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Sitas, A.

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UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND

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

African Studies Seminar Paper
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Title: Disorganising the Unorganised: The 'Black Flood' and the Registered Metal Union Responses, Part I, the 1960s.of South African 'Development'.

by: A Sitas

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African Studies Seminar Paper
to be presented at Seminar in
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11 May 1981

DISORGANISING THE UNORGANISED: THE 'BLACK FLOOD' AND THE REGISTERED METAL UNION RESPONSES, Part 1, the 1960s.[1]

by Mr A. Sitas

"I grew up in Zululand, I know the African. Our president says he can talk three African languages. I am not very far behind. I can talk to them, I can understand them. Has anybody spoken to an African about trade unionism? He doesn't know what you're talking about. If you take those in Zululand, where they still walk around only with the bottom covered, they don't know what a trade union means ..."

(J.J. Potgieter, San Boilermakers Society, TUCSA 1972, Annual Conference minutes, p.598).

"I was proud and pleased when the Prime Minster, Mr Vorster, said at the Rand Easter Show that he had only praise for the workers of South Africa, together with the employers and others. That was no indictment .... Labour has played its fair share in keeping to those things to which mankind has become used to, and is striving towards. Pontius Pilate washed his hands and send our Lord to his crucifixion, and that is what you would be doing if you washed your hands off the African today. That, from an intelligent and intellectual body like T.U.C.S.A., must not happen in this year 1968. It happened nearly 20,000 years ago, and there must be no repetition ..."

(Nelson. TUCSA 1968, Annual Conference Minutes, p.559).

This paper arises out of a combination of two factors: firstly, it is out of a dissatisfaction with a reality presented to us of late by a number of articles and more voluminous affairs like books about the role of white-skinned people in the racial division of labour, and through that, South African society as a whole. Secondly, out of a feeling that the ever-recurrent debate about 'inter-racial solidarity' and the South African working classes has been spirited away by some theoretical formulations that like the best of imported machinery started producing a mass of realities that obfuscate rather than clarify real issues that the labour movement is facing at present.[2] Unlike Demag machinery though, the results of the former, produced a reality that in most cases does not exist. These two factors will increasingly become clear as the narrative unfords and need not detain us here. What needs to detain us here though is the plot of the ensuing argument. In the first two parts of this paper, the story of the shifts in the T.U.C.S.A. as concerns African unionisation and their affiliation, disaffiliation acrobatics that characterised much of the 1960s is told. It finally traces two divergent responses vis-a-vis the registered union movement. The one, spearheaded by what have been called 'craft-diluted' unions, the other by 'industrial unions'. The third part, concerns an exploration of the material complexities that characterise the 'craft-diluted' unions with a specific focus on the actual transformations in the metal industry in South Africa throughout the 1960s. The fourth part looks at the unions themselves and how they respond to their new-found reality, not at the point of leadership but rather at the actions and passivities of their respective ranks and files. The fifth part analyses what has been discussed so far in the light of the current debates about the class determination of the white wage-earning classes. The paper closes with the 1972 T.U.C.S.A. Conference and the clear polarisation/accommodation that exists in strategy between registered unions: a year before Potgieter's Zulus took to the streets, their rags barely covering their bottoms but for completely different reaons than he gives or to use Nelson's *bad* metaphor, the year his Black-worker-Christ resurrects himself despite the washing of the hands of Pontius Pilate (read: colonial administrator; read: registered union movement).[3] The second part, or the second paper, at the moment in preparation, will be tracing the process to the present.

PART A: THE TRADE UNION COUNCIL AND INTER-RACIAL SOLIDARITY

The *Trade Union Council of South Africa* (TUCSA, initially SATUC) accepted affiliation from registered white, mixed, 'coloured' and 'indian' unions. At its annual Conference in 1962 after lively discussion, rhetoric and debate it arrived at the dramatic decision to allow properly constituted ('*bona fide*') trade unions to become affiliated to the Council, despite the fact that these unions were not officially recognised or registered under the Industrial Conciliation Act's stipulations.[4] The decision came about in the midst of a 'turbulent' climate of both a national and an international magnitude.

Already by 1961 members of the I.L.O. were moving resolutions for the suspension of South Africa from its ranks due to the Government's

Apartheid policies and claims that the registered predominantly white trade union movement was not representative of the entire labouring population of South Africa.[5] Already by 1961, the economy hardly moving out of a period of slump conditions was faced with the withdrawal of large scale capital investment following the Sharpeville massacre.[6] Simultaneously, the S.A.C.T.U. was, despite harassment, launching a new organisational drive especially on the East Rand whilst at the same time claiming to be the only true representative of the South African labour force internationally.[7] By then, also a number of Trade Union Council affiliates were increasingly concerned with the inflow of a growing number of African workers in South Africa's industrial life, substitution of white by black 'cheaper' labour, the Government's border area decentralisation programme and the loss of control over their respective industries.

As the S.A.C.T.U. was living through an 'undeclared state of emergency' through bannings of meetings and people, just before the mass-scale repression of S.A.C.T.U. organisers took root, L.C. Scheepers of the *Transvaal Leather Workers Industrial Union* proposed that

> this conference urges upon the Government to give recognition to African trade uhions whose membership consists of urbanised Bantu. Such trade-unions to function under the wing of the registered union. Where no such registered trade union exists, such unions to function under the supervision of the South African Trade Union Council ...[8]

Scheepers went on to assert that this was necessary because African trade unions attempting to operate on their own would not be a success, that is why the T.U.C.S.A. hen should take such union chicks under its wing. This motion was met with lukewarm support from what has been termed the 'craft-diluted' unions. E.H. McCann of the *Amalgamated Engineering Union* seconded the resolution, as he stressed, with caution. The dominant thrust though came from the industrial unions who opposed the motion as being too 'regressive' and finally a motion calling for the recognition of African trade unions was passed unanimously.[9] By 1962, the T.U.C. with 83 *for*, 10 *against*, and 9 abstentions voted for the admission of African unions as affiliates to the counci. A moment of inter-racial solidarity marred only by the cynical statement by Tom Murray on behalf of the N.E.C. that unless the Constitution of T.U.C.S.A. was not amended in terms of admission of African unions the credentials of the South African delegates would not be accepted at the I.L.O. Conference later the same year.[10]

Opposition to the motion came once again from the 'craft-diluted' unions, the *Amalgamated Engineering Union*, the *Motor Industry Employees Union* and the *Ironmoulders' Society of S.A.* McCann of the A.E.U. in contra-distinction to his previous stand was reported to have asked

> what could they do for their African friends by bringing them into the Council as affiliates that they could not do by liaison? ... He believed that in time they would convince the membership (of his union - 19,000 primarily Afrikaans speaking -AS) that the workers should all be united, irrespective of colour, but he did not think that the time had arrived as yet ....[11]

Crompton for the *Ironmoulders'Society* argued, in the interests of 'mixed unionism' - as his was - and the 'rate for the job' asserting that, since Africans were not permitted to join established unions he could not

support the creation of separate unions for Africans, their unions might undercut the established standards of the unionised whites and coloureds by breaking the 'rate for the job'.[12] Once again and overwhelmingly as abovementioned the delegates of the Conference voted for a changed constitution. A new era for the registered trade union movement had begun.

The above decision resulted in the formation of an African Affairs Department employing two African organisers under the guidance of a white official to provide the necessary training and educational functions for the 'organisation of the unorganised' and to assist small African unions to consolidate themselves. By early 1963, five African trade unions representing approximately 800 workers had become affiliated. The dramatic irony of the affair performed itsnasty tricks of coincidence: e.g., as T.U.C.S.A. was ignoring the Amendment Act of 1959 (I.C. Act) that prohibited mixed congresses or conferences by inviting in its 1963 annual conference affiliate African unions to send representatives,[13] the Sabotage Act of 1962, went halfway in crippling the leadership of the S.A.C.T.U., leaving the other half in the actual banning of 45 of its organisations by 1963/4.[14] As a backdrop, the San economy was beginning to enter its phenomenal boom or the miracle of the 60s as it is known, to transform the fabric of its entire industrial life. The T.U.C.S.A. conference once again resolved that

> all workers shall have the right to membership of unions registered in terms of the Industrial Conciliation Act, or where no registered unions exist, the workers should have the right in terms of how to organise and have their union recognised ....[15]

The T.U.C.S.A. appear and by implication its affiliates appear on the platform of the 60s, as a body of unions committed to nonracialism, basic and democratic rights, for all workers of South Africa, apolitical in so far as it makes the definite political choice to avoid politics and concentrate on 'bread and butter' issues, and in appearance radically transformed.[16] Only a few years after the '£1 a day' campaign, the stay-aways and the political campaigns of the late fifties and early sixties, African labourers are encouraged to join organisations that are apparently committed to inter-racial solidarity.

But you cannot have your cake and eat it. F.O.F.A.T.U.S.A., the brainchild of T.U.C.S.A. and some international trade union bodies, the opposing federation to S.A.C.T.U. that 'liaised' with T.U.C.S.A. throughout the late fifties and early sixties is disbanded. The initial response of the F.O.F.A.T.U.S.A. was to accept affiliation as a body, voicing reservations the affiliation of its unions on an individual basis. They saw no reason for *dual* affiliation and T.U.C.S.A.'s constitution did not provide for such affiliation anyway. Given that most of the F.O.F.A.T.U.S.A. affiliated unions were *de facto* in co-operation with T.U.C.S.A.'s affiliates due to the fact that most of the former were 'parallel unions' of the latter, the continued existence of F.O.F.A.T.U.S.A. was in a critical state. This led to a breach within it: by the end of 1963 the National Union of Clothing Workers decided to affiliate to the Council and by 1965 thirteen of the most important members also joined. From then on, the disbandment of the federation was question of months.[17]

T.U.C.S.A.'s 'transformation' did not budge a State committed to its industrial relations legislation. In 1964, the Deputy Minister of Labour made his stand quite clear by explicitly stating that nothing happened since 1948 to warrant any change in the Government's attitude concerning

trade unions. He maintained that Africans had not reached the stage where they could, without harmful results, exercise the functions and rights normally conferred on trade unions.[17] From similar premises the T.U.C.S.A. drew different conclusions: if this is so, then they *must* be provided with *responsible* leadership in order to turn them into constructive channels where they would have everything to gain from gradual progress. Unless their trade unions were recognised, and the above was met, the unrecognised African trade unions would become a dangerous element in South African society; if thwarted and frustrated they could be and already have been exploited by 'subversive elements' ...[18]

Debates were not on the Government's agenda, not with anyone least of all with trade union bodies about the organisation of the 'Bantu': When, in January 1965, an interview was sought with the Minister of Labour, T.U.C.S.A. met with intransigency all the way through: the government saw no point in such an interview for Africans according to its policy would remain excluded from the Industrial Conciliation Act's provisions, despite T.U.C.S.A.'s resolutions and wishes.[20] T.U.C.S.A. stood firm for the next year in its new found commitment. By 1966 it had thirteen African trade unions affiliated to it:

Union	Membership
African Baker's Industrial Union	50
African Brewery, Winery & Distillery Workers Unions	100
African Broom & Brush Workers' Union	524
African Glass Workers' Union	100
African Leather Workers' Union (Transvaal)	500
African Sweet Workers' Union	84
African Transport Workers' Union	100
African Tobacco Workers' Union	400
African Trunk & Box Workers' Industrial Union	100
Engineering Workers' Union of S.A.	430
National Union of Clothing Workers	4000
Tobacco Workers' Union of African Women	50
	6488[21]

It was not a golden era for African worker organisation: whereas in 1961 some 60 African unions existed with a good 60,000 members, the suppression of S.A.C.T.U., the demise of F.O.F.A.T.U.S.A. brought about an absolute *decline* of such a membership. The T.U.C.S.A. affiliated African unions barely constituted a third of F.O.F.A.T.U.S.A's (18,385) membership in 1961. This short history of African unionisation started with fits and starts to packed galleries and conference tables, in the midst of high principled polemics and a newly found enthusiasm; in promise it far exceeded actual practice; in practice, it was to become a travesty in a dramatic shift of principle comparable to some of the best theatrical moments like in Brecht's *Azdak*, baffling to the human brain unless one is born a virtual cynic.

