

THE ORIGINS OF THE
SOUTH AFRICAN LABOUR PARTY
1888 - 1910

VOL. I.

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by
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P R E F A C E

Hitherto the origins of the labour party in South Africa has attracted the interest of few historians. In 1943 Jack Cope, who is to-day a well-known author of novels and short stories, published his pioneering and accurate work, Comrade Bill: The Life and Times of W.H. Andrews, Workers' Leader; in 1968 F.J. Grobler submitted a doctoral thesis in the University of Potchefstroom entitled "Die Invloed van Geskoolde Blanke Arbeid op die Suid-Afrikaanse Politiek van 1886 tot 1924"; and in 1969 H.J. and R.E. Simons published their comprehensive history of the South African labour movement, Class and Colour in South Africa, 1850-1950. All are notable contributions in the field of general labour history of South Africa, but, as their titles indicate, they cover a wide subject and a long period, and therefore devote inadequate attention to the rise of political labour organisations in South Africa. For instance, they provide no analysis of the vital trade union role in labour politics, they ignore, or show no awareness of, the existence of the Natal Labour Party, 1907-1909, of which three Natal M.L.A.s were members, they reveal little knowledge of the intercolonial labour conferences which founded the South African Labour Party in 1909, they give scant treatment to labour champions of non-white rights, they fail to appreciate Keir Hardie's impact on the South African labour movement and they overlook several parliamentary contests in which labour candidates participated.

These shortcomings, however, are scarcely surprising since none of the records before 1910 of political labour organisations seems to have survived and most of the labour

and socialist publications for the same period also have disappeared. In addition, all the labour pioneers in this country have died and, consequently, present-day researchers cannot work in close liaison with any one of them, as Cope did. In these circumstances, I have been forced to rely on the daily and weekly contemporary press for my main source material. Fortunately, I found labour columns in several daily newspapers for most of the period, 1902-1910, otherwise I would have despaired of ever submitting this thesis. The account, therefore, in the following pages is far from complete. Nevertheless, it is a story that must be told, even if there were little to tell, for the rise of labour and socialist parties at the turn of this century was an extremely important world-wide development.

I have tried in this work to account for the emergence of political labour organisation in South Africa, and then to provide a record of its activity from its beginnings in Natal in 1888 to 1910 when the South African Labour Party contested the Union of South Africa's first general election. I have paid particular attention to the roles played by the trade union and socialist movements in the emergence of the labour party in South Africa, and to organised labour's attitude towards non-whites because of its anomalous refusal to accept them as part of the working-class movement. Although F.H.P. Creswell joined the labour party as late as June 1910, I have thought it essential to describe his political activity since 1902, to explain why the South African Labour Party identified itself in 1910 with his white labour policy and welcomed him as its parliamentary leader.

Two unusual features in this thesis require comment. First, I have taken much trouble to establish the trade unions and/or occupations of many labour and socialist

leaders whose names appear in this work and, with some leaders, I have added further biographical information. This procedure is particularly relevant in the study of labour parties and labour candidatures for public office, besides promoting a better understanding of the subject matter. Secondly, I have included eighty pages of select documents and data which should be valuable to researchers in related fields in view of the present dearth of primary material on the origins of the labour party in South Africa.

Acknowledgements

I am deeply grateful to Mr. A.M. Davey of the history department of this university, under whose guidance most of this thesis was written, for his great assistance in my research and advice on presenting its results. I owe also a special debt of gratitude to Mrs. Elaine Katz of the economic history department of the University of the Witwatersrand for her willingness to exchange information on related subjects and for sending me hundreds of photocopies from the South African Typographical Journal, the Amalgamated Engineers Journal and the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, South African Council, Monthly Reports.

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C O N T E N T S

PREFACE	ii
THE PRINCIPAL CHARACTERS	ix
ABBREVIATIONS	x
CHAPTER	PAGE
I INTRODUCTION	1
1. White Immigration, 1870-1910	1
2. Overseas Background and Influence	5
3. Olive Schreiner	11
4. Overseas Background of the Labour Leaders	15
5. Trade Union and Socialist Background	22
6. The Hoggenheimer Bogey	26
7. Industrial Situation	34
8. The Franchise	42
II BRITISH SOUTH AFRICA TO 1900	45
<u>Cape Colony</u>	45
1. Cape Town	46
2. Kimberley	50
3. Port Elizabeth	54
<u>Natal</u>	57
4. Natal Working Men's Association	59
5. Natal Labour League	62
6. J.F. King and Elections, 1892-1897	66
7. Natal Progressive League	70
8. Charles Henry Haggart	73
III SOUTH AFRICAN REPUBLIC, 1892-1900	77
1. Trade Union Background	78
2. Labour Union and J.T. Bain	83
3. International Independent Labour Party	90
4. Organised Labour, President Kruger and the Franchise	96
5. Labour Achievements	106
IV TRANSVAAL, 1900-1903	112
1. Trade Union Background	112
2. From Military to Crown Colony Government	119
3. Transvaal Political Association	123
4. Gathering Storm	129
5. White Unskilled Labour and F.H.P. Creswell	135
6. Start of the Chinese Labour Controversy	144
7. Political Objections to Unskilled White Labour and F.H.P. Creswell	152
8. Organised Labour's Opposition to Chinese Labour	160
9. Labour Importation Ordinance and Results of the Chinese Labour Controversy	171

CHAPTER	PAGE
V TRANSVAAL, 1903-1907	178
1. Transvaal Municipal Elections, 1903	178
2. Growth of Socialism	182
3. Labour Politics in 1904 and Formation of the Transvaal Labour Party	186
4. Organised Labour and Formation of Political Parties, 1904-05	192
5. Formation of the Transvaal Political Labour League	198
6. Johannesburg Municipal Elections, 1905, and Labour Factionalism	202
7. Labour Divisions; Chinese Labour; and the Constitution Commission	210
8. Pretoria Politics, 1905-1906	215
9. Formation of the Independent Labour Party on the Rand	219
10. A.S. Raitt in the Legislative Council, 1903-1906; The Colour Question	225
11. Political Alignment in 1906	231
12. Formation of the Transvaal Labour Representation Committee	236
13. General Election	239
VI TRANSVAAL, 1907-1910	248
1. Miners' Strike, 1907	248
2. The Labour Presence in Parliament, 1907-1910	260
3. L.R.C., 1907-1910	273
4. I.L.P., 1907-1910, and the Socialist Movement	278
5. The Unemployment Position	283
6. White Labour Policy and Attitudes towards the Native	287
7. Attitudes towards the Indian	300
8. Non-White Political Rights	303
9. Unification of South Africa	307
10. Dissension in the Labour Movement	309
VII CAPE AND ORANGE RIVER COLONIES, 1900-1910	313
<u>Cape Town</u>	
1. Trades and Labour Council and Political Labour League	313
2. Cape Town P.L.L. and Elections	319
3. Cape Town Social Democratic Federation	327
4. Labour Electoral Association, Labour Advance Party and Labour Represen- tation Committee	329
5. General Election, 1908	334
6. Decline of the S.D.F.; Draft South Africa Act	338
<u>Cape Colony (outside Cape Town)</u>	340
7. Port Elizabeth	340
8. East London	342
9. Kimberley, 1900-1905	343
10. Kimberley, 1906-1910	347
<u>Orange River Colony</u>	350
11. Bloemfontein	350

CHAPTER	PAGE
VIII NATAL, 1900-1909	355
1. Quasi-Labour Candidates and M.L.A.s	355
2. Emergence of Political Labour Organisations, 1903-1906	361
3. General Election, 1906, and By-Elections, 1907	369
4. The Natal Labour Party	374
5. Attitudes towards Non-Whites	379
6. Natal Railway Strike, 1909	387
7. Unification of South Africa	392
IX FORMATION OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN LABOUR PARTY	397
1. Background to 1907	397
2. Preparation in 1908	402
3. First Intercolonial Labour Conference, 2 and 3 January 1909	406
4. Background to the Second Intercolonial Labour Conference	409
5. Second Intercolonial Labour Conference, 9-11 October 1909	414
6. Growth of the S.A.L.P. and its First Annual Conference, 30 January 1910	424
X 1910 ELECTIONS	436
1. Entry of Creswell and Wybergh into the S.A.L.P.	436
2. The Candidates	443
3. Election Arrangements with the South African National Party	452
4. The Issues	457
5. The Campaign	464
6. Results, Post-Mortems and Conclusions	470
TABLE OF CONTENTS OF APPENDICES	477
APPENDIX A: CONSTITUTIONS AND OBJECTS	480
APPENDIX B: PROGRAMMES, MANIFESTOS, POLICIES AND AIMS	496
APPENDIX C: ELECTION RESULTS	534
APPENDIX D: OFFICE-BEARERS	548
APPENDIX E: A GUIDE TO THE LABOUR PRESS	553
BIBLIOGRAPHY	558

LIST OF TABLES

ONE: Biographical Details on the 1910 Transvaal Labour and Socialist Candidates for the First Union Parliament	20
TWO: Biographical Information on the Presidents of the Witwatersrand Trades and Labour Council	21

POLITICAL CARTOONS

On Creswell and Haggar	476A
------------------------	------

THE PRINCIPAL CHARACTERS

On the pages listed below, biographical information is given on the following persons:

Ancketill, H.	17,70	Mathews, T.	16,91
Andrews, W.H.	118	Nettleton, F.	15
Back, J.F.	190	Palmer, N.	368
Bain, J.T.	10,83-4	Purcell, I.	48
Brittlebank, A.	95	Raitt, A.S.	103
Clark, A.L.	72	Reid, John	8,16
Connolly, J.	367	Rose, E.B.	86
Crawford, A.	217	Salter, W.C.	17,283
Creswell, F.H.P.	136	Sampson, H.W.	15,118-9
Davidson, J.	282	Schreiner, Olive	11-14, 29-31,37
Haggar, C.H.	8,16,74-5	Shanks, R.	92
Hammond, W.T.	54	Stickland, R.J.	105
Hardie, James Keir	40, 295-7,303-4,337,382-3	Tatham, R.H.	370
Harris, T.	48	Trembath, J.F.	15,346-7
King, J.F.	59	Tyzack, C.T.	64-5
Lorimer, W.W.	16,190	Ware, J.J.	16-17,215
McLarty, W.	357	Weinstock, G.	18
Madeley, W.B.	247,345	Whiteside, P.	15,117-8
Maginess, T.	335	Wybergh, W.	117,123,156

A B B R E V I A T I O N S

<u>A.E.J.</u>	<u>Amalgamated Society of Engineers Monthly Journal</u> (London)
A.P.O.	African Political Association
A.S.E.	Amalgamated Society of Engineers
A.S. of C. & J.	Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners
C.S.A.R.	Central South African Railways
D.W.P.U.	Durban Workers' Political Union
G.W.P.A.	General Workers' Political Association (of Pietermaritzburg)
I.D.B.	Illicit Diamond Buying or Illicit Diamond Buyer
I.I.L.P.	International Independent Labour Party
I.L.P.	Independent Labour Party
L.R.C.	Labour Representation Committee
M.L.A.	Member of the Legislative Assembly
M.L.C.	Member of the Legislative Council
N.G.R.	Natal Government Railways
N.L.P.	Natal Labour Party
N.P.A.	Natal Political Association
N.P.L.	Natal Progressive League
O.R.C.	Orange River Colony
P.L.L.	Political Labour League
S.A.E.D. & F.A.	South African Engine-Drivers' and Firemen's Association
S.A.I.L.P.	South African Independent Labour Party
S.A.L.P.	South African Labour Party
S.A.P.	South African Party
S.A.T.U.	South African Typographical Union
<u>S.A.T.J.</u>	<u>South African Typographical Journal</u>
S.D.F.	Social Democratic Federation
T. & L.C.	Trades and Labour Council
T.L.P.	Transvaal Labour Party
T.M.A.	Transvaal Miners' Association
T.N.U.	Transvaal National Union
T.R.G.A.	Transvaal Responsible Government Association
W.M.A.	Working Men's Association
W.N.L.A.	Witwatersrand Native Labour Association

CHAPTER I

I N T R O D U C T I O N

Shall I ask my God Sunday by Sunday to brood across the land, and bind all its children's hearts in a close-knit fellowship;- yet, when I see its people betrayed, and their jawbone broken by a stroke from the hand of gold; when I see freedom passing from us, and the whole land being grasped by the golden claw, so that the generation after us shall be born without freedom, to labour for the men who have grasped all, shall I hold my peace? The Boer and the Englishman who have been in this land, have not always sought after justice; but the little finger of the speculator and monopolist who are devouring this land will be thicker on the backs of the children of this land, black and white, than the loins of the Dutchmen and Englishmen who have been.

Olive Schreiner in 1897.¹

The emergence of the labour party in South Africa cannot be understood without describing, firstly, the inspiration and influences from overseas, secondly, the origins of the South African labour movement of which the labour party was the political arm, and, lastly, the economic and industrial conditions which prompted labour political action. Such is the purpose of this chapter.

1. White Immigration, 1870 - 1910

The development towards the end of the nineteenth century of the Griqualand West diamond-fields and then the Witwatersrand gold-fields transformed the South African economy. Existing towns expanded and new ones grew rapidly. The Rand became the industrial centre of South Africa and, inevitably, the heart of its labour movement. Consequently much of this study is devoted to the Transvaal.

1. Trooper Peter Halket of Mashonaland, pp.129 - 30.

Thousands of immigrants, mostly from Great Britain, were attracted by the mineral discoveries. During 1895, for example, about 26 000 emigrants left England for South Africa and that number rose to 36 000 the following year - most heading for the Transvaal.² Clearly South Africa could not be immune from overseas political developments including the growth of the labour and socialist movements. Almost overnight the Witwatersrand became one of the world's most cosmopolitan centres as Olive Schreiner observed in 1899:

Russians, Jews and Poles are here by thousands, seeking in South Africa the freedom from oppression that was denied that much-wronged race of men in their own birth-land; Cornish and Northumberland miners; working-men from all parts of the earth; French, German and English tradesmen; while on the Stock Exchange men of every European nationality are found, though the Jew predominates. The American strangers are not larger in number, but are represented by perhaps the most cultured and enlightened class in the camp, the mining engineer and large importers of mining machinery being often of that race; our lawyers and doctors are of all nationalities, while in addition to all foreigners, there is a certain admixture of English and Dutch South Africans.³

The white miner came from Cornwall and the north of England, and in lesser numbers, from south Wales, Australia, California, Klondyke, Italy, Greece and elsewhere.⁴ Although W. Mather, the general secretary of the Transvaal Miners' Association, (the T.M.A.), declared in 1902 that the Witwatersrand was the most cosmopolitan mining camp in the world,⁵

2. H. M. Robertson, "South Africa" (Brinley Thomas (ed.), Economics of International Migrations: Proceedings of a Conference held by the International Economic Association), pp. 173 - 184; D. Hobart Houghton, "Economic Development, 1865 - 1965" (Monica Wilson and Leonard Thompson (eds.), The Oxford History of South Africa, II), p.15.

3. Olive Schreiner, An English - South African's View of the Situation, pp. 38 - 9. On the same subject also J. S. Marais, The Fall of Kruger's Republic, p.1.

4. R. K. Cope, Comrade Bill: The Life and Times of W. H. Andrews, Workers' Leader, p. 43; T. G. 2 of 1908, Transvaal Mining Industry Commission, Minutes of Evidence, paras. 4542 - 4, Mathews's evidence; U. G. 19 of 1912, Report of a Commission Appointed under the Provisions of

there is no doubt that the men from Britain predominated amongst the white miners. In March 1905 no less than 85,4 per cent of European miners in the Transvaal were born in the United Kingdom.⁶ Similarly in Kimberley the British miners constituted 68,6 per cent of the white employees of De Beers in 1892 and 54,4 per cent in 1906 - the drop being caused by increased employment of South African-born.⁷

Before about 1910 the white miner in South Africa was often associated with the Cornishman or "Cousin Jack" as he was called. Both to the general manager of De Beers, Gardner Williams, and to the 1907 president of the Transvaal Chamber of Mines, Louis Julius Reyersbach, "Cornishmen" were virtually synonymous with white miners in South Africa.⁸ But they exaggerated the preponderance of Cornish miners, for in 1909, when there were approximately 20 000 white miners on the Rand, the president of the Transvaal Cornish Association estimated that four to five thousand came from Cornwall.⁹

5. Transvaal Leader, 23.6.1902, p.3.
6. A. A. Mawby, "The Political Behaviour of the British Population of the Transvaal, 1902 - 1907" (Ph.D thesis, University of the Witwatersrand, 1969), p.231.
7. Assistant-general Manager, De Beers, to Col. D. Harris, 4.4.1907, John X. Merriman Papers, no. 32 of 1907. See also Gardner F. Williams, The Diamond Mines of South Africa: Some Account of their Rise and Development, pp. 407 - 8.
8. Independent, 31.12.1892, p.7, on Williams; T. G. 2 of 1908, para. 757, on Reyersbach.
9. S. A. Review, 26.11.1909, p.26. For mining population statistics see L. M. Thompson, The Unification of South Africa, 1902 - 1910, p.498.

Significantly, the Cornish miner came to South Africa with little or no orientation towards industrial or political organisation. When aspiring to serve the public he had usually preferred the pulpit to the political platform.¹⁰ By contrast the miners from Scotland, North England and South Wales started to send their own representatives, although associated with the Liberal Party, to the House of Commons from the last quarter of the nineteenth century, for example, Alexander Macdonald, Thomas Burt and Ben Pickard. In the 1885 general election six of the eleven successful working class candidates were miners, none of whom came from Cornwall.¹¹ The father of the British Labour Party, James Keir Hardie, who was first returned to parliament in 1892 as the independent labour representative for South-West Ham, was an ex-Scottish miner and one of his co-workers in the 1880's in Ayrshire was Andrew Fisher who became Labour prime minister of Australia in 1910.¹²

In South Africa, however, miners played a minor role in proportion to their numbers in the emergence of the labour movement. There were several reasons. The non-political attitude of the Cornishmen and the diversity of origin of the other white miners has already been described and, as the narrative will reveal, European miners feared victimisation, received high wages and found it difficult to form effective

10. A. K. H. Jenkin, The Cornish Miner: An Account of his Life Above and Underground from the Early Times, pp.284 - 8.

11. A. W. Humphrey, A History of Labour Representation, ch. iv and p.93; G. D. H. Cole, A Short History of the British Working-Class Movement, 1789 - 1947, p.231.

12. W. Stewart, J. Keir Hardie, pp. 21 & 266.

leadership because of the extremely heavy miners' phthisis death toll. Instead, the immigrant artisans: the engineers, carpenters, compositors, masons and others, were in the forefront, sometimes assisted by immigrant businessmen and professional persons.

Most of these artisans originated in Great Britain, but after the Anglo-Boer War Australians and, to a lesser extent, New Zealanders became active in the South African labour movement. Writing from the Rand towards the beginning of 1903, A. S. Raitt, then the leading official in South Africa of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, (the A.S.E.), and a Glaswegian by birth, reported:

One thing which helps is the presence here, since the war, of settlers from other colonies - particularly Australia and New Zealand - who bring their democratic principles with them. We find it easy to inspan them in the common cause, and both they and their principles are heartily welcomed.¹³

2, Overseas Background and Influence

The rise of the South African labour movement coincided with overseas immigration towards the end of the nineteenth century; and not unexpectedly some of the more class conscious immigrants tried to emulate conditions at home. William Parfitt, chairman of the election committee of the Natal Labour League in 1890, for example, addressed a public

13. A.E.J., April 1903, p.84, Raitt's report. See also S. A. Review, 14.11.1902, p.21; A. R. Colquhoun, The Africander Land, p.405; and tables 1 and 2 on pp. 20-21 below.

meeting in Durban at this time on his experience of electioneering for labour representatives in England.¹⁴ Similarly in 1892 J. Marley, an executive member of the Witwatersrand Mine Employees' and Mechanics' Union, in supporting the formation of this union explained that as a trade unionist of thirty years' standing he knew the benefits of combination.¹⁵

Immigrants must surely have told of the rise of the mass socialist and labour parties in Europe; the socialist revival in Great Britain in the 1880's inspired by H. M. Hyndman, William Morris and others; the popularity of the land taxation proposed by the American reformer, Henry George, whose book, Progress and Poverty, first published in 1879, seemed the first step towards socialism for eminent social students such as George Bernard Shaw;¹⁶ the founding of the national Independent Labour Party, (the I.L.P.), in Britain in 1893 and of the Labour Representation Committee in 1900 with the support of the powerful Trades Union Congress. In 1906 the L.R.C. changed its name to the British Labour Party. Immigrants must also have noted the return in 1892 to the House of Commons of J. Keir Hardie and John Burns as independent labour representatives and, in contrast to the growing number of "Lib-Lab"

14. Natal Mercury, 1.9.1890, p.3.

15. Star, 29.8.1892.

16. Social-Democrat (London), November 1897, p.323, declares: "Probably no man, not a Socialist, ever did more for the Socialist movement in England than Henry George". On Shaw see H. Pelling, The Origins of the Labour Party, 1880 - 1900, p.36.

M.P.s, not linked to either major party. Finally, they must have followed the rise of the L.R.C. which won twenty-nine seats in the 1906 general election.¹⁶

Considering South Africa's close ties with and dependence on Great Britain it was natural that the development of its labour movement should be carefully observed. Thus in 1892 the Star referred to Joseph Seddon, secretary of the Witwatersrand Mine Employees' and Mechanics' Union, as the John Burns of the Transvaal and in 1906 attacked Peter Whiteside, then the leading labour man in South Africa, for aspiring to be the local Keir Hardie.¹⁷

Nevertheless, the South African labour movement looked to New Zealand and Australia for advanced legislation and impressive electoral success. In New Zealand in 1891 a Liberal-Labour government came to power and retained office till 1912. Its main body of experimental legislation, followed later by Australia, was passed in the 1890's and included the establishment of a ministry of labour; a completely new code of labour legislation, notably the 1894 Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act; the 1891 Land and Income Tax Act, which prepared the way for graduated income tax; the breaking up of the great landholdings; protective tariffs to foster local industry; the recognition of the government's obligation to provide relief to destitute old persons; and the enfranchisement of women in 1893. As a New Zealand economic historian stresses,

16. H. Pelling, Origins of the Labour Party, provides an excellent account of the British background.

17. 30.8.1892; and 1.9.1906, p.8.

this legislation owed little or nothing to socialist theories. "Its two outstanding elements", he adds, "were the use of State machinery for special purposes and a steadily deepening humanitarian trend".¹⁸

Social students throughout the world including Olive Schreiner in the Cape Colony directed their attention to the New Zealand legislation.¹⁹ In 1902 the radical Cape Town weekly, the South African Review, called for the formation of a democratic and loyal party after the example of Seddon, who was premier of New Zealand, 1893 - 1906; and a year later the newly-formed Cape Town Political Labour League wrote to Seddon for advice and received an encouraging reply.²⁰ C. H. Haggart, Natal Labour M.L.A., 1906 - 10, and first general secretary of the South African Labour Party, (the S.A.L.P.), described himself as a "state-socialist" of the Richard Seddon school and John Reid, Transvaal Labour M.L.A., 1907 - 10, stated that "Dick Seddon was his type of socialism".²¹ Both were therefore not socialists in the accepted sense, but their admiration for New Zealand's social welfare legislation and its premier is important.

Meanwhile the labour party in Australia grew fast. After the failure of direct action in the 1890 Great Maritime and Shearers' Strike, the Sydney Trades and Labour Council founded an electoral league which nominated forty-five candidates in

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18. J. B. Condliffe, New Zealand in the Making, chs. v, vi and p.183. See also K. Sinclair, A History of New Zealand, pp.169 - 185.
19. Olive Schreiner, An English-South African's View of the Situation, p.54; Olive Schreiner and S. C. Cronwright-Schreiner, The Political Situation, p.16.
20. S. A. Review, 14.11.1902, p.21. S. A. News, 5.1.1904, p.10, letter from Seddon to S. Blight, 10 November 1903.
21. On Haggart see South African Who's Who, 1908, p.167; on Reid see A.S.E. Monthly Report, February 1908, p.21.

the 1891 New South Wales general election of which no less than thirty-six were elected. In 1893 sixteen independent labour representatives were returned to the Queensland lower house, and in Victoria and South Australia substantial success was achieved although not as great. In the first Commonwealth of Australia general election the Labour Party won sixteen seats in the House of Representatives and eight in the Senate - sufficient to hold the balance of power in both houses. In 1904 J. C. Watson headed the first Australian Labour government.²²

Already in May 1898 the South African Typographical Journal advised its readers to follow the example set by fellow workers in Australia in political representation.²³ Within four or five years Australian immigrants began to take a prominent role in the labour movement as A. R. Colquhoun, first administrator of Mashonaland and world traveller, recorded in 1906:

A marked feature in the growth of the Labour party, not only in Johannesburg but in all the seaport towns, has been the influence of the Australians, many of whom came over during or just after the war.²⁴

Despite the impressive growth of the German Social Democratic Party which received three million votes at the 1903 Reichstag elections and had nearly one million members by 1913, it made no impact on the origins of the S.A.L.P. comparable to the British and Australasian labour movements even though many adherents probably settled in South Africa before 1910. Nevertheless, as a labour biographer has recorded, its success was admired by Transvaal labour leaders and its ideas circulated amongst the Rand workers through the pamphlets of one of its leading theoreticians, Karl Kautsky.²⁵

22. Australian Encyclopaedia, VII, p.171 ff.

23. Editorial. See also April 1901, editorial.

24. A. R. Colquhoun, The Africander Land, p.405.

25. R. K. Cope, Comrade Bill, p.98.

The wide circulation of British labour and socialist literature and visits to South Africa of prominent British, Australian and New Zealand labour sympathisers certainly hastened the growth of the South African labour movement. Robert Blatchford's popular socialist weekly, the Clarion, and his other publications like Merrie England had a sizable readership in South Africa. In the early 1890's J. T. Bain, socialist and trade union leader, was distributing this paper on the Rand and in June 1894 he reported that six Johannesburg newsagents were handling it. In 1899 Bain's own newspaper, the Johannesburg Witness, offered its yearly subscribers who paid in advance a year's free subscription to the Clarion.²⁶ So widespread were the latter's readers that its Rand correspondent declared in 1910:

I have met them at the Cape, on the Rand, in Durban cafés, on the Berg, down in the mines, along the reef, in the torrid waters of the earth, and I fully expect when my time comes, and the ship is sinking, to hear a clarion voice rip out: "Nunquam, [Blatchford's pen-name] one penny weekly."²⁷

In April 1908 Keir Hardie recalled that one of the largest booksellers in Durban devoted a window to the display of British I.L.P., Clarion and other socialist literature for all of which there was a ready sale.²⁸ It seems likely therefore that there was a similar demand in other large South African towns.²⁹

26. On Bain as distributor see ibid., p.45; Clarion, 4.8.1894, p.6, letter from "Snooks" [Bain]; Johannesburg Witness, 1.9.1899, p.83. On the 1894 Johannesburg agents see Clarion reference above.

27. Clarion, 25.3.1910, article by "Pufff".

28. Labour Leader, 17.4.1908, p.244.

29. R. K. Cope, Comrade Bill, p.98 on the Rand; overseas press cuttings, mainly from the Labour Leader, in the Trembath Papers, on Kimberley.

The wide circulation of British labour and socialist literature and visits to South Africa of prominent British, Australian and New Zealand labour sympathisers certainly hastened the growth of the South African labour movement. Robert Blatchford's popular socialist weekly, the Clarion, and his other publications like Merrie England had a sizable readership in South Africa. In the early 1890's J. T. Bain, socialist and trade union leader, was distributing this paper on the Rand and in June 1894 he reported that six Johannesburg newsagents were handling it. In 1899 Bain's own newspaper, the Johannesburg Witness, offered its yearly subscribers who paid in advance a year's free subscription to the Clarion.²⁶ So widespread were the latter's readers that its Rand correspondent declared in 1910:

I have met them at the Cape, on the Rand, in Durban cafés, on the Berg, down in the mines, along the reef, in the torrid waters of the earth, and I fully expect when my time comes, and the ship is sinking, to hear a clarion voice rip out: "Nunquam, [Blatchford's pen-name] one penny weekly."²⁷

In April 1908 Keir Hardie recalled that one of the largest booksellers in Durban devoted a window to the display of British I.L.P., Clarion and other socialist literature for all of which there was a ready sale.²⁸ It seems likely therefore that there was a similar demand in other large South African towns.²⁹

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29. R. K. Cope, Comrade Bill, p.98 on the Rand; overseas press cuttings, mainly from the Labour Leader, in the Trembath Papers, on Kimberley.

Before unification of South Africa important overseas visitors for organised labour were: Richard Seddon in May 1902; J. Ramsay MacDonald, secretary of the British L.R.C., in September, October 1902; Thomas Burt, veteran "Lib-Lab" miners' M.P., in 1904; F. W. Pethick-Lawrence, labour editor and intellectual, in 1900 and in 1905; Wilson Wilson, a gifted Australian labour orator and organiser, in 1907; Keir Hardie in 1908; Chris Watson, the former Australian Labour premier, in 1909; and Tom Mann towards the beginning of 1910.³⁰ In addition, Ben Tillett, the British dockers' leader and labour politician, and T. W. Price, the South Australia Labour premier, stopped briefly in Durban in 1908.³¹

3. Olive Schreiner

Another important source of overseas influence was Olive Schreiner even though she grew up in the Cape Colony. From 1881 to 1889 and in 1893 she lived in England and Europe and was much taken up with the socialist and labour movement. Amongst her close friends were the Sheffield socialist and author, Edward Carpenter, and Karl Marx's youngest daughter, Eleanor, an energetic British labour organiser and socialist,

30. Cape Times, 27.5.1902, p.5 on Seddon; J. Ramsay MacDonald, What I Saw in South Africa, September and October, 1902; Thomas Burt, A Visit to the Transvaal: Labour: White, Black and Yellow; Labour Record, February 1906, p.356, article by Pethick-Lawrence; W. H. Harrison, Memoirs of a Socialist in South Africa, 1903 - 1947, p.13, and R. K. Cope, Comrade Bill, p.92 on Wilson; J. Stewart, J. Keir Hardie, pp.268 - 70; S.A.T.J., November 1909, p.11 on Watson; and Tom Mann, Tom Mann's Memoirs, pp.244 - 7.

31. S. A. Tribune, 1.5.1908, gives Tillett's lecture on socialism in detail. On Price see Rand Daily Mail, 14.2.1908, p.8.

who committed suicide in 1897.³² "I sometimes feel such a longing for children to teach, or better still, working men", Olive Schreiner wrote in 1886, "I feel so one with them"³³ When her old friend Keir Hardie spent a day with her at De Aar, Cape Colony, in 1908 tears came into their eyes when they recalled the British socialist revival of the 1880's in which both had been active. "It was the brilliant sunrise", Olive Schreiner believed, "without which there could not have been any day."³⁴ A few years later she wrote indeed that she had devoted the ten best years of her life to the causes of labour and prostitution and added:

Why 28 years ago I was one of the eight women, with Helen Taylor in the chair, John Stuart Mill's niece [step-daughter], who started in a small underground room near the Houses of Parliament the Women's Branch of the Democratic Federation [Hyndman's S.D.F.] - the largest Socialist organisation in England. I also was one of the original drawers up of the constitution of the "Fellowship", [Fellowship of New Life, forerunner of the Fabian Society] I have never been able to bind myself to any one section of any great world movement, like socialism or the woman, it seems to fetter me. It's not my own way and there must be different sections - just as in a great army there must be foot, horse and artillery.³⁵

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32. D. L. Hobman, Olive Schreiner: Her Friends and Times, ch. VI and passim; V. Buchanan-Gould, Not Without Honour: The Life and Writings of Olive Schreiner, passim.
33. As quoted in V. Buchanan-Gould, Not Without Honour, p.93.
34. S. C. Cronwright-Schreiner (ed.), The Letters of Olive Schreiner, 1876 - 1920, pp.278 - 9.
35. Olive to W. P. Schreiner, n.d., no. 30 of 1912, D 60/241 M, Olive Schreiner Papers in the Jagger Library.

Olive Schreiner's role in the South African labour movement was apparently confined to literary propagandist, sympathiser, teacher and prophetess. Her allegories such as The Sunlight Lay across my Bed and Three Dreams in a Desert, both published in Dreams in 1890, sharply attacked capitalism and the subjection of women, respectively. Significantly, Three Dreams was printed in full in 1910 by Johannesburg's Voice of Labour whose editor, Archibald Crawford, l'enfant terrible of the Transvaal labour movement, probably found solace for his unpopular militant socialism in its following lines:

She said, "And, of those that come first, some are swept away, and heard of no more; their bodies do not even build the bridge?"

"And are swept away, and are heard of no more - and what of that?" he said.

"And what of that ---" she said.

"They make a track to the water's edge."

"They make a track to the water's edge ---." And she said, "Over that bridge which shall be built with our bodies, who will pass?"

He said, "The entire human race." 36

F. W. Pethick-Lawrence, who spent ten days at Hanover, near De Aar, with Olive Schreiner towards the end of 1905, according to his biographer was always conscious of his debt to her prophetic vision and to her publications.³⁷ Surely if such leading British labour men as Pethick-Lawrence and Keir Hardie should value her friendship then comparable South African leaders should have formed some attachment, even though such evidence is difficult to find. Her correspondence with John X. Merriman in 1899 does, however, reveal that she was in contact with white workers in Johannesburg.³⁸ From February 1905 she

36. Voice of Labour, 1.4.1910, p.152. For first part of the allegory see issue of the previous week.

37. Vera Brittain, Pethick-Lawrence: A Portrait, pp. 39 - 40, & 86.

38. 2 April 1899, no. 113 of 1899, Merriman Papers in the South African Library.

started sending letters of encouragement to the Cape Town Social Democratic Federation, (the Cape Town S.D.F.), some of whose meetings she attended; in the middle of the same year the Johannesburg Shop Assistants' Union received a lengthy letter of advice from her, which was read at one of their public demonstrations; and in July 1913 she sent a letter of sympathy to the Cape Town demonstration held to protest against the shooting of strikers and others in Johannesburg.³⁹ In addition, Kimberley's Labour leader, Jimmy Trembath, recorded long extracts from her writings in his 1910 election note-book; and in 1912 she actually confided to her brother, W. P. Schreiner, that the Johannesburg socialists looked upon her "as one of their folk."⁴⁰ Her impact on the South African labour movement is considered in subsequent sections of this chapter.⁴¹

39. On the Cape Town S.D.F. see S. A. News, 8.6.1905, p.8, First Annual Report of the S.D.F.; Also W. H. Harrison, Memoirs, p.14; and Buchanan-Gould, Not Without Honour, p.110. On the Shop Assistants see C. S. Cronwright-Schreiner, Letters of Olive Schreiner, pp. 386 - 7. On the 1913 strike see Worker, 31.7.1913, p.1.

