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1980-03-10
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A F R I C A N S T U D I E S I N S T I T U T E

African Studies Seminar Paper
to be presented in RW
4.00pm MARCH 1980

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by: P L Bonner

No. 089

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND

AFRICAN STUDIES INSTITUTE

African Studies Seminar Paper to be presented at Seminar in RW 319 at 4.00 p.m. on Monday 10 March 1980

THE TRANSVAAL NATIVE CONGRESS 1917-1920: the Radicalisation of the Black Petty Bourgeoisie on the Rand

P.L. Bonner

The radicalisation of black politics on the Rand during and immediately after the First World War has often been noted by writers on South Africa. Simons[1], Benson[2], Walshe[3], Wickens[4], Caris and Carter[5], Roux[6], Legassick[7], Johnstone[8], to mention but the most important, have all commented on the rising tide of militancy in this period, and have tried in varying degrees to identify the growing contradictions which it expressed.

Accounts of the origins of the movement share a number of points in common: the growing impoverishment of the reserves (whether it be explained in terms of structural underdevelopment or merely contingent effects of droughts); the rise of a concentrated black urban proletariat as a result of the secondary industrialisation promoted by the war; the concomitant shortage of housing and the emergence of teeming urban slums; the steeply rising cost of living during the war and the simultaneous pegging of black wages at pre-World War I levels; various direct and indirect taxations on African earnings; the example of white worker action, and the continued inflexibility of the job colour bar. Needless to say there is great unevenness of treatment in these accounts. Walshe, for example, lists a number of factors - the experience of black soldiers in Europe; increases in cost of living; droughts; the flow of migrants from the reserves; slums; the pass laws; increased post-war taxation; reduced expenditure on African schools; shootings of Africans and lenient white juries; displacement of African interpreters; racial discrimination on railways and in post offices - to which he appears to give roughly commensurate weight.[9] Johnstone, by contrast, attempts a strucural explanation, examining the interconnections between migrant labour, pass laws, the compound system and the particular exigencies of the war-time economy in identifying the well-springs of discontent.[10] Wickens on the other hand almost entirely ignores the processes of rural degredation, and so one could go on. Nevertheless, the interpretations provided are not mutually contradictory, and it is possible to stitch together a composite account.

The same cannot be said of the shape and dynamics of the movements which were spawned by these pressures, and more particularly of the role and class basis of the Transvaal Native Congress (T.N.C.). Here two broad and mutually contradictory

positions emerge. The first, articulated most explicitly by Walshe, is that the T.N.C., and the African National Congress (A.N.C.) more generally, retained its conservative petty bourgeois orientation and never effectively transcended its class origins or effectively mobilised the political constituency that the times had placed in its grasp. "While unrest was widespread, if sporadic in expression," Walshe argues, "agitation was difficult to maintain and Congress soon lost the initiative against the authorities ... A determination systematically to build up mass membership and branch organisations so as to assert the power of the African majority against European domination had not matured amongst a leadership inclined to moral assertion and concerned with equality of opportunity for progressive individuals. The tactics of extra-constitutional opposition were not easily learnt by those who still retained a vision of peaceful, perhaps spasmodic, but inevitable political evolution." "It is clear", he goes on to say, "from the general demeanour during these protests that Congress remained under the leadership of men who still saw the African's place as one of responsible citizenship".[11] Wickens, more cautiously and with qualifications, takes Walshes cue. Congress, though contributing through its meetings and propoganda to the atmosphere in which the strikes were to flare up and actively organising the 1919 anti-pass campaign, was nevertheless small in membership, indecisive in leadership and continually prone to constitutionalist initiatives, like the Peace Delegation to Versailles in 1918.[12]

Simons and less explicitly Benson take a diametrically opposite line. Criticising "the binary model of standard Marxist theory" espoused by the International Socialist League at the time, which denounced the A.N.C. as, "Labour Fakirs of black South Africa, black bell-wethers for the capitalist class", Simons suggests (somewhat obscurely) that African nationalism was the authentic vehicle of black proletariat aspirations, by virtue of its effective mobilisation of agitation, and its identification with British imperial capital against its more immediate white working class and farming oppressors.[13] Tracing an almost totally different route Johnstone ends up in the same camp. Concentrating on the functionality of the exploitation colour bars to imperial capital, and the reactions of black workers to a steadily deteriorating position, he equates Congress campaigns with working class resistance, and treats African politics in this period as a largely homogeneous movement.[14]

The purpose of this paper is to explore more sensitively and in more detail the class dynamics of the black population on the Rand between 1917 and 1922. Its main focus is the role and activities of the black petty bourgeoisie, and to this extent it takes off from Brian Willian's fascinating exposition of the black petty bourgeoisie in Kimberley. As Willan argues there, "Little scholarly analysis has been devoted to an historical evolution of class difference amongst Africans in twentieth century South Africa or to the ideological forms that accompanied this", and he goes on to explore the functionality of liberal ideology to the black

petty bourgeoisie in Kimberley, and how De Beers deliberately fostered an alliance with this group to forstall its radicalisation and identification with an increasingly militant black working class.[15] Willan's analysis raises questions which will be taken up in this paper; it also neglects important issues which have to be considered if we are to have a satisfactory profile of the black petty bourgeoisie. Why, for example, was it so susceptible to liberal ideology and co-option from above? Of whom precisely did it consist? And to what extent was it a homogeneous group? This study hopes to take up these points in more detail, and does so by working from three central premises. Firstly, that the petty bourgeoisie as a class stands between the dominant relations of production of capitalism, that is to say the capital/labour relation, and as such is pulled two ways. Secondly, that,

> the more separated is a social sector from the dominant relations of production, and the more diffuse are its 'objective interests' and consequently, less developed it 'class instinct' - the more the evolution and the resolution of the crisis will tend to take place on the ideological level.[16]

And thirdly that the black petty bourgeoisie in a colonial racist society was a fundamentally different creature from that found in the developed capitalist world. As Godley noted in his 1921 report on passes "a large majority of /the/... members /of the S.A.N.N.C./ is comprised of natives who have acquired a certain amount of education only to find the professional, clerical and skilled avenues of employment closed to them...".[17] The colonised black petty bourgeoisie was therefore both stunted and repressed, and unable to articulate with conviction its characteristic values of statology, the myth of the ladder and *status quo* anti-capitalism.[18] In addition, for every one of those admitted to its ranks, there was always a correspondingly great substratum among the upper levels of the working class - generally described at the time as the "educated" or "civilised" - who aspired to their position but found their upward mobility blocked. A downward identification towards this group, at least by a section of stunted petty bourgeoisie, was therefore always on the cards. How far this would proceed, and the extent to which this class which was united only by ideology and its intermediary position would cohere on this issue, or split, would be determined by economic, political and especially ideological class struggle. It is therefore to the class struggle on the Rand and its co-ordinates in this period that we must look for an answer to the questions we have posed.

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In June 1917 the leadership of the A.N.C. shifted decisively to the Rand. Seme and Dube were ousted and S.M. Maghatho and S. Msane were elected respectivly President and Secretary General. Walshe explains the realignment in terms of

different tactics in response to the policy of segregation, personality conflicts between Dube and Seme, and the remoteness of Dube in Natal. Almost certainly the reasons went deeper than that as Walshe himself recognises when he indicates that much of the impetus for the purge came from the Transvalers and those involved with the Johannesburg newspaper *Abantu Batho*.[19] The Rand was now overwhelmingly the largest centre of black urban population in South Africa, both of workers and the incipient black petty bourgeoisie.

During the war industrial development had taken off, sucking in huge numbers of those displaced from the land. Between 1915/16 and 1921/22 the number of industrial establishments on the Rand increased from 862 to 1 763, while the black working class engaged in non-mining activities (including "works") swelled from 67 111 in 1918 to 92 597 in May 1920.[20] Such an environment provided the natural locus of political organisation, more especially as nearby Pretoria was the seat of political power[21], and it was to here that the centre of gravity of black political organisation naturally moved. Equally important in forcing the pace of this change was the growth of the black petty bourgeoisie. As industry and the black working class expanded so opportunities for the black petty bourgeoisie opened up. Teachers and others with basic educational qualifications flocked to try their luck in the economic heartland of the Rand. Taberer for example, of the Native Recruiting Corporation, reported that between 1915 and 1918 he had received 205 written applications for clerkships on the mines, mostly from Basutoland and the Cape, in addition to two to three times that number of personal approaches, and there seems little reason to believe the same pattern was not repeating itself in industries all over the Rand.[22] The size which this community had reached by the end of the war is difficult to judge. However, a rough and ready indication may be provided by the number of registration certificates (primarily granted to the self-employed) and letters of exemption (accorded to those with over Standard 3 educational qualifications) issued on the Rand. At the end of May 1920, these, together with underage certificates stood at 2 497.[23] How these broke down between the three categories is difficult to judge, since only consolidated figures are furnished in the 1920 statement. A more detailed analysis for 1923 may however provide some clues. According to this, those in possession of juvenile certificates on the Rand amounted to 257 (191 domestic servants, 66 golf caddies). Daily labourers - a substantial number of whom must have possessed registration certificates - totalled 1 001.[24] This general profile is confirmed by Cooke who in evidence to the Moffat Commission spoke of 1 078 Africans holding registration certificates in the proclaimed labour district in 1917.[25] A rough computation would therefore suggest that the salaried or professional section of the black petty bourgeoisie on the Rand numbered almost a thousand; and the self-employed small businessmen or craftsman slightly over that figure. It was these men who formed the organisational core of the T.N.C. and it was to them that the mantle of leadership now increasingly fell.

1917 Was also important on the Rand for an additional reason. In the middle of 1917 inflation began to bite (see Table I).

TABLE I

RETAIL PRICE INDEX ON THE WITWATERSRAND[26]

(1938 = 100)

YEAR	FOOD	ALL ITEMS
1913	97,7	84,5
1914	94,3	82,4
1915	99,2	85,2
1916	104,3	90,7
1917	113,3	98,2
1918	115,7	105,6
1919	124,9	116,5
1920	163,9	144,0
1921	133,9	130,8
1922	109,9	109,6
1923	105,8	105,5
1924	108,3	107,2
1925	108,3	106,4
1926	107,1	104,9

Prices of certain commodities had been rising since the beginning of the war, but for a range of basic African consumer goods, mine stores at least had expended old stocks at old prices which only ran out in the middle of 1917. It seems likely, given the dominance of mine and concession stores in this sector of the market economy, that other traders followed suit. The dammed up effects of inflation were therefore only unleashed late in 1917.[27] Prices spiralled, and black wages, unlike those of whites who received war bonuses and cost of living allowances, remained relatively unchanged. The political atmosphere on the Rand, and indeed in most other urban areas in South Africa, became correspondingly charged. In 1918 a boycott of mine stores was organised by Shangane miners on the East Rand, and in June 1918 Johannesburg's sanitary workers struck in support of higher pay - an event, which together with the harsh sentences handled down by Magistrate McFie, galvanised migrant workers, industrial workers, urban lumpenproletariat and petty bourgeoisie into two years of militant agitation beginning with the so-called shilling strike of 1 July 1918.

The rise in prices and falling real incomes which followed the war provided the trigger for the most radical black agitation to be seen in South Africa prior to the Second World War, and provoked a systematic rethinking of "native policy" in the Union, and more particularly in the urban areas of the Rand. Yet it would be a serious mistake to exaggerate the importance of this factor at the expense of the wider range of repressive discriminatory mechanisms which bore on virtually the whole of South Africa's black population at this time. The grievances of mineworkers which eventually erupted in the 1920 black mine-

workers strike have been explored in some detail by Johnstone and also in my own article on the subject. What still requires investigation is the structurally ultra-subordinate position - to use Johnstone's expression - of more permanent urbanised workers and the black petty bourgeoisie.

Without wishing to do violence to the essential integrity of the labour repressive system which governed the daily lives of virtually all Africans on the Rand, five main areas of control can be discerned - wages, passes, housing, constraints on upward mobility and capital accumulation, and education. Each is interrelated; each fell differentially on different sections of the African population. Yet while their differential incidence provided scope for future reformist initiatives, aimed at driving wedges between the black population, their effects were sufficiently pervasive during and immediately after the war to provide the basis for a broad populist movement of agitation. It is to these that we shall now turn.

The most burning grievance of the day for all classes in society was that of wages. For the permanently proletarianised it was just not possible to make ends meet at the prevailing rates of pay. In 1921 the Johannesburg Joint Council of Europeans and Natives calculated the essential expenses of a family of four living at Klipspruit at £5.3.11 a four-week month, excluding luxuries such as clothing, furniture and entertainment.[28] Adjusted for town dwellers average expenditures would have been even higher, the increase in rent exceeding the saving in travelling by from 5/- to 10/-, and the same is probably true of areas of freehold tenure like Sophiatown, Martindale and Newlands.[29] If we extrapolate back to 1917 on the basis of the retail price index this figure could be depressed by perhaps 25% (prices of food having risen by roughly 18% and those of all goods by about 33%), leaving us with a minimum living wage of 84/6d, calculated on the basis of a $4\frac{1}{3}$ week month. Very few African workers on the Rand earned this sum of money. A survey of wages paid by private employers in July 1914 for example shows the following distribution[30]:

Under 60/- per month; mostly with food and quarters:
2 559 employees (40 employers)

60/- to 70/- per month; 70% without food and quarters:
2 859 employees (55 employers)

70/- to 80/- per month; no food and quarters:
1 280 employees (33 employers)

80/- to 90/- per month; no food and quarters:
691 employees (13 employers)

90/- to 100/- per month; no food and quarters:
180 employees (4 employers)

NOTE: The figures furnished are averages for industrial establishments and so do not take account of income distribution *within* each industrial concern: weekly figures calculated on a $4\frac{1}{3}$ week month.

Little had changed by July 1918. Figures presented by Cooke, Acting Director of Native Labour show the distribution of wages outside the mining sector as follows[31]:

Category	% of Non-Mining Working Population	Average Wages
Houseboys	50%	40/- to 60/-
Storeboys	23%	£ 70/- to 80/- without quarters
Stable Boys	3%	60/- to 70/-
Municipal and Allied	9%	£ 50/- with food and quarters
Industrial Workers	-	£ 15/- to 22/6d a week (calculated on $4\frac{1}{3}$ week month = 65/- to 97/6d : on a 4 week month = 60/- to 90/-)

African testimony to Moffatt confirms this picture of working class penury, and draws attention to the ommissions and understatements of the Joint Council budget calculations.[32] Perhaps the most common complaint expressed by African miners and migrant labourers to the Moffat Commission was the rise in cost of jackets and shoes and other items of clothing.[33] If these had entered into the realm of necessary as opposed to discretionary expenditure for this section of the working population, how much more essential must they have been to the "educated" and "civilised" of the African petty and aspirant petty bourgeoisie.