PART B: THE T.U.C. AND RACIAL SOLIDARITY, 1966-69

(1)

The period between 1966-69 was to prove the most critical for the T.U.C.S.A. Critical, because as rapidly as the decision to affiliate and help organise African trade unions came into existence, in the same rapidity affiliation was stopped. The African unionists that footed the Bill in this social drama, like Mvumbelo, refer to this period as one of the most 'heart breaking' in their careers and rightly so.[21] Malherbe, the General Secretary of S.A.S.B.O., N.U.B.E.S.A. and S.A.B.E.U. explains that

> it was an open ... war between the Minister and T.U.C.S.A. at that stage. Now you cannot always advance, you have to sometimes to coin the beautiful phrase 'retreat according to plan'; you have to retreat, you have to take a couple of steps backwards to consolidate your position and then go forward again. And this is exactly what we did - and were forced to do at that stage.[22]

The 'retreat' meant though, that by 1970 only three African unions remained in existence: the National Union of Clothing Workers, the African Leather Workers' Union and the Engineering Workers' Union of South Africa.[23] Let us follow the generals and colonels in their open war and trace the events from the beginning.

Affiliation of African unions was not seen in a favourable light by a number of T.U.C.S.A. affiliates and by a significant amount of affiliates' rank and file. The first union to disaffiliate over the issue was the *Motor Industry Employees' Union* (a mechanics' union). Also in 1966, the Amalgamated Engineering Union (A.E.U.) bowed to rank and file discontent over its T.U.C.S.A. links and left the Council. At the 1966 Annual Conference, Tom Rutherford of the *South African Typographical Union* (S.A.T.U.) took the lead in arguing that T.U.C.S.A.'s position did not represent that of many white workers who feared the threat of an organised African labour force. Although T.U.C.S.A.'s position was correct in principle it was proving to be damaging.[24] Rutherford's arguments were supported by the *South African Electrical Workers' Association* (S.A.E.W.A.) and the *Ironmoulders' Society* (I.M.S.). Tom Murray of the Boilermakers' warned of capitulation if T.U.C.S.A. surrendered its principles to the pressures a t h a n d the only resistant voice amongst the 'craft' bloc. Crompton (I.M.S.) summed up the position of the dissenting affiliates

> We must accept that we are protectionist organisations. By this I mean that we meet the wishes of the members who foot the bill. Undoubtedly we would not be leaders unless we tried to channel the thought and the policy of our organisations, but we can only do this to a certain extent ... What really matters is - what does the membership of our respective unions want? Are we going to be leaders without an army, or are we going to accept that we have to back-pedal in order to preserve the conditions of the membership?[25]

Rank and file discontent *was* increasing. A rift in T.U.C.S.A. was imminent. The question of affiliation was referred to the incoming National Executive Committee (N.E.C.) unanimously. The N.E.C. in turn closed down the African Affairs Section of T.U.C.S.A., thus bringing to an end the

Council's contribution to the 'organisation of the unorganised'.

In October 1967, the Minister of Labour gave a speech that was sharply critical of the T.U.C. He accused it of being out of touch with South Africa's traditional attitudes. He criticised its African union policy and he warned of possible steps that could be taken against the Council by the Government. This seems to have been the unifier of all the dissenting unions. It immediately sparked off statements by several T.U.C.S.A. affiliates to the effect that they are opposed to the affiliation of African unions. The N.E.C. decided that the grave situation in its hands warranted a special conference in Durban on the 12-13 December 1967.[26]

T.U.C.S.A. in the meantime sent a delegation to interview the Minister of Labour. He was rather curt. The fostering of African trade unionism was against Government policy and any undermining of the policy would not be tolerated. He also, to the embarassment of the delegation, produced a signed memorandum by the Port Elizabeth branch of the *National Furniture Workers'Union* (a coloured T.U.C.S.A. affiliate union) that they were against T.U.C.S.A.'s policies over African affiliation. T. Murray (Boilermakers) responded as he claimed in a 'calculated' way to the Minister

> I said that T.U.C.S.A. does not necessarily believe in - when I said this I stuck my head out, and you can chop it off if you like - is for registered unions to be authorised to organise the Bantu within their own particular ambit ... I said that the organisation of the Bantu was basically motivated through selfishness because the white man is being systematically eliminated from the 'industrial scene' ...[27]

(2)

Even before the Special Conference a number of African unions decided to disaffiliate because their continued presence could harm the Council.[1] The *African Glass Workers'Union*, the *African Leather Workers'Union (Transvaal)*, the *African Sweet Workers'Union* and the *African Trunk and Box Industrial Union* withdrew. Simultaneously, the *African Bakers'Industrial Union*, the *African Broom and Brush Workers' Union*, the *African Chemical Workers' Union* and the *African Transport Workers'Union* no longer complied with the constitution of the Council so they were deemed to have ceased to be members.

At the Special Conference, the *African Tobacco Workers' Union* also withdrew. C. du Preez, the general secretary of both the registered and the abovementioned 'parallel' explained

> (The Union) withdrew from T.U.C.S.A., not because they wanted to, but because they wanted to save T.U.C.S.A. At that time we were afraid that if the Africans did not withdraw then T.U.C.S.A. would break up and that was something we did not want ...[28]

Similarly, L. Mvumbelo announced at the Conference the decision of the N.U.C.W. to sacrifice its interests for the safety of the Council.

> It is our firm belief that it is essential to keep T.U.C.S.A. in existence. If we, the African trade unions, do not withdraw there is a very distinct danger that the Council will be weakened and become less effective ... we would be acting

> contrary to the spirit of trade unionism if we did not do everything in our power to keep the Council going on the course it has set for itself ...[29] (!!)

Debate at the conference itself revealed a sense of fatalism and a high degree of 'survivalism' by the affiliates involved. Most saw the destruction of T.U.C.S.A. as imminent. Once again, the *S.A. Typographical Union*, the *S.A. Electrical Workers' Association* and the *Ironmoulders' Society* were pressing for change in order to maintain unity in T.U.C.S.A. and to avert Government threats. B. Cowley of the S.A.E.W.A. declared:

> It appears that I am the only speaker dedicated to the cause of the white artisan here today. We are a white trade union, and we have had the difficulty and problems in connection with T.U.C.S.A.'s policy for nearly four years ... We are not prepared to go against the policy of the government - and we are prepared to stand by that policy until such time as it is changed ...[30]

The discussion led to a polarisation reflected in two opposing resolutions. On the one hand, the one moved by Rutherford (S.A.T.U.) recommended the exclusion of unregistered trade unions from T.U.C.S.A.; on the other, R. Altman's (*National Union of Distributive Workers*) urging for the preservation of the *status quo*. The former was carried by 46 in favour, 7 against and 17 abstentions.[5] In terms of T.U.C.S.A.'s constitution though this vote did not count as a resolution but as a recommendation for the Annual Conference to discuss and implement.

(3)

Hardly four months later, in April 1968, to the surprise of many a delegate the motion from the Special Conference was not even tabled on the agenda. This, according to du Toit[31], had to do with the presence of an I.C.F.T.U. representative at the conference but it seems like a poor interpretation of a power struggle that was assuming extreme proportions. A furious Nicholson (S.A.E.W.A.) was prompted to intervene and place it there, not without extreme bitterness.[32] The resolution called for the ratification of the Special Conference decision to stop the affiliation of unregistered African unions.[33] In proposing the motion, Nicholson held no punches. As he said,

> You have to vote on this issue one way or the other. If the world is going to say that T.U.C.S.A. has this or that policy, it is not because one or two have a policy, but because everybody, or the majority, so decides. We must also pay attention to the fact that one of the main objectives of T.U.C.S.A. is to have trade-union unity throughout South Africa, not just in certain trade unions. We want everybody in one co-ordinating body. Whilst the policy of T.U.C.S.A. is to admit African trade unions, I am afraid that you can forget it. You can wipe Resolution no. 33 off the Agenda paper right now. It is a waste of time debating it. Unless, and until, T.U.C.S.A. has the policy, which is to allow only registered trade unions to be affiliated, then I am afraid you can forget about trade-union unity in South Africa.[34]

Furthermore,

> Another of the main objectives of T.U.C.S.A. is to better the working conditions of the people of South Africa. To do that you have to gain the co-operation of the Government, whether you like it or not.[35]

The S.A.T.U. supported S.A.E.W.A. E. Van Tonder explained that they did so on the grounds of consistency with previous decisions. He added,

> we further support the resolution because, as far as we are concerned, in our attitude to the Bantu workers our hands are clean, and our consciences are clear. The Typographical Union was many years ago faced with a problem almost indentical to that which T.U.C.S.A. is facing today ...

Drawing from the history of the S.A.T.U. he asserted that,

> At the outset of the struggle it was deemed important for the Bantu workers to be organised for consultation purposes, and to keep them out of unhealthy political elements prevalent at the time. This resulted in establishing the South African Typographical Union, African Section. A strong warning from the Department of Labour soon followed ... We had to decide then whether we would go ahead, and risk the destruction of our union, or whether there was another solution. We decided we would abandon - perhaps abandon is not the word I should use, rather dissolve - the African Printers' Union ...[36]

He also explained that dissolving the union did not mean that S.A.T.U. ignored the African labourer; far from it, they had always looked after his interests as well.

