

SOUTH AFRICAN LABOUR BULLETIN

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Wage Increases and Inflation

**Problems of Established
Trade Unions**

**Are Works Committees in other
Countries Effective?**

JUNE, 1974

Vol. 1 No. 3

ERRATA

On Page 5 at the end of paragraph 2 after "R235 million," read — "African wages could have been doubled without reducing retained earnings, and without reducing dividends by more than 20%. Indeed they would have been reduced by much less, since about half the increased wage bills would have compensated for by decreased company taxation."

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COMMENT.

1. CLARIFICATION: TRADE UNIONS AND KWAZULU POLITICS.

The IIE is an educational institute which does not take up party political positions. We invited Chief Buthelezi to become Chancellor of the IIE because we believe that he is the outstanding national leader of the Zulu people, of the African people, and of all South Africa's peoples. But as an organisation we do not wish to become involved in KwaZulu politics. Nevertheless, we feel that the Labour Bulletin should at least comment on and attempt to clarify the present confused situation with regard to the trade unions and KwaZulu politics.

There are three quite distinct issues involved:

1) The policy differences between Chief Buthelezi and one of his Ministers, Mr Dladla. There clearly is a sharp policy difference between the two. Unfortunately, what the nature of the difference is, is not at all clear. Journalists would really be performing a service if they would set out clearly what these policy differences are, instead of merely hinting obliquely at them. Unfortunately, the newspapers seem to be more interested in the dramatic headlines provided by personality clashes than in a sober analysis of policy differences. However, as far as we can gather, the differences between the two leaders have little to do with trade unions or with the immediate problems of workers. As far as we can gather, these differences are concerned with problems such as the nature of the relationship between african entrepreneurs and the Bantu Investment Corporation, and with the issue of land tenure and rural development. These are issues on which the trade unions have no opinions as yet. In regard to Mr Dladla's interventions on behalf of the workers, the trade unions have always understood Mr Dladla to be acting as the agent of Chief Buthelezi, as has been stated by both men, and as was confirmed by the recent joint statement of the KwaZulu cabinet and the Trade Union Advisory and Co-ordinating Council (TUACC) which we print below.

2) The suggestion that some people intended to start a Labour Party in opposition to Chief Buthelezi, and that Mr Dladla is to lead this party. We do not know if anybody is planning to start such a party, but we have seen no evidence that they are. We do not know if Mr Dladla is planning to become involved in such a party, but so far we have seen no evidence that he is. Also, we can only agree that such an eventuality would be a tragedy for South Africa, and could do nothing other than to weaken the positions of both men in their struggle for African rights, and therefore also in their struggle for the rights of the workers.

3) The third issue is the allegation that the open trade unions in Natal, or people associated with them, are involved in a campaign against Chief Buthelezi. Here we can state unequivocally that no workers' organisation associated with TUACC has ever adopted such a strategy. Trade unionists, like other people, although

usually to a lesser extent than other people, also have their spare time, and of course we cannot guarantee that no trade unionist in Natal is privately involved in such political manoeuvres. But we have seen no evidence that any are. And even if any are so involved, it would be irresponsible to suggest that this means that they are acting as representatives of the trade unions in such involvement.

It is sad, then, that journalists should write lengthy articles, bereft of any evidence other than references to 'sources', making very serious allegations about trade union involvement. It is doubly sad to see a man of the status and background of Laurence Gandar writing what can only be characterised as a smear article; an article in which he suggests, but never proves, that there are radical (white) elements around the trade unions who see Mr. Dladla as a 'black power strongman', and that Tucsa is justifiably 'unhappy about some aspects of what is going on here'. Here Gandar is conflating a number of totally different issues to produce 'evidence' for a plot in a manner which would put a cabinet minister to shame. The accusation about 'Black Power' is particularly bizarre. There is a workers' organisation in Durban which is in some sense associated with 'Black Power', or, to be more precise, with 'black consciousness.' This is the Black Allied Workers' Union. But BAWU at present has nothing to do with the TUACC unions because these unions co-operate with Tucsa unions and with whites. So to suggest that the TUACC unions are in some way associated with a Black Power move. shows a fair degree of ignorance.

Of course we cannot discount the possibility that there is some organised campaign against Chief Buthelezi involving the trade unions. If these journalists really do have evidence, then it is about time that they revealed it. The trade unions have no desire to be manipulated by politicians. But if they are relying for their evidence on rumours, then they should ask themselves two questions. The first question is: what possible reason would the unions have for being opposed to Chief Buthelezi? He has fully supported the unions, and the unions know that Chief Buthelezi is their most important source of moral support, and their greatest protection against government intervention. Even if it were thought that Mr. Dladla would be even more firm in his support of the trade unions, it is obvious that the hope of making that marginal gain cannot be worth the risk of attacking a leader who has the wide support not only amongst workers but also amongst all other sections of the Zulu community. Any union official who used his position to canvass against Chief Buthelezi would be certain to cause a split in his/her union. The unions have an interest in preserving the unity of the Zulu people and the power and influence of Chief Buthelezi.

The second question is: if the unions have no interest in the weakening of Chief Buthelezi, and in the rift between the Kwazulu cabinet and the unions, who does have an interest. Who has an interest in

starting and circulating rumours which could be the source of such a rift? The whole story of Shaka's Spear should surely provide an answer to that question.

2. DEATHS ON THE GOLD MINES.

In the last nine months 48 african miners have been violently killed. Nineteen died as result of pay disputes, and the other 29 died in 'faction fights'. These figures are horrifying. In any normal country such events would have lead to the appointment of a Commission of Inquiry to investigate the nature of an industry which produces such violence. But South Africa is not an ordinary country; nor is Gold Mining an ordinary industry. So it is left to the public to try to make sense of this phenomenon by piecing together what bits of information there are.

The most significant bit of information is that miners are paid far less than industrial workers, while mining houses are making enormous profits. The most serious disturbance was at Western Deep, where 12 miners were killed. Western Deep is owned by the progressive Anglo-American company. Recent figures show that Anglo in one year had an african wage bill of R40 million - and distributed dividends of R235 million. African wages could have been compensated for by decreased company taxation.

Harmony mine, where 4 miners were killed, had, in the year 1972-73 an african wage bill of R7.7 million. Its working profit for the year was R50 million. Figures of this order could be duplicated in any number of the other mines. The vast profits are mainly the result of the rocketing price of gold. But, as Wilson shows in his book 'Labour in the South African Gold Mines', dividends were about twice as high as the total african wage bill throughout most of the 1960s. And the gold price has been high for some time now.

Many of the shareholders live outside Southern Africa and cash remitted to them is lost to the South African economy. If cash was distributed in wages rather than in dividends it would boost demand for a whole range of South African manufactured goods and foodstuffs throughout those areas in Southern Africa from which the miners come.

But wages are not the whole problem. The mining houses are, with varying amounts of enthusiasm, beginning to raise wages. Indeed, in all four mines in which deaths resulted from wage disputes, these were associated with previous wage rises. In all cases companies concerned explained that misunderstandings had arisen, and these misunderstandings had lead to ill-feeling and violence. But how can misunderstandings of this nature arise in such closely managed and disciplined institutions as mining compounds? A clue to the obvious conclusion is given by the

fact reported by a spokesman from one mine, that the first thing which the miners did was to burn down the cottages of the indunas, 'the first symbol of authority that they came across'. There is no trust, no communication, no negotiation between management and workers. Everything, even wage increases, comes from the top.

A mining compound is what the social psychologist Erving Goffman has called a 'total institution', in which large numbers of people are permanently together, subject in all their activities to a plan drawn up and imposed upon them without their participation. In such a total institution the kinds of tensions between inmates, which in the compounds break out into faction fights, are endemic. The faction fights and the rifts in connection with pay increases are almost certainly both the result of the pattern of tension, antagonism and distrust which is typical of any total institution.

Just as the diagnosis is obvious, so is the remedy. There will only be relative peace on the mines when the workers themselves have a measure of control over their lives. This can only be achieved through a workers organisation which can consult the workers and negotiate for them; which will be trusted when it gives them information; and which can take over the running of the compounds and the facilities available to the workers. No individuals who are not responsible to and chosen by the workers will be able to mediate between workers and management- hence the fate of the indunas' houses. No facilities made available to the workers will serve to decrease tensions unless the workers have some real control over them. Consultation is not enough. There must also be real participation, which involves some devolution of power from management to workers.

The major argument which has been repeatedly advanced over the last 70 years against a trade union for african miners is that such an organisation is not practicable for migrant workers. This argument can be proved false both in theory and from the practice. Although virtually all the miners are in fact migrants who come to work on one year or 18 month contracts, most also return frequently to the mines. Wilson suggests that the total service of an african miner is somewhat less than half the 14 year average of the white miner. But even 6 or 7 years is an appreciable period of time. In any intake of miners there will always be older and more experienced men who also have the leadership potential to become workers' representatives within the trade union.

This is born out by the success with which the African Mine Workers' Union was able to organise between 1941 and 1946, in spite of the fact that it was refused access to the compounds and that the Mines refused to recognise it in any way. During its whole existence it only received one reply from the Chamber of Mines, a printed 'the matter is receiving attention' card which, it later turned out, had been sent in error by a junior clerk.

By 1946 the union was sufficiently well organised to have a conference of over 2000 delegates, and to organise a strike of 74, 000 miners, which was only broken by extremely harsh repression by the combined action of the United Party government and the Chamber of Mines.

The Chamber claimed: "A trade union organisation would be outside the comprehension of all but a few educated Natives of the urban type; it would not only be useless, but detrimental to the ordinary mine Native in his present stage of development." This kind of ignorant racialism perhaps shows only that the many Africans who joined the AMWU had a rather broader comprehension of workers problems than that possessed by the half-educated spokesmen of the Chamber of Mines.

Today, 30 years later, one must hope that the policy makers of the mining houses are better educated. It is even widely believed that one of the largest of these organisations has close links with a political party which favours greater democracy and a devolution of power in South Africa. If this is the case then they do not need to wait for a change of government; they can begin straight away by agreeing to recognise an African Miners' Union. In such a key industry an effective workers' organisation, negotiating conditions of work, and democratically controlling the workers' living quarters and facilities, would be an important training ground for black leadership, and a shining example of the possibilities of progressive policies.

But if the mining houses do not act in this way, and continue to claim that they cannot understand this violence, then the government must appoint an open Commission of Inquiry. According to a press report, the Minister of Police, Mr. Kruger, "said he was concerned about the situation. The mines were near residential areas and the trouble could spread." (Sunday Times, June 16th.) The implication of this statement seems to be the following; "We do not care how many people die on the mines because of conditions there. That is no business of the State, but only of the mines themselves; but of course if the trouble affects (white) residential areas, then it is a different matter." But the miners are not the property of the mines, that they can treat as they will. They are South African citizens, and the government has a responsibility for their lives, and for their deaths. The government cannot wait for such trouble to spread. It must investigate the underlying causes of the deaths which have occurred, and then it must take the one necessary step which can solve the problem; it must legally recognise african trade unions.

THE STATEMENT MADE BY T.U.A.C.C. AND THE KWAZULU CABINET.

The meeting between the KwaZulu Cabinet and the representatives of the Trade Union Advisory Co-ordinating Council came about because the latter were concerned about the press reports, and the mention of african workers in the alleged disputes within the KwaZulu Government. They were also concerned about the document or letter that caused the dispute, and about the authors who claimed to be speaking on behalf of workers.

The Trade Union Advisory Co-ordinating Council representatives wish to object strongly to Mr. Ndlangamandla's claims (that is, the supposed writer of the document) that he represents the interests of workers. The views he expressed were his personal views which are not representative of the workers' views. We object to his overt attempts to set one member of the KwaZulu Government against the others.

We further want to make clear that when the Executive Counciller for Community Affairs, Mr. Dladla, interceded in all disputes involving african workers, he did so at the request of workers and the Trade Unions concerned, and with the knowledge of the KwaZulu Government.

We also discussed and clarified the point about Mr. Ngobese's role in any future disputes. We understood that Mr. Ngobese would, from now onwards, liaise more with workers and trade unions, and report to the KwaZulu Cabinet through Mr. Dladla, under whose department these matters fall.

COMMENT: WAGE INCREASES AND INFLATION.

Recent public statements regarding wage increases illustrate once again the widespread acceptance that wage increases must result in further inflation. The implication is that this link is the result of the workings of "economic laws" of some sort. However, anyone who has made an attempt to understand the nature and causes of inflation in recent decades, must dismiss such firm assertions and suspect the motives of those making them.

The possible interactions between various forces giving rise to inflation at any one time are so numerous as to rule out simplified statements regarding the course that events will take. The role of wage increases in the inflationary process might be better understood if we spell out some of the major forces at work in such a process. The point being made is that simple statements obscure more than they explain and are therefore dangerously misleading.