40. Notes 35 & 63 of the note-book and Scrapbook II, p.17, Trembath Papers. Olive to W. P. Schreiner, n.d., no. 30 of 1912, D 60/241 M, Olive Schreiner Papers.

41. See pp. 29 + 31 & 37 below.

4. Overseas Background of the Labour Leaders

Most of the South African labour leaders climbed the labour ladder away from their home countries which they left as young men as Tables One and Two below confirm. Best examples are Peter Whiteside, general secretary of the South African Engine Drivers' and Firemen's Association, (the S.A.E.D. & F.A.), 1902 - 19, Transvaal Labour M.L.A., 1907 - 10, and first S.A.L.P. Senator; H. W. Sampson, president of the South African Typographical Union, (the S.A.T.U.), 1903 - 29, except for September 1905 to March 1906, Transvaal Labour M.L.A., 1907 - 10, and first president of the S.A.L.P.; W. H. Andrews, organiser of the A.S.E. for South Africa, 1906 - 12, and first chairman of the Transvaal L.R.C.; J. F. Trembath and Thomas Maginess, foremost industrial and political labour leaders in Kimberley and Cape Town, respectively, about the time of unification of South Africa; and John Connolly, organising secretary of the Natal Railwaymen's Association, 1906 - 09, and Natal Labour M.L.A., 1906 - 10. Yet Sampson and Trembath arrived in South Africa carrying membership cards of the London Society of Compositors and Andrews and Maginess were already members of the A.S.E.⁴² In addition, Sampson claimed to have been a member of the Islington branch of the I.L.P. in 1892; Frank Nettleton, Pretoria's first labour municipal councillor and pioneer of railway trade unionism in the Transvaal, seems to have joined the I.L.P. in Sheffield in 1886 and the United Kingdom Society of Coach Makers a year later; and a leading member of the T.M.A. recalled in 1910 how he had used to sit at the feet of the British Marxist leader, H. M. Hyndman, and had once been a disciple of the

42. The best source for biographical details is Gitsham and Trembath, Labour Organisation in South Africa, p.159 ff. On Connolly see Natalian, 5.7.1907, p.9; on Maginess see Worker, 26.3.1914, p.5.

Yorkshire miners' M.P., Ben Pickard.⁴³ As the national British I.L.P. was only formed in 1893, reference to it beforehand must be to analogous local organisations.

There were, however, several men who settled in South Africa with previous status in the overseas labour movement. The most important was the Honourable Tom Mathews, who had been an active strike leader in the U.S.A, president of the Butte City section of the Western Miners' Federation, and solitary Labour member and speaker of the Montana State Assembly, 1892-4. Emigrating to the Transvaal in 1897, he was soon in the forefront of the labour movement and, besides pioneering socialism and labour representation on the Rand, he was general secretary of the T.M.A., 1909-15.⁴⁴ Charles Henry Haggard, Natal Labour M.L.A., 1906-10, and first general secretary of the S.A.L.P., had been a parliamentary candidate and editor in Charters Towers, a mining town in Queensland, but whether he was then identified with labour is not known.⁴⁵ John Reid, Transvaal Labour M.L.A., 1907-10, had held the onerous post of district secretary of the Glasgow A.S.E. at a time when it controlled 8 000 members.⁴⁶ W. Wallace Lorimer, unsuccessful Labour candidate in the 1907 Transvaal general election, was one of the founders of the Scottish National Council of Shop Assistants and became later a member of the executive council of the British Shop Assistants' Union to which it had affiliated.⁴⁷ John Joseph Ware, returned to the Johannesburg Municipal Council in 1906, to the Transvaal Provincial Council in 1910 and to the

43. On Sampson see Gitsham and Trembath, Labour Organisation In South Africa, p.174 and Labour Leader, 30.6.1911, p.401; on Nettleton see Gitsham and Trembath, p.173 and Durban Election Bulletin, 5.2.1921, p.5; and on the T.M.A. leader see Voice of Labour, 1.4.1910, p.148, article by "The Porcupine."

44. See the writer's biographical article on Mathews in the Dictionary of South African Biography, II, pp.453-4, and Transvaal Leader, 5.9.1908, p.11, "Labour Notes".

45. Star, 26.8.1910, p.8, article on Haggard.

46. A.S.E. Monthly Report, December 1908, p.15.

Union Senate in 1915, represented the Sydney Operative Masons Society at the inaugural conference of the New South Wales Labour Party.⁴⁸ W. C. Salter, one of the stalwarts of the Transvaal Independent Labour Party, 1907 - 10, had shared public platforms in England with Keir Hardie and Tom Mann whom he counted amongst his friends.⁴⁹ Finally, Henry Ancketill, the S.A.L.P. parliamentary candidate for Durban Central in 1910, had been a social reformer, probably without labour affiliations, before his arrival in Durban in 1896. He had been secretary of the English Land Restoration League, 1891 - 2, which was later called the League for the Taxation of Land Values, and claimed to be a close friend of Henry George himself.⁵⁰

In addition, there were the former labour champions who remained in the background after settling in South Africa. Two interesting examples were William S. Mabbot and Alexander S. Livingstone. Mabbot had been a militant trade unionist in Australia and participant in the 1890 Great Maritime Strike. Disillusioned, he became secretary to the expedition to Paraguay, which included William Lane, the Queensland socialist leader, and whose object was to found a communist settlement. On its failure he moved to South Africa where he played a minor role in the socialist movement before dying in Zululand in 1920.⁵¹

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47. Transvaal Leader Weekly Edition, 2.2.1907.
48. Worker, vol. III, no.196, about May 1913, press-cutting in Trembath Papers, scrapbook, II.
49. Rand Daily Mail, 14.9.1910, p.6, obituary.
50. Natal Mercury, 30.3.1910, p.9, letter from Ancketill; on his friendship with Henry George see ibid., 13.12.1897, p.7. Note also that S. Mainwaring, one of the leaders of London's Labour Emancipation League, which affiliated to the S.D.F. in the early 1880's, may have been the same S. Mainwaring given as secretary of the Johannesburg branch of the Transvaal I.L.P. in December 1906 - compare H. Pelling, The Origins of the Labour Party, pp. 29 & 252 with Rand Daily Mail, 27.12.1906, p.5.
51. International (Johannesburg), 18.6.1920, p.8, obituary.

Livingstone had been a business partner of the leader of the Queensland Labour Party and had championed the workers' cause with his pen during the 1890 industrial unrest. Afterwards he founded a newspaper on the Murchison goldfields, Western Australia, from where he went to the Yukon and started his tri-weekly, Yukon Miner. From Canada he moved to London and then to South Africa in 1902 establishing himself as a stationer and newsagent in Braamfontein, Johannesburg.⁵²

One of the most accomplished of the Rand labour journalists, Harry W. Haynes, who settled on the Witwatersrand in 1904, wrote that the Jewish element was always in South Africa "the backbone of the Labour and Socialist movement".⁵³ He is certainly not accurate for the years before 1910, for, although Israelstam, Rabb, Rathouse, Levinson, Berman and Weinstock were prominent in the socialist sects, their influence on the trade unions and the origins of the labour party was small. There were no Jewish labour or socialist parliamentary candidates in the first Union general election, although there were at least two in the first Transvaal Provincial Council elections.⁵⁴ The most influential Jew in the South African labour movement before 1910 seems to have been the hotel-keeper, Gabriel Weinstock, one time member of the German Social Democratic Party, leader of the Rand Vorwarts Society and general treasurer of the S.A.L.P., 1909 - 15.⁵⁵

52. Transvaal Leader, 10.12.1910, p.3, "Labour Notes".

53. Natal Advertiser, 18.6.1931, p.12, article by Haynes.

54. See Appendices C, V & VI below. Note that Rathouse and Righthouse were alternative names for members of the same family.

55. Interviews with Louis Karovsky and Thomas Boydell, 1964 - 5. On Weinstock's membership of Vorwarts see Rand Daily Mail, 24.4.1906, p.5, "Labour Notes".

The wide background of the Transvaal labour leaders is well illustrated by Tables One and Two below. None of those listed was born or educated in South Africa and most came from Britain, although the strong Australian influence should be noted among the presidents of the Witwatersrand T. & L.C. who were all actively involved in labour politics. In addition, the political dominance amongst Transvaal trade unions of the A.S.E., whose headquarters was in London, is clearly shown in Table One: six out of the twelve 1910 labour candidates were members of this union; and also standing for parliament at the same time were Boydell in Durban and Maginess in Cape Town, both A.S.E. members.⁵⁶ Finally, it is significant that in both tables Mathews is the solitary representative of the Cornish miners, and he left Penzance for the U.S.A. as a lad of fifteen.⁵⁷

Although comparable details are not easily obtained for the other provinces, it seems likely that their labour leaders were also exclusively overseas-born men, for example, Maginess in Cape Town, Trembath in Kimberley and Palmer in Pietermaritzburg were an Irish engineer, a Cornish compositor and a London accountant, respectively. The most noteworthy local product before 1910 was probably the Uitenhage-born printer, Ivan L. Walker, who was secretary of the Pretoria Trades and Labour Council, (the Pretoria T. & L.C.), 1909 - 11, but his significant contribution to the labour movement came afterwards.⁵⁸

56. See Appendix C, VI below for list of labour and socialist parliamentary candidates in 1910 with their union affiliations.

57. Transvaal Leader, 5.9.1908, p.11, "Labour Notes".

58. Gitsham and Trembath, Labour Organisation in South Africa, p.177. H.J. and R. E. Simons, Class and Colour in South Africa 1850 - 1950, p.79, imply incorrectly that Walker was an overseas immigrant.

T A B L E O N E

BIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS ON THE 1910 TRANSVAAL LABOUR AND SOCIALIST CANDIDATES FOR THE FIRST UNION PARLIAMENT

<u>Name</u>	<u>Date and Place of Birth</u>	<u>Other Dwelling Places</u>	<u>Labour Background</u>	<u>Date of Arrival in South Africa</u>
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Before Arrival in South Africa

Labour Candidates for the House of Assembly

England

Andrews	1870	Suffolk	Birmingham; London	A.S.E.	1893
Coward	c.1870	?Cumberland	North Lancashire	?Miners Union	c.1897
Haggar	1854	East Anglia	? and Queensland	ex-parliamentary candidate	1898
Madeley	1873	Woolwich	India	A.S.E.	1903
Mathews	1866	Cornwall	Canada; U.S.A.	President of Butte City Miners' Union; 1893-4 Speaker of the Montana House of Assembly; Socialist	1897
Mussared	1874	Kent	Merchant Navy	A.S.E.; Socialist	1903
Sampson	1872	London	-	London Society of Compositors; I.L.P.	1892
Wybergh	1868	England	Germany	-	1891

Scotland

Bain	c.1859	Dundee	Edinburgh; England; South America	A.S.E.; Socialist	c.1889
Reid	c.1866	Glasgow	-	District Secretary Glasgow A.S.E.	c.1903

Other Countries

Landye	c.1860	Dublin	Navy	A.S.E.; Socialist	c.1898
Creswell	1866	Gibraltar	London; Armenia; Venezuela	-	1893

Labour Representative in the Senate

Whiteside	1870	Ballarat	Melbourne	-	1893
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Socialist Candidates for the House of Assembly

Crawford	1883	Glasgow	-	-	1902
Davidson	c.1877	North Scotland	-	Socialist	1898

* Drawn mainly from Gitsham and Trembath, Labour Organisation in South Africa, p. 157 ff. and Star, 20.8.1910, pp.9 & 12
 Note that Haggar has been included although he went to the polls as an independent labour candidate after re-nomination by the S.A.L.P.

T A B L E T W O

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION ON THE PRESIDENTS OF THE WITWATERSRAND TRADES AND LABOUR COUNCIL, 1902-09 *

<u>Year(s)</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Date and Place of Birth</u>	<u>Trade Union and Other Dwelling Places before Arrival in S.A.</u>	<u>Date of Arrival in S.A.</u>	<u>Trade Union</u>	<u>Political Role while President</u>
1902-04	P. Whiteside	1870, Ballarat	Melbourne	1893	S.A.E.D. & F.A.	Labour municipal councillor
1905	W.H. Andrews ^a	1870, Suffolk	Birmingham; London. A.S.E.	1893	A.S.E.	Chairman, P.L.L.
1906	J.J. Ware	1858, Australia	Sydney Operative Masons' Society	1897	S.A. Operative Masons' Society	Labour municipal councillor.
1907	J.E. Riley	1872, Leeds	1874 in New Zealand; 1887 in Australia; 1893 in England where he joined the Operative Masons' Society	1896	S.A. Operative Masons' Society	Labour parliamentary candidate; secretary, Tvl. L.R.C.
1908	O.H. Evans	?, London	Joined the A.S. of C. & J. in Australia	1896	A.S. of C. & J.	President, Tvl. L.R.C. ^c
1909	H.W. Sampson	1872, London	London Society of Compositors	1892	S.A.T.U.	Labour M.L.A.; first chairman, S.A.L.P.

* Drawn principally from Gitsham and Trembath, Labour Organisation in South Africa, p. 160 ff.; but on Riley see Transvaal Leader Weekly Edition, 2.2.1907, and on Evans see Transvaal Leader, 2.5.1908, p. 15, "Labour Notes".

a G.H. Parkes of the A.S. of C. & J. was originally elected, but returned to England about April 1905. Andrews was acting president for some time, being elected officially in June - Rand Daily Mail, 9.6.1905, p. 9

b Star, 28.3.1907, p. 9. However, he did not hold this post for long.

c Transvaal Leader, 19.9.1908, p. 13.

5. Trade Union and Socialist Background

The founding of the new model craft trade unions in England was to have its repercussions on South Africa. In 1851 the A.S.E. was started and in 1860 the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners, (the A.S. of C. & J.) was formed. Soon their members were launching branches all over the English-speaking world. By 1896 the A.S.E. had eighty-two branches outside the United Kingdom and the A.S. of C. & J. one more. About this time the Engineers could boast a membership at home of 80 000, divided amongst 497 branches, and the Carpenters 46 000, divided among 623 branches.⁵⁹

Virtually from their inception both unions were involved in politics. Leading officials were, for instance, on the executive committee of the short-lived Labour Representation League in 1869.⁶⁰ A.S.E. members who rose to cabinet rank in the early twentieth century were John Burns and George N. Barnes, its general secretary, 1896 - 1908. Another prominent member was Tom Mann, one of the pioneers of the Independent Labour Party in the 1890's and a well-known labour "firebrand". Long-serving "Lib-Lab" M.P. was W. R. Cremer, one of the founders of the A.S. of C. & J., who was first elected in 1885 and was later knighted. Ample precedent was therefore provided for political activity to those members who settled in various parts of the British Empire, the Boer republics and the U.S.A.

59. Sidney and Beatrice Webb, Industrial Democracy, pp.53 & 81.

60. A. W. Humphrey, A. History of Labour Representation, pp.187 - 8 on the League; on the A.S.E.'s political activity in the 1850's see H. Tracey (ed.), The British Labour Party: Its History, Growth, Policy and Leaders, I, pp. 32 - 3.

The first lasting trade unions in South Africa were actually branches of the Carpenters formed in the early 1880's in Cape Town and Durban.⁶¹ Branches of the Engineers probably date from the later 1880's.⁶² By 1908 the A.S. of C. & J. had five branches on the Rand alone and about 500 members in the Transvaal; towards the start of the same year the A.S.E. had 755 Transvaal members in a total South African membership of 1 153 divided amongst sixteen branches. Up to 1905 when a South African district committee was sanctioned the local branches of the Carpenters were tacked onto the Australian district by its Manchester headquarters and only in 1926 were they allowed to establish their own governing council for South Africa. On the other hand, the Engineers obtained their own South African Council in 1906. This union was probably the most powerful in South Africa before 1910 financially if not in membership, showing a total income for its branches for the March quarter, 1908, of £1 276-19-0, expenditure of £940-16-7 and total balance as at 31 March of £8 977-4-3.⁶³ Significantly, the A.S.E. was to provide most of the trade union parliamentary candidates in 1910, as has been shown already.⁶⁴

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61. E. Gitsham and J. F. Trembath, A First Account of Labour Organisation in South Africa, p.14.
62. W. H. Andrews, Class Struggles in South Africa, p.13.
63. On the number of Carpenters' branches and control from headquarters in 1905 see Transvaal Leader, 2.5.1908, p.15, "Labour Notes"; on its membership see T.A.S. 1 of 1908, Report of the Select Committee of the Transvaal Legislative Assembly on the Eight Hours' Bill and Minutes of Evidence, p.43, evidence of O. H. Evans (member of the A.S. of C. & J.), 15.7.1908. On membership, branches and income of the Engineers see its Quarterly Report for March Quarter, 1908 bound with the A.S.E. Monthly Reports in the Johannesburg offices of the Amalgamated Engineering Union; for the establishment of the South African Council See A.S.E. Monthly Reports, 1906; and on the A.S.E.'s strength see A.S.E. Monthly Report, September, 1908, p.11 statement by its organiser, W. H. Andrews, and Transvaal Leader, 16.12.1911, p.7, "Labour Notes".
64. See appendix C, VI below and Table One above.

Besides the overseas linked trade unions, many purely South African craft unions were started in the 1890's some of which grew quickly after the Anglo-Boer War. The two most important were the S.A.T.U., which was founded in 1898, and the S.A.E.D. & F.A., which started as the Transvaal Engine Drivers' Association in 1894. By 1908, at least, the S.A.T.U. was in a powerful position as it embraced about ninety per cent of the skilled workers in the printing industry. A year later it had 900 members divided amongst nine South African and two Rhodesian branches. In 1908 the S.A.E.D. & F.A. claimed a membership of 1 200.⁶⁵

Surprisingly, in the mining industry and on the railways where wide-embracing and powerful trade unions might have been expected, labour organisations were struggling to exist before unification of South Africa. The T.M.A., which was started in 1902, had only a few hundred members and no fighting-funds before the 1907 miners' strike after which it was gradually built up into a powerful union. Its income for 1909 was just over £2 500, but its bank balance was a precarious £164-12-9 largely because it was still paying off its 1907 strike debts.⁶⁶ Before 1910 railway trade unionism, except for the Engine-Driver's, was in its infancy, although the Natal Railwaymen's Association, started in 1906, seemed promising until the disastrous 1909 railway strike.⁶⁷

65. On the formation of the S.A.T.U. see A. J. Downes, Printers' Saga, being a History of the South African Typographical Union, pp. 43 - 5; on its membership see S.A.T.J., January 1910, p.15; on the percentage of unionists among the printers see Transvaal Leader, 30.5.1908, p.12, "Labour Notes" On the origins of the S.A.E.D. & F.A. see F. J. Grobler, "Die Invloed van Geskoolde Blanke Arbeid op die Suid-Afrikaanse Politiek van 1886 tot 1924" (D.Litt. thesis, Potchefstroom University, 1968), p.24; on its membership see T.A.S. 1 of 1908, p.43, evidence of R. Tennant, president of the Association, 9.7.1908.

66. Gitsham and Trembath, Labour Organisation in South Africa, pp. 28, 65 - 6; and for the 1909 financial statement see Transvaal Leader, 22.1.1910, p.5, "Labour Notes". There are wide variations on the T.M.A.'s membership, but the estimate of 800 in the A.S.E. Monthly Report, March 1909,

As in Great Britain, Canada and Australasia, the craft unions in Johannesburg, Cape Town and Durban co-ordinated activities from the 1890's in trades councils which were soon active in municipal and colonial politics.⁶⁸ The strongest was the Witwatersrand Trades and Labour Council which was the driving force behind labour politics in the Transvaal, 1902 - 06. Both in the Transvaal and in the Cape Colony the formation of the trades council proved an important stepping-stone towards the emergent labour party.

The political aspirations of the trade unionists were also encouraged by a spreading socialist movement. In 1898 there seemed to be four socialist clubs in South Africa, but only after the Anglo-Boer War did socialism take solid root.⁶⁹ Organisations such as the S.D.F., the Socialist Labour Party, the Clarion Fellowship and the I.L.P. - all deriving their names from overseas - were started. At the inaugural conference of the Transvaal Labour Representation Committee in December 1906 the following socialist societies were present: the I.L.P., the Sons of Russian Freedom, Vorwarts (a society catering for German social-democrats), and the Italian Socialist Society.⁷⁰ At the most important of the three founding conferences of the S.A.L.P. socialist organisations represented were the Transvaal I.L.P., the Johannesburg Socialist Society, the Socialist Literary Society of Germiston, and the Cape Town S.D.F.⁷¹ As they succeeded in forcing the S.A.L.P. to adopt the socialist objective in its constitution this study must consider the rise of socialism in South Africa.

67. On the origins of the Natal Railwaymen's Association see Natalian, 5.7.1907, p.9, biography of Connolly.

68. S. A. Tribune, 7.12.1907, p.2, "The Need for Trade Unionism in S. Africa."

69. S. A. Review, 20.5.1898, p.5, on the four clubs.

70. Rand Daily Mail, 20.12.1906, p.4. For socialist organisations in Johannesburg in 1904 see Star, 24.11.1904, p.10, letters from J. F. Bach [Back] and W. W. Lorimer.

71. Transvaal Leader, 11.10.1909, p.7.

6. The Hoggenheimer Bogey

It is doubtful whether the labour party would have been a significant factor in South African politics had local conditions not been conducive to its rise, whatever the overseas precedents. The enhanced power of the mining houses derived from consolidated control over the mining industry seemed, for example, to challenge labour to organise or be submerged. Thus in 1903 the South African Typographical Journal advised fighting "aggressive combination of employers with defensive counter-combination" stepping forward determinedly towards the federation of trades.⁷² The emergence of the labour party can be regarded indeed as one outcome of the mounting hostility towards the mining magnates so brilliantly portrayed in the Hoggenheimer caricature.

In 1889 the amalgamation of the diamond mines culminated in the establishment of the De Beers Consolidated Mines Limited, which brought highly capitalised and modern industry to Kimberley besides ensuring itself a virtual monopoly over output. In the same year on the Rand the mine-owners co-ordinated activities with the formation of the Witwatersrand Chamber of Mines. As in Kimberley, ownership of the mineral resources passed into the hands of a small number of holding companies which alone were able to raise the enormous capital required to finance deep-level gold mining. But no one company secured control over the industry. The most powerful proved to be Wernher, Beit and Company, which was associated with Eckstein and Company, and was popularly known as the Corner House. Other important mining houses included the Consolidated Goldfields of South Africa Gold Trust Limited which was linked with Rhodes's interests; the Johannesburg Consolidated Investment Company, controlled by the Barnato family; and the J. B. Robinson group. Capital was further strengthened by the formation by the Chamber

72. August 1903, p.14.

of Mines in 1900 of the Witwatersrand Native Labour Association which secured a monopoly over the recruitment of native labour for the gold mines.

From the 1890's Kimberley acquired an unpleasant reputation. F. Reginald Statham, who worked as a journalist in Kimberley, 1891 - 4, but was a paid agent in England of the South African Republic, 1896 - 9, paints a most depressing picture of life at the diamond fields in his novel, Mr. Magnus, which was published in 1896:

The merciless hours of work, twelve hour shifts practically lengthened out to fourteen hours; the suppression of all freedom of opinion among those employed; the animal herding together of natives; the universal espionage over every man by his fellows; the atmosphere of theft and suspicion; the disregard, in the presence of the interests of the company, of every humane consideration; the terrorism kept up by sudden dismissals; the setting aside of legal obligations for the sake of mere greed; the brutal sentences inflicted on men trapped into the illegal possession of the precious products of the mine....⁷³

A few years later Statham was equally scathing about the political atmosphere:

Kimberley, as a town, is ruined; it is dead. It returns, it is true, four representatives to the Cape Parliament. But these four representatives are selected and returned in the interests of De Beers by the company's employees, who vote to order on pain of dismissal - dismissal without notice, without reason given, and without any glimpse of a recommendation. If you do not stand well with De Beers, you may as well give up trying to live in Kimberley, unless you are financially independent - in which case you will leave it by the very first train.⁷⁴

His observations were confirmed by several anti-Rhodes Cape politicians including Samuel Cronwright-Schreiner, M.L.A. from 1902 to 1910 and husband of Olive Schreiner, who wrote

73. Mr. Magnus, p.22. For biographical details see his autobiography, My Life's Record, especially pp.160, 166 - 9, and 180 ff.

74. F. R. Statham, "South African Facts and Fancies", Social-Democrat, May 1899, p.135. See also his book, South Africa As It Is, pp.265 - 6 and 280 and Mr. Magnus, ch.vi, which describes a Kimberley political meeting.

in 1900 from personal experience:

Public life is dead, the natives who work in the mines are shut up in prisons, euphemistically called "compounds", and the whites are held in the hollow of the hand of "the Company".⁷⁵

About the end of 1903 an ex-mine manager on the Rand, F. H. P. Creswell, who was at this time far from joining the labour party and certainly not a pro-Boer, maintained that Kimberley was "a by-word throughout South Africa, as par excellence the type of place which every rising community wishes not to become".⁷⁶

The "lesson" of Kimberley was not lost on labour leaders in South Africa nor on some Transvaal Uitlanders. J. Brown, vice-president of the Witwatersrand Mine Employees' and Mechanics' Union, believed in 1892 that the deplorable state of the Kimberley workers was due to the absence of labour organisation at the right time; J. T. Bain, main driving force behind this trade union, related in 1894 how he had been in Kimberley and found that the workers were not certain of their jobs unless they voted for the nominees of De Beers, but he referred to voting before the introduction of the secret ballot in the Cape Colony from 1 July, 1894; and W. Taylor, last secretary of this union, stressed about the same time that the franchise had not prevented Kimberley from "being ruined and damned forever".⁷⁷

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75. Some Vital Facts about Kimberley and Johannesburg for Working-Men and Friends of the Native, issued by the South African Conciliation Committee in 1900 as its pamphlet no. 35. For criticism of De Beers's monopoly by leading Cape politicians see T. R. H. Davenport, The Afrikaner Bond: The History of a South African Political Party, 1880 - 1911, pp.138 - 9, - the population of Kimberley halved between 1888 and 1891.
76. F. H. P. Creswell, "The Transvaal Labour Problem", Independent Review, February 1904, p.126.
77. On Brown see Standard & Diggers' News, 8.10.1892, p.3; on Bain see 11.4.1894, p.5; and on Taylor see his letter in 2.7.1894, p.5, and also his letter in 17.7.1894, p.2. See also opening sentence in the 1899 International Independent Labour Party's appeal in Appendix B, IV, 2 below. On the introduction of the secret ballot see J. L. McCracken,

Writing during the Anglo-Boer War, Cronwright-Schreiner maintained that Johannesburg's great fear was that the big mining houses would obtain control over it and reduce it to a second Kimberley.⁷⁸ The same fear was expressed towards the end of 1900 by the Cape Town Uitlander Refugee Committee.⁷⁹ In 1905 Tom Kneebone, full-time organiser of the A.S.E. in South Africa, reported that Kimberley was "honey-combed by a service of spies, touts, and pimps" more or less in the employ of De Beers.⁸⁰ His successor, Bill Andrews, recorded towards the end of 1907 that it was difficult to escape in Kimberley "the universal feeling and terror inspired by De Beers".⁸¹

Kimberley was thus a strong reason for the organisation of labour in the rest of South Africa. The Rand did not follow the same pattern possibly because the political influence of the Chamber of Mines was contained under Republican rule and from 1907 - 10 under the Het Volk government and, to a lesser extent, because of the emergent labour movement.⁸² Yet the mining magnates on the Rand attracted as much antagonism as those in Kimberley.

Olive Schreiner and her husband were alarmed in 1895 at the so-called "monopolists" control over South Africa's mineral resources and vigorously attacked the "small, resolute and keen body of men, amalgamated into Rings and Trusts."⁸³

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78. S. C. Cronwright-Schreiner, Some Vital Facts about Kimberley and Johannesburg, p.4. See also quotation from the Johannesburg Witness on p. 77 below.
79. Protest of the Refugee Committee, Cape Town, against Capitalistic Legislation in the Transvaal, p.2. See also F. R. Statham, "South African Facts and Fancies", p.139.
80. A.E.J., July 1905, article by Kneebone dated 22 May 1905.
81. A.S.E. Monthly Report, December 1907, p.16.
82. H. [R] L. Outhwaite, "The Situation in South Africa", The International (British), December 1907, pp.19 - 21, discusses the restricted political influence of the Chamber under different governments.
83. Olive Schreiner and S. C. Cronwright-Schreiner, The Political Situation, p.34.

Continuing, they added:

For not as in other countries has the Monopolist risen up among us, a growth of our own; he comes from a foreign clime, and sweeps bare the virgin land before him like the locust; and, like the locust, leaves nothing for his successor but the barren earth.⁸⁴

In 1899 she returned to the same theme:

... when they have rifled our earth and picked the African bones bare, as the vultures clear the carcass of their prey, they will leave us with the broken skeleton.

and asked who gains by war, giving her own reply:

There are some who think they gain! In the background we catch sight of misty figures; we know the old tread; we hear the rustle of paper passing from hand to hand, and we know the fall of gold; it is an old familiar sound in Africa; we know it now!⁸⁵

The attacks on the mining industry by the Schreiners were perhaps reminiscent of those of the British handicraftsmen towards the beginning of the nineteenth century against the advent of machines. They harked back to the old world before the arrival of the monopolist stressing the absence of poverty and superfluous individual wealth; the slow but steady national progress retaining the country's wealth for its people; the independent politics and newspapers and the freedom and happiness of the people.⁸⁶

Two novels of the 1890's which sharply attacked the mining magnates and their companies were Olive Schreiner's Trooper Peter Halket and Reginald Statham's Mr. Magnus. The latter was the more successful novel and was devoted to exposing the virtual enslavement of Kimberley's inhabitants by

84. Ibid., pp.15 - 16.

85. Olive Schreiner, An English-South African's View of the Situation, pp.57 & 81.

86. Olive and Cronwright-Schreiner, The Political Situation, p.30; Cronwright-Schreiner, Some Vital Facts about Kimberley and Johannesburg, p.2.

De Beers. In both books Rhodes is a central figure. In Trooper Peter Halket Olive Schreiner predicts how Rhodes's name will be immortalised: written in gold dust, set with diamonds and cemented with human blood shed from the Zambesi to the sea; and has him boasting:

There is not one man nor woman in South Africa, I cannot buy with my money! When I have the Transvaal, I shall buy God Almighty Himself, if I care to!⁸⁷

In Mr. Magnus Rhodes is referred to as "a kind of licensed law-breaker", a man who would rather see the grass growing in the streets of Kimberley than sacrifice any of his interests and as "the incarnation of unconditional acquisitiveness".⁸⁸

Reviewing both books Eleanor Marx-Aveling doubted whether future readers would believe "that any more infamous, unscrupulous villain ever walked this earth" than Rhodes.⁸⁹ He was, however, an Englishman; and the appearance for the first time of the non-British Hoggenheimer symbol after his death in 1902 seems therefore logical.

Hoggenheimer actually started as "Hoggenheimer of Park Lane" in the musical comedy, The Girl from Kays', by Owen Hall which was first produced on 5 November 1902 in London and ran for 432 performances.⁹⁰ At least by September 1903 the South African News published D. C. Boonzaier's remarkable Hoggenheimer political cartoons depicting the mining magnate as a

87. Trooper Peter Halket, p.183.

88. As quoted by Eleanor Marx-Aveling, "Filibuster Cecil Rhodes and his Chartered Company", Social-Democrat, September 1897, p.271. See also F. R. Statham, Mr. Magnus, pp.54 ff.

89. Eleanor Marx Aveling, "Filibuster Cecil Rhodes and his Chartered Company", p.267.

90. Standard Encyclopaedia of Southern Africa, 5, pp.559 - 60, article by L. Herrman.

fat and unpatriotic alien of semitic origins, who used his immense wealth to exert great political pressure first over the Transvaal and then over South Africa.⁹¹ From 1904 to 1907 Hoggenheimer appears frequently in the Smuts-Merriman correspondence.⁹²

The introduction of Chinese labour on the gold mines in 1904 increased hostility towards the Chamber of Mines and enabled Boonzaier to produce some of his best Hoggenheimer cartoons. Smuts, too, used Chinese labour to attack the mining magnates in his Memorandum of Points in Reference to the Transvaal Constitution presented to the Imperial Government in 1906. "The struggle by the mine-owners for political domination which began before the War", he added, "is obliterating all other issues...."⁹³ The Natal Witness was also hostile towards the mining industry at this time and declared in an editorial:

We are beginning to realise that there is no value in the prosperity of enormous industries, protected by elaborate laws, owned and managed by a dozen men, principally foreigners, and from whom the racial owners of the land are excluded. Dividends and record outputs avail nothing to stem the tide of poverty and depression.⁹⁴

Nor was the majority report of the Transvaal Mining Industry Commission, published in March 1908, uncritical of the results of gold mining and estimated that out of every twenty shillings worth of gold produced on the Witwatersrand for the year ended 30th June 1907 11s 3d went out of the country.⁹⁵

91. D. C. Boonzaier, "S. A. News" Cartoons (Cape Town, 1904). The symbol was later used by other cartoonists; see, for example, D. Santry's Hoggenheimer in S. A. Review, 9.7.1909, p.15.

92. W. K. Hancock, Smuts 1. The Sanguine Years 1870 - 1919, p.202. Note that Hancock's suggested date of 1908 for the first Boonzaier Hoggenheimer cartoon is several years too late.

93. W. K. Hancock and J. van der Poel (eds.), Selections from the Smuts Papers, volume II, June 1902 - May 1910, p.217.

94. 21 August 1906, p.4.

The growing anti-capitalist feeling, usually not anti-capitalism, which was portrayed so well by the Hoggenheimer caricature, was therefore not confined to the workers; but in the absence of radical urban political movements the emergence of the labour party seemed inevitable.

Organised labour was not indifferent to the growing power of the mining magnates. In 1899, for example, the Rand's International Independent Labour Party, (the I.I.L.P.), matched Olive Schreiner's gift of vivid denunciation with its description of the Chamber of Mines as "that insatiable daughter of the horse leech"; and Andrew Corley, defeated Labour candidate in the 1904 Cape Colony general election, denounced all that Hoggenheimer stood for in his farewell speech before emigrating to New Zealand:

I know that I am leaving behind me in this Colony a few who will never let the fight for British freedom and justice be surrendered to a gang of financiers and mining magnates In the new Colonies you have got government by the financial houses and foreign mining magnates, aided and abetted by the Imperial Government and the heavily subsidised Rhodesian press....⁹⁶

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95. Report of the Transvaal Mining Industry Commission (March 1908), p.122, section 12.
96. S. A. News, 25.2.1904, p.9. For 1899 I.I.L.P. quotation see first paragraph of Appendix B, IV, 2 below.

7. Industrial Situation

The years 1903 to 1909 in South Africa were marked by severe economic depression, unemployment and European emigration.⁹⁷ Successful industrial action became extremely difficult, as the disastrous 1907 Transvaal Miners' Strike proved. Redress of genuine grievances and necessary labour legislation was thus also sought by political means; and grievances there certainly were.