> I appeal to you all, fellow delegates: he finally stated, adopt the wiser course. The issue was very aptly outlined at the Special Conference by brother Malherbe when we were told by him: retreat slightly, let us give ourselves a breathing space, let us take time to consolidate and build T.U.C.S.A. up into a force so powerful that it just cannot be ignored ...[37]

Instead of a standing ovation the spokesman of the 'craft' position met with the wrath of many an opponent. The oppostion was more vociferous. Speaker after speaker voiced their support for continuing the affiliation of African unions.

According to Fraser (Goldsmiths and Jewellers, Cape),

> A powerful organisation has said that we shall abandon the Africans. What would be left of T.U.C.S.A.? Can it go ahead under the impression that it would be truly representative of working-class opinion in this country? If we accept this argument we only delude ourselves and sow the seeds of destruction. Are we sufficiently naive to believe such rubbish? ... Do we put our heads in the sand like the birds which I think should be our national emblem, or do we face up to the situation, and recognise the truth that the African is here to stay? He is a worker, the same as you and I. Tell the Minister of Labour to go to Hell, and say that we will continue to accept the African trade unions as affiliates of

> T.U.C.S.A. ...
>
> In conclusion, may I say that if T.U.C.S.A. is going to allow itself to be pushed around by any Government Department, it will cease to be a trade union co-ordinating body and will finish up as a Government Department ...[38]

Similarly J.R. Altman (*National Union of Distributive Workers*) vehemently opposed the resolution:

> Let it not be recorded in history that T.U.C.S.A. excluded the African unions when there was no compulsion upon them to do so; let not T.U.C.S.A. call down upon its own head the odium and opprobrium of the international trade-union movements by voluntarily departing from the true principles of trade unionism. This is an odium which should properly attach to our Government, if it should make it unlawful for African unions to continue to belong to T.U.C.S.A. ...[39]

According also to D.G. Langenhoven,

> Even if we stand with our backs on the wall, T.U.C.S.A. will survive. Our battlefields are the offices, the factories, the workrooms and the houses. Justly and proudly we will survive, upholding T.U.C.S.A.'s principles and not besmirching its policy by as much as the bending or wagging of a finger ...[40]

And again, Nelson:

> All that we are asking for now is a fair sharing of rights in regard to the continued upliftment of our country. Nothing more, and not less. I must quote again to you the words of Lord Buddha: *As a solid rock is not shaken by the wind, even so the waves are not ruffled by praise or blame.* Therefore, like the solid rock, in the quote, you must be unruffled; you must continue to be the bastion and the protector of those things for which a trade-union movement in any country must stand. You must be a force for the right, the principles, the protection, and the furtherance of the cause of the working man, the underdog.[41]

In his assessment of the debate, Nicholson was right:

> Most of the speakers have changed their standpoint from that of the December Conference. In fact, everyone has done a complete somersault. The majority of the speakers in December were for this particular resolution, now they oppose it. Why? What has changed their minds? Are they now brave? Do they want to be murdered, as they said in December, so that this organisation can go out of existence altogether? Do they now feel that it is the correct thing not to want organisation any longer? They are now prepared to die, fine. But you are no good to anybody as a dead hero .... I appeal to you now, and I am right ... that unless the Africans are excluded from T.U.C.S.A. as from this moment, there will not be a T.U.C.S.A. in the very near future ...[42]

Despite Nicholson's plea and prophecy, the Conference voted overwhelmingly for the continued affiliation of black unions.

A year rolled on. By the 1969 Conference the T.U.C. was in a *real crisis*. After our Brechtian *Azdak* did his fantastic somersault the year before with real and piped applause from the galleries, he turned around and jumped and stood on his head. Unions that had threatened to disaffiliate in the past *did* so, leaving the organisation in a chaotic situation. In the words of the General Secretary,

> Since the 14th Annual Conference (1968) ... T.U.C.S.A. has been in what can only be described as a state of crisis. No less than 14 unions have seen fit to disaffiliate from the Council and it would appear that the underlying reasons for the disaffiliation of those trade unions has been in the main, the continued affiliation of African trade unions to this Council ... [43]

This meant loss of membership and funds of course, and concommitantly disunity amongst the 'labour movement'.[2] Concluding, the General Secretary assured the delegates that:

> We will be told that we are compromising our principles. Very possibly this is so. I submit that we are not compromising our principles, since the principles remain, but that we have to find a way in which to implement those basic principles. We will also be accused of compromising with those who do not agree with us. I plead guilty in this respect. I say yes we are. We are compromising with our fellow trade unionists, and I believe that it is vitally necessary to do just that ... [44]

The resolution that followed the assurance did not only exclude affiliation from African unions but added to that was the clause that this decision not be altered unless 'not less than 80% of the affiliated members could represented at such conference vote in favour thereof by means of a vote'.[46] Only an ex-official of the African Affairs Section, E. Tyacke rose above the occasion and spoke *against* the resolution.[46] His speech gained little support, especially since influential leaders like Murray, Scheepers, Grobbelaar, Altman and Crompton - some with less vigour and more resignation in their speeches than others - pressed for it. With only two delegates against, the motion was passed and so did a phase in South African labour history. Shortly afterwards the S.A.T.U. reaffiliated.

We shall leave now the industrial unions out of the picture, to tell their part of the story another time. We shall rather concentrate on the 'craft-diluted' unions; those that find their home in the 'metal industry' of South Africa, in order to avoid a conclusion that would be untrue. There are three ways out: we can see their response governed by self-interest and predicated on a racial bias and conclude with J. Lever that theirs was a mild defiance bordering on near capitulation, based on the racial prejudices of a militant rank and file.[47] We can agree with Fraser that T.U.C.S.A. was becoming another Government Department. This we can theorise adequately by saying that the State has the role of reproducing the dominant relations of production, when trade unions start playing the role of reproducing just that, we can follow Althusser in saying that they are ideological state apparatuses or Davies that they are social democratic apparatuses of the State.[48] Or we can try and see what are these unions beyond the conference table and what are they doing, have been doing and what is being *done* to them.

PART C: METAL INDUSTRY AND ITS TRANSFORMATIONS

F. de Clerq in a recent article asserted that a

> process of mechanisation and craft dilution occurred later on (during the war years) in the capital goods sector, such as in the metal and engineering industry, when similar practices were again adopted by the then craft unions. After having resisted vigorously for over a decade, the process of job fragmentation and craft dilution, the craft unions in the metal and engineering industry lost their control over the labour process and job supply during the war and started to reconstitute themselves as craft-diluted unions ...[49]

To evaluate statements of this sort, it is imperative to be rather more rigorous. Looking at mechanisation in its technical aspects we can even say that it took root in many a country before the industrial revolution itself.[50] To look at it though as a process of qualitative transformation whereby it becomes the dominant form of production under the hegemony of new relations of exploitation is not to confuse it with an increase of fixed plant in some industrial concerns at whatever point in time.

A work of comparative depth as R. Samuels *The Workshop of the World: Steam Power and Hand Technology in mid-Victorian Britain* [51] does not exist in South Africa so that one can start situating the uneven development of South Africa's capitalist path, its fragmentary and spasmodic class formation, and its unique forms of organisation, both in the actual methods of production and in the pattern of labour organisation.[52] It is by now evident that the metal industry is a vast expanse of complex relations of production producing in turn unpredictable configurations of forces. We do know that it was the Second World War that engendered its 'take-off'. (For D. Kaplan, it is the transition from absolute to relative surplus value extraction; for E. Webster it is a transition from manufacture to machinofacture).[53] But, if we stand from the vantage point of the early 1960s we realise that in fact the socialisation of production under the auspices of the 'giant enterprise', the colossal development of the societal productive forces under the real subordination of labour to capital which predominantly produces standardised products, in mass production, through 'machinofacture' and via 'relative surplus value' extraction is a rather uneven and incomplete phenomenon. The point is, that although 'pockets' of mass-scale production can be traced to even the 1930s with the creation of Iscor, its *dominance* in the industry as a whole has to await the upheavals of the 1960s.[54]

If you scan your eye around you, from this bleak platform, you will need another pair of hands and you can enumerate all of the giant concerns, 19 of them in 1961, with over 1000 employees.[55] Try a leap in time and you will find 18 of them in 1951.[56] The State bloc will give you four, 2 Iscors, the USCO, and Vecor. You will also find Dunswart Iron and Steel Works, Scaw Metals, Stewart and Lloyds (Vereeniging), Huletts (Alcan) Aluminium, Metal Box, Telephone Manufacturers of S.A., Thomas Barlow, Wright Boag , General Electric, Union Carriage and Wagon Co., Ford, General Motors, Motor Assemblies, and so it goes. Leap *two* years ahead to 1963/4 and you will need four pairs of hands to count 35.[51] Of course the objection can be raised that sheer size cannot give you what you are looking for; what of increases in capital intensity that reflect a higher organic composition of capital and therefore of small firms with equal or

more output than the giants of 'yore', etc.? True, we have done the exercise before so we do not need to repeat it here.[58] Summarily, if one looks at the growth of capital intensity, you will find the highest ratios in the *Basic Metal* industries. Disaggregate the State Corporation's figures and you will find that the figures in the sector drop as low as all the rest. The argument remains: most significant transformations in the metal industry have occurred *after* the 1960s,[59] and the widespread entry into the industrial scene of S.A. of a predominantly semi-skilled workforce can start being located there. In the 1960s we witness an absolute 'horizontal' expansion of the 'large firms' but also of the *small* firm, the jobbing and repair firm.[60] This calls for a few summary observations. Firstly, a complex development that combines both highly productive large enterprises and small jobbing and repair firms, engineering workshops and small component manufacturers is bound especially in the case of the latter to preserve the skilled white artisan. Secondly, due to the nature of the circulation of the social product in S.A., with its 'small market', and its specific class relations, forms of jobbing and non-standardisation are bound to be reproduced even in the *heart* of the largest corporations. They are, in approximately 60% of the mass producing, over 1000 employee firms.[61] In *these*, departments of production the skilled white artisan is *also* preserved.

Thirdly, there are two types of transition possible in metal firms. (a) Processes of production that involve a physico-chemical transformation, i.e. steel, can be organised in a continuous flow process. This means that increasing automation and mechanisation does away with actual producers altogether, what it brings forth is *maintenance* teams, that regulate the smooth functioning of large complexes of furnaces, machinery, coasters, etc. The processes that have taken place in the South African steelworks where most of them *are* highly mechanised and in parts semi-automated have brought about these teams, they *too* at their highest echelons preserved the white skilled artisanate. This is true of the Iscors, the Highveld Steel and Vanadium Works, Dunswart and the African Metals Corporation firms.[62] (b) Processes of production that involve mechanical means in the fabrication of both production and consumption goods *differ*. Here, one gets both fragmentation and deskilling: fragmented processes have in South Africa accrued to 'other' colour groups than white whereas *deskilling*: the reduction of craft work to a simple, standardised machine process is the most complicated area. Here, the white unions have bargained hard to preserve these functions as a skilled white domain. This is the domain of battle over the job between white machinists and white unions as against employers and black labour. It is no surprise that when you visit the lathe section of most giants you find some of the machinists are white and some black, same skill, relatively similar machinery, different wage rates. But this process really sets in in all its seriousness *after* the vast rationalisations of the late 1960s in the non-basic metal sectors.

