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Witz, Leslie

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UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND

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

African Studies Seminar Paper
to be presented in RW
4.00pm MARCH 1985

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No. 164

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African Studies Seminar Paper to be presented at Seminar in RW 319 at 4,00 pm Monday, March 11, 1985.

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SUPPORT OR CONTROL: THE CHILDREN OF THE GARMENT WORKERS' UNION, 1939-1948

by Leslie Witz

> Characteristically in a family a child is indoctrinated with the desired desire to become a certain son or daughter ... with a totally enjoined, minutely prescribed 'freedom' to move within the narrow interstices of a rigid lattice of relationship. (D. Cooper, The Death of the Family, Harmondsworth (1976), p. 25).

INTRODUCTION

Various historians have pointed out that during the first three decades of the twentieth century both capital and the state incorporated white wage earners in South Africa into institutionalised structures.[1] The white workers lost all their militancy, developed a racist hierarchical division of labour, became entrapped in the hegemony of bourgeois politics and their trade unions slipped into the morass of bureaucracy. White workers, however, were not simply trapped by the state and capital. Incorporation was a process which took over twenty years or more to accomplish and was determined by specific conditions facing white workers and trade unions, in particular on the Witwatersrand, during this period. White workers rather eased themselves into a trap, lowered the gate, bolted it and threw away the key.[2]

There is one group of white workers which, it is maintained, managed to resist this incorporation: the clothing workers on the Witwatersrand in the 1930s and 40s. These workers were Afrikaner women who were active members of the Garment Workers' Union (GWU), a trade union which, it is claimed, under the leadership of Solly Sachs (its general secretary from 1928 to 1952), displayed a high degree of militancy, established internal democratic structures, assumed an independent political role and firmly committed itself to non-racialism.[3] Perhaps the most important claim made on behalf of the union is the last for it has been used to justify many a theoretical position in the South African political arena. Solly Sachs himself used it to criticise the Communist Party's almost exclusive concern with black workers.[4] Basil Davidson, writing in the New Statesman in 1950, wrote that the non-racialism in the Garment Workers' Union represented the hope that Afrikaners would forego their racialism and that black and white could co-operate in a future free South Africa.[5] More recently Fine, de

Clercq and Innes used the GWU's commitment to non-racialism as an example of how workers need not simply become incorporated into racial structures if trade unions registered under government sponsored legislation.[6]

All these assertions are based on an unquestioning acceptance of the Garment Workers' Union's official version of its stance towards black workers in the industry. The GWU always maintained that it welcomed blacks into its organisation, supported their struggles and through this assistance black workers acquired substantial benefits such as higher wages and shorter working hours.[7] This paper will attempt to examine this rendition critically, looking particularly at the period 1939 to 1948, a time when black workers started entering the clothing industry on the Witwatersrand in significant numbers. However, we must first briefly survey the period 1929 to 1938 for in those years the roots of the GWU's policies towards black workers in the clothing industry were implanted.[8]

Establishing the Parallels, 1929-1938

In the the inter-war years white women constituted the bulk of the workforce in the clothing industry in the Transvaal. (see Table 1) 82% of the workers in the industry in this area in 1937/8 were white, 14% were Africans (only 8 out of 1 109 being women) and Coloureds and Indians comprised the remainder.[9] Nearly all the whites were employed as machinists (sewing the garment) while the Africans were involved in cleaning the factories, laying cloth out on the tables to be cut and, above all, in pressing the completed garment.[10]

While the white workers in the inustry could and did participate fully in the machinery established by the Industrial Conciliation Act of 1924 (to constitute an industrial council with employers to conclude an industrial council agreement to cover employment conditions and to organise into a registered trade union) the African workers were denied such access.[11] Registration was nonetheless not a major obstacle in the organisation of trade unions for African workers. Indeed trade union organisation was given a boost by the existence of wage regulating machinery which complemented the Industrial Conciliation Act, the Wage Board established under the Wage Act of 1924. Although the Wage Board was established by the government to promote employment of unorganised whites in secondary industry by fixing high minimum wages increasingly African workers utilised it to promote their own interests.[12] Since the Board could initiate an investigation of a particular industry when a sufficiently representative group of employers or employees approached it to make such an inquiry, Africans began organising into trade unions to make representations to the Board. Thus, when a wage Board sitting for the clothing industry was instituted in 1928 a group of African workers, with the assistance of the Communist Party of South Africa, formed a racially separate trade union to cover the interests of the black workers in the industry: the South African Clothing Workers' Union (SACWU).[13] Thus two trade unions existed for clothing workers on the Witwatersrand. The relationship between them was, to a large extent, determined by two interrelated factors, the attitudes of the workers and the philosophy of Solly Sachs.

Members of the South African Clothing Workers' Union were always willing to assist the Garment Workers' Union but the white workers imbued with racist attitudes, were not prepared to reciprocate. When the African workers offered to help the whites in a particular struggle the whites eagerly welcomed their assistance. However, when the roles were reversed and the blacks would call on the whites for help it was not forthcoming.[14] Thus, prior to the arrival of Solly Sachs in November 1928 a one-sided relationship existed between the SACWU and the GWU.

Solly Sachs' belief in a future socialist non-racial South Africa did not tally with that of his constituency. Nonetheless his notion that white workers could assist in bringing about such a society helped him to accommodate their views without abrogating his principles. Black and white workers, he argued, had to be kept apart until the latter were re-educated and had developed a non-racial working class consciousness.[15] He would concentrate his efforts on attempting to achieving this by working with white workers. On the other hand he would see to it that the black workers' organisations were assisted. Thus he became one of the prime advocates of parallel unionism, whereby the registered trade union (the GWU) took the unregistered trade union (the SACWU) under its wing, offering it facilities, expertise and access to the industrial council.[16] Sachs felt that if the workers were forced together in one organisation it would lead to a split in the union, the racist workers hiving off to form their own union.[17] While the GWU's leaders therefore assisted the SACWU the rank and file were kept apart. Thus, under Sachs' auspices, the GWU's structure of maintaining separate branches in order to ensure that the union remained intact was created.

This policy was accentuated in the late 1930s when the nascent Afrikaner nationalist movement, attempting to gain the political and financial support of white workers, launched an attack to take control of the GWU.[18] Using racism as a major weapon the Nationalists accused Sachs of organising and "addressing kaffirs" while neglecting the interests of white workers.[19] The GWU's leaders therefore went out of their way to defuse racial tension and show white workers that they were assisting them. When racial incidents occurred at factories the GWU organisers would approach the employer and generally the African workers involved would be dismissed.[20] However, while the GWU kept white and black workers apart it did give the SACWU financial and organisational aid. This enabled the SACWU to survive the 1929-32 depression, establish a stop-order system at four factories and ensure that African clothing workers were among the highest paid of all African workers on the Witwatersrand by 1938.[21]

It was also during the late 1930s that coloured workers started entering the clothing industry on the Witwatersrand. Their positions in the clothing factories were somewhat different to those of Africans. All coloured workers could be organised in a registered trade union, could participate on industrial councils and could be a party to industrial council agreements. They could also form a single union with other workers in the industry. Furthermore the coloured workers entered the clothing industry in exactly the same jobs held by whites. Nonetheless, they entered the industry at a time when whites were beginning to leave voluntarily and thus presented no competition for their jobs.