The Transvaal Mining Regulations Commission, whose report was published in August 1910, conservatively estimated the annual death-rate of white rock-drillers at thirteen per cent, and revealed that the average age of death from silicosis of Rand European miners was thirty-five whereas in Bendigo, Australia, where the incidence was higher, it was fifty.⁹⁸ The number of miners' phthisis sufferers who went home to Cornwall, the North of England and elsewhere, where they died from the disease, will never be known. Harry Sampson, the Transvaal Labour M.L.A., actually declared that Cornwall was "more or less the graveyard of South Africa."⁹⁹

97. D. Hobart Houghton, "Economic Development, 1865 - 1965" (Monica Wilson and Leonard Thompson (eds.), The Oxford History of South Africa, II), p.15; Leonard Thompson, The Unification of South Africa, pp.52 - 4; R. L. Outhwaite, "The Situation in South Africa", The International, December 1907, pp. 19 - 21.

98. See extracts of the report as published in S. A. Almanack and Reference Book, 1911 - 12, p.323; also Debates of the Transvaal Legislative Assembly, 26.4.1910, col.635, statement by the Minister of Mines; and U. G. 19 of 1912, especially pp.21 - 22 & 54.

99. S. A. Review, 26.11.1909, p.26. See also A. K. H. Jenkin, The Cornish Miner, p.329 ff.

Although the ravages of miners' phthisis on the Rand were known since 1902, no compulsory fund for the payment of compensation to sufferers or dependents was created until the first Phthisis Act was passed by the Union parliament in 1911.¹⁰⁰ Far-fetched as it may seem, the white miners were severely handicapped in organising effective leadership because they did not live long enough. Writing in 1912, Mary Fitzgerald, who was the typist to the T.M.A. about 1902-10, recorded that of the thirty-six different executive members of the T.M.A. with whom she was photographed during her tenure of office only four were still alive.¹⁰¹

In addition, the accident mortality rate on the Transvaal mines remained consistently high, being 5,29 per 1 000 for the year, 1908-9. For the six years, June 1903 to June 1909, 4 874 fatalities were recorded, of which 409 were Europeans.¹⁰² The death-rate of native miners from all causes was forty-five per thousand for the year 1904-5 and improved to 23,9 for the year ending March 1910, but the number of natives who died at their kraals from phthisis or other diseases caught on the mines can never be estimated.¹⁰³

Andrew Fisher, the Australian Labour premier, therefore seemed justified in his belief expressed in private conversation in Pietermaritzburg towards the end of 1910 that the gold mines were not worth the cost in human lives.¹⁰⁴ "Since

100. Transvaal Leader, 14.9.1909, p. 7, article on the history of miners' phthisis in the Transvaal.

101. Voice of Labour, 24.5.1912, p. 5. It is indeed ironic that the blacklisting of the miners' leaders after the miners' strike in 1907 was an unwitting act of kindness, for this action prolonged their lives and enabled Mathews and Coward to work full-time on strengthening the T.M.A. The strike in 1913 was to prove a shattering defeat for the mine-owners and the Government. Nevertheless, Mathews and Coward died prematurely in 1915 and 1913, respectively.

102. Transvaal Mines Department, Annual Report of the Government Mining Engineer for the Year Ended 30th June, 1909, p. 13; T.G. 28 of 1909, Statistics for the Transvaal Colony for the Years 1903-1908, p. 91.

the war [1902]", declared a Cape Town labour sympathiser, the Rev. Ramsden Balmforth, in 1913, "nearly 100 000 lives had been sacrificed in those mines. I say that I cannot understand the conscience and state of mind that permits such a state of things."¹⁰⁵ The need for labour organisation was self evident, especially in the Transvaal. Yet, such was the weakness of the trade unions before the unification of South Africa that the Chamber of Mines successfully refused to recognise the rights of collective bargaining, as the 1907 Transvaal Miners' Strike showed.

However much organised labour pressed for social welfare legislation such as old age pensions, free education, an employers' liability act and an eight hours' act, its chief concern remained competition from the far cheaper and more numerous non-white workers, both inside and outside South Africa.¹⁰⁶ It was undoubtedly to the financial advantage of the capitalists to train the less expensive and more docile non-European labourers to supplant their European brethren. So grave seemed the situation in 1908 to one contemporary writer, that he declared:

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103. Debates of the Transvaal Legislative Assembly, 26 April 1910, col.636, statement by the Minister of Mines.
104. Voice of Labour, 9 December 1910, p.516, article by L. H. H. Greene. See also Ambrose Pratt, The Real South Africa, pp. x - xi, Fisher's introduction.
105. Worker, 31 July 1913, p.1.
106. For labour demands see programmes under Appendix B below.

... in the face of a rapidly-increasing black population and a slowly-increasing white population, the fields of whose labour activities economic forces are more and more restricting, it is difficult to find much place in the future for the white man, and none for the white labourer.¹⁰⁷

Perceptive observers like Olive Schreiner, her husband and Pethick-Lawrence saw the problem of South Africa's native peoples as the same problem of the unskilled proletariat in Europe complicated, however, by colour difficulties.¹⁰⁸ In a letter to the Johannesburg Shop Assistants Union in 1905, Olive Schreiner stressed the obvious solution:

... there must be organised union of all workers; union among all workers in different branches and in the same society, and a yet larger union between the workers of all nations and countries, without which our labour problem can never be solved. For as long as there is an Italian girl willing to take the work for five shillings which a French girl did for ten, or a Chinaman who will take the miners' work for half that the Englishman or Kaffir demanded, there is always a hole in the bottom of the boat through which the water will ultimately creep in.¹⁰⁹

Nevertheless, there were "really colossal difficulties", as she stated in 1908, "difficulties often not understood by those across the seas, who condemn conduct which they themselves would probably follow if brought face to face with the same difficulties."¹¹⁰

It was hard for Europeans to see any identity of interest with still tribalised natives with whom communication was nearly impossible because of the language barrier and the

107. L. Haden Guest, "The Conflict of White and Negro Races", The International, February 1908, p.193.

108. Olive Schreiner and C. S. Cronwright-Schreiner, The Political Situation, p.109; Labour Record, April 1906, p.28, article by Pethick-Lawrence.

109. S. C. Cronwright-Schreiner (ed.), The Letters of Olive Schreiner, Appendix D, pp.386 - 7.

110. Olive Schreiner, Closer Union, p.57. It was written on 30.10.1908 and first published in the Transvaal Leader, 22.12.1908, and later in book form.

shutting-off of the mine natives in compounds. Moreover, these natives normally worked on the mines for shorter periods than a year before returning home to till the soil. In addition, there was the traditional race prejudice to be contended with, which happened to coincide, as Pethick-Lawrence perceived, with the prejudice between skilled and unskilled that existed in Europe.¹¹¹

Most white South Africans and not a few overseas observers considered the native an inferior human being. A revealing article in the British conservative monthly magazine, National Review, stated, for example, that it was universally agreed in South Africa that it would be disastrous to give the natives equal rights as they were variously regarded as being "idle", "cheeky", "nearer to baboons than they are to white men", "not human" and as "black things". The same writer continued:

The trouble is that the native wants - or rather some white men want for him - similarity of treatment with other human beings, with the result that full use cannot be made of him as an agent in the production of wealth.¹¹²

Even the Schreiners wrote about the superior intelligence and culture of the white man and the Rev. R. Balmforth, another strong negrophile, stated in 1910 that it would probably take the native races thousands of years to be "fitted for the task and responsibilities of self-government".¹¹³ Lack of concern for native welfare in Kimberley is well illustrated by Reginald Statham who wrote in 1896:

111. Labour Record, April 1906, p.28.

112. W. F. Bailey, "The Native Problem in South Africa", National Review, as reviewed in Social-Democrat, January 1897, pp.24 - 5.

113. Olive Schreiner and S. C. Cronwright-Schreiner, The Political Situation, p.110; for the quotation see Voice of Labour, 28 January 1910, p.47, "The Native Problem" by Balmforth.

Workers were killed by the falls of "reef" - which did not much matter when the workers were possessed of black skins; work was interrupted - which mattered very much to people with white skins.¹¹⁴

Thus it was not surprising that the attitude generally adopted by organised labour towards the native clashed with overseas trade union principles. In 1894, for example, W. Taylor, a Witwatersrand trade union officer, advocated a law to protect whites from the increasing insolence of the natives and opposed the grant of the franchise to the Uitlanders because it did not prevent the white man from being shot down in Kimberley when "he refused to be treated like an ordinary Kafir".¹¹⁵ Similarly in 1899 the Transvaal's I.I.L.P recalled the Illicit Gold Buying law proposed unsuccessfully by the Chamber of Mines and described it as "fit only for Kaffirs and convicts".¹¹⁶ In March 1902 an article appeared in the South African Typographical Journal asserting that the native was naturally inferior to the white man and, consequently, had to be kept permanently subjected as a manual labourer for which he was specially endowed with physical strength. The same writer actually appealed for solidarity of employer and employee against the native, pandering to whom led only to "insolence and inutility".¹¹⁷ In 1910 an editorial in the same paper excluded non-whites in its conception of the socialist commonwealth despite reference to Marx, Engels, Ruskin, Morris and others. "The natural physical differences between blacks and whites", it explained, "preclude them being placed upon the same social plane or intermingling one with the other."¹¹⁸ The suggestion, therefore,

114. Mr. Magnus, p.50.

115. Standard & Diggers' News, 11.4.1894, p.5, on the insolence; and 2.7.1894, p.5, on Kimberley.

116. See Appendix B, IV, 2 below.

117. P.9, article by "European".

118. April 1910, pp.9-10.

by G. V. Doxey that the colour bar in industry originated largely from class-conscious superiorities rather than from racial prejudice is not accurate and is even contradicted by his own narrative.¹¹⁹

The white workers seemed to become colour prejudiced soon after arrival in South Africa. Lord Selborne commented in 1906:

However democratic whites in South Africa may be in respect of each other, there is nothing in the world less democratic than the attitude of the white working man towards every black of any position or extraction.¹²⁰

and John X. Merriman agreed:

...the most violent and illiberal Native views are to be found in the large centres among the newcomers especially among working men who regard the Natives, not unjustly, as their most dangerous rivals, and having been regarded, however unjustly, as "the lower classes" in Europe are delighted on arrival here to find themselves in a position of an aristocracy of colour.¹²¹

Moreover, in 1908 there was a violent reaction amongst Natal and Transvaal white workers against Keir Hardie's sympathy towards non-whites, his refusal to recognise a colour bar in the labour movement and to full human rights, and his proposal of minimum wage legislation irrespective of race based on the higher white living standards. "It will scarcely be credited," he recalled in 1914, "that this produced as much sensation as though I had proposed to cut the throat of every white man in South Africa."¹²²

119. G. V. Doxey, The Industrial Colour Bar in South Africa, pp.29 & 31, provides conflicting quotations from the Diamond Fields Advertiser, 12.4.1884, p.8, and 25 [24] .4.1884, p.3. The stripping of white miners caused a furore and led one of their leaders to declare: "they want to strip you the same as a Kafir or a common felon" - Diamond Fields Advertiser, 24.4.1884, p.3.

120. As quoted in Nicholas Mansergh, South Africa 1906 - 1961: The Price of Magnanimity, p.70.

121. Merriman to Smuts, 19.7.1908, Smuts Papers, II, p.44.

122. Emrys Hughes (ed.), Keir Hardie's Speeches and Writings, p.131. See also F. Murray's letter in Voice of Labour, 28.8.1909, p.6, deploring the opposition of white trade unionists to the entry of non-whites into labour organisations.

Besides race differences and prejudice there were strong economic reasons for the exclusive attitude of organised white labour as Tom Mathews, the miners' leader, explained in 1914 to the Dominions Royal Commission:

...the mining industry or any other industry has no right to have the black man a slave as he is, and to have him under the aegis of any law, to have him to compete with us - not allowed to strike, not allowed to agitate, not allowed to be any higher than he is - a raw aboriginal. What the white artisans here ask is that, if the black man is to compete with us, the law which we make should not help him in any way as against us.¹²³

So long as the indentured Native, Chinese and Indian labour systems operated in South Africa, the Chamber of Mines, through the Witwatersrand Native Labour Association, retained its monopoly over recruitment of black miners, and the native pass laws made breach of contract a criminal offence, the white man found it difficult to support the occupational advancement of non-whites without imperilling his own standard of living and very livelihood.¹²⁴ This problem could not be solved as Australia did by closing her borders to the entry of non-whites, for the major portion of South Africa's population was non-European and potentially a vast labour reservoir. This important question can indeed be considered the raison d'être of the S.A.L.P.¹²⁵

123. Cd. 7707, p.70, para. 2043. Although quoting Mathews's views Doxey evades his point about the unfree labour market - The Industrial Colour Bar in South Africa, pp. 116 - 9.

124. On the existence of the pass laws and the formation of the W.N.L.A. see S. T. van der Horst, Native Labour in South Africa, pp.133, 163 - 4, 177 and passim.

125. See Appendix B, V, 2 and 3, for example.

8. The Franchise

In January 1910 the British Labour Party polled a half-a-million votes and won forty seats in the House of Commons. In the same year the Australian Labour Party obtained for the first time a clear majority in both houses of the federal parliament and in New Zealand a Liberal-Labour government ruled from 1891 - 1912. In South Africa, however, similar development was prevented by the restricted franchise of the South Africa Act, 1909, uniting her four British colonies. Universal suffrage, or manhood suffrage at least, was the prime requirement for the emergence of mass socialist or labour parties capable of assuming the reins of government by democratic means.

The South Africa Act retained the existing franchise qualifications of the four colonies. Thus in the Transvaal the vote was restricted to white men; in Natal about two-thirds of its European men were enfranchised constituting 99,1 per cent. of the electorate in 1907 and the remainder consisted of 150 Indian, 50 Coloured and 6 African men; and in the Cape Colony about two-thirds of the white adult male population had the vote comprising 85,2 per cent. of the electorate in 1909, and the balance was made up of 10,1 per cent. Coloured, Malay, Indian and Chinese male voters and 4,7 per cent. African men. Only in the Cape was a non-racial franchise really operative with the suffrage being granted to a male adult earning £50 annually or occupying premises worth £75 per annum and passing a simple education test.¹²⁶ Yet its Franchise and Ballot Act of 1892 had raised the occupation qualification from £25 to £75 and it was strongly criticised by Olive and Cronwright-Schreiner as a retrogressive step undoing the progressive work of the previous generation and as contrary to development in all civilised countries where the electoral

126. L. M. Thompson, The Unification of South Africa, pp.109 - 12.

basis was being broadened and not narrowed.¹²⁷ Thus in South Africa, whose population according to the 1911 census was six million of which only 21,58 per cent. were Europeans, roughly four-fifths of its adult men were disfranchised.¹²⁸ Moreover, no non-white was eligible for election to either house of the Union parliament.¹²⁹

The appearance of labour politicians in parliament before 1910 was further handicapped by inadequate payment of members. In the Cape parliamentarians received a guinea a day for up to ninety days a year plus a travelling and subsistence allowance for those living more than fifteen miles from the seat of parliament; Natal paid only a guinea a day while parliament sat to those members who lived outside of Pietermaritzburg as travelling grants; but the Transvaal and the O.R.C. recognised the principle of payment of M.P.'s and allowed salaries of not more than £300 per year from 1907.¹³⁰ The trade unions which might have been expected to finance political candidates were in the teething stage bearing no comparison to their powerful counterparts in Great Britain. Before 1910 the only full-time trade union officers were apparently the general secretary and two organisers of the T.M.A., the general secretary and organiser of the S.A.E.D. & F.A., the organiser for South Africa of the A.S.E., all resident on the Rand, and the

127. On the Act see J. L. McCracken, The Cape Parliament, pp.93 - 6; on the criticism see Olive Schreiner and S. C. Cronwright-Schreiner, The Political Situation, pp.10-11. In 1899 Olive Schreiner wrote that the state gained "by giving voice to all its integral parts" - An English-South African's View of the Situation, pp. 65 - 6.

128. For population statistics see L. M. Thompson, The Unification of South Africa, p.486.

129. South Africa Act, section 44 (c).

130. On the Transvaal, Natal and the Cape see A.S.E. Monthly Report, January 1908, pp. 5 - 6; on the O.R.C. see ibid., February 1908, p.14; on Natal see also ibid., February 1908, p.15; and on the Cape see also J. L. McCracken, the Cape Parliament, pp. 30 - 1 & 48.

organising-secretary of the Natal Railway Men's Association.¹³¹
The South Africa Act conceded, however, adequate payment of
parliamentarians at £400 per annum.¹³²

In short, the rise of the labour party in South Africa was certainly accelerated by overseas white immigration and precedents, rudimentary industrial legislation and economic depression, but was mainly a product of the struggle against monopoly capital and cheap labour. Its policy and course of development were largely determined by the limited franchise.

131. S. A. Tribune, 7.12.1907, p.2; A.S.E. Monthly Report, September 1908, p.11 and March 1909, p.9; on the Natal Railway Men's Association see Natalian, 5.7.1907, p.9, biography of Connolly.

132. South Africa Act, 1909, section 56.

CHAPTER II

BRITISH SOUTH AFRICA TO 1900

The appearance of a Labour candidate at the polling booth to-day is a sign of the times. It heralds a movement which, if rightly led, may work great good in South Africa. There is a separate Labour Party in most civilized countries but this. Labour has often decided the fate of ministries in Australia. In America, whose gigantic Trusts are making it anything but the free country in fact that it is in name, Labour politicians are taking a violent and almost anarchist turn. ...it is highly improbable, in a country with our marvellous mineral treasures and consequent sharp class distinctions, that labour will not put forth sooner or later its separate Parliamentary representation.

South African News in 1899.¹

CAPE COLONY

The Cape Colony's first labour town councillor and M.L.A. were elected in 1909 and 1914 only, even though Britain had sanctioned municipal board elections in Cape Town as early as 1836, representative government in 1853 and responsible government in 1872. Only the rural O.F.S. moved more slowly. The inadequate payment of parliamentarians and weakness of the trade unions, which were mostly in their teething stage before 1900, certainly militated against the appearance of labour candidates. Moreover, railwaymen were not allowed by government regulation to join political associations.²

Attempts at labour organisation in Cape Town were first made in the 1840's and 1850's. Two short-lived trade unions were formed in the printing industry; workers were sufficiently

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1. 16.5.1899, p.3, editorial. The editor was then Albert Cartwright who became parliamentary correspondent in the House of Commons for the British Labour Party's Daily Citizen in 1912 - Transvaal Leader, 2.11.1912, p.5, "Labour Topics".
 2. Transvaal Leader, 29.1.1907, p.7. statement by Lord Elgin, the British Colonial Secretary.

aroused in 1850 to demonstrate against unemployment and starvation caused by the closing of shops during the anti-convict agitation led by John Fairbairn; and in 1859 the Weekly Magazine, a labour paper, appeared for about nine months.³

However, solid labour organisation was only established after the introduction of the railway and the discovery of diamonds in Griqualand West had greatly expanded the industrial activity of the Cape. In 1881, for example, the first branch of the A.S. of C. & J. in South Africa was founded in Cape Town.⁴

1. Cape Town

By 1894 Cape Town craft unions were sufficiently advanced to launch a T. & L.C., in the formation of which Harry Sampson, one of the S.A.L.P.'s principal architects, played a prominent part.⁵ It could not have survived long, for the plasterers', masons', carpenters' and plumbers' trade unions joined forces to found the Cape Town District T. & L.C. on 28 August 1899. After the outbreak of the Anglo-Boer War many workers saw active service and the Council ceased to meet from February 1900 to May 1902.⁶

The question of nominating labour candidates was certainly mooted in the 1890's. T. J. O'Reilly seemed to be a sort of working man's champion in the Cape Legislative Assembly and certainly stood by labour principles when he opposed the

3. S. A. Rochlin, "Cameos of South African Workers' History", Saamtrek, 6.2.1953; Trade Union Council of South Africa, South Africa's Greatest Bastion of Trade Unionism; I. L. Walker and B. Weinbren, 2 000 Casualties, p.2, quoting Rochlin.

4. Gitsham and Trembath, Labour Organisation in South Africa, p.15.

5. Ibid, p.174; Standard & Diggers' News, 12.5.1895, p.6.

6. S. A. News, 4.3.1905, p.15, "Labour Notes", gives a history of the T. & L.C.

raising of the franchise qualifications in 1892, maintaining that no man should be deprived of the vote unless he was under age.⁷ In March 1898 he stood unsuccessfully in the West Circle elections of the Legislative Council and claimed to be the working-man's candidate, much to the derision of the Owl and the S. A. Review, which both deplored his splitting of the anti-Afrikaner Bond ticket.⁸ O'Reilly, who was a prominent **commercial** leader and ex-Mayor of Cape Town, probably had little in common with the working class beyond a patronising interest in its welfare.⁹

About this time the formation of a working-men's political association was being considered.¹⁰ The South African Typographical Journal, whose editor was Fred Knapp, secretary of the Cape Town branch of the S.A.T.U., was obviously in favour as it declared that the backbone of unionism was Labour representation in parliament and advised its readers to follow the example of Australian workers concerning participation in politics.¹¹

After some initial preparation, the constitution of the South African Working Men's Progressive Union was approved on 6 May 1898 at a meeting attended by sixteen whites and one Malay. O'Reilly was elected president and its other officers

7. J. L. McCracken, The Cape Parliament, p.95.

8. Owl, 8.1.1898, pp.20-1; 12.3.1898, p.171; 19.3.1898, p.178; S. A. Review, 25.3.1898, pp.1 & 11. See also Rand Daily Mail, 4.7.1905, p.5, "Labour Notes".

9. For biographical details see Men of the Times; Old Colonists of the Cape and Orange River Colony, p.331; and African Monthly, April 1908, p.529.

10. S. A. Review, 25.3.1898, p.1.

11. May 1898, editorial. On Knapp see A. J. Downes, Printers' Saga, p.45.

included A. W. Ross, treasurer of the Cape Town branch of the S.A.T.U., I. Purcell, who became a Labour M.L.A. in 1920, and J. Carver, who was a Labour town councillor in 1918. However, few bona fide workers seem to have attended this meeting, for a German carpenter denounced the Union as "dem humbug" because in his own country working-men did not have such "vite" hands as those present. But the Union cannot be dismissed as a bogus labour organisation as the South African Review insisted on doing.¹²

Carver maintained that the Union's aim was to bind the various trades together and that the workers wanted a Labour Party that would pander neither to the Progressive nor Bond parties.¹³ Yet when the Union decided to contest the Cape Town Legislative Assembly by-election held on 16 May 1899, its first choice was O'Reilly and second was apparently Ohlsson, a prominent local capitalist, both of whom declined to stand.¹⁴ Finally, Thomas Harris, the chairman of the Union, accepted nomination. He, too, did not seem to have any labour credentials. Born in Gloucestershire, he had lived in several colonies of the British Empire before arriving in South Africa in 1881 where he established himself as an auctioneer and estate agent and became a prolific writer to the press.¹⁵

Harris's speeches called for social welfare measures such as an eight hours day, removal of duties on foods, an employers' liability act and taxation reform. "The working

12. S. A. Review, 13.5.1898, p.4. See also 25.3.1898, p.1; 29.4.1898, p.4; 6.5.1898, p.4; 2.6.1898, p.15; 29.11.1901, p.9.

13. S. A. News, 15.5.1899, p.5.

14. On O'Reilly see ibid., 15.5.1899, p.5; on Ohlsson see S. A. Review, 28.4.1899, p.4 and 2.6.1899, p.5.

15. Obituaries in Transvaal Leader, 24.7.1906, p.9 and South Africa, 18.8.1906, p.501; S. A. News, 22.8.1899, p.3, advertisement.

classes were slaves to all intents and purposes to an iniquitous class legislation and were in the thralldom of the capitalist and monopolist", he declared.¹⁶ Nevertheless, he fought this election not as a labour candidate but as an independent Progressive just as he was to do in the 1904 general election.¹⁷ The South African News welcomed him, however, as a pioneer of labour representation in South Africa.¹⁸ Harris was soundly defeated by his Progressive opponent, but still obtained an encouraging twenty-five per cent. of the poll.¹⁹

Although the South African Working Men's Progressive Union seemed to peter out after the by-election, some of its leaders retained the public's attention. Harris assisted an unemployed agitation and organised a public meeting on 26 August 1899 which demanded a more equitable distribution of taxation, a half-holiday bill, a shop-assistants bill, a labour bureau, and alteration to the Municipal Amendment Bill whereby Cape Town would be divided into wards, polling hours extended from eight in the morning to eight in the evening and the vote extended to all men of age.²⁰ J. Bartlett stood unsuccessfully for the city council and I. Purcell obtained a very poor vote in the October divisional council elections.²¹

Cape Town's white workers do not seem to have supported

16. S. A. News, 4.5.1899, p.4. See also 12.5.1899, p.8.
17. Ibid., 4.5.1899, p.4; on the 1904 contest see Appendix C, I, 2 below.
18. S. A. News, 16.5.1899, p.3, editorial.
19. J. D. Cartwright 1862
T. Harris 561 - S. A. News, 18.5.1899, p.5.
20. On the Union's lack of activity see S. A. Review, 2.6.1899, p.5; 23.6.1899, p.6; 21.7.1899, p.7. On Harris and the unemployed see S. A. Review, 23.6.1899, p.6, and on the public meeting see S. A. News, 21.8.1899, p.5; 26.8.1899, p.5; and 28.8.1899, p.7.
21. On Bartlett see S. A. News, 28.8.1899, p.7; on Purcell see S. A. Review, 17.11.1899, p.9. For committee of the Union see S. A. Review, 13.5.1898, p.4.

colour discrimination. When the Salt River railwaymen, for example, issued a manifesto in February 1885 stressing the need to organise against competition from cheap coloured workmen, their anger was directed against their employers, the Government, and not against their "Coloured brethren".²² In May 1899 the chairman of one of Harris's election meetings declared that the Working Men's Progressive Union favoured equal rights irrespective of colour and denied that it was trying to oust the coloured worker.²³

Equally significant was the spread of socialism to Cape Town where by 1899 at least, there was a socialist club.²⁴

Events before 1900 suggest that organised labour in Cape Town had not yet accepted the concept of an independent labour party, but, then, political parties were slow to emerge in the Cape Colony. In the 1898 general election the South African Party opposed the newly-formed Progressive Party for the first time.

2. Kimberley

Some idea of the political alignment of Kimberley's white workers can be obtained from a brief consideration of the industrial unrest in 1883 and 1884 caused by attempts to force Europeans to strip and be searched for illicit diamonds. Both in October 1883 and in April 1884 the workers struck; trade unions were started; crowded public meetings took place; the Diamond Fields Advertiser denounced the workers' leaders as "political firebrands ... fanning the flame of discontent" and it was in turn boycotted by organised labour;

22. S. A. Rochlin, "Cameos of South African Workers' History", Saamtrek, 21.8.1953.

23. S. A. News, 15.5.1899, p.5.

24. Standard & Diggers' News, 4.9.1899, p.3.

the strike which commenced on 24 April 1884 involved 1 000 white workers and led to the dramatic shooting of six or seven of them by mine guards; and a remarkable demonstration of labour solidarity was shown at the funeral which was attended by 1 500 persons.²⁵

Despite the strained relations between capital and labour, no move towards labour political representation appears to have been made. This was probably because the mine-owners withdrew their demand for stripping of whites and, secondly, because Kimberley's parliamentary representatives seemed to side with the white workers. James Brown, president of the Artisans' and Engine-Drivers' Protection Association, Dutoitspan no.1 branch, declared, indeed, on 23 April 1884:

If Parliament does not take notice of these grievances the sooner the government is out of power the better. The working men of the Diamond Fields are an important class, and able to return any members they like. We all know those gentlemen who are elected have our interests at heart, and as they promised to support a Bill in our behalf we can't expect them to do any more.²⁶

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25. Gitsham and Trembath, Labour Organisation in South Africa, p.24; Walker and Weinbren, 2 000 Casualties, p.3 ff; G. V. Doxey, The Industrial Colour Bar in South Africa, p.27 ff.; and Diamond Fields Advertiser, April and beginning of May 1884. For quotation see 12.4.1884, p.3, editorial; on the boycott see statement by Hans Olsen in 25.4.1884, p.3; on the fatalities see especially 30.4.1884, p.3; 1.5.1884, p.2 and 5.5.1884, p.3; and on the funeral and inquest see 1.5.1884, p.3, and 7.5.1884, respectively.
26. Diamond Fields Advertiser, 24.4.1884, p.3.

The attempted application of the humiliating searching procedure to whites, also showed that organised labour was becoming racially prejudiced in its attitude towards natives. "They want to strip you", stated a Mr. Eagleston, chairman of the Dutoitspan and Bultfontein Overseers Association, "the same as a Kafir or a common felon".²⁷

The amalgamation of the diamond mining companies, which culminated in the take over by De Beers Consolidated in March 1889, was not accompanied by any strengthening of labour organisation. As a result De Beers was able to acquire virtually complete control over Kimberley as has already been described.²⁸ "Proceedings at parliamentary elections", wrote F. R. Statham, "showed too plainly that the Company would tolerate nothing short of unconditional submission."²⁹ Nevertheless, in the early 1890's there were still signs of independence which even Statham concedes in a brilliant skit on Kimberley's politics in his Mr. Magnus. The workers have their champion, and the independent parliamentary candidate has strong support, but Plowman Edwards (Gardner Williams, general manager of De Beers) gives a grave warning to free thinking employees:

Every employee of theirs was free to vote as he pleased; that had always been the policy of the company; only if he voted against his own interest and against the interest of the company, which was the same thing, he could not expect the company to take an interest in his own welfare, or to keep him in work when business was slack.³⁰

27. Ibid.; See also 12.4.1884, p.8, statement by a Mr. Snipe, one of the miners' leaders.

28. See pp.27-9 above.

29. My Life's Record, p.165. The naive explanation by F. J. Grobler, "Die Invloed van Geskoolde Blanke Arbeid", pp. 137 & 139, **that the absence of labour organisation was due to De Beers's benevolence does not accord with eye-witness accounts.**

30. Mr. Magnus, ch.VI and p.84 for the quotation.

In 1891 some white workers were inspired by the American Knights of Labor, which reached its peak in 1886 when it had three-quarters of a million members, and started a secret labour organisation with the same name in Kimberley. It strongly attacked Rhodes, monopoly capital and cheap labour; and had as one of its aims the direct representation of labour in parliament.³¹ Rhodes retorted that the Knights were "Knights of Idleness" who preferred to agitate rather than to work.³²

In the Legislative Assembly by-election for the Kimberley constituency held on 16 December 1892, the president of the Knights of Labour, John Law, strongly supported the candidature of J. S. Cowie, who had been mayor of Beaconsfield and called himself the working-men's candidate.³³ The Independent actually referred to Cowie's coming forward on the shoulders of the Knights of Labour such as they were.³⁴ In his opposition to the raising of the franchise qualifications he was certainly in agreement with labour thinking, but he may have upset some Knights by his marked sympathy for non-whites who contributed about a third of his votes; but in his abuse of De Beers and the Rhodes government he had the full backing of the Knights.³⁵ Law, who was also highly critical of Rhodes, had

31. H. J. and R. E. Simons, Class and Colour in South Africa, 1850-1950, p.44. On the American Knights of Labour see H. S. Commager (ed.), Documents of American History, doc. no.298.

32. F. J. Grobler, "Die Invloed van Geskoolde Blanke Arbeid", p.138.

33. On Law's support see Independent, 10.12.1892; on Cowie as ex-mayor see Diamond Fields Advertiser, 16.12.1892, p.2; and as working-men's candidate see Independent, 10. & 16.12.1892.

34. 7.12.1892, editorial.

35. On his attitude to the franchise and to non-whites see Independent, 17.12.1892; Diamond Fields Advertiser, 10, 14, 15 & 16.12.1892; on composition of his vote and reaction of the Knights see Independent, 19.12.1892, editorial, which quotes letter from "Knight of Labour" to the Diamond Fields Advertiser; and on his opposition to De Beers and Rhodes see Independent, 10 & 12.12.1892.

little confidence in the government from which they had received scant treatment when they petitioned parliament for redress of grievances. When his organisation stood up for their rights, Law added, its members were stigmatised as "I.D.B.'s".³⁶

Cowie was badly defeated in the election by Richard Solomon who was then employed by De Beers.³⁷ Afterwards the Knights of Labour seem to have disintegrated and organised labour remained submissive for over a decade.³⁸

3. Port Elizabeth

The only genuine labour candidate in the Cape Colony before 1900 seems to have been William T. Hammond who stood for Port Elizabeth in the 1898 general election. He was apparently a well-educated commercial traveller who had been the first to take up the cause of Port Elizabeth railwaymen and other employees.³⁹ No evidence of trade union participation in his election campaign has been found and it was merely directed by a committee.⁴⁰

Hammond's labour allegiance is well-illustrated by his reply to his election requisition in which he declares:

my especial duty would be to voice the desires, demands and grievances of Labour, and to make certain that the voice of the real wealth produce[r]s, will be heard in Parliament.⁴¹

36. Independent, 10.12.1892.

37. R. Solomon 2 057
J. S. Cowie 468 - Independent 24.12.1892, p.4.

38. For the revival see J. F. Trembath's article, "Labour in Kimberley", Worker, 30.1.1909, press-cutting in Trembath Papers, I, p.70.

39. For his occupation see E. P. Herald, 18.8.1898; for other biographical details see obituary in Cape Daily Telegraph, 18.7.1905, back page; on his championing the workers' cause see E. P. Herald, 22.7.1898.

40. See advertisement signed by T. K. Jones in Locker-On, 22.7.1898, p.9.

41. See Appendix B, I, 1 below.

More proof was provided by William Smith, one of his chief supporters, when he told a public meeting

In England ... every class was represented in Parliament, from the agricultural labourer upwards. He remembered well the outcry against labour candidates for the House of Commons, but knew of no single instance where such candidate had belied the trust reposed in them. He referred to men like Thomas Burt, Joseph Arch, and others. Why should not the working men have direct representation in this Colony?⁴²

Lastly, P. Burke, another of his followers, maintained that Hammond's candidature was the first attempt in the Cape Colony to put a working man into Parliament.⁴³

The policies advocated by all four candidates in the Port Elizabeth constituency were in many demands similar.⁴⁴ As urban nominations they all called for a Redistribution Bill concerning constituency division and for cheaper food. But the Progressives, E. H. Walton and J. Wynne, stressed their opposition to republicanism and support for Rhodes's work in the North, whereas Hammond concentrated more on bread and butter issues. Although he regarded Imperial growth as a source of pride, he was more concerned with work conditions in Port Elizabeth than with Sir Charles Warren's expeditions or with the gateway to the North. In addition, he hoped Boer and Briton could "possess the land in brotherhood".⁴⁵

The bread and butter reforms advocated by the labour candidate included termination of contract and convict labour, careful fostering of local industries, an employers' liability act, improvement in conditions of work on the railways and the

42. Looker-On, 29.7.1898, p.4.

43. Ibid., 19.7.1898, p.4.

44. Looker-On, 22.7.1898, pp.4, 8 & 9, published the replies to the election requisitions of the four candidates; Hammond's reply is reproduced in Appendix B, I, 1 below.