The following table gives an impressionistic account of the growth involved:

Year	Employee Size						
	0-100	100-200	200-400	400-500	500-1000	1000+	Total
TRANSPORT AND EQUIPMENT							
61-62	738	17	9	4	7	5	780
67-68	928	37	----25 ----		11	13	1014
MACHINERY							
61-62	417	41	24	-	4	4	490
67-68	808	72	48	9	16	8	961
METAL PRODUCTS							
61-62	1071	78	39	9	19	-	1216
67-68	1596	110	62	6	22	15	1811
ELECTRICAL							
61-62	916	23	18	7	7	-	
67-68	407*	47	----25 ----		13	6	

*Statistics do not include the electrical repair shops anymore. [63]

But does this growth necessarily mean craft dilution. In 1962, the Deputy Minister of Economic Affairs announced that:

> the success of an industrial concern depends largely on the installation of first class machinery and the adoption of modern production techniques. In this respect we may be even better off than other countries which are often burdened with out-of-date machinery and outlays which may be costly to modernise. The point which I want to stress, however, is that every organisation whether commercial or industrial, is a combination of machines and men and it is absolutely essential that men and machines should be closely knit into one effective mass machine organisation, fully geared to the purposes of producing the right thing of the right quality at the right price and at the right time ...[64]

Was he heralding the age of machinofacture? In the light of the evidence which does show an increase of machines in limited spheres it was the *men* rather that were the dominant problem of the 1960s. Expansion happened, some basic metal production on a more labour-intensive basis. The emphasis was on assembly rather than manufacture and machining of components in the motor industry, assembly rather than fabrication of other transport equipment like bicycles and rolling stock for the railways. Jobbing fabrication of mechanical engineering goods in the largest machinery enterprises, assembly in the agricultural machinery enterprises, assembly of motors, switchgear and telephone equipment, etc. (Of course notable exceptions exist, coal mining related fabrication of capital goods started taking a turn with the increasing mechanisation of coal mines, some rolling stock enterprises, the engine plants of Ford and General Motors, etc.)[65] If out of the 35 abovementioned with over 1000 employees in 1963/4 you failed to invite the six from the basic iron and steel industries you would fill a stage with an excellent choir. From McKechnie Bros. to Siemens, and from Telephone Manufacturers of S.A. to the General Electric Corporation, you would have heard the same 'Amazing growth ... Expansion ....Labour intensive'.[66] The Government statistics do not dare contradict them either: take the P.W.V. complex four years ahead (1967/8) and you will find labour to plant and machinery ratios (in R) standing at 2,7:1 for Electrical, 2,6:1 for Transport

Equipment, 2,5:1 for Machinery, 1,9:1 for Metal Products and only in Basic Metal would you find an inversion 0,87:1.(The Vaal complex in the latter 0,25:1). But wages in South Africa *are* misleading, a truckload of black workers might be earning in wages the equal amount to the wages of a white on a bicycle. True, let us also look at Rands per employee.

TOP TEN, STATISTICAL REGIONS Rs/p.e.

1	Basic Metal Firms - Vaal Complex	R5527 p.e.
2	Basic Metal Firms - Near East Rand	R2910 p.e.
3	Basic Metal Firms - West Rand	R2285 p.e.
4	Basic Metal Firms - Pretoria	R1744 p.e.
5	Basic Metal Firms - East Rand	R1742 p.e.
6	Electrical - Vaal Complex	R1560 p.e.
7	Transport Equipment - Near East Rand	R1496 p.e.
8	Metal Products - Vaal Complex	R1259 p.e.
9	Transport Equipment - West Rand	R1037 p.e.[67]

The point is that although mass production was happening and at a rate unknown to S.A. hitherto, it would be a giant leap into oblivion to assume that mechanisation and deskilling was taking place at the rate some of the commentators led us to believe.[68]

The sudden horizontal expansion of the industry had an immediate effect: it demanded more labour of all kinds, and of all types of skills. If you were a white artisan you would find that you were in great demand and short supply, viz.

> the white unionist is faced with a dilemma: the sudden horizontal expansion of the metal industry makes his union's skills scarce *and* expensive, whilst at the same time the transformation of the various labour processes, the importation of new ones, make his skill difficult to pinpoint. Already by 1964 the employees are up in arms: Dr Zoellner, chairman of Dunswart Iron and Steel, is complaining that 'Industry is being held to ransom by some classes of artisans, notably fitters ..'[69]

The first thrust by managements was to fragment hitherto skilled positions and employ people of other racial groups. This happened in the electronics industry with the introduction of coloured women, in the motor industry where increasingly coloured and African men moved into the auto plants of the Eastern Cape at the expense of semi-skilled whites and Yster'n'Staal Unie members, despite job reservation in the Rosslyn auto-plants of black men at the expense of whites again despite attempts by the Industrial Tribunal to delineate reservation; of black men as against white women in the electrical machinery and apparatus industry, of black men and women in holloware manufacture.[70] Furthermore, the suddenness of the expansion brought with it situations beyond the metal unions' control. Completely new labour processes were 'imported', already fragmented and mechanised that escaped their ambit. Here, straight employment of black workers was practiced unilaterally. According to one of the multinational giant's general managers,

> Firstly, you look at the balance of payments, the imports and exports statistics. For example you see that there is a market for aluminium wire bringing in R20 million per annum. You know that for the time being *that* is your ceiling. You say, well, the market inside South Africa needs *this* quality and *this* quantity of aluminium wire. Then you calculate your costs of production, using all the possible relations or

> variables - energy, machinery, labour, etc. You come up with the most profitable combination. Boksburg, lets say, is uneconomic due to the Physical Planning Act, Rosslyn is cheap on labour but expensive on energy and transport. You come to the best solution. You see from the mother company's technology you can choose whether you want to be labour intensive or not. It depends. But in a R20 m. market you are bound to be labour intensive. That is the *first* step. You set up a factory. You produce. You then move into higher gear...[71]

It is finally here, in the multinational bloc that throughout the 1960s a new breed of small firm, highly capital intensive, well above the average in the sector, takes root. Ringsdorff Corporation, Klockner Müller, Fedgas, Sulzer Brothers, etc., with small employment figures and with above average fixed investments play a dominant part in their respective 'markets'. Ringsdorff, a new concern, for instance, with 48 employees, has not installed automated processes because at this stage of the development of the 'market' it would be unjustified: 'RCC is backed by the extensive know-how of its parent company, Ringsdorf Werke in Bonn, a manufacturer of graphite carbon and sintered metal products...' From its ultimate mother Sigri (a subsidiary of Siemens Germany) the company obtained a whole host of new processes that will allow it to grow with the South African economy, fearing little competition.[72] We shall avoid providing endless examples.

The latter concentration and centralisation in the metal industry happened abruptly, bringing with it sudden changes in the various labour processes at hand. We have had a glimpse of it on two other occasions. As it was previously argued it was accentuated by the rapid entry of two forces in the South African situation. A vast inflow of foreign capital and transnational corporations, on the one hand and a vast consolidation of the industrial wings of the various Mining Finance houses.[73] Both stimulated an expanse and furore in activity of State involvement and a consolidation of industrial corporations. The rapidity is obvious: firstly, the local content programme of the automobile industry *forced* multinationals already there, like Ford and General Motors, to expand. With it, it brough all the others afraid to stay outside the game once import duties began to displace their competitiveness. This was a two-way process. Local capital like the Messina Transvaal Corporation rushed to secure Datsun-Nissan, whilst B.M.W. itself rushed in to secure a market and so it went. By 1968/9 the 'market' was squeezing competition and brought about vast reorganisations. Dorman Long Africa and Vanderbijl Engineering Corporation were suffocating each other as mechanical engineers, the complex process of the creation of Dorbyl was set afoot, of I.P.S.A., and the takeover of Dorbyl and Stewart and Lloyds had gone a long way towards establishing virtual giants in the fields concerned. The African Metals Corporation with plants at Newcastle and Meyerton producing pig iron by the thousand tons and controlled by Iscor, decided to merge with S.A. Manganese, thus rationalising the entire process of production from mine to ferro-manganese. Similarly Anglo-American went ahead and rationalised its ferro-alloys by the formation of the Witbank complex, ferro-chrome to steel, at the Highveld Steel and Vanadium Corporation. Scaw Metals was brought under Amic's wing. Barlows in two swoops bought the producer mechanical engineers Wright Boag & Head Whighston to consolidate, Barlows Heavy Engineering and through its takeover of Rand Mines to consolidate the stainless steel

nerve of the Middleburg region, R.M.B. Alloys and Southern Cross Steel Co. Anglovaal did not hesitate either, nor did J.C.I., nor did General Mining and Federale Mynbou. Iscor itself moved fast and launched Metkor, that consolidated its marginal interests through Wire Industries, Wispeco. A merger between G.E.C. and First Electric in the U.K. brought about vast transformations. First Electric sold A.M.F. to Stewart and Lloyds which consolidated its foundry at Springs, bringing forth the G.E.C. Machines giant group of factories. Numerically it is expressed as 112 mergers or reorganisations in the period under consideration (1963-1974) involving about 50 companies, some of them the largest metal plants in South Africa.[74]

But it is here, and throughout the 1960s in the steelworks that a certain transformation in quality of skills needed can be observed. It is a new class of skilled work that resembles the global technician, supervisor and controller, not of men but of machine processes. It is recruited initially from the ranks of 'craftsmen', the A.E.U., the Boilermakers', S.A.E.W.A,, etc. He is trained in the various new techniques; computer programming, flow control, and quality control. It is not his particular skill that he exercises, he becomes a low order mechanical or electrical engineer (or *technologist* as the Goode report calls him), of a general skill so he can programme numerical control machinery, computer flow processes and co-ordination of production functions. He is not a master of any particular skill but an eclectic combination of all of them.[75] Here I want to argue that one gets in the 1960s a growing grouping that in the literature has been termed the new petit bourgeoisie, or the new middle class.[76] By the late 1970s he is in absolute demand and in short supply, but *that* is a process that has to await a slump and an upswing in the industry, coupled with an enormous phase of concentration and centralisation, mergers and further rationalisation of a number of important labour processes.