There ensued considerable debate among the ranks of both the white and coloured workers on whether and how coloured workers should be organised. The whites were vitally interested in organising the coloureds. "... they felt that the coloured workers being non-members of the Union, might undermine their hard-won standards."[22] The majority of white workers advocated the policy that this organisation of coloured workers should be in a parallel union, which would have its own branch and officials and hold separate general meetings.[23] Some of the coloured workers who rejected this idea felt that they were bearing the brunt of discriminatory practices.[24] Most of the coloured workers, however, meekly accepted the GWU's proposals and decided to form a parallel union.[25]

The GWU has always maintained that it created the No. 2 branch in order to maintain unity among the workers. The Central Executive Committee (CEC) was particularly fearul of the union being destroyed because of racial pressure. "It was better to have separate branches than to have the Union being broken up altogether."[26] The No. 2 branch had no representation on the Central Executive Committee or the industrial council. When it did request to be represented on the former body the Central Executive Committee "considered it ill-advised, as they took the view of the majority of the Europeans into consideration, and therefore did not agree to the request of the No. 2 branch"[27]. Once again the GWU's racial philosophy of division creating unity is evident. Not only were meetings held separately but even at the Medical Aid Society separate medical officers and dentists were appointed for coloured workers.[28]

The GWU in effect maintained control over the No. 2 branch for it was through the Central Executive Committee that agreements were conducted. Although the separate branch could make representations it had no voice on the Central Executive Committee and thus it was the No. 1 branch which dictated the union's bargaining position. The coloured workers had virtually no say in their working conditions since this was controlled by the organisation which represented the employers, the Transvaal Clothing Manufacturers' Association (TCMA), and the GWU sitting on the industrial council.

Support and Control, 1939-1948

Whereas before the outbreak of World War Two the number of blacks in the clothing industry in the Transvaal was relatively small, from 1939 onwards their proportion of the labour force increased significantly. This was a result of the phenomenal growth in the clothing industry during the war years.

A complete stoppage of imported clothing along with the need to fulfill orders from the Department of Defence provided the incentive towards increased production in these years.[29] The value of gross output in the clothing industry increased by 76%, an increase greater than that achieved by secondary industry in general over the same period.[30] The number of clothing factories in operation in the Transvaal almost doubled from 158 in 1939 to 315 in 1945.[31] Many of these were small factories hoping to make a quick profit from the prevailing circumstances.[32] At the time of this expansion in the industry white women were opting for alternative, generally higher paid, spheres of

employment. They started moving out of clothing factories into munitions plants and office jobs.[33] This was the background to the manufacturers' cries of a labour shortage during the war years.[220] One of the employers even suggested that labour be recruited from the countryside to Johannesburg through consultation with parents and by offering to pay train fares.[34] This plan was never put into operation. Instead employers started proposing higher wages in order to entice employees to remain in their employ. According to the president of the TCMA the effect of this was that "fantastic wages" were paid.[35] If profits were to be maintained this situation could not be perpetuated. Manufacturers sought other means of acquiring the necessary cheap labour in a labour intensive industry.

They turned to the coloured and African population of the Witwatersrand. The number of coloured women in the area increased from 8 247 in 1921 to 20 711 in 1946.[36] Over the same period the number of African women resident on the Witwatersrand increased almost tenfold from 28 735 to 220 833.[37] Increasingly these coloured and African women were drawn into the industry. (See Table 1) By 1946, whites, although still constituting the largest part of the workforce, comprised only 55% of it. The percentage of Africans had risen to 25% (there were now 454 females and 2 313 males), coloureds had increased to 18% and Indians to 2%.[38] The coloured workers were nearly all female, in total 2 345 compared to 6 588 white females.[39]

This influx of blacks into the industry during the war years had major implications for trade union organisation. In numerical terms the No. 2 branch of the union became much more powerful. From a membership of 144 in 1940 the branch membership increased to 2 910 in 1946. (See Table 2). The No. 1 branch in the same time expanded its membership from 5 938 to 7 000. (See Table 2). Membership figures of the SACWU for the war years are not available, but by 1950 it had 1 299 members.[40] Whereas before the war the rather small parallels had meekly accepted the control exerted by the GWU, they now began to challenge both managerial power and the authority of the GWU in determining their affairs.

Throughout the 1940's the no. 2 branch's major initiatives were its call for representation on the Central Executive Committee and the industrial council. At the beginning of 1942, the No. 2 branch, with its growing membership, was becoming increasingly displeased over the inferior position it occupied in relation to the No. 1 branch. The Central Executive Committee was elected only by members of the No. 2 branch and although a customary practice had been established to co-opt members of other branches onto the Central Executive Committee (such as Germiston), the No. 2 branch had been excluded. Subscriptions paid by coloured members were incorporated into a general fund administerd by the Central Executive Committee. Anna Scheepers, as president of the union, automatically became president of the No. 2 branch and presided over their executive meetings. The overall effect of this, according to Hetty du Preez, organiser of the branch, was that they had become mere "puppets of the CEC".[41] Another member of the branch executive, G.S. Davis, asserted "that as far as he could see the No. 2 branch was not a branch at all".[42]

Hester du Preez initially raised the issue of representation on the Central Executive Committee on behalf of the branch.[43] Solly Sachs and

the Central Executive Committee did not accede to this request claiming, as they had done previously, that the result would be a split in the union.

> We in the Garment Workers' Union believe in the principle that workers are workers, but we have to take into account the fact that the majority of our members are imbued with anti-colour prejudices which they bring with them from the platteland. If we would force the issue that coloured workers must be represented on the Committee we would split the Union. Up to now we have had parallel organisations and we must now decide if the time has come to change our policy. I say no.[44]

Nearly all the other members of the Central Executive echoed Sachs' point.[45] The Christian-National assaults on the union were particularly emphasised for, although in 1942 these attacks were at a low point, it was maintained that coloured representation would give the Nationalists "another point to attack the Union".[46] It was only Ray Adler, who along with Anna Scheepers attended No. 2 branch meetings in an advisory capacity, who raised a dissenting voice to this general line. She did not agree that the G.W.U. should be afraid of the enemies who were attacking the union and accede to their demands. "The non-Europeans are supporting the war effort and have joined up. We should give them Branch representation on the CEC".[47] Yet she was a lone voice in the wilderness. She was shouted down by Hester Cornelius, Anna Scheepers and Solly Sachs. Sachs launched into a tirade against Hester du Preez for even daring to raise the issue claiming that she had done so entirely on her own initiative with a view to splitting the union.

> E.S. Sachs said that the person who is responsible for the request of representation on the CEC ... has rendered the Union and the Coloured workers a disservice. We were building up unity and strength in the Coloured branch but now this action would cause disharmony. The No. 2 Branch are entitled to make these requests but he felt that the request did not come from the Coloured workers and that it was suggested by someone who is trying to lay down a policy for us.[48]

Du Preez countered this accusation by maintaining that "some workers had raised the matter with her".[49] In order to judge whether the workers wanted[50] representation she suggested that a general meeting be called. Sachs, however, disagreed with this proposal. "It would mean that the Coloured workers had their position of inferiority flaunted in their faces once again."[51] While it is unclear what Sachs was attempting to assert in this statement it is evident that he did not want the status quo which existed between the branches disturbed. The meeting therefore broke up without any decision reached.