45. Looker-On, 29.7.1898, p.4.

collection by the government of "substantial revenue" from diamonds.⁴⁶ The labour orientation of these demands is clear. Even though Hammond was described as a socialist after his death in 1905, socialist doctrine does not seem to have been included in his 1898 programme.⁴⁷

The Eastern Province Herald was extremely hostile towards Hammond and accused him of being an extremist and pro-Boer.

It [his speech] was rampant in the extreme. He attacked anybody and everybody, anything and everything. However he had the greatest respect for the Dutch. They would not know they were Dutch in dealing with them at any ordinary time. It was only when there was a political crisis.⁴⁸

Although the weekly Port Elizabeth newspaper, Looker-On, was more sympathetic, it also criticised him for his brotherly attitude towards the Boer.⁴⁹ This racial bogey was to become one of the main obstacles to labour electoral success throughout South Africa as voters divided not on class differences but on blood ties.

When polling took place on 18 August the two Progressive candidates were returned easily. Hammond made no impact as he received 148 votes only, which was scarcely more than five per cent. of the victors' poll.⁵⁰ Nevertheless, he did not appear disheartened and drew comfort in his pioneering rôle in the South African labour movement:

46. See Appendix, B, I, 1 below.

47. Cape Daily Telegraph, 18.7.1905, back page, obituary.

48. 23.7.1898.

49. 29.7.1898, p.6, column entitled, "Straight from the Shoulder".

50. See Appendix C, I, 1 below.

I am not disappointed...it is what I expected it to be and I feel proud of it. I remember in England when the Labour candidates came forward they got far fewer number of votes than I secured now.... I feel I have in the contest lighted a fire in South Africa which will burn brighter as time rolls on, and, to use an Oriental figure, a little stone out of the mountain.⁵¹

In the following year the Increased Representation Act gave Port Elizabeth two additional seats in the Legislative Assembly. In the ensuing election on 14 April no labour candidate was sufficiently bold to stand. Instead, Hammond actually supported James Searle, one of the successful Progressive nominations.⁵² During the same year Port Elizabeth trade unions considered forming a Workmen's Political Association, but whether anything materialised is not known.⁵³

NATAL

It is possible that the British immigrants who settled in Natal from the middle of the nineteenth century brought contemporary labour ideas. However, much painstaking research beyond the terms of this study will be required to establish whether Chartism, "new model" trade unionism and socialism made any impact in the early years of Natal. Some of the answers might be obtained by following the pattern of voting of the white workers in the first few elections after 1856 when the majority of the members of the Legislative Council were elected under a fairly wide franchise.

Research done so far dates the start of Natal labour organisation to the 1880's, coinciding with the expansion of industrial activity. The railway extended to Pietermaritzburg

51. E. P. Herald, 20.8.1898.

52. Ibid., 20.3.1899. For the result see 15.4.1899.

53. A. J. Downes, Printers' Saga, p.88.

in 1880 and was gradually continued to the Transvaal border which it reached in 1891. Meanwhile the Witwatersrand gold discoveries had greatly stimulated Natal trade.

In 1882 a branch of the A.S. of C. & J. was opened in Durban; in 1888 the Typographical Society of Natal was founded and was soon operating both in Durban and Pietermaritzburg; and not long afterwards a branch of the A.S.E. was established in Durban.⁵⁴ At least by 1897 Durban trade unions started a trades council which seems to have been re-formed towards the middle of 1899. A short-lived Natal Trades Council existed for several months after it was started in November 1892.⁵⁵

The appearance of Labour candidates at the polls was undoubtedly hastened by the continued immigration of Indians who had nearly outnumbered the Europeans by 1885. Cheap indentured Indian labour was first imported in 1860 to meet the labour requirements of Natal's sugar planters and was heavily subsidised by the Government from 1874. However, friction seemed to arise only from the 1880's when white workers and small traders encountered a new generation of Indians who knew not the indenture shackles. In addition, large numbers of free Indians began to immigrate to Natal and were soon undercutting the small traders and seemed to threaten the livelihood of the white workers.⁵⁶ By about 1883 or 1884 white workers, handicraftsmen and small traders were actively opposing Indian immigration and were being assisted by the Natal Advertiser.⁵⁷

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54. On the A.S. of C. & J. and the Typographical Society see H. Ringrose, Trade Unions in Natal, pp.4-5; on the A.S.E. see A.S.E. Monthly Report, February 1915, p.6, article by J. T. Bain.
55. On the 1897 council see Appendix B, II, 2 below or Natal Mercury, 6.12.1897, p.6; on that in 1899 see A. J. Downes Printers' Saga, p.99; on the Natal Trades Council see F. J. Grobler, "Die Invloed van Geskoolde Blanke Arbeid", pp.107-108.
56. L. M. Thompson, "Indian Immigration into Natal (1860-1872)", Archives Year Book for South African History, 1952, II, pp.69-71; M. Palmer, The History of the Indians in Natal, p.41 ff.
57. See C. T. Tyzack's remarks in Natal Mercury, 22.9.1890, p.3.

4. Natal Working Men's Association

The Natal W.M.A. was formed about the beginning of 1888. According to its president, M. J. Kerns, its members were moved by two main objects:

their right to be represented in the Legislative Council by a working man, and the right to express their opinions as to whether this should be a European or an Asiatic colony.

He added that the Association did not oppose indentured Indian labourers providing that they were imported at the expense of the sugar planters and that they were not allowed to settle in Natal on expiry of their indentures.⁵⁸

In May the W.M.A. decided to support the candidature of John Fyfe King in the Durban Borough by-election for the Legislative Council. He was a Durban town councillor and a gunsmith who had settled in Natal in the early 1870's and had established a rifle-works-cum-sports shop.⁵⁹ Of the three candidates in the by-election King was the most hostile towards Indians, declaring:

It was said at home that the coolies did all the work in the Colony, and that the white population was little better than a lot of Kafir drivers. A wrong idea had got abroad and it was for all true colonists to let the British public know that the coolie was not wanted here by the general community, but only one class wanted them.⁶⁰

58. Natal Mercury, 26.5.1888, p.3. On Kerns as president see 18.5.1888, supplement. For further anti-Indian views of the W.M.A. see, for example, 26.6.1888, p.3.

59. On support for King see Ibid., 11.5.1888, p.3; for biographical details see obituary in Times of Natal, 30.10.1899, p.4; as town councillor see Natal Mercury, 9.6.1888, p.4; as gunsmith see Durban Borough Voters' Roll in Natal Government Gazette, 10.7.1888, p.521 ff.; on the sports shop see advertisement in Natal Mercury, 3.10.1890, p.1.

60. Natal Mercury, 1.6.1888, p.3.

On another occasion he accused Indians of causing a rise in land prices by 'sticking on the fertile and beautiful Natal soil like so many "fat ticks".⁶¹ Coinciding with his election campaign the W.M.A. held well-attended and successful public meetings on the Indian question some of which were addressed by prominent Natal politicians.⁶²

Although the Indian issue was the central theme of his campaign King stressed the right of working men to direct representation, advocated the grant of responsible government to Natal and supported the fostering of local industries.⁶³ The Labour candidature did not receive the same scathing criticism from capitalist organs and political leaders as occurred in other parts of South Africa. Henry Binns, later prime minister of Natal, even congratulated the W.M.A.'s on its activities and agreed that every class had the right to representation in the Legislative Council.⁶⁴

King was certainly not a member of the working class even though he may once have been. The great pride with which he termed himself a working man was not justified.⁶⁵ Nor were his leading supporters horny-handed toilers, except for C. T. Tyzack, who was a carpenter. The occupations of M. J. Kerns, chairman of his election committee, and L. Baumann and G. Lacombe, who headed his election requisition, were journalist, baker and chemist, respectively.⁶⁶ Nevertheless, the Natal Mercury was probably accurate when it described the movement

61. Ibid., 18.5.1888, supplement.

62. Ibid., 18.5.1888, supplement; 19.5.1888, p.3; 30.5.1888, supplement; 2.6.1888, p.4.

63. Ibid., 29.5.1888, p.3; 30.5.1888; 1.6.1888, p.3.

64. Ibid., 18.5.1888, supplement. For sympathetic attitude of the Natal Mercury, see, for example, 7.6.1888, p.2, editorial.

65. See, for example, ibid., 1.6.1888, p.3, speech by King. See also 2.10.1890, p.3, in which Harry Escombe chides King for his claim that he was just a working man.

66. Durban Borough Voters' Roll in Natal Government Gazette, 10.7.1888, p.521 ff.

behind King as the "first serious effort made by our resident handicraftsmen ... to secure a spokesman".⁶⁷ Indeed, when polling took place on the 4 and 5 June King obtained a spurt of support during the lunch hour when the railway and harbour employees voted.⁶⁸

By a small margin of four votes the Labour candidate was elected.⁶⁹ The Natal Mercury correctly attributed his victory to the attractiveness of his anti-Indian views at a time when European labour was demanding "legislative protection from alien competition".⁷⁰ His return was not made easier by the prevailing system of open voting and "treating" of electors by his main opponent, C. Dacomb.⁷¹

The W. M. A. continued its activities in Durban after the by-election and one of its members contested the municipal elections on 1 August 1888.⁷² Meanwhile a W.M.A. was founded in Pietermaritzburg with William Leathern, an agent by occupation, as its first president. King hoped that it would move forward like its Durban counterpart and return its own representative at the next Legislative Council elections.⁷³

67. Natal Mercury, 7.6.1888, p.2, editorial.

68. Ibid., 6.6.1888, p.3.

69. J. F. King 525; C. Dacomb 521; J. R. Saunders 66 - ibid., 6.6.1888, p.3.

70. Ibid., 7.6.1888, p.2, editorial.

71. Ibid.

72. Ibid., 26.6.1888, p.3; 10.7.1888, p.3; 1.8.1888, p.3; 2.8.1888, p.3.

73. Ibid., 10.5.1888, p.3; for King's hope see 6.6.1888, p.3; for Leathern's occupation see Pietermaritzburg City and Borough Voters' Roll in Natal Government Gazette, 10.7.1888, p.515.

5. Natal Labour League

Labour began to consider its nominations for the general election for the elective members of the Legislative Council well in advance. Towards the beginning of July 1890, M. J. Kerns, still president of the W.M.A. in Durban and employed by the Weekly News, declined nomination because he could not afford the time; The W.M.A. seems to have directed its attention instead to J. F. King and two others.⁷⁴ Soon afterwards King's old election committee and a few extra persons held several meetings and decided to bring forward King and C. T. Tyzack in the Durban Borough division.⁷⁵ Apparently there was some controversy whether the W.M.A. still functioned despite Kerns's denial that it was defunct.⁷⁶

The confused situation was, however, soon resolved. On 31 July a meeting of about thirty "working men" decided to dissolve the W.M.A., such as it then was, since its constitution was no longer suitable. In its place the meeting started a labour league "on a more pronounced basis, stern opposition to Asiatics being a fundamental principle". Because the party favouring the grant of responsible government, called either the Forward or Reform Party, was not prepared to give pledges on the Asiatic question the gathering agreed on three independent labour candidates. So enthusiastic was this initial meeting that it intended to extend the League's activities beyond Durban.⁷⁷

Two days afterwards the articles of association of the Natal Labour League were approved at a well-attended public meeting in Durban. Their primary concern was for the welfare

74. On Kerns see Natal Mercury, 17.7.1890, p.4; on the proposed nominations see 7.7.1890, p.3.

75. Ibid., 16, 17, 18 & 21.7.1890, pp.3,4,3,3, respectively.

76. Ibid., 21.7.1890, p.3.

77. Ibid., 2.8.1890, p.3.

of the existing white labour force whose prosperity could be greatly enhanced by developing the economic resources of Natal and by curtailing Indian immigration.⁷⁸ As with the W.M.A., the raison d'être of the League was hostility towards the growing Indian population. Speeches by the Labour leaders at this time clearly illustrate this.

King maintained that the Government was swayed by the planters' interest and was under the thumb of the Indian Immigration Board. When he brought the "coolie question" before the Legislative Council his action was virtually ignored.⁷⁹ C. T. Tyzack, president of the League, declared:

the League had no desire to make capital out of the cholera scare, but rather by wise legislation, and a little more moral pressure to remedy as much as possible the evils resulting from the swamping of the colony by an alien race - a race which copied and practised all the vices of the European, but rejected the virtues. Our children would suffer more from contact with such a degraded race than we should.... Our natives are being rapidly demoralised, and trade was being taken from us.⁸⁰

H. G. Banwell, chairman of the Natal Typographical Society, maintained that "Indian barnacles were sucking the lifeblood of the country, and Natal seemed likely to become as Mauritius had become - all through the cursed policy of the British Government".⁸¹ R. Patrick, secretary of the Durban branch of the same society, also showed strong racial prejudice towards Natal Indians.⁸² Obviously these two trade union leaders saw no identity of interest with their Indian co-workers.

78. On the meeting see ibid., 4.8.1890, p.3; for the articles of association see Appendix A, I below.

79. Natal Mercury, 4.8.1890, p.3.

80. Ibid., 1.9.1890, p.3. See also his manifesto in 17.9.1890, p.3.

81. Ibid., 4.8.1890, p.3. On Banwell's background see A. J. Downes, Printers' Saga, p.11 ff.

82. Letter from Patrick in Natal Mercury, 3.10.1890, supplement. On Patrick's background see A. J. Downes, Printers' Saga, p.11 ff.

On 30 August the League decided to nominate J. F. King and C. T. Tyzack as its official candidates in the Durban Borough elections for the Legislative Council to be held on 6 October. If any of the League's followers wished to exercise their third vote they were advised to give it to Sir John Robinson, owner of the Natal Mercury, who identified himself with the workers to a greater extent than the other candidates of the Forward Party.⁸³

Soon afterwards a major split occurred in the ranks of the League. For allying themselves with another party, J. Hyde Wordingham, secretary of the League, and M. J. Kerns were expelled from membership. Both were employees of the Weekly News and had supported the anti-responsible government party. The League denied that any of its members were on the Grand Committee of the Reform Party as Wordingham claimed, and seemingly valued its independence.⁸⁴ Even though the League regarded Robinson's candidature sympathetically, Kerns's accusation that it consisted only of Natal Mercury employees does not seem justified.⁸⁵ Its committee in September was certainly more representative of the working-class than the old W.M.A. Its president, C. T. Tyzack, was a carpenter, its vice-president was a clerk, one committee member was a compositor and another was a bootmaker, but the third committee member's occupation is not known.⁸⁶ Backbiting and labour disunity was to become a feature of labour organisation in South Africa before 1910.

83. Natal Mercury, 1.9.1890, p.3.

84. On the expulsions see ibid., 8.9.1890, p.3; on Kerns's attendance at an anti-responsible government meeting see 16.8.1890, supplement; for Wordingham's claim and comments on his expulsion and for the League's reply see 9.9.1890, p.3.

85. Natal Mercury, 2.10.1890, p.3.

86. For office-bearers see League's correspondence in ibid., 9.9.1890, p.3; for occupations, except that of Hopson, see Durban Borough Voters' Roll in Natal Government Gazette, 15.7.1890, p.927 ff.

Meanwhile the Reform Party nominated its ticket of three for the Borough contest: Sir John Robinson, Harry Escombe and B. W. Greenacre.⁸⁷ It was, however, anxious to include King in its ticket and to secure the withdrawal of Tyzack's candidature.⁸⁸

At first Tyzack seemed determined to continue and issued a thoughtful manifesto affirming his support for responsible government, opposition to Indian immigration and concern for the working-class. He was to some extent class conscious, for his manifesto declared, for instance:

The working men of Durban have much need to be reminded that the action of capitalists in the past and the legislation of the Colony, has ever been selfishly directed towards their own interests. Now that men are awakening to the fact, it is the old story - dust is thrown in the eyes of the public, and the blame that ought to be divided is all laid at the door of the Government.⁸⁹

Tyzack intended writing a second manifesto devoted solely to the industrial situation, but before this materialised he changed his mind about standing and persuaded the League to accept his withdrawal.

He felt that two Labour candidates might jeopardise King's chances. Moreover, Indian voters had decided to plump for the anti-responsible government nominees and forced the League to throw its weight behind the Forward Party.⁹⁰ Greenacre retired from the contest and King joined the Forward Party's ticket of three. For King this was a perfectly logical step as he had been a member of the Natal Political Reform Association since its formation in Pietermaritzburg

87. Natal Mercury, 19.8.1890, p.3.

88. Ibid., 8.9.1890, p.3; 9.9.1890, p.5.

89. Ibid., 17.9.1890, p.3.

90. Ibid., 15.9.1890, p.3; 22.9.1890, p.3; 3.10.1890, supplement, letter from R. Patrick.

in July 1890 by the Natal M.L.C.'s in favour of responsible government.⁹¹ All three candidates of the Forward Party were returned easily to the Legislative Council in Durban's first secret ballot election.⁹²

In Pietermaritzburg the W.M.A. survived into 1890 and supported those candidates in favour of constitutional change without nominating its own men. Its president was still W. Leathern.⁹³

6. J. F. King and Elections, 1892-1897

Absence of reference to the Natal Labour League after 1890 suggests that it was short-lived. No similar organisation was formed in the general election held in September 1892 which was fought on the Constitution Amendment Bill. Both King and Tyzack were strongly identified with the Forward Party whose three candidates, including the former, were returned unopposed in the Durban Borough division.⁹⁴

Towards the end of November a Natal Trades Council was founded and soon extended its objects to include political action. It hoped to promote the election of parliamentary representatives sympathetic towards its ideals and even to secure the return of trade unionists. Its main legislative demands seem to have been for an eight hours working day, fixing of minimum wages and abolition of state assisted immigration. However, it had a short existence, for it did not participate in Natal's first elections for the Legislative

91. Natal Mercury, 18.7.1890, p.3. King became a member of the Reform Association started in Durban on 27 October 1890 - 29.10.1890, p.3.

92. Escombe 848) Robarts 486
King 808) elected Payne 450
Robinson 796) - ibid., 7.10.1890, p.3.

93. Ibid., 7.8.1890, p.3; 20.8.1890, p.3, letter from Tyzack; 9.10.1890, p.3.

94. Natal Mercury, 7.9.1892, supplement.

Assembly in September 1893.⁹⁵

With the achievement of responsible government in 1893 the overriding constitutional issue was settled. There seemed therefore no reason why the number of Labour candidates should be limited. At first the Labour interests seemed content with King's nomination for one of the four seats in the Durban Borough constituency, leaving the remaining vacancies for the well-known ex-M.L.C.'s, Sir John Robinson, Harry Escombe and B. W. Greenacre. But the Chamber of Commerce apparently brought forward J. W. Leuchars with the avowed intention of ousting King. Labour retaliated by nominating J. F. Ferguson, a Durban town councillor and jeweller.⁹⁶

It seems unlikely that any specific labour organisation more than an election committee backed the candidature of King and Ferguson. Newspaper reports refer variously to meetings of working men, to the "Labour Representative Committee", the "labour party" and the "Labour organisation."⁹⁷ Nor does analysis of the election requisitions of these two candidates reveal much support by likely trade unionists; instead, the leading signatories seem to be mainly small businessmen or handicraftsmen such as watchmakers, jewellers, saddlers and butchers.⁹⁸

The published programme of the Labour candidates was distinctly orientated towards the interests of white labour in Natal. It opposed, for example, Indian immigration and labour,

95. F. J. Grobler, "Die Invloed van Geskoolde Blanke Arbeid", pp.107-108. Grobler does not consider its demise and inaccurately assumes it was behind the Labour candidates in 1893.
96. Natal Mercury, 1.8.1893, p.3, letter from J. King, junior.
97. Ibid., and 28.8.1893, p.3; 4.9.1893, p.3; 14.9.1893, p.3.
98. For election requisitions see ibid., 5.9.1893, p.3; for occupations, when given, see Durban Borough Voters' Roll in Natal Government Gazette, 11.7.1893, p.703 ff.

government-assisted European immigration and state-aided training of Natives in skilled trades. Other demands affecting the workers included legal recognition of trade unions, an Employers' Liability Act, cheaper elementary education and the removal of political disabilities placed upon government employees.⁹⁹

Meanwhile in Pietermaritzburg F. S. Tatham, a lawyer, was being successfully supported by the white workers. They were chiefly concerned about Indian immigration and state-aided technical education of Natives. There was then in Pietermaritzburg a state-subsidised institute teaching Natives printing, boot-making and carpentry which sold its products in competition with workshops which received no subsidy.¹⁰⁰

When polling took place on 14 September in the Durban Borough constituency the Labour candidates were soundly beaten despite nearly two months of election campaigning.¹ Their similar performance suggests a solid corps of followers, but not nearly enough to return a Labour representative without a cumulative voting system.

King's defeat after three successful candidatures for the Legislative Council was not a great blow to the so-called "labour party" in Durban. He was an ineffective and limited politician whose anti-Indian attitude seemed responsible for his election victories.² Irrespective of his presence, the Natal parliament was soon passing discriminatory legislation against the Indians. In 1894, for example, the government subsidy for Indian immigration was withdrawn; in 1895 a head tax was imposed on emancipated Indians; in 1896 Indians were

99. See Appendix B, II, 1 below.

100. Natal Mercury, 21.11.1902, p.8, Tatham's speech to the Durban Trades Council on 20.11.1902.

1. For statistics see Appendix C, II, 1 below.

2. On his limitations see Natal Mercury, 15.9.1897, pp.3 & 7 and 30.10.1899, p.5; Transvaal Critic, 10.9.1897, p.343 and 29.10.1897, p.577.

prevented from acquiring the franchise; and in 1897 Indian immigration started to be restricted.

Considering that anti-Indian protests reached their peak in 1897 in Durban, it was perhaps not surprising that King should oust one of the Demonstration Committee Ticket of four and be returned as M.L.A. for the Borough in the general election of the same year.³ He remained as strongly anti-Asiatic as before and wanted to see "Sammy" out of the country and property sales to Indians stopped.⁴ Although he still revelled in calling himself a labour candidate standing on the labour platform, he was not backed by organised labour. Study of his election requisition again reveals the virtual absence of the trade union element and presence of lower middle class and professional men.⁵

The Durban Trades Council submitted its own platform, which concentrated on regulations for government contracts and factories and wanted trade unions legalised, to the five Borough candidates. Since all supported it, the Council resolved not to recommend any individual candidate. Its secretary, Isaac Wratten, actually maintained that the workers had little to do with King's election and denied that he represented them. "Misrepresent", he stated, was nearer the truth.⁶

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3. Escombe 1 138) Findlay 527
 Evans 764) elected
 Wylie 633)
 King 600) - Natal Mercury, 27.9.1897, p.5.
 On the anti-Indian demonstrations in 1897 see M. Palmer,
 History of the Indians in Natal, p.59 ff.
4. Natal Mercury, 14.9.1897, p.6; 23.9.1897, p.6; 25.9.1897,
 p.7.
5. Compare ibid., 15.9.1897, p.2, King's election requisition with Durban Borough Voters' Roll in Natal Government Gazette, 13.7.1897, p.1017 ff.
6. Natal Mercury, 26.1.1898, p.6, letters from Wratten and "A Member of the Council". For the platform see Appendix B, II, 2.

7. Natal Progressive League

Unlike the W.M.A. and the Natal Labour League, which were merely products of anti-Indian fervour, the Natal Progressive League, (the N.P.L.), made an enduring impact on the political labour movement in South Africa. Not only did it influence the Labour programme, but it also included amongst its members several of the future leaders of the Natal and South African Labour Parties.

The N.P.L. was founded in Durban towards the end of 1897 to propagate the ideas of the great American land reformer, Henry George, and had therefore the following objects:

- (a) to secure an equitable and rational system of land tenure, in harmony with the natural law, that the use of land is the essential birthright of man;
- (b) the abolition of all taxes upon labour, and the products of labour, and the earnings of labour;
- (c) the gradual increase in the taxation upon land values until the whole value of land is taken in taxation for public purposes.⁷

Its main promotor was probably Henry Ancketill, former organising-secretary of the English Land Restoration League and a personal friend of Henry George himself. Ancketill, who was a great grand nephew of Lord Castlereagh and son of the Deputy-Lieutenant of Ireland, had trained in holy orders before his arrival in Durban in 1896. Soon after George's death in October 1897 he published a tribute to his life's work in pamphlet form.⁸

7. Natal Mercury, 24.11.1899, p.7 or Torch, October 1899, p.6. For inception of the N.P.L. see its secretary's first and second annual reports in Natal Mercury, 26.11.1898, p.9, and 24.11.1899, p.7, respectively.

8. Natal Mercury, 13.12.1897, p.7; Natal Who's Who, 1906; Natal Mercury, 30.3.1910, p.9, letter from Ancketill.

Although the N.P.L. never attracted a large following and remained primarily a study circle and debating society until its demise during the Anglo-Boer War, it achieved a great deal. It successfully popularised Henry George's doctrines in the press; in its own well-produced monthly organ, Torch, which was started in November 1898 and ran for at least twelve issues; through distribution of its own and overseas pamphlets; and at public meetings.⁹ Taxation of land values was to become an important plank on many Labour platforms from 1902 onwards, including that of the S.A.L.P. in 1910.¹⁰

The N.P.L. added many additional names to the electoral rolls; strongly supported the movement for re-distribution of seats in the Legislative Assembly; assisted the Durban Trades Council in 1899 in persuading the Natal Parliament to allow government employees to participate in politics; and co-operated with the Anti-Customs Union Committee in organising a monster petition against the Customs Union Bill.¹¹

It promoted the Natal labour movement by distributing overseas socialist and labour literature and by discussing labour and socialist issues in Torch; by publishing its own pamphlets such as the one entitled, Political Disabilities of Government Servants; and by providing a political forum for future Labour leaders.¹²

9. Natal Mercury, 26.11.1898, p.9 and 24.11.1899, p.7, first and second annual reports of the N.P.L.'s secretary, respectively. For press debate on land taxation see, for example, 2.11.1898, p.9; 5.11.1898, p.11; 7.11.1898, p.6; 9.11.1898, p.6; 10.11.1898; 14.11.1898, p.6; and 15.11.1898, p.8. Issues of Torch can be found in the Durban Public Library. See Torch, February 1899, for list of literature kept at the N.P.L.'s depot.

10. See, for example, Appendices B, I, 5; B, II, 7 & 8; B, IV, 11; and B, V, 2, below.

11. Natal Mercury, 26.11.1898, p.9 and 24.11.1899, p.7, N.P.L.'s first and second annual reports, respectively. On the redistribution of seats see also Torch, February 1899, p.3.

12. For literature distributed by the N.P.L. see Torch, February 1899.

The chairman of the N.P.L.'s first annual general meeting was C. H. Haggar, subsequently one of the principal architects of the S.A.L.P. and its first general secretary.¹³ The entire committee of the N.P.L. elected in November 1899: H. Ancketill, A. L. Clark, H. Attersoll, G. Robertson and W. H. Pritchard, were active participants in Labour politics in the early twentieth century.¹⁴ Clark, who was the author of a pamphlet on land taxation printed in 1898, became one of the leaders of the Durban Clarion Fellowship, the Durban S.D.F. and the Natal Labour Party. He was chairman of the first inter-colonial Labour conference that preceded the formation of the S.A.L.P. and has been described as the father of railway trade unionism in South Africa.¹⁵ Attersoll was president of the Durban Workers' Political Union in 1905; Robertson was a prominent member of the Durban Trades Council before and after the war; Pritchard was one of the leaders of the I.L.P. in Johannesburg before 1910; and Ancketill stood in 1910 as the official S.A.L.P. candidate in the Durban Central constituency.¹⁶ In addition, Nelson Palmer, Natal Labour M.L.A., 1906 - 10, played some part in the formation of the N.P.L. branch in Pietermaritzburg in July 1898.¹⁷

As in England the nascent labour party in Natal was thus much indebted to Henry George who, ironically, was moving away from the labour movement in his last years.¹⁸

13. Natal Mercury, 26.11.1898, p.9.

14. For those elected see ibid., 24.11.1899, p.7.

15. Gitsham and Trembath, Labour Organisation in South Africa, pp.164-5. A copy of Clark's pamphlet can be found in the Natal Society Library, Pietermaritzburg.

16. On Attersoll see Natal Mercury, 16.10.1905, p.7; on Robertson see 24.11.1899, p.7 and Rand Daily Mail, 30.5.1905, p.5, "Labour Notes"; on Pritchard see Voice of Labour, 9.10.1909, p.4 and Appendix D, IV below; and on Ancketill see Appendix C, VI, 2, below.

17. Natal Mercury, 26.11.1898, p.9, first annual report of N.P.L.'s secretary.

18. On England see H. Pelling, Origins of the Labour Party, p.36 and passim; on George and the labour movement see M. R. Beard, The American Labor Movement: A Short History, pp. 102, 105.

8. Charles Henry Haggar

Towards the beginning of 1899 the N.P.L. decided to form a political association so as to leave it free to concentrate on land reform. The inaugural meeting of the Natal Political Association, (the N.P.A.), which included Durban M.L.A.'s amongst its first office-bearers, eventually took place on 2 September. Its main objects seemed to be the redistribution of seats according to the number of voters, abolition of duties on food-stuffs, and land reform so as to encourage white settlement.¹⁹

J. F. King, who was ailing, offered to resign from the Legislative Assembly providing the N.P.A. found a suitable replacement, but he died on 29 October before any decision had been taken. Apparently Haggar, one of the N.P.A.'s committee members, was then being considered.²⁰

In the ensuing by-election for the Durban Borough constituency held on 16 December, the first candidates to appear were B. W. Greenacre, an old parliamentary hand and leading businessman, and W. R. Poynton, a Durban town councillor and official nomination of the N.P.A. Practically every prominent member of the N.P.L. participated in bringing Poynton forward and even trade unionists such as H. G. Banwell and H. Knowler signed his election requisition.²¹

Subsequently, however, Ancketill prompted the N.P.L. to nominate Haggar. The League now believed that Poynton was an unsatisfactory candidate because he had actually declared that Greenacre would be a worthier representative than himself in war time and seemed anxious to retire from the contest.²²

19. Torch, September 1899, p.7; Natal Mercury, 24.11.1899, p.7, second annual report of the N.P.L.'s secretary.

20. Natal Mercury, 5.12.1899, p.6, letter from D. Wemyss, and 6.12.1899, p.7, letter from Haggar.

21. Natal Mercury, 24.11.1899, p.3, for the election requisition; on trade background of Banwell and Knowler see A. J. Downes, Printers' Saga, pp.12-13 and 98, respectively; on Poynton's background see Natal Mercury, 18.12.1899, p.7.

22. Natal Mercury, 24.11.1899, p.7, and 28.11.1899, p.7.

Haggar's candidature focussed public attention for the first time on one of the leading pioneers of labour representation in South Africa and, therefore, a central figure in this work. A political cartoonist's delight with his short, portly build, bald head and massive beard, Haggar was a remarkable politician, a brilliant orator and a veritable Admirable Crichton. Born in East Anglia in 1854, he was educated for the church from which he resigned in 1889 to take up a scholastic and literary career. He apparently held degrees in divinity and philosophy and had received a long medical training without qualifying as a doctor.

Before ill-health made him settle in Durban in 1898 he had spent at least ten years in northern Queensland, where he worked first as a preacher, then as a "professor" of languages at the Townsville technical college and finally as "professor" of chemistry at Charters Towers. At the same time he was active in municipal and political affairs, stood unsuccessfully for parliament, presumably as a radical or labour candidate, and won an international competition for the best essay on the subject of Australian Federation.

In South Africa he was first employed on the Natal Government Railways, but left due to lack of advancement and took office as the general secretary of the Durban Y.M.C.A. besides becoming known as a local preacher, forestry lecturer and agricultural expert. From the start of the Anglo-Boer War he attended to sick and wounded soldiers.²³ He liked to call himself "Doctor" Haggar, but the validity of his title was often challenged, probably with justification, by

23. Natalian, 24.5.1907; Star, 26.8.1910, p.8; Appendix B, II, 3 below; Natal Mercury, 4.8.1899, p.5; 8.8.1899, p.6; 4.12.1899, p.5; 6.12.1899, p.7; and 23.12.1899, p.7; Natal Who's Who, 1906, p.82; F. H. Gale, Who's Who in the Union Parliament, p.55. For example of Haggar cartoon see Rand Daily Mail, 9.9.1910, p.6, or p.476A below.

his opponents.²⁴

Haggar came before the Durban electors as an avowed apostle of "state socialism" as practised by the New Zealand prime minister, Dick Seddon, whom he greatly admired. He was proud to be regarded as an Australian politician and pleased to be in a position to convey New Zealand and Australian political thought, maintaining:

It was the principles of progress which had put New Zealand at the head of the modern world and made Australia the working man's paradise. If the principles he espoused could be carried out in those lands why could not they come within the range of practical politics here? The power of carrying them out lay with the working classes, the wealth-producing people of this country.²⁵

Not unexpectedly, therefore, his published programme drew much of its social welfare demands from those two countries.²⁶

Haggar was also profoundly influenced by the White Australia attitude, for he asserted that "the only sound policy was to aim at South Africa as a white man's country."²⁷ Thus his programme advocated redistribution of seats on the basis of the white population, encouragement of white settlement on the lands of Natal, "absolute prohibition" of further Indian immigration, compulsory return to their homelands of all Indian

24. Star, 26.8.1910, p.8; Voice of Labour, 10.6.1910, p.270, editorial and A. G. Barlow, Almost in Confidence, p.137. The writer has found no confirmation of the undocumented statement by H. J. and R. E. Simons, Class and Colour in South Africa, p.103, that Haggar was a Ph.D. It seemed more likely that Haggar assumed this title because of his medical prowess. He was resident medical officer on the Robinson Deep Mine in 1909, for example - Transvaal Leader, 18.12.1909, p.14, "Labour Notes".

25. Natal Mercury, 29.11.1899, p.7; see also 9.12.1899, p.9 and 15.12.1899, p.7, letter from T. N. Hughes. On Haggar and Seddon see p. 8 above.

26. For the programme see Appendix B, II, 3 below.

27. Natal Mercury, 24.11.1899, p.7.

workers whose indentures had expired and early resumption of land alienated or sold to Asiatics. Yet he favoured extended use of Native labour.²⁸

Correspondents of the Natal Mercury wrote about the irony of a local preacher and secretary of the Y.M.C.A. stooping to a popular emotional appeal with his anti-Asiatic outlook. They stressed that his so-called democratic views excluded the underprivileged Indian workers even though Queen Victoria was Empress of the Indians too.²⁹

Many years afterwards Haggar claimed to have produced the archetypal labour programme in South Africa, but it is doubtful whether he regarded himself in 1899 as much more than a radical candidate.³⁰ It was only after the Anglo-Boer War that independent labour political organisation was seriously considered in Natal.