To exclude such items from the budgets of permanently urbanised African families thus seems unreasonable and arbitrary as do many of the other estimates of expenditure contained in the Joint Council's budgetary forecasts. Elias Chake, for example, estimated his outlays as: coal, paraffin and wood at 10/-, 10/- and 5/- per month respectively, church fee/school fees £10 and £8 a year, passes £3.5.0 annually and rent £2.10.0 a month, each of which were appreciably higher than the Joint Council's 1921 assessment, and the drift of evidence of other witnesses to Moffatt lends substance to his claims. Of course, Chake as an interpreter in the Magistrates Court in Pretoria, was quite clearly located among the African petty bourgeoisie, yet like many others of the African working class, he was living in a shack in a yard, and his lifestyle and daily needs cannot have differed very much from at least those of the aspirant African petty bourgeoisie.[34]

The generalised poverty of the African working class is

readily apparent, but it is more difficult to plot the income and economic fortunes of the African petty bourgeoisie. The most common wage for mine clerks, if one accepts the testimony of R.W. Msimang, who seems to have held a special brief for this group on the Moffatt Commission, was between £3 and £5, with food and quarters added.[35] Benajmin Phooko, who was one of two mine clerks to appear before the Moffatt Commission, was earning £3.15.0 a month, again with food and quarters added, whcih thus confirms the payment of wages at the lower end of Msimang's bracket.[36] More typical however were slightly higher rates of pay. According to William Taberer, the Director of the Native Recruiting Corporation, the average payment to clerks in twelve mines chosen randomly, across all the mining areas of the Rand was £4.7.6 a month, once more with food and quarters included, and this we may perhaps take as a more representative rate of pay.[37] What other sections of the petty bourgeoisie were earning is at the present stage of my investigations a matter of speculation. Jeremiah Duljwa, head teacher at the independent school in Klipspruit, which seems to have attracted the children of the more affluent sections of that community, earned £5 a month, which must serve, in the absence of more detailed information, as a tentative indication of the salaries commanded by his peers.[38]

If this is so, then one thing emerges very starkly from these figures, and that is the small differential between the wages of the black petty bourgeoisie and the rest of the black working class. As we have seen, wages in the non-mining sectors ranged from 65/- to 97/6d, while even underground work in the mines themselves was commanding an average of £3.5.2 per 30 day shift.[39] The objective conditions for an alliance of convenience centred on the demand of 1/- a day therefore clearly existed, and renders intelligible the universal support accorded to this demand in 1918 and 1919.

At the same time the lines of potential cleavage within this alliance should not be ignored. Most obvious perhaps were those which existed between teachers or others who held good educational qualifications, who "came to the Rand thinking they would get better work" and found that as mine clerks they were "only getting the same as received by a blanket man underground", from whom they strove to set themselves apart.[40] Less striking, but nonetheless important, was a more blurred line of demarcation between those who thought of themselves as educated and civilised and those they deemed were not. A refrain that runs through the evidence to the Moffatt Commission is the needs of this rather amorphous group on the Rand. As Msimang put it:

> Many Europeans do not understand these people. They do not understand that he lives at a fairly high standard of living. These people need - in fact they require - all the things practically required by the European. Take the food bill. Most Europeans seem to think these people are content with porridge, but you will find they have quite a representative table. Meat, tea and so on.[41]

Elias Chake, court interpreter, testified in similar terms. It was not true, he insisted, that blacks had few requirements. No consideration was paid to the educated who had different tastes and different needs. It was time for some differentiation of treatment, he seemed to be saying, between those who were educated and civilised and those who had yet to reach that stage.[42] I. Bud Mbelle, ex-interpreter from the High Court in Kimberley echoed Chake's views, while the Reverend Mcayiya went as far as to offer some practical suggestions, intimating that the salaries of "civilised natives" should be considered separately from those of others by boards of arbitration comprised of representatives of both sides.[43]

The message that is conveyed in these representations is one of a perceived community of interest between the black petty and aspirant petty bourgeoisie. In part this was the product of what Laclau would call their "interpellation" as "educated" or "civilised", that is to say their mode of self-identification on an ideological plane.[44] The possibilities this presented for straight ideological co-option have already been mentioned, but there was more to their community of interest than mere ideological forms. Many, though by no means all of this "community" were permanent urban dwellers who were struggling against the odds to raise their families in town. This meant that their total costs of reproduction had to be covered by incomes generated in the cities, which in the case of urban workers simply did not stretch that far. Powerful pressures therefore existed for their wives to go out to work, which seems to have been as true of all but the most affluent sections of the petty bourgeoisie as it was of those who aspired to join their ranks.

This particular conjuncture of circumstances both served to cohere the petty and aspirant petty bourgeoisie, and paradoxically to drive them closer together with the rank and file of the working class. As Debbie Gaitskell has shown two broad categories of women came to be settled in the towns. Firstly, those coming unattached or fleeing from their homes, who became domestic servants, washer women or prostitutes, or took up illicit liquor selling to earn an income. Secondly, the wives and daughters of families of those who came to settle permanently in town. Perhaps the most striking characteristic of this group was their relatively high literacy levels, 4,71% of Transvaal women from the country being literate as opposed to 31% of their urban kin.[45] It seems likely that the majority of the latter provided spouses for the urban petty and aspirant petty bourgeoisie, thereby serving to cohere it even further around the values of education and civilisation, yet their openings for employment were almost as limited as those of the urban unattached. Opportunities for domestic service were limited, besides separating them from their families and homes, and wages had in any case been depressed between 5/- and 10/- at the beginning of the war.[46] Washing was back-breaking and low-paying[47], and for the women of Klipspruit location, involved travelling costs which virtually cancelled out any profits to be made. As Charlotte Maxexe and Rev. Mcayiya complained to the Moffatt Commission, echoing the plea of 122

Klipspruit women uttered eight years before, "much of the work formerly done by women in now taken over by men".[48]

The only alternative in these circumstances was the illicit brewing of liquor, which automatically thrust them back into the arms of their lumpen and proletarian brethren in the locations and in the towns. William Letlalo, for example, recalls how his wife was forced into illicity liquor brewing to provide funds to send his children to school - Letlalo was at that time a Transvaal Native Congress member and a storeman, and thus a member, in my argument, of the aspirant petty bourgeoisie - and the number of complaints to official bodies and government commissions from members of the petty bourgeoisie about police raids for liquor seem to indicate this was an important occupation of this class.[49] Once again, then, we find arising in the particular conjuncture of the war-time economy two contradictory trends. On the one hand, the cohering of the urban petty and aspirant petty bourgeoisie: on the other, the possibilities of mobilising a broad class alliance comprising the proletariat, lumpenproletariat and petty bourgeoisie. Only the day-to-day flux of the class struggle, and the respective pressures and inducements offered by the main protagonists in the conflict - capital and labour - would determine the eventual position of the petty bourgeoisie.

If the black petty bourgeoisie and working class were thrust together on the issues of wages and cost of living, they found themselves in equally close proximity in relation to housing and passes. Both issues occupied a central place in their representations to official commissions and government bodies, and were central planks in their campaigns of 1918-1920. Passes were perhaps the most bitter source of grievance, and by their multi-functional nature afflicted and hence united all sections of the black urban population. For the labourer in wage employ they represented the means whereby his contract of employment was attested, and could be enforced, and his opportunity to seek new employment or improved conditions effectively curtailed. A sense of this repressive function of the pass law was no doubt present in the minds of black workers from the earliest days of the system, but it only emerged fully blown in the consciousness of the black petty bourgeoisie with the sanitary workers strike on the Rand in April 1918. Sentenced to three months hard labour on the jobs they had previously performed, for presuming to strike for higher wages, the "bucket boys'" helplessness before the interlocking mechanisms of Pass Laws and Masters and Servants legislation stripped bare for all to see the labour repressive functions of the law. As Benjamin Phooko, a clerk representing 5 000 City Deep labourers protested:

> Allowing prices to rise alarms us because we have entered into contracts that cannot be broken, so as to demand a higher price for our labour. We therefore record our sympathy with the Municipal workers who were forced to break their contracts.[50]

Nine months later the same point was driven home in a pamphlet issued by the Transvaal Native Congress. "At our

meeting at Vrededorp on 30.3.19", it bluntly proclaimed, "we came to the conclusion that passes prevented money."[51]

Passes did indeed prevent money, and in a variety of more subtle and disguised ways. On the monthly pass, renewed each month by the employer, workers' wages were recorded, and this served to peg them indefinitely at low levels, since new employers could always see what wages had been paid before. Any upward drift that might have been effected by withholding of labour and holding out for higher pay was further inhibited by the 6-day pass which obliged the worker to find new employment within six days; the travelling pass which required the payment of a shilling before the worker was allowed to seek employment outside of the district of his registration; and the 'special', which strictly interpreted needed to be carried by the worker when he left his employer's premises.[52]

Government spokesmen stoutly defended the even-handedness of these measures. The justification furnished by Herbert Cooke, Acting DNC, in an open letter to "the natives of the Witwatersrand" at the height of the anti-pass law agitation, is fairly typical in this respect:

> In Johannesburg and other reef towns unless the natives name and place of residence is written on his pass he is lost to his people. Messages cannot be sent to him. If he dies no-one knows where his money is to be sent. If he does not get money written in his pass he can complain to the pass officer.[53]

Cooke's argument was reproduced in several official submissions to the Inter-Departmental Pass Laws Committee in 1920, but the essential hypochrisy of at least the last part of his argument was exposed by the Inspector (Central) NAD, Johannesburg. "The existing regulations regarding the non-payment of wages", he said,

> do not sufficiently protect the natives. Under the Pass Regulations the intent to defraud has to be proved which in most cases is impossible. The Masters and Servants Act only protects servants to a slight degree, the penalty provided being insufficient to deter employers from defrauding their natives.[54]

The real thrust of the Pass Laws was to enforce contracts and prevent desertion (their role in checking criminality is discussed later in the paper), and this emerges quite clearly from a discussion of Night Passes by W.C. Lawrence, Acting Chief Pass Officer of the Rand. Night passes were required by anyone who wished to be out after 9.00 p.m. in a municipal area, and their application had been extended to black women shortly before the war. This proved a fertile source of complaint from the African petty bourgeoisie in particular, since it exposed women to the uncouth attentions of police alledgedly in pursuance of their duty.[55] Lawrence's opposition to any relaxation of this measure brings into focus the essential functions of the system as a whole. Women, he argued, since

they were not obliged to carry the ordinary array of passes, were virtually free of control. "There is the Masters and Servants Act", he went on to say,

> but it is very difficult indeed to trace women. They simply disappear in the night ... under the Night Pass Ordinance she is frightened to go out without her pass and you /presumably the employer and the authorities/ are not so liable to lose her.[56]

R.M. Tladi's passionate denunciation of the system to the Superintendent of Native Affairs at Benoni underlines the point:

> (1) A Passport is supposed to be a protection to natives and regarded as an agreement made at the Pass Office between the employer and the employee.
>
> Question:
>
> (1) (a) If so why should I be compelled to carry this agreement or document with me?
>
> (2) (b) Why should the Police run after me day and night asking me to produce this document and cause me to be absolutely restless?
>
> (3) (c) Why can't I place it in my box for safety?
>
> (4) (d) Why if I happen to have this in my house the Police must arrest me, and that I have to suffer the penalty before any dispute arises between myself and my employer? [57]

The same solicitude for the welfare of the employee was reflected in the official glosses placed on the operation of the six-day and travelling passes. Very few unemployed were prosecuted, Cooke argued in evidence to the Moffatt Commission, unless they had been out of work for one, two or three months consecutively. W.C. Lawrence, Chief Pass Officer, took a slightly more cautious line. The six-day pass, he testified, was usually extended for an extra six days, and for blacks on subsequent registration, for up to fifteen days. As for the 'special', both denied that in practice this regulation was applied to anyone but a mine labourer in the district of registration.[58] A mass of testimony contradicts this interpretation. As R.M. Tladi, a TNC official from Benoni, protested, the six-day slip meant that a man earning 2/- per day tried to find work at higher pay but had to settle for 1/6d through the expiry of the pass which included Sundays, and the Pass Officer's refusal to extend for any more than three days further, including the day of issue.[59] And a variety of other supported his claim.[60]

Indirect support may even be adduced from the Inter-Departmental Pass Laws Committee submissions. Holidays and Sundays, the NAD Inspector Benoni argued, should not be

included in the six days stipulated to get work, which suggests that at a local level at any rate, the pass laws were administered more rigorously than Cooke or Lawrence allowed.[61]

This leads us to the question of the actual administration and policing of pass laws, but before moving on to that we should consider two last aspects of passes which served to maintain a submissive and servile workforce for employers in town. These were the character column on passes and the endorsement of the stamp *FIRD* for anyone convicted of a criminal offence. The way in which the character column on passes served to suppress employee unrest or resistance has been mentioned by van Onselen, and is graphically illustrated by H.S. Mgqamo's speech to the Superintendent, Native Affairs, Benoni:

> A native works under a white man for 5 years or more. He by mere misfortune breaks a glass or any article in the house. His master gets annoyed and forgets this man worked for such a long time under him. He discharges him and on his character he writes 'bad boy'. This character disables the man to obtain work anywhere and in some cases even if engaged by another white man, when registering him at the Pass Office seeing his character on the Pass the Pass Officer turns to the employer and states "I advise you not to take this boy", then the man is stranded.