During 1942 the GWU was attempting to organise a National Union of Garment Workers which would include "the thousands of coloured workers in the Cape and Durban".[52] Solly Sachs requested the No. 2 branch executive that the question of representation be left in abeyance until after the conference, for then the workers would realise "that they

should stand together and not fight on racial ines".[53] Sachs' plea was seen as a sidestepping manoeuvre and members of the branch executive repeated their call for representation.[54] Yet under the combined pressure of Sachs and the Central Executive Committee the branch relented and decided to leave the matter over until after the conference.[55]

The National Conference was scheduled for August 1942. In the interim Sachs made an appeal to the white workers, at a general meeting of the GWU, "to treat the coloured workers in the factory decently".[56] Workers, irrespective of race and political allegiances, should stand together, he declared, "in order to be able to fight the bosses".[57] The white workers, however, did not heed his call for working class unity. Although most of the members present at a shop stewards conference held on 13 August 1942 were "in favour of better treatment to the coloured workers", many of the shop stewards reported that the white workers were against representation of the No. 2 branch on the Central Executive Committee.[58] Sachs concluded from this that, as he had always maintained, it was first of all necessary to educate "the masses" before the problem of representation could be tackled.[59] Before a meeting of the No. 2 branch he reiterated his opinion that it was "only a small number of workers who are pressing for representation and not the branch members as a whole".[60] Du Preez was adamant that the demand did not merely come "from a handful of workers as Mr Sachs wanted to put it, but from the majority of Coloured workers".[61] Again the matter was not resolved and left in abeyance. On 19 August the Central Executive eventually decided to make a firm decision with the regard to representation. It passed a resolution which rejected No. 2 branch representation on the Central Executive Committee because, in view of the racist attitudes of the white workers, this was likely to cause a split in the union.[62] The Central Executive would concentrate its efforts "on educating the masses of workers in true trade union principles".[63] While the workers were being educated a Joint Committee would be established consisting of an equal number of representatives from the Central Executive Committee and the No. 2 branch "to discuss matters of mutual interest".[64] This tactic tallied perfectly with Sachs' "waiting until the time was ripe" philosophy.

The National Conference of garment workers was a dismal failure and did not lead to a re-education of the white workers.[65] The No. 2 branch received the resolution from the Central Executive Committee and treated it for what it was, a mere sop to the branch's request. J. Philips, the chairman of the No. 2 branch, was "not at all satisfied with the reply he received from the CEC" and advised the CEC to "conduct a vigorous campaign for unity amongst the workers".[66] Although Philips rejected the concept of joint meetings as a solution it is notable that he actually accepted the premises of the executive's argument, namely that it was the white workers who were holding up the process of change. At this stage he did not recognise that Sachs and his cadré on the Central Executive Committee were also playing a vital role in perpetuating the status quo between the No. 1 and No. 2 branches so as not to place their respective leadership positions in danger.

Over the next year, as the No. 2 branch continued demanding representation on the Central Executive Committee, Philips became increasingly disillusioned with the stand which Sachs was taking. He accused

Sachs of concentrating all his engergy on the No. 1 branch and neglecting the No. 2 branch.[67] Sachs immediately called in the Central Executive Committee to justify his stand. The Committee recorded "its satisfaction of the fact that the secretary in all his dealings with the No. 2 branch has merely tried to carry out correctly the policy of the CEC".[68] The Central Executive also resolved that the issue of representation had been dragging on for too long and unilaterally terminated discussions until such time as "important developments" took place.[69]

The No. 2 branch executive did not let matters rest there. Philips went to Cape Town to drum up support for the branch's cause from the non-racial Cape Garment Workers' Union.[70] While in Cape Town he told the Cape union "that if they (the No. 2 branch) did not say yes to Mr Sachs, there goes their job".[71] The branch also refused to repudiate articles in Inkululeko, Cape Standard and the Trade Union Bulletin condemning the GWU (Tvl's) approach to multi-racialism in their trade union.[72] Two Indian members of the branch, Naidoo and Moodley, began attempting to mobilise coloured workers against the union because of the colour bar and accused the Central Executive Committee of not pursuing trade union principles.[73] They pressed for complete disaffiliation of the branch from the GWU and the establishment of a separate union.[74] This the Central Executive Committee would not tolerate, as an indepedent union could move out of its orbit of control. It therefore decided to take drastic action, expelled Naidoo and Moodley from the union, dissolved the No. 2 branch and set about reconstituting a more compliant branch.

Sachs explained the outbursts of hostilities between the No. 2 branch and the Central Executive Committee and the "need" for the eventual dissolution of the branch in terms of an agitator thesis. The workers, he claimed, were satisfied with the existing relationship and it was only "until a demand for division inspired from outsiders was presented" that cracks appeared.[75] In order to reconstitute the branch and the harmonious relationship which had existed before it was therefore not urgent to redress the basic grievances relating to representation but to appeal directly to the coloured workers to express their faith in the parallel relationship. A general meeting of coloured workers for this purpose was called in February 1944. Sachs opened the meeting urging the workers to express a vote of confidence in him, the President and the Central Executive Committee.[76] Philips saw no need for this vote "as at no time did the members say they had no confidence in the Central Executive Committee and officials".[77]

As Sachs was speaking about reorganising the No. 2 branch he noted that Naidoo was at the meeting. He indicated that he would not continue with the meeting until Naidoo left, which the latter refused to do.[78] The meeting became rowdy and "Mr Naidoo was put out of the meeting by force".[79] When the vote was taken a large majority voted in favour of Sachs, the rest abstained and no one dissented.[80]

This meeting was followed up by one between the Central Executive Committee and shop stewards of the No. 2 branch.[81] It was very badly attended on the part of the shop stewards. The reorganization of the branch was formalised and a condemnation of the articles was unanimously approved. A branch committee was to be formed consisting of twenty members to be elected by a shop stewards meeting and later endorsed by

a general meeting. On the question of representation on the Central Executive Committee Sachs was adamant that "it would not be possible to grant this at the present juncture".[82] Scheepers did, however, state that the Central Executive Committee would not object to a joint meeting with the No. 2 branch when discussing proposals for a new agreement.[83] In conclusion she expressed the hope that the Central Executive Committee and executive of the branch would "work together in future in harmony and co-operation".[84] The No. 2 branch, although it still persisted in its demand for representation, never again challenged the control of the Central Executive Committee and became an obedient child.

The request by the No. 2 branch for representation on the industrial council was met with an equally unenthusiastic response by the Central Executive Committee and with opposition from manufacturers. Given the branch's non-representation on the industrial council, the Central Executive Committee had to act on its behalf to put forward the branch's case. Within the Executive there were divisions over what should be done on this issue. Ray Adler was firmly in favour of representation on the industrial council and urged the Central Executive press the issue.[85] Hester Cornelius reiterated her argument that such a move "would harm the Union".[86] The president of the union, Anna Scheepers felt that some of the employers would object to such a move and refuse to "sit on the council with non-European workers".[87] Solly Sachs stated rather ambiguously that "if the European workers objected to representation on the Council he would definitely oppose it".[88] It is unclear whether he meant he would oppose representation or the objections of white workers. Given his statements relating to representation on the Central Executive Committee it would seem that he meant the former. The executive did nonetheless decide to approach the chairman of the industrial council and poll his views on what the attitude of the employers would be.