Despite a vigorous campaign the N.P.L.'s candidate made little impression on the electorate and actually forfeited his deposit. "Dr. Haggar's 225 votes will not deter the doughty champion of the 'people's rights'", commented the Natal Mercury, "from throwing down once again his gauntlet and will no doubt profit from the lessons of his defeat."³¹ How right it proved!

28. See Appendix B, II, 3 below.

29. Natal Mercury, 1.12.1899, p.7; 6.12.1899, p.7; 15.12.1899, p.7.

30. For Haggar's claim see The Friend, 4.11.1908, p.5.

31. 16.12.1899, p.4, editorial. For result of contest see Appendix C, II, 2 below. For loss of his deposit see Natal Mercury, 23.12.1899, p.6.

CHAPTER III

SOUTH AFRICAN REPUBLIC, 1892 - 1900

Let the workman remember that the Boer Government with all its defects has been his best friend. Your enemy is not Paul Kruger, nor the Government of this State. Your enemy is the Chamber of Mines and the Mine Managers Association, and when they have Kimberleyised you and compounded you and reduced your wages to the lowest possible margin, you will know it with a vengeance.

Johannesburg Witness in 1899¹

Before 1900, despite the wide franchise open to them the workers played an insignificant role in the politics of the Cape Colony and Natal. This was certainly not so in the South African Republic where the franchise law of 1890 excluded the Uitlanders from an effective say in the government of the country for at least fourteen years. They could obtain the vote more easily for the Second Volksraad, whose powers were strictly limited, but showed little inclination to do so. Greater interest was shown in the Johannesburg Sanitary Board, twelve of whose fifteen members were elected by the town's white adult male population from 1890 onwards. It had wider functions of local government than its name suggests.² But there seemed no restriction on labour organisation and by 1895, when Johannesburg already had a population of 50 907 white persons, there were at least eight trade unions on the Rand.³ Their establishment was one outcome of the large-scale immigration from overseas brought about by the Witwatersrand

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1. As quoted in Torch, May 1899, p.5. The writer was probably J. T. Bain.
 2. J. S. Marais, The Fall of Kruger's Republic, pp.53-54.
 3. Ibid., p.1, for population figures. Clarion, 4.8.1894, p.6, article from "Snooks" [Bain] on number of trade unions.

gold discoveries.

During the 1890's it was virtually impossible for the Transvaal labour movement to be politically apathetic. The movement for the extension of the franchise to the Uitlanders, with its crowded public gatherings and intensive petition hawking, and the deteriorating relations between the Republican government and Great Britain must surely have sustained keen political interest. In these tense times neither Kruger nor his opponents were eager to incur the hostility of the white worker.⁴

Yet from about 1895 highly capitalised deep-level mining - then beginning in earnest - was forcing the mine-owners to become far more cost conscious than they had been with the hitherto predominantly outcrop mining.⁵ In normal times there probably would have been a direct confrontation between the Chamber of Mines and organised labour, but the former was anxious to preserve as much Uitlander unity as possible. After the Anglo-Boer War had started, however, and Kruger's defeat was expected, both the Mining World, and the mining magnate, John Hays Hammond, openly called for a reduction in wages.⁶

1. Trade Union Background

Rand white workers had several grievances requiring the attention of labour organisation. They worked long hours, sometimes on Sundays too; those employed by the mines were subject to twenty-four hours notice and were forced to sign

4. See, for example, Critic, 6.10.1893, p.445; E. B. Rose's pamphlet, White Labour and the Transvaal; R. K. Cope, Comrade Bill, pp.48-50; H. J. and R. E. Simons, Class and Colour in South Africa, p.54.

5. For the political implications of deep-level mining see G. Blainey, "Lost Causes of the Jameson Raid", Economic History Review, December 1965, pp.350-66.

6. Mining World, December 1899, as quoted in R. K. Cope, Comrade Bill, p.50; and for Hammond's call see G. H. L. Le May, British Supremacy in South Africa, 1899-1907, p.30, and S.A.T.J., December 1900, p.13.

away common law rights in the event of an accident - and the accident rate was high; they objected to unsatisfactory accommodation on the mines and they feared victimisation for outspokenness; but they seemed satisfied, except in 1897, with wage-rates.⁷

The first trade union in the South African Republic was probably the Johannesburg Building Trades Association which was formed on 20 February, 1889 and continued to exist until its functions were taken over by the Witwatersrand Mine Employees' and Mechanics' Union.⁸ The Labour Union, as the latter was more generally known, was launched on 20 August 1892 and aroused great enthusiasm amongst the white workers during its early existence. On the East and West Rand miners rushed to join and pay their £1 membership fees.⁹ Such seemed its initial financial success that its first three secretaries, 1892-3, all received salaries.¹⁰

The Labour Union started as a wide-embracing labour organisation including miners, artisans and tradesmen in its ranks and actually intended to represent all the workers on the Witwatersrand. Thus its secretary wrote to Dr. W. J. Leyds in July 1893:

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7. Evidence of A. B. Fyffe in R. W. Schumacher (ed.), The Mining Industry: Evidence and Report of the Industrial Commission of Enquiry, pp.299-310; "S.A.", "Black and White in the Transvaal", Monthly Review, July 1906, p.14; Star, 12.8.1892, letter from "Miner"; Standard & Diggers' News, 12.4.1894, p.5, report of political meeting; 20.4.1894, p.4, letter from A. A. Greig; and 21.4.1894, p.7, letter from J. T. Bain; Transvaal Leader, 28.8.1909, p.9, article I in series "Capital and Labour".
 8. Critic, 15.12.1893, p.73.
 9. Standard & Diggers' News, 8.10.1892, p.3. On membership fee see p.2 of the Labour Union's constitution in Transvaal Archives, SS 3861, R8453/93, pp.133-39.
 10. Critic, 8.6.1894, p.51.

I need scarcely inform you that our Union is the Workman's Union of the Witwatersrand and has for its object the protection of the interests and lives of its members in particular, and the working class portion of the community in general.¹¹

Its constitution clearly reveals that victimisation of Labour Union members was feared, for it contained strict secrecy provisions and instituted the strange office of Warden whose duty it was to patrol the entrance of meeting rooms. Moreover, any member victimised for Labour Union activity was entitled to its support.¹² The authors of the constitution may also have been influenced by the secrecy associated with Kimberley's Knights of Labour with whom they were probably in contact, for the Labour Union expected a deputation from the Knights at one time.¹³

The politically motivated Labour Union was the pioneering labour party in the Transvaal and warrants therefore the detailed account of its activities in subsequent sections of this chapter. Suffice to record at this stage that it had become virtually defunct by the beginning of 1895 partly because of its unfortunate choice of office-bearers and partly because the formation of craft unions and the Johannesburg and District T. & L.C. deprived it of much of its purpose.

By November 1892 a tailors' society had appeared; in August 1893 the Transvaal Typographical Society was formed; a few months later J. T. Bain was mainly responsible for starting

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11. A Hope to the State Secretary, 14.7.1893, SS 3861, R8453/93, p.47. See also Standard & Diggers' News, 15.5.1893, p.3, especially speeches by Hope and Rose. On character of its membership see W. H. P. Linden, secretary of the T. & L.C., to the Mining Commissioner, April 1895, SS 3861, R8453/93, p.88.
 12. Constitution of the Witwatersrand Mine Employees and Mechanics Union, pp.5, 7 & 9.
 13. Star, 24.8.1892 (advertisement), and 29.8.1892.

a branch of the A.S.E. in Johannesburg which included amongst its first members A. S. Raitt and W. H. Andrews, both prominent Labour politicians after 1902; and by the middle of 1894 the Transvaal Engine-Drivers' Association was founded and progressed so well that by 1899 it boasted a membership of 650 of the 800 engine-drivers on the Rand and a credit balance of nearly £1 000.¹⁴ Meanwhile other trade unions emerged, like those catering for the bakers, painters, bricklayers and carpenters.¹⁵ Already in 1897 the Transvaal Critic reported that there were unions and protection societies "in connection with every known trade in Johannesburg."¹⁶

Nevertheless, the miners lagged behind. Besides the all-inclusive Labour Union the only other pre-war organisation concerned with their needs was the short-lived Rand Mine Workers' Union, which was founded in May 1897 probably as a result of the unsuccessful Randfontein lock-out imposed by J. B. Robinson.¹⁷ Its chairman, A. B. Fyffe, whom Robinson dismissed as a "labour agitator" and "spurious people's champion", was called upon to give evidence before the Mining Industry Industrial Commission.¹⁸

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14. On the tailors see Star, 5.11.1892, p.3; on the printers A. J. Downes, Printers' Saga, p.20; on the engineers A.S.E. Monthly Report, November 1906, p.10, article by Andrews, and February 1915, pp.6-7, article by Bain; and on the engine-drivers in 1894 F. J. Grobler, "Die Invloed van Geskoolde Blanke Arbeid", p.24, and in 1899 Standard & Diggers' News, 6.6.1899, p.6.
15. Critic, 7.9.1894, p.463, and 25.1.1895, p.268, Star, 18.12.1893, p.3, F. J. Grobler, "Die Invloed van Geskoolde Blanke Arbeid", p.8.
16. 26.2.1897, p.339. The Critic changed its name to Transvaal Critic on 25.12.1896.
17. Transvaal Sentinel, 8.5.1897; F. J. Grobler, "Die Invloed van Geskoolde Blanke Arbeid", p.10; Transvaal Critic, 3.9.1897, p.307; 24.9.1897, p.395; 1.10.1897, p.456.
18. R. W. Schumacher (ed.), The Mining Industry: Evidence and Report of the Industrial Commission of Enquiry, pp.299-310. See Transvaal Sentinel, 22.5.1897, for Robinsons' remarks. Ten years later Fyffe reappeared in the labour movement in the O.R.C. - The Friend, 14 & 23.2.1907.

The strikes in 1897 against reduced wages, more work and longer hours seemed to deter a similar offensive by employers until the Republican Government had fallen. As a result the need for a permanent miners' association was not really appreciated until after the war.¹⁹ In addition, many miners regarded the Witwatersrand as a temporary work-place, thus leaving their families in Britain, and were not disposed to becoming involved in labour organisation.²⁰

The Johannesburg and District T. & L.C. was formed on 11 October 1893 and was described by its secretary in 1895 as a "kind of working men's government".²¹ It survived in some form until the outbreak of war in 1899, but never succeeded in uniting all the forces of organised labour.²² From 1897 it was probably confined to societies in the building trade during which time a certain Noonan appeared to be its leading member and was its secretary in 1899.²³

Cohesion amongst trade unions was not possible so long as they were forced to choose between loyalty to Great Britain or to the Republic. British-linked trade unions such as the A.S.E. and the A.S. of C. & J. were probably not unmoved by the call of imperialism, whilst purely South African societies such as those catering for printers and engine-drivers had much to lose and may have favoured the status quo.²⁴ In these circumstances it is understandable why a strong labour party failed to emerge under President Kruger's rule.

19. On the strikes see R. K. Cope, Comrade Bill, pp.40-43, 47-48.

20. Olive Schreiner, An English-South African's View of the Situation, p.41.

21. W. H. P. Linden to the Mining Commissioner, April 1895, SS 3861 R8453/93, p.88. This letter also describes the start of the Council.

22. Critic, 12.1.1894, p.161; 20.4.1894, p.50; 25.1.1895, p.268; Transvaal Critic, 28.2.1896, p.423; 3.9.1897; R. K. Cope, Comrade Bill, p.46; A.S.E. Monthly Report, December 1908, p.16.

23. Transvaal Leader, 2.5.1908, p.15, "Labour Notes"; R. K. Cope, Comrade Bill, p.48. On Noonan in 1899 see Standard & Diggers' News, 15.5.1899, p.6.

2. The Labour Union and J. T. Bain

Towards the middle of 1892 the Chamber of Mines was apparently negotiating with steamship companies to bring out large number of miners and their families at a cheap rate. White workers on the Rand denounced the scheme as a blatant move to reduce their wages by flooding the labour market and fully 2 000 attended the Johannesburg protest meeting on 20 August that retaliated by launching the Labour Union. J. T. Bain, who was chairman of this meeting, appeared under the alias of "J. T. Smith", presumably so as not to endanger his chances of employment, and may have been the Union's main instigator.²⁵

As father of the labour and socialist movements in the Transvaal Bain's background is very relevant to this study. He was born in 1859 or 1860 in Scotland where he was put to work in a factory as a boy of seven. An unfortunate childhood caused him to hate oppression - this happened to Keir Hardie too - and he was soon well versed in the writings of William Morris and other socialist thinkers. He was also a great admirer of Carlyle. After qualifying as a fitter and working in Scotland, England and South America, Bain settled on the Rand towards the end of the 1880's.²⁶ By this time he was a firm advocate of the nationalisation of industries and of the class struggle, advising reporters of the Star to read Das Kapital

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24. For contrasting attitudes of the A.S.E. and the Transvaal Engine-Drivers' Association see F. J. Grobler, "Die Invloed van Geskoolde Blanke Arbeid", pp.34-5.
25. For account of the meeting see Star, 20.8.1892; for examples of workers' indignation at the scheme see letters in Star, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17 and 20.8.1892; on Bain's alias see Critic, 18.5.1894, p.641; as main instigator see Critic, 8.6.1894, p.51 and 15.6.1894, p.89.
26. Labour World, 1.11.1919, p.6, obituary by G. A. Hay; Worker, November - December 1913, "My Bookshelf" by J. T. Bain; Gitsham and Trembath, A First Account of Labour Organisation, p.159.

so that they could understand the causes of the Pittsburgh riots. "Strikers' riots, and such like scenes," he explained, "are but symptoms of the universal war".²⁷

Judging by the conciliatory and moderate attitude of the Labour Union's first office-bearers Bain's influence amongst its members was initially small. Its first president and secretary, R. F. Thomas and J. Seddon, respectively, both stressed that Labour intended to work in harmony with Capital. Bain, indeed, was not on its executive in 1892.²⁸

The Labour Union progressed so favourably at the outset that it seemed set for a bright future. It held regular and well-attended meetings and that on 28 August succeeded in enrolling 600 miners as members.²⁹ It so broadened its scope that the assurance given in September to Seddon by a full meeting of the Chamber of Mines that there was no intention to flood the labour market, did not cut short its existence.³⁰ The newly-formed Transvaal National Union, (the T.N.U.), sought its co-operation over the extension of the franchise, the Kruger government appeared sympathetic towards its aims and the Rand community accepted it as a legitimate and representative organisation.³¹ It made abortive plans to bring John Burns to the Transvaal, claimed responsibility for the election at the end of 1892 of two candidates to the Johannesburg Sanitary Board, and in April 1893 successfully opposed the illicit gold buying measures proposed by the

27. Star, 3.8.1892, letter from "J.T.B." [Bain].

28. For list of officers see Constitution of the Witwatersrand Mine Employees' and Mechanics' Union, p.1, or Critic, 18.5.1894, p.643. For conciliatory statements see, for example, Standard & Diggers' News, 8.10.1892, p.3; Star, 1.10.1892; and Critic, 3.2.1893, p.189.

29. Star, 29.8.1892, 12.9.1892, 1.10.1892, 1.12.1892. See Natal Mercury, 30.8.1892, on the new members.

30. F. J. Grobler, "Die Invloed van Geskoolde Blanke Arbeid", p.3.

Chamber of Mines.³² On 13 May it celebrated Labour Day with a most impressive banquet at which Carl Jeppe represented the Volksraad and Captain von Brandis the government officials in Johannesburg.³³

The Labour Union perhaps reached the zenith of its influence with the appearance on 19 May of the first issue of Sentinel, its weekly official organ controlled by Seddon.³⁴

Up to that stage it seemed to preserve a united front of prospective labour leaders including in its ranks British imperialists like W. Tonkin, A. S. Raitt and R. Shanks and republicans like J. T. Bain and E. B. Rose.³⁵

Towards the middle of 1893, however, the Labour Union became openly hostile towards the T.N.U. and more favourably disposed towards President Kruger.³⁶ As a result it must surely have lost the support of the more patriotically-minded British workers. As has already been noted, its effectiveness was further reduced by the rise of craft unionism and the formation in October 1893 of the T. & L.C. of which Bain was secretary. This Council, and not the Labour Union, issued the election manifesto calling on workers to vote in the Johannesburg Sanitary Board elections of December 1893, for the four candidates opposed to the "Barnato and Eckstein crowd" and most sympathetic to the Labour platform.³⁷ But the downfall of the Labour Union was primarily caused by its disastrous choice of office-bearers. "To the best of my knowledge,"

31. On the T.N.U. see Standard & Diggers' News, 8.10.1892, p.3, and Star, 24.10.1892; on Kruger Standard & Diggers' News, 15.5.1893, [p.37], remarks by Seddon, and Critic, 6.10.1893, p.445 ff.; on the Rand community report of public meeting over the issuing of canteen licences in Star, 28.11.1892, p.4.

32. On Burns see Star, 15 & 18.10.1892; on the Sanitary Board elections Hope's remarks in Standard & Diggers' News, 15.5.1893, [p.37]; and on the illicit gold buying measures F. J. Grobler, "Die Invloed van Geskoolde Blanke Arbeid", pp.16-17.

33. Standard & Diggers' News, 15.5.1893, [p.37].

34. Critic, 26.5.1893, p.519.

35. For their membership, except for Tonkin, see Standard & Diggers' News, 15.5.1893, [p.37]; on Tonkin see Star, 12.9.1892.

36. See pp.97-101 below.

37. Standard & Diggers' News, 16.12.1893, p.6.

declared J. F. de Beer, Judicial Commissioner in Johannesburg, "there exists no parallel of a society so exceptionally unfortunate in the matter of its officials as this Union."³⁸

Joseph Seddon and Andrew Hope, its first two secretaries, absconded with some of its funds; its third, George Saunders, was dismissed; and its first treasurer, J. G. Fenton, left Johannesburg suddenly.³⁹ By the time some stability was restored towards the end of 1893 with the appointment of Bain as secretary, now an honorary post, and E. B. Rose as president, membership had dropped to below two hundred.⁴⁰ Rose, who probably acquired his fine oratorical ability as an authorised lecturer of the National Secular Society of England and who came to the Transvaal about 1890, was also connected with the T. & L.C. In August 1892 he described himself as an unemployed carpenter, but soon afterwards started business as a building contractor. As an employer of labour he was constitutionally debarred from being a member of the Labour Union, but it granted him special exemption.⁴¹

The new officers, however, did not refurbish the tarnished image of the Labour Union. They antagonised the Johannesburg public by transforming the Union and the T. & L.C. into willing instruments of concession hunters. Bain's justification that concessions would foster local industry, maintain satisfactory working conditions and enforce minimum wage rates was dismissed with ridicule.⁴² Both he and Rose had vested

38. Ibid., 6.6.1894, p.7.

39. Critic, 8.6.1894, p.51; also 12.1.1894, p.161, and 18.5.1894, p.643.

40. Critic, 12.1.1894, p.161; also 8.6.1894, pp.49 & 51.

41. E. B. Rose, The Truth about the Transvaal, p. v; Star, 29.8.1892, on his unemployment; Critic, 8.6.1894, p.49, for Rose's evidence in court on the special exemption and 5.1.1894, p.141, on his association with the Secular Society.

42. Standard & Diggers' News, 12.4.1894, p.5; Critic, 1.6.1894, p.17.

interests in supporting the Wonderfontein water scheme and Solomon Gillingham's application for the Biscuit and Jam Concession. Bain was certainly paid for his canvassing.⁴³ Further support was lost because of his hot-blooded and violent temperament and his bent for accumulating enemies. At the public meeting on 10 April 1894, for example, Bain found it necessary to strengthen his argument by raising a chair threateningly over the head of an adversary, J. W. Quinn, a master baker, and thereby provoked an upheaval. At the continuation meeting the following day he again started an uproar by implying that Quinn had defrauded the public by selling short-weight bread.⁴⁴ Nor was his reputation enhanced when both Reuben Thompson, president of the Transvaal Typographical Society, and A. R. Goldring, secretary of the Chamber of Mines, publicly stigmatised him as a liar.⁴⁵ But Henry Hess, editor of the Critic, a staunchly pro-T.N.U. weekly, was principally responsible for blackening Bain's character as well as hastening the demise of the Labour Union.

From about October 1893 Hess began to mount his scathing attacks, condemning the Union as a bogus organisation of "festering agitators", "howling bounders" and "vagabonds" who arrogated to themselves a false position as leaders of the working class.⁴⁶ Rose was depicted as "the individual who periodically assaults people in the streets, using the most disgusting language" and as "an atheist of the most advanced type".⁴⁷ The worst epithets, however, were reserved for Bain, to whom Hess took an extreme dislike:

43. Critic, 1.6.1894, p.17, and 8.6.1894, pp.49 & 51, court evidence.

44. Standard & Diggers' News, 11.4.1894, p.5 and 12.4.1894, p.5.

45. Ibid., 6.6.1894, p.7; Critic, 18.5.1894, p.641.

46. Critic, 6.10.1893, p.445; 20.10.1893, p.497; 3.11.1893, p.543; 29.12.1893, p.117; 13.4.1894, p.484; 11.5.1894, p.605.

47. Critic, 18.5.1894, p.643.

Bain has lied in meeting and out of meeting. He lied to the editor of the Moon as he has lied to me. His so-called Union is a fraud, a delusion and a snare. He has accepted bribes over the Wonderfontein Scheme and he has been promised bribes over the Biscuit Concession. In short, he is a dangerous professional agitator, a dishonest man. I shall be glad to prove these allegations in a court of law, if the opportunity be given me.⁴⁸

Bain fell into the trap and brought a libel action against Hess before Judicial Commissioner J. F. de Beer on 11 May, 1894. So undeterred was Hess that he audaciously branded Bain as a "liar, perjurer, swindler and corrupt scoundrel" whilst the case was still proceeding.⁴⁹ Eventually on 5 June, de Beer passed judgment in favour of the defendant during the course of which he severely criticised the Labour Union and Bain's past conduct.⁵⁰ But still the feud continued. Hess heaped abuse on Bain declaring in August, for instance, that he was a "mendacious plotting scoundrel unfit to be tolerated in a moral lazaretto".⁵¹ Afterwards Bain was convicted and fined for using threatening language and for attempted assault on Hess; similarly Rose for premeditated assault.⁵²

It is indeed ironical that, whereas Hess triumphantly predicted that Bain's career as Labour leader was at an end, he was still able to achieve lasting fame as one of the heroes of the South African Labour movement despite the staggering setback suffered in this court action.⁵³ In 1914, for example, F. H. P. Creswell, parliamentary leader of the S.A.L.P., paid tribute to Bain's courageous life-long devotion to the cause

48. Critic, 13.4.1894, p.484. See 3.11.1893, p.543 on instantaneous dislike of Bain.

49. Critic, 18.5.1894, p.643.

50. Standard & Diggers' News, 6.6.1894, p.7; Critic, 8.6.1894, p.51.

51. Critic, 3.8.1894, p.303; see also 21.12.1894, p.107.

52. Critic, 18.9.1894, p.559, on Bain; 15.2.1895, p.362 on Rose.

of Labour; and, although he differed strongly with him on many occasions, he still believed that "Bain's clear, crystal sincerity made one love him".⁵⁴ Hess, on the other hand, defended his thirty-ninth libel action in London in March 1902. A few years afterwards his public career ended when he was charged with financial fraud.⁵⁵

No organisation could flourish whilst exposed to such abuse as the Labour Union suffered. Nevertheless, it lingered on and W. Taylor, who succeeded Bain as secretary and who shared his views on the class struggle, threatened at one stage to contest the Johannesburg Sanitary Board elections held on 15 January, 1895.⁵⁶ But it seemed evident from the T. & L.C.'s meeting on 12 February that the Union no longer functioned. When Bain and Rose were challenged to produce their credentials from the Labour Union by the secretary of the Council, W. H. P. Linden, who was probably prompted by Hess, they left the meeting and resigned from the Council.⁵⁷

53. For Hess's prediction see Critic, 15.6.1894, p.91.
54. Union of South Africa, House of Assembly Debates, 4.3.1914, col.971; see also 9.2.1914, cols.163-4. Note that Walker and Weinbren, 2 000 Casualties, p.286, maintain that Bain was the greatest leader produced by the South African trade union movement.
55. K. Hancock and J. van der Poel (eds.), Selections from the Smuts Papers, IV, p.335. On thirty-ninth libel action see S. A. Review, 7.3.1902, p.35.
56. On Taylor as secretary see Standard & Diggers' News, 12.5.1894, p.6; on the class struggle see his letter in 17.7.1894, p.2; and on the elections see Critic, 14.12.1894, p.71 and 21.12.1894, p.107.
57. SS 3861, R8453/93, p.216, T. & L.C. Minutes of 12.2.1895; Critic, 8.2.1895, p.331; 15.2.1895, p.362; 22.2.1895, pp.393-4.

Although the Labour Union did not provide an auspicious start to the political labour movement in the Transvaal, it, nevertheless, made a not inconsiderable impact on republican politics during its short existence as will be described later. It produced J. T. Bain and started a very cordial relationship with the republican government which certainly consulted it on labour matters.

3. International Independent Labour Party

Besides the Labour Union and the Johannesburg T. & L.C. the only other Labour organisation in the South African Republic with political function was the International Independent Labour Party, (the I.I.L.P.), which seems to have been one outcome of the controversy over the rights of the Uitlanders. During April and May 1899 Milner inspired the apparently staged miners' meetings which demonstrated against the Kruger government.⁵⁸ A counter movement arose which contemplated the formation of a Miners' Protection Society at the end of April.⁵⁹ On 9 May at a well-attended meeting of white workers, J. T. Bain, who was in the chair, pleaded for an organisation independent of the Chamber of Mines and the mine managers that would be able to stand up to the capitalists; and it was decided to refer the proposal to a further public meeting four days later.⁶⁰

Many years afterwards General Smuts disclosed that Bain had been an agent of the Republic's secret service before the Anglo-Boer War.⁶¹ It seems not unlikely therefore that he was prompted by the Government to divide the movement championing

58. J. S. Marais, The Fall of Kruger's Republic, pp.263-4.

59. Standard & Diggers' News, 1.5.1899, p.3.

60. Ibid., 10.5.1899, p.6.

61. Union of South Africa, House of Assembly Debates, 4.2.1914, col.73.

the Uitlander cause. Moreover, as a humble artisan, Bain must have obtained funds from some source to start his weekly Labour newspaper, Johannesburg Witness, towards the middle of 1898.⁶²

Copies of Bain's paper were scattered freely about the meeting on 13 May which was attended by a cosmopolitan crowd including many British workers; members of Vorwarts, the local society of German Social Democrats; and government detectives at the request of the meeting's conveners. Although the gathering agreed to form an independent labour party and appointed a provisional committee for that purpose, a wide divergence of opinion concerning the Rand capitalists led to stormy proceedings.

Main speaker was Tom Mathews who, as past speaker of the Montana House of Assembly and recent graduate of the Camborne School of Mining in Cornwall, spoke with the authority of experience even if he had only arrived on the Rand in 1897.⁶³ He warned that unless the workers organised the capitalists would ground them into servitude. Drawing on his American experience, he added:

We don't want such sort of employers in the Transvaal; we don't want those huge trusts and combinations that have brought the people down to their lowest form.

Other speakers expressed similar sentiments and they included George Steeples who at one time was associated with the Johannesburg Witness and was general secretary of the Transvaal

62. See Appendix E below.

63. See the writer's biographical article in Dictionary of South African Biography, II, pp.453-4; also p. 16 above.

Engine Drivers' Association. He was particularly scathing about the mining magnates in Kimberley where he had once worked.⁶⁴

On the other hand, R. Shanks, who was a frequent speaker at the meetings on the mines, maintained that it was pointless "railing a lot of balderdash against the Capitalists" and considered the idea of diabolical companies and managers killing a lot of men to be absurd. Shanks was a Scottish monumental mason and had worked in the U.S.A. before settling on the Rand in 1889. In 1893 he started his own business in the same trade.⁶⁵ So upset was the chairman of the meeting, a certain Hall, at the vociferous denunciation of the capitalists that he attacked the so-called wire-pullers behind the gathering whom he accused of trying to sell Labour, and nearly terminated proceedings by angrily walking out of the hall.

However, with Mathews in the chair, order was restored and a provisional committee elected, widely representative of the Transvaal labour movement. It included Bain, Mathews, Shanks, Gross (president of Vorwarts), Noonan (secretary of the T. & L.C.), Weinwurm (an Austrian who was shortly to organise the Johannesburg hotel employees), and Hildebrandt (an Afrikaner who was elected secretary of the Witwatersrand T. & L.C. in 1905).⁶⁶

After a series of meetings the articles of association of the I.I.L.P. were adopted on 17 June. The Johannesburg Witness was recognised as the new body's official organ, the provisional

64. For biographical details on Steeples see Standard & Diggers' News, 9.1.1899, p.5, and 15.4.1899, p.6.

65. For biographical details see Men of the Times: Pioneers of the Transvaal, p.334.

66. For report of the meeting see Standard & Diggers' News, 15.5.1899, pp.5-6. On the Johannesburg hotel employees see 6.6.1899, p.6.

committee was discharged and replaced with an executive committee including Bain, Mathews, Gross and Weinwurm, but not Shanks.⁶⁷ Its choice of name seems particularly appropriate in view of its international composition, although it must surely have consisted of white members only.

The dedicated socialism of Mathews and Bain does not seem to have affected its object and platform, for the I.I.L.P. merely aimed to combine the workers for their protection and concentrated its demands on the eight hours' day, the abolition of all unnecessary Sunday labour and compulsory arbitration in industrial disputes.⁶⁸ "The promoters have issued articles of association which confine the scope of the "International Independent Labour Party" to a purely practical and business-like platform" was the pleased comment of the government-subsidised Standard and Diggers' News.⁶⁹ Nevertheless, true to labour principles the I.I.L.P. platform advocated "one man one vote, no property qualifications, and no religious qualifications."⁷⁰

But the I.I.L.P.'s official organ was unequivocally and almost hysterically opposed to capitalism. "Its responsible Editor, Printer, and Publisher, J. T. Bain" wrote:

Never in all God's earth was there devised or invented an instrument capable of inflicting tortures on mankind than the lash of capitalism. The cat-o-nine tails lash is a mere child's whip in comparison to the other.⁷¹

67. Ibid., 21.6.1899, p.6

68. As summarised in Standard & Diggers' News, 6.6.1899, p.3, editorial.

69. Ibid.

70. Extract from Johannesburg Witness, 7.7.1899, article by Bain, reprinted in Worker, 13.11.1913, p.5.

71. Ibid. For reference to Bain's control of the paper see Johannesburg Witness, 1.9.1899, editorial notice.

According to the Johannesburg Witness, trade unionism was excellent but did not go far enough. Socialism was the only salvation for mankind and sooner or later the workers would be forced to choose between it or becoming "slaves and bondsmen to the end of time." Thus it concluded:

Kings may reign and be deposed; empires may rise and fall, but Socialism will march on till all men are Socialists, till the whole world is Socialist, even as Heaven is Socialist to-day.⁷²

Early in July the I.I.L.P. issued a manifesto calling on the Rand's workers to unite and prevent groups of "unscrupulous financiers" and "disappointed speculators" from engineering war to secure control over the Transvaal for the "capitalist class" which wanted to see the "flag of a Bastard Jingoistic Imperialism float over this state."⁷³ The influence of Bain and Mathews is clear. But the socialism expressed in its circular, published a month later, was circumscribed and guarded:

The equitable distribution of wealth involves the abolition of all monopolies, the nationalisation of the land, and the municipalisation of all those works which are of their nature a public necessity, and which can be controlled and carried on by publicly elected bodies with greater economy than by private companies.⁷⁴

By this time Bain had resigned from the executive committee of the I.I.L.P. because press attacks made him an embarrassment.⁷⁵ Soon afterwards the Johannesburg Witness

72. 1.9.1899, p.82, article by "Vulcan". From its content and style the author appears to be Bain.

73. See Appendix B, IV, 2 below.

74. See Appendix B, IV, 3 below.

75. Standard & Diggers' News, 31.7.1899, p.5. For example of press attack see Star, 5.6.1899, pp. 4 & 6. For letters on the press vilification of Bain see Standard & Diggers' News, 18.7.1899, p.7, and 10.8.1899, p.5.

ceased to be the Party's official organ, but Mathews and A. Brittlebank, who became "permanent" organising secretary of the I.I.L.P. on 15 July, continued to contribute articles.⁷⁶

Brittlebank's appointment was an acquisition to the Party. He had been an active propagandist of Henry George's ideas in Australia, was associated with the English Land Nationalisation Society and was a widely-read, keen student of economics. Subsequently he tried to influence F. W. Reitz, J. X. Merriman and Professor Fremantle with his line of thinking. He had worked in the middle 1880's as a portrait and landscape photographer on the diamond-fields in Griqualand West whence he moved to the Barberton gold-fields and became a burgher of the South African Republic. Leaving the Transvaal for ten years, he worked in America and Australia before arriving back in Johannesburg, probably in 1899. He was soon a prolific press correspondent.⁷⁷ Chairman of the I.I.L.P. at this time was Kenneth Ferguson, whose background is not known.⁷⁸

The I.I.L.P. held regular fortnightly meetings until it disappeared after war had broken out. Foremost topic of discussion was, of course, the imminent war, but other subjects like the Robinson Deep Mine strike in August 1899 and the eight hour day were considered. A motion of sympathy with the strikers was passed and a movement to attain the eight hour day was started, inspired perhaps by precedents in

76. Standard & Diggers' News, 4.8.1899, p.5, on its ceasing to be the official organ; 18.7.1899, p.6, for appointment of Brittlebank; Johannesburg Witness, 1.9.1899, for articles by Brittlebank ("Archimedes") and Mathews ("The Bounder").

77. Standard & Diggers' News, 18.7.1899, p.6; Diamond Fields Advertiser, 15.3.1884, p.4, advertisement; SS 8443 (oorlogstukken), R8181/00, Brittlebank ("Archimedes") to the State Secretary, 9.5.1900. For attempted conversion of eminent politicians see SS 7795, R 5276/99, Brittlebank to F. W. Reitz, 6.4.1899; and Brittlebank's letters to Merriman, nos. 293 and 333 of 1904 in the Merriman Papers.

78. Standard & Diggers' News, 31.7.1899, p.5.

Australia where the shorter working time had been enjoyed for over a decade.⁷⁹ The success of this movement will be described in a later section of this chapter.⁸⁰

Membership of the I.I.L.P. can only be gauged from its secretary's statement on 3 August that it stood at 130.⁸¹ Its policies may have attracted wider support, however, as one miner wrote:

I am not very far wrong by stating that the moral sympathies of the majority of workers are in favour of the manifesto as issued by the I.I.L.P., and if they will only work with more secrecy for their internal affairs, say on the lines of the Knights of Labour, then they will get our material support also, for we are just waking from our supposed sleep⁸²

An organisation calling itself the International Labour Union, of which a certain Straub was president and T. Olie secretary, existed in Pretoria in September 1899 and participated in the movement for an eight hour working day.⁸³ No further details have been found, but its name suggests some connection with Johannesburg's I.I.L.P.