Mgqamo then went on to trace this hypothetical individual's descent into depravity - he meets a 'white hooligan' who gets him a forged pass in turn for selling liquor: he is arrested and convicted, and on discharge has the hated words *FIRD* imprinted in his passport. He is now of necessity condemned to a life of permanent criminality from which he will never escape.[62]

The connection between criminality and the pass laws was indeed intimate, and is worthy of special consideration. An enduring concern of the urban authorities was the canker of criminality in the black community on the Rand, and the threat that this volatile constituency could constitute (particularly if allied to poor white lumpen slum dwellers) in times of hardship and political instability.[63] The pass laws were the principal means of policing and if possible of rooting out this 'evil', since by definition the unemployed could not possess a pass stamped with the appropriate contract of employment, unless, of course, this was obtained by extra legal means. This in practice was what often happened, and so the pass laws were often leaky in respect of this particularly crucial function. Nevertheless, to the extent that they obliged recourse to such expedients, with the various costs which they necessarily entailed, they were as unpopular with the lumpen-proletariat as they were with the African working class. It was for this reason that they came to constitute a key component of the anti-pass agitation and infused the movement with much of the volatility and violence that it came to possess.[64]

This criminal function of the pass laws was not limited to

policing the lumpenproletariat, but also spilled over and infected their application to the black populace as a whole. "The Pass Laws as applied in the Labour districts", commented the Native Affairs Inspector for Krugersdorp,

> appear to be based on the assumption that every native is a criminal from whom the rest of the community has to be protected, hence the introduction of the Finger Impression system.

And it was,

> the continual harrassment by police and others, often in an officious manner demanding the production of passes at all times and places,

which he felt was probably at the root of the grievances of the pass law system as a whole.[65]

Other evidence confirms at least the earlier part of his assessment,

> There is without a doubt unsumpathetic treatment of natives by police constables and junior officials in Government Departments,

argued the Inspector of the NAD, Benoni, and representatives of the petty bourgeoisie were among the most vociferous in confirming his charge. "The pass", T.M. Tladi protested

> persecutes and disappoints /you/ ... In the first place when you meet a Policeman you'll have to take off your hat and then produce your pass otherwise you will be knocked about and afterall you will be arrested and charged for resisting or failing to satisfy the Police and you will be convicted accordingly.[66]

Others endorsed Tladi's views - Mvabasa spoke of "deficient policemen who do not know the nature of the charges"[67], while 'Comrade Sebeho' at a meeting of the Industrial Workers of Africa (IWA), during the 1/- a day agitation, gave some clue as to why those adopting 'civilised' manners might be more open to harrassment and victimisation. "The whites are wise", Sebeho pointed out, "they do not appoint natives born in town to the police, only those from the kraals", which may be legitimately construed as confirming van Onselen's argument about the divisive objectives of this pattern of recruitment.[68]

To sum up then, passes clearly 'prevented money', whether of a legal or extra-legal variety; they also delivered a submissive, vulnerable workforce, which would not lightly run the risk of crossing the wishes of their masters. It is hardly surprising that they became the focus of militant agitation on the Rand in March and April 1919. Yet while oppressing all sections of the African community, and providing a focus of cross-class opposition, they did not oppress all black urban dwellers in the same way, and thus simultaneously furnished a means of fragmenting and defusing the agitation to which they had given birth. The irreducible core of the pass laws was maintaining a politically stable low wage economy by

enforcing contracts and inhibiting mobility, and by policing and rooting out the criminal lumpenproletarian mob. This was a point on which virtually all submissions by officials to the Inter-Departmental Pass Laws Committee agreed (for example, "I do not think the Native suffers any hardship under the existing regulations as to registering contracts. The contract protects him as much as it does the employer", Manager G.N.L. B. Compound; "The Pass Laws in other Provinces do not appear to be satisfactorily effective /which has/ led to grievances against restrictions under the Transvaal Pass Laws, but it is undoubtedly necessary for the protection, not only of the employer, but of the native himself", Inspector NAD, Benoni; "These people are in various stages of development but the raw or blanket native predominates and with these people there is neither a sense of responsibility or self-control, and I cannot conceive of any modification of the provisions of the law as affecting this particular class being brought in without involving grave consequences, having regard to the many temptations - such as illicit liquor traffic, with which natives residing on the Rand are beset", Protector of Natives; "It is not thought that the existing pass laws in the Transvaal Province could be revised, modified, or simplified to any extent ... as during the recent anti-pass agitation the only specific reason given by the natives ... was that the carrying of the pass curtailed their actions", Pass Officer, NAD, Roodepoort; "The Transvaal law has been thoroughly tested and has proved simple in administration as also fair and to work smoothly. With the exception of a few slight provisions ... /no/... grounds for modification", Pass Officer, Boksburg; "... the Pass Laws of this Province ... need but little revision as far as the ordinary native is concerned. The native, or any subject race for that matter, will always agitate for a law which places less restraint on his movements", Pass Officer, Randfontein. (See also footnotes 53 and 69.)

Equally striking however was one other area of unanimity, and this was in respect of relaxing the regulations governing the granting of exemptions and certificates of registration. The recommendations put forward here are particularly interesting since they may help us to define a little more closely the amorphous group described until now as the aspirant petty bourgeoisie. The potential beneficiaries of this largesse, where specified, were store boys; bank messengers of long service; "the respectable educated and partly educated"; the skilled artisan, mechanic, tradesman, clerks and skilled hospital attendants - which is perhaps as close as we will get to delineating this rather impalpable group.[70]

To fully mollify these elements, reforms in the policing of passes and the abolition of the £1 fee for registration, (both of which were recommended in the evidence) would have had to have been undertaken, yet even without them such a policy carried the germ of success. Registration and exemption certificates freed their holders from the normal operation of the pass laws, from the night curfew and from 'native' taxation - all of which were major grievances of the urban populace at the time. They also virtually automatically entitled the

possessor to higher rates of remuneration, since the pass could not now fulfill its customary wage pegging function, and since exemption was taken as an index of potential for a higher calibre of work.[71] Like the agitation on wages therefore, the agitation on passes was a double edged weapon since its central target could as it were be dismantled and used to disorganise the alliance it had spawned.

"The Pass Law is ... slavery."[72] Housing ran close second for the prize of the most hated single institution governing black urban life on the Rand. Conditions were truly appalling. Existing accommodation fell into five distinct categories: in townships like Klipspruit which served Johannesburg, or others like the Blue Sky location which were dormitories for other towns along the Rand; in areas of freehold occupation like Sophiatown, Martindale, Newclare or Alexandra; in the urban slums of Vrededorp and the Malay location, Fordsburg, Doornfontein, Ferreirastown, Jeppestown, Marshalltown and Prospect Township, where rooms in yards could be hired; on the premises of employers or in compounds they built to house their employees; and in barrack-like compound accommodation such as that at Jubilee and Salisbury which the municipal councils built to accommodate their own and other private businesses' employees.[73]

Material conditions were uniformly squalid and depressed. Klipspruit, Sophiatown, Martindale, Newclare and Germiston and a number of other east Rand locations were built immediately adjacent to municipal sewage depositing sites, which was the principal reason for them becoming available for African occupation. Klipspruit was the worst. By 1917 it was virtually surrounded by the sewage farm, with many huts being within 300 yards of its perimeter.[74] Most families lived in the municipality built V-shaped huts, which were "no more than an iron roof placed over the floor"[75]; virtually no facilities were provided[76]; the mortality rate was staggering (20:100 adults in 1914/15 and 380:1 000 infantile mortality)[77]; and the transport cost of the ten mile journey to Johannesburg bit deeply into the earnings of those who had to work in town (sixpence daily return, 2/6d weekly and 8/6d monthly).[78] In addition, residents were subjected to a highly autocratic location administration. One of the principal inducements held out for moving to Klipspruit in 1906 was the availability of mealie plots and grazing for those who hired stands, but by 1910 most grazing had been fenced off, the owners of strayed cattle being fined at a rate of 5/- or 10/- a head, and the area available for cultivation had been drastically reduced.[79] Arbitrary actions of all kinds were a regular feature of location life. Raids for the brewing of illegal liquor; the auctioning of owner-built accommodation valued at anything up to £100, when the occupier had fallen into arrears on stand rent, which were then auctioned to the municipality for ludicrous sums (for example 7/6d, £1.10.0), and re-let at rentals from between £1-£2 a month; a 2/6d charge to ride a bicycle and so on.[80] Other locations along the Rand endured equally austere and insensitive regimes. Rents were often higher, even less municipal housing was provided, facilities

were miniscule and the came continual harrassment took place.[81] Small wonder that "the better class of educated and skilled native dislike /d/ the name 'location' /and/ compared them with compounds".[82] The functions and objectives were in essence the same. Conditions were little better in the freehold areas of Sophiatown, Martindale, Newclare, etc. Prices of property were two to five times higher than those in neighbouring white suburbs; facilities were non-existent; overcrowding was rife; and diseases endemic. And while they were located considerably nearer town, no municipal transport was provided.[83]

It comes as some surprise therefore to learn that there were long waiting lists for accommodation in each of these locations.[84] A brief review of the housing ecology of the Rand helps suggest some of the reasons. The massive increase in the Witwatersrand black urban population, as a result of the structural transformations engendered by the war had created a tremendous demand for African accommodation, which the building industry had conspicuously failed to satisfy. Costs of building materials which had soared during the war provide part of the answer, but much more crucial was the inability or unwillingness of the municipal authorities charged with the responsibility for black housing, to undertake the necessary programme of relief.[85] The constraints under which the municipal authorities laboured have been treated extensively by Kagan and Proctor, and will not be examined in any detail here. Suffice it to say that white rate-payer opposition; commercial and speculative interests who profited from the high rentals yielded by the slums or looked for windfall gains on sale of land to the municipality; the reluctance of mining companies to part with the surface rights to their land; and the overlapping jurisdictions of municipal, provincial and central authorities, all served to paralyse any action in this field.[86] There were, as a result, at least 10 000 blacks in Johannesburg alone without authorised accommodation in municipal compounds, locations or black freehold areas.[87] Their needs were met - though hardly satisfactorily - by a municpal permit system which allowed employers to house employees on their premises, in small employer constructed compounds, or in rooms hired in adjacent multi-racial slums.[88] Each - and certainly the last - was less satisfactory than accommodation provided in locations and hence helps further explain why such urban dwellers were so anxious to move out. On the premises of employers heavy rentals were often charged, leading to overcrowding[89]; in compounds, there was no provision for families to stay; and the slums were characterised by the most degrading conditions to be found anywhere on the Rand. Tenants were housed in unsanitary yards, divided up into numerous tiny rooms; they lived cheek by jowl with criminals, prostitutes and other lumpenproletariat elements; rents were extortionate, usually averaging 25/- to 30/- per month for a room; disease was rife (these areas usually being the source of epidemics that periodically ravaged the Rand); and infant mortality rates were higher than anywhere else (355,18:1 000 in 1919-1020).[90]

The collective grievance over housing was thus one which could mobilise virtually all sections of the African community.

At the same time it should also be recognised that it was felt most keenly by the same "educated" and "civilised" who were struggling to construct a tolerable family life in the towns. Jammed together in disease-ridden hovels with the lowest strata of black society, they were the most anxious to escape to the dubious advantages of the location. To the extent then that the authorities could provide housing for this sector and introduce a few elementary reforms in the running of the locations, these people were open to being detached from the radical populist alliance that emerged in 1918-1919. The authorities themselves were not slow to take the point. Disease, and the influenza epidemic were jeopardising the reproduction of the more permanently urbanised population on the Rand[91]; shortage of housing was breeding intense disaffection both in the locations and the volatile urban slums. As Major Cooke observed in discussions with the Parks and Estates Committee:

> The Committee is perfectly aware the period has been marked by a considerable amount of industrial unrest, and that no longer did the native take up that docile attitude which he had done in the past. This is a result of education which has been instilled in him, and will be found even more apparent, with the result that we must look for more increased difficulties and we must be more careful than in the past ... the time was by no means inopportune for reviewing the procedure regarding native administration /and in particular/ housing.[92]

H.S. Bell, Native Sub-Commissioner, embroidered on the theme. After commenting on the unsympathetic treatment meted out to "the better class of educated and skilled", he went on to say:

> There are the educated and skilled native labourers, many of whom are of decent class and desire to live decently, and many young men and women growing up of the same class, who have nowhere to go for any sort of recreation after their daily labours, nowhere where they can go in the evenings ... it is surely the duty of the Public to assist them to become respectable, and try and alienate them from the illicit liquor evils and other evils to which so many are driven ... As far as I know there is absolutely nothing being done to meet the requirements of this class, who claim to be the leaders of the natives and some grow into bitter agitators.[93]

The Government was not slow in grasping the nettle (although it should be noted that its grip quickly slackened when the urban agitation died down after 1921). In September 1918, Louis Botha urged the Administrator of the Transvaal that the housing question should be taken up urgently with the local authorities. "The present state of affairs" he emphasised was, "not only a grave menace to public health, but in addition the social and moral evils accruing from the indiscriminate herding together of Europeans and natives in slum quarters in

Johannesburg are incalculable".[94] Shortly afterwards, in 1919, the Public Health Act was passed, empowering local authorities to prevent or remedy unhealthy housing conditions, and this was followed in 1920 by the Housing Act which authorised the central government to assist local authorities in preparing housing schemes and which allowed them to raise loans either privately or from government sources.[95] Clearly the needs of "the better class of educated and skilled" were finally receiving some attention, which may provide one part of the explanation of why the urban militancy on the Rand flickered out in 1921.

Thus far in this paper the black petty bourgeoisie have been treated as a relatively homogeneous group. This they clearly were not. In common with the same class in other parts of the capitalist world they can be divided roughly between the small business owners/petty commodity producers, and professionals and the salariat, although there were those who straddled the divide. One thing that united both strata of this class however (or both classes as some would have it) were the tight limits placed on their capacity for capital accumulation. To both, this was what was signified by the ubiquitous "colour bar". Most areas of government service were closed to blacks; private enterprise enforced its own "customary colour bar"; blacks were not allowed to own businesses or black eating houses in white areas, and the pressures of white labour and segregationist ideology had forced many of the marginal but fairly successful purveyors of services out into the economic wilderness of the townships, or back into the working class.[96] Even in black residential areas a number of other constraints were felt. In Klipspruit, where the purchase of land was prohibited, no-one could lease more than one stand or one mealie plot, and licences for trading and petty vending were both discriminatory and prohibitive.[97] In 1910 business stands cost 36/- a month as opposed to 7/6d in Vrededorp (by the end of the war they had risen to 38/-); and trolleys for hawkers were licenced at £3 each[98] (this of course was in addition to the 2/- payment for a monthly pass).[99] Even then black businessmen did not necessarily enjoy a monopoly of the trade. Some locations, according to Bell, the Native Sub-Commissioner of the Witwatersrand, were monopolised by European traders, and Kagan gives examples of such intrusions into Alexandra and Klipspruit.[100] In the freehold areas the situation was in many respects worse. Properties in Sohpiatown cost two to five times the going price in neighbouring white areas, and were beyond the reach of most of the African petty bourgeoisie, while trading was dominated by "coolies and foreigners".[101] Perhaps the clearest evidence of the slender resources of the African petty bourgeoisie however is the small number that could even afford to build their own houses under leasehold arrangements in places like Klipspruit, and the frequency with which those that were built were auctioned to cover arrears of stand rent.[102]

The African traditional petty bourgeoisie (small-scale business owners and petty vendors) were clearly a highly marginalised group. Some indication of this is given by a

return of daily labourers for Johannesburg in 1923 (see Table II).