An increase in wages will lead to an increase in money income, a large proportion of which will be spent on goods and services (exactly how large a proportion depends on the income level of the recipients). Such increased incomes and the resultant expenditure will be inflationary if the increased demand is not matched by increased supply of the goods and services. From the point of view of the economy as a whole, the ability to expand supply depends on the extent to which all productive capacity is utilised. There is the possibility of various "bottlenecks" that prevent full utilisation of all factors at the same time. eg. skilled labour, steel or imported goods. The exact nature and extent of such "bottle-necks" at any one time would always require further investigation.

There is a sense, therefore, in which it can be contended that wage increases should only accompany productivity increases in order to prevent inflation. This is essentially a macro issue, however, applying to the whole economy. The relationship between productivity and wages at firm or industry level is far more complicated. Furthermore, one cannot proceed far referring only to the aggregate supply and demand position in the economy. The inflationary impact that wage increases might have depends on supply conditions in the various sectors producing the goods and services which are in increased demand. Where expenditure takes place depends on the group that receives the increases. It should be borne in mind that it is absolute increases in expenditure that are important. That black government employees get larger percentage increases than whites has a significance which we shall return to below. But from the point of view of any inflationary impact, it is the larger absolute amounts that whites will receive that is more significant.

It is apparent, therefore, that a number of important factors have to be taken into account. Any inflationary impact of wage increases would depend on who is getting them, how large they were, where they would generate expenditure and on the supply conditions in the sectors producing the goods and services demanded. This com-

plexity raises further considerations. The expenditure patterns and supply conditions are empirical matters and the available information on which to base predictions is not entirely adequate. Furthermore, a great deal depends on the responses of individuals, businesses and institutions to the forces at work, and such responses can never be mapped out in advance with any great accuracy.

In fact the overall institutional structure of the whole socio-economic system is intimately linked to both the causes and the effects of inflation. In any economy there is competition on the part of various groups for the goods and services and productive resources produced, this being more particularly so in inflation-ery situations. It might not be too simplistic to see it as a process of who wins and loses, and how they do it.

The ability to purchase goods in this competitive environment depends on income. Inflation with rising prices means that the real value of income will decline unless money income rises at the same or a faster rate than prices.

The major groups of spenders in the economy are government, investors and consumers. Within this last group, another important distinction must be made between black and white consumers. For our purposes here, it is not so much the race that is important but rather that it gives rise to differing institutional environments. To make the point let us simplify and accept that government income is from tax revenue, and the money printing press (deficit financing), investor income from profits and consumers from wages.

There is a strong circular causality that has to be broken into. If one group tries to spend more, without output expanding, then prices will rise for all groups. Each other group would now try and defend itself against this process by making sure that their money income would rise to counteract the effect of rising prices.

Government is in the best position to do this since its income level is essentially a policy matter depending on the extent of deficit. Business will try and maintain profits by passing on cost increases and there is an incentive to keep wages (as part of costs) growing at a slower rate than prices. The income of consumers depends on their bargaining position as workers which is why it is important to distinguish between white and black.

This simplified outline suggests some very important consequences. Clearly, inflation will have a different impact on the four groups depending on the concurrent changes in their money income (that is, what happens to real income). In fact, differentials in the rates of change of these magnitudes experienced by the groups, is tantamount to a redistribution of income. If one group's real income falls whilst another's is maintained, then the former's position relative to the latter's has deteriorated, since it now has lesser

access to the goods, services and productive resources produced.

It is apparent, therefore, that the link between wage increases and inflation is complicated for two main reasons. Firstly, wage increases need not automatically lead to further inflation since this would depend on a number of other factors. Furthermore, inflation is the product of both demand and supply factors, so that a corrective policy cannot ignore the supply side. Secondly, we see that more fundamental factors regarding income distribution would appear to be intimately linked to inflation. That wage increases lead to price increases is best seen as part of the process outlined above regarding the potential redistributive effects of inflation. So wage increases become another factor in a circularly causal set of events. Where to ascribe blame is now far more complex, although to pin it on wages may be convenient for some.

AND WHAT OF LEYLAND?

This article is intended as a general reflection on the events at Leyland Motor Corporation plant at Mobeni in Durban. As is fairly well known, 177 african employees at the plant downed tools early in March 1974. The strike received substantial press coverage but little background to the dispute emerged. (eg. Daily News 5.3.74, and The Natal Mercury 7.3.74) The recent work stoppage at Leyland suggests that it is perhaps time for an analysis of the underlying causes of the dispute.

The issue at the root of the grievances of the Leyland workers is their demand for the recognition of their trade union - the Metal and Allied Workers Union (MAWU) - and the refusal of the Leyland management to negotiate with it. In August 1973 MAWU sent a letter to the Managing Director in Johannesburg in an attempt to open channels of communication. In response to this letter Management explained their policy 'to improve labour relations';

"In order to achieve this, the procedure for communication between employer and the employee as laid down in the Bantu Labour Relations Regulations Act will be implemented and used effectively to develop a close liaison between management and the employees.....We are convinced that this can be attained within the framework of the Act and that Bantu worker representation through a trade union will not be necessary. We will be prepared to review the situation when Bantu trade unions can be registered in terms of the Industrial Conciliation Act, but, until such time, we can unfortunately not recognise the Metal and Allied Workers' Union." (Letter dated 28.8.73 from F.P. Jacobsz, Director of Finance and Planning.)

Some points need to be clarified for those not familiar with the situation at Leyland at that time. Prior to August 1973, management had contributed to the structure of employer-employee communication by forming a management appointed committee. Minutes of the meetings of this committee suggest that management would have clung to this institution had workers not coerced them to think in terms of the new Act. According to workers reports of those minutes, workers informed management that they had had an election under the auspices of MAWU on the 27.7.73, and had elected 20 workers to form a works committee. They pointed out that this had been done in accordance with the new law and 'stressed that they welcomed the opportunity of discussing their problems with management.'

The plant manager, far from being enthusiastic at this move, "explained to them that a works committee would not necessarily be able to negotiate with Management as it was a committee of workers only, and could only communicate the wishes, aspirations and requirements of employees to management. (Minutes of meeting 2.8.73)

In the light of the above, Leyland's position seems rather dubious. They exclude trade union representation on the grounds that nego-

tiation with trade unions is rendered superfluous by the machinery created by the Bantu Relations Regulations Amendment Act (1973). At the same time they inform workers that works committees are not "necessarily" useful institutions for negotiation. While the argument put forward by Leyland is hollow superficially, they do make a valid distinction between bodies that "communicate the wishes, aspirations and requirements" of workers, and bodies which may be used as effective negotiating structures. This is well demonstrated by the workings of the original committee designed by management.

It is not suggested that this body failed in all respects. Workers were able to vent a variety of grievances; for example complaints about lockers and food in the canteen. They were able to present one or two requests. In May 1973, for example, they asked if the company would sell employees scrap wood. Accepting this, however, is far from accepting a situation of negotiation. There were no disputes in any meaningful sense. Management merely accepted or rejected suggestions made by workers.

Wage demands provide the most obvious example of the point being made here. In May, workers asked the plant manager when they could expect the promised increments to be finalised. They were told that details were in the process of being finalised and would be made known at the next meeting on the 27.6.73. At a meeting of the committee on the 2.8.73., the increments had still not been finalised. Workers complained and asked whether the new wage rates would apply retrospectively to June. The plant manager said that "it had been physically impossible to complete it (job evaluation) earlier. He did not think that the new rates would be backdated." (Minutes of meeting on the 2.8.73) There the matter ended. Clearly this cannot be called negotiation!

We have seen that the distinction which Leyland makes is valid but we must ask of them a simple question; WHAT KIND OF BODIES ARE CAPABLE OF NEGOTIATING WITH MANAGEMENT ON BEHALF OF WORKERS? Their answer to this question is perhaps not yet formulated but it is now 10 months since they were confronted with the problem and it would seem inexcusable to allow this lapse to pass unnoticed. Once the local management refused to allow a works committee to function, the ball was in their court and we must assess the merits of this action in the light of the alternatives open to them.

After a deadlock of four months during which there were no discussions at all between management and its employees, Leyland brought in an official of the Department of Labour to persuade workers to form a liaison committee. Not surprisingly, his attempts failed. The workers were familiar with the distinctions between works and liaison committees. They had chosen a works committee in August precisely because they were convinced that, for all its limitations it was preferable to a liaison committee. The naivety of trying to force unwelcome institutions on mistrusting workers was demons-

trated once again when workers returned blank ballot forms for the election of representatives to the liaison committee. It must be noted that workers were not simply boycotting this institution because it was management initiated; they had seen it fail. The Bantu Labour Relations Regulations Act makes provision for employers or employees to approach the Department of Labour if they wish to form works committees or liaison committees. While the Act explicitly states that all committees must be registered by the Department of Labour, it is not uncharacteristic of that Department to override the expressed preferences of workers. Taking the Leyland case more specifically, it must be noted that workers had written to the Department demanding a works committee in June 1973. One wonders why 6 months later, the committee was not yet established.

Leyland was inexcusably slow to learn. After it was clear that workers did not want to participate in such a committee, management persisted in its attempts to draw workers into that institution. At the end of January, Dr. Jacobsz, the Director of Finance and Planning, flew down from the head office in Johannesburg, to address the workers at the Mobeni plant. Workers insisted that they wanted MAWU to represent them. Workers informed him that they were all members of MAWU and demanded the right to have union representation rather than that of any other institution. Dr. Jacobsz refused this and insisted that they should form a liaison committee.

It would seem clear that Leyland had no intention of establishing channels for resolving conflict. They perhaps felt that taking a 'hard line' was the only way to put an end to a problem that had on for several months. Here I would suggest their position becomes fundamentally untenable. While both workers and management have the power to destroy ANY institution regulating conflict by simply refusing to participate in it, neither group can stop disputes arising. Through their uncompromising attitude management created a deadlock. The dispute persisted and since there were no institutions through which workers could arbitrate, they eventually resorted to presenting an ultimatum by way of a memorandum, demanding union representation. Management stalled then repeated their position.

At this point workers came out on strike on March 4th. The workers demanded a reconsideration of the decision taken against their request and threatened to stop work until such time as management decided to grant their demands. When the Secretary of MAWU phoned the plant manager with the intention of mediating a quick settlement of the dispute, he received a blunt answer to the effect that management was capable of handling its affairs without the intervention of a third party. However, they were consulting with the Department of Labour who advised that all workers be fired for striking illegally. Management adhered to this advice, firing some workers. Management in collaboration with the Department of Labour were determined to crush the union.

This determination prevailed over the interest of management to prevent strikes. When the Secretary of MAWU phoned the office in Johannesburg, the vice-head of Leyland, Mr. Landau, appealed to him to "reason" with the workers that they should rather discuss this matter than stop work, otherwise the Corporation would have to close down and move elsewhere. If anyone had been reluctant to discuss the matter it was management, not the workers. A meeting was arranged between Mr. Jacobsz and the Secretary of the union. At this meeting Mr. Jacobsz indicated that they would negotiate with the union if only there was not so much pressure from associates and the government. He said that the company was aware of the membership of their workers and did not object if these workers nominated representatives or shop-stewards to serve on the committee that consulted with management. He added that the union could always meet and discuss matters of mutual interest between the workers and management. At the meeting it was agreed that the workers would return to work as soon as possible, and that they would nominate delegates who would be the union's shop-stewards. These delegates would not constitute a liaison or a works committee. At the time this seemed to be a victory for the union rather than a tactical move by management to crush the union.

Meanwhile, management had hired twenty new workers, so that when the workers returned to work on Monday the 11th of March, some of them were discharged and paid off. On Wednesday Dr. Jacobsz, who had come down to Durban met the workers' delegates and told them that the strike by the British workers had necessitated the retrenchment of sixty five workers. He refused to allow the delegates to consult with the workers. By Friday, these workers had been paid off.

While Leyland management is constrained to insisting that their actions are not victimization of the sixty-five workers concerned (it is in fact a legal offence to victimize workers) there can be little doubt that their argument is a weak one. If workers were retrenched for shortage of work (as claimed) it is inconceivable that the remaining workers should have to work excessive overtime as has been happening ever since. Further, anyone familiar with the dynamics of the Leyland work force, will plainly see that management has carefully weeded out the strongest unionists to the best of their ability. Four of the six elected delegates, the union's shop-stewards, were among those fired. These were old Leyland hands some of whom had been there for eight to ten years, and who would have been the last people to be retrenched. So what appeared to be the beginnings of recognition of the union by management was in fact a clever tactic on the part of management to crush the union. However they neglected to consider the strong union feeling amongst the majority of the workers at the plant.

The workers sent another memorandum to management demanding the reinstatement of the workers who were victims of the 'mass firing'. Management reiterated its position with regard to them, but later

attempted to hire four new workers. This nearly caused a strike as the workers had insisted that the fired workers were to be the first to be employed if more workers were needed. When management tried to slip in a new worker by employing him together with six of the old ones, the workers came out on strike with the result that management had to pay him off. Management have since employed six of the workers who were fired.