4. Organised Labour, President Kruger and the Franchise

As the democratisation of the electoral system was a cardinal plank on all Labour platforms, it was inevitable that organised labour should become involved in the struggle for the franchise for the Uitlanders in the Transvaal. J. T. Bain certainly advised workers to attend the inaugural meeting

79. Ibid., 4.8.1899, p.5; 14.8.1899, p.4; 28.8.1899, p.6; 11.9.1899, p.4; 12.9.1899, p.6; 25.9.1899, p.4.

80. See p. 108 below.

81. Standard & Diggers' News, 4.8.1899, p.5.

82. Ibid., 18.7.1899, p.7, letter from "Miner", Rose Deep, Germiston. Note similar fear in the Standard's report of a July I.I.L.P. meeting in which the names of some speakers are not disclosed so as not to endanger their positions - 18.7.1899, p.6.

on 20 August 1892 of the T.N.U. whose main object was to attain equal rights for all citizens of the South African Republic.⁸⁴ But the first committee of management of the T.N.U., although consisting of thirty persons, did not include a single Labour representative.⁸⁵

The Labour Union was antagonistic towards the T.N.U. until the Chamber of Mines gave its assurance early in September that the labour market would not be flooded with overseas immigrants.⁸⁶ A few days later the T.N.U.'s committee was enlarged to include R. F. Thomas and W. Tonkin of the Labour Union; and on 6 October the chief office-bearers of the T.N.U. addressed a Labour Union meeting and received a warm reception. Significantly, they were asked for and gave the assurance that Rhodes was in no way connected with their organisation.⁸⁷ Soon afterwards three further leaders of the Labour Union, A. Hope, E. B. Rose and J. Brown, joined the T.N.U.'s committee.⁸⁸ Although Labour had only five members of fifty-three at this time, the Johannesburg community had, nevertheless, recognised the right of organised labour to political representation.

At this stage the Labour Union seemed firmly behind the T.N.U. and hostile towards President Kruger despite his cordial reception of its deputation towards the beginning of October. Rose stated, indeed:

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83. Standard & Diggers' News, 11.9.1899, p.5 and 15.9.1899 p.6.
84. Star, 20.8.1892, for Bain's advice; 22.8.1892, for inaugural meeting of the T.N.U.
85. Star, 27.8.1892, lists the committee.
86. For its hostility see Star, 29.8.1892, statement by Seddon.
87. For enlarged committee see Star, 12.9.1892 and 22.9.1892; for 6 October meeting see Standard & Diggers' News, 8.10.1892, p.3.
88. Star, 24.10.1892 and 25.10.1892, advertisement.

He had noticed a curious fact with regard to the recent encounter between the President and Mr. Brown [vice-president of the Union], at Boksburg. He found that the language used by Mr. Kruger on that occasion was almost precisely similar to that which the German Emperor recently used when speaking of the Socialists. If the President of a free republic were found using the language of a pronounced autocrat, it went to prove what many people said, that this was no Republic.⁸⁹

Yet during the first half of 1893 the Labour Union completely reversed its stand, withdrawing from the T.N.U. and displaying an increasingly warm regard for the President. As Bain explained, the Labour Union had come to distrust the T.N.U.'s committee whose interests clashed with those of the workers and now believed that if it wanted anything from the Government it was better off asking by itself than through the T.N.U. In addition, Bain maintained that the workers should concern themselves with present possibilities rather than with "fanciful franchise schemes" of the future.⁹⁰ Some years later Rose wrote that the split from the T.N.U. was caused by its rejection by an overwhelming vote of the Labour amendment to add a secret ballot act to the demand for franchise extension, but it is strange that Bain should not have mentioned this.⁹¹

The parting of the ways not only weakened Uitlander solidarity but also that of Labour, for there must have been British workers still supporting the T.N.U. Perhaps Thomas and Tonkin remained on its committee as they seem to have disappeared from the Labour Union's ranks. Certainly Shanks

89. Star, 24.10.1892. On the deputation see F. J. Grobler, "Die Invloed van Geskoolde Blanke Arbeid", p.6.

90. See Bain's letters in Standard & Diggers' News, 31.5.1893, p.5, and 5.6.1893, p. [3].

91. E. B. Rose, The Truth about the Transvaal, p.27 f.

continued to favour the T.N.U. and A. S. Raitt, who was secretary of the Johannesburg branch of the A.S.E. in 1899, joined its committee, subsequently becoming a prominent Uitlander leader.⁹²

Henry Hess actually accused the Government of financing certain members of the Labour Union to break up the T.N.U. and of contributing funds towards launching the Sentinel in May 1893. This paper, which was to remain the official organ of the Labour Union for three months, appropriately published in its first issue an article entitled "The Impeachment of the National Union." Hess's charge was not far-fetched as acceptance of government funds by some of the Labour Union's officers would not have been out of character considering their subsequent corruption. "The aim of the government," he explained, "was to form an alliance between the agricultural classes and the mining classes because Mr. Kruger said, 'I find the working classes do not wish to interfere with my government, but those capitalists and the National Union do.'"⁹³ The following year Hess implied that the canvassers for the petition on the franchise, promoted by the Labour Union in conjunction with the T. & L.C., were well-paid from state funds. This petition, following Bain's dramatic lead at the uproarious public meeting on 10 April, advocated one man one vote, no religious disqualifications and a ballot act, and may have been organised to reduce the impact of the opposing petition of the T.N.U. demanding a qualified franchise. Otherwise Hess's belief is incomprehensible.⁹⁴

92. Note divergence of opinion on the franchise of Bain and Tonkin at the public meeting reported in Standard & Diggers' News, 11.4.1894, p.5. Note also differences between Bain and Shanks as revealed in Bain's letters in ibid., 31.5.1893, p.3 and 5.6.1893, p.37. On Raitt see O. F. Brothers, The First Transvaal Parliament, p.69.

93. Critic, 6.10.1893, p.445 ff.; see also 29.9.1893, p.423 and 3.11.1893, p.543.

94. For Hess's belief see Critic, 11.5.1894, p.605; for report on 10 April meeting see Standard & Diggers' News, 11.4.1894, p.5.

The Labour Union seemed, indeed, far more anxious to establish friendly relations with the Government and to attack the T.N.U. than to obtain the franchise. Bain's reference to "fanciful franchise schemes" has already been mentioned. His successor as secretary of the Union, W. Taylor, expressed confidence in the Boer, denounced the T.N.U. as the cat's-paw of the capitalists and was convinced that the workers would be ruined by the franchise, for it had not prevented the capitalists from crushing labour in Kimberley, Chicago and at the Carnegie Steel Works.⁹⁵

Government leaders, especially Kruger, came to be regarded as the friends of the working class by the Labour Union and, later, by the T. & L.C. At the end of 1893, for example, Rose declared:

Going so frequently on deputations to Pretoria, he was a little bit behind the scenes as it were, and he had conceived a very considerable sympathy for the Government when he saw the base attempts that were made all day long to verneuk and canoodle them by the men with the largest purses. He had an especial sympathy for the President in his endeavours to mete out evenhanded justice to all parties alike.⁹⁶

Amos Broadhurst, president of the T. & L.C., was still more complimentary at the second Labour Day banquet, held in May 1894, asserting:

every honest, well-disposed, law-abiding working man in this Republic has no better friend, no more sincere well-wisher, than its worthy President, Paul Kruger.⁹⁷

95. See Taylor's letters in Standard & Diggers' News, 2, 7, 17.7.1894, pp. 5, 9 & 2, respectively. See also F. J. Grobler, "Die Invloed van Geskoolde Blanke Arbeid", pp.5-6.

96. Star, 18.12.1893, p.3. For Seddon's attitude see Standard & Diggers' News, 15.5.1893, p.37.

97. Standard & Diggers' News, 12.5.1894, p.6.

That Kruger valued this support is clearly shown by the following statement appearing in the Press:

Just to ease the minds of Messrs. Rose, Bain & Co., Ltd., about the personal affection they boast of at public dinners for His Honour the State President, it may be as well to state that President Kruger, who is known to have a strong sympathy for the working classes, and therefore sent a pleasant formal reply to the invitation for the Rand Banquet, has at the same time a peculiar way of his own in reading people's characters thoroughly after the first interview, and that Mr. Bain's manifold talents have already been thoroughly recognised.⁹⁸

By the time the Jameson Raid tested the loyalty of the white workers no political labour organisation existed in the Republic to convey their reaction. But the hasty exit from the Rand of thousands of British workers indicates they were averse to taking up arms against the state.⁹⁹ The irrepressible Bain travelled to Pretoria to assure the Government that the workers were on its side, offered to help trace enemy weapons and told of his discharge from the Jumpers Mine for refusing to take up arms against Kruger.¹⁰⁰ On 2 January 1896 he publicly demanded the execution of the leaders of the insurrection whom he condemned as traitors.¹ Hildebrandt, who was later elected to the I.I.L.P.'s provisional committee, joined the Government's Vrijwilligers. The T. & L.C., however, presented a petition early in June requesting the Government to release the remaining Reform Committee prisoners.²

98. As quoted in Critic, 11.5.1894, p.605.

99. F. R. Statham, South Africa as It Is, p.280; Olive Schreiner, An English-South African's View of the Situation, pp.43-5; F. J. Grobler, "Die Invloed van Geskoolde Blanke Arbeid", pp.31-3.

100. Transvaal Critic, 28.2.1896, p.423; F. J. Grobler, "Die Invloed van Geskoolde Blanke Arbeid," p.10.

1. Star, 15.6.1899, p.6.

2. Transvaal Critic, 5.6.1896, p.42; F. J. Grobler, "Die Invloed van Geskoolde Blanke Arbeid," p.33. The writer has assumed that the petition signed by 3 688 workers described by Grobler was the one presented by the T. & L.C. although, unlike the Transvaal Critic, he makes no reference to the Council.

When war clouds threatened the Transvaal for months before finally breaking out on 11 October 1899 the allegiance of the white workers was again put to the test. Generally, organised labour seemed to back Kruger. In May Rand trade unions, except the A.S.E., petitioned the British government to refrain from interfering in the internal affairs of the Republic, and the Transvaal Engine-Drivers' Association actually sent a deputation to Kruger to assure him of its steadfast support.³ Both the Johannesburg Witness and the I.I.L.P. condemned the Uitlander movement as capitalist-inspired and feared that it might transform Johannesburg into a second Kimberley.⁴ The chairman of the I.I.L.P., K. Ferguson, suggested on 9 September that the workers should proceed to Pretoria to ascertain whether war was imminent and, if so, should defend the Republic.⁵ "If war was about," he declared two weeks later, "it would forever be a blot on the Imperial Government, a monstrous calamity, and would bring no glory or profit."⁶

John Burns maintained that the Cornish, Northumberland and Durham miners recognised that the franchise demand was a bogus one, being "a fraudulent pretext of the financiers to cover ulterior designs, to buy up and use the votes of industrial nomads to increase their commercial power, to lower the social standard of the miners, to lower wages and to increase hours".⁷ Similarly Brittlebank wrote in June:

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3. F. J. Grobler, "Die Invloed van Geskoolde Blanke Arbeid", p. 34-5.
 4. Johannesburg Witness, 1.9.1899 and extract published in Torch, May 1899, p.5; on the I.I.L.P. see manifesto in Appendix B, IV, 2 below.
 5. Standard & Diggers' News, 12.9.1899, p.6.
 6. Ibid., 25.9.1899, p.4.
 7. The Views of a Labour Member on the Justice of the War, pp. 6-7, (pamphlet no.19 published by the South African Conciliation Committee).

Out of the great number of men to whom I have spoken on the subject of the franchise not more than two or three have evinced any desire to avail themselves of it. What they want are warm, comfortable bedrooms, no overtime, and no Sunday work.⁸

In September the Transvaal government was even assured that the majority of the Cornish miners would stand behind it.⁹

Nevertheless, the majority of the white workers on the Rand were probably influenced by imperialist ideas and apparently came under the sway of the South African League.¹⁰ Miners' meetings clamouring for the franchise may not have been spontaneous, the South African League's petition to the Queen containing 21 000 signatures may have been skilfully organised, Sir Alfred Milner and some of the mining magnates may have been guiding hands behind the Uitlander movement, and Tommy Dodd and A. J. Strong may have been paid-touts of the League when they posed overseas as representatives of the long-suffering workers on the Witwatersrand,¹¹ but genuine Labour leaders were also involved in the Uitlander agitation. Thus the Uitlander Council, which had its origins in the miners' meetings, included R. Shanks and A. S. Raitt.¹² The latter resigned in August as secretary of the Johannesburg branch of the A.S.E. because the Council, required too much of his time.¹³ Born in 1867 in Scotland, Raitt qualified as a mechanical engineer at the University College of Dundee. About five years after his arrival in South Africa in 1890 he became a prominent advocate of Uitlander rights.¹⁴ Both he

8. Letter in Standard & Diggers' News, 22.6.1899, p.6.

9. M. Bitensky (Dr. M. Katzen), "The South African League" (M.A. thesis, University of the Witwatersrand, 1950), p.84 ff.

10. Ibid.; and A. A. Mawby, "The Political Behaviour of the British Population of the Transvaal, 1902-1907," pp.32-3.

11. Johannesburg Witness, 1.9.1899; and extract published in Torch, May 1899, p.4; John Burns, The Views of a Labour Member on the Justice of the War, pp.7-8; F. J. Grobler "Die Invloed van Geskoolde Blanke Arbeid", p.33; and J. S. Marais, The Fall of Kruger's Republic, pp.263-4.

and Shanks showed by their public careers from 1902 onwards that they were not puppets of the Chamber of Mines, as will be shown.

From the middle of July 1899 the I.I.L.P. dared not risk holding a public meeting so unpopular seemed its views.¹⁵ When Bain and Mathews tried to address the Uitlander Council's public meeting on 26 July they were "ignominiously ejected."¹⁶ Undeterred, Bain rashly called for volunteers for the Republican army before a defiant crowd on Johannesburg's Market Square on 16 September and might have caused bloodshed when he drew his revolver after being roughly received, had the police not intervened in time.¹⁷

Meanwhile thousands of Uitlanders foresaw the outbreak of war and sought refuge in the coastal towns of South Africa.¹⁸ Not so J. T. Bain who joined the Heidelberg Commando once hostilities had begun. Captured by the British forces the following year he was nearly executed as a traitor, but spent two years in a prisoner-of-war camp in Ceylon instead, after proof was produced that he was a naturalised enemy subject.¹⁹ Brittlebank continued to submit articles to the Volksstem and entered government employ in Pretoria in February 1900.²⁰ Mathews, however, returned to Cornwall, explaining several years afterwards:

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12. Standard & Diggers' News, 31.7.1899, p.5.
 13. Natal Mercury, 24.8.1899, p.4.
 14. O. F. Brothers, The First Transvaal Parliament, p.69.
 15. Standard & Diggers' News, 31.7.1899, p.5.
 16. Ibid., 27.7.1899, pp.5-6.
 17. Ibid., 18.9.1899, p.5; see also obituary on Bain in Star, 29.10.1919, p.10.
 18. Standard & Diggers' News, 4.8.1899, p.3; 16.9.1899, p.3; 20.9.1899, p.4; African Review, 23.9.1899, p.491; Transvaal Leader, 28.8.1909, p.9, article I in series "Capital and Labour."
 19. Union House of Assembly Debates, 9.2.1914, col.163; R. K. Cope, Comrade Bill, p.77.
 20. SS 8371 (Oorlogstukken), R5157/00, Brittlebank to the State Secretary, 10.2.1900.

Having no cause to complain of my wages or hours under the late Republican Government, I did not fight for either side, as, being a Socialist, I deem all wars cruel and unnecessary,²¹

Of the post-war Labour leaders only Bain fought for the Boers, although R. J. Stickland, a leading member of the S.A.T.U. from its inception in 1898, stayed on the Rand during the war and worked on the mines for the Republican government.²² Shanks joined the Uitlander refugees in Durban and Raitt served with distinction in Bethune's Mounted Regiment.²³ The president of the Witwatersrand T. & L.C. in 1902, P. Whiteside, who was first elected to the executive of the Transvaal Engine-Drivers' Association in 1897, and its vice-president, W. H. Andrews, who participated in the formation of the Johannesburg branch of the A.S.E. in 1893, both saw active service with the Imperial army, as numerous other Transvaal trade unionists of British background must surely have done, and were again to do in the First World War.²⁴

Differences amongst the Labour leaders over the Anglo-Boer War did little to hinder the growth of the Transvaal labour movement. However, the bitterness engendered by the hostilities between Boer and Briton ensured that the South African electorate would divide along "racial" rather than "class" lines and thereby retarded the growth of the political labour movement and restricted its membership.

21. Star, 29.8.1910, p.8.

22. On Stickland during the war see Transvaal Leader, 31.1.1907, p.12; for biographical details see Gitsham and Trembath, Labour Organisation in South Africa, p.175.

23. On Shanks see Natal Mercury Weekly Edition, 7.12.1900, p.11; on Raitt see Star, 25.11.1907, p.8, obituary.

24. On Whiteside see obituary in Star, 19.9.1929; on Andrews see R. K. Cope, Comrade Bill, p.59 and passim. On Labour's attitude to the First World War see D. Ticktin, "The War Issue and the Collapse of the South African Labour Party, 1914-15", South African Historical Journal, November 1969, p.64 and passim.

5. Labour Achievements

"There is every likelihood of our being able to launch our own paper ere long, from our own press, from our own Labour Hall, and from our own ground," Bain wrote enthusiastically to the Clarion in June 1894.²⁵ Although he started the Johannesburg Witness in the middle of 1898 and the Government actually granted stands on Hospital Hill to the Labour Union at the end of 1893, his hopes were not fulfilled.²⁶ No Trades Hall was erected until 1905 and no wide-embracing labour publication of reasonable duration was launched, until the Voice of Labour and the Worker were issued in 1908 and 1909, respectively. The original stands offered were rejected by the Labour Union because they were not centrally situated. Negotiations, which had commenced in October 1892, continued for four years, ending after the T. & L.C. lost Government sympathy because of its involvement in a strike and possibly because it had become imbued with imperialist fervour.²⁷

Despite its discreditable officers the Labour Union achieved much for the white workers. In 1893 the Government submitted copies of its draft mining regulations to the Chamber of Mines and to the Labour Union for their comments. Of the twenty-three amendments proposed by the Union no less than twenty were adopted by the Government, whereas of the fourteen

25. 2.8.1894, p.6, letter from "Snooks" [Bain].

26. On the Johannesburg Witness see Appendix E below. On the grant of stands see SS.3861, R8453/93, pp.14-15, Resumé by W. J. Leyds, 25.4.1894.

27. For lengthy correspondence concerning the stands see relevant file in the Transvaal Archives, SS 3861, R8453/93 or detailed summary given in F. J. Grobler, "Die Invloed van Geskoolde Blanke Arbeid", pp.11-16. On the T. & L.C.'s imperialist fervour see Transvaal Leader, 10.7.1909, p.12, and Rand Daily Mail, 23.5.1905, p.5, "Labour Notes"

submitted by the Chamber only six were accepted, and of these, two were amended by the Volksraad in accordance with the Union's representations. In addition, the Labour Union succeeded in obtaining a strict Boilers' Inspection Law which had become vital because of the large number of accidents arising from faulty boilers on the mines.²⁸ "The working men had obtained as much from the Government in twelve months," declared W. H. P. Linden of the Painters' Union in May 1894, "as they would have got in England in twelve years."²⁹ About the same time the respect commanded by the Union was again impressively demonstrated when it invited all the members of the First and Second Volksraad to a joint meeting for the purpose of discussing labour demands. Over fifty per cent. of the members attended the cordial three hour gathering in Pretoria.³⁰

The Labour Union was mainly responsible for the rejection of the Gold Thefts Bill drafted by the Chamber of Mines and published unaltered in the Staats Courant in February 1893. Providing far-reaching powers for detectives controlled by the Chamber but paid by the State, in cases concerning illicit gold, this Bill would have made no one safe from summary arrest if suspected of possession of illicit gold and would have introduced the detested diamond "trapping system". The Labour Union strenuously opposed this measure by means of petitions and deputations to the Government with such success that the Chamber, realising the unpopularity of the proposed Bill, asked for its withdrawal.³¹ Similarly, the Labour

28. Standard & Diggers' News, 12.5.1894, p.6, Rose's remarks; E. B. Rose's pamphlet, White Labour and the Transvaal, pp.7-9.

29. Standard & Diggers' News, 12.5.1894, p.6.

30. E. B. Rose, White Labour and the Transvaal, pp.10-11.

31. Ibid., p.8; F. J. Grobler, "Die Invloed van Geskoolde Blanke Arbeid", pp.16-18; Johannesburg Witness as quoted in Standard & Diggers' News, 6.8.1899, p.5; I.I.L.P. Manifesto in Appendix B, IV, 2, below.

Union prevented the Johannesburg Waterworks Company and the Mercantile Association from depriving tenants of the vote in the plebiscite over the town's water scheme at the end of 1893.³² However, the Labour Union and, subsequently, the T. & L.C. failed to secure a badly needed Employers' Liability Act despite initial Government sympathy. This was largely because of the opposition of the Chamber of Mines, but Government procrastination was also partly to blame.³³ Organised labour also failed to obtain a satisfactory Sunday Observance Act in 1894 and 1896 as mine stamps were still able to operate with certain restrictions.³⁴

Although the eight hour working day was one of the foremost planks in the Johannesburg T. & L.C.'s platform in 1893,³⁵ the movement for its attainment only gathered momentum in August and September 1899 when the I.I.L.P. took up the demand and drafted a petition for it and when the International Labour Union in Pretoria supported.³⁶ On 11 September the First Volksraad actually agreed to the principle and instructed the Government to "publish a draft law fixing a maximum working day of eight hours for white workmen."³⁷ There, however, the matter ended as war broke out soon afterwards.

32. E. B. Rose, White Labour and the Transvaal, p.8; also Star, 18.12.1894, p.3.
33. F. J. Grobler, "Die Invloed van Geskoolde Blanke Arbeid", pp.20-24; E. B. Rose, White Labour and the Transvaal, p.8; I.I.L.P. Manifesto in Appendix B, IV, 2 below; Transvaal Leader, 21.9.1909, p.7, article XI in series "Capital and Labour."
34. F. J. Grobler, "Die Invloed van Geskoolde Blanke Arbeid", pp.28-31. For Bain's 1894 petition see Standard & Diggers' News, 21.4.1894, p.7.
35. See Appendix B, IV, 1, below
36. On the I.I.L.P. see Standard & Diggers' News, 14.8.1899, p.4; 28.8.1899, p.6; 2.9.1899, p.4; 11.9.1899, p.4. On the International Labour Union see 11.9.1899, p.5, and 15.9.1899, p.6.
37. Ibid., 12.9.1899, p.4. See also E. B. Rose, White Labour in the Transvaal, p.11.

When organised labour harked back after the war to the "halcyon days" under Kruger it therefore did so with good reason, even if the President had ordered his Zarps to intervene in the 1897 Randfontein Miners' Strike at the request of the mining magnate, J. B. Robinson.³⁸

Much of the post-war Labour programme had already been advanced under the Republican regime. Thus the Johannesburg T. & L.C.'s municipal platform, first drafted in 1893, advocated the insertion of a fair wage clause in all Sanitary Board contracts, an eight hour working day, a minimum wage for white workers and municipalisation of essential public services; and in 1899 the I.I.L.P. pressed for an Employers' Liability Act and compulsory arbitration in industrial disputes.³⁹ Nor was colour discrimination a post-war development. One of the first statutory appearances of the industrial colour bar was instigated by the Transvaal Engine-Drivers' Association. Act no. 12 of 1896, section XII, point 106 laid down: "No person of colour may hold an engine-driver's certificate of competency."⁴⁰ Bain complained about the use of native labour in the baking trade; Taylor would have liked a law to protect Europeans from the increasing insolence of natives; and the I.I.L.P.'s manifesto in July 1899 referred to the abortive Chamber of Mines Illicit Gold Bill as "fit only for Kaffirs and convicts."⁴¹ In 1897 the T. & L.C. protested against the use of non-white skilled labour with such success that archi-

38. On the Randfontein Strike see R. K. Cope, Comrade Bill, pp.41-2; on harking back to pre-war years see pp.134, 175, 194 below.

39. See Appendix B, IV, 1, below on the T. & L.C. and Standard & Diggers' News, 6.6.1899, p.3, editorial, on the I.I.L.P.

40. As quoted in Transvaal Critic, 18.6.1897, p.865. See also F. J. Grobler, "Die Invloed van Geskoolde Blanke Arbeid", pp.24-27.

41. On Bain see Standard & Diggers' News, 12.4.1894, p.5; on Taylor see 11.4.1894, p.5; for the I.I.L.P.'s manifesto see Appendix B, IV, 2, below.

tracts afterwards stipulated in their contracts that only white skilled workmen should be employed.⁴² A few years later Rose described the race prejudice in the Transvaal as follows:

...anyone conversant with the ideas and feeling prevailing in South Africa regarding the equality of blacks and whites would only smile at the bare suggestion that they should or would be paid alike. Indeed, it is safe to assert that in nine cases out of ten the "nigger" who demanded the same pay as the white man, although expected to do the same work, would be promptly kicked for his audacity, and in the tenth case would be simply told to "voetsak" (clear out).⁴³

Labour solidarity, then did not embrace the black man. In view of the unfree labour market, the compound system on the mines and the large-scale employment of migratory tribal native labour, this outcome was not illogical as explained in the introductory chapter. Yet, the I.I.L.P.'s statement of its aims in August 1899 stressed the need to organise all sections of the working-class "from the highest municipal officer to the man who sweeps out the office." The white worker, however, seeing no identity of interest with the non-white labourer, could not conceive that this plea included the native. But its likely author, A. Brittlebank, if his post-war outlook is any criterion, thought otherwise.⁴⁴

In short, the labour and socialist movement took such solid root under the Republican government that their re-

42. Transvaal Leader, 2.5.1908, p.15, "Labour Notes".

43. E. B. Rose, White Labour and the Transvaal, p.6.

44. For I.I.L.P. statement see Appendix, B, IV, 3, below. Its language and content point to Brittlebank's authorship. On his post-war outlook see his letters in Rand Daily Mail, 30.10.1907, p.8, and in the Star as published in Indian Opinion, 16.1.1909, p.32.

emergence after the Anglo-Boer War was certain. The cordial relationship between Labour and President Kruger foreshadowed the subsequent alliances between organised labour and the Afrikaner which were to culminate in the Nationalist-Labour Pact government of 1924. Finally, the hostility of organised labour towards the mining magnates, which began in Kimberley and was sustained on the Witwatersrand in the 1890's, was to continue after the war, becoming an important feature of the political labour movement.

CHAPTER IV

TRANSVAAL, 1900-1903

I have consulted the Consolidated Goldfields people, and one of the members of the board of the Village Main had consulted Messrs. Wernher, Beit & Co., and the feeling seems to be one of fear that if a large number of white men are employed on the Rand in the position of labourers the same troubles will arise as are now prevalent in the Australian Colonies, i.e., that the combination of the labouring classes will become so strong as to be able to more or less dictate, not only the question of wages, but also political questions by the power of the votes when a representative Government is established.

Percy Tarbutt, Chairman of the Board of the Village Main Reef Mine, 3 July 1902.¹

1. Trade Union Background

In April 1901 Lord Kitchener allowed some of the mines to resume operations. As a result the civilian population began to return to the Rand and reached its pre-war level by September 1902.² Nor did the craft unions wait for the Peace of Vereeniging in May 1902 before restarting activity. In February the carpenters went on strike for higher wages, in April the craft unions united in opposing the imposition of piece work on the Crown Reef Mine, and in May the tailors fought for better conditions.³ Trade unionism expanded rapidly. Already in 1901 the Johannesburg District Committee of the A.S.E. was founded and a paid organiser appointed. Whereas in 1899 there was only one branch of the A.S.E. in

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1. From Tarbutt's letter to F. H. P. Creswell, 3.7.1902, as reproduced in Cd. 1897, p.594.
 2. A. A. Mawby, "The Political Behaviour of the British Population of the Transvaal, 1902-1907", p.5.
 3. F. J. Grobler, "Die Invloed van Geskoolde Blanke Arbeid", p.38.

the Transvaal, early in 1903 there were six.⁴ The S.A.E.D. & F.A., the pre-war Transvaal Engine-Drivers' Association renamed, was soon forming branches all over the Reef and by the middle of 1905 had 1 500 members. Much of its success was due to its full-time general secretary, Peter Whiteside, who held this post from May 1902 to 1919.⁵ Other unions progressed favourably, and even the miners who were so apathetic under Republican rule were affected by the enthusiasm for combination.

In January and May 1902 William Mather, an ex-Cumberland miner working as an insurance agent, was asked to take the initiative in organising the miners because he was able to move about more freely than they.⁶ He convened the inaugural meeting of the T.M.A. on 22 June and was responsible for the formation of several branches in July and August.⁷ Its first president was A. J. Strong and its general secretary and treasurer were Mather and S. W. Fursey, respectively.⁸ Within a year the first two had deserted the cause of organised labour. Strong's position became untenable after

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4. A.E.J., April 1903, p.84, report by Raitt; September 1903, p.33, report by Kneebone; and A.S.E. Monthly Report, March 1909, p.8, article by Jas. Morgan.
 5. Rand Daily Mail, 17.7.1905, p.4; Transvaal Leader, 23.5.1908, p.9, "Labour Notes"; Gitsham and Trembath, Labour Organisation in South Africa, p.179.
 6. Transvaal Leader, 17.7.1902, p.5, letter from A. Murdoch; 8.8.1905, p.5, letter from W. Mather; Star, 18.7.1902, p.8, letter from Mather's wife. Mather is referred to as the virtual founder of the T.M.A. in Transvaal Leader, 9.5.1908, p.13, "Labour Notes".
 7. On inaugural meeting see Transvaal Leader, 23.6.1902, p.3; and 8.8.1902, p.5, letter from Mather. On branch formation see, for example, 25.7.1902, p.4; 28.7.1902, p.5; and 18.8.1902, p.5.
 8. On Strong's office see Transvaal Leader, 25.8.1902, p.5; on Mather see Natal Mercury, 5.12.1902, p.8 and Transvaal Leader, 9.5.1908, p.13, "Labour Notes"; on Fursey see Transvaal Leader, 14.8.1902, p.6.

his opposition to the strike on the Village Main Reef Mine in October which the T.M.A. actively supported.⁹ Mather was asked to resign in April 1903, probably because of alleged association with the mine-owners over Chinese labour, and was succeeded by Fursey, who was replaced during 1904 by John Wood. The latter remained general secretary until his death from miners phthisis about the end of 1906.¹⁰ Until the 1907 Miners' Strike the T.M.A. struggled to survive and managed to organise a small minority of white miners only - probably well below 1 000 - despite the exaggerated membership claims of its spokesmen.¹¹ At this time the only full-time official it could afford to employ was its typist, Mary Fitzgerald, who became renowned as "Pickhandle Mary" after the 1911 Johannesburg Tramway Strike.¹²

The failure to organise a powerful miners' association was a great setback for the emergent labour party, for the white miners constituted the largest homogeneous section of the Witwatersrand European population. As late as 1913 David Ivon Jones, a leading S.A.L.P. intellectual, deplored that not one miner was in Parliament nor on the Germiston Town Council at a time when the urban electorate had never been so favourable to the Labour cause, adding:

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9. See, for example, Strong's letter in Transvaal Leader, 7.10.1902, p.5, and T.M.A.'s reply in 9.10.1902, p.5.
10. On succession of secretaries see Transvaal Leader, 9.5.1908, p.13; and Gitsham and Trembath, Labour Organisation in South Africa, p.65. For Labour's repudiation of Mather see H. W. Sampson's letter in Morning Leader, 23.5.1904. For date of his resignation see S. A. News, 18.4.1903, p.3, "Labour Notes".
11. R. K. Cope, Comrade Bill, p.89; Gitsham and Trembath, Labour Organisation in South Africa, pp.28 & 65; and Mary Fitzgerald's Recollections (typescript), pp.2-3, in Johannesburg Public Library. For examples of exaggerated claims see African Review, 25.10.1902, p.118, for T. Ratcliffe's estimate of 3 000, and T. G. 2 of 1908, p.427, for Mathews's figure of 3 800.
12. Mary Fitzgerald's Recollections, pp.1-2.

It is a blunt commentary on the ravages of disease, and on the fell work of the black list and the sack as a political weapon that so few miners are able to appear on public bodies.¹³

Labour organisation on the Rand made its most important advance in 1902 with the re-formation of the T. & L.C. In April the successful strike on the Crown Reef Mine against piece work led to the establishment of a united trades committee representing craft unions supporting the strikers.¹⁴ This temporary co-operation was consolidated on 17 July when a meeting of eight local unions presided over by Whiteside decided to convert the trades committee into the Johannesburg T. & L.C., which was later renamed the Witwatersrand T. & L.C.¹⁵ The main driving force behind its formation was undoubtedly the A.S.E., whose hall was used for the meetings of the United Trades Committee and was the headquarters of the T. & L.C. until the Trades Hall was officially opened in May 1905.¹⁶ The Council's constitution was drafted by its provisional committee of which E. Boughey was chairman. His election points to some continuity with the pre-war Council of which he was vice-chairman in 1896. Trade union delegates agreed to the constitution in November 1902 and elected Whiteside as the first president of the T. & L.C., W. H. Andrews as vice-president and T. W. S. Davies of the S.A.T.U. as secretary.¹⁷

13. Worker, 21.8.1913, p.3.

14. R. K. Cope, Comrade Bill, p.64; Walker and Weinbren, 2 000 Casualties, pp.11-13; Rand Daily Mail, 8.6.1905, p.6, letter from "A Member of the A.S.E."

15. Star, 18.7.1902, p.8, Rand Daily Mail, 8.6.1905, p.6, letter from "A Member of the A.S.E."

16. A.S.E. Monthly Report, August 1906, pp.11-12, article by Andrews; Rand Daily Mail, 8.6.1905, p.6, letter from "A Member of the A.S.E."; R. K. Cope, Comrade Bill, p.66.

17. For Boughey's position in 1896 see SS 3861, R 8453/93, p.225, Johannesburg T. & L.C. to the State Secretary, 4.8.1896. For other information see especially Transvaal Leader, 19.11.1902, p.5; also S.A.T.J., October 1902, p.8 and December 1902, p.8.