Sachs met with Mr Brown, the chairman, who was of the opinion that there would definitely be opposition from employers to coloureds on the council.[89] This attitude on the part of employers was incomprehensible to the No. 2 branch executive. As one member stated when the subject was initially raised, "If they are prepared to sit with European workers thay can just as well sit with Coloured workers".[90] Some of the members of the TCMA were definitely racially hostile and "did not wish to sit on the Council with coloured representatives".[91] The employers' association nonethless realised that if the union chose a coloured as a delegate they would have to accept it.[92] It would not, however, encourage such representation and informed the No. 2 branch

> that it thought present Union delegates fully represented all sections of the industry and that their interests were being ably served. It was considered, therefore, that the existing arrangements should not be disturbed.[93]

With the GWU No. 1 branch not in favour of representation on the Central Executive Committee it was highly unlikely that they would choose coloured delegates for the council. Indeed, as we shall see, it was only two years after the war that the first coloured delegate was appointed by the union to the council.

Not only did the organization of Indian and coloured workers in the clothing industry on the Witwatersrand flourish during World War Two but African worker organisation in the industry, and indeed throughout industry in South Africa, grew at a phenomenal rate. According to O'Meara by 1945 at least 40% of Africans in commerce and private industry were unionised.[94] Most of these unions were affiliated to the umbrella body established for black trade unions in 1941, the Council of Non-European Trade Unions (CNETU). CNETU had, by 1945, 119 union affiliates and a membership of 158 000.[95] This phenomenal quantitative growth in organisation had largely come about as a result of the substantially improved bargaining position held by Africans in the specific context of a wartime economy. The semi-skilled functions which they were performing, at a time when white labour was scarce, made Africans less easy to displace and therefore less vulnerable to dismissal.[96] State policy towards African workers was also shifting at the time, the attitude being adopted that it was necessary to ensure that the 'war effort' would not be disrupted by industrial stoppages.[97] Following a wave of strikes the government enacted War Measure 145 of December 1942 which outlawed strikes by Africans with severe sanctions.[98] This alone could not end strikes and it became necessary to afford African unions some apparatus whereby they could channel their grievances. The Department of Labour insisted that industrial council agreements fix wages for Africans and published a series of Wage Board determinations.[99] 1942/43 saw a spectacular increase in the number of Africans for whom wage determinations were made, the numbers covered rising from 1 084 to 67 632.[100] Trade union organisers now had something which they could legally enforce and trade union organisation mushroomed.[101] The SACWU, which had long been pressing for inclusion in the industrial council agreement for the clothing industry in the Transvaal and/or a revived Wage Board determination, was at the forefront of the revival in African trade unionism.

During the war the SACWU intensified its efforts for inclusion in the agreement and/or a new Wage Determination. The SACWU's attempts received limited support from the GWU but was rejected by most manufacturers. Shortly before the outbreak of World War Two the GWU had refused to negotiate on behalf of the African male workers as a Wage Board determination was imminent.[102] The GWU opposed the recommendations made by the Wage Board in 1939 on the basis of the low wages which it had fixed for dressmakers and milliners.[103] Manufacturers, on the other hand, asserted that the wages were too high.[104] The recommendations were therefore never published as a determination. The SACWU once again turned its efforts towards extending the agreement to African workers.[105] This request was received sympathetically by the GWU. At a meeting between representatives of both associations it was decided to write to the industrial council asking that pass-bearing Africans be included in the agreement.[106] It was nonethelss not viewed by the GWU as a sufficiently fundamental issue to hold up the signing of the agreement.[107]

Relations between the SACWU and the GWU were, at the time, rather tenuous. Wages and other expenses of the SACWU were being paid out by the GWU until such time as the former could "stand on its own feet".[108] In June 1940 the GWU also made a loan to Makabeni, the secretary of the SACWU, of £8 in order to attend his mother's funeral.[109] While he was

away the administration of the SACWU's office was neglected and the GWU paid the rent of £4 for August.[110] This accumulated debt worried the Central Executive Committee. Anna Scheepers complained that the GWU "paid out more on their behalf than we received".[111] Johanna Cornelius suggested that Makabeni be asked "whether the money would be paid out".[112] The Central Executive agreed to investigate the position of the SACWU once Makabeni returned from his mother's funeral.[113] The matter, however, was left in abeyance for eight years when the Central Executive Committee demanded that the debt be paid in full immediately.[114]

The Central Executive's attention was diverted by the Minister of Labour's (Walter Madeley) refusal to publish the agreement which was concluded in May 1940 between the TCMA and the GWU because of the definition of the clothing industry.[115] The SACWU utilised this gap to mobilise its members and press for its inclusion in the agreement. On September 1941 a general meeting was held at the non-European Trade Hall.[116] At this "well attended" meeting it was unanimously resolved to pressurise for coverage by the agreement or that the Wage Board recommendation of 1939 be published.[117] It is perhaps indicative for the nature of organisation in the SACWU that it took over a month to forward these resolutions to the Minister of Labour, by which time he had already published the agreement. Madeley's decision to publish had come in the face of a massive mobilisation of garment workers at mass meetings in Johannesburg and Germiston where they had threatened strike action if the agreement was not published.[118]

When negotiations re-opened in May 1942 the SACWU submitted another memorandum to the TCMA, the GWU and the Department of Labour calling for the extension of the agreement or a revision of Wage Determination No. 42. In particular the SACWU was concerned about those workers in the industry who were not directly involved in clothing production such as boiler attendants, motor car drivers, mechanics, packers, machine belt fixers, deliverers and nightwatchmen and did not fall under determination or agreement.[119] A statistical survey carried out by the TCMA found that 715 of the 1 225 African males in the industry were not employed on production.[120] This group of workers, according to the SACWU, was the most exploited of all workers in the industry.

> They work 48 and more hours per week, while others work 46 hours a week. They continue working when others have a rest for 10 minutes. They remain behind when others finish off their day's work. When their grievances are brought to the attention of the ... Department of Labour under Wage Determination No. 70, as their work is identical with that of the Commercial and Distributive Trade the explanation is always that they are employed in the manufacturing establishments. From the law operating for manufacturing establishments, they are excluded. It is said that they are not factory workers. Where do these workers belong?[121]

Manufacturers were vehemently opposed to including these workers in its agreement with the GWU. The chairman of the TCMA expressed the fear that it could lead to joint strike action by Africans and whites.[122] The GWU wanted all workers to be covered by the agreement

but was not prepared to make it a contentious issue with the TCMA.[122] In the circumstances the GWU recommended that "the proper way of settling this long outstanding problem once and for all would be to have a complete new investigation into the Garment Making Trades".[124] Negotiations between the TCMA and the GWU had reached a deadlock over whether Easter Monday should be a paid holiday and the cost-of-living allowance.[125] Under War Measure No. 9, which provided for compulsory arbitration in the case of a deadlock in negotiations, an arbitrator was appointed.[126] As the inclusion of Africans in the agreement was not in dispute, the arbitrator did not decide on this issue. The effect of the arbitration award was a substantial increase in wages for the garment workers.[127]