Those transformations however, schematically presented here, are the catalyst to understand the shifting terrain of most of the 'craft-diluted' unions. All the respective unionists in the industry discussed agree that

> the changes in the 1960s have affected us fundamentally. Although we were messed up, not knowing whether we were industrial or craft unions anymore, as you suggest, the fact remains. We stood our ground ....[77]

PART D: CRAFT UNIONS AND THE 'FLOOD'

From most of the literature at hand[78] one gets the feeling that the most important aspect of the craft unions is being overlooked: that is, being formed by and reciprocally forming South African labour history, they are bound to reproduce over time in their own manner the vagaries and idiosyncrasies of the South African social formation.

As is well known, the first unions started in South Africa were indeed craft unions, organising white skilled workers around their particular craft trades and the apprenticeships that were attached to them.[79] The Boilermakers' Society for instance still has its secret handshakes and all the rituals of a craft organisation.[80] The control of work by unions, natural in many a country, had in fact become in South Africa synonymous with racial exclusivity on the labour market. We need not summarise all the literature around the *colour bars* of the white craftsmen. In South

Africa, skill was entrenched on a *racial* basis and racial distinction came to be predicated on skills allocated differentially to various racial groups.[81] What can at least be done here is to give an outline of these contradictions that define them, and that they define. Firstly, shifting of the colour bars took place so that workers' privileges were not lost. On the one hand one witnessed the downgrading of skills by the unions themselves in order to capture new and transformed labour processes and to preserve them as a white domain; on the other, 'racial' groups like 'Coloureds' or 'Asians' once entrenched in various skilled positions were incorporated in an attempt to control them *within* one union and within the skills concerned. (The Western Cape with a long tradition of Coloured artisans is a striking exception to the rule.)[82] All these unions, the Boilermakers', the A.E.U., the S.A.E.W.A., the S.A.T.U., the Ironmoulders' Society, were confronted with similar problems to a lesser or greater extent. They are all organisations that happened in, and were formed by, South Africa's unique ascendance to a capitalist industrial nation. In particular, the metal and mechanic's unions started predominantly *outside* the metal industries. It was the boilermakers

in the mining industry, in the railway shops, in the various public bodies, etc. that constituted the core of the unions. Figures up to 1936 indicate that most metalworkers and craftsmen were *outside* the metal industry itself.[83] The spread of secondary industry in South Africa has created a situation whereby membership of these unions is spread thinly across a wide spectrum of industrial activities. As Van der Watt, the General Secretary of the Boilermakers' Society explains

> The Boilermakers' Society started as a craft union, organising basically boilermakers and welders. Now as a craft union we had craftsmen in virtually all industries you could think of from pulp and paper to metal .. At the moment to give you an idea, we are involved in 23 different industries, which we've got in the union ...[84]

This created, according to him, a structural impossibility to convert the craft union into an industrial union when the strains of dequalification set in.

> With the passage of time we've moved away from the craft union - we don't just organise craftsmen, we organise semi-skilled workers and we've even got labourers as members of our union, in a limited number. We're not a craft union anymore so if we had to convert now to a single industry union which of the 23 are we going to jettison? It's just not on ..[85]

A similar situation hangs over other ex-craft metal unions in South Africa.[86] Secondly, the craft unions did not go out of their way to organise semi-skilled workers in the metal industry. This they were *forced* to do by the actual unfolding struggles in the field. The large influx of semi-skilled and unskilled white workers, through the civilised labour policy in the State corporations and the auto-plants was ignored. These workers had to fight *for themselves* through the years 1936-1942 until in 1942 a breakaway faction of the Boilermakers started mobilising and organising them. This led to the formation of the Yster 'n Staal Unie that organised all the abovementioned whites into an *industrial* union. Their response was twofold, (a) to start organising semi-skilled workers in their own union and, (b) to draw the Yster 'n Staal into an alliance with them

through the Industrial Council. On the one hand this compromise was to create a buffer against any new entrants into semi-skilled territory of other colour groups with its concommitant undercutting, ensuring at the same time that wage rates were kept high and resistance to capital's inroads into their privileged position was strengthened.[87]

Thirdly, all the craft unions were weak on most shopfloors. From the small firms with their four artisans and journeymen, to the larger concerns where they were a small minority of the total labour force to their dispersed existence across industries, they could not have the power an industrial union could mobilise. Weak on any industrial level, weak on any factory floor, they *had* to rely on union bureaucracies for integration.[88] Furthermore, they could not individually negotiate with individual managements about the exclusive skills so they *had* to unify employers in their respective industries. The Industrial Council system and the Apprenticeship Act became their lifeblood, the *sine qua non* of their bargaining power, and their only point of congealed force.[89] The shop steward's structures that existed lost their relevance and a functional separation of rank and file and union bureaucracy became structural.[90] It is this autonomy between unionists and members that explains a lot of the disjuncture between the union leadership's 'enlightened' statements and rank and file response.

But then, with the sudden baptism of fire, the 1960's brought about new dynamics. Wherever you turned, there were changes. We had the entry of white women on the East Rand into assembly work in the electrical engineering industry ever since the 1950s and their proliferation by the 1960s into operative positions (± 4000 of them) in the larger factories.[91] The Yster 'n Staal moved to organise, but so did the S.A.E.W.A. Simultaneously from the 1960s onwards we had the inclusion of Coloured women in the electronics field. Here nobody dared move to organise for some time. The S.A.E.W.A.'s Secretary, Cowley, apparently was quoted as saying that over his dead body would Coloureds be organised into an artisan union in the Transvaal. Anna Scheepers of the Garment Workers, and together with C. du Preez set out to organise them into the and Electricians Workers' Union. We had by the late 1950s, early 1960s, firstly a steady inflow of African workers into the metal industry, and into semi-skilled positions. The Yster 'n Staal tried to stop the influx where it could, as happened in the motor industry with job reservation clauses. But the inroads of black workers given the sudden irruption of the boom years was unstoppable. Fragmentation did take place extensively: 'We all did it ... of course we did it ..'.[93]

For a long time as a black worker put it, the white unions were looking after their members 'when they are dead ... not when they are alive'. As the separation of shopfloor and union bureaucracy turned the latter into benefit societies looking after pension and funeral benefits, and the leadership was grudgingly conceding, as all saw in their own style, the acceptance of the 'Bantu' in the conference rooms of T.U.C.S.A., something happened. The leadership of the Boilermakers, the A.E.U. and the S.A.E.W.A. came to feel a widespread resistance from their rank and file. They, face to face with the 'black flood', came out vociferously over the period 1962-65 *against* the Union leadership, *against* the inclusion of *any* black labour into *anything* that resembled a trade union. The leadership had to yield.[94] But it was not a phenomenon restricted to the unions. It was a counter-attack that must be seen in its proper *political* context in the early 1960s.

It was a general discontent encompassing most of the white working class communities in South Africa and especially on the Rand. The Conservative Labour Party was formed from disaffected white workers who saw the Nationalist Party selling them down the river. It was a right-wing workers response. Langlaagte, Mayfair and Krugersdorp were widely canvassed.[95] Parallel to that, the spectacular struggles of the M.W.U. encompassed whole communities from Germiston to the Orange Free State. Worker delegates were being organised for a new party in the West Rand and the O.F.S.[96] The rank and file, according to various unionists interviewed, were widely influenced by subversive and unenlightened rhetoric, political rhetoric. The Government was being persuaded against the 'Swart Gevaar' that was plaguing their 'privileges'. The decisions taken at the T.U.C.S.A. were by no means their own, it was the compromises of a leadership that did not even consult them.

> The miners were telling them: look what's happening to us you are also being betrayed by your trade unions. Wake up. Fight, etc. etc. ...[97]

The Government had to respond to appease its electorate. It blocked 'job advancement' for Africans on the mines, it hardened its opinions about the T.U.C.S.A. and it said so. Some of the leaders like Murray saw what was coming. There was no way that the 'flood' could be checked. One had to fight now in order to avoid later consequences. Africans were to form their unions themselves, industrial ones. It had to come. They had to find new strategies. Parallel union organisation was out of the question.

> We don't believe in a separate union at all. It's got to be in a multi-racial union. The reason why we don't even consider the aspect of separate parallel unions is because we believe in the long term it's going to create polarisation.[98]

Yet for these craft-diluted unions the choice was obvious, they could not transform themselves into an industrial union. If they wanted to transform themselves into industrial unions, firstly, 'which of the industries should they jettison' (as in the 23 of the Boilermakers) and, secondly, the Metal unions would be at each others' throats. Similarly, to organise on an industrial basis would have been suicidal given the feelings of the 'semi-skilled' rank and file of the unions. As for the organisation of the African worker, both separate and parallel unionism was out of the question.[99]

Given the above-mentioned limits of craft-diluted unions and the fear of polarisation, this brings us to a second strategy. It is the strategy of these years, and even if ditched or reconfirmed was to become crucial. Its essence is: Parallelism within one union - which offered two possibilities, a) 'diluted craft colour bar unions' with *separate branches* and b) 'mixed unionism'. The former is parallelism via *separation* (made easy by the provision of the 1956 Amendment Act) integrated only at the executive level which is white. The latter is a mixed union with constitutional separation via grading or weighting the membership across, as the *de facto* situation has it, *colour lines*.[100]

As an example of the first type, one can mention the *South African Electrical Workers' Association*,

> The 1956 Amendment Act affected this union quite tremendously because prior to 1956 we were a mixed union - white, coloured

> and Asiatic. Because of discussions held prior to the 1956 Act our predecessors decided that the Act was going to make it compulsory to split, so they decided, rather than wait for the event to be forced to do so, maybe in a way they didn't want it to be, they would split the union prior to the Act becoming law.... The new union which was set up remained affiliated to the parent union and in fact that is how it has been ever since. Both constitutions provide for affiliation with each other and that the General Secretary of the parent union shall continue as General Secretary of the new union, which I am now - still General Secretary of both unions, and that the officials of one union shall be officials of the other ...
>
> The very good effects of this was, and this is where we get our cue for the future, was in terms of the new Act: although it didn't make it compulsory to split, it did say that they could only continue as mixed unions at the whim of the Minister, and that in a mixed union only whites could serve on the executive council which meant that trade union members in the mixed union were virtually 2nd class trade union members, and there is no such thing as a 2nd class trade union member.
>
> This split had the effect of in fact setting up a new union with its own executive council, its own president, vice-president, and so on ... they could do anything they wanted to do and serve on the different bodies for their own domestic affairs *but* they had the advantage, a decided advantage at present, that the General Secretary of the parent union continued as the General Secretary of both... It has in every effect ensured that the policy of both unions remains the same and that the reactions of both unions are the same, etc. etc. because of the common bonds through the General Secretary ... so in fact we have carried on as one union, but with two unions, or at least with the different racial compostions of both unions having their own say in their own domestic affairs.[101]

As examples of the *second* kind, one can mention the Ironmoulders' Society, the South African Typographical Union, the Boilermakers' Society, etc. For instance, the Boilermakers decided to seek exception and remain a multi-racial union after the 1956 Amendment Act, which was granted. And in 1957 they got an exemption to also hold multi-racial meetings.[102]

The dominant pattern is, however, summed up by Van Tonder (S.A.T.U.) who in agreement with the Boilermarkers were pushing for a 'mixed unionist' strategy to be adopted by T.U.C.S.A. in 1972.