TABLE II

DAILY LABOURERS - JOHANNESBURG 1923[104]

Nature of Employment	Number
Shoemakers and Cobblers	198
Tailors and Clothes-Menders	83
Clothes Cleaners	15
Pedlars and Hawkers	387
Carpenters	21
Tinkers and Plumbers	36
Trolley Drivers and Dray Carters	34
General Dealers	57
Wash Boys	29
Brickmakers and Builders	25
Paperhangers and Painters	19
Ornament Makers	14
Butchers	10
Miscellaneous Bootblacks, Musicians, Quarrymen, Coal Heavers, Hedge Trimmers, Hairdressers, Bakers, Bicycle Mechanics, Well Sinkers, Insurance Canvassers, Wagon Makers, Thatchers, Jobbing Gardeners, Evangelists, Ourse Makers, Grass Mowers, Eating-House Keepers, Bangle Makers, Mattress Makers, Blacksmiths, Harness Stitchers, Sock and Cap Knitters, Laundrymen	73
TOTAL	1 001

Possibilities for capital accumulation were clearly small, at least in the lower and middle ranges of the spectrum, and it was for this reason that many chose to enter the salariat, and use this as a springboard into more substantial entrepreneurial ventures. S.M. Maghatho and C.S. Mabaso of the TNC apparently chose this route, as did Josiah Sibiya, Klipspruit's most successful business 'tycoon'.[103]

It is hardly surprising in this circumstances that the professionals and the salariat came to be viewed as the most prestigious section of the petty bourgeoisie, and the principal reference group for those aspiring to its ranks. By the same

token, education and being educated became entrenched as a central value and aspiration in the consciousness of the black petty and aspirant petty bourgeoisie. "During the past half dozen years", wrote M.C. Brice, the Honorary Secretary of Native Girls Industrial School Committee,

> The kaffir has been educating himself in his little tin shack in our back yards to a degree that might astonish the average Johannesburger to think about.[105]

Education thus became the principal means to breach to citadel of white privilege, the key element in the self-identification of the petty and aspirant petty bourgeoisie and a major demand in the agitations which arose in 1918-1920.

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> The method of native organisation either political or industrial organisation must of necessity be the reverse of methods adopted by more established communities ... The incentive to organise come from the top rather than the bottom. Leaders of native people are largely self constituted instead of being elected by well established bodies. H.S. Cooke[106]

It is striking that prior to the sanitary workers' demand for higher pay in June 1918 there is scarcely a hint of the impending radicalisation of the black petty bourgeoisie. The most militant posture struck was a threat of a strike in response to the Native Administration Bill of 1917, uttered at an ANC meeting at Phokeng, and this seems to have been little more than a rhetorical flourish which came to nothing in the end.[107] Even the East Rand boycott of mine stores in February 1918, which was recognised retrospectively by the leaders of Congress as the beginning of the agitation, elicited scarcely an expression of concern, and certainly no involvement, from the leaders of the petty bourgeoisie.[108] As I. Bud Mbelle said in answer to a question about the stores boycott addressed to him by the Moffatt Commission, "We /the TNC/ did not know /what led to it/ ... we were waiting for people to come and explain to us. No people did".[109] As late as March and May 1918 no single reference was made to the need for higher wages at the SANNC and TNC Congress meetings held at Bethlehem and Pietersburg on 29 March and 24 May respectively.[110] The Congress leaders can hardly have been accused of having their finger on the pulse of the working class. Only with the bucket boys strike, which provided the first visible expression of a broader groundswell of opposition among the industrial working class, was the Congress leadership finally stung into action.

At the outset of this paper I argued that the petty bourgeoisie, lying between the two dominant relations of production, tended to swing according to the pressures

exercised on it by the two contending classes. Laclau develops this point specifically with regard to ideological class struggle.

> In periods of stability, when the social formation tends to reproduce its relations following traditional channels and succeeds in neutralising its contradictions by *displacements*, this is when the dominant bloc in the formation is able to absolve most of the contradictions and its ideological discourse tends to rest more on purely implicit mechanisms of its unity. This is when generally, the correlation between the logical consistency of the elements of the discourse and its ideological unity reaches its lowest point (religious interpellations of an ascetic type can, for example, coexist with an increased enjoyment of worldly goods without the social agents 'living' them as incompatible).
>
> In a period of generalised ideological crisis ... the opposite tends to occur. The crisis of confidence in the 'natural' or 'automatic' reproduction of the system is translated into an exacerbation of all the ideological contradictions and into a dissolution of the unity of the dominant ideological discourse. As the function of all ideology is to constitute individuals as subjects, this ideological crisis is necessarily translated into an 'identity crisis' of social agents. Each one of the sectors in struggle will try and reconstitute a new ideological unity using a 'system of narration' as a vehicle which disarticulates the ideological discourses of the opposing forces.[111]

The events of 1918-1920, in my view, bear out these propositions. The ideology of one wing of the petty bourgeoisie was clearly disarticulated and re-articulated to that of the working class. A middle section vacillated continually and experienced an identity crisis in response to the contradictory pulls of capital, state and the black working class, and the more established affluent and reactionary section sustained, with occasional deviations, an ideology articulated with that of the ruling class.

The speed with which substantial sectors of the petty bourgeoisie swung in mid 1918 in clear evidence of the precarious ideological hegemony exercised by the ruling classes over a racially repressed petty bourgeoisie in a colonial situation. It is also testimony to the depth of working class resentment that had built up in the course of the war. According to Fennas Plaatjes of Randfontein Block, this was a complaint that went back to 1917 (i.e. when inflation began to bite).[112] Benjamin Phooko of City Deep put the issue in a little more perspective. Workers had wanted an increase even before the war but now the demand had intensified. Individual workers had been asking for an increase for some time. It was

in fact an everyday occurance.[113] What prompted the move to collective action is a more complex question. A major precipitating factor however was the Municipal Engineers Strike of 11-14 May 1918, which put out the town's lights for five nights. The speed with which the municipality caved in and a 23% increase was awarded to *all* white municipal workers as a result of their action was no doubt an object lesson to all black workers on the Rand.[114] Indeed it is worth noting that all the major strike movements on the Rand in this period coincided with actual or impending white worker action. In 1913, it was the white mine workers strike[115]; in 1918 the Engineers strike; in April 1919 (the time of the anti-pass agitation) a building strike together with a ballot for a general strike[116]; and in February 1920 a ballot for another white mineworkers strike. In part the synchronism no doubt arose from the 'demonstration' or 'infection' effects which have been noted by other commentators[117], but equally important in all probability was a sense of weakening or rupture in the power bloc, which black workers felt they would be able to exploit. Certainly the repressive capacities of the state were stretched to their limit on these occasions.[118]

Whatever the precise interplay of these factors the black workers employed on the mechanical section of the S.A.R. soon got the message. On 13 May - right in the middle of the Engineers strike - they also demanded and secured an increase of 3d a day.[119] The success of the railways worker's action had a ripple effect across the Rand. "This constitutional /method/ reported the Town Inspector of the NAD, "has evidently been copied by the Municipal natives". On 20 May one hundred workers at the Destructor Compound, Newtown followed suit, and a few days later similar requests were made in nearly all the other municipal compounds. In the latter case there seemed, in the view of the same official, to have been "more concerted action". "This would appear to indicate", he concluded, "that correspondence and organisation is being evolved among the natives employed in large concerns.[120]

The Council's reply was that they would consider the matter at their next committee meeting and on 1 June their answer was delivered to the workers at Vrededorp. No increase would be granted; contracts would have to be worked out and workers would then be free to leave or disengage. Those re-engaging would then be considered for a small increment.[121] The workers expressed disappointment but appeared to acceed, and the Town Inspector departed completely oblivious of the trouble that was about to erupt. As workers reflected on the decision their anger evidently deepened. They were among the worst paid workers on the Rand, earning £2.10.0 a month for a seven day week; they were contracted for 180 days (the sanitary section at least); their work was "degrading"; and their wage packets were being progressively eaten away by the continuous increase in prices. As many testified to the Moffatt Commission - prices were up; taxes and school fees consumed most of their income; and they could neither clothe themselves and their families, nor afford to feed their children.[122] The Natalspruit compound was first to react; and it was only after

fifty arrests had been made that the trouble was put down. Fifty arrests however meant fifty vacancies and when Bezuidenhout Valley compound refused to do their Natalspruit colleagues' work, thirteen more ended up behind bars. The climax of the episode was, however, yet to come. Those in the Vrededorp compound allocated to the vacant jobs were extremely unwilling to comply. First they demanded - and were promised double pay - and then on the 9th and 10th they too decided that blacklegging was not for them, and refused to go out to work. Wolhuter Compound adopted a similar attitude, and Springfield was described as "wavering and unwilling".[123] The upshot was 152 arrests and the callous sentence handed down by Magistrate McFie (see above). The fat was truly in the fire. Congress and the African public generally were outraged and the 1/- a day dampaign was about to commence.

The first TNC meeting on the matter was held on the evening of the 10th, although its executive, through the offices of Letanka, had taken up the case of the strikers when the first arrests were made.[124] Its proceedings soon revealed many of the cleavages, as well as the pre-occupations, that were to characterise Congress over the next two years. Maghato, President of SANNC, opened the proceedings by observing that the municipal workers had struck because they were united and had been arrested because of the pass laws. If the blacks just folded up their arms and stopped work, they would surely hurt the white man. H.L. Bud Mbelle, by contrast, proposed that they should petition the Governor General, for a relaxation of the penalty, to which Mtota (probably an IWA member) retorted they should forget the Governor General and if no satisfaction was given they should strike. I. Bud Mbelle (fifteen years interpreter in the High Court in Kimberley) then intervened and made a plea for moderation, which he thoughtfully made available to the Moffatt Commission. "In coming here tonight", he announced,

> we have not come to pray, we are here on a very important matter. In rising I wish to express my concurrence with the proposal of Mbelle Junior, opposing altogether Mtota's proposal. My countrymen, do not forget we are in a critical time. Do not forget that we have not a single greyheaded man among us, therefore when the fat is in the fire we must remove it ourselves. We must extinguish the fire when we see it burning outside ... the Congress at Bloemfontein decided that its sentiment was against any form of strike. We have therefore also to be careful about what we do and must avoid putting our people into trouble ... If we do not stop the strike the whole of Johannesburg will be in flames ... I therefore entreat you to stop the strike. I entreat you to help those people financially, protect them and help them in the appeal required against the Magistrate's judgement. At the same time, let us make it quite clear that we are opposed to strikes.

Bud Mbelle however was clearly out of his depth. "Let it

burn" (whether it was the fat or Johannesburg we are never informed), was the audiences' reply, and Mbelle retired in disarray.[125] The working class was already beginning to exercise its pull.

At this stage the proceedings of the meeting become shrouded in mystery. The Moffatt Commissioners obviously had secret police reports of the meeting which I have not been able to trace, when they interrogated (literally) those prominent in the agitation, and from their cross questioning it appears that preparations were now undertaken, at the direction of Mvabasa, to organise a strike. One man, Mhlonga, was apparently detailed to canvass the idea in Springs, another was to work between Cleveland and Block B, and a third was given responsibility for Randfontein and Roodepoort.[126] Still others were charged with visiting white employers and white households to propogate the idea among their employees, the name of a newspaper vendor called Shabalala being mentioned in this context.[127] On the 11th, if Moffatt's evidence is to be believed, a report-back took place, and on the 13th or 15th at a meeting at the African Club, the Springs and Benoni delegates detailed the progress.[128] Witnesses naturally denied these allegations when confronted with them by the Moffatt Commission, but there was one piece of evidence to suggest something of this kind was undertaken. On June 26 a worker reported that about two weeks before a man had come to his place of employment and invited them to a meeting (presumably that of the 19th).[129]

For Isaac Bud Mbelle and the older, more established and more affluent section of Congress things were now getting thoroughly out of control. On 13 June he telegrammed the Minister of Justice in the following appeal:

> Honourable Sir ... Your attention may already have been drawn to the severe criticisms of Mr. McFie's remarks that appeared in the daily Press of Johannesburg and other centres, characterising the sentence on strikers as unduly severe. In addition I have the honour to inform your honour that this has created an unfortunate situation for the leaders of our Congress, as it has had a painful effect upon the native labourers of the Rand. During the past three days matters grew so serious that two days ago I telegraphed for the senior officers of our congress to help calm the natives. Mr. Mgato, our President, Mr. Saul [sic] Plaatje, Mr. Saul M'aana [sic] and the senior Vice President, Mr. D.S. Letanka have had various consultations with the native sections on the Rand, which culminated in a largely attended public meeting at the Pilkington Hall last night, of which this application is the result. I think we have most of their machinations under control, but as I understand that some counter meetings are to take place under socialist auspices next Sunday and Wednesday, the Government would strengthen our hands considerably by extending its clemency to the

> prisoners, and by altering Mr. McFie's decision before the week-end.[130]

By this stage one further public meeting had been held (excluding the more clandestine affairs referred to by Moffatt), and one was impending. On the 12th Maghato chaired a gathering of two hundred blacks and three whites, whose main business was Sol Plaatje's investigation of some shootings in the Free State. Mabaso, however, took the opportunity to give vent to some deeper frustrations. Referring to a speech in Parliament four years before which allegedly posed the question how best to destroy the natives, Mabaso provided his own answer, "Put them in a barren place where nothing will grow and there is fever" (i.e. Klipspruit). This was a theme to which Mabasa would return in later addresses. Clearly the militant atmosphere on the Rand had unblocked something in Mabaso's mind.[131]

The meeting of the 19th was far more significant. Until this point *no single formal demand had been made for an increase in wages*, although it is safe to assume that complaints had been registered from the floor at Congress meetings. That, and the whole direction of the TNC over the next two years was about to be changed. The meeting was something of a set piece occasion. A thousand Africans attended (and twelve whites), who had travelled in from all parts of the Rand; the hall was overflowing; and all the TNC dignitaries were there - Maghato, Mabaso, Msane, Letanka, Msimang, Mbelle, Maxexe and others. The Reverend Lebala opened with a prayer, but from that moment a different spirit gripped the assembled throng. Mabaso started with what was to become a familiar diatribe against the location system:

> He pointed out Klipspruit and Germiston location as the place of the natives where all the dirt from the towns is deposited or thrown. This aims at making natives bring forth unhealthy children, who would soon die away.