The Minister did however decide to appoint a Wage Board investigation into the clothing industry in the Transvaal which would cover all employees in the industry not covered by the agreement. As a result of the investigation Wage Determination No. 120 was published in July 1944.[128] The average wages of African male workers on production were £2.17.8 per week and those not employed on production received £2.8.1 per week.[129] Averages hide the huge wage differentials between categories of labour. In terms of the determination mechanics earned £6.13.6 per week and messengers and cleaners £1.12.0.[130] Pressers and cutters received £1.10.0 as beginners rising to £4.0.0 when qualified after three years in the industry.[131] The SACWU was pleased with the determination but it noted that a major category of labour was omitted, that of machinist.[132]

The publication of the determination instead of defusing African worker militancy in the industry actually intensified it. It highlighted for the workers the anomalous conditions under which they laboured. African males had to work 46 hours a week while workers covered by the agreement were working 44 hours and they had two weeks holiday on full pay compared to three weeks in the agreement.[133] This situation was "causing a great deal of unrest" among African workers in the industry.[134] Employers were compelling their African employees to remain behind or come back on Saturdays to complete the 46 hour week, which aggrieved workers.[135] It is little wonder that the attempts by the SACWU to explain the different workings of the agreement and wage determination failed to satisfy the workers who did "not see the reason of two different laws for one industry".[136] As part of CNETU's campaign for African unions to press for recognition the SACWU requested the TCMA to recognise the union.[137] Recognition in this instance meant legal recognition in terms of the Industrial Conciliation Act. As Makabeni noted, "they preferred no recognition at all to non-statutory recognition".[138] Manufacturers took a differing approach to this request. Larger concerns were at the time becoming receptive to the practice of personnel management.

> It is realised today, that to have an efficient and competitive industry it is essential that relations between management and personnel should be harmonious and cordial, and these measures are all directed at creating a willing and contented army of workers which must react to the mutual benefit of employer and employee.[139]

In an effort to establish these harmonious relations nine factories had introduced stop order facilities for the SACWU.[140] Nonetheless, not much was done during the early 40's to employ these ideas.[141] The TCMA refused to recognise the SACWU.[142] According to one manufacturer it was not necessary to grant such recognition because

> Natives were not Europeans; they were childish in many respects and consequently were treated more liberally than they would be otherwise.[143]

Matters reached a head in December 1945 when the factories closed for their annual holiday period.

All factories closed for at least three weeks, during which time workers covered by the agreement received full pay. In terms of the determination Africans were only entitled to two weeks annual paid leave. The employers demanded from their African workers that they sign a declaration stating they would not demand paid leave above two weeks.[144] Those that refused to sign were given notice. The result was that "scores of workers"[145] were dismissed because they refused to sign the indemnity. The GWU expressed concern over the treatment[146] which was being meted out to the African workers. The Secretary for Labour indignantly expressed the opinion that this concern smacked

> of hypocrisy when considered in relation to the support which they accord to the employers on the industrial council in their refusal to extend the agreement to natives.[147]

This attack was unjustified, for, as we have seen, the GWU had not collaborated with the TCMA in this respect. It had rather not persisted with the issue in order that its own interests might not be threatened. According to Sachs the GWU Central Executive "felt that employers would extend the more favourable conditions to them (Africans) in any case".[148]

When work resumed in January 400 African workers in Germiston came out on strike demanding that they receive three weeks paid leave like others in the industry. The GWU entered the fray and took a leading part in the negotiations raising the ire of manufacturers. When the spokesman for the employers, Mr Saffer, entered the negotiating room to meet the SACWU's representatives

> he found Mr Sachs and Miss de Wet of the GWU. He asked why they were there and Mr Sachs replied that unofficially the native union was a branch of the GWU, and he was spokesman for the natives. His Union was going to give them full support.[149]

This clearly indicates the measure of control which the GWU had over the SACWU. It was in the GWU's interests to resolve the conflict as speedily as possible in order to ensure that whites would not be locked out if the factories closed. In addition the three weeks annual paid leave in the agreement was threatened. On the GWU's request the SACWU and the Germiston employers agreed that the matter be brought before a special meeting of the industrial council.[150] This effectively meant

that negotiations on behalf of the African workers was taken out of the hands of the SACWU and placed in the hands of the GWU. The GWU backed down on the strikers demands, accepting two additional days paid leave, no victimisation of strikers and a re-instatement of all workers fired in December.[151] The GWU also assured the employers that all strikers would return to work, which they duly did. The strikers were not given pay for the time they were on strike by the employers, and although it was suggested that the GWU reimburse the strikers for wages lost there is no evidence in the GWU's income and expenditure account of such an amount being paid out.[152]

As was noted earlier one of the most significant changes in the labour force in the clothing industry during the war years was the steady, but slow, influx of African women. (See Table 1). Unlike their male counterparts nearly all African women in the industry (56% out of 588) were employed on production.[153] Most of these women occupied job categories held by white and coloured women in the industry.[154] If unorganised these workers could present a major threat of job and wage undercutting. Coloured workers were refusing to work with African women because they felt that "African women would take their jobs".[155] White women voiced complaints of "non-Europeans ... doing the same sort of work as themselves, even though on the different floor of the factory".[156] On the shop floor union organisers had to step in in order to prevent racial conflicts, invariably with the interests of whites, coloureds and then Africans taking precedent in that order. Hetty du Preez visited a factory where coloureds would not work with Africans and secured the replacement of the Africans by coloured workers.[157] In the case of whites the Nationalist assaults on the union were beginning to gather momentum, and this time racialism on the shop-floor was a major tactic utilised in the attack.[158]

These attitudes put a brake on the GWU's attempts to organise African workers. It was necessary to organise these workers in closer cooperation with the Central Executive Committee than was the case with the SACWU because their jobs were similar to whites. Greater control could be exercised if they were part of the same union. In 1942 the industrial council had sought legal opinion on the position of African women workers, who did not hold passes, in terms of the Industrial Conciliation Act of 1937.[159] The advocate's opinion was that they were employees in terms of the act.[160] The Secretary for Labour rejected the opinion on the basis that the women were employed on "works" as defined in the Native Labour Regulation Act of 1911.[161] Following this up the GWU took a test case to the Supreme Court. Two employees, an African male, Baloyi, and an African female, Christine Okolo, applied for a declaration that they were employees in terms of the Industrial Conciliation Act.[162] Justice Murray ruled that Baloyi was not an employee but that Okolo was as she was not a "pass-bearing native".[163] The GWU immediately demanded back pay for all African women who were underpaid and this amounted to £1 100 per employee.[164]

The GWU's problems were not over in this regard as when it attempted to organise the African women in the union the coloured workers were reluctant to admit them to the No. 2 branch. Makabeni had always referred complaints by African women to Hetty du Preez and informally these workers were part of the branch.[165] Leaders of the branch were in favour of the formal incorporation of African women into their ranks

but the workers were not too enthusiastic about the idea. A Mrs Flask reported that "the workers in her factory did not want to mix with Africans".[166] Groups of workers in factories milled about discussing the fact that Hetty du Preez was going to represent Africans.[167] Du Preez was aware of these feelings of antagonism but she insisted that the coloured workers "must realise that they must organise on industrial lines, and there was no room for such sentiments".[168] A general meeting of the branch was called to resolve the issue.