Early in 1903 A. S. Raitt, then the A.S.E.'s organiser, reported that the T. & L.C. consisted of eight societies representing 2 500 to 3 000 men.¹⁸ At the end of the year ten unions were affiliated with a total membership of 3 000. Afterwards this figure increased, for the T.M.A. joined for the first time and the Plasterers' Society reaffiliated, both towards the middle of 1904.¹⁹ In August 1905 the Rand Daily Mail referred to 3 800 men represented by the Council, which seems a reasonable estimate. As there were on the Rand 15 000 miners at this time the T. & L.C. represented a small minority of white workmen although it could speak with greater authority on the demands of the non-mining population.²⁰

The Council's activities were manifold. Coinciding with the demise of Mather's weekly Labour paper, The Tribune, which survived for one year after its first issue on 6 September 1902, the Council published its own monthly organ which continued irregularly into 1905, being initially entitled, Trades and Labour News and afterwards, Official Circular.²¹ From its

18. A.E.J., April 1903, p.84.

19. On affiliation of ten unions see Star, 14.11.1903, p.11, letter from the T. & L.C; on figure of 3 000 see S. A. News, 6.2.1904, p.10, "Labour Notes" quoting second annual report of the T. & L.C; on affiliation of the miners and plasterers see S. A. News, 14.5.1904, p.13, "Labour Notes".

20. Rand Daily Mail, 23.8.1905, p.3, for estimate of 3 800. For population statistics see L. M. Thompson, Unification of South Africa, pp.486 & 498. Note the following estimates of the T. & L.C.'s membership, some of which are inflated: 5 000 by Whiteside as reported in A.E.J., November 1903, p.111; 5 000 upwards by S. A. News, 6.2.1904, p.10, "Labour Notes"; 7 000 in 1906 by H. W. Sampson in T. G. 11 of 1908, para. 2345; 5 000 in August 1907 by C. Yellen, representing the T. & L.C., in T.A.S. 2 of 1907, p.95; 10 000 to 12 000 for combined membership of Witwatersrand and Pretoria T. & L.C.s by Whiteside in Debates of the Transvaal Legislative Assembly, 19.8.1908, col. 1753.

21. On The Tribune see S.A.T.J., September 1902, p.5; October 1902, p.8; and October 1903, p.8. On the T. & L.C.'s organ see S. A. News, 17.10.1903, p.3; 6.2.1904, p.10, "Labour Notes"; 20.8.1904, p.4, "Labour Notes"; Rand Daily Mail, 4.8.1905, p.5; and 15.8.1905, p.5, "Labour Notes".

inception the T. & L.C. showed political intent, for its constitution provided for unseating delegates whose political activity clashed with its own.²² Already in November 1903 it described itself as the "Labour Party" and was financing its own municipal candidates.²³ It formed a parliamentary committee to consider subjects to be introduced by its representative in the Legislative Council and a municipal committee, which soon succeeded in obtaining the insertion of a fair wage clause in municipal contracts.²⁴ In 1903 W. Wybergh, the Commissioner of Mines, maintained contact with the T. & L.C. and the T.M.A. and, in drafting his Mines, Works and Machinery Regulations Ordinance, submitted clauses to the Council for its comment.²⁵ According to the Labour columnist of the South African News, the Witwatersrand T. & L.C. received as much public recognition as the Chamber of Commerce.²⁶

Functioning where South Africa's main industry was located, the Witwatersrand T. & L.C. became inevitably the country's foremost political and industrial labour organisation until the formation of the I.L.P. and L.R.C. in 1906 and the Transvaal Federation of Trade Unions in 1911 left it without much purpose. That its early office-bearers like Whiteside, Andrews and Sampson should play key rôles in the emergent labour party is therefore scarcely surprising.²⁷

Whiteside, who was president of the T. & L.C., 1902-1904, became the best known Labour leader in South Africa from 1903 to 1909 and was affectionately called "The People's Peter".

22. H. J. and R. E. Simons, Class and Colour in South Africa, p.98.

23. Star, 14.11.1903, p.11, letter from the Witwatersrand T. & L.C. on the "Labour Party". S.A.T.J., May 1903, p.5, and December 1904, p.5, on financing candidates.

24. S.A. News, 5.3.1904, p.11, "Labour Notes"; S.A.T.J., February 1904, p.6.

25. Debates of the Transvaal Legislative Council, 13 & 14.7.1903, pp.202 & 213, respectively.

26. 5.3.1904, p.11.

Born in 1870 in Ballarat, Australia, he qualified as an engineer in Melbourne, but worked as an engine-driver on the Rand from his arrival in 1893 until his election as general secretary of the S.A.E.D. & F.A. in 1902, except when he served as a quartermaster sergeant in the British army during the Anglo-Boer War. In 1896 he founded the Benoni branch of the Transvaal Engine-Drivers' Association and was elected to the executive of the parent body a year later.²⁸

Andrews, who was vice-president of the Witwatersrand T. & L.C. until his election as president in June 1905, was president of the Transvaal Political Labour League in the same year and of the Transvaal L.R.C. on its formation in December 1906. Born in Suffolk, England, in 1870, he qualified as a fitter in 1891 and emigrated to the Transvaal in 1893. Except for a small role in the 1897 Randfontein Strike, Andrews was not prominent in labour organisation before the war, but was nevertheless a foundation member of the Johannesburg branch of the A.S.E. From 1903 to 1906 he was secretary of the Johannesburg District Committee of the A.S.E., and when the South African Council of the A.S.E. was sanctioned by its London headquarters in 1906, he became its first secretary. At the end of the same year he succeeded Tom Kneebone as full-time organiser of the Engineers for South Africa.²⁹

Harry Sampson, who was secretary of the T. & L.C. from June 1903 to the end of 1904 and for a few months in the middle of 1905, and president in 1909, became the first president of the S.A.L.P. Born in 1872 in London where he was trained as a compositor, Sampson arrived in Cape Town in 1892. Here

28. Men of the Times: Pioneers of the Transvaal and Glimpses of South Africa, p.371; S. A. News Weekly Edition, 27.2.1907, p.7; F. H. Gale, Who's Who in the Union Parliament, p.36; S. A. News, 16.4.1904, p.4, and 20.7.1905, p.10, "Labour Notes"; Star, 19.9.1929, obituary; R. K. Cope, Comrade Bill, p.66.

29. R. K. Cope, Comrade Bill, chs. I to VII; A.S.E. Monthly Report, August 1906, pp.11-13; Transvaal Leader, 8.8.1908, p.14, "Labour Notes".

he helped to revive the printers' trade union and participated in the formation of the short-lived T. & L.C. After the printers' strike in 1897 he moved to East London where he was elected president of the local branch of the S.A.T.U., holding office from about 1898 to the beginning of 1902. By January 1903 he had joined the staff of the Transvaal Leader and was representing the Johannesburg branch of the S.A.T.U. on the T. & L.C. In July he was elected vice-president of the S.A.T.U., becoming president in December on the resignation of T. W. S. Davies. He held this office until 1929 except for six months, 1905-1906, when he was secretary and manager of the Johannesburg Trades Hall and Workingmen's Club. In 1928 he joined General Hertzog's cabinet as minister for posts and telegraphs.³⁰

Towards the middle of 1903 the Pretoria T. & L.C. was formed and in August it claimed membership of seven trade unions representing close on 2 000 artisans. In 1908 its secretary, F. Nettleton, stated that twelve unions were affiliated. The Council's first president and secretary were A. Arnold and L. M. Sanderson, both leading members of the local branch of the S.A.T.U. Arnold had presided over the inaugural conference of the S.A.T.U. held in Kimberley in 1898.³¹

2. From Military to Crown Colony Government

As the war dragged on, so the hardship of the thousands

30. A. J. Downes, Printers' Saga, pp.4,5,63,65,67,132,170-176,191 & 193; Gitsham and Trembath, Labour Organisation in South Africa, p.174; F. H. Gale, Who's Who in the Union Parliament, p.76. Note that the articles on Andrews and Sampson in Dictionary of South African Biography, I, must be treated with caution as they contain inaccuracies.

31. For formation and first officers of the T. & L.C. see S.A.T.J., June 1903, p.6; S.A. News, 3.10.1903, p.8; A. J. Downes, Printers' Saga, p.154. For membership claim in 1903 see Cd. 1895, p.69, no.42 and for 1908 see T.A.S. 1 of 1908, 3.7.1908, p.30. On Arnold and Sanderson see A. J. Downes, Printers' Saga, p.152; and on inaugural S.A.T.U. conference ibid. p.43

of Uitlander refugees in Natal and the Cape Colony worsened. After Great Britain formally annexed the South African Republic on 1 September 1900 their restlessness to return certainly mounted.³² Major Tom Dodd, secretary of the Transvaal section of the South African League and an Uitlander hero, was even approached to lead a proposed workmen's political group, but refused, maintaining that there could only be two parties while the war lasted: rebels and loyalists. However, he does not seem to have had any attachment to Labour and was probably in closer liaison with mining magnates such as Percy Fitzpatrick.³³

Milner with good reason feared that a "wretched class of agitator" would obtain a hold over the Uitlander refugees.³⁴ From September 1900 at least, the Cape Town Uitlander Refugee Committee started to hold protest meetings. Its meeting on 27 October, attended by over 2 000 persons, drafted a petition to the Queen complaining about the delay in and method of repatriation and attacking the unfair preference given to nominees of the mining houses who were already dominating the Transvaal government. This petition added, significantly, that the interests of the mining companies were opposed to those of the refugees because they wished to reduce the wages and numbers of white miners whom they were anxious to replace with the cheaper native workers.³⁵ The same committee issued a

32. Violet Cecil, "The Johannesburg Voter", National Review, March 1906, p.100.

33. Dodd to Fitzpatrick, 8.6.1900, as quoted in A. A. Mawby, "The Political Behaviour of the British Population of the Transvaal, 1902-1907", p.37. For biographical information on Dodd, who died during the war, see African Pictorial, April 1903, supp.; Transvaal Leader, 19.8.1902, p.4; F. H. P. Creswell, The Chinese Labour Question from Within, p.77.

34. A. A. Mawby, op. cit., p.37.

35. S. A. News, 29.10.1900, p.3; Natal Mercury Weekly Edition, 2.11.1900, p.24; S. A. Review, 2.11.1900, p.6.

pamphlet in which it accused the mining houses of promoting the war to convert Johannesburg into a second Kimberley, but nevertheless expressed full confidence in Milner.³⁶ A former member of the Johannesburg branch of the S.A.T.U. warned:

Let the people of South Africa beware that on the ruins of Boer tyranny a worse tyranny may not arise, for the capitalists, who have sweated black and white alike mean to increase their annual profit after the war.

In justification he pointed to the remarks made in November 1899 by the mining magnate, John Hays Hammond, concerning the increased post-war profits to be derived from wage reductions, and to the speech a month later by Earl Grey at a London meeting of Chartered Company shareholders in which he talked about the introduction of Asiatic labour.³⁷ The pattern of post-war Labour politics was already taking shape.

In the political reconstruction of the Transvaal Milner did not overlook Labour's right to representation. He seemed to share the views of Dodd who wrote in 1900 to Fitzpatrick that, to prevent disunity amongst the Transvaal British, prominence and influence should be given to trusted members of the then factiously inclined mercantile and working communities like J. W. Quinn, the well-known master baker, R. Shanks, a monumental mason, and A. S. Raitt, leading member of the A.S.E. in Johannesburg.³⁸ Indeed, when Milner appointed twelve municipal councillors for Johannesburg in June 1901 he included Quinn and Shanks; a year later he added Raitt and A. J. Strong, then president of the T.M.A., to the Council;

36. Protest of the Refugee Committee, Cape Town, against Capitalistic Legislation in the Transvaal; see also J. Ramsay MacDonald, What I Saw in South Africa, September and October, 1902, p.104.

37. S.A.T.U., December 1900, p.13. For A. Arnold's similar outlook in 1900 see A. J. Downes, Printers' Saga, p.146.

38. Dodd to Fitzpatrick, 8.6.1902, as quoted in A. A. Mawby, "The Political Behaviour of the British Population in the Transvaal, 1902-1907" p. 65

and in March 1903 Whiteside.³⁹ When he enlarged the Legislative Council to include non-officials Raitt was amongst those chosen.⁴⁰ Yet, organised labour was not happy over the nominations as it was apparently not consulted.⁴¹

Raitt, who was chairman of the parliamentary committee of the T. & L.C. until the middle of 1904, and Whiteside, who was president of the T. & L.C. from 1902-1904, were genuine Labour representatives. Although not a trade unionist Shanks commanded "the entire confidence of the working classes" according to the chief officers of the Witwatersrand T. & L.C. in 1903.⁴² Strong, however, had been forced to resign as president of the T.M.A. in October 1902 as described already. "Everyone in Johannesburg knew Mr. Strong," wrote J. Ramsay MacDonald towards the end of 1902. "I got his history before I was a day in the place.... No appointment shows more clearly than this how completely Lord Milner has become a tool of the Chamber of Mines and the South African League, because no appointment is less reputable." Moreover, he added, Strong had been a colleague of Dodd in the pre-war "stumping business" of the League.⁴³ MacDonald's verdict on Milner, which was shared by the general secretary of the T.M.A., W. Mather, seems, perhaps, incorrect, at least until the Chinese labour

39. For original nominations see Cd. 903, p.34, serial no. 17; on Strong see Transvaal Leader, 25.7.1902, p.4; on Raitt see A.E.J., June 1903, pp.66-7; on Whiteside see Men of the Times: Pioneers of the Transvaal, p.371.
40. Debates of the Transvaal Legislative Council, 20.5.1903, p.1, (first session).
41. Rand Daily Mail, 10.4.1906, p.5, "Labour Notes"; Transvaal Leader, 9.5.1908, p.13, "Labour Notes"; Star, 9.8.1910, p.5, article by "Filius Populi".
42. On Raitt and the Parliamentary Committee see S. A. News, 5.3.1904, p.11, "Labour Notes" and 13.8.1904, p.4. On Whiteside see p. 117 above. On Shanks see letter from the T. & L.C. in Star, 14.11.1903, p.11; as non-unionist see Star, 8.8.1904, p.8.
43. On Strong's resignation see p. 113 above. For quotations see J. Ramsay MacDonald, What I Saw in South Africa, p.106. For Bain's criticism of Strong in 1899 see Johannesburg Witness, 1.9.1899.

controversy began in 1903.⁴⁴ Milner had appointed W. Wybergh as his first commissioner of mines. Before the war he had been forced to resign as assistant consulting engineer to the Consolidated Golfields mining group because of his political activity as president of the Transvaal province of the South African League. In June 1902 Wybergh announced the imposition of a ten per cent. profits tax on the mines, and certainly acted independently of the Chamber of Mines which came to regard him as an enemy.⁴⁵ Wybergh gradually gravitated towards the Labour Party which he joined in 1910. In addition, Milner showed real concern for the welfare of the native miner.⁴⁶

Although Raitt was the only Labour representative of the twenty-three non-official members of the Legislative Council, Milner had recognised the right of organised labour to political representation under his crown colony administration, which began on 23 September 1902 when military government ended officially. By the beginning of 1904 three members of the Witwatersrand T. & L.C. had been made Justices of the Peace.⁴⁷

3. Transvaal Political Association

Soon after the Treaty of Vereeniging was signed, political activity was revived on the Rand. Following preliminary dis-

44. For Mather's opinion see J. Ramsay MacDonald, op.cit., p.106. Note that D.J.N. Denoon, "'Capitalist Influence' and the Transvaal Government during the Crown Colony Period, 1900-1906", The Historical Journal, no.2 of 1968, strongly supports MacDonald's attitude.

45. For biographical information see Cd. 1897, p.611 and 613; F. H. P. Creswell, Chinese Labour from Within, p.77; The Times, 5.3.1906, p.8, letter from W. F. Monypenny; S. A. News Weekly Edition, 27.2.1907, p.7.

46. R. K. Cope, Comrade Bill, pp.62-3; G. B. Pyrah, Imperial Policy and South Africa, 1902-1910, pp.187-8; Alfred Milner, "Great Britain and South Africa", National Review, April 1906, p.216; A. A. Mawby, "The Political Behaviour of the British Population in the Transvaal, 1902-1906," p.106.

47. S. A. News, 5.3.1904, p.11, "Labour Notes".

cussion with personal friends, J. Dale Lacey, a popular diamond mining magnate, convened a meeting on 2 July which resolved to form a political association to voice "public opinion on questions affecting the interests of this Colony". Eighty persons, representing varied interests including Labour, attended this gathering and they elected a committee to call the inaugural meeting of the Transvaal Political Association, as this movement came to be called.⁴⁸ Its manifesto, dated 6 August, expressly denied that the Association sought immediate self-government. In the absence of representative institutions it wished to speak for the population in "matters of public interest with the sole object of informing and assisting those who now exercise political power, and acting in harmony with them for the common good."⁴⁹

These "matters of public interest" provide the key to the formation of the Association. Dale Lacey was concerned about future taxation and the rights of prospectors and claimholders; on 5 June the Milner administration had burdened the mines with a ten per cent. profits tax; but the most important matter of all was Britain's proposed levy on the Transvaal for Imperial war expenses. In June the Chamber of Mines expressed its misgivings to Milner about the war debt; on 29 July the Colonial Secretary, Joseph Chamberlain, affirmed in the House of Commons that he expected a fair indemnity from the Transvaal and soon afterwards privately told Alfred Beit, a leading mineowner, that he thought in terms of an ultimate contribution of £100 000 000. As rumours to the amount were not silenced, feelings became heated in Johannesburg

48. Transvaal Leader, 3.7.1902, p.3. For background to the meeting see Dale Lacey's letter in issue of 25.8.1902, p.4.

49. Ibid., 8.8.1902, p.7. See also African Review, 23.8.1902, p.289, and L. S. Amery (ed.), The Times History of the War in South Africa, 1899 - 1902, VI, pp.59-60.

on this subject.⁵⁰

As early as 1 July the Transvaal Leader, whose editor, R. J. Pakeman, was one of the leaders of the political agitation, trusted that the "Labour Councils" would not stand aloof from the Association.⁵¹ The anxiety expressed by certain persons at the Association's meeting the following day that the Witwatersrand might be "galloped into the construction of a body political of dangerous influence that might not be so easily slain", must have seemed prophetic to the capitalists a month later.⁵² An unknown Australian trooper drafted a labour programme which was circulated from Engineers' Hall, Johannesburg, headquarters of the A.S.E. and the emergent T. & L.C., to Rand labour organisations. Its immediate aim was to coordinate the workers' demands at the proposed inaugural meeting of the Transvaal Political Association.⁵³

The Labour programme envisaged the formation of a League whose aims were to include agitating for democratic government, contesting municipal and parliamentary elections, combining "all shades of democracy under one common banner under the auspices of the Trades and Labour Council of the Transvaal," and forming branches in every district of the Transvaal. Its parliamentary candidates were to be rigidly confined to "the ranks of the workers" and were to be required to pledge their

50. On Dale Lacey's fears see his letter in Transvaal Leader, 25.8.1902, p.4. On the war contribution see Julian Amery, The Life of Joseph Chamberlain, IV, p.318 ff.; A. A. Mawby, "The Behaviour of the British Population in the Transvaal, 1902-1906," p.75 ff. and p.102 ff.; "Pseudo-Africanus", "Johannesburg", National Review, January 1903, pp.804-5; "Greater Britain: The Taxation of the Transvaal", National Review, November 1902, pp.480-9; J. Ramsay MacDonald, What I Saw in South Africa, p.112.

51. P.3, editorial.

52. Transvaal Leader, 3.7.1902, p.3.

53. J. Ramsay MacDonald, op. cit., p.112-3. He seems to date this programme as September or October whereas the Star and Transvaal Leader refer to it in August only. It is unlikely that two platforms were published, as the one recorded in full by MacDonald resembles closely the short extract in African Review, 9.8.1902, p.213. The author of the platform was not one of the Australians who played important

support for the Labour platform.⁵⁴

As the first post-war labour platform it merits detailed description. It advocated the usual contemporary workers' demands for democratisation of the electoral system, ameliorative labour legislation and a free system of education. However, no women's franchise was supported and an Upper House, albeit popularly elected, was proposed. Australian and New Zealand influence is evident in the demands for a National Bank, federation of South Africa after an affirmative plebiscite of the whole white nation, compulsory arbitration in all labour disputes, graduated income tax and the encouragement of land settlement schemes like those in New Zealand. Local conditions probably dictated the exclusion of non-whites from the Labour conception of a democratic electoral system as well as the opposition to the introduction of Asiatics on the gold mines, although this opposition was undoubtedly strengthened by Australian precedents. Henry George was responsible for the first listed plank in favour of taxation of land values irrespective of improvements. Socialist influence probably accounted for the demand in favour of "nationalisation or municipalisation" of essential public services and the coal mines. Finally, the programme did at least acknowledge the existence of the non-white labour force when it advocated a minimum wage for white and black workers.⁵⁵

The Star and the Transvaal Leader virtually ignored Labour's political activity and neither published the platform of the proposed League. They did report, however, the hostile reaction of the conservative British press. Both the Morning

have been subsequently mentioned. Thus Eastern Record, 19.12.1914, p.13, refers merely to an Australian trooper who drafted the platform.

54. See Appendix B, IV, 4, below.

55. See Appendix B, IV, 4, below.

Post and the Standard dismissed the platform as the "Newcastle Programme run mad", adding that the blood and money of the Empire was not "ungrudgingly expended" to enrich shareholders of Rand mines or to create "a Socialistic Utopia for a select body of employe[e]s."⁵⁶

Meanwhile Dale Lace's committee was forming branches of the Transvaal Political Association and finalising arrangements for its inaugural meeting on 23 August at which its constitution was to be adopted.⁵⁷ A counter movement led by the president of the Chamber of Mines, Percy Fitzpatrick, and supported by A. J. Strong, then president of the T.M.A., opposed the holding of the meeting, forced its postponement and succeeded in the election of a joint committee of the two groups which excluded Dale Lace.⁵⁸ It is possible that Labour control over the meeting was feared.⁵⁹

The coalition committee, which was dominated by leaders of the mining industry, conceded Labour's right to representation when it appointed Mather to its deputation of six whose task was to see Lord Milner about the war contribution.⁶⁰ This committee eventually agreed to hold the inaugural meeting of the Association on 4 October when the public would be asked to protest against the proposed war levy. Yet only one of its thirteen members attended and the representatives of the mining houses were notably absent.

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56. Star, 5.8.1902, p.6; Transvaal Leader, 6.8.1902, editorial. Note that the radical Newcastle programme was adopted by the National Liberal Federation at its Newcastle Conference in October 1891 - S. MacCoby (ed.), The Radical Tradition, pp.207-8.
57. Transvaal Leader, 15. & 18.8.1902, pp.5 & 3, respectively; Star, 7.8.1902, p.9, advertisement; A. A. Mawby, "The Political Behaviour of the British Population in the Transvaal, 1902-1906", pp.60-1.
58. Transvaal Leader, 21.8.1902, letter signed by W. St. John, Carr and others (including Strong); 22.8.1902, p.8, advertisement containing eighty-two names (including Strong) of persons opposed to the proposed public meeting; 23.8.1902, pp. 3 & 4, for formation of new committee and decision to postpone meeting; 25.8.1902, p.4, for letter from Dale Lace denying responsibility for the

Peter Whiteside proposed one of the motions at this meeting, which was attended by 1 500 persons, and was one of the prominent men on the platform. After proposals to form the Association and concerning the war contribution had been passed, the meeting became disorderly when Mather and his followers dominated proceedings. No incoming committee could be elected and the meeting had to be adjourned.⁶¹ "If anyone is anxious to anticipate the particular destiny of the Transvaal Political Association," commented the Star, "he would do well to devote attention to the programme and aims of Mr. Mather and his friends."⁶²

Poorly attended public meetings were held in November and December at which the constitution of the Association was adopted and a governing central council elected.⁶³ The Witwatersrand T. & L.C. formally resolved on 16 November to give the Association its "active and undivided support" and several of its members seem to have been elected to its council.⁶⁴

Main Reef Mine, one of the mines owned by the Corner House of which Fitzpatrick was one of the local heads - Transvaal Leader, 7.10.1902, p.5, letter from Strong; and 9.10.1902, p.5, letter from the T.M.A.

59. J. Ramsay MacDonald, What I Saw in South Africa, p.114.

60. Star, 18.9.1902, p.6. On mining industry domination see S. A. News, 19.9.1902, p.15 and J. Ramsay MacDonald, op.cit., p.15.

61. Star, 6.10.1902, p.7.

62. 6.10.1902, p.6.

63. A. A. Mawby, "The Political Behaviour of the British Population of the Transvaal, 1902-1906," p.72; Star, 24.11.1902, p.6; 15.12.1902, p.7. For the constitution see Transvaal Leader, 24.11.1902, p.7.

64. Transvaal Leader, 19.11.1902, p.5; Rand Daily Mail, 24.11.1902, as cited by A. A. Mawby, op.cit., p.240.

In December, however, the T. & L.C. seems to have withdrawn its support for the Association.⁶⁵ But it did not pursue the formation of the proposed Labour League, for no mention of it can be found after August.

Once Chamberlain settled the amount of the war contribution and clarified the position concerning self-government during his visit to the Rand in January 1903, the Transvaal Political Association lost much of its purpose. Its support later in the year for the Labour Importation Association, which was financed by the Chamber of Mines, confirms that it retained no connection with organised labour whatsoever.⁶⁶ The Association seems to have lingered on in Pretoria until it merged in 1906 with the Transvaal Responsible Government Association and the Reform Club to form the National Association.⁶⁷

4. Gathering Storm

As organised labour had established itself in 1902 as a recognised section of the Rand community, delegates of the Witwatersrand T. & L.C. and the T.M.A. were amongst the Johannesburg leaders who attended the meeting with Joseph Chamberlain on 17 January 1903, at which the amount of the Transvaal's war contribution was amicably fixed at thirty million pounds. Paradoxically, the Labour representatives voted against the contribution, although they subsequently explained to Chamberlain that they were not against it.⁶⁸

65. From absence of participation, as reported in Transvaal Leader, 11.12.1902, p.3, and 15.12.1902, p.6.

66. Cd. 1895, p.45.

67. G. H. L. Le May, British Supremacy in South Africa, 1899-1907, pp.156 & 199; J. M. H. van Aardt, "Die Botha Bewind in Transvaal, 1907-1910" (D.Litt. thesis, Potchefstroom, 1958), p.52; A. A. Mawby, op.cit., p.300.

68. Star, 23.1.1903, p.6, letter from E. J. Durrell, of the A.S. of C. & J.'s no.1 branch and reply from Chamberlain. See also "Greater Britain: The Colonial Secretary's Tour", National Review, February 1903, pp.1016-7; A. A. Mawby; "The Political Behaviour of the British Population

Four days after this meeting he received a deputation from the T. & L.C., which presented him with a memorial setting out its grievances. Chamberlain was assured that the Council had full confidence in the Milner administration, although it looked forward to the grant of responsible government. The memorial listed labour legislation required and, significantly, demanded protection for the existing labour force from overseas white and local non-white competition.⁶⁹

As the trade unions enjoyed complete freedom of meeting and white wages were high, no complaint was registered on these issues. Indeed, one contemporary writer described Labour as innocuous, maintaining that a powerful Labour Party could not arise because the workers had no profound discontents. "The annoyances of the Johannesburg proletariat," he continued, "are as compared with Europe like crumpled rose-leaves to thorns."⁷⁰ W. T. Stead, editor of the Review of Reviews, declared that the Rand white worker was the highest paid in the world, an opinion shared by another overseas observer, who wrote:

There is no country in the world where the white artisan is paid so highly for such light work, and there is no country in the world where the employer gets so small a quid pro quo from the white worker for the money expended on him.⁷¹

This living standard, organised labour was determined to defend and, hence, fully supported the strike of artisans

see Star, 22.1.1903, p.6.

69. Star, 22.1.1903, p.6; and R. K. Cope, Comrade Bill, p.67.

70. "Pseudo-Africanus", "Johannesburg", pp.805-6. On trade union freedom see, for example, Thomas Burt, A Visit to the Transvaal; Labour: White, Black and Yellow, pp.72-3.

71. S. Ransome, The Engineer in South Africa: A Review of the Industrial Situation in South Africa after the War and a Forecast of the Possibilities of the Country, p.79. For Stead's view see Review of Reviews, June 1904, p.562.

on the Crown Reef Mine in April 1902, and that of rockdrillers on the Village Main Reef Mine six months later.⁷²

During the latter strike Labour leaders predicted a more general offensive by the mining magnates, recalling the statement in March of the London chairman of the Village Main Reef Mine that profits would increase after the war ended because the white wage bill would then be reduced.⁷³ Such a policy was indeed sound business as the chief engineer of the Consolidated Golfields Company, H. H. Webb, wrote in October to his principal, C. D. Rudd. White salaries represented the chief expense in goldmining, constituting thirty-five per cent. of its costs, as against twenty-four for native wages and food. He therefore recommended reduction in the proportion of white labour employed and training of native workers in responsible duties, even if this meant going through a succession of strikes.⁷⁴

Meanwhile the departure of thousands of British soldiers, and the failure to expand goldmining sufficiently, resulted in the economic slump of 1903 and started the depression which continued for five years. Instead of the expected post-war millennium the Rand experienced mounting unemployment with about 3 000 stamps and 5 000 skilled men idle by the end of 1903. Immigration to the Transvaal after the peace was counterbalanced by the exodus of disappointed settlers a year later.⁷⁵ Economic recovery depended on the mining

72. R. K. Cope, Comrade Bill, pp.65 & 72.

73. Transvaal Leader, 6.10.1902, p.5; Star, 4.10.1902, p.6.

74. D. J. N. Denoon, "'Capitalist Influence' and the Transvaal Government," pp.318-9.

75. S. A. News, 17.2.1904, p.8, article by its Rand representative; The Times History of the War in South Africa, VI, pp.59 & 101; S. Ransome, The Engineer in South Africa, p.272; C. S. Goldman, "South Africa and her Labour Problem," Nineteenth Century, May 1904, p.850; G. H. L. Le May, British Supremacy in South Africa, 1899-1907, p.158; M. H. de Kock, Selected Subjects in the Economic History of South Africa, pp.124-6.

industry, then crippled by a serious shortage of native labour for which several factors were responsible. The prolonged war had disrupted continuous supply, abundant harvests in tribal areas discouraged work-seeking, the unhealthy and hazardous mining work was a great deterrent, the monopolistic W.N.L.A., formed in 1900, did not prove immediately successful in its recruiting methods and, finally, the reduction in native wages on the re-opening of the mines from the pre-war monthly 50s to 30s was an ill-advised move, rectified in February 1903 only.⁷⁶ The solution of this shortage was to have vital repercussions on the emergent labour party. Whereas in 1902 organised labour concentrated its attention on possible wage reductions, in 1903 it began to fear for its very existence and for the future of white labour on the Rand, picturing all avenues of employment overrun by Chinese workers, imported by the Chamber of Mines on the pretext of alleviating the unskilled labour shortage. Indeed, the controversy surrounding the introduction of Chinese labour gave a tremendous impetus to the political labour movement in South Africa not incomparable to the effect of the Great Maritime Strike in 1890 in Australia and of the Taff Vale Case, 1900-1901, in Great Britain. In addition, Transvaal politics up to 1907 cannot be understood without detailed study of this controversy.

Before the war there had been a chronic shortfall of

76. Cd. 1897, Reports of the Transvaal Labour Commission: Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence; Debates of the Transvaal Legislative Council, Second Session, p.56 ff. (Labour Importation Motion); S. A. News, 25.2.1904, p.7, article by its Rand representative; F. H. P. Creswell, The Chinese Labour Question from Within, pp.47 & 50; W. T. Stead, "South Africa and its Problems: The Chinese Question, "Review of Reviews, June 1904, pp.565-8; D. J. N. Denoon, "The Transvaal Labour Crisis, 1901-6," Journal of African History, 1967, pp.481-8.

native labour as Sir George Farrar, president of the Chamber of Mines in 1903, stressed.⁷⁷ Whether, therefore, the mining houses under cover of impending ruin from the relative shortage were intent on solving the absolute shortage with Chinese labour is a significant question.⁷⁸ Such an inference may well be drawn from the speech of the retiring president of the Chamber of Mines, Sir Percy Fitzpatrick, made at its annual meeting on 26 February 1903 in which he stated:

I cannot share the despondency which many feel, or affect to feel, regarding the African supply Nor do I share the view which some have expressed, that to get back to our pre-War position of about 100 000 boys would be a calamity, because that would be our sticking point, and because that supply would be too small for our future needs and yet too large to warrant importation of Asiatics.⁷⁹

Already in 1898 Chinese labour was suggested, but the Chamber regarded it then as inadvisable.⁸⁰ By the middle of 1901 there was serious discussion about Asiatic labour and, immediately peace was declared, a leading Johannesburg firm, according to a contemporary writer, cabled London: "Pigtails certain."⁸¹ By July 1902 certain mining leaders were privately pressing for the Chinese and by October the Chamber was promoting their importation in Government circles. Fitzpatrick correctly predicted at this time in a letter to his London head, Julius Wernher, that were the Chamber to push for the Asiatics, before their necessity was convincingly shown, there would be "a frightful row" on the Rand.⁸² By

77. Debates of the Transvaal Legislative Council, 28.12.1903, p.57. See also F. H. P. Creswell, "The Transvaal Labour Problem," National Review, November 1902, p.446; and F. D. P. Chaplin, "The Labour Conditions in the Transvaal," National Review, February 1905, p.1000.