The Union Government, he continued, was asking to take control of the late German colonies:

> We oppose the idea. We are in hell and do not wish that our brethren come to this place of torments.

Charlotte Maxexe took up the same point of the genocidal policies of the white population. After protesting that:

> in order to get a living most of the girls and women are engaging in the illicit liquor trade and ended up in goal,

she noted,

> The white people try to prevent the natives from increasing. Natives in the compounds are innoculated every Sunday.

- a statement which was to get her into hot water with the Moffatt Commission.

Mvabasa and Selope Thema then launched into an attack on

Christian missionaries and Christian teaching:

> The white people teach you about heaven and tell you that after death you will go to a beautiful land in heaven. They don't teach you about this earth on which we live ... if we cannot get land on this earth neither shall we get it in heaven ... The God of our Chiefs, Chaka, Moshoeshoe, Rile, Sandile, Sobuza, Leutsoe etc. gave us this part of the world we possess. (Mvabasa)

> The Missionaries have taught us to follow the saying "Do unto others as you would that they to you should do", but they endorse the terrible laws for natives. They teach us to think about God while they tell their brethren to take our land of our Chiefs ... Has Christ come to rob us of our land? God gave this part of the earth to the black people. He taught us our customs. There is no heaven on earth. We must have a place on earth, never mind about heaven. (Thema)

What is interesting about these speeches aside from their evident passion, is the transformation of consciousness which they seem to entail. The logical inconsistency of elements in their previous ideological discourse had been revealed; Christian values like submissiveness and expecting your due reward in heaven had been found wanting and discredited. In their place we see in process the construction of a new ideological unity with popular appeals to the land of our chiefs, the God who brought us our customs being re-integrated into a new populist discourse. Politically and ideologically the tide was on the turn.

As significant are the continued cleavages within Congress that emerge at this meeting. All were infected by the atmosphere of the gathering, but there was a limit to which some of the leadership would go. Maghato, for example, swam with the tide in his rhetorical passages and used the appropriate biblical imagery of the Children of Israel in the Land of the Pharoes, but mainly in the hope of diverting the agitation into safer less violent channels. "The International Socialists .. and the Labour Parties", he argued,

> are all white people. I understand they want the natives to strike. If you listen to them and go out on strike they will be the very persons who will be around with rifles to shoot you in the street. I am absolutely opposed to the idea of a strike. I maintain that we shall get our grievances rectified if we only ask through the proper channels ... I tell you we are are not afraid of white people. We can destroy Johannesburg in a day; we can stop the mines in an hour. But we respect the Union Jack and are loyal to the British Government.

(this last was of course a characteristic element of the earlier ideological discourse).

Mabaso, always to the left of Maghato adopted a more qualified position:

> There is a section of white people called the International Socialist League. These men appear to sympathise with black people ... I cannot tell whether these men are honest or not ... [but] in my opinion they are friends of the black people.

But it was left to Mvabasa to articulate the militant class position in its most unadulterated form. To the horror of his more moderate colleagues on the platform he moved a resolution, seconded by Thema, that Congress request the authorities and employers to increase wages of black workers by 1/- a day as of 1 July 1918. In motivating his motion he made the following remarks, which clearly betray the influence of the ISL, whose meetings Mvabasa had attended since late the previous year. "The capitalists and workers", he said,

> are at war everywhere in every country ... The white workers do not write to the Governor General when they want more pay. They strike and get what they should.

Despite interventions by the Reverend Lebalo and Caluza, which were respectively ignored or shouted down, the die was now well and truly cast. It only remained for Herbert Msane of the ISL to propose a secret committee of five from the ISL and TNC (to avoid detectives) to work on a strategy and for a collection to be made before the main business of the meeting was over.[132]

From the report of Native Detective Moorosi (there were several others which confirm the general content of the speeches), it would appear that no decision was actually taken on the question of a strike, although this was clearly the sanction that was in the back of peoples' minds if the 1/- request was rejected. Another informer, however, came away with a different view. According to him, Mvabasa had proposed that another meeting be called before the 1st July, and if the employers did not acceed a strike would take place on the second.[133] This was certainly the impression gained by the meeting at large. While Mvabasa and Herbert Msane denied at an IWA meeting of 27 June that any such decision had been taken, most of the others who were present (Sebeho, Ntholi, Tinker and Ngoji) insisted that it had.[134] "All the natives on the Rand knew it", asserted Comrade Ntholi and he is supported by a report from the employees of Felber and Jucken whose recollection of the meeting was, "more pay, the abolition of passes and stop work on 1st July".[135] Even for the more radical wing of Congress the situation was getting out of control.

If the Congress leaders were becoming uneasy the Government was also clearly getting cold feet. To begin with, they had taken up an extremely hard and uncompromising line. When it had seemed that the municipality might be caving in to the municipal strikers' demands, the Magistrate, Johannesburg, the Deputy Commissioner of Police and the Acting Assistant Director of Native Labour, had written to the council in the following

peremptory terms:

> We desire to state for the information of the Council that for the Council at the present time to consider even, much more to concede, any claim of bodies of native servants of the Municipality for an increase of wages is a course which would, in our judgement, be fraught with the most serious danger, not only to industry but also to public safety on the Witwatersrand.
>
> We desire also to state formally for the information of the Council that the Government is prepared to deal sternly and immediately with any criminal disorder by the Natives or by Europeans should any disorder follow from a refusal of the Council to consider the question. We wish to repeat that for the Council even to consider such claims, is in our opinion fraught with the most serious danger to the public welfare.[136]

The prospect of a general strike of black workers quickly concentrated their minds. On the 14th, the Minister of Justice replied to Mbelle's telegram, saying he would place it before his colleagues at the earliest opportunity; and opportunely, from the point of view of the timing of the strike, the Director of Prisons was able to inform Mbelle on 26 June that the Governor General had agreed to the release of the Municipal workers on probation.[137]

The Congress and IWA leaders were getting more than a little jittery themselves. On 13 June 118 workers at Premier Milling had struck for higher pay, to be followed by nearly 500 workers from eight other firms (not all had struck work by many gave a month's notice when pay increases were refused).[138] Nor was trouble confined to industrial plants. From 20th or 21st Taberer reports it became apparent "that there was an uneasy feeling among the natives on some of the mines", while shortly afterwards workers from Crown Deep went to Western Section to propagate the strike.[139]

The Committee of five responded with an attitude of masterly inactivity. H.L. Bud Mbelle issued a circular to all employers on the Witwatersrand on 20 June, drawing attention to the increase in prices and to the fact that, "the native workers of the Rand are a valuable and perhaps indispensable class of the community", and requesting an increase of 1/- a day, but beyond that little was done.[140] Part of the reason was that no-one was clear whether a strike call had been made on the 19th. In any case, as Mvabasa pointed out, it was foolish to strike on the first day of the demand.[141] Equally important, however in the eyes of Tinker, Ntholi and other members of the ISL/IWA was the belief that the black working class was not yet well organised enough to strike.[142]

It came as some relief therefore when the bucket boys were released and other overtures were forthcoming from the authorities. Taberer met Letanka, Msimang and Mbelle to warn them that black workers would be shot if they struck and that the

mines would close down, while General Botha received a delegation to hear grievances and promised an enquiry would be made.[143] All the co-optive strategies were being quickly brought to bear.

Nevertheless, the terms upon which different parties to the movement made their capitulation varied according to their ideological and political creed. Mvabasa, at a meeting on 28 June, attended by some 1 000 Africans, was at pains to denounce rumours of a July 1st strike and to explain why there should be delay:

> I see that some of you think that we are too slow with the thing, but it is not so, we are first trying to make you understand and put you on the right way because we don't want any of you to be hurt or get into trouble.

He went on to explain what the right way would be:

> ... our strike won't be like the white man's strike. You could see the white men whey they pick stones and break the stores etc., stop all the trams and railways ... we won't do /that/... but will be in our blankets naked ... and we shall then see if any Government servant will then come and shoot you while lying in your bed fighting nobody ... You must leave your sticks behind in case you strike the white men will say you were assaulting them with sticks ... the Sanitary boys were arrested while having sticks with them ... we natives of Johannesburg are to show the other natives of South Africa. If we do a thing every native in South Africa will do it; as you have seen in the papers that Natal is shaking, asking for more money, and it will be the same in the Cape and the Free State ... the whole of South Africa will one day go on strike ...[144]

Comrade Ntholi begged to differ on Mvabasa's rather naive approach. On the mines, he accurately predicted,

> the white people will place a few armed Policemen or soldiers at the gates /and/... the poor natives will be starved into submission in less than two days.

As for kitchen and shop 'boys':

> the boss will only kick him and he will go out to work. He himself /would not/ sleep on a strike day. He /would/ fight any man that came his way.[145]

Yet for all these differences of emphasis it is clear the strike idea was still alive and well in the minds of some of the Congress leadership.

Those who had always been opposed to the movement were no more convinced. Saul Msane, an old Congress leader, circulated a pamphlet denouncing strike action, which was subsequently reproduced in the white Sunday press, which was to earn him widespread approbrium and the title *Isita sa Bantu* (Enemy

of the Natives).[146] Maghato at a further meeting of 29th attended by 900 blacks and three whites struck a more ambiguous note. Once again his speech was laced with militant rhetoric:

> The God of the white people was Gold, their heaven was money ... We are told by the missionaries that there is a place called Hell, he cannot pray because the devil won't have that nonsense in his place. We black people in this land are in hell already, the owner of the hell, which is the white man will not allow the blacks to pray ... the blacks are tormented in this land and the white man does what he likes.

At the same time it was riddled with contradictions.

> McFie has opened our eyes and made us see what we had never seen before. The natives have been made to realise their power and its utility ... They know by organising they can make their voices heard. The white people have got maxim guns ready to shoot unarmed natives ... the white people are afraid to talk with us because they know well they would be defeated. I am loyal to the King. I am not afraid of General Botha as I am keeping within the law.

Clearly if anyone was grappling with an identitfy crisis it was Maghato, as he continually vacillated between the two sides. I. Bud Mbelle was clearer - he supported the 1/- demand (he hardly dare not), but he was absolutely "against any idea of strike". Mvabasa was clearer still. If people were opposed to the strike they should hold their own meetings. "If the 1/- increase is not given we shall certainly strike."[147]

Nevertheless, it appeared that for the time being at least the strike had been postponed. On the following day (Sunday), partly at the instance of Dower of the Department of Native Affairs, a mass meeting was held at New Market, Newtown, attended by "thousands of natives" which Maghato addressed, telling them there was no strike, and that they would be told what to do the following Sunday. The Secretary for Native Affairs, Dower, also spoke, eliciting a noisy response, above which nothing could be heard. When Dower departed, Ntholi, who had draped the Union Jack around his body, publicly tore it to shreds. The report concludes, "the natives were very angry and making rows, some white men hitting them etc."[148]

The leadership might have compromised but as the foregoing report suggests the workers were in no mood to be fobbed off. On July 1st "Practically all the natives employed by the various firms ... put forward an application for an increase of wages at a rate of 1/- a day", and were waiting for a reply. "... all disclaim/ed/ any intention of striking, but I /E. Berg, Town Inspector/ very much doubt whether they will continue that attitude were they to meet a general refusal".[149] Others were no so long suffering. Several industrial concerns struck, while at Ferreirasdorp, Robinson Deep and Crown Mines, 4 000, several hundred (?) and 2 000 mineworkers respectivel refused to go down the shafts, only complying once they had been charged by bayonet and rifle-wielding police.

Opposition had been temporarily stifled by a mixture of force, disagreement and confusion in the ranks of the Congress leadership, and the conciliatory noises being made by the authorities. At the meeting at Newtown Market, a message had been delivered by Dower from the Prime Miniter (which nobody had hear above the din) announcing the appointment of the Moffatt Commission. A few days later, on 9 July, Prime Minister Botha graciously agreed to entertain a deputation of the black community to listen to their grievances. The list they presented was a judicious mixture of working class and petty bourgeois concerns, providing plenty of scope for cosmetic concessions, and is worth reproducing in full.

TABLE III

LIST OF GRIEVANCES[151]

(a) The conomic position of the natives on the Rand having regard to:-

  (1) increased cost of living due to the war;

  (2) the consequent dersire for increased wage;

  (3) housing accommodation in the case of those not directly employed on the mines and the incidental disadvantages of the existing systems;

  (4) inability under existing conditions to give proper support to wife and family, more particularly in the case of those resident in labour areas;

  (5) disabilities and disadvantages imposed by "the colour bar" in law and the consequent artificial interference with progress;

  (6) payment of compensation in respect of miners' phthisis, death or incapacitation from accident;

(b) enforcement of the Night Passes Ordinance in respect of women;

(c) non-availability of letters of exemption in the different provinces owing to the operation of the different pre-Union laws;

(d) restriction on employment of natives as interpreters in Courts of Law;

(e) non-employment of natives in post offices and unsuitability of post office accommodation for natives;

(f) multiplicity of passes in labour districts;

(g) residential passes and disadvantages owing to the distance of the native locations from the towns, together with a request for suitable housing provisions;

(h) lack of facilities for education.

On 24 July a further delegation was admitted, representing black residents in the Pretoria district. The process of token conciliation was clearly in full swing.[152]

The latter part of 1918 marks a lull in African opposition, and this is perhaps the appropriate point to draw some general conclusions about the agitation that emerged. One thing that is absolutely clear is that for the Congress leadership at least, and probably also for the mass of the African working population, these events provided the first full realisation of the strength of the organised working class. As Saul Msane said in evidence to the Moffatt Commission,

> The masses in the native population are beginning to realise that they are an indispensable factor in the natural and social fabric of South Africa. They are beginning to see that the whole industrial system in this land is based and must be based on their willing co-operation.[153]

Numerous speeches at meetings in this period corroborate this impression. Also apparent is the polarisation among the leadership of the TNC. The older, better established section who were also frequently residentially divided from the working class (e.g. Msane lived in Bree Street)[154], proved extremely reluctant to throw their lot in with the working people, having more to lose in terms of their standing with the authorities, and the favours which this might ultimately provide. On the other side, there were those whose outlook was profoundly transformed by this period of working class mobilisation - people like Mabaso, H.C. Bud Mbelle, Selope Thema, Mvabasa, and to a certain extent Letanka too. Nor should the influence of the ISL and IWA be underestimated here - as it often is - since it was their members (Ntholi, Kraai, Cetiwe, Sebeho and others) who often held the line when it came to more militant action. Finally, there were those - most classically Maghato - who were caught between and remorselessly pulled two ways, men who were nevertheless important in Congress because they could speak to both factions, and who eventually helped it back on a constitutionalist path.