The meeting, primarily concerning itself with the Indian Passive Resistance campaign, was attended by 4 000 people, far in excess of the branch's membership.[169] Before the meeting was terminated the resolution calling for African females to be represented in the branch was passed almost unnoticed.[170] A general meeting of African women workers was then called. It was attended by approximately 200 workers and five representatives were elected to the branch executive by a show of hands.[171] Among the five representatives elected was Lucy Mvubelo who is today general secretary of the NUCW.

Passing reference has been made in the latter section of this paper to the role played by parallels in the wider worker movement. Both the SACWU and the No. 2 branch where affiliated to CNETU,[172] Makabeni being its president and James Philips its treasurer. While the SACWU did not approach the GWU for permission to affiliate to CNETU, the branch had to apply for sanction from the Central Executive Committee. Solly Sachs had played a major role in laying down CNETU's organisational structure, he being the chairman of a commission of inquiry,[173] appointed by CNETU, to order its own affairs. The Central Executive Committee therefore had little hesitation in endorsing the decision of the No. 2 branch to affiliate.[174] Despite CNETU's numerical strength, it was "the most powerful African trade union grouping ever to have existed in South Africa",[175] its organisation was fragmented, unstable and lacked effective muscle.[176] Its only income was an allowance of £12 a month from the Bantu Welfare Trust.[177] The CEC realised that CNETU was weak organisationally and was not prepared to grant it a loan of £110 in 1945 because CNETU was "not functioning properly".[178] Scheepers echoed Sachs' opinion but added that

> A committee should be established to train these people how to manage their affairs and become proper trade union organisers and secretaries.[179]

She did not indicate what she meant by a 'proper' trade unionist but the statement has clear paternal overtones.

CNETU's strength was shortlived and by 1949 66 CNETU unions had foundered.[180] Its failure seems to have lain in its weak organisational structure which was not able to stand up to the post-war recession.[181] In 1951 the remainders of CNETU, including the No. 2 branch of the GWU, met and discussed the establishment of a trade union umbrella body which would oppose the South African Trades and Labour Council (SATLC) to which many registered unions, including the GWU, were affiliated.[182] As the branch was part of the GWU, the GWU Central Executive Committee would not tolerate such actions. The Central Executive asserted that "it would be most unconstitutional for us to take part in the formation of any rival organisation".[183] The branch

was therefore instructed "not to take any further part in this matter" and to "submit a full report to Head Office as soon as possible on the ... conference".[184] Clearly the GWU would not let its child get out of control to the extent that it might undermine the union's position.

In general then during the war years the parallels attempted to utilise the specific conditions to gain a greater degree of independent control. They had limited success in their endeavours for once they began to tread on the toes of the GWU, they were sharply rapped on the knuckles and brought back into line. Although the 'happy family' had threatened to disintegrate by 1946 it was still very much intact with the parent firmly in control.

In the post-war years the GWU's 'family' drew even closer together. The major factor which influenced these relationships during this period was the intensification of the trend of whites leaving the industry and blacks entering it. In 1946 whites constituted approximately 55% of the labour force in the clothing industry on the Witwatersrand and blacks 45%. Ten years later blacks constituted two-thirds of the workforce in the industry.[185] This trend had a tremendous impact on Solly Sachs and the union.

The war seems to have confirmed for Sachs that capitalism could be a progressive force in South Africa. Intensive secondary industrialisation had brought whites and blacks together in factories. Sachs envisaged that this general proletarianisation would ultimately lead to combined opposition to the capitalist classes.[186] In Sachs' terms therefore the time was ripe for a slow and gradual introduction of a closer working relationship between the GWU and its parallels.

However, there was one major factor which militated against this occurring, the intensification of the Nationalist assaults on the GWU. The Nationalists used the growing number of blacks in the industry in an attempt to stir up racial antagonism and undermine the GWU's leadership hierarchy. The GWU had therefore to tread very carefully in its relationship with its parallels in order to ensure that the Nationalists could not seize on issues where they could proclaim blacks were being favoured above whites.

Relations with the No. 2 branch carried on very much the same as during the war, except that the branch did not challenge the authority of the Central Executive. The growing number of members of the branch did, nonetheless, place pressure on the Central Executive Committee to make some concessions to the branch over representation. Sachs stated that "the No. 2 branch does represent over 3 000 members and can therefore feel that they are entitled to a say".[187] He had decided to draft a new constitution for the GWU and give the branch representation on the Medical Aid Society and industrial council.[188] Although Philips welcomed the move he informed the branch committee that he would only be satisfied once they enjoyed "the same privileges as the CEC".[189] A year passed, the constitution was not drafted and the branch still did not have representation on the industrial council.[190] When the branch approached the Central Executive Committee on this question the Nationalist assaults on the union were reaching their zenith. The GWU was attempting to eradicate all areas of possible racial friction which the Nationalists could seize upon. It requested that at the offices of the industrial council blacks and whites be kept separate and not congregate in the same area.[191] The Central Executive was therefore not

willing to press the representation issue as "European workers might object to non-European workers" on the same body.[192] Philips replied, in a rather meek fashion, that he "did not think that the No. 2 branch would press for representation. There were heated arguments in that connection in the past".[193] The matter was therefore left in abeyance until a new constitution for the GWU was registered, which was not until 1953. The branch was nonetheless given representation on the Medical Aid Society, but the delegate to the Society was appointed by the Central Executive and not the branch executive never mind the workers.[194] Shop-floor organisation and a leadership responsive to it was therefore squashed.

The SACWU also came under closer control by the GWU. Support was forthcoming from the GWU but with the GWU exerting virtual control. This was knowhere more evident than in the dispute between the SACWU and the Star Shirt Clothing Factory and Trade Steam Pressers. The GWU, Sachs in particular, assumed almost total control of the union side of negotiations. At issue in the dispute was the discrepancy between the agreement and determination over hours of work and annual leave. Mr Glazer, the manager of Star Shirt, had in September 1947 advised his African workers that he was increasing their hours of work from 42½ hours (as in the agreement) to 46 hours per week (as in the determination).[195] The workers approached the SACWU and informed the union they were not prepared to accept these conditions.[196] Makabeni reported the matter to Solly Sachs who then contacted Glazer and persuaded the latter to resume work at the old conditions.[197] Then a week before Christmas Glazer sacked his African workers and told them to report for re-employment on 5 January.[198] He also told the workers that they would only be paid for two weeks leave as against three weeks for those working under the agreement.[199] When closing day came the workers demanded three weeks pay which Glazer refused to concede.[200] Glazer then called in the police to the factory and in their presence discharged the workers.[201] On returning to work on 5 January Glazer told the workers they would have to work a 46 hour week. The workers refused and found themselves unemployed.[202] The GWU viewed this as a very serious issue as the conditions of work of white pressers could be threatened by the outcome of the dispute. At a meeting of the industrial council the GWU delegates made it clear that

> the pressing section is an important part of the Industry, that many members of our Union were employed in that Section and that a lowering of conditions of work for Native workers will adversely affect members of the Union.[203]

The GWU therefore submitted the matter under dispute to the industrial council and, when it was not resolved there, to an arbitrator. Glazer and Makabeni "agreed to accept unreservedly the findings of the Arbitrator".[204] The arbitrator ruled that the workers were to work 42½ hours per week, the unemployed workers were to be reinstated and given two-thirds pay for the time they were out of work from 5 January to date of reinstatement.[205] Clearly this was a great victory for co-operation between the SACWU and GWU. Yet the virtual monopolisation of the bargaining by the GWU boded ill for any attempts to create an independent leadership among the rank and file African male workers.