> Like Mr Murray, I believe that their home would be the Typographical Union. If they are going to be workers in the printing industry, then that is the union they will come into, and I will have no other situation. I make that quite clear today, so that you know where you stand with us .... There is the question which has been asked, if you bring them into your union, what are you going to do if they flood it in numbers? Our answer is quite simple to that. We have got *weighted* membership. A man

> enters our industry as a grade 3 member. He has got a quarter of the vote, but we only make him pay - in all fairness - a quarter of the subcription to the union, and we will apply that same principle to the African who wants to enter our trade union, once he is eligible for trade union membership, so that we will be quite able to take care of our union.[103]

The above must be seen in the light also of separate *branch* meetings between racial groups (Branches A and B in the case of S.A.T.U.) with the *de facto* powers vested on the shoulders of the white membership which consequently brings about the perpetuation of white leadership Most of the unions (craft-diluted ones) as has been seen in the above resisted vehemently any talk of unionising the African labourer or even the idea of affiliation of such unions in the T.U.C. After successful unionisation drives from the 1970s onwards and the change in legislation, the strategy comes to fruition. The above strategies remain and are superimposed on the organisation of African labourers. But let us not leap in the future as yet.

Malherbe of S.A.S.B.O. summed up the predicament very well,

> Keeping people apart is the most fertile ground in the world for conflict. You know it's almost like going on to a sports field and having one captain for forwards .. one captain for the backline .. having in the end the forwards autonomous, with each doing their own thing - no co-operation between the two. It wouldn't work. It must be a team effort. You must have one captain who runs the whole team ...[104]

The implication was that separate unions would undermine the privileged standards of the registered union movement.

PART E:

The hour for a short theoretical discussion has arrived. It concerns the 'debate' around the white wage earners in South Africa, their class determination and what in general has been thrown around in an attempt to explain their odd behaviour. It is true that these wage-earners have behaved throughout the last century in ways that have raised serious questions as concerns class analysis in South Africa. The first studies of the labour movement, have been carried out by a number of militants within its ranks. The orthodoxy was that inter-racial class solidarity was curtailed due to the location of these wage earners as *labour aristocrats* within the South African economy. Their material position of privilege created a false consciousness as concerns their true proletarian interest and made them act in certain sectarian ways, sometimes overtly or covertly racist, segregationist and, finally, Afrikaner Nationalist to boot.[105]

The next intervention was by F.A. Johnstone that very rigorously took us a step forward, keeping the concept of labour aristocracy but situating it firmly in the exigencies of the mining industry, its cost structure that created the possibilities for *exploitation colour bars vis-a-vis* African mineworkers and a general vulnerability for the white skilled workman who defensively created a nexus of job colour bars that gave birth to a divided working class. Again this conceptualisation was set

in motion to explain the actions of white workers against their apparent proletarian interest.[106]

Finally, following some debates in the metropolitan countries concerning class determination of various employees and particularly influenced by the work of N. Poulantzas and G. Carchedi R. Davies and H. Wolpe set out to rigorously define or identify the parameters of the working class and the new petty bourgeoisie in South Africa.[107] The white wage earners' actions, alliances and struggles were explained by the formulation that they increasingly came to occupy new petty bourgeois positions in South Africa's social division of labour. This ambiguous position in the social formation, sandwiched between a bourgeoisie and a working class in its monopoly phase helps explain equally ambiguous actions. The kinship structure between this concept, and explanations of events seems immediately of a more noble lineage. They did not act against their proletarian interest at all, they were not victims of a 'false consciousness' but rather of an adequate ideology given their structural position. The whole presentation thus far seems to contradict such a concept and indeed it *does consciously* do so, save for once in the section II. It arises from a dissatisfaction not with the concept itself but with its usage in South Africa, its importation as I previously mentioned, outside any tariff policy.[108] A dissatisfaction where realities, events, struggles are related to theoretical discourse as a taxonomical hunting forest or workshop. It is one thing to say that the mining finance houses are monopolistic organisations, reflecting a high concentration and centralisation of people and things, it is quite another to expect that this immediately will give us rationalisations, transformations of the labour process and a new petty bourgeoisie; especially so when the labour process in mining has altered very little over the last hundred years, leaving the 'gang system' almost intact. We look around and find the white miner in his ambiguous location in production and we say: new petty bourgeoisie. We look at the reality of wage earners moving increasingly into supervisory positions in the production process and we say: new petty bourgeoisie; here it matters little whether forms of supervision present striking similarities with the first factories of a Wedgewood or an Arkwright; we look at artisans that seem to have the 'function of co-ordination and control' in the labour process and we say: new petty bourgeoisie; again, it matters very little whether craft work always involves co-ordination and surveillance since the 17th Century so that perhaps the question of how old is this new petty bourgeoisie might never arise. We can continue piling example after example until we have enough of a mouse to scare an elephant but we should not bend the stick the other way. New relations of production involving our 'technologists' and others are being created in South Africa that *are* transforming the *sine qua non* of supervisory labour, of also 'mental' labour, of clerical work, etc. We shall need and shall examine the strengths and weaknesses of a concept like the 'new petty bourgeoisie' . What we do not need is this concept to start *producing* realities that do not exist. Already it has, and this all the more damaging to both explanation and theory.

It is pertinent though, at this stage, to clear another matter with another dominant of late current that seems to in its sweep pose itself as an alternative. This is the 'capital accumulation' school that with messianic and Thomist religiosity rewrites the development of South Africa as if it were a reading of the Book. Theoretical logic and historical event are conflated. capital accumulates. and in reality follows the logic of a theoretical exposition. Or the 'real' (the social

formation, South Africa 10 B.C., 1950 A.D., 1970 A.D.) in conflated with the conceptual development of the 'capital relation' (or the 'mode of production'), with the result that the latter becomes the *real* history of any capitalism at hand.[109] I feel that the danger here is twofold: a) that any argument that has emerged is resolved by reference to 'authority',[110] and b) we would be forced, although more sophisticatedly, to create our own Rostowian 'stages' with all roads leading from simple co-operation to manufacture to machinofacture, to Fordism, as neatly as from 'the pre-conditions to take-off' to 'self-sustained growth'.[111] To come to the heart of our topic, we would have to say that the craftsman has been deskilled through mechanisation, or there has been dequalification of labour through the substitution of dead over living labour with the concommitant rise in the organic compostion of capital reflected in the increase of capital intensity. Having said that we missed most of the process, however much we ghatered facts to corroborate the assertion. Once more we can produce the realites. Once more all the more damaging to explanation and theory, and consequently to history.

We saw that the 'craft-diluted' unions acted in a sectional way *vis-a-vis* the T.U.C.S.A., forcing everyone by 1969 to change their strategies towards the exclusion of African workers. By asking the question 'why'/after the brief look at the transformations of the metal industry and skill nexus, we could assert by now that these unions are by the late 1960s neither simply organisations of a new petit bourgeoisie or production workers in search of an industrial union or simply artisan unions (whether craft-diluted or not). We can follow Poulantzas[112] here and assert as these organisations (these social bodies of institutional materiality and power)

are a condensation of social forces albeit factionalised with interests that appear antagonistic but are held together through the ability of the artisan members to lead and preserve white privilege. The years after 1969 after a stagnation and then the slump are to prove a catalyst in polarising the various interests and the search for new alliances. As against Davies, I would like to still call them working class organisations. As working class organisations in the late 1960s, and early 1970s, are once again challenged by the configuration of forces in industry, international bodies and, by now, black worker militancy, once again their response is *different* from the industrial unions. This is the story of the second part of the paper, a story that will finally allow also a thorough theoretical discussion of the issues at hand.

On the one hand, though, we have to accept that theory of the forms of exploitation and the labour process is not a simple chronology of real events, whilst on the other we have to come to terms theoretically with the real unfoldings of the pecularities of South African capital accumulation.[113]

With this, we turn to our *Azdak* one more time, in 1972, to witness the drawing of the curtains, once again to piped applause. By now, the roads between 'ex craft' and industrial unions become particularly clear.

PART F: THE LAST ACT BEFORE THE FLOOD

The T.U.C.S.A. at its 18th Annual Conference was busy making gestures about the future of the African worker. The debate there was punctuated by the two invited speakers, on the one hand Professor P.J. van der Merwe from the University of Pretoria and a member of the Bantu Affairs Commission,

and on the other Dr Francis Wilson of the University of Cape Town, known through his books on migrant labour in South Africa. The former argued for the resolution of the problem
keeping the structures of Apartheid intact. He argued that 'homeland governments' could legislate for 'indigenous trade unions' which could propagate the drawing up of labour agreements between the 'homeland government' and the Government of South Africa. The 'indigenous trade unions' could participate to an extent agreed upon inter-governmentally, in the preparation of such agreements. These homeland trade unions could also possibly assist in the recruitment and placement of labour, in economic development, by rallying worker support - even subordinating wage demands to the future development of the homelands as well as assisting with other basic social services and the mobilisation of savings. The Professor went on to state that the registered trade unions which advocated the inclusion of citizens of the different 'Bantu Nations' in their trade unions were not only ignoring, but actually underming, the efforts of homeland governments to take their own decisions and develop their own national and indigenous institutions. On the other hand, Dr Wilson argued *for* African union rights.

The various debates that took place clarified the fact that Professor van der Merwe's plan was not acceptable; very few though went as far as the liberal content of Dr Wilson's talk. This sparked off a debate that was continued over in the context of a specific resolution.[114] The resolution was submitted by the National Executive Committee and read as follows:

> Organising of African Workers. This 18th Annual Conference calls on all affiliated unions of the Council to make every effort to obtain from their members an unambiguous and clear mandate, in the coming year, to press Government to permit the organising of African workers into registered trade unions in their respective industries and occupations for which they cater.[115]

Firstly, there was the response of the *craft-diluted colour bar unions* who, in tune with the thinking of the C.M.B.U. (also discussing the organisation of African labourers at the time). The dominant response was one of 'mixed' unionism or 'parallelism within one union'. Crompton asserted that,

> if a man wants to be a Moulder in this Country, or if a woman wishes to be a Moulder, then they come in on the basis that they would have to be members of the Iron Moulders' Society, and no other organisation. We could not tolerate two unions talking to the same boss, and trying to arrange wages and conditions. We made that valid point, but we were defeated at that time.[116]

He also admitted that the flow of Africans into the industry, especially favoured by Employers freed them to practice their own form of job reservation 'colour bar' ..