It is obvious that the unrest in Leyland Motor Corporation will not be settled as long as this firm continues to turn a blind eye to the dissatisfaction and grievances of its workers; until they decide to recognise the form of representation which the workers are determined to have. Management is naive to think that this determination can be squashed by what appear to be repressive measures. The workers have shown that they are not prepared to conform to the form of representation desired by management, so management is going to have to choose between no form of negotiation, and the consequences of this, or recognition of the union.

Most of the fired workers are at present unemployed and are being assisted by a relief fund, established by the union and the Leyland workers. However, there is the danger that they will be endorsed out of the industrial area. Mr. Shange, who is now working for MAWU, was faced with this threat.

It is interesting to note in passing the indirect effects of the Leyland workers' action. Some time ago the International Federation was reluctant to liaise with MAWU because it had been informed by the registered unions concerned, that MAWU was not representative of african workers. However, it was impressed by the Leyland strike, by the support which the union had amongst the workers, and has now sent forms for assistance from the Federation, and invited MAWU to affiliate.

THE PROBLEMS OF ESTABLISHED TRADE UNIONS.

'The registered trade unions have become nothing more than glorified benefit societies'. (Harriet Bolton, March 1974)

Even trade unions which are well established with a developed policy face problems. These are not quite so obvious compared to those of the new unions struggling for existence. All the things which the new trade unions aim for, have been achieved; the union has its own well-developed benefits, stop orders exist for members subscriptions, the union enjoys a dominant role in the Industrial Council, and through the 'union shop' principle, there is a steady membership. Organizers do not have to spend most of their working day recruiting members or maintaining existing members in good financial standing.

Despite the tremendous advantages listed, the established trade unions face their own set of problems which are a severe hindrance to trade union solidarity, and to the expansion of the trade union movement. The problems the established trade unions face are those of age; officials tend to get cut off from the workers through spending more time on office work, Industrial Council meetings, and other related activities; there is a hardening of the arteries when leadership has become so entrenched that there is a constant cry for new faces, and finally decisions are made by a few people so that a gap is created between the ideal of democracy and the actual practice.

From being an active component of the labour movement, the established trade unions gradually have become more of an administrative system. Over the years, the established trade unions have striven to become more acceptable to the State, and have sacrificed their independence for the admitted benefits of recognition by the State for their members. As they have become better established so the interests of their members have not necessarily become the interests of the workers as a whole in a particular industry. As a Nationalist M.P. said in 1953; "In the past the trade union was merely an organization of individuals working in a certain industry in order to negotiate with their employers and, as far as the State was concerned, to discuss legislation. Gradually, however, every registered trade union in South Africa has become a recognised part of the State machinery for carrying out our Industrial Conciliation machinery. Consequently, in view of the fact that the State to a large extent gives recognition to trade unions as part of such machinery, it is obvious that the State has to watch very carefully in composing that machinery, that it can function in a manner which will enable it to achieve the aim for which it was created". (Hansard 5, 14 August 1953). This quote sums up the attitudes which have now become absorbed by the established

trade unions.

As a result of this development, which arises from an interaction between trade unions and the State, with the State confirming the legal standing and direction of established trade unions, trade union officials tend to get cut off from the workers. The obvious ideal of the trade union movement has always been to have workers running their own organisations. This was the original idea when workers first decided to form trade unions, but over the years trade unions have had to employ more and more officials who have not come up through the ranks, and who have special skills through longer education than most workers. While in many ways this is a necessary development, the attempt should still be made to realize this ideal. One way in which more members of established trade unions could be inducted into leadership positions would be for these unions to allocate more money, time, and attention to the training and education of members.

These problems are made worse by the fact that workers who become officials tend to get cut off from the workers. A worker who is moved from the factory floor to the trade union office has a completely different set of duties to perform. Quite often the organizers earn a lot more than they would on the factory floor; instead of being paid weekly they are now being paid monthly, and allowances are provided for transport (a union car may even be provided) and other essentials. While a worker approaches a manager as an employee, a trade union official approaches a manager as a virtual equal with a greater freedom of action.

From being a production worker, a trade union organizer soon changes into an office worker. Directly a trade union selects one of its members in the factory to work for the collective interests for a salary, that worker becomes, consciously or not, lifted out of the working class into a new status, that of the salaried employee. The worker who becomes a trade union official ceases to be a worker economically and psychologically, and experiences the same gap between himself and the workers as does the non-worker. The trade union official has to learn new skills and information, such as the cost of production of commodities produced in the industry, the source and cost of raw materials, the state of the industry, the wages and conditions of workers in different regions etc. He/she has to possess the talents of a general and those of a diplomat. Unfortunately trade union officials soon develop a protective concern for their own salaries, allowances, and status.

All these things tend to widen the gap between the workers and the trade union officials, even those officials who have come up from the factory floor. It is in this situation that firm direction by union executive committees becomes vital, otherwise workers might

come to think that the trade union, the employers associations and the Industrial Council, are ranged against his/her interests as a worker.

As the established trade unions survived through the decades so the arteries of the union began to harden. As a result, workers rapidly lost interest in their organizations in which there was little change. A good organization will temper the experience of age with the enthusiasm of youth. If the workers see that there is very little change in representatives and elected officials and that these personnel are never effectively challenged, then apathy will result. It is a good principle that all official positions should require nominations, proposals, and ballots when elections fall due. Too often officials are unchallenged, and the workers feel very little sense of participation in the government of the trade unions. Where there is an unbeatable candidate, some person should be encouraged to stand in opposition, so that the workers get used to the idea that reasonable difference of opinion is not treason but required at every election to provide healthy alternatives. All this means more work for the officials, but the benefits are a much higher degree of participation by the workers and officials can be more confident of worker support.

The gap between the workers and the officials, between the ideal of democracy and the practice of oligarchy, has become so crystallised that writers on the subject refer to the "iron law of oligarchy". In 1911, a German writer, Roberto Michels, laid down his famous "iron law of oligarchy" in the following terms; "It is organization which gives birth to the dominion of the elected over the electors, of the mandatories over the mandators, of the delegates over the delegators. Who says organization says oligarchy". Many studies of trade unions have shown that at the top there are a small group of people, most of whom have held high office in the trade union's government for a long time and who do not face any serious opposition. In these trade unions, no matter what powers the constitution gives to the members, the real power lies with the people in the top positions. The various studies show that trade unions are like one-party states in their internal organization. This often does not happen because of a deliberate plan, but because oligarchy within democratic trade unions is an unintended consequence of organisation. Various trade unions have tried to fight this tendency by making sure that there is a turnover of officials, by limiting the number of years that a person can take office, and then requiring that that person then return to the factory after completing his term as an official. But these attempts have mostly failed.

How has this situation come about? What are the reasons for a lack of democracy in trade unions? There are several reasons for this development, some of which the trade unions are quite aware of and

try to combat. The first is that union members are not sufficiently well-informed to effectively participate in decision-making. For the members of a union to have more power against the officials there must be good attendance at meetings and a large amount of interest in the day-to-day activities of the union. This rarely occurs, apathy being the normal state of affairs, to be broken only by a crisis. There are many reasons for this. Most union members, like other people, just spend most of their time at work or with their families. Their remaining free time is taken up with friends, entertainment, and other recreational activities. Most trade union meetings are concerned with technical administrative matters which are not of deep interest to the average member. As long as there is no trouble at the office only a small minority finds participation in union affairs sufficiently rewarding to sustain a high level of interest and activity. Other reasons for a lack of activity in union affairs are a fear of possible victimization from employers, transport problems, and a need to rest after a tiring week's work, if the union activities take place at the weekend. Many trade unions increase attendance fees as an inducement to attend, and while this practice may increase the number of members at meetings, it can make the meetings prohibitively expensive and also lower the quality of workers coming forward to represent the workers.

A more prosaic reason advanced for the lack of democracy in established trade unions, is that the leaders want to stay in office. While democracy requires that there should be a turnover in leadership, the secretary of a trade union tends to lead an upper middle class life style and is conscious of the need to maintain his/her standing in the community. Often a trade union official will earn as much as a professional man, but possesses more power. Most officials want some security of tenure because of their position in society. On the other hand, democracy requires insecurity for those in governing positions, and every official in a democratic society must anticipate a loss of office. But once a person has got a high job status he/she will always try to retain and protect it. If the official sees that there is a big gap between himself and the workers, he/she will not want to become a worker again.

A final reason advanced is that large-scale organizations tend to give trade union officials a virtual monopoly of power. Trade unions, like all other large-scale organizations, have to develop a bureaucratic structure if they are to survive. To become more efficient there is a growing office staff and tight control on decisions. Bureaucracy is inherent in the sheer problem of administration, and in the necessity of unions to be 'responsible' in their dealings with management, and with other groups. In the end trade unions become parallel to the structures of business and government. Because of the necessity to be efficient and to stick very carefully within the law and labour policy, there is increased

power at the top and decreased power among the ordinary members. Opposition is seen as a danger which cannot be tolerated because it gives strength to the union's enemies. Further reasons for oligarchy are that the only people in communication with all the members are the trade union officials, and that the officials may well possess skills of organization which are lacking in the rank and file.

These are serious statements of the democratic health of the established trade unions. In their defence, the leaders of trade unions argue that the trade unions are organized for industrial conflict, and that since the workers are engaged in perpetual conflict with management, internal opposition only serves the interests of the enemy. A further argument is that there is no need for factions in the organization because all members are workers and have common interests and objectives. It is quite true that certain trade unions have been severely weakened by internal conflict. As an example, the Natal Branch of the Textile Workers' Industrial Union has been torn into two factions for many years and employers have taken advantage of the situation, and have certainly fostered it. The fighting amongst the workers in the Textile Union is one of the reasons for the low wages paid in this industry.

While these arguments do carry a certain force, it is important to realise that a high degree of democratic practice should be guaranteed. In many established trade unions we can see that the secretaries have been in their positions for decades. While it is true that these officials are often efficient and have maintained good administration, there are immense problems when they pass on (it seems as though very few trade union secretaries retire). Unless there is a high degree of participation in the affairs of the trade union and a number of people have had the experience of running a trade union, then the interests of the members will certainly suffer when changes are eventually forced on the officials. It is important for every trade union member to become a trade unionist, not a member of an organization. This is only possible where opposition is tolerated, where there is at least some turnover in jobs, and where young workers know that they have a chance of playing an important role. If this does not happen then employers will be justified in saying that it is only the trade union officials and not the workers who are trying to achieve things. A strong union needs to be efficient, but to be really efficient in putting forward the interests of its members, it has to be a democratic organization.

ARE WORKS COMMITTEES IN OTHER COUNTRIES EFFECTIVE?

1. INTRODUCTION

One important issue is left out of the current debate on trade union rights for african workers. Because attention is given to industrial action by workers and the implications of trade unions they are establishing , little discussion is held on the relationship between workers and employers. The role of the employer and employers' organizations in contributing to an effective relationship between workers and employers is also played down.

The need for a relationship arises out of the fact that workers have to sell their labour for a wage. Unless the wages and working conditions given in exchange are mutually agreed upon, no satisfactory relationship can emerge and continue.

In the early stages of the labour movement in other countries, companies employed on average a small number of workers, the employer was the owner and the whole concept of management had not been formulated. Emerging african trade union leaders, however, have to face sophisticated managerial techniques. Furthermore, blue-collar workers are increasingly employed by companies with a large labour force. Hence it is becoming necessary to define the representational rights and powers of workers in their place of work, besides rights of negotiation of workers on a collective basis and on an industry-wide level.

This article examines certain issues underlying the question of worker representation and aspects of the works council system in Germany and the Netherlands. In both these countries, legislation dealing with the scope and limited of works councils was brought in 20 years ago. Trade unions have existed since the turn of the century and operate on industry-wide level to negotiate improvements in wages and working conditions with employers' associations. But as the activities and decision-making powers of works council affect the members of those unions, they have become involved in the functioning of those organizations. They

not only conduct educational classes for works committee representatives but have made successful representations to improve the legal power of works committees.

2. LEGISLATION IN GERMANY AND THE NETHERLANDS

In the Netherlands all the workers of a factory, including unorganized workers who are not members of trade unions, can elect fellow-workers to the works council. The Chairman is the employer.

The functions and powers of the works council include:

- A. Having a say in hours of work including overtime and arrangement of holiday leave.
- Being consulted on working conditions or other matters referred by the main agreement of that industry to the council.
- Attending to and controlling administration of pension matters, safety rules, health care, sick pay, other benefit funds, productivity commission, etc.

The management must have the approval of the works council in the above matters before it can decide on them.