The GWU also decided that the time had come to call in its debt from the SACWU. According to Makabeni the SACWU was still in an unstable financial position and requested that the money it owed be written off as a bad debt.[206] On behalf of the Central Executive Anna Scheepers replied that since the SACWU was now receiving an income of over £1 300 per annum the Executive was not prepared to continue carrying the burden of the SACWU.[207] "Once people are able to stand on their own feet, others should be assisted."[208] This intransigent attitude on behalf of the GWU perhaps resulted from the coming to power of the Herenigde Nasionale Party in May 1948. It would be far better to call in this debt, risk the enmity of the SACWU, rather than give the state a weapon with which to attack the union.

Although therefore there were a few cracks in the relationship with its parallels by 1948 the GWU had established a 'happy family' with itself in the parental role: "the family that prays together and stays together through sickness and health till death us do part."[209] The parallels achieved a great deal of benefit from the support it received from the GWU, in particular the 40 hour week and huge amounts of back pay. Hand in hand with this support came control exercised by the GWU. The product was therefore not so much either support or control but support and control.

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TABLE 1:

Racial and/or Sexual distribution of Employees in the Clothing Industry in the Transvaal for selected years

		1925(1)	1926(1)	1929(2)	1934(3)	1936(4)	1938(4)	1944(5)	1946(5)	1955(4)
W	M			175	503		569	660	877	
	F			1 544	3 926		5 923	6 322	6 588	
	T	950	1 016	1 719	4 429	5 814	6 492	6 982	7 465	5 693
I	M				2		17	98	49	
	F				18		45	200	161	
	T	1	1	10	20	20	62	298	210	345
C	M				23		56	180	195	
	F				123		205	1 650	2 345	
	T	23	26	117	146	198	261	1 830	2 540	4 764
A	M						1 101	2 313	2 489	
	F						8	454	900	
	T	153	185	539	392	605	1 109	2 767	3 389	6 655
TOTAL		1 127	1 228	2 385	4 987	6 637	7 924	11 877	13 604	17 457

W = Whites; - I = Indians; - C = Coloureds; - A = Africans; - T = Total

It must be noted that these figures do not include tailoring workshops where most of the Indians were employed.

SOURCES

1. Glass to Min. of Finance, 5 May 1926. G.W.U., Aab 1.74.
2. Wage Board Report, 20 July 1929. C.A.D. Arb 1432.
3. Wage Board Report 1935. C.A.D. Hen 854.
4. H.A.F. Barker, 'The Economics of the Wholesale Clothing Industry in S.A. (1907-1957)', D. Comm. Unisa, 1961., p. 366. Table XXVII.
5. Raad van Handel en Nywerheid Verslag no. 303 k 285/2.

TABLE 2:

Memberships of the G.W.U.

		1933(1)	1940(1)	1943(1)	1944(1)	1946(1)	1947(1)	1951(2)
WHITES	Males	66	290	402	354	543	541	460
	Females	900	5 648	4 898	5 211	6 457	7 796	7 242
	Total	966	5 938	5 300	5 565	7 000	8 447	7 702
ASIATICS	Males	n/a	n/a	Included under Coloureds		50	88	63
	Females	n/a	n/a			48	176	231
	Total	n/a	n/a			98	264	294
COLOUREDS	Males	25	14	92	198	158	219	272
	Females	5	130	1 031	1 771	2 910	3 051	3 744
	Total	30	144	1 123	1 969	3 068	3 270	4 016
AFRICANS	Females	-	-	-	-	508	697	1 299
	TOTAL	996	6 082	6 423	7 534	10 674	12 678	13 311

SOURCES:

1) Secretary for Labour files: 1933-Arb 563; 1940-Arb 1024;
C.A.D. Pretoria 1943-Arb 1025; 1944-Arb 1025;
1946-Arb;1026; 1947-Arb 1026.

2) G.W.U. Archives: Ccb 1.2.1.2. File 11.

NOTES

1. See, for example, R.H. Davies, Capital, State and White Labour in South Africa 1900-1960, Brighton (1979); H. Simon, 'The Myth of the White Working Class in South Africa', African Review, Vol. 4, No. 2, 1974; H. Wolpe, 'The "White Working Class" in South Africa', Economy and Society, Vol. 5, No. 2.

2. Personal communication with Martin Nicol, 1983.

3. For a lengthy analysis of the growth of the GWU under Sachs' auspices see L. Witz, 'Servant of the Workers: Solly Sachs and the Garment Workers' Union, 1928-1952', M.A. University of the Witwatersrand, 1984. This dissertation critically examines these claims which have been made on behalf of the GWU by authors who have largely accepted Solly Sachs' autobiographical study, Garment Workers in Action, Johannesburg (1957) at face value. The foremost example of this is J. Lewis, 'Solly Sachs and the Garment Workers' Union' in E. Webster ed., Essay in Southern African Labour History, (Johannesburg, 1978).

4. E.S. Sachs to W.H. Andrews, 26 March 1947. University of the Witwatersrand, Church of the Province of South Africa Archives, Garment Workers' Union Records (hereafter GWU) Bce 2.1.

5. B. Davidson, 'The Hope for White and Black', The New Statesman and Nation, 4 August 1951.

6. B. Fine, F. de Clercq and D. Innes, 'Trade Unions and the State: the Question of Legality', South African Labour Bulletin, Vol. 7, no's 1 and 2, September 1981, p. 44.

7. See, for example, J. Cornelius, 'Garment Workers' Union Defends its Policy', Advance, 11 December 1952; Paper deliverd by A. Scheepers at the Industrial Research Workshop of the Abe Bailey Institute for Interracial Studies, (University of Cape Town, January 1973), GWU Dbc 2.6(4).

8. This earlier period is more extensively examined in Witz, 'Servant of the Workers', Ch. 3.

9. Raad van Handel en Nywerheid, Verslag nr. 303, 1947. Central Archives Depot (hereafter CAD), Pretoria, K 285/2.

10. Transvaal Clothing Manufacturers Association (hereafter, TCMA). Memorandum concerning the clothing industry on the Witwatersrand, n.d., GWU Aubl.180.

11. The 1924 Industrial Conciliation Act laid down that any workers whose contract of labour was regulated by the Native Pass Laws and regulations was not an employee as defined by the act and thus did not fall in its ambit.