> Some four years ago when this thing first reared its head in my Industry, I was the instigator of a form of 'Job Reservation' in the Engineering Industry. It was agreed that all the job categories (a), (b)- (c) and (d) would be allocated to persons who were eligible for Trade Union

> membership. That meant that anybody who was not an Indian, not a Coloured, and not a White person, could not work in those occupations. It was a form of 'Closed Shop' and also 'Job Reservation'.[117]

Yet as Murray (Boilermakers) asserted, times *do* change:

> It just goes to show you. Time marches on, time is the great Teacher, and time is the mighty Leveller, and consequently those same unions, that thought it so dreadful, that thought it unholy to be seen in the same room with an African, find that the circle is now complete, and that if they do not organise the Africans they themselves will feel in jeopardy. Anyhow, it is a good sign, and that is another reason why this right has got to be obtained for the African, because there is not a single factor in the whole of the South African picture that is going to hold back the advancement of the African more than his inability to be organised into existing Unions. We cannot blame people for opposing other people coming into their spheres of influence who cannot be controlled by the only method that we as established trade unions know.[118]

The only method of control that the 'established trade unions know' is one of 'leadership':

> Surely you must accept that at this particular point in time, no obvious leaders exist for African workers. They might have some tucked away, they might have very fine political leaders, but I will say this, I do not believe that they have yet reached the stage of having leaders with the expertise that is required to run a modern trade union.[119]

Thus the onus is on the T.U.C.S.A. to provide that leadership needed, due also to its international prestige:

> My own thinking is that the main reason why we should press for African trade unions is simply that is the right thing to do. It is the correct thing to do, particularly for a body like TUCSA, who tries to keep in touch, tries to keep abreast of the international picture. Who regularly goes over to Geneva, goes over to all these Institutions in Europe, and says to them, 'Look we are an ordinary trade union organisation trying to do the best we can'. But it is extremely difficult to convince these people that we are trying to do the best we can, when in fact we eliminate most the working force of the country from the privileges of belonging to a trade union.[120]

It is Van Tonder of S.A.T.U. who really explains what 'parallelism within one union' means in the guise of mixed unionism. As he stated,

> There seems to me to be two or three lines of thought here today. The one is that they must be organised into registered trade unions. To my way of thinking that would mean that they would have their own separate unions. That is a principle that I just cannot subscribe to, because it is a dangerous one.[121]

So the solution is to have *one* union. Van Tonder continued:

> Like Mr Murray, I believe that their home would be the

> Typographical Union. If they are going to be workers in the printing industry, then that is the union they will come into, and I will have no other situation. I make that quite clear today, so that you know where you stand with us.
>
> There is the question which has been asked, if you bring them into your union, what are you going to do if they flood it in numbers? Our answer is quite simple to that. We have got graded membership as it is. We have got weighted membership. A man enters our industry as a grade 3 member. He has got a quarter of a vote, but we only make him pay - in all fairness - a quarter of the subscriptions to the union, and we will apply that same principle to the African who wants to enter our trade union, once he is eligible for trade union membership, so that we will be quite able to take care of our union. But the difficult that I see in other unions is what are you going to do with the Bantu, when you have got a registered White union, and a registered non-White Union?[122]

The organisation of the African into a separate *parallel union* was the dominant trend of the conference. This was also justified on the inadequate leadership available and the general *inexperience* of African labourers in 'responsible' union matters.

R.C. Webb (Motor Ind. Comb. W.U.) pointed out, despite the rejection of Drake Koka's credentials, the increasing importance of the black consciousness movement, whilst T.T. Alexander pointed out the urgency of the matter at hand[123] and questioned whether they were not involved in 'delaying tactics' *vis-a-vis* the resolution. According to R. Webb,

> I have come up here just to seek clarification on two basic problems which accompany this resolution. The first problem, which probably will be the easiest one to solve, is whether we are in fact entitled to prescribe the conditions of recognising African trade unions? I think that it will be fatal for us to ignore the growing Black consciousness and Black Power movements emerging in this country and, despite the rejection of a certain African trade union leader's credentials, I do believe that he is relfecting a very, very broad view of how Africans are just beginning to feel. Whether we can continue to consider them as a mere appendage is a matter for conjecture, but perhaps that could be sorted out later.[125]

Yet the dominant response was the 'independent unionism' was clearly a divisive tactic of 'frustrated men', a concept dangerous to the labour movement and a gift to employees and the government. As against all the above, the most significant was the crystallisation of a 'left-wing' in T.U.C.S.A. that argued for the creation of genuine trade unionism in South Africa despite colour or privilege. The challenge was put forward by H. Bolton, who said,

> Mr President and fellow delegates, I would feel, not because I disagree with the object of this resolution, but I would feel better if I was standing here and opposing it, rather than giving it my support as we have been asked to do. Not because I do not agree with the ultimate aim, but because I do not think that I will live long enough to see the aim achieved, and the point is that we have all been warned that

> we should do something now. We have been warned for the last 10 years and more that we should do something about it NOW, and up to now, apart from some pretty good public relations, all we have done to the Authorities, to the Governments, to where it can count, is to press them to do something, and all they have done is write back and say that they will not do it, it is against their policy. That is as far as we have got, and I am afraid that is as far as we are going to get again.
>
> .... Most of us have been sitting down and saying we cannot do this because it is not allowed. But would we have done it had it been allowed? I wonder who gave Anna Scheepers, and Johanna Cornelius, and the other people from the Garment Workers' Union, the mandate to organise an African union that has been in existence for so many years already? They did not wait to ask the Government whether or not they could. They knew it was right and they did it.
>
> I have also been surprised by the statements made by people, some of whom I feel should know better, or perhaps they should be in better contact with the other races in South Africa, when people say that there are no leaders amongst the Africans; they cannot run their own unions, they would not know how to. It is very, very nice for us to talk when we sit here within the protection of the Law and have the rights, and we are good organisers and we are good secretaries.
>
> As for something to do, and I think I would have the support of my union in this, because we discussed this aspect in 1966. I think that what we should do, or a line of thought that we should explore, and perhaps we can ask the Officers' Committee or the N.E.C. to do this, is that we should consider the possibility *of all of us deregistering and putting ourselves in the same position as the Africans, and starting trade unions, not registered or un-registered, but all of us together starting trade unions for all the workers in our industry.* [125]

F. Sauls of N.U.M.A.W.R.O.S.A. showed similar feelings:

> we are aware that the majority of the workers in the Republic consist of Black workers. We are sitting here today, and yesterday, discussing the Black workers of South Africa.
>
> Today we stand accused in the eyes of the Black workers and in the eyes of the world. We were discussing Black workers here. I heard some speakers say that there weren't Black labour leaders amongst these people, but I firmly believe that they have Black leaders. Not one Black leader representing these people was present at a Seminar to state their views and put their views over. Certain delegates here have spoken about the threat the African worker holds for the other Coloured, Indian and White workers. I firmly believe that if we have to make a decision to organise the Black workers on this issue of the threat that the Black worker constitutes for the

> other workers, then I would suggest that the delegates here rather abstain from voting. But if we accept these people as human beings, fellow workers, then in all sincerity, then, and only then, can you vote that we continue with this resolution.
>
> Mrs Bolton has put up a suggestion that if this resolution is refused - it could happen that it is acceded to - but if it is refused, what are we going to do then? Certain trade unions, like the Garment workers, have taken steps in organising the Black workers. So what prevents any of the other unions from doing it? But the position as it seems to me, it is only because that threat is there, and I want to state again, that if we vote on this with the thought of the threat of the African against the other workers, then, Mr President, I would say to the delegates, stick to your convictions and principles and vote against the resolution. Thank you.[126]

Significant, because on the one hand H. Bolton actively engaged herself and helpted the formation of African unions in Durban to her own personal detriment[1] whilst N.U.M.A.W.R.O.S.A. finally split from T.U.C.S.A. and was instrumental in the formation of the Federation of S.A. Trade Unions (see below). *Both*, given the *status quo*, started by organising 'independent parallel unions'.

NOTES

1. This paper would have been impossible without the insights, criticisms and encouragement provided by Eddie Webster, but also from eye-opening advice and ways of undoing the subject matter offered by Halton Cheadle, Maurice Kagan , Alan Fine and Ike Van der Watt through a series of interviews and discussions, though the results as presented here and the responsibility for them represent none other than my own fleas and dispositions. Furthermore, of late I had occasion to read J. Lever's *TUCSA: The Trade Unionism of Moderate Opposition, 1954-1970* in F.M. Orkin and S.E. Welz (ed.), Society in Southern Africa, 1975-78, A.S.A., 1979, which influenced the final draft of the paper in no uncertain terms, despite disagreements about the *interpretation* of the material at hand.

2. On this, the debate has been raging over issues like *registration, parallel unionism, craft-dilution, alliances, co-option, control,* etc. in the the wake of the Wiehahn Commission and the various Bills that have been subsequently tabled and enacted. For a sample, try S.A.L.B. *Labour Organisation and Registration*, vol. 5, nos. 6 & 7, March 1980, especially, F. de Clerq, *A History of Registered Unions*, M. Nicol, *Registration and Emasculation*, and P.Hendler, *The Organisation of Parallel Unions*, etc.

3. In fact the metaphor is so bad that one can substitute all the characters of the Crucifixion drama with almost amazing hair raising results. See also ChowlesNkosi's lino-cut series 'Black Crucifixion', *Staffrider*, vol. 2, no.4, 1979, for a similar principle operating from another point of view.

4. The Industrial Conciliation Act of 1924 and is various amendments as discussed extensively in a plethora of works both of legal and broader social orientation, c.f. R. Davies, *The Class Character of South Africa's Industrial Conciliation Legislation*, J. Lever, *Capital and Labour in South Africa: The Passage of the Industrial Conciliation Act, 1924* in E. Webster (ed.) *Essays in Southern African Labour History*, (Johannesburg, 1978).
But also in works such as M.A. du Toit, *The South African Trade Unions*, (Johannesburg, 1976), and G.V. Doxey, *The Industrial Colour Bar in South Africa*, (Capetown, 1961).

5. c.f. I.L.O.'s Annual Conference Minutes, Geneva, 1961/2; as also the issue is picked up by the *Survey of Race Relations, 1961, 1962 1963*, Institute of Race Relations, Johannesburg.

6. c.f. D. Hobart Houghton, *The South African Economy*, (Capetown, 1974).

7. c.f. K. Luckhardt and B. Weill, *Organise or Starve - The History of the South African Congress of Trade Unions*, (London, 1980).

8. Quoted from J. Lever, op. cit., p.266.

9. Ibid.

10. Ibid., 267.

11. Ibid.

12. Ibid.

13. cf., T.U.C.S.A., *Annual Conference Minutes, 1963.* Also M.A. du Toit, op. cit.