- B. Attending to observations, wishes and complaints of workers provided they cannot be handled through normal channels.
- C. Advising and making suggestions on measures that may contribute to technical and economic improvements.
- D. Promotion of training and education of workers.
- E. Rendering advice and being consulted on the personnel policy of the firm.
- F. Being consulted when the establishment is to be closed down, taken over by another firm, moving of the firm to another area.

In Germany the works council also consists of members elected by the union-organized and unorganized workers, including clerical personnel. The Committee elects its own chairman and decisions are conveyed, inter alia, through minutes of meetings, to management or the personnel department. In urgent cases, the chairman will convey the decisions. In factories with a large labour force, the chairman and sometimes one or more works council members are full-time employed to attend the works council affairs. These full-time people receive the wage they would have earned if they had stayed in their particular job.

What are the formal powers arising out of these three rights of consultation, information and co-determination? The following summarised list includes items referred to the works council by the collective wage agreements:

regulation of daily hours of work, breaks, time and place of payment of wages, etc.

preparation of the holiday leave schedule.

administration of welfare and social security services.

carrying out of vocational training.

disciplinary matters arising out of incidents when instructions have not been followed by workers.

determining of job and piece rates for incentive schemes.

approving of transfers re-organization, dismissals and other changes in personnel policy involving substantial disadvantages for workers.

In 1968, there were 180 000 works council representatives. Although 90% of works council members are union members, only about one-third of all german workers belong to unions.

3. TRADE UNION ATTITUDES TOWARDS WORKS COUNCILS

Although the trade unions in Germany and the Netherlands co-operate with the works council system they are critical of its limited powers. The dutch trade unions have said that "works councils offer few real guarantees for an effective influence of the workers' representatives on the operation of enterprise. Decision can only be reached provided that management agrees to co-operate". It is felt that the employer can still take too many decisions without having to seek the co-operation of the works councils.

The german trade unions also maintain that the works councils should have a greater say and add the vital observation, "Experience over a considerable period of time with the existing legislation has shown that in the long run proper functioning of the works councils depends for its effectiveness on the active support of the trade unions".

As these statements show works councils, as a form of workers' participation, are not rejected. However, since the first legislation on works councils was passed, the trade unions have, in terms of experience, indicated that the power of the works council has to be made more effective. And the new 1971 Legislation has incorporated these suggestions from trade unions, and further amendments to the revised Legislation are being formulated at present by the trade union co-ordinating bodies.

4. TRADE UNION REPRESENTATIVES IN THE WORK SITUATION

But besides the involvement of the trade unions in the process of making works councils more effective and being in a position to exercise more power, other developments have taken place which are of vital importance.

During the last decade, trade union leaders in both countries have expressed the wish that the trade unions should be more active for their members in the actual place of work. It was felt that although trade unions could influence social and economic matters on a national level,

they lacked influence in the factory.

The realisation that trade unions should be active in the factory was brought home by the experience with works councils. Although the works council system is accepted it became apparent that the decision-making process of the council could be manipulated, deliberately or not, by the employer.

The works council representatives constantly have to be reminded that they must safeguard the interest of workers and not take decisions which are only in the interest of the company and its operation.

As a result, both the german and netherlands trade union members in each factory have elected workers to represent the union and safeguard their interests. These elected officials can, but need not, be the same persons who are elected on to the works council.

In Germany, the term "vertrauensleute" or "confidence people" is used to describe these trade union representatives in the factory. In the Netherlands, the term "bondswerk in de industrie" is used to emphasise the need for involvement of the trade unions as a corporate or collective organization in the work place.

The elected trade union members form the link (or "hot line") between what happens to workers in the factory and the trade union leaders.

These elected trade union representatives are not shop stewards in the british trade union sense. Because of the presence of the committee system, these elected union representatives do not have the power of shop stewards. This in itself is of importance to the trade union because the british shop steward system has at times tried to usurp the function of the trade union. That is, they can be a threat to the established trade union arrangement, proper channels of negotiation and harmful to the trade unions' image. In the evidence of the British Trade Union Congress

to the Royal Commission on trade unions, it is stated "Cases have been reported to the General Council (of the TUC) where joint steward bodies have concluded agreements inconsistent with union policies".

Hence trade union constitutions should specify what rights and responsibilities the elected trade union members have and what functions works committees can perform.

One of the three co-ordinating bodies in the Netherlands, the C.N.V., has stated that trade union activity in the establishment offers workers an appropriate framework or structure through which to exercise influence on the social policy in the work place. It is believed that a well-planned programme of factory-based trade union activity improves communication with members and ensures democratisation of the union. The question of democratisation is important because the trade union leaders have been too long out of touch with their members.

The largest union in the Netherlands has stated that trade union activity in the establishment aims to:

counter the power and control which the employer can exert over the workers.

ensure that the interests of the workers are protected.

involve trade unions in the personnel policy of the establishment or factory.

affect changes in the organization of work so that the humanity of the workers is upheld.

It is also said that provided there is effective trade union activity in the work place, the works councils can perform an essential function. The elected trade union members in the work place ensure that the system of workers' participation becomes meaningful and functional. Trade union activity in the factory is not the same as the british shop steward system because of the legal presence of works councils and the support of the trade union for these

councils as a form of workers' participation.

It stands to reason that these new developments have laid a great emphasis on workers' education. Both the elected trade union members in the factory as well as the works council representatives require knowledge in order to know how to carry out their new responsibilities. For example, 1 250 members attended one of the courses given by the educational school for the Typographical Union in Germany last year. The Union has 150 000 members.

5. WHAT ISSUES ARE DISCUSSED AT A TYPICAL WORK COUNCIL MEETING?

What items were discussed by a meeting of a works council? The following brief minutes of a works council meeting in Germany are given:

The firm concerned employs 646 blue-collar workers and 78 white-collar workers, of whom 312 are foreigners.

It is important to add that the Chairman is no longer employed in the factory but spends all his time on works council affairs. He earns what he would have been paid if he had remained in the factory and has an office with necessary facilities. One other member of the Council has the right, if he so thinks necessary, to leave his job and attend to council matters. All the other members are employed in the factory. The council meets during working hours. The Agenda is drawn up by the council and contains items on which a decision is requested by the Personnel Department as well as issues brought to the attention of the council from workers or "vertrauensleute" (confidence people).

Ten of the eleven committee members (one is a foreigner) and one youth representative came to the meeting. Meetings can be held every week. The person absent was attending a week-long course organized by the union, on the structure and function of works councils. He received paid educational leave during that period.

(NOTE: In the metal industry, which employs 5,2 million workers of whom 50% are trade union members, 20 000 of the 80 000 works council members have attended a week-long course on works council. Altogether 65 000 or 81% of work council members are union members).

Meeting

1. The personnel department had requested permission to dismiss two foreign workers who had returned from annual leave three weeks late.

As they had no sick pay certificate, approval was given for their dismissal.

NOTE: At another factory, a similar problem had been discussed by the works council. This involved six foreign workers who had sent a doctor's certificate which it was suspected was not valid as the same illness affected all of them and they were all booked back to work on the same date.

The Council ruled, on the principle that the foreign workers need more time to be at home with their family or relatives because of a year's absence, that they not be dismissed. However, that committee undertook to discuss the issue with the workers and give them a final warning as well as let it be known that this tactic could not be tolerated for the future.

2. Permission was requested by the Personnel Department for the promotion of two workers.

The council agreed but did question why a three month probation period was necessary. It was accepted that if the promotion did not materialise a full explanation would have to be given by the Personnel Department to the Committee.

3. The management requested permission to issue identification cards to all employees. Apparently, the security guard did not know all workers, particularly the foreign workers. Some friends of foreign workers came during night shift to have a shower in the factory. If a card was lost, the workers had to pay for a new card.

Considerable discussion was generated by this request. First of all, it was asked why there was a need for an identification card and, secondly, why people should be punished if they lose their card.

As the matter could not be resolved, it was put to the vote. 6 agreed, 2 were against, 1 abstained and the youth representative did not participate.

4. The management asked for permission to withhold the bonus for one day from two employees who had fallen asleep on the job. As a result, part of an order was spoiled because rejects went through, resulting in a considerable claim for damages.

Exhibits were shown to the representatives and the Chairman pointed out that the committee had up to that stage agreed in only one other instance to penalise a worker.

The requested action was regarded as a fair penalty and permission was granted after the amount was reduced.

5. The new rules of the firm's pension fund in regard to payment to widows were approved.
6. The youth committee had requested permission for more time during the hours of work to enable apprentices to study.

Permission was granted although some members felt that the apprentices were treated too leniently.

7. The Chairman asked for nomination of one member to accompany him to Dusseldorf for the quarterly meeting of the co-ordinating works councils belonging to this group of companies in order to approve of the new job classification for all the factories.
8. The company advised it would not pay its usual contribution per worker to cover part of the cost of an excursion. The reason was that some German workers had demanded, because their families would attend, that foreign workers be excluded. The company ruled that either all workers attend or the annual outing be cancelled.

Discussion ensued and it was put forward that certain Departments were too large and would have to split into two sections, each holding its outing on a separate day.

The council agreed to support the company in its stand and ruled that if a Department has to be divided, it be ensured that each section be mixed so that German and foreign workers participate together.

9. The Chairman reported that one german worker had complained that Germans were oppressed because foreign workers were appointed as foremen. "Foreigners send money home and why should he, as a German, have to take orders from a foreigner".

The Chairman said that he rejected racialism and that this was a dangerous trend. He said that this matter should also be discussed at the next meeting of "vertrauensleute" or "confidence people" - (that is, the trade union representatives in the factory elected by the trade union members only and not the unorganized workers).

Considerable informal discussion ensued on this matter. There was a general rejection of the attitude expressed by the german workers, and it was agreed to record that the council was strongly against discrimination and that the matter would be discussed in these terms with the german worker concerned.

10. Under the heading of General, the following matters were raised:

- (a) Pollution Problems:

Information was tabled about the petition being distributed by people in the town to ask that action be taken against dust caused by manufacturing companies.

Details about the regional air pollution officer were supplied.

- (b) Influenza Immunisation:

The turkish workers had refused to be immunised against influenza because of the Ramadaan Festival.

It was agreed that the immunisation next year be

organized at a different time.

(c) Long Sick Leave:

One worker had lodged a complaint against a fellow-worker who was still on paid sick leave but who had been seen in public bars and other public places.

The Chairman said that if the doctor had booked him off and the worker obeyed doctor's orders, he was entitled to sick pay.

The meeting lasted nearly 2 hours.

NOTE: It is apparent from the above report of what actually transpires at a works council meeting that the power of that organization is not abused and decisions taken are responsible. It is also evident that workers' education is important to ensure that council members know how to exercise their rights.

6. WHY NICODEMUS MAREBA DECIDED TO STAY

When Nicodemus Mareba was fired on the 30th January, 1974, he suspected that this was due to his involvement in the establishment of a works committee. The company he worked for, Van Leer in Springs, alleged that he was dismissed because he did not follow instructions but Mr. Mareba did not accept this explanation and asked the 1 400 strong Engineering and Allied Workers' Union to take up the matter.

The firm, at that stage, refused to deal with the African Union, and the Secretary was left no alternative but to seek legal advice. The firm was asked to reinstate Mr. Mareba as it appeared that he was victimised and the Bantu Labour Relations Act provides against dismissal of people who are active in the establishment of a works committee. The Union also advised the International Metal Workers' Federation in Switzerland to which it is affiliated, of the incident as Van Leer is a multinational company.

Mr. Mareba's suspicion that he was dismissed because of his works committee activities was based on the difficulties he and other fellow workers had experienced over the previous

four months in establishing a committee at Van Leer. He had attended a weekend Seminar organized by the Urban Training Project in October, 1973, and this had given him insight into the difference between a works committee and a liaison committee.

When management tried to impose a liaison committee on the workers, he had questioned why consideration was not given to the works committee as an alternative. Management had not responded to his request and tried to impose its plans on the workers. He had taken round a petition amongst workers which asked the company and the Department of Labour to establish a works committee at Van Leer (R.D.M.-18/4/74).

The management of Van Leer refused to consider reinstatement but both Mr. Mareba and the Engineering Workers' Union pressed on with their claim. On the 18th April, 1974, the firm relented and offered Mr. Mareba a choice:

The company said it was prepared to re-engage him, pay back-pay owing to him since the date he had been dismissed and also contribute to his legal expenses, or, as an alternative, pay him R1 000.

Mr. Mareba decided not to accept the money. He is determined to remain with the company (R.D.M.-20/4/74).

Miss Jane Bandes, the Secretary of the Engineering and Allied Workers' Union, in commenting on Mr. Mareba's decision said that she hoped other firms would learn from the experience of Van Leer. She also expressed the hope that a satisfactory relationship would be established between her union and the company.