The Moffatt Commission's recommendations which were published in September were received differently by different sections of the black population. Another meeting was called by the Prime Minister to acquaint Congress with the substance of its findings, though Botha in the event was indisposed. Secretary for Native Affairs, Malan, stepped into the breach and announced concessions on the following issues:

1. Recommend increases in wages for those permanently resident in towns not enjoying the benefit of employer-provided accommodation and rations.

2. Wage increases for black soldiers and policemen in the SAMR and SAP[!] (5/- a month for a single man - up to 12/6 a month for a married man, plus a war bonus for those married and earning over 3/6d a day), and special allowances not exceeding 25/- a month for those employed in the higher ranks of interpreters.

3. Conciliation boards (under very restricted circumstances).
4. Removal of the 1/- a day fee for a travelling pass.
5. Removal of night passes for women.
6. Improved Post Office accommodation for blacks with the possibility of employing black clerks being under consideration.
7. Court interpreters to be chosen exclusively on the basis of merit.
8. Attempts in progress to improve black education.
9. Pending the passage of the Native Affairs Administration Bill, *ad hoc* conferences to be convened between the Minister of Native Affairs and black representatives.[155]

While some were mollified by these concessions (and the Johannesburg Chamber of Commerce agreed to a 25% increase over pre-war rates of pay in the categories Moffatt specified)[156], the vast majority were not. Moffatt had barely touched on the broader structures of exploitation and oppression, and as inflation bit deeper a further explosion was on the cards. As early as late August/beginning of September, at a meeting in Johannesburg, "one firebrand ... wanted those present to urge the natives along the reef to come out on strike", until, "Wiser and saner counsels prevailed and it was decided to wait until the Moffatt Report was published".[157] And at the SANNC Annual Conference at Bloemfontein, at about the same time, Sol Plaatje was horried at the attitude of the Transvaal delegates:

> /They/ came to the Congress with a concord and determination that was perfectly astounding to our customary native demeanour at conferences. They spoke almost in unison, in short sentences nearly all of which began and ended with the word "strike" ... It was only late in the second day that we succeeded in satisfying the delegates to report, on getting to their homes, that the Socialist method of putting black against white will land our people in serious disaster ...[158]

The influenza epidemic of September/October 1918 temporarily took the steam out of further agitation, but by December of that year Congress was once again meeting with Malan, the Secretary for Native Affairs, and parading a familiar list of complaints.[159] They received short shrift from the Secretary, although he couched his responses in the most courteous manner. The colour bar could not be removed due to pressure of public opinion, and the use of force would only have the effect of alienating whites; the cost of living would go down now that the war was over; the concession stores were not exploiting their custom; passes did not exist for slavery but for mutual protection and would gradually disappear as blacks moved up the scale of civilisation; housing was high on the Government's agenda; and if the complaints about post offices remained he

would bring it to the attention of the Minister.[160]

Nevertheless inflation kept on rising; no new housing was forthcoming; and passes continued to be viewed as the principal means of obstructing higher pay. Early in 1919 therefore African leaders began, in the words of Johnstone, to advance a new tactic in the campaign for extra wages - passive resistance against passes.[161]

The anti-pass campaign precipitated one of the more dramatic expressions of African cross class unity to be seen in this period - not surprisingly since the common, but by no means uniform, incidence of the pass laws across the African population served as a focus of grievance for virtually all classes. On 3 April the newspaper *Abantu Batho* reported that the previous Sunday (March 30), the delegation which interviewed the NAD, the Chamber of Mines, the NRC and the Municipal Council on the question of the 1/- a day had held a mass meeting to communicate the substance of the discussion. "The report", according to *Abantu Batho*, "didn't please the meeting as this question was an old one. It was therefore agreed that passes be thrown away as passes are the foundation on which the refusal of the Europeans is based."[162]

One question arises at this stage, which Johnstone for one does not adequately answer.[163] Why did the focus shift so suddenly from wages to passes when no serious demand for their outright abolition had been voiced until this stage? Obviously, the connection between passes and wages had been made as early as June 1918, but as the *Rand Dail Mail* commented, in successive meetings with the authorities in October and December 1918, and again on March 21 of that year, the question had simply not been raised in that form.[164]

The answer emerges from the meeting between the TNC and various employer bodies that preceeded the March 30 meeting. Cooke had been asked there to appeal to the employers in getting higher wages, but had replied he had no power to interfere.[165] If employers would not respond to the Commission's recommendations and Government urgings, and if pass laws prevented the successful prosecution of strikes, then the obvious target was the Pass Laws themselves. It was here it seems that the link was finally made.

The movement got into full stride the following day. Lawrence, Acting Chief Pass Officer, arrived at his office at 8.30 the next morning to find a large gathering being addressed by Mbelle and Mabaso. After brief discussion he agreed to receive a delegation consisting of Mabaso, Mbelle, E. Dunjwa, Cetiwe, Nshoko, G. Mapikela, Kraai, J. Khatlane and two others. The message they delivered was that after repeated representations they had received no increase in wages and they had therefore decided to refuse to carry passes.[166] Lawrence made the unremarkable observation that they would be breaking the law, after which they proceeded to hold a mass meeting at Von Brandis Square, and hundreds present began to hand in their passes. In the afternoon, pickets proceeded to the suburbs demanding passes from employees in white businesses, and collected probably 2 000 or more.[167] The following day threatened even more militant agitation. The Director of

Native Labour cabled the Native Affairs Department in Pretoria that the movement was still growing and that a meeting of 3 000 blacks had been in progress for the last four hours. A cordon of friendly pickets surrounded the meeting which would only allow entry if passes were surrendered. At this stage inadequate polic forces were available and he urged the despatch of the SAMR. Such action, he added, would not complicate the European strike, members of which fully appreciated the native unrest.[168] Much the same pattern of events was expected for the 2nd, it having been decided on the previous day that a new mass meeting should be held; that all blacks working in town were to be pulled out by pickets - special attention being given to the municipal compounds; that mine clerks were to cooperate in getting the mine labourers to come out; and that delegates from Pretoria, Potchefstroom, Boksburg and Benoni were to secure the surrender of passes and the cessation of work in those areas.[169] Police reinforcements being by now available however, the strike leaders were arrested and a large crowd followed the arrested to the charge office. Here, further demonstrations took place and further arrests were made.[170] Finally, on the 3rd, mounted police charged a large crowd demonstrating at the Court, many being injured and many arrests being made.

Sporadic incidents occurred for the rest of the month. Violent clashes took place between black and white civilians in Vrededorp on the 3rd and 4th, resulting in 108 arrests; on the 9th, when a meeting was urged to release the prisoners from gaol; on the 14th, when those arrested on the 4th handed in their gaol tickets and with other passless Africans were arrested once more; and on the 25th, when an unsuccessful attempt was made on a police escort taking prisoners from the court house to gaol, a total of 306 being detained on these occasions.[171] Meanwhile similar outbursts were taking place all over the Rand. Benoni was perhaps most seriously affected. At a meeting on the 2nd, fifteen arrests were made after which large crowds gathered at the charge office behaving, in the language of the police report, in a disorderly fashion. 69 women and 49 men were thereupon arrested, to which the crowd responded by stoning the police escort. On the 3rd 100 Africans appeared carrying a sack containing their passes and 67 arrests were made, and on the 4th all available European constables were summoned to round up twenty male Africans who were travelling the district "spreading disaffection among the mine natives". In total 231 arrests had been made.[172] Similar episodes were reported from Maraisburg and Springs in which latter instance fifty ringleaders were incarcerated in gaol.[173] Only Boksburg for a time seemed relatively immune, owing largely to the "moderation" of its branch chairman Wessells Morake. As early as February 1919 there had been agitation against passes, but this had been successfully stifled by Morake's insistence that they keep within the law. An E.R.P.M. clerk, J.G. Matshiqi soon put an end to that. With the support of the radical Johannesburg branch, and physical reinforcements from Johannesburg, Germiston and Benoni, he arranged counter meetings, against the express ruling of the

Location Superintendent, to advocate the destruction of passes. Morake, "a moderate man" in the old SANNC mould, naturally informed the Superintendent with the result that a fracas broke out when the Police and the Superintendent arrived, and sixty arrests were made.[174]

What conclusions can we draw from this new phase of political radicalisation? Firstly, although it cannot be traced so readily through the minutes of meetings, the process of polarisation was still going on. At the very beginning of the disturbances Maghato hurried off to the Native Sub-Commissioner, Pretoria, to say that the situation was getting out of control.[175] On the other hand it was the familiar figures of Mabaso, H.L. Bud Mbelle, E. Dunjwa, Cetiwe and Kraai who led the march to the Pass Office which started the affair. At the same time we see a new element entering the agitation, no doubt because it was passes that were under attack - the lumpenproletariat of Vrededorp and other urban slums. Of the 316 arrested on 4 April in the Vrededorp disturbances, 45 had previous convictions for serious crimes, 15 for desertion, and 10 for minor offences (for example, pass laws, drunkeness, habitual loafing). One enterprising individual had 26 previous convictions, another 22, one 15 pass law offences, and another two had convictions for uttering passes. A similar pattern emerged from the arrests of the 14th.[176] Clearly a new and dangerous element was entering the movement, with the arrival of the lumpen urban mob, which was to prompt serious reflection as to what course of action to pursue with the radicalised petty bourgeoisie.

A section of the TNC leadership now seems to have drawn back from the brink. The violence unleashed by the anti-pass disturbances, from workers and the lumpenproletariat, as well as from the police, seems to have given rise to serious misgivings. Officical soft-soaping once more served to reinforce this feeling. On 1 July 1918 DNL Pritchard summoned a TNC delegation to announce the appointment of the low grades mines commission, and suggested that Congress itself might wish to give evidence. But if they did, he counselled that they "should go with a clean slate. A great blunder had been made by them in starting the 'Throw away passes' agitation", and he advised them to consider what their attitude would be. He was prepared to grant all blacks who had thrown away their passes one week's grace to go to the various pass offices and get duplicate passes.

The deputation then retired and on returning thanked Colonel Pritchard for his offer. They admitted they had made a great blunder, and gratefully accepted his offer. Pritchard can hardly have been able to contain his satisfaction and went on to consolidate his gains. The FIRD and the character column on passes, he said, had already been abolished, and his objective was to get the Government to agree to a far more liberal granting of exemptions from passes, such exemptions being given free. He felt "a great majority of natives would still require a lot of control, but the exempted ones would gradually make a buffer population and readily increase". Clearly the spectre of a militant petty bourgeoisie once again

unleashing the passions of the urban mob and working class was one that he was anxious to exorcise straight away. Concluding, he went on to further sugar the pill by reporting that an inter-Departmental Pass Laws Committee was about to be set up, and that he was having discussions with the municipality to expedite the provision of housing and to see what could be done about prosecutions in Klipspruit for illicit brewing of liquor.[177]

Reporting to a TNC meeting in Vrededorp on 6 July, Mabaso got a hotter reception than he can possibly have expected. Thibedi cross-questioned him about his position, eliciting the accusation that "he was only a youngster and would get us into trouble", and another unnamed member of the audience bluntly accused Mabaso of being bribed. At this Mabaso promptly closed the meeting, and was only with difficulty saved from public assault. The meeting was only rescued when Mbelle pointed out that Mabaso was only reporting back and if they were not in agreement another interview should be arranged.[178]

At meetings on the 8th and 10th similar criticisms were voiced, it being argued that Pritchard would inform the Commission of Enquiry that blacks had no grievances against passes now they had agreed to take them back. On the 8th Mabaso tried to defend his position by saying, "We have broken the law: Congress has no money to assist workers. It behoves us to be penitent and to honour the Director who will intercede for us". However, like Maghato before him he was clearly being pulled two ways, and at the meeting of the 10th he finally caved in. "Those who want to follow the Director's advice", he argued, "can. For those who don't I inform you of a General Strike in the Transvaal on October 1st". Already three "natives" were organising for a strike in Potchefstroom, Middelburg and Rustenburg.[179] (Another police report of the meeting confirmed the above as substantially correct with the sole exception of the date of the strike. According to this what was said was that every possible endeavour would be made to bring about a strike.)