12. D. Budlender, 'Labour Legislation in South Africa, 1924-1945', M.A. (University of Cape Town, 1979), p. 116.

13. Rand Daily Mail, 8 June 1928.

14. This is clearly borne out by the events of May/June 1928. In May a group of white workers went on strike in Germiston and the black workers came out in sympathy. The workers' demands were acceded to. Nonetheless, when the following month the black workers came out on strike over the victimisation of one of the SACWU's members the white workers offered no support and the strike was crushed.

15. J. Lewis, 'Solly Sachs and the Garment Workers' Union' in E. Webster ed., Essays in Southern African Labour History, (Johannesburg, 1978) p. 180.

16. This definition of a Parallel Union comes from a South African Labour Bulletin, 'Comment', Vol. 3. No. 4, 1977, p. 8.

17. Lewis, 'Soly Sachs', p. 180, H.J. and R.E. Simons, Class and Colour in South Africa, 1850-1950, (Harmondsworth, 1969), p. 477.

18. There are various accounts of this attack on the GWU. The fullest are in Witz, 'Servant of the Workers', ch. 5 and B.M. Touyz, 'White Politics and the Garment Workers' Union: 1930-1953', M.A., (University of Cape Town, 1979).

19. D.B.H. Grobbelaar to E.S. Sachs, 27 October 1938, GWU Bcc 1.10. This was a tactic which had been used in 1932 by the employers to divide the GWU. They had paid the author Herman Charles Bosman £25 to publishh an article in his paper the New L.S.D. which was particularly scathing of Solly Sachs. In the article Solly Sachs was accused of going to the Inchape Hall and swaying "in the arms of skokiaan-reeking Zulu and Basuto women". It went further to say that Sachs enjoyed these dances and then enquired, in blunt racist terms, "We wonder what it is that attracts him [Sachs] to kafir women? Do you like their frizzy hair, Sachs? Or their prognathous jaws? Or their African fragrance?" In fact Sachs had never danced in his life and the union's members virtually ignored this malicious attack. This incident was related to me by Sachs' first wife Ruy Edwards in 1983 and is confirmed by Sachs' brother's, Bernard, account in his book Herman Charles Bosman, (Johanesburg, 1971), pp. 16, 41. A copy of the article is available in the court record Rex v Blignaut and Malan, 1932, GWU Bcc 1.2.

21. M. Stein, 'African Trade Unionism on the Witwatersrand, 1928-1940', B.A. Hons., (University of the Witwatersrand, 1977), p. 34.

22. 'Formation of the No. 2 branch', Statement by A. Scheepers before GWU Commission of Inquiry, 1949. GWU Bca 3.

23. 'The No. 2 Branch', GWU submission to GWU Commission of Inquiry, 1949, GWU Bca 3.

24. Scheepers on No. 2 branch, 1949, GWU Bca 3.

25. Ibid.

26. Interview with Dulcie Harwell, 19 February 1982.

27. Statement by Scheepers, GWU Commission, 1949. GWU Bca 3.

28. Ibid.

29. Secretary Industrial Council Clothing Industry (Transvaal) Report for year ended December 1942. GWU Cca 2.1.2.

30. H.A.F. Barker, 'The Clothing Industry in South Africa', South African Journal of Economics, Vol. 29, No. 4, 1961, p. 246.

31. Secretary Industrial Council Report for year ended 30 June 1939; Secretary Industrial Council Report for year ended December 1945. GWU Cca 2.1.2.

32. Ibid; Minutes Special Executive Meeting TCMA, 11 August 1942. TCMA Minute Books.

33. Secretary Industrial Council Report year ended December 1942. GWU Cca 2.1.2; Interviews with Dave Naturman, Weinstein, (both clothing manufacturers), R. du Preez et al and Dulcie Hartwell.

34. Minutes A.G.M. TCMA 20 February 1941: Minutes Executive TCMA April 1943. TCMA Minute Books.

35. Minutes A.G.M. TCMA, Ibid.

36. Special General Meeting TCMA, 10 April 1943. TCMA Minute Books.

37. Report of the 5th Census of the Population of the Union of South Africa, 4 May 1931, U.G. 11'1933; Report of the 7th Census of the Population of the Union of South Africa, 7 May 1946, U.G. 51'1949.

38. Raad van Handel en Nywerheid, Verslag Nr. 303, 1947, CAD K 285/2.

39. Ibid.

40. Stein, 'African Unions', p. 110.

41. Minutes Executive Committee No. 2 branch, 28 February 1942. GWU Bbb 1.2.

42. Ibid.

43. ibid; Minutes Executive Committee No. 2 branch, 29 January 1942. GWU Bbb 1.2.

44. Minutes Meeting CEC read out at meeting with No. 2 branch, 28 February 1942. GWU Bbb 1.2.

45. Ibid.

46. Ibid; Interview Dulcie Hartwell.

47. Minutes, Ibid.

48. Ibid.

49. Ibid.

50. Ibid.

51. Ibid.

52. Mintues Meeting No. 2 branch, 23 April 1942. GWU Bbb 1.2; For an in depth examination of these attempts see M. Nicol, 'The Garment Workers' National Unity Movement', B.A. Hons. University of Cape Town, 1977.

53. Minutes, Ibid.

54. Ibid.

55. Ibid.

56. General Meeting GWU, 23 July 1942. GWU Bad 1.

57. Ibid.

58. Minutes Meeting No. 2 branch, 17 August 1942. GWU Bbb 1.2.

59. Ibid.

60. Ibid.

61. Ibid.

62. Sachs to Chairman No. 2 branch, 28 August 1942. GWU Bbb 3.2.2.6.

63. Ibid.

64. Ibid.

65. See Nicol, 'GWU Cape Peninsula'.

66. Minutes Meeting No. 2 branch Executive, 7 September 1942. GWU Bbb 1.2.

67. Sachs to Secretary No. 2 branch, 14 September 1943. GWU Bba 2.3.3.

68. Ibid.

69. Ibid.

70. The Cape union is an entirely separate organisation from the GWU in the Transvaal. It was originally established as a "bosses' union" and still is one. See Nicol, 'GWU Cape Peninsula'.

71. Evidence of Rhoda Ket, GWU Commission of Enquiry, Cape Town Evidence, 1949, p. 48. GWU Bca 4.

72. Minutes Special Meeting CEC and Shop Stewards No. 2 branch, 27 May 1944. GWU Baa 2.4.

73. Report GWU Commission of Enquiry, U.G. 16'1950, p. 7.

74. Minutes Special Meeting, 27 May 1944, GWU Baa 2.4.

75. Ibid.

76. General Meeting No. 2 branch, 26 February 1944. GWU Bad 1.

77. Ibid.

78. Ibid.

79. Ibid.

80. Ibid.

81. Minutes Special Meeting, 27 May 1944. GWU Baa 2.4.

82. Ibid.

83. Ibid.

84. Ibid.

85. Minutes Meeting No. 2 branch, 28 February 1942. GWU Bbb 1.2.

86. Ibid.

87. Ibid.

88. Ibid.

89. Minutes Meeting No. 2 branch, 7 September 1942. GWU Bbb 1.2.

90. Minutes Meeting No. 2 branch, 17 August 1942. GWU Bbb 1.2.

91. Minutes Executive Meeting TCMA, 8 August 1944. Minute Books TCMA.

92. Ibid.

93. Ibid.

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