This, of course, is the crux of trade unionism - to establish a relationship based on equality and mutual respect between workers and employers. A trade union which cannot establish a relationship has little scope to improve the plight of workers. It was in this spirit that Mr. Mareba refused to be enticed by the considerable sum of money offered to him. He had become involved in the issue of works committee and became a member of the trade union not for his own gain but in order to ensure that the workers

have an effective voice and that management recognised the fact that workers have the right to be represented by an independent organization.

7. COMMITTEE LEGISLATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

Although african workers have had the possibility since 1954, in terms of the Bantu Labour (Settlement of Disputes) Act, to form works committees, the procedural requirements were not practical either to them or employers. In fact, employers established many committees which did not comply with the legal requirements of the Act, because they did not want Department of Labour involvement in domestic matters. However, after the Durban strikes, the Act was considerably revised and it is significant that the title was changed from "Settlement of Disputes" to "Labour Relations". Furthermore, the clause regarding victimization was also made more specific.

The Act provided for a choice between two types of committees in a place of work. The works committee consists of representatives elected by the workers, whereas the liaison committee consisted of representatives appointed by the employer as well as representatives elected by the workers.

The Act is still unsatisfactory and has not provided an answer to the question of legal recognition of african trade unions but as at April, 1974, 830 liaison committees and 200 works committees had been established (R.D.M.-4/74).

The upsurge in the establishment of committees cannot be ignored by organizations or people concerned with the development of a labour movement in South Africa. The personnel departments of companies and holding groups are actively promoting some form of committee in the work place. To ignore this development is naive. Hence the action taken by trade unions in other countries who were faced with similar legislation must be taken into account.

8. CONCLUSION

One fact cannot be disputed. Works committees are not trade unions and as the case study of Mr. Mareba and a number of others have shown; works committees on their own cannot protect workers. It is only when workers have access to a trade union that their interest can be safeguarded.

As has been pointed out, works committees cannot give workers membership rights. The leaders of trade unions are directly responsible to their members for their decisions and actions but works committee representatives do not have to report back. The trade union operates independently from the authority of employers and only trade unions can bargain on a collective basis with employers' associations to improve wages and working conditions. A works committee cannot muster the collective strength of workers and adopt a determined stand against an inconsiderate employer. Only the trade union has the financial stability to build up an independent administrative system. Only the trade union can provide legal assistance. Only a trade union can ensure that workers receive effective workers' education.

But works or liaison committees are here to stay. Because they influence the relationship between workers and employers, their possibilities must be utilised and their inability to protect workers' interests must be understood.

This suggests that african trade unions accept and operate with works or liaison committees. It is in the work situation that the dignity of the worker can be endangered. And provided that the elected members of a liaison committee or all the members of a works committee, receive guidance and advice they can ensure protection of workers. The committee structure allows for a relationship to be developed between workers and the employer. The trade union can ensure that the quality of this relationship is effective and protects the dignity of each worker.

REYNOLDS'; SCENE OF A STRUGGLE:

The recent events at Reynolds, a shoe component factory in Pine-town, provide a striking example of the powerlessness and inefficacy of works committees, and an insight into the way some managers use their power.

The works committee was established in 1972, though it was not registered. It was suggested by Mr. Smith, the manager, after a strike because he objected to such "violent" means for settling disputes. However, while objecting to strikes Mr. Smith, as the details of the events show, is also not prepared to share his decision-making powers with the workers. He seems to believe in the possibility of eradicating conflict by having a peaceful, docile, submissive workforce; he seems to believe that conflict itself is illegitimate.

The cause of the lock-out was the failure on the part of management to satisfy the expectations of workers, who anticipated an annual increase of 2c per hour in April. The anticipation was based on past experience. Taking into account the low wages paid to the workers, and considering the effects of inflation on their real wages, the consternation which this caused the workers is understandable. The factory is covered by an Industrial Council Agreement for the Engineering industry, which was gazetted on March 29, 1974. This Agreement includes clauses for African workers. Most of those involved in the dispute fell under Rate I, which lays down the minimum wage of 32c per hour or R14.40 per week. It is alleged that some workers were paid less than this amount.

The workers decided to send the members of the works committee to Mr. Smith with their complaints; to use the negotiating machinery established at the instigation of management. Neglecting to listen to their complaints, Mr. Smith told them that no increase would be given, and that this information should be conveyed to the workers. When asked how the workers were expected to cope in a situation of rising prices, Mr. Smith said that since the price of raw materials had risen, there was nothing he could do. The members of the works committee called a meeting of the workers, but before they could give their report, the meeting was interrupted by Mr. Smith, who told the workers that if they were not satisfied they must leave. He is alleged to have shouted at the workers and used abusive language. He offered them an ultimatum; work with no increase or be fired. When the workers tried to appeal to him, he told them all to leave the factory, which they did, waiting outside.

Mr. Smith called the police after workers refused to leave the premises. The police told the workers to remain quietly outside. Mr. Smith had also contacted the Labour Department in Pinetown, who would have to inform the Industrial Council of the dispute.

The next day, Tuesday the 21st May, the workers returned to the

factory. Mr. Smith told them to collect their wages at 9.00pm. that morning, and if interested to return at 4.00pm., when he would consider their re-employment on merit basis. He had employed 28 new workers that morning, but required some more machinists and operators. The workers interpreted this action as a denial of their right to negotiate. Because of the employment of replacement workers, 28 of the former employees could not be re-employed - only those needed by the company to make up their normal work force. When the new workers were informed of the conditions behind their employment, they expressed disinterest being interested only in the fact of being employed.

Instead of collecting their wages at 9.00pm., about 60 workers went to consult with the Acting-Secretary of the General Factory Workers' Benefit Fund at Bolton Hall, to which most of the workers belong. He said that he was willing to assist them and suggested that no workers apply for re-employment. They unanimously rejected the individualistic principle of selection on merit, opting for the principle of solidarity - all of us or none.

The workers did not perceive the Labour Officer as a representative of their interests. No workers were interviewed by officials of the Department during the dispute, and there was no active intervention by officials. The implication from official statements made was that they would only intervene on the request of workers. The view of the workers was that the absence of liaison with the Department of Labour was a result of the failure of Mr. Smith to comply with section 7(c)2 of the Bantu Labour Relations Regulations Amendment Act. Because he had failed to register the works committee, there had been a lack of liaison between the Chairman of the works committee and the Department. The members of the works committee felt that had liaison been an accepted principle, the Chairman would have contacted the Labour Department whose intervention might have prevented the employment of replacement workers. However the Department had only been in contact with Mr. Smith, accepting his interpretation of the events.

The Acting-Secretary of the Benefit Fund, at the instigation of the workers drafted a petition which the workers signed. This petition stated that Mr. Smith should re-employ all the workers, and meet their demands for an increase of 2c per hour. The watchman the factory took the petition to Mr. Smith who reiterated his ultimatum as the only acceptable solution. The workers then decided to return to Bolton Hall for consultation.

The Acting-Secretary phoned Mr. Solomon Ngobese, the Urban Ambassador appointed by the Kwazulu government to handle labour disputes. Unable to contact him, he then phoned Mr. Barney Dladla, Kwazulu Minister of Community Affairs, to ask him to on behalf of the workers. Mr. Dladla phoned Mr. Smith who once again reiterated his decision. Mr. Ngobese phoned on Friday and is reported to have said; "A company official told me that if the situ-

ation had been handled properly, there would never have been a strike." (Daily News) Thus there was dissension within management over the manner in which the dispute had been handled.

Given Mr. Smith's intransigence, the workers were unable to do anything further. They unanimously decided that they collect their wages and sign themselves off, and that no workers should be re-employed. However, a week later, 11 workers who were standing outside the factory, were approached by Mr. Smith who asked them why they did not want to work, since the majority of their fellows were re-employed. On the basis of this misrepresentation of the facts, these workers were seduced into working at Reynolds again.

On Friday, the workers once again congregated at the office of the General Factory Workers Benefit Fund. A statement and legal affidavit were signed. The workers decided to lay a charge against management alleging that management had;

- a) violated the Bantu Labour Relations Regulations Amendment Act in that the Department of labour was not notified of the existence of a works committee at the factory.
- b) had unfairly dismissed workers involved in the dispute. This dismissal took place in effect when replacement workers were employed before the old workers were signed off.
- c) had failed to allow the works committee to function in the manner envisaged by the Act by interfering in a committee meeting and acting in an insulting way.

Workers appealed to the Department of Labour to prosecute the person responsible, and to demand immediate reinstatement, pending the outcome of the Department's investigations. If the Department substantiated the charges, the workers demanded that they be referred to the Public Prosecutor.

Throughout the dispute the workers perceived the situation as a lock-out, whereas management and the Department of Labour perceived it as a strike. A spokesman for the Department, revealing his distantiation from the workers' viewpoint, was quoted as saying; "If the workers come to us, we would be happy to guide them and keep them out of trouble. That's what the Bantu Labour Officer is for. But as it stands now, they are subject to prosecution because the factory covered by an Industrial Council Agreement. They have stopped work without going through the prescribed conciliation machinery". (Daily News) In terms of the Bantu Labour Relations Regulations Amendment Act, african workers are only permitted to strike after the intervention of the Bantu Labour Officer has failed to settle the dispute. How is one to explain the contradiction in the perceptions of the situation? Either the ultimatum was an illegitimate one to make in which case the work stoppage was imposed by management, or the response by the workers was illegal. But management's ultimatum besides revealing their attitude to negotiation with workers, was illegal. Rather than "work without increase or be fired" it should have

been "work without increase or be fired with notice or notice pay". The workers did not decide to stop work; this decision was imposed upon them by Mr. Smith who told them to leave. However, it is significant that management "chose" to perceive the situation as a strike. Such a choice reflects a belief in the social legitimacy of all managerial actions and the inherent "troublesome" nature of workers. The actions of Mr. Smith reflect the arrogance with which some managers use their power; his ignorance of the law and his belief that a conflict over the conditions of employment is illegitimate; workers must accept the conditions determined by Management. However, disregarding the few who were blackmailed, the workers were just as united in their belief that they would only work if their demands were met. The commitment of their stand is highlighted by the fact that at present most of them are having to face the difficulties of unemployment.

AN EXAMINATION OF THE MEDICAL SCHEMES ACT, 1967

This Paper will be divided into three main sections.

The first section will deal with the question of medical care Industry, the rôle of the State and then the applicability of Act. It will also detail the scope, structure and administration of the Act. Section B will deal with the control which the Act exercises over Medical Schemes and the final section will examine the Act as arbitrator between the Schemes and Medical Practitioners.

SECTION A

This Paper has taken for granted the relevance of medical matters to industrial life in general and to trade unions in particular. There is - or can be - a community of interest between unions and employers on the question of the provision of medical care for workers. This interest does not necessarily stem from the same type of concern, nor from the same motives, but one should be aware that it exists and therefore be able to make use of such interest. Despite having a so-called free enterprise system, State, in the form of Central, Provincial and Local Government, has taken some interest in the provision of medical services to the population in general, and industry in particular. The Act under consideration has served to introduce the State into the relationship between various private organizations such as, Medical Schemes, private hospitals, and doctors, etc. The Act has had the effect of making the State an arbitrator of sorts in these relationships. This has been done without granting any financial contribution to any of the private organizations and apparently with no idea of moving towards a State-run Medical Scheme.

The word "medical" has been used deliberately, rather than that of "health" because the latter has a much wider application and was obviously not envisaged by the framers of the Act. The World Health Organization definition of "health" reads "a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity". In the South African context, this definition would be extremely difficult, if not impossible to implement, without an extensive re-organization of the medical, social and political system.

SCOPE OF THE ACT

Medical schemes run by trade unions are covered by this Act

those run by Industrial Councils are, broadly speaking, only affected should the Minister of Labour ask for such cover to be extended. In December 1968, however, a significant change to the Act was made by the Government. This change concerned the question of membership of two Medical Schemes by one individual. When the Act was published in 1967, Clause 38 effectively prohibited an individual from belonging to, or submitting claims against, more than one Medical Scheme. This provision was then extended to Schemes which had hitherto been excluded from the operations of the Act, namely Medical Schemes established by agreement under the Industrial Conciliation Act, the South African Railways and Harbours Sick Fund and those Funds established under the Police Act, the Defence Act and the Prisons Act. This change took place despite vigorous protests from such bodies as the Transvaal Clothing Industry Medical Aid Society. The latter, in a memorandum published in February 1969, pointed out that this extension of the scope of the Act would severely curtail the benefits enjoyed by many women in the Industry. Many of these women were married to men who worked in industries such as Furniture and Leather, where medical benefits were not as extensive as those provided in the Clothing industry. The relevant clause did not allow a dependant of a member to choose to which scheme she should belong and consequently many people were deprived of medical cover - a situation hardly in keeping with the declared aims of the Medical Schemes Act. The result of this change was to force Industrial Council Schemes to divide into two - one exclusively for sick pay, the other for medical benefits. Women whose husbands belonged to a Medical Scheme could therefore still receive benefits from the Sick Pay Fund.