The militant constituency of Congress seemed to be maintaining its grip, but another movement was stirring which was ultimately to create a new set of rifts. On the 19th March Maghato reported that he and Chief Maghato had collected R41.18.6 at Potchefstroom and £10 on farms at Delmas. What this heralded was a new move into the countryside and a closer alliance with the chiefs. Maghato in particular was susceptible to this shift, being the son of Kgorutle Ratad Maghato (chief of the tribe at Mphahlele), and the grandson of Chief Maghato of the Zoutpansberg area.[181] His attitude to rural society and to the benign egalitarian rule of chiefs is best captured in his speech to a Congress meeting in June 1918. "In our rule", he said, "we did not distinguish the poor because the poor got cattle given him by the Chief to maintain his family".[182] What Maghato failed to realise, however, was that the position of chiefs had changed, and the alliance that he fostered became an increasingly conservative drag. Nevertheless, what was in the making was a rural populist movement which was ultimately to reach fruition after the decline of

urban agitation in mid 1920. In May 1919, for example, reports reached Johannesburg of Maghato's trip to Bronkhorstspruit where he urged the destruction of passes, and of his continued perigrinations into the Lydenburg district.[183] Of the other Congress leaders, Ramailane seemed the most prone to this approach. At a Congress meeting on 23 November, he urged his audience to approach the Government in a constitutional fashion, and they would gradually obtain their rights, citing the example of Chief Griffiths of Basutoland who had just made a visit to England.[184] An additional influence here may have been the impending arrival of the SANNC delegates from Versailles, which had temporarily diverted Congress' attention, for on the 23rd Ramailane announced to his perplexed audience that "he was able to give them great news". All the Transvaal Chiefs were going to travel to Basutoland to consult with Chief Griffiths about his trip overseas.[185]

Conservative chiefly ideology was gradually penetrating Congress and even Mabaso became infected by the spirit of the times. On the 8th February 1920, just before the black mineworkers' strike, he spoke out strongly against Africans causing any trouble over the £2 Poll Tax of the Transvaal. The Native Congress and the chiefs, he added, were not in favour of strikes, but wanted to submit to the laws of the country trusting that in the end the Government would redress their grievances. The "mabalans" (clerks) at Crown Mines, he went on, should use all their influence in preventing trouble taking place, adding that the Transvaal chiefs were going to Basutoland to hear Chief Griffiths' report.[186] Mabaso returned to the same theme on 20th and 22nd February. Congress did not want to go against the Government. It was trusted by the chiefs who regarded it as an intermediary between the authorities and "the natives".[187]

Chiefly influence and conservatism was clearly pulling a section of the Congress leadership one way, and Ramailane was at pains to emphasise that Congress had no part in the 1920 black mineworkers' strike.[188] Yet it was still not possible to ignore more radical kinds of pressures being exercised on the other wing of Congress or the political polarisation within its ranks, that would persist until as late as 1921. At the "native strike" meeting for example on 20 February, "a Zulu" announced that he wanted to speak about the strike. "They must do what they were told", he said, "because the strike was organised and directed by educated people". The strike was to take place on Monday morning, and the strike headquarters was 21 Delvers Street. Its telephone number was 5791 to which all news should be sent.[189] Similarly, in response to Mabaso's plea for moderation on 22 February, the crowd replied that Congress had failed to accomplish anything, and their faith in it had vanished. The only thing for them to do was to go out on strike.[190]

Other evidence of the continued radicalisation of Congress, in at least its middle ranks, is supplied by a report of a Congress meeting at Boksburg on 8 Feburary 1920. At this, Ngoja got up and gave a speech in a more familiar vein;

> The black race must know that white people are thieves and devils ... God did not want cowards. They must look to the gaols as their homes. The mine natives must know they are producers of wealth and must get better pay ... There must be unity among blacks. The town lights can be put out ... America said they would free all natives and they will help ... America had a black fleet and it is coming.[191]

A millenarian and apocalyptic vision was also beginning to intrude. Which wing would win out in this battle would be the product of changing rythms in the economic life of the country and their effects on class struggles.

Some tentative hypotheses on this subject have been advanced in an earlier paper I wrote on this period[192]; detailed investigation, however, will have to await another time.

FOOTNOTES

1. H.J. and R.E. Simons, *Class and Colour in South Africa 1850-1950*, (Harmondsworth, 1969).
2. M. Benson, *The Struggle for a Birthright*, (Harmondsworth, 1966).
3. P. Walshe, *The Rise of African Nationalism in South Africa*, (London, 1970).
4. P.L. Wickens, *The Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union of Africa*, (Cape Town, 1978).
5. T. Karis and G. Carter (eds), *From Protest to Challenge. A Documentary History of African Politics in South Africa 1882-1964*, (Vol.I, Stanford, 1972).
6. E. Roux, *Time Longer than Rope*, (Madison, 1964).
7. M. Legassick, "The Rise of Modern South African Liberalism: Its Assumptions and its Social Base", unpublished paper, University of London, 1972.
8. F.A. Johnstone, *Class, Race and Gold*, (London, 1976).
9. Walshe, *African Nationalism*, p.71.
10. Johnstone, *Class*.
11. Walshe, *African Nationalism*, pp.73,83.
12. Wickens, *Union*, pp.43.57.
13. Simons, *Class and Colour*, pp.210-214.
14. Johnstone, *Class*, pp.174-180.
15. B. Willan, "Sol. Plaatje De Beers and an Old Tram Shed: Class Relations and Social Control in a South African Town, 1918-1919", *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 4, 2 Oct. 1977, 195, 196-215.
16. E. Laclau, *Politics and Ideology in Marxist Theory*, (London, 1977), 104.
17. *Report of the Interdepartmental Committee on the Native Pass Laws*, UG 41,22,5.
18. N. Poulantzas, *Classes in Contemporary Capitalism*, (London, 1975), 290-97.
19. Walshe, *African Nationalism*, 50-59, especially 60.
20. TAD, Municipal Co. Archives Box 823, 18/37. Minutes of Evidence to Moffatt Commission - Evidence of H.S. Cooke, Acting D.N.L., 423-4. DNL, Box 323, File 84/20, 243, Local Government Commission, Statement of numbers of natives employed in proclaimed labour districts of Transvaal on 31.5.20.
21. Interview William Sebina Letlalo, Soweto, 10 December 1979.
22. TAD, Municipal Co. Archives, Box 823, 18/37, Minutes of Evidence to Moffatt Commission, Taberer 481.

23. DNL Box 323, File 84/243, Local Government Commission, Statement of numbers of natives ... (the figures for the Rand have been extracted from the wider submissions made from the Transvaal).
24. DNL Box 2 323, File 84/20/243, Replies to circular B.4/23 Chief Pass Officer to D.N.L., 29 Jan.1923.
25. TAD Municipal Co. Archive, Box 823 18/37 Minutes of Evidence to Moffatt Commission. Evidence of H.S. Cokke, Acting DNL, 442.
26. Bureau of Census and Statistics, "Union Statistics for Fifty Years, Jubilee Issue 1910-1960", H.24.
27. TAD, Municipal Co. Archive, Box 823 18/37 Minutes of Evidence to Moffatt Commission. Evidence of P.W. McKie, representing Transvaal Miners Traders Association, 576.
28. The Johannesburg Joint Council of Europeans and Natives, "The Native in Industry", p.2 and Report of the Wages Committee, 19 August 1921 - cited in N. Kagan, "African Settlements in the Johannesburg Area 1903-23", M.A. Thesis, University of the Witwatersrand, January 1978, p.99.
29. For example, Mun. Co. Arch. 823 18/37 Mins of Evid. to Moffatt Commission, 230, Msimang, 151-2 Maxexe, 131, Mcayiya, 565, Chake.
30. DNL 310 File 125/19/48 Native Wages.
31. Evidence to Moffatt Commission, Cooke 442-3.
32. See Note 29.
33. P.L. Bonner, "The 1920 Mineworkers' Strike: A Preliminary Account", in B. Bozzoli, *Labour Townships and Protest*, (Johannesburg, 1979), 279.
34. Evidence to Moffatt Commission, Chake 565-6.
35. *Ibid.*, Msimang, 229.
36. *Ibid.*, Phooko 317; see also Filiso, 94.
37. *Ibid.*, Taberer, 481.
38. *Ibid.*, Duljwa, 218.
39. *Ibid.*, Cooke 459; see also above pp.6-7.
40. *Ibid.*, Msimang, 229-30.
41. *Ibid.*, 2.
42. *Ibid.*, Chake 565.
43. *Ibid.*, Mcayiya 135-6.
44. Laclau, *Politics*, pp.100-111.
45. D. Gaitskell, "Laundry, Liquor and 'Playing Ladish': African Women in Johannesburg 1903-39", unpublished paper, 22 June 1978.
46. TAD, Municipal C. Archives Box 823, 18/37, Minutes of

Evidence to Moffatt Commission.

47. *Ibid.*, evidence of Msimang.

48. *Ibid.*, 338/10/F164 Klipspruit Disturbances 1919, Petition by Ellen Leeuw and 122 native women to the Mayor of Johannesburg 23 March 1910, "It is well known that our husbands are getting very low wages and cannot afford to discharge their liabilities unless they get our assis--ances". "All classes of work formerly performed [by women] are now in the hands of men - e.g. kitchen or general servants work, washing and ironing, eating houses for natives, nursing in native hospitals."

49. Interview William Sebina Letlalo, Soweto, 10 Dec. 1979; TAD, Municipal Co. Archives, Box 823, 18/37, Minutes of Evidence to Moffatt Commission, Charlotte Maxexe, who links the temptation to brew illicit liquor to the reduction of jobs available to women;
DNL Box 313 File Part 125/19/48. Industrial unrest 1919 Benoni, H.J. Mgqamo to Inspector NAD Benoni, 30 May 1919, Encl. R.M. Tladi's speech 2 May 1919;
DNL 323 File 84/20/243, Local Government Commission, Evidence H.S. Bell;
DNL 281 446/17/D48, Native unrest, Native Detective Sergeant Moorosi to Det.H/Const. Hoffman, 21 June 1918 - speech by Charlotte Maxexe.

50. TAD, Municipal Co. Archives 823 18/37, Minutes of Evidence to Moffatt Commission, Benjamin Phooko, 318.

51. DNL enc. pamphlet signed H.L. Bud Mbelle and C. Mabaso, April 1919.

52. C. van Onselen, *Chibaro*, (London, 1976), pp.231-2;
TAD, Municipal Co. Archives, 823, 18/37, Minutes of Evidence to Moffatt Commission, H.S. Cooke.

53. DNL 309 125/19/48 Anti-Pass Agitation. Cooke to Natives of the Witwatersrand. For other examples, the Pass Officer, Boksburg (19 Dec. 1919) argued, "As many natives are ignorant and uncivilised this is necessary as an identification and check against crime, and a protection against Europeans"; Protector of Natives (11 De. 1919), "The pass system protects them against uncrupulous employers and when a dispute over length and conditions of service arise. Also in event of accident or demise it makes it possible to inform relatives and remit money.

54. DNL 320 301/19/17 Evidence to Inter-Departmental Pass Laws Committee, Inspector (Central) NAD Johannesburg to DNC, 19 Dec. 1919.

55. For example, see Evidence to Moffatt Commission, Bud Mbelle, 275.

56. TAD, Municipal Co. Archives, 823 18/37, Minutes of Evidence to Moffatt Commission, W.C. Lawrence, Acting Chief Pass Officer, 342.

57. DNL Box 313 File Part 125/19/48, Industrial Unrest 1919 Benoni, H.S. Mgqamo to Inspector NAD Benoni, 30 May 1919, encl. R.M. Tladi's speech, 2 May 1919, Benoni.

58. TAD Mun. Co. Archives, Evidence to Moffatt Commission, Cooke, 465,468; Lawrence 339,344.

59. DNL 313 File Part 125/19/48, Industrial Unrest 1919 Benoni, H.S. Mgqamo to Inspector NAD Benoni 30 May 1919, encl. R.M. Tladi's speech 2 May 1919.

60. SN Box 85 527/17/F164(1) Transvaal Native Unrest (1) Stubbs Commission, Letanka's statement, "When a Native, after being forced to come out of his kraal, got to the Mines or the towns, the Pass Law forced him to get work as soon as possible. That is when the 6-day pass was instituted. When it expires the Native is afraid he may be arrested. He has not sufficient time to find more remunerative employment, and is perhaps forced to accept £1 or 30/- a month. The first white man who hires him gives him as little wages as possible because the unfortunate Native is forced by the Pass Law to take anything that is offered to him. His Pass is marked £1 or 30/- and thus his first employer is his valuator. He cannot get more.

61. DNL 320 301/19/72 Evidence to Inter-Departmental Pass Laws Committee, Inspector NAD Benoni to DNL 24 Dec. 1919.

62. DNL 313 File Part 125/19/48, Industrial unrest in Benoni. Mgqamo.

63. See for example, DNL 309 Part File 125/19/48 Vrededorp Riot.

64. See below, pp.44-5.

65. Inspector NAD Krugersdorp to DNL, 17 Dec. 1919.

66. DNL 313 File Part 125/19/48, Industrial Unrest in Benoni, Mgqamo to Inspector NAD Benoni, 30 May 1919 encl. Tladi's speech 2 May 1919; for other evidence to the same effect see Mgqamo to Inspector NAD Benoni 30 March 1919.

67. 338/19 F164 Klipspruit Disturbances 1919 encl. L.T. Mvabasa to DNL 1 August 1910.

68. DNL 281 446/1710D48, Police report on IWA meeting, 27 June 1918; "A native Police who could neither read or write happened to meet one Alfred Barnabas, a clerk at Kleinfontein G.M. Co. Ltd., an exempted man. The Police asked him for his special. He told him that he carried an exemption which he produced to him. The Police insisted on him producing a special "not this", then took him to the Benoni Charge Office .../and claimed/ he had refused to produce /the exemption/. He was charged and convicted accordingly". Mgqamo also gave details of two similar cases. DNL, Box 313 File Part 125/19048, Industrial Unrest in Benoni; C. van Onselen, "The role of Collaborators in the Rhodesian Mining Industry 1900-1935", *African Affairs*, Vol.72, No.289, October 1973.

69. DNL 320 301/19/72 Evidence to Inter-Departmental Pass Laws Committee.

70. *Ibid.*, Inspector Central NAD Johannesburg to DNL 19 Dec. 1919; Pass Officer Roodepoort to DNL 18 Dec. 1919; W. Walker, Inspector NAD Johannesburg to DNL 6 January 1920.

71. Interview Letlalo, 10 Dec. 1979.

72. S.N. Box 85, 527/17/F164(1) Stubbs Commission, Transvaal Native Unrest, Letanka.

73. N. Kagan, "African Settlements in the Johannesburg Area, 1903-1923", M.A. Thesis, University of the Witwatersrand, 1978, 35-66, 111-2, 115; A. Proctor, "Class Struggle, Segregation and the City: A History of Sophiatown 1905-1940, in B. Bozzoli (ed.), *Labour, Townships and Protest*, (Johannesburg, 1979), 53.

74. *Ibid.*; Kagan, "Settlements", 35-6,93; DNL 281 446/17/48, Report on SANNC meeting 19 June 1918.

75. Kagan, "Settlements", 101.

76. 338/19 F164 Klipspruit Disturbances 1919, encl. Supplementary Report of the Parks and Estates Committee on the Klipspruit Disturbances, Minutes of 383rd meeting, 27 January 1920.

77. Kagan, "Settlements", 101.

78. *Ibid.*, 92.

79. *Ibid.*, 64,95; 338/19 F164 Klipspruit Disturbances encl. Evidence of H.S. Cooke, Assistant DNL; *ibid.*, encl. E.T. Mvabasa to DNL 1 August 1910.

80. *Ibid.*; *ibid.* encl. evidence of H.S. Cooke; Kagan, "Settlements", 156-7,93.

81. DNL 323 File 84/20/243 Local Government Commission, Evidence of H.S. Bell, Native Sub-Commissioner Witwatersrand, n.d.; DNL ... Report by Detective Brandon, 30 April 1919; DNL Box 313 File Part 125/19/48, Industrial Unrest Benoni, H.S. Mgqamo to Inspector NAD Benoni 30 May 1919 and encl. R.M. Tladi's speech 2 May 1919.