14. K. Luckhardt and B. Weill, op. cit.; also cf. A. Feit, *Workers without Weapons - The South African Congress of Trade Unions and the Organisation of African Workers*, Archon Books, 1975.

15. T.U.C.S.A., op. cit.

16. cf. J. Lever, op. cit.; cf. J. Blongwane's comments in *Financial Mail*, May, 1973; M.A. du Toit, op. cit.; L. Mvumbelo, interview with S.A.L.B., vol. 5, no. 3, 1979, Douws Dekker, et al.

17. cf. *Survey of Race Relations*, M. Horrell (ed.), Institute of Race Relations, Johannesburg, 1964.

18. Ibid.

19. Interview with B. Nicholson, Gen. Secretary of S.A.E.W.A., 7/4/1980.

20. Figures from M.A. du Toit, op. cit., 164.

21. L. Mvumbelo, interview, op. cit.; also interview with E. Seloro (Secretary of the Textile Workers' Union), 2/4/1980 and N. Daniels (Gen. Secretary of the Textile Workers Industrial Union), 19/4/1980.

22. Interview with A. Malherbe, 25/3/1980.

23. cf. J.A. Coetzee, (ed.) *Industrial Relations in South Africa*, (Johannesburg, 1978).

24. J. Lever, op. cit., 270-1.

25, Ibid., 272.

26. T.U.C.S.A., *Report of Proceeedings, Special Conference, 1967.*

27. J. Lever, op. cit., 281.

28. T.U.C.S.A., *Report of Proceedings, 14th Annual Conference*, p.520.

29. T.U.C.S.A., *Special Conference*, op. cit.

30. Ibid.

31. M.A. du Toit, op. cit.

32. B. Nicholson, Interview, 7/4/1980.

33. T.U.C.S.A., *Report of Proceedings, 14th Annual Conference, 1968*, p. 459-500.

34. Ibid., B. Nicholson, 502.

35. Ibid., 503.

36. Ibid., E. Van Tonder, 514-5.

37. Ibid., 517.

38. Ibid., 505-7.

39. Ibid., 523.

40. Ibid., 509.

41. Ibid., 559.

42. Ibid., 566/7.

43. T.U.C.S.A., *Report of Proceedings, 15th Annual Conference, 1969*, p. 394.

44. Ibid., 397.

45. Ibid., 392.

46. Ibid., cf. 'We feel that TUCSA is not going to be saved. When I came into TUCSA the African workers had been accepted, and I can say in all sincerity that the TUCSA that I worked for through those years was an organisation I thought worthwhile ...', etc.

47. J. Lever, op. cit.

48. L. Althusser, 'Ideology and Ideological State Appparatus' in *Lenin and Philosophy* (London, 1971), and R. Davies, *Capital State and White Labour in South Africa, 1900-1960*, (London, 1979).

49. F. de Clerq, 'A History of Registered Unions', *S.A.L.B.*, vol. 5, nos. 6 and 7, March 1980.

50. It has even led people like J. Neff to indicate that an industrial revolution took place in the late 16th - early 17th centuries; cf. his 'The Progress of Technology and the Growth of Large-scale Industry in Great Britain, 1540-1640' in E.M. Carus-Wilson (ed.), *Essays in Economic History*, vol. I, (London, 1954).

51. R. Samuels, in *History Workshop (Journal of Socialist Historians)*, no. 3, 1977. Here a note of caution is necessary. Both R. Samuels and E. Webster use the concept of 'uneven and combined development' to indicate a *process* in the history of capitalism. What is not exactly clear is whether it is used in relation to a *theory* of a developmental path (that is, a 'theoretical evenness') or as a

description of a reality. I feel that in South Africa if we are using this concept to capture a polyvalent process we must think through at the same time what S. Amin ('Accumulation on a World Scale, Monthly Review, 1976.) has called 'disarticulation' as a tendency between and within economic sectors in peripheral formations having to do with the location of a peripheral formation in a world economy. For if this is true, what appears to be the 'uneven' part of the formula could not develop at *all*. Its possibilities for transition might be *blocked* save mass-scale State intervention (viz. Iscor, 1928, Amcor, 1937, intervention of multinationals, etc.) Whereas in Samuels mid-Victorian period this uneven process can be shown to have a different dynamic.

52. Despite that, the 'metal industry' is increasingly becoming a more 'comprehensible' domain. See for instance, C.S. Richards, *The Iron and Steel Industry in South Africa*, (Johannesburg, 1940); P. Tobiansky, *SEIFSA - The Making of an Employers' Association*, B.A. Hons. Dissertation, Univ. of the Witwatersrand, 1980; E.C. Webster, *Class Struggle in the foundry; deskilling and the transition from manufacture to machinofacture among ironmoulders in South Africa*, A.S.I. Seminar Paper, 1980; and *Accommodation or Resistance? The Response of the Iron Moulders' Society to Technological Changes in the Early Apartheid Period*, History Workshop Paper, Univ. of the Witwatersrand, 1951, and my own *Drought in the City - Hostels and Metalworkers on the East Rand*, History Workshop Paper, Univ. of the Witwatersrand, 1981.

53. cf. D. Kaplan, *The State and Capitalist Development in South Africa*, unpub. Ph.D. thesis, Sussex Univ. , 1979.

54. 'Empiricist' fallacy? My feelings are that it is not. We hope to be able to pinpoint an era where a certain form of exploitation becomes dominant: i.e. it subsumes to its rhythms and vagaries most of the industrial life of a social formation. That it is complex to pinpoint absolutely is hardly a justification for trying to do so. We must be able to indicate at least (a) the emergence of a universal worker, i.e. semi-skilled, performing the repetitive functions of a mass-producers process, (b) a shift in the supervisory function or the controlling and co-ordinating functions in a labour process, (c) a change in ownership and control, (d) the linkage of the above to a predominantly mechanised process, etc. etc. We shall return to the problems in Part E, in a theoretical discussion.

55. *Census of Manufacturing*, Dept. of Statistics, R.S.A. (Pretoria, 1962/3).

56. Ibid. A reclassification has occurred though in the area of 'mining workshops' that cease to be documented, cf. ibid.

57. Ibid. The names of some firms in 1961 have been gathered through research involving interviews with employers (see below), *Engineering Week*, *The Manufacturer*, *Financial Mail*, *Sunday Times*, *Business Times*, *Iscor News*, and in some cases checking with Board of Trade and Industries Reports.

58. cf. D. Innes, *The State, Post-War Manufacturing & Class Struggle*,

(d) Interviews with employers of two of the largest firms in S.A., (East Rand), July 16th 1980, July 19th 1980.

71. Interview (d) above, July 16th 1980.

72. This argument and more data developed in A. Sitas (1980), op. cit.

73. Ibid.

74. As in footnotes 57 and 61, also Annual Reports of Barlows (1969 onwards Barlow Rand), 1966-1972; Anglo American Corporation, 66-72.

75. The growth of this 'new phenomenon' is at the moment being researched. On the East Rand the process can be traced in the basic metal firms from approximately the latter part of the 1960s, whereas the capital goods firms (information based on 6 of these) from the mid-1970s onwards. In the bigger steelworks it goes back to the 1950s. Numerically any figure is almost impossible to disaggregate. That it is an ever growing important force there is no doubt, cf. the discussion on the 'Goode Report' in *Engineering Week*, vol. 1, no. 1, 2, 3, 1979.

76. See the work of N. Poulantzas, *Classes in Contemporary Capitalism* (London, 1974); and G. Carchedi, *On the Identification of the New Middle Class* in *Economy and Society*.

77. Interview, B. Nicholson, op. cit.

78. cf. R. Lagrange's *A General Overview of the Relationship between Registered Unions and the Labour Process in the Engineering Industry after World War II*, B.A. Hons., Univ. of the Witwatersrand, 1980, and similarly, P. Hendler, op. cit., and F. de Clerq, op. cit.

79. cf. J. and R. Simons' *Class and Colour in South Africa*, (London 1974), and E. Katz, *A Trade Union Aristocracy*, Univ. of theWitwatersrand, 1977.

80. *The History of the Boilermakers' Society*, educational pamphlet by the Society for Shop Stewards' Training (n.d.).

81. cf. F.A. Johnstone, *Race, Class and Gold*, (London, 1976), and also G.V. Doxey, op. cit.

82. cf. J. and R. Simons, op. cit.

83. cf. A. Sitas (1981), op. cit., p.18-19.

84. Interview with I. van der Watt General Secretary of the Boilermakers' Society, April 15th 1980.

85. Ibid.

86. Interview with B. Nicholson, op. cit., M. Kagan, op. cit.

87. R. LaGrange, op. cit., argues a similar story.

102. But, according to Van der Watt it was the coloured members that pushed for separation of the branches on colour lines.

103. E.A. van Tonder, (of S.A.T.U.), *Report of the Proceedings*, T.U.C.S.A. 19th Annual Conference, 1972, p. 572

104. A. Malherbe, (S.A.S.B.O.), interview, op. cit.

105. cf. J. and R. Simons, op. cit.

106. cf. F.A. Johnstone, op. cit.

107. N. Poulantzas and G. Carchedi op. cit.; R. Davies, op. cit., H. Wolpe, *The White Working Class in South Africa*, Economy and Society, vol. 3, 1977.

108. A related point is made in A. Sitas (1979), op. cit.

109. cf. the Warwick Project.

110. cf. M. Legassick and H. Wolpe in R.A.P.E., no. 7, 1977, where the possibility of marginalisation is excluded without being investigated because of Braveman's (*Labour and Monopoly Capital*, New York, 1974) work that shows that capitalism deskills. Or the conceptualisation of whatever is not wage-labour employment is a 'latent' reserve army of labour, whether it is women reproducing the death-pangs of a redistributive mode of production at the turn of the century or women in a latter day Bantustan, say the Transkei 1979.

111. cf. D. Hobart Houghton, *The South African Economy*, (London, 1974), take the 'stages' as he presents them in South Africa and superimpose 'formal subordination' at the stage of 'pre-conditions', etc.

112. cf. N. Poulantzas, *State Power and Socialism*, (London, 1978).

113. The theoretical implication will be placed in Part II; after we have discussed machinofacture, deskilling, etc. as they really take root in the South African social formation.

114. cf. T.U.C.S.A., *Reports of Proceedings*, 18th Annual Conference, 1972.

115. Ibid., 567.

116. Ibid., 526.

117. Ibid., 527.

118. Ibid., 571.

119. Ibid., 569.

120. Ibid., 572.

121. Ibid., 591.

122. Ibid., 592.

123. Ibid., 578.

124. Ibid., 579/80.

125. Ibid., 594/5.

126. Ibid., 607.