Those Schemes which include medical cover as part of their benefits but which contain other provisions that make them liable for registration either under the Pension Funds Act or the Friendly Societies Act are not exempted from registration in terms of the Medical Schemes Act. Such schemes shall be registered under the latter Act, only after registration has been effected under one of the two Acts. When a Pension Fund or Friendly Society ceases to be registered under the applicable Act, registration under the Medical Schemes Act automatically lapses. Section B of this Paper will indicate the control which the Medical Schemes Act exercises over the rules adopted in the constitutions of schemes which are registered as Pension Funds or Friendly Societies.

In indicating the scope of the Act, recognition has been given to the existence of two distinct types of schemes, namely Medical Aid and Medical Benefit. The Act's scope, however, is equal for both types.

STRUCTURE FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE ACT

The Central Council for Medical Schemes was formally established in terms of the Act and was given certain functions which will be discussed later. Not less than seven and not more than nine ordinary members are appointed by the Minister of Health, who also appoints the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman. The Council contains members who represent various interests namely a medical practitioner, a dentist, a chemist and druggist, someone with a special knowledge of Medical Benefit Schemes, another who has special knowledge of Medical Aid Schemes, one who has special knowledge of hospital service and another person who on the recommendation of the Minister of Labour would have special knowledge of Schemes established under Industrial Conciliation Agreements.

The Act prescribes two specific functions to the Council, namely the control and promotion of Medical Schemes, and the investigation of complaints and settlement of disputes concerning medical schemes. Other functions can be allocated to the Council from time to time. The Minister of Health is also obliged to consult the Council before appointing the Registrar of Medical Schemes.

The Council also has extensive duties to perform in connection with complaints and disputes. The latter can include disputes in connection with the rules under which schemes operate. The Council is also empowered to enquire into complaints by medical practitioners or dentists or any supplier of service against a scheme or schemes and complaints by the latter against medical practitioners, dentists, etc. where such complaints could not be dealt with under the Medical, Dental and Pharmacy Act. Disputes which concern financial arrangements and fees payable to medical practitioners can also be placed before the Council for consideration and there are fairly lengthy portions of the Act devoted to the settlement of such disputes.

The Act also gave recognition to the two national associations representing the different types of schemes. Both the National Association of Medical Aid Schemes and the National Association of Medical Benefit Schemes were given recognition in the original Act, although this specific provision was removed in 1969.

A Secretariat with a Registrar of Medical Schemes at its head was also established. This officer is directly responsible to the Secretary for Health and the Minister. He has wide powers to call for information and statistics as well as extensive powers with regard to the registration, cancellation and all suspension of registration of the various schemes. Such registration forms an important part of the control measures introduced by the Act and will be dealt with in the following section.

SECTION BCONTROL OF SCHEMES

All medical schemes, whether aid or benefit, in existence at the time the Act was published, or which came into operation after 1967 were required to register as Medical Schemes. Each scheme has to satisfy the Registrar that rules and other provisions comply with the Act before a certificate would be issued. The Registrar has powers to grant provisional registration should he feel that the scheme did not comply in full with the Act, thus allowing time for alteration in order to satisfy the necessary requirements. Medical Schemes would not be permitted to carry on any business other than that of the provision of medical care. Certain minimum provisions are required in the rules of each scheme namely:-

- (a) The appointment of manager or public officer,
- (b) Stipulation of minimum benefits,
- (c) A provision that dependants of members would also be entitled to the same benefits,
- (d) The provision of continuation membership for people who retire or terminate employment on account of age, ill health or other disability,
- (e) That the scheme grants cover to widow-members,
- (f) A stipulation that a scheme would be obliged to admit as a member any person who had previously been registered with another medical scheme for a continuous period of at least two years,
- (g) The settlement of disputes between members and schemes,
- (h) Provision for amendments to rules of the scheme.

Any changes to the rules of a particular scheme would have to be approved of by the Registrar and registered accordingly. Those schemes which are also registered under the Pension Fund Act or the Friendly Societies Act are also obliged to apply to the Registrar for permission to alter or cancel rules connected with the medical section.

Should any scheme be dissatisfied with the ruling which the Registrar may have given, provision has been made for appeals to the Medical Schemes Appeal Board which consists of three members appointed by the Minister. This seldom occurs as most disputes are handled by the Central Council.

The Council also has the power, with the approval of the Minister, to make regulations with regard to certain matters which include the provision of benefits to members of schemes, the payment of subscriptions, the supply of statistics, etc. The latest and most important of these regulations were issued on the 29th December 1972, and came into force on the 1st July of this year. These

made certain radical changes with regard to the payment of benefits to members of both medical aid and medical benefit schemes. The Council introduced minimum and maximum benefits which will have the effect of making members of such schemes pay a certain amount each time they visit general practitioners or are supplied with medicines by such practitioners. These regulations were adopted in order to apply disincentives to all members of medical schemes. The minimum levy for each visit to a general practitioner is 50c per consultation; for home visits, 75c per consultation and during weekends and public holidays, a minimum of R1 per visit. The regulations also make it necessary for schemes to make a charge for each prescription which members receive.

While these provisions do not, as yet, apply to members in Industrial Council schemes, they are an indication of what the Government and the Central Council regard as the method by which to counter the growing use and possible abuse, of medical cover. These measures might have an effect on the over-use of medical services (mainly by higher-income groups) in the short-term. It is unlikely, however, that they could be anything but stop-gaps in the struggle to provide effective and expanding cover without allowing costs to increase a great deal.

SECTION C

The Act as arbitrator between schemes and medical practitioners.

1. Tariff of fees : Several sections of the 1967 Act dealt with this matter (e.g. Clauses 29, 30 and 31) and emphasised once again the importance with which the matter of payment is viewed by the Government. It might also indicate the priorities which the latter have set in regard to medical care.

The Tariff applies mainly to Medical Aid Societies as they pay on a fee-per-visit basis. Originally it was thought that changes to the Tariff would come about on application to the Central Council from either the Medical or Dental Association acting together with the National Association of Medical Aid Schemes. Should the latter and either (or both) of the medical associations not reach agreement on such changes, a dispute would be referred to the Central Council. This body would nominate an arbitrator who would make a final and binding (not less than 12 months) award.

These provisions were changed in 1969 in order to allow for the appointment of a Remuneration Commission, which now meets every two years to consider the question of tariffs. The Commission receives representations from the professional medical bodies and the various Associations representing Medical Schemes including

the National Association of Medical Benefit Schemes. Although the last Commission did not give extensive increases to the practitioners, it seems probable that it would find it difficult not to do so next year. While the Tariff does not affect Medical Benefit Schemes as much as it does the Medical Aid Schemes, it is obviously also an important indicator of cost and payment patterns for the benefit type of Society. The large section of the original Act dealing with payment to medical practitioners by the Benefit Societies was too unwieldy to prove effective and was subsequently removed in the amendments to the Act published on the 30th June, 1969. One important provision contained in these sections was the one which allowed doctors and dentists to "contract out" of the Act. This meant that the Tariff of fees would not apply to such people who could therefore charge in excess of the "normal" rate. Not unnaturally, the Medical Schemes have felt that the opportunities for "contracting out" give an undue advantage to the practitioners. Members who consult such doctors receive the accounts direct and have then to recover payment from the Schemes. Dentists were also covered by the Act but recently their Association has let it be known that all dentists have decided to "contract out" and consequently new moves are being made to deal with this situation.

The title of this Paper obviously sets a fairly narrow limit to its content and therefore the three sections have aimed merely at giving some idea of the major features of the Act.

One possibly interesting point for discussion which would extend the range of the Paper is a consideration of one of the most neglected features of the Act. This is the one which encourages the Central Council for Medical Schemes "to.....promote, encouragedevelopment and functioning of medical schemes". One would have imagined that this directive would involve a close look at the kind of medical care which schemes are, or should be providing, i.e. whether promotive, preventative and educational programmes should receive as much encouragement as purely curative services?

A LOOK AT THE OPEN TRADE UNIONS:

METAL AND ALLIED WORKERS' UNION (DURBAN).

The Metal and Allied Workers' Union (MAWU) was formed on the 28th April 1973, and at present has branches in Durban and Pietermaritzburg. At the time of its formation, it was the first open trade union in Natal. The Durban branch has 15 executive members and employs three officials - a secretary/organiser, organiser and a clerk/typist.

The present membership of the Durban branch is 2327, distributed in the Iron and Steel, as well as the Motor industries. The union is well established in the following firms; Leyland, Defy Industries, Non-Ferrous Metal Works, Glacier Bearings, Lawsons Auto diesel, Rowen, G.U.D. Smith Industries and many others. These firms have regular meetings with the union officials and have permitted the election of shop-stewards, who attend courses conducted by the union and offered by the Institute for Industrial Education.

MAWU has no existing contact with the Industrial Council for the industry. It can participate informally in the Industrial Council only if the Boilermakers' Union (registered) and the Steel and Engineering Federation of South Africa agree to this. As yet this has not occurred though MAWU is attempting to narrow the rift.

The union is related to the General Factory Workers' Benefit Fund in that this body provides doctor and funeral benefits for the union members. There is also a relationship between this union and the other local unregistered, open trade unions situated at Central Court and Bolton Hall. This relationship takes the form of discussions, consultation and the formulation of policy, which takes place at the meetings of the Trade Union Advisory and Coordinating Council. T.U.A.C.C. also provides a forum for consultation and discussions with members of the Kwazulu Government.

The MAWU has contacts with various International organisations for example, the British Trade Union Congress and the I.L.O. It has applied for membership to the International Metal Workers' Federation.

The union has received invaluable assistance from the Garment Workers' Industrial Union (registered), in the form of accommodation, stationery, bookkeeping etc. The union officials feel that without this assistance, it would have been impossible to set MAWU on its feet. The Secretariat facilities offered by the Central Administrative Services have also enabled the union to achieve semi-independence in a relatively short time.

Attempts to break the ice with some employers have been in vain. The failure in this sphere is a result of the influence of the Department of Labour, which acts as an unofficial advisor to management. The officials are not disheartened by this because they feel that the open trade unions are here to stay, as all responsible employers will realise. However, attempts to contact emp-

ployers by means of letters have received little response. This negative attitude is most manifest in firms like Caravan International, Lawsons Auto-diesel, Glacier Bearings, Smith Industries and Leyland Motor Corporation, where an uncertain relationship between management and workers exists.

The following are some of the problems faced by MAWU;

a) Stop-order facilities are withheld by management so that subscription fees have to be collected separately from each individual. This wastes a lot of the officials' time. A system was introduced whereby shop-stewards do this job, but this was found to have complications, for example, the loss of contact with the members.

b) The union has recruited members from factories where conditions of work were bad, low wages were paid and no channel for communication between the workers and the employer existed. Once membership was consolidated, management frequently improved its attitude to workers with the result that workers began to lose interest in their membership of the union.

METAL AND ALLIED WORKERS' UNION (PIETERMARITZBURG).

The Pietermaritzburg branch of the MAWU was formed on the 9th of June 1973. In the short space of one year it has built up a membership of 1556 workers distributed over 55 factories. The union employs two full time organisers.

The significant aspect of the union membership is that it includes workers in the motor repair industry and also workers from a large rubber plant in Howick. To understand this aspect of the union structure, cognizance must be taken of the fact that MAWU and the other T.U.A.C.C. unions grew largely because of the pressure exerted by the workers for trade unions. At the meeting where MAWU was formed, workers from the rubber plant and motor repair shops called on the Metal workers to include them under their wing. This did create organisational problems but the union has been able to partly overcome these due largely to the well developed and high level of consciousness shown by workers at this particular rubber plant. This is partly a consequence of the fact that there was a union covering these workers in the late fiftys and early sixtys, but which disintegrated as a result of the banning of its leaders.

The MAWU in the initial stages of its formation was given a great deal of support from the secretary of the Engineering Union, Mr. Norman Middleton, but from subsequent developments, it would seem not from his union. MAWU also has a relationship with the registered, Boilermakers' Union of South Africa. Collaboration with this union grew out of the fact that a large number of the MAWU membership comes from Hullett's Aluminium, which is also the focal

point of the Boilermakers' Union in Pietermaritzburg.

Early last year the Boilermakers were entering into negotiations for a technical schedule and the MAWU approached the Boilermakers and the firm concerned, requesting the union's participation. The Boilermakers supported MAWU's admission but the National Industrial Council for the Iron, Steel and Engineering industry refused to allow it to participate, without directly informing it of their decision. It had taken legal opinion on the matter, the gist of which was that the Industrial Council is "a master of its own destiny"; it can include or exclude whoever it desires. It decided to exclude MAWU.

The union's branch executive committee has now decided that it should have direct negotiations with the Boilermakers who would then represent it in the Industrial Council when it sits to discuss the technical schedule later this year. The union hopes to further strengthen its relationship with the Boilermakers and also try and open negotiations with other registered unions, for example, the Iron and Steel and Engineering Industrial union.