82. DNL 323 File 84/20/243 Local Government Commission, Evidence of H.S. Bell.

83. Kagan, "Settlements", 35-7,87-9.

84. DNL 323 File 84/20/243 Local Government Commission Evidence H.S. Bell.

85. *Ibid.*; Kagan, "Settlements", 45.

86. *Ibid.*, 67-74, 135-6; Proctor, "Class Struggle", 53.

87. Kagan, "Settlements", 41,52,115; Proctor, "Class Struggle", 53.

88. Kagan, "Settlements", 42,65.

89. *Ibid.*, 42, who cites £3-£4 a month; TAD Municipal Co. Archives, Evidence to Moffatt Commission, 296, Jackson Koza who cites 15/- a month.

90. Kagan, "Settlements", 46-50; TAD Municipal Co. Archives, Evidence to Moffatt Commission, R.W. Msimang, E. Chake, C. Maxexe, H. Mcayiya.

91. *Ibid.*, 142, 152-2;
My thanks to Doug Hindson for drawing my attention to this point.

92. DNL Box 323 File 84/20/243, Local Government Commission, Parks and Estates Committee, Minutes 21 July 1919.

93. *Ibid.*, H. Bell, Native Sub-Commissioner, Witwatersrand, to DNL 26 June 1920.

94. *Ibid.*, L. Botha to Administrator, Transvaal 11 September 1918.

95. Kagan, "Settlements", 80-81.

96. S.N. 85 527/17/F164(1) interview between Malan, Acting Minister Native Affairs and delegation of natives on Reef, 12 Dec. 1918; TAD, Municipal Co. Archives, Mins of Evidence to Moffatt Commission, Msimang 230, C. Maxexe 153, I. Bud Mbelle 275, Rev. H.R. Mcayiya 132, Msane 401, J.W. O'Hara 371; C. van Onselen, "Ama Washa. The Zulu Washermans Guild of the Witwatersrand 1890-1914", unpublished seminar papers; C. van Onselen, "Johannesburg's Jehu's 1890-1914", unpublished seminar paper.

97. Kagan, "Settlements", 60.

98. 338/19/F164 Klipspruit Disturbances 1919, enc. L.T. Mvabasa to DNL, 1 August 1910; TAD Mun. Co. Archives, Evidence to Moffatt Commission, Rev. H.R. Mcayiya, 129. According to Kagan ("Settlements", 63) in 1906 16 applications for trading stands had been granted, 11 for African eating houses and 6 for church stands.

99. For example, TAD Municipal Co. Archives, Evidence to Moffatt, Mcayiya, 132, Cook 447.

100. DNL 323 File 84/20/243 Evidence S. Bell; Kagan, "Settlements", 89, 95; see also 338/19/F164 Klipspruit Disturbances, encl. L.T. Mvabasa to DNL 1 August 1910.

101. Kagan, "Settlements", 35; TAD, Mun. Co. Archives, Evidence to Moffatt Commission, Benjamin S. Dlepu.

102. Kagan, "Settlements", 155-8.

103. T.D. Mweli Skota, *The African Yearly Register*, (Johannesburg, 1932), 174,254; TAD, Mun. Co. Archives, Evidence to Moffatt Commission, evidence Moffatt 539.

104. DNL Box 323 File 84/20/243, Chief Pass Officer, Johannesburg to DNL Johannesburg 29 January 1923.

105. Quoted in C. van Onselen, "The Witches of Suburbia: Domestic Servants in Johannesburg", unpublished seminar

paper, University of London, Institute of Commonwealth Studies, 9 March 1978, 30.

106. TAD, Municipal Co. Archive, Evidence to Moffatt Commission, H.S. Cooke, 426.

107. *Ibid.*, S.M. Maghato, 540.

108. Fox example, *ibid.* R.W. Msimang, 228-9.

109. *Ibid.*, I. Bud Mbelle, 279.

110. *Ibid.*, I. Bud Mbelle, 262; S.M. Maghato, 542.

111. Laclau, *Politics*, 103.

112. Evidence to Moffatt Commission, 324, Plaatjes.

113. *Ibid.*, 320-1, Phooko.

114. *Ibid.*, J.W. O'Hara, Johannesburg City Council, 360-1.

115. Johnstone, *Class*, 168-70.

116. DNL 309 125/19/48 newspaper cutting.

117. Simon, *Class and Colour*, 230; see also DNL 206 1697/17/17 Report of TNC meeting 13 February 1920.

118. R.H. Davies, *Capital, State and White Labour in South Africa 1900-1960*, (New Jersey, 1979), 83-4 - see especially Smuts' statement to Parliament in 1922, "The fear that obsessed me above all things (during the course of the armed struggle of March 1922. - RD) was that owing to the wanton provocation of the revolutionaries, there might be a wild, *uncontrollable* outbreak among the natives". (emphasis added)

119. DNL Brown Manilla file, Native unrest reports from Town Inspectors and others, E. Berg to DNL 28 May 1918.

120. DNL, Brown manilla file. Native unrest reports from Town Inspectors and others, E. Berg to DNL 28 May 1928; see also Evidence to Moffatt Commission, Alfred Poolson, Manager, Vrededorp Sanitary Compound, 160-4; *ibid.*, E.C. Berg, Acting Town Inspector Native Affairs.

121. *ibid.*, Berg to DNL, 1 June 1918.

122. *ibid.*, Number of natives in the employ of the Johannesburg Municipality; evidence to Moffatt 13-41 Nonjane, 'Willie', 'Tony', 'Frank'.

123. TAD, Mun. Co. Archives, Evidence to Moffatt Commission, E.C. Berg; A. Poolson (the sequence of events given by Berg and Poolson do not tally - where there are disagreements I have followed Berg).

124. DNL, 281 446/17/D48 Native unrest. Native Detective Moorosi to Det. H. Const. Hoffman 21 June 1918 - speech by Letanka.

125. *Ibid.*, Report on meeting of TNC 10 June 1918, Ebenezer Hall; Evidence to Moffatt Commission, 267-8, I. Bud Mbelle.

126. *ibid.*, 261, A. Mzimba.

127. *Ibid.*, 221-3, H. Duljwa.

128. *Ibid.*, 241-2, R.W. Msimang.

129. See notes 125, 126, 127; DNL 281/446/17/D48, Deputy Commissioner of Police Johannesburg to DNL 26 June 1918.

130. TAD, Mun. Co. Archives, Evidence to Moffat Commission, 269-271, I. Bud Mbello.

131. DNL 281 446/17/D48, Native unrest, report on meeting of 12 June 1918, Ebenezer Hall, headed "Transvaal Native Congress".

132. *Ibid.*, Deputy Commissioner CID Transvaal Division to DNL 21 June 1918, reports by Native Detective Sergeant Moorosi 21 June 1918, G.S. Broodryk 21 June 1918, Sergeant Mbusani 21 June 1918, Constable J.J. Jordaan n.d., Sergeant J. Bland and two others headed "Details of Mass Meeting of the Johannesburg Natives 19.6.18", and "Transvaal National Native Congress and Industrial Workers of Africa"; for Mvabasa and the IWA see, F.A. Johnstone, "The IWA on the Rand: Socialist organising among Black Workers on the Rand, 1917-1918" in Bozzoli, *Labour*, 260.

133. DNL 281 446/17/D48. Report on "Transvaal National Native Congress and Industrial Workers of Africa".

134. *Ibid.*, Native Detective Sergeant R. Moorosi to Hoffman, 28 June 1918.

135. *Ibid.*, Deputy Commissioner of Police Johannesburg District to DNL 26 June 1918 encl. statement Major Bell, Basuto Boss Boy, n.d.

136. TAD, Mun. Co. Archives, Evidence to Moffatt Commission, 381-2, Samuel Hanrock.

137. *Ibid.*, 271-2, I. Bud Mbelle.

138. DNL Brown manilla folder, E. Berg, Town Inspector to DNL 13 June 1918; *ibid.*, 27 J-ne 1918.

139. TAD. Mun. Co. Archives, Evidence to Moffatt Commission, Taberer, 477, Filiso, 90.

140. *Ibid.*, Duljwa, 223-5; DNL 281/17/D48, Native Sergeant Moorosi to Det. Head Constable Hoffman 28 June 1918.

141. *Ibid.*

142. *Ibid.*; *ibid.* Report of ISL meeting 25 June 1918 under heading International Socialist League, n.d.

143. DNL 281 446/17/D48 Native unrest, N.D. Sergeant Moorosi to Det. Head Const. Hoffman 30 June 1918.

144. *Ibid.*, report on meeting 28 June 1918 headed "The Transvaal National Native Congress meeting connected with other societies".

145. *Ibid.*; *ibid.* N. Det. Sergeant Moorosi to Hoffman 29 June 1918.

146. Cited in Willan, "Class Relations", 207.

147. DNL 281 446/17/D48 Native Unrest, Moorosi to Hoffman 30 June 1918.

148. *Ibid.*, Report on meeting 30 June 1918 headed "Transvaal Native Congress and Industrial Workers of Africa", n.d.

149. DNL, brown manilla folder, E. Berg to DNL 2 July 1918.

150. *Ibid.*, Berg to DNL 3 July 1918; Evidence to Moffatt Commission, Cooke, 431; G. St. Leger Devenish 173-5; E. Weaver, 180-2; S.K. Mackenzie, 186-8, 'John' 60-1; 'Richard' 72-6.

151. *Ibid.*, 4-6.

152. DNL 294 243/18/48 Deputation of Representative natives to General Botha encl. Report of preliminary meeting 24 July 1918.

153. Evidence to Moffatt Commission, S. Msane, 405.

154. *Ibid.*, 412; see also Kagan, "Settlements", 98.

155. DNL 243/8/48 (8) Deputation of Representative Natives to Gen. Botha 9 July 1918 encl. Notes for Minister's interview with native delegates.

156. DNL 310, 125/19/48, Johannesburg Chamber of Commerce, Report of Executive Committee 24 January 1920.

157. DNL 243/8/48 (8) Deputation of Representative Natives to Gen. Botha, encl. DNA to dnl 4 Sept. 1918.

158. Cited by Willan, "Class Relations", 206.

159. P.L. Bonner, "The 1920 Black Mineworkers' Strike: A Preliminary Account", in Bozzoli, *Labour*, 277.

160. S.N. 85 527/17/F164(1). Transvaal native unrest (Stubbs Commission), Interview Malan and others with TNC deledation 12 December 1918.

161. This period has as yet not been adequately covered in my researches. I rely on Johnstone - *Class, Race and Gold*, 176-7.

162. DNL 125/19048 Anti-Pass Agitation April 1919 encl. *Abantu Batho*, 3 April 1919; see also SN 85 527/17/F164(1), Transvaal Native Unrest Stubbs (1); *ibid.*, M. Natlab to Natives Cape Town 31 March 1919.

163. Johnstone, *Class*, 177.

164. DNL 309 125/19/48 encl. *Rand Daily Mail*, (early April 1919).

165. SN 85 527/17/164(1). Transvaal Native unrest (1). Stubbs Commission, Minutes of meeting between TNC delegation and government officials headed by N.J. de Wet, Minister of Justice.

166. *Ibid.*, Affidavit W.C. Lawrence, Acting Chief Pass Officer, 1 April 1919.

167. *Star*, 31 March 1919, quoted by Roux, *Time ... Rope*, 117;

DNL 309 125/19/48, statement showing class of natives concerned in recent "no pass agitation"; *ibid.* Telegram DNL to NAD Pretoria, 1 April 1919.

168. S.N. 216 389/19/F473, Teleg. Natlab to Natives, Pretoria 1 April 1919.

169. DNL Telegram DNL to Dept. Native Affairs, Cape Town, 2 April 1919, 11.20 p.m.

170. Johnstone, *Class*, 177.

171. *Star*, 4 April 1919, quoted by Roux, *Time ... Rope*, 119-20; DNL 309 125/19/48 Anti-Pass Agitation, April 1919. Sergeant F. Gallop to Officer L/C SAP Western area 9 April 1919; *ibid.*, statement showing class of natives concerned in recent no pass agitation; SN 216 389/19/F473, Statement M. Sibisi 14 April 1919; DNL Tel. Natlab to Natives Cape Town 10 April 1919.

172. SN 216 389/19/F473, C. Loftus inspector SAP Benoni to District Commissioner, Boksburg 4 April 1919.

173. *Ibid.*, Wilfred Jali, C.I.D. Maraisburgh to Mr. King. 16 April 19(?); *Cape Times*, 7 April 1919.

174. DNL Inspector Rawlinson NAD Boksburg to DNL 28 April 1919; *ibid.*, Location Superintendent Boksburg Location to Inspector NAD Boksburg 29 April 1919; *ibid.*, Det. Head Constable H. St. O. O. Brandon to District Commissioner SAP Boksburg 30 April 1919.

175. SN 85 527/17/F164(1) Transvaal unrest, Stubbs Commission, teleg. Natives Pretoria to Natives Cape Town, 1 April 1919.

176. DNL 309 125/19/48 Statement showing the class of natives concerned in the recent "no pass agitation".

177. DNL 206 697/14/76, Interview Pritchard with TNC delegates 1 July 1919.

178. *Ibid.*, Report of TNC meeting 6 July 1919.

179. *Ibid.*, Report of TNC meetings 8 July 1919 and 10 July 1919.

180. *Ibid.*, Report of meeting 22 July 1919.

181. Skota, *Yearly Register*, 180.

182. DNL 281 446/17/D48 native unrest. Report on meeting of 19 June 1918, headed details of the mass meeting held of the Johannesburg natives, 19 June 1918.

183. SN 85 527/17/F164(1) Transvaal Unrest, Stubbs Commission, Statement by Detective Kleinbooi, C.I.D. Johannesburg 21 May 1919.

184. DNL 206 1697/17/76 Report of meeting of 23 November 1919.

185. *Ibid.*, Report of meeting 23 December 1919.

186. *Ibid.*, Report of meeting 8 February 1920.

187. *Ibid.*, Report of meeting 20 February 1920; *ibid.*, 22 February 1920.

188. *Ibid.*, 20 February 1920.
189. *Ibid.*, Report of Native Strike meeting, 20 February 1920.
190. *Ibid.*, report of meeting 22 February 1920.
191. Justice Department, Det. Constable Brandon to District Commissioner SAP, 9 February 1920.