MAWU has after a great deal of struggle been able to gain access to management at Hulett's aluminium. Its relationship has developed to a point where it is now negotiating for total recognition. The union officials are sure that they will be successful with this particular factory and thus gain victory for the workers' movement. The union is, at present involved in opening negotiations with the management at Sarmcol the Rubber plant in Howick. Last month its request to meet management was favourably received but unfortunately there have been some changes in the top management and the union has had to make approaches to the new managing director for an interview.

The management at Sarmcol has been conducting a campaign to force the workers to elect a liaison committee. The entire workers' force of African, Indian and Coloured workers have stood firmly rejecting the concept of liaison committees and have asked for the recognition of the Metal and Allied Workers' Union.

The struggle for recognition in a number of other factories has been pursued with all the means available to the union. Some form of liaison does exist with management especially with regard to the solving of complaints.

The officials of the union feel that after one year of existence, great strides have been made in the general education of workers and in gaining partial recognition from management. They feel, however, that the task facing them at the moment is to strengthen the shop-steward system.

NATIONAL UNION OF TEXTILE WORKERS.

The National Union of Textile Workers was formed on the 25th September 1973. In the 8 months of its existence it has recruited more than 5,000 workers. That is, it has already drawn approximately 25% of all textile workers in the area.

There have been two major responses to this growth; a negative one and a positive one. The basis of the negative response is the premise that the Textile Union is ultimately a threatening body. The State has persisted in this approach, banning four people in January. Recently the State seems to have adopted a policy of technical opposition to the activities of the union, for example a pass raid on the union offices. The officials of the union feel that such harassment has the indirect, positive effect of enhancing their awareness of these technicalities. The positive response is that management, in a substantial number of firms, has begun to take a more accepting attitude to the union. Smith and Nephew and S.A. Fabrics in particular have shown an openness to the open trade union which is to be commended. At Smith and Nephew negotiations for an agreement have reached a final stage. One of the benefits negotiated, namely a joint attendance/length of service bonus will be introduced as from the 24th June 1974. The union expects that the agreement will be signed within the next week or two. S.A. Fabrics have given the union free access to the factory at all times and will negotiate an agreement with the union as soon as it has concluded the agreement with Smith and Nephew.

The general feeling of the union officials is that this attitude will increasingly become more prevalent amongst employers. The contacts which the union has established with the management of various other firms, has not been unrewarding on the level of individual worker complaints. The union hopes that, with time and effort this will be extended to include more general discussions on wages and working conditions.

THE FURNITURE AND TIMBER WORKERS' UNION.

This union started in February 1974 and has a present membership of just under 300 in an industry where the potential is about 4 000 members. At the moment the potential is relatively small since Africans in this industry are outnumbered 3:1 by other racial groups. The main response has been from the Timber section where the following factories provide most of the membership; Blaikie and Johnstone, Rhodesian Timbers, Hillman Brothers, and Marshall Timbers. The Furniture workers have been slow to respond, mainly because the majority of these workers joined the General Factory Workers' Benefit Fund in 1972 or early 1973, thinking that it was a union. They were subsequently disappointed that no negotiations for improvements were undertaken and they lost some faith in the idea of a union. In the Furniture section Aristocraft, Huski and Greaves and Thomas have shown most response.

The union receives moral and practical help from the Furniture and Allied Workers' Industrial Union (Natal) though financial support is limited to the use of the telephone and minor stationery. The registered union supports its unregistered counterpart and accepts the principle of open membership, but is restricted by the law. Some officials of the registered union however give priority to the protection of the interests of their members.

The union has one organiser who started work in April. His salary is being paid by C.A.S. for the first three months. The Acting-Secretary is a voluntary worker, who also assists the registered union. After an initial general meeting, an acting-executive committee, known as the 'care-taker committee', was established consisting of a delegate and an alternate delegate from each factory where interest in the union has been shown.

The union members fall under two agreements; the Furniture Agreement for Natal and the Building Agreement for Durban. At the fortnightly care-taker committee meetings, instruction on basic trade union principals is given and discussion of the agreements takes place.

The union's acting-secretary and organiser, and the organiser of the registered union have been visiting management in the Furniture industry to gauge response to the union and to build up good relationships. Their response has been wary and cautious. The union is planning a meeting of all employers in the Furniture section and hopes to approach the Industrial Council on the basis of recognition from the employers, so that some status on the Council can be attained, even if initially only as observers.

As yet the union has not made any contact with the Furniture Workers' International body, though this is being arranged.

The organiser visits distant factories on his way to the office in the morning and nearby factories at lunch hour so the union does not experience serious transport problems. The organiser's activities for the Furniture and Timber Union have been hampered by his having to handle complaints and moneys for two other unions which are just starting, the Chemical Union and the Transport and General Union. Apart from this hindrance which shall shortly be overcome, the organiser has been visited by the Special Branch at his home. Their attempts to intimidate him have been unsuccessful.

THE UNION OF CLOTHING AND ALLIED WORKERS.

This union was formed on the 30th August 1973 and at present has a membership of 974, distributed over 55 factories in and around Durban. The total number of African workers in the entire industry in Natal is approximately 1,100.

The Africans in the industry are covered by an Industrial Council

Agreement which provides a sick benefit to all its members after three months employment. In May all workers in the industry received a 25% increase in wages.

The union has an executive of 12 members. Shop-stewards have been established in most factories, the number shop-stewards in each depending on the number of workers.

This union has established a good working relationship with the registered Garment Workers' Union. In the initial stages of its formation it received financial and other forms of assistance. The union also has a close contact with the Industrial Council. The union officials believe that the union will receive stop-order facilities in all factories in the near future, because of their close collaboration with the registered union and the sympathetic attitude of management in the Garment industry. The Union of Clothing and Allied Workers have experienced a more sympathetic response from management than that received by other open unions. This attitude was also manifested in 1972 when management granted stop-order facilities for the Benefit Fund. Thus this union has overcome one of the most difficult obstacles to its establishment. The union is affiliated to the International Federation of Garment Textile and Leather Workers' Union.

While this union has had to contend with the interference of the Special Branch and the Department of Labour, the problems which it has to face are to a large extent dissimilar to those faced by the other open trade unions.

CHEMICAL WORKERS' INDUSTRIAL UNION.

This union has been accepting members since the end of 1973 most of which are at A.N.C.I. (African Explosives). As yet no organisation has been undertaken. The Chemical workers who come to join are advised to push for a high percentage membership in their factory (at least 50%) as the union will not start any attempt at negotiating with management until this level has been reached. This policy of workers organising themselves has been necessary because the union has had no organiser. However, it has proven to be highly successful and the workers are extremely enthusiastic about it.

The Furniture and Timber Workers' Union staff have been handling the moneys and minor problems. The union has about 600 members. An organising secretary, a former worker, is shortly to assume full-time operations. The workers in this industry seem very keen on being unionised so that one can expect this union to grow rapidly.

GENERAL FACTORY WORKERS' BENEFIT FUND.

The General Factory Workers' Benefit Fund was formally established on the 9th September 1972. The workers elected their executive committee consisting of 20 members most of whom are from the Clothing and Furniture industries. The executive committee holds its meetings every three months except in cases of emergency when special meetings are held. The Fund employs 11 people, at both the Durban and Pietermaritzburg offices, one of whom is on voluntary basis.

The membership of the Fund stands at approximately 18,000 excluding members of the unions who are covered in funeral benefits. In all, there are approximately 22,000 members. These members come from more than 150 different industries.

During the first year of operation, the Fund used the Garment Workers' Union offices free of charge, and only in the second year was it charged rent. Since its formation it has been dependent on an accountant who is paid by the Garment Union.

On the 31st of January 1974 Mr. David Davis, an administrative officer of the Fund, was banned and prohibited from working in any trade union movement. Individual members of the Fund have been visited periodically by members of the Security Police who have attempted to intimidate workers and officials. Apparently some went to the extent of promising large sums of money to spy and disrupt the Fund. On the 20th May 1974, the C.I.D. (Commercial Branch) visited the Fund's offices, both in Durban and Pietermaritzburg. They produced search warrants alleging that the Fund was an unregistered Friendly Society. All the Fund's records were confiscated and have not yet been returned. The officials of the Fund are considering finding a possible alternative form of registration in case the application for registration in terms of the Friendly Societies Act is completely rejected. The possible alternative is to have the Fund underwritten by an insurance company.

BOOK REVIEWS

H. Beynon: Working for Ford.
Penguin Modern Sociology 1973.

Books on industrial sociology are usually written from two general standpoints; firstly, they are written largely for other sociologists, and secondly, they are written from the perspective of a basic harmony of interest between management and labour. This book is interesting and useful because it transcends both these limitations, while at the same time retaining a focus on the key issues in 'industrial relations'.

Beynon transcends the limitations of a mere sociological standpoint, by, while remaining an outsider, becoming "an outsider who was accepted inside". Through being accepted inside he is able to present a sympathetic portrait of the men - mostly the shop-stewards - who make cars at Halewood near Liverpool. 'Industrial relations' are presented to us through the idiom of the men on the production line. To take two examples; "It's strange, this place. It's got no really good points. It's just convenient. It's got no interest. You couldn't take the job home. There's nothing to take. You just forget it. I don't want promotion at all. I've not got that approach to the job. I'm like a lot of people here. They're all working here but they're just really hanging around, waiting for something to turn up.....It's different for them in the office. They're part of Fords. We're not; we're just working here; we're numbers". (p.114)..... "You don't achieve anything here. A robot could do it. The line here is made for morons. It doesn't need any thought. They tell you that. 'We don't pay you for thinking' they say. Everyone comes to realize that they're not doing a worthwhile job. They're just on the line. For the money. Nobody likes to think that they're a failure. It's bad when you know that you're just a little cog. You just look at your pay packet - you just look at what it does for your wife and kids. That's the only answer". (p.121).

He transcends the limitations of the 'harmony of interest' perspective by recognizing a basic conflict between management and labour; which "can only be remedied by a fundamental change in the entire basis of production. The political transformation of society....." (p.318). The conflict, at its most fundamental level, is over how much work men do and how much they get paid for it. The stage for this unequal conflict is set in the factory - it is obviously unequal he argues as capital, at any sign of significant challenge to managerial power, can pack its bags and go elsewhere. "To lay men off or to close plants down permanently ultimately involves political decisions, and it is at this level of struggle that the conflict between capital and labour becomes

obviously biased against the worker. Capital is inherently flexible; machines can be written off, investment switched from one point of the world to another. Against the might of capital, the power of the shop stewards committee is negligible unless backed by 'a strong international organization". (pp.183-4).

Beynon introduces at the core of his analysis of 'industrial relations', the concept of a working-class factory consciousness which he sees most clearly manifest in the shop stewards at Halewood. In its simplest form, to have a factory class consciousness is to have an understanding of how you are exploited in the factory and how you can best combat management. He suggests that, 'a factory class consciousness.....understands class relationships in terms of their direct manifestation in conflict between the bosses and the workers within the factory. It is rooted in the workplace where struggles are fought over the control of the job and the rights of managers and workers. In as much as it concerns itself with exploitation and power it contains definite political elements. But it is a politics of the factory implicitly tied up with the day-to-day battle with the boss..... In its least developed form it is revealed in sporadic bloody-mindedness and malingering - the 'fuck-em' attitude that most managers are familiar with and find so distasteful'. (pp.98-99).

By introducing this concept Beynon is able to take into account the fact that while the car workers have been at the centre of industrial conflict there is little evidence that they have been able to link their struggles positively with those of other workers. Their battle has produced no radical political demands. They have not been able to shift the basis of the struggle from the effects to the causes - to an attack on the dominant logic of capitalist production. Hence Beynon avoids the pitfalls of a superficial revolutionary optimism by recognizing that the shop stewards within the car plants for all their militancy are not revolutionaries. Their factory consciousness is not necessarily a revolutionary class consciousness in the Marxian sense of that much abused concept. "They hate the car plant and they hate the system that produces it but they see no clear way out of it. They vaguely articulate the notion of workers control, but the slogan of the "car plants for the workers" makes no sense to the lads who work on the line. They hate the car plant in a way that the miners never hated the pits. They see no salvation in the nationalization of the car industry, be it under workers control or not". (p.314).

If the stage for this conflict is the factory floor, its organizational manifestation is not the trade union bureaucrats but the shop stewards committee. Hence factory class consciousness finds its historical antecedents in syndicalism - developed in Britain in the shop steward movement that occurred during and after World

War I. The shop stewards are the representatives of shop floor democracy - the basis of the shop stewards committee, is the collective defence of shop floor workers against the 'bosses' and the unions. Here Beynon is concerned to explain why some workers define their interests in collective terms and become shop stewards and others in 'individualistic' terms and become supervisors. He rejects an explanation of activism in terms of different types of people and opts for an explanation in terms of the collective position of workers in the factory. He writes that, "Psychologism ignores the dialectic of social life. It also ignores ideology. Dominant personalities can dominate for good or ill. The use to which they put their abilities is not determined by these abilities. Activity is directed by values and systems of belief. An adequate account of shop-floor activism and leadership needs to go beyond the personalities of the people involved and consider the ideology of the activists and of the organization within which they are active". (p.192). Beynon locates the roots of activism clearly in what he describes as the structural contradiction of capitalism most starkly manifested on the factory floor. The contradiction of factory production, and the source of contradictory elements within class consciousness, is rooted in the fact that the exploitation of workers is achieved through collective, co-ordinated activities within both the factory and society generally. So much for the agitator thesis!

This is a book which is rich in insights, simply and humorously written, e.g. on management p.133, on social science p.113, on 'class traitors' p.123, on 'scientific management' p.137, on the essentially political nature of all industrial relations p.221, and on what it means to be a shop steward and married p.204. To work on the production line in a motor car factory is a boring and fundamentally alienating task where one's day is regulated in an authoritarian way that is difficult for the non-manual classes to comprehend. This book urgently needs to be read and understood by academics, managers, and trade unionists.

The man in the engine dress has just fitted another gearbox. Forty an hour. Three hundred and twenty a shift.

- John C. Legget Class, Race, and Labor Oxford
University Press 1968 (\$1.95)
- Malcolm Rimmer Race and Industrial Conflict (Warwick
Studies in Industrial Relations)
Heinemann 1972 (£1.40)

It is not only in South Africa that "race" is seen as an important factor in conflict situations. In each country where it becomes an issue the previous history of relations between racially distinct groups is different, and so it is obviously highly dangerous to think in terms of one universal "race problem". But it is nevertheless useful to study other racial situations, even if only in order to become more sensitive to the many other social issues which may be involved, and which may be obscured by the race label.

Rimmer's title "Race and Industrial Conflict", appears at first to be something of a misnomer, because, apart from brief references in the Introduction, he scarcely discusses race again until the last sentence of the book. But it is in this that the main significance of his study lies. It is a study of one group of foundries in the English Midlands. There is a high proportion of mainly Indian immigrant workers in the firm. The work units tend to be segregated. Most of the English workers belong to one union, the Amalgamated Union of Engineering and Foundry Workers (AEF), while nearly all the immigrants belong to a different union, the Transport and General Workers' Union (TGWU). During a long strike by the TGWU the English workers worked overtime to help to break the strike, and in fact went on strike in protest when the management gave in to the TGWU demands. In short, it looks like a situation of racial conflict. But, on closer analysis, it turns out that the causes of the conflict have virtually nothing to do with race at all.

The work in the foundries is largely semi-skilled and unskilled. It is heavy and unpleasant work, often requiring a lot of overtime. Over the period of the study there was very low unemployment in the region. Thus it was easy for workers with general skills to move out of the industry, and this is how the concentration of immigrants developed;

they were mainly Punjabi-speaking, and had no industrial background. Recruitment into the firm was informal, which meant that those already employed tended to bring in their friends and relatives, so there was a very rapid development of a situation of "ethnic workgroups". The fact that many of the immigrants spoke no English meant that they had to rely on the few of their fellows who were bilingual, and it also discouraged social contact. The AEF had been long established but relatively inactive in the firm. Membership was concentrated among the more skilled workers. For these two reasons it provided no outlet for the grievance of the immigrants. Thus when the TGWU began to recruit in the firm it made rapid headway, aided by the communal solidarity of the immigrants. The immigrants, sometimes in conjunction with unskilled English women workers, soon developed a far more militant posture than the workers in the AEF.

It was this that led to conflict between the two groups, and to understand why it is necessary to analyse the bargaining and disciplinary procedures that had grown up in the firm. These were characterised by the very large place given to custom and practice, as opposed to formalised procedures. One can say that a particular culture had grown up within the firm, and bargaining and disciplinary procedures were governed by the unwritten rules of this culture. In normal conditions each new worker would have been socialised into this culture and so would have learnt to operate within these rules. With the rapid growth of ethnic work-groups this failed to happen. Matters were further complicated by the fact that most of these new workers came from an agricultural background with different general cultural rules about work. According to Rimmer these include being used to longer shifts, no tradition of restricting output, different attitudes to promotion, and different customs about what should count as a cause justifying dismissal. In the case of the strike referred to above, an Indian worker had been dismissed for swearing at a supervisor, and several of his friends who had stopped work in protest were also dismissed. The English workers felt that this was a legitimate reason for dismissal, and this was why they protested when a successful strike forced reinstatement.

It was the disruption caused by the immigrants to the established customs and practices of management-worker

relations in the firm which caused conflict both between workers and managers and between immigrant workers and other workers. Race and racial prejudice was not a major issue, but once conflict had occurred between the groups over the real issues, it was perhaps easy for this to be seen to some extent in racial terms by the participants. The only weakness in Rimmer's study is that he does not investigate the extent to which this may have happened. In South Africa we usually tend to make the opposite mistake. In our research we concentrate on the extent to which conflict is expressed in racial terms, and often quite ignore the real issues underlying the conflict.

Leggett's book is a study of "class consciousness" in Detroit. Race only enters to the extent that it is a factor determining class consciousness. Leggett defines class consciousness as follows: "the varying degrees to which workers acquire a perspective which emphasises class terms and calls for the maximisation of working-class interest through class struggle -- whether at work or in the neighbourhood.....whether workers utilise class terms, identify with their class, and display an awareness of the allocation of wealth within the community or society." (p.39). In an attempt to measure class consciousness amongst black and white workers in Detroit Leggett drew up a questionnaire designed to test (a) to what extent workers used class terms in their comments on general social issues; (b) the extent which they believed that society is ordered so as to benefit primarily the rich; and (c) the extent to which workers were in favour of militant action and/or some redistribution of wealth. Of his stratified sample of 375 workers only 10% showed no sign of class consciousness in any of these forms. Considering that the survey was undertaken in 1960, at a time when there was a widespread belief amongst american social scientists and politicians that class divisions were fast disappearing, this is quite a dramatic result. Admittedly only one third of the sample counted as militants, but nevertheless it indicates quite a high level of class consciousness and general dissatisfaction. Most of the book is devoted to an attempt to assess the various social factors which encourage class consciousness. Of these, Leggett uncovers two which are most significant, and are also most relevant for an understanding of the South African situation. These are what he terms "uprootedness", and marginality.

Amongst those whom he interviewed there was a much higher level of class consciousness among workers recently uprooted from a non-industrial background. These included Polish immigrants of peasant stock and black American migrants from the southern states. Leggett also quotes evidence from early Russian experience, and from contemporary Finland, to show that this militancy of recently urbanised workers is a widespread phenomenon. It is also born out by Rimmer's study, which showed much greater trade union militancy amongst the Indian immigrants from the rural Punjab than amongst the long-established English industrial workers, in spite of the fact that they were working in the same factory under similar conditions. These findings to a certain extent contradict the work of other social scientists who have assumed that recently urbanised workers are likely to be disoriented and relatively passive, while only workers who have been urbanised for several generations will begin to develop new forms of organisation which will militantly threaten the existing order.

If this is a universal phenomenon, then what is its explanation? Leggett mentions two possible hypotheses. The first is the obvious fact that workers new to industry have few skills and thus get the worst jobs, in which they can most easily be exploited. Having migrated to the city with high hopes of a better life they are more likely to rebel against the realities of the situation than are more established workers who have either moved into the better jobs or have got used to being exploited. The second suggested reason is that these migrants come from agrarian regions where the level of class conflict is very high, in that landlords impose very strict control and there are no outlets for grievances. When they reach the cities they have already acquired very hostile attitudes towards property-owners, and these find ready militant expression in the new forms of organisation, the political party and the trade union, which the migrants find in the industrial cities.

The phenomenon may also be at least partly explained using Bendix's concept of legitimation. Bendix points out that workers coming into a new type of work environment discover new forms of authority and control. They will not submit freely to these new controls until they can be brought to accept their legitimacy, and this often in fact involves

changing the forms of authority to comply with the workers' demands. During the initial period, however, conflict is likely to be high, and only abates when the new workers are integrated to their own satisfaction into the social structure. (For a fuller discussion of this see the forthcoming I.I.E. publication "The Durban Strikes", Ch.5). In South Africa we may expect all three of these factors to apply. Although migrant workers coming from a tribal background have not been in direct conflict with a landlord class, it is arguable that the all-pervasive land shortage in the tribal areas is likely to have been seen by them in such terms, as the result of the white occupation of most of the land. Thus they are probably predisposed to dislike property owners in much the same way as the American, Polish and Russian migrants to whom Leggett refers.

Leggett's findings indicate that in Detroit being a member of a low status marginal group is a second factor which correlates with class consciousness. His Negro respondents were much more likely to be class conscious than were his white respondents, and, among the whites, the Poles, whom he classifies as a semi-marginal community, and who have a much lower status in Detroit than those of English and German origin, are more likely to display class consciousness than are the latter. Unfortunately he does not really explore the extent to which this is a function of the higher proportion of uprootedness among the Negroes and the Poles and of the fact that, as he says, the marginal and semi-marginal groups also have a larger proportion of relatively uneducated and unskilled workers who are likely to be economically insecure, and for this reason militant. Marginality itself may only be a cause of class consciousness in that the prejudices against these groups make it more likely for them to be kept in the less secure jobs. In the case of Detroit the development of automation in the motor industry had in fact threatened most those jobs in which Negroes were most concentrated. If general attitudes to those who are in authority affects class consciousness, then those who are reacting hostilely against prejudice are also more likely to exhibit class consciousness. According to Leggett this often takes the form of what he describes as "class-race" consciousness. He suggests that this means that "the main antagonists of the future may prove to be the white business community and an organised Negro working class". (p.118). He also points out, however, that union membership is an important determinant of militancy and

class consciousness, and that in Detroit politics militant white workers support politicians who are dedicated to civil rights as well as to labour.

At the end of "Class, Race and Labor" I am still very uncertain as to the relation between class and race in Detroit. It is apparent that Negroes and to a lesser extent Poles are more class conscious because of their uprooted background, lesser education and low status. But it is not at all clear how the objectively unfavoured situation and the low status position mutually reinforce one another, and to what extent the whole situation comes to be seen by all the participants in race terms.

For South Africa, both books contain, in different ways, the same message: (a) what appear to be racial conflicts are often the result of people from agrarian areas migrating into an unfamiliar urban environment in which different expectations and work customs generate conflict with the already well-established workers who, for historical reasons, also belong to different ethnic groups; and (b) the newly arrived workers are likely to be both anxious and able to use the pre-existing industrial institution, the trade union.

Leggett's research method, which relies on the replies of a sample of workers to a questionnaire, has been used to some extent in South Africa. However, there are, as far as I know, no attempts to follow the method adopted by Rimmer: the detailed description of labour relations in one particular factory or group of factories. The advantage of this method is that it is less easy to be trapped by the assumptions contained in one's own questionnaire. Rimmer's monograph would be valuable reading for anyone thinking of doing research into industrial conflict in South Africa.

TRIBUTE TO A FIGHTER.

JOHANNA CORNELIUS entered the Clothing Industry at the age of 18 years, on the 18th November, 1930 and she joined the Union and right away displayed qualities of leadership.

Johanna made her first Trade Union speech to Clothing workers, calling them out on strike in 1931, and was arrested and jailed for the part she played.

She and other workers spent time in jail, after being arrested in a picket line. Bail was refused and they were released only when the Mine Workers demonstrated in their support.

In 1934 Johanna was appointed full time organiser for the Garment Union in the Transvaal.

In 1934 Johanna helped organise the Textile Workers Union and she retained her interest and her participation in this union until her death.

She organised the Tobacco workers into a union which led to the formation of the National Union of Tobacco Workers. She was also instrumental in establishing the Industrial Council for Tobacco workers.

Johanna held the position of National Organiser, Secretary and President of her union at various times over the years since 1930. She was the General Secretary of the Garment Workers' Union of South Africa (i.e. Transvaal, O.F.S. and Eastern Cape Unions) from 1952 when Solly Sachs was banned, until the time of her death.

She represented her union and TUCSA at International Conferences and at the I.L.O. Conferences in 1940 and in 1973. She also held positions on the Industrial Council and served as President of the Training College Management Board.

But it was as an organiser and fighter that Johanna shone. She never gave up and always opted in favour of a fight.

She was arrested on several occasions during her career for being involved in strikes and demonstrations, and in 1956 she organised the "stay at home" demonstration of 12 000 workers in opposition to the Job Reservation provisions of 1956.

Johanna Cornelius was a fighter and she played her trade union role with conviction and energy and did her duty as she saw it, to the exclusion of every other consideration in her life.

HARRIET BOLTON.

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