78. Frank Hales, "The Transvaal Labour Difficulties," Fortnightly Review, 1.7.1904, p.118.

79. As quoted in S. M. Gluckstein and W. C. H. Saxby, Black, White or Yellow: The South African Labour Problem: The Case for and against the Introduction of Chinese Coolies, p.4

80. 1898 Annual Report of the Chamber of Mines as referred

the end of the year it was apparently evident to the mine managers that their bosses were determined to import Chinese labour, and towards the beginning of 1903 Drummond Charlin, joint general manager in South Africa of the Consolidated Goldfields Company, explained why the mining houses were being patient:

They are, of course, aware that they will encounter considerable opposition, and it is because they have not under-rated this opposition that they have been content to wait so long for proof that no appreciable relief can otherwise be obtained. The period of waiting has been, and continues to be, extremely costly to the shareholders, who are the real owners of the mines; its prolongation will be ruinous to all South Africa.⁸³

By the end of 1902 Mather and his followers grew disillusioned with British rule, harked back to the "happier" days under President Kruger and openly acknowledged their intention to co-operate with the Boers.⁸⁴ The Chinese labour agitation served to increase the support for this attitude amongst organised labour. But Labour uneasiness did not inspire a militant outlook. In October 1902, for example, a miners' meeting during the Village Main Reef strike resolved to ask the Governor to pass into law a compulsory arbitration ordinance whereby all differences between employers and employed could be adjusted without loss to the general community.⁸⁵ Labour leaders advocated, instead,

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81. Frank Hales, op.cit., p.111. On talk in 1901 see J. E. B. Seely, Adventure, p.83 and "Greater Britain: South Africa - White, Black and Yellow," National Review, January 1904, p.833.
82. A. A. Mawby, "The Political Behaviour of the British Population in the Transvaal, 1902-1906", pp.93 &96.
83. F. D. P. Chaplin, "The Labour Question in the Transvaal," National Review, April 1903, p.297.
84. J. Ramsay MacDonald, What I Saw in South Africa, pp. 106-7 and 115.
85. Transvaal Leader, 6.10.1902, p.5.

concerted political action. Mather stressed that the worker was the equal of the millionaire at the ballot box and Raitt explained:

They had seen that strikes were played out, though he admitted that strikes had done a great deal, and he was one of those who never admitted that a strike was a failure, even if the men did not get their demands. But strikes were as out-of-date weapons in their struggle for justice as clubs would be in modern warfare, so let them relegate strikes to the past as clubs would be placed in museums, and let them study the political questions of political life, for the Legislative Council as at present constituted would soon be done away with and the country would soon be governed by its own elected members.⁸⁶

5. White Unskilled Labour and F. H. P. Creswell

Before the war the shortage of native labour led to the employment of some indigent Boers as unskilled workers on the mines and on public works.⁸⁷ Towards the beginning of 1902 and for about two-and-a-half years afterwards, unskilled whites, mainly discharged soldiers and destitute farmers of the bywoner class, worked on several mines on a much larger scale.⁸⁸ The most publicised of these mines was the Village Main Reef whose manager from December 1900 to November 1903 was F. H. P. Creswell, the parliamentary leader of the S.A.L.P. in 1910. As "Creswellism" represented one of the party's loudest election cries in that year, its origins are very relevant to this work.⁸⁹

86. African Review, 18.7.1903, p.92. On Mather's attitude see Transvaal Leader, 6.10.1902, p.5 and Star, 14.7.1902, p.7

87. F. H. P. Creswell, "The Transvaal Labour Problem," (1902), pp.446 and 452.

88. R. W. Schumacher, A Transvaal View of the Chinese Labour Question, p.45; P. C. Campbell, Chinese Coolie Emigration within the British Empire, p.105.

89. See Appendix B, V, 3, below.

Frederic Hugh Page Creswell was born in Gibraltar in 1866, the thirteenth and youngest child of the deputy Postmaster-General and Surveyor of the Mediterranean, and received his education in England where he obtained a civil engineering degree in 1888 from the Royal School of Mines. After experience of mining in Venezuela and America he was sent in 1893 to Mashonaland to report on mining properties. Soon afterwards he was drawn to the Rand where he was appointed in 1895 general manager of the Durban Deep Mine at Roodepoort. He still held that position when the Anglo-Boer War broke out in which he served with distinction in the Imperial Light Horse. Until his resignation at the end of 1903 Creswell was employed for nine years as manager of mines controlled by Wernher, Beit & Company.⁹⁰ Up to this time he seemed a-political, although he participated in mid-1902 in the activities connected with the formation of the Transvaal Political Association and thereafter supported the counter movement led by one of his business superiors, Percy Fitzpatrick.⁹¹ "I am certain my life is fuller and more really life," he wrote to his sister in 1912, "than it would have been as a prosperous and moderately wealthy man as I suppose I should have been if that Chinese business had not woken me up."⁹²

Creswell provided his unskilled ex-soldiers with free board and lodging and started them on five shillings a day payment which he believed was higher than the British equivalent and an adequate living wage. His enemies, however,

90. Margaret Creswell, An Epoch of the Political History of South-Africa in the Life of Frederic Hugh Page Creswell, chs. I to V; L. E. Neame, Some South African Politicians, pp.29-30; J. E. B. Seely, Adventure, p.82; Cd.1897, p.574.

91. Transvaal Leader, 3.7.1902, p.3, and 21.8.1902, p.5.

92. Creswell to his sister, Margaret, 16.4.1912, Creswell Papers, envelope 2.

never forgot this and coined the derisive slogan, "Five-bob-a-day Creswell."⁹³ Yet, in 1907, white policemen were being recruited in the Transvaal at the same wage and, in 1908, 1.173 white labourers were working on the Central South African Railways at 3/4d per day.⁹⁴ Lord Kitchener publicly supported the experiment and in May the local board of the Village Main Reef Mine and the Chamber of Mines lent their approval. But by July the leading mining houses changed their attitude and in October R. W. Schumacher of the Corner House, which controlled the Village Main Reef, announced that the use of unskilled whites was merely a temporary expedient until adequate native labour could be obtained.⁹⁵ About the same time Creswell rejected Fitzpatrick's suggestion that he be transferred back to the Durban Deep at the same salary.⁹⁶

In 1903 the Chamber of Mines dismissed the experiment as economically disastrous, maintaining that its general extension would convert forty-eight out of the seventy-nine mines then running at a profit into losing propositions and the remainder into much less profitable investments.⁹⁷ Sir

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93. See, for example, Rand Daily Mail, 7.12.1906, p.4; and political cartoon in Star, 10.1.1907, p.10.
94. On the policemen see Debates of the Transvaal Legislative Assembly, 25.7.1907, col.1559, speech by Whiteside. On the railway workers see T.A.S. 1 of 1908, Appendix E, p. xi, letter from the Inspector of White Labour.
95. A. A. Mawby, "The Political Behaviour of the British Population in the Transvaal, 1902-1906", pp.89-90; R. W. Schumacher, A Transvaal View of the Chinese Labour Question, pp.36-7; Cd.1897, p.594, Tarbutt's letter to Creswell, 3.7.1902. For Schumacher's speech see "Greater Britain: The Taxation of the Transvaal," National Review, November 1902, p.489.
96. Margaret Creswell, Frederic Hugh Page Creswell, p.35.
97. Cd.1897, p.595 as referred to by P. C. Campbell, Chinese Coolie Emigration within the British Empire, p.165.

George Farrar contended that Creswell's experiment cost shareholders £3 000 per month, pronounced the use of unskilled whites on other mines as equally unsuccessful and believed that the high turnover of unskilled Europeans on the mines proved that they were dissatisfied with the work.⁹⁸

Opponents of the scheme regarded 10/- per day as the bare minimum for white men and accurately stressed that tradition militated strongly against whites doing the work previously done by natives, becoming thereby "white kaffirs" in the eyes of the public.⁹⁹

Nevertheless, Creswell remained convinced of the economic, social and political soundness of his views and received encouraging support from R. J. Pakeman, editor of the Transvaal Leader in 1902, W. F. Monypenny, editor of the Star, 1902-1903, W. J. Wybergh, Commissioner of Mines, 1900 - 1903, and even from Sir Percy Fitzpatrick during 1902, as well as from influential persons overseas.¹ W. H. Hall, a highly qualified American engineer, had given evidence whilst employed by one of the leading mining houses on the Rand before the Transvaal Industrial Commission of 1897 supporting the profitability of unskilled white labour.² Moreover, the report prompted by the Chamber of Mines of the three mine

98. Debates of the Transvaal Legislative Council, 28.12.1903, Pp.70-72.

99. For general criticism of the white labour experiment see, for example, V. R. Markham, The New Era in South Africa: With an Examination of the Chinese Labour Question, p.124 ff.; R. W. Schumacher, A Transvaal View of the Chinese Labour Question, p.37; S. Ransome, The Engineer in South Africa, p.58; Henry Kirke, "The Question of Chinese Labour," Economic Review, July 1904, pp.305-12; C. Kinloch-Cooke, "Chinese Labour in the Transvaal," Empire Review, February 1906, pp.24-6; and Robert Raine's pamphlet, Transvaal Labour: Unskilled Whites: Manager of Village Main Reef on Mr. Creswell (1906).

1. On Creswell see, for example, his pamphlet, The Chinese Labour Question from Within and his letter in the S. A. News, 23.6.1906, p.5. On Pakeman see Transvaal Leader 6 & 10.10.1902 and 17.11.1902, editorials. On Monypenny see Margaret Creswell, Frederic Hugh Page Creswell, p.35. On Wybergh see Cd. 1897, p.611 ff. On Fitzpatrick see A. A. Mawby, op.cit., pp.89-90, and Transvaal Leader,

managers investigating Creswell's experiment advised that in certain departments underground and on the surface unskilled whites could be profitably employed as compared to conditions in 1899, although the entire substitution of native labour by white was regarded as unfeasible.³ Both John Burns in England and John X. Merriman in the Cape Colony shared Creswell's view that the white man in South Africa should be employed in unskilled work. "If there is a double dose of original sin of laziness in a white man who goes to South Africa," declared Burns, "that must be cured, as it will be, by the influx of White people to the Rand."⁴ Similarly Merriman wrote to Creswell in 1906:

If we could only get one mine owner really on our side it could mean much. Even greater than the material gain, though that would be enormous, would be the lesson that labour was a credit and not a disgrace to a European and the mixing of Dutch and English in some common work would do more to break down the barrier of suspicion and distrust than anything else.⁵

The leaders of the T.M.A. were not, however, in favour of the experiment. "My opinion, which may not be the opinion of the majority," declared Mather at the inaugural meeting

of the white labour policy. For favourable overseas publications by prominent politicians see J. E. B. Seely, Adventure, pp.83 and 103-4; Herbert Samuel, "The Chinese Labour Question," Contemporary Review, April 1904, p.459 ff. and John Burns, "Slavery in South Africa," The Independent Review, May 1904, pp.607 ff.

2. Herbert Samuel, op.cit., p.460.
3. P. C. Campbell, Chinese Coolie Emigration within the British Empire, p.165. See also The Times, 5.3.1906, p.8, letter from W. F. Monypenny.
4. John Burns, op.cit., p.608.
5. 27.5.1906, p.2, Creswell Papers, envelope 4.

of the Association, "is that any man is not worthy of his name if he will accept the position and remuneration that have always been secured to the nigger."⁶ In 1907 Mathews told the Transvaal Mining Industry Commission that any white man working for 10s per day was not worth his wages because, if he were a man, he would demand 16s 8d.⁷ Towards the end of 1902 the Transvaal Leader even suspected that the Rand Labour emissary, Thomas Ratcliffe, was sent to England to exaggerate the evils of Transvaal labour conditions so as to protect existing white labour privileges.⁸

In September and October 1902 the rock drillers on the Village Main Reef went on strike, refusing to supervise three machines instead of two as Creswell had ordered, and were supported by the T.M.A. which called for a boycott of the mine. The new arrangement, which Creswell acknowledged several years afterwards as a mistake, meant less skilled rock drillers were required enabling more white helpers to be profitably employed, but at the same time increased the miners' phthisis hazard as John Wood complained to Lord Milner:

I am an experienced rock drill man. At the present time there are plenty of miners going to Braamfontein cemetery without their having to mind three rock drills.⁹

Whether the miners struck, therefore, against the implementation of the unskilled white labour policy is a moot question.

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6. Transvaal Leader, 23.6.1902, p.3. See also Star, 16.10.1902, p.8, for Strick's views, and 14.7.1902, p.7, and 16.10.1902, p.8, for Fursey's views.
7. T.G. 2 of 1908, p.443, paras. 4848-9.
8. 17.11.1902, p.3, editorial.
9. Star, 4.10.1902, p.6. For the same complaint see also Transvaal Leader, 22.10.1902, p.3, letter from J. Thompson, a rock driller. On the T.M.A. proposed boycott see Transvaal Leader, 28.10.1902, p.5. The reasons for the strike were outlined by the T.M.A.'s deputation to Milner which did not mention the unskilled white labour policy - Star, 4.10.1902, p.6. For Creswell's acknowledged mis-

There were no strikes on the Glen Deep, Rose Deep, Jumpers Deep, Nourse Deep and Langlaagte Deep Mines where the policy was also tried, and the skilled artisans who downed tools in April on the Crown Reef did so against the imposition of the piece work system and nothing else.¹⁰

Organised labour preferred to believe that an adequate supply of native labour could be secured. Mather told Milner that with fair treatment the mines could have all the natives they needed, an opinion shared by Fursey, then treasurer of the T.M.A., who advocated that the Government should take over the W.N.L.A.¹¹ R. J. Stickland, printers' delegate to the Witwatersrand T. & L.C. in 1903 and a former miner, proposed the establishment of native villages around the mines so as to provide a permanent labour force. He denounced the recruiting monopoly of the W.N.L.A. and the reduction in native wages as ill-advised, and praised the native as the finest mine worker in the world. He favoured, however, extended use of unskilled white labour providing the cost of living could be lowered, which he believed possible, and providing the skilled miner were protected from being ousted by a flood of men in the process of learning the trade.¹² The most prominent Labour leaders at this time, Whiteside and Raitt,

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10. On the mines where the experiment was tried see R. W. Schumacher, A Transvaal View of the Chinese Labour Question, p.37; on the Crown Reef strike see, for example, Gitsham and Trembath, Labour Organisation in South Africa, pp.25-6. Note, therefore, inaccuracy of the contention in A. A. Mawby, "The Political Behaviour of the British Population of the Transvaal, 1902-1906", p.118, that the miners struck wherever the white labour policy was practised.
11. Star, 4.10.1902, p.6, for Mather's belief; 16.10.1902, p.8, for Fursey's. Their views were also shared by the Witwatersrand T. & L.C. in January 1902 - Star, 22.1.1903, p.6.
12. Star, 14.10.1903, p.7, letter from Stickland. For biographical information see S.A.T.J., May 1903, p.5, and Transvaal Leader, 12.12.1908, p.14, "Labour Notes."

also believed that sufficient native miners could be recruited and that their work could be supplemented in many ways by unskilled and semi-skilled white men.¹³

The views of organised labour, in fact, were not completely contrary to those held by Creswell. It seemed more opposed to cheap white labour than to unskilled white labour as Creswell stressed in a letter to Merriman in 1906:

We do not want to suggest "cheap" white labour but that the man who wants labouring work performed shall offer the wage whatever it may be which will attract the Labourer to perform it and leave the labourer to make his own terms. That bugbear of "cheap" white labour has been the magnates strong card to seduce the 20/- a day man into thinking that his wages will be undercut.¹⁴

Moreover, he did not propose, as some historians have maintained, the entire substitution of native labour by white labour, although he may have cherished this as a long term ideal.¹⁵ He advocated supplementing the existing inadequate supply of black workers with white men, albeit four to five times more expensive, whose greater intelligence combined with labour saving machinery and devices would keep costs at the pre-war level; and he confidently predicted in 1902:

As white labour becomes more plentiful so will it supersede the native labour in those parts of the work it is more profitable to use it, and as in one mine so in the whole mining area. White labour

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13. For Whiteside's attitude see, for example, Minority Report of the Labour Commission of which he was a signatory - Cd. 1895, p.249 (conclusions); for Raitt's outlook see Debates of the Transvaal Legislative Council, 29.12.1903, p.110 ff.
14. 20.5.1906, Merriman Papers, no. 160 of 1906. Note John Woods, general secretary of the T.M.A., attacked Creswell's experiment in 1905 for not paying the white unskilled workers a living wage - S. A. News, 9.6.1905, p.8.
15. See, for example, G. V. Doxey, The Industrial Colour Bar in South Africa, p.59, and Professor C. F. Niewoudt's biographical article in Dictionary of South African Biography, I, p.188. Both refer to Creswell's pamphlet.

and machinery will tend to be used in the big establishments where they pay best, and cheap native labour and less machinery in the smaller mines which can afford no more.¹⁶

He hoped that holding to the existing limits of the native labour reservoir in South Africa, increasing the employment of free white workers and abandoning the recruiting monopoly of the W.N.L.A. would undermine the semi-servile compound system on the mines, explaining it as follows:

... a social system, the chief feature of which is that all hard, muscular work is done by an inferior race (which if not existent in the country in sufficient numbers must be imported) is only the old slave-state conception under a new guise.¹⁷

He rejected, however, the establishment of a permanent native population around the mines as it would soon be demanding higher wages which he preferred to pay to whites; and maintained, indeed, that the native wages reduced during the war should not have been raised. Finally, he supported segregated activity of white and non-white in unskilled work and never proposed that they work alongside each other.¹⁸

Creswell's sympathy towards the white labour movement is shown in his clear assessment of its precarious position, maintaining early in 1904:

did not study it carefully, especially p.25 ff. On this subject see also his evidence in Cd. 1897, p.595 and Monypenny's letter in The Times, 5.3.1906, p.8.

16. F. H. P. Creswell, "The Transvaal Labour Problem," (1902), pp.453-4.
17. F. H. P. Creswell, The Chinese Labour Question from Within, p.82. For similar standpoint see Wybergh's evidence in Cd.1897, pp.613-4.
18. Creswell's views have been summarised from his writings, i.e., "The Transvaal Labour Problem" (1902); "The Transvaal Labour Problem," Independent Review, February 1904, pp.124-136; and The Chinese Labour Question from Within (1905). His evidence to the Labour Commission has also been studied - Cd. 1897, p.593 ff.

In the competition for the distribution of wealth obtained from the mines as between the owner, the employed, and the rest of the white community, the owner had to his hand a deadly weapon in the labour of the Kafir races.¹⁹

This was a situation that Chinese labour could only aggravate. Consequently, it is not surprising that organised labour should be drawn closer to Creswell, to whom the Chinese seemed to signal the end of his fondest dreams of a white South Africa, in mutual opposition to the Chinese and to their importers, the Chamber of Mines.

6. Start of the Chinese Labour Controversy

Overseas precedents, particularly in America and Australia, ensured that the cosmopolitan Rand community would not take kindly to the importation of Chinese workers. "Chinese exclusion," writes an American historian, "was the first demand of California unionists and was pressed on every occasion until finally the Congress of the United States passed the Chinese exclusion act of 1882."²⁰ Thus in 1901 the South African Typographical Journal warned:

Australia and America curse the "yellow agony" under which they suffer, and what has occurred there should be a lesson to South Africa, as it could easily be repeated.²¹

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19. F. H. P. Creswell, "The Transvaal Labour Problem" (1904), p.126.
20. Mary Ritter Beard, The American Labour Movement: A Short History, pp.77-8. On Australia see, for example, M. Clark (ed.), Sources of Australian History, p.393 ff.
21. July 1901, p.10. For Mathews's comments on Chinese in America see T.G.2 of 1908, p.442, para.4836.

Throughout 1902 the Rand public dismissed the idea of Chinese labour with the greatest aversion as can readily be ascertained from reading either the Star or the Transvaal Leader. Significantly, it was an Australian advocate who inveighed against Asiatic labour at the miners' meeting on 4 October, called to support the strikers on the Village Main Reef; and another Australian drafted the platform of the proposed Labour League which included a plank opposing the introduction of Asiatic labour on the gold mines.²² In January 1903 the memorial presented to Chamberlain by the Witwatersrand T. & L.C. argued that the experience of Australia and Natal proved that the introduction of Chinese and Indian labour was afterwards "bitterly resented." It saw no need for the Chinese because "the immense reserves of native labour in South Africa, if properly and judiciously exploited and encouraged, would amply meet all demands."²³

Chamberlain declared that the British Government would never allow the importation of Asiatic labour unless it was demanded by the Transvaal public, thereby following the principle he stressed during his visit that the Transvaal was to be governed with scrupulous regard to the will of the people.²⁴ Nevertheless, it was widely believed then and afterwards that the British Colonial Secretary had negotiated a secret quid pro quo with the mining magnates whereby he would sanction Chinese

22. On the League see p. 125 above and for its platform see Appendix B, IV, 4 below. For Hutchinson's speech see Transvaal Leader, 6.10.1902, p.5 and on his nationality, 29.9.1902, p.4.

23. Star, 22.1.1903, p.6.

24. "Greater Britain: The Colonial Secretary's Tour," National Review, February 1903, pp.1017-8; Julian Amery, The Life of Joseph Chamberlain, IV, pp.319, 326 & 332; F. H. P. Creswell, The Chinese Labour Question from Within, p.15.

labour in return for the Transvaal's war contribution of £30 million, underwritten in part by the mining houses.²⁵ Not only did Chamberlain deny such a sinister pact, but he seemed sympathetic towards the unskilled white labour experiment, for he wrote from Potchefstroom to Creswell:

The proof of the pudding will be in the eating, and I can only add that I heartily wish you such a success as will convince your opponents, [in] which case the problem which appears to baffle the mine-owners will be a long way on the road to settlement.²⁶

By this time Creswell believed that Wernher, Beit and Company was against the use of unskilled white labour. All doubt was removed when he found himself an unwitting member of a deputation to Chamberlain, representing the consulting engineers on the gold-fields, the Chamber of Mines and the Mine Managers' Association, one of whose objects was to explain the impracticability of unskilled white labour. As a result of his defiant defence before Chamberlain on this occasion, the London Board of his mine instructed him to discontinue his experiment, but the local Board still allowed him to employ unskilled whites in certain work.²⁷ Creswell was obviously moving towards a final breach with his employers.

From about the time of Chamberlain's tour, the Transvaal Government and the Chamber of Mines seemed to grow increasingly intimate, as a recent researcher has noted. The hostility

25. Smuts's memorandum on the Chinese Question enclosed in his letter to Merriman, 2.6.1906, in Merriman Papers, no.142 of 1906; "Greater Britain: The Colonial Secretary's Tour," p.1018; S. A. News, 22.6.1905, p.7; W. Wybergh, "The Transvaal and the New Government," Contemporary Review, March 1906, p.316; Whiteside's comments in Debates of the Transvaal Legislative Assembly, 19.6.1907, col.173.

26. 23.1.1903, Creswell Papers, envelope 7.

27. Cd.1897, pp.594-5, Creswell's evidence; Margaret Creswell, Frederic Hugh Page Creswell, pp.35-6, although her chronology of events is inaccurate; The Times, 5.3.1906, p.8, letter from W. F. Monypenny.

aroused by the proposed importation of Chinese labour, he adds, "underlined the fact that the interests of State and Chamber were almost identical."²⁸ But Chamberlain made the mining magnates realise that public approval for Chinese labour was essential. They therefore had to "educate" the public.

Concerted agitation for Chinese labour only began after the Intercolonial conference, held from 10 to 23 March in Bloemfontein, approved its importation under a system of indentures providing that industrial development positively required it, and that it were imported under strict governmental control with repatriation on termination of indentures.³⁰ The campaign was triggered off by the president of the Chamber of Mines, Sir George Farrar, in a speech to a crowded meeting of East Rand miners and residents at Driefontein on 31 March. He pointed out that the Chinese would be restricted to unskilled labour, would be repatriated on expiry of their indentures and would increase the number of skilled miners employed whose prosperity would be enhanced.³¹ At this meeting Mather disagreed strongly and distributed an anti-Chinese pamphlet whose concluding message was: "When Asiatic miners are employed - no white man need apply!"³²

The following day a public meeting at the Wanderers convened by the White League, which was founded on 31 October 1902 by shopkeepers anxious to combat Indian competition,

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28. D. J. N. Denoon, "'Capitalist Influence' and the Transvaal Government," p.314.
29. F. H. P. Creswell, The Chinese Labour Question from Within," pp.15-16; A. A. Mawby, "The Political Behaviour of the British Population of the Transvaal, 1902-1906," p.156.
30. W. B. Worsfold, The Reconstruction of the New Colonies under Lord Milner, I, p.303.
31. Ibid.
32. As quoted in F. J. Grobler, "Die Invloed van Geskoolde Blanke Arbeid," p.42.

opposed Chinese labour by 5 000 votes to 2.³³ Main speakers at this crowded gathering, which resembled the great Uitlander meetings in 1899, were G. Hutchinson and J. W. Quinn. "After this seed-time of heroism, watered by blood and tears," Hutchinson asked in an emotional outburst, "is the industrial harvest of the Transvaal to be reaped by Mongolians?"³⁴ The support of organised labour was added with Mather's speech and with the message of solidarity from the Witwatersrand T. & L.C., protesting against "the threatened invasion of Asiatics." According to a contemporary writer, this meeting, which was "essentially a working-men's one", "cheered to the echo every argument and every invective against the yellow labourer, and hissed the name of every mine-owner mentioned, including Sir George Farrar and Sir Percy Fitzpatrick."³⁵ The Star declared that the voice of Johannesburg was emphatically against the Chinese and Chamberlain wrote to Milner a few weeks afterwards that the British public would never accept the importation "so long as the mass of working men are against."³⁶

Milner seemed unperturbed and by July was writing to Chamberlain predicting a successful campaign in favour of the Chinese whose arrival on the Rand he expected early in the following year.³⁷ He gave his support to the Labour Importation

33. On this meeting see Star, 2.4.1903, p.7; also Frank Hales, "The Transvaal Labour Difficulties," p.110; W. B. Worsfold, op.cit., p.305; and A. A. Mawby, op.cit., p.120. On the White League see Star, 8.11.1902, p.6.

34. Star, 2.4.1903, p.7.

35. Frank Hales, op.cit., p.110. See same source for the T. & L.C.'s rôle.

36. As cited by Julian Amery, The Life of Joseph Chamberlain, IV, p.334. On the Star's verdict see its editorial on 2.4.1903, p.6.

37. Julian Amery, op.cit., p.334.

Association, newly established by the Chamber of Mines to press its viewpoint on the Chinese before the public;³⁸ and on 2 July 1903 appointed the members of the Transvaal Labour Commission whose purpose was to study the labour shortage and to ascertain the availability of native labour in central and southern Africa. It sat from 21 July to 6 October, questioned ninety-two witnesses and issued its report on 19 November. By choosing a majority of its members from the pro-Chinese supporters Milner could confidently await its report. Although he appointed the president and secretary of the T.M.A., E. P. Perrow and S. W. Fursey, respectively, and the president of the Witwatersrand T. & L.C., Peter Whiteside, as members of the Commission, organised labour was not happy.³⁹ Fursey resigned before its first public sitting, protesting apparently against its composition; and Perrow underwent a sudden conversion to the opposite camp, as had happened to Mather, resigned as president of the T.M.A., whose confidence he had lost, and, with Michael Dodd of the Chamber of Mines, openly campaigned in mid-October in favour of Chinese labour.⁴⁰

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38. P. C. Campbell, Chinese Coolie Emigration within the British Empire, p.173; A. A. Mawby, "The Political Behaviour of the British Population of the Transvaal, 1902 - 1906," pp.129-30; R. K. Cope, Comrade Bill, pp.71 & 73.
39. For composition of, and background information on the Commission see Cd.1897, p.1; Benjamin Sacks, South Africa: An Imperial Dilemma: Non-Europeans and the British Nation, 1902-1914, pp.31-2; and P. C. Campbell, op.cit., p.175. For Perrow's position in the T.M.A. see, for example, Transvaal Leader, 28.10.1902, p.5; for Fursey's office see S. A. News, 11.11.1903, p.7. For attitude of organised labour see p. 151-2 below.
40. On Fursey's resignation see Cd. 1897, p.1, and South African Guardian's article, "The Chinese Question," as reprinted in S. A. News, 4.12.1903, p.8. See same article on Perrow's conversion and Morning Leader, 23.5.1904, letter from H. W. Sampson, secretary of the Witwatersrand T. & L.C. Note that in June 1903 Perrow was included in the White League's deputation to Milner - Star, 5.6.1903, p.7. For Perrow's and Dodd's pro-Chinese speeches see Star, 16.10.1903, pp.8-9. The latter's brother was T. R. Dodd, late secretary of the South African League, Transvaal section - Transvaal Leader, 19.8.1902, p.4.

Meanwhile, in June 1903, opponents of Chinese Labour founded the African Labour League whose first committee, except for Whiteside, consisted of Johannesburg's commercial leaders.⁴¹ Afterwards other Labour leaders participated prominently in its activity, for example, W. W. Lorimer of the Shop Assistants' Union and R. J. Stickland of the S.A.T.U., who became its secretary.⁴² The League's main objects were to promote employment of native miners and of unskilled white railwaymen and to oppose the introduction of Chinese labour which, it maintained, would retard the advancement of South Africa as a large field for white immigration. "We believe in the future of South Africa," the League declared, "and that it is eminently fitted to become a home of a great white nation, and we hopefully look forward to the amalgamation of the various white races."⁴³

Towards the end of August another organisation opposed to Chinese labour was started. The National Democratic Federation, of which Howard Pim, a well-known accountant, was elected president and R. J. Stickland secretary, may have been inspired by the National Democratic League which was formed in 1900 in Great Britain to effect a ralliement des gauches, but their platforms showed little similarity.⁴⁴ Like the African Labour League, the National Democratic Federation advocated greater use of native labour and "union of the white races," but showed a broader purpose in its

41. Cd. 1895, pp.46, 51.

42. S. A. News, 15.12.1903, p.6. For Stickland as secretary see S. A. News, 5.3.1904, p.11, "Labour Notes".

43. Cd. 1895, p.47.

44. The British organisation's initial platform concentrated on constitutional reform - F. Bealey and H. Pelling, Labour and Politics, 1900 - 1906, p.51 ff. For platform of the Transvaal organisation see Appendix B, IV, 5, below.

call for responsible government based on white adult suffrage. Although its platform was not concerned with demanding ameliorative industrial legislation, organised labour was well represented on its executive by Stickland, Raitt, Andrews, Fursey and Sampson. Initially, at least, its meetings were held in the Engineers' Hall, headquarters of the Witwatersrand T. & L.C., further emphasising trade union support.⁴⁵ The labour movement on the Rand was obviously becoming involved in political action.

When the Labour Commission eventually reported in November largely to the satisfaction of those favouring Chinese labour, its opponents were not surprised. The African Labour League had protested to the British Colonial Secretary against the predominance of representatives of the mining industry and the stock exchange on the Commission and Jas Reid of the Pretoria T. & L.C. expressed the feeling of organised labour and the anti-Chinese protagonists when he had described it as "practically packed."⁴⁶ "That solemn farce is ended," commented the South African Guardian, a radical weekly newspaper on the Rand owned by R. L. Outhwaite, an Australian journalist.⁴⁷ Similarly, Ernest Sheppard, an executive member of the National Democratic Federation, wrote to John X. Merriman:

The main report of course is exactly what everyone knew it would be from the first. I don't think a more disgraceful and barefaced "putup" job has ever been fixed onto a wretched community than this.⁴⁸

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45. Details on the Federation have been extracted from Star, 26.8.1903, p.6; 31.10.1903, p.11; S. A. News, 5.9.1903, p.12, "Labour Notes"; and A. J. Downes, Printers' Saga, p.136.
46. For the League's protest see Cd.1895, p.46. For Reid's comment see S. A. News, 3.10.1903, p.8.
47. As quoted in S. A. News, 4.12.1903, p.8.
48. 29.11.1903, Merriman Papers, no.262 of 1903. For similar viewpoint see Debates of the Transvaal Legislative Council, 28.12.1903, p.81, Hull's speech, and 30.12.1903, p.150, Loveday's speech; F. H. P. Creswell, Chinese Labour Question from Within, pp.16 & 91; and S. A. News,

Ten of the twelve members of the Labour Commission signed the majority report which found that the mines had an existing shortfall of 129 000 natives and would need an additional 196 000 within five years. The minority report, signed by Quinn, the chairman of the African Labour League, and Whiteside, maintained that there was sufficient native labour for present and future requirements, although efforts would be required to obtain it, and that it could in many ways be "supplemented and superseded by white labour," vindicating, in part, Creswell's stand.⁴⁹ Sir George Farrar concluded sarcastically that a great opening awaited Quinn and Whiteside in the mining industry seeing that they knew more than the best mining experts in the world.⁵⁰ Undeterred, the Witwatersrand T. & L.C. resolved on 6 January 1904, with only two dissenting votes, to express its full accord with the findings of the Minority Report.⁵¹

7. Political Objections to Unskilled White Labour and F. H. P. Creswell.

Towards the end of September 1903 Creswell, in his evidence before the Labour Commission, maintained that the mining magnates opposed the use of unskilled white labour from the outset because they were afraid that white labour would become too

submit the report of the three mine managers who studied Creswell's experiment did not inspire confidence - P. C. Campbell, Chinese Coolie Emigration within the British Empire, p.165, and F. H. P. Creswell, "The Transvaal Labour Problem" (1904), p.132.

49. Cd. 1894, pp.41 & 57.

50. Debates of the Transvaal Legislative Council, 28.12.1903, col.133. For similar outlook see R. W. Schumacher's speech to meeting of the Chamber of Mines, 2.12.1903, as reported in his pamphlet, A Transvaal View of the Chinese Labour Question, p.50.

51. S. A. News, 16.1.1904, p.10, "Labour Notes."

strong a factor in economic and political affairs. This contention was repeated by W. Wybergh, the Commissioner of Mines, on 29 September when he gave evidence. To support his argument Creswell read a letter from his London head, Percy Tarbutt, dated 3 July 1902, which clearly confirmed that Wernher, Beit & Co. and the Consolidated Goldfields opposed extended use of white labour for the reasons outlined. They feared the "same troubles" would arise as were prevalent in Australia, that is, as Tarbutt explained:

the combination of the labouring classes will become so strong as to be able more or less to dictate, not only the question of wages, but also political questions by the power of the votes when a representative Government is established.⁵²

The mining magnates were infuriated by Creswell's action, but organised labour was full with admiration and was to remind them of the Tarbutt letter on many occasions afterwards. In 1915 the S.A.L.P. was still using this letter in its election propaganda.⁵³ In the words of R. W. Schumacher in 1906 the letter became the "ancient stalking-horse of the anti-Chinese party."⁵⁴

Raitt, Shanks and J. C. Stewart, the secretary of the Australian Labour Party, wrote to Creswell congratulating him on his evidence. "Few, if any, throughout the whole industry," declared Shanks, "could be expected to make the noble stand you have done in the face of those who could, and may yet attempt to accomplish your ruin." It was, Shanks

52. Cd. 1897, p.594, Creswell's evidence. For Wybergh's evidence see Cd. 1897, p.612 ff.

53. See, for example, S.A.L.P. leaflet, Can the Leopard Change his Spots?, in Trembath Papers, Scrapbook II, p.187.

54. A Transvaal View of the Chinese Labour Question, p.28.

continued, "one of the brightest examples of manhood this, or any other country has ever produced."⁵⁵ In his reply to Stewart, Creswell showed how moved he had become by the Chinese labour controversy and how near he was to embarking on his political career:

Shall the working men of our own Race have the benefit of all the employment to which they are fairly entitled in a country for which the whole empire has made such great sacrifices or shall they be debarred therefrom in the interests of a comparatively few (many of whom are foreigners) because such few think that Chinese or some other inferior Race labour will be more easy to direct. In this sense the question concerned not only ourselves in the Transvaal but Englishmen at home and in all the Colonies.⁵⁶

Far from contradicting the contents of the Tarbutt letter, Sir George Farrar declared at the end of December in the Transvaal Legislative Council that the importation of a poor class of white men would lead to discontent, strikes and labour combinations because of unsatisfactory wages, and even added:

...rather than face that, I myself, had I been in Mr. Tarbutt's position, would have written practically the same letter, because all that we want is a contented, respectable white population, which will help to build a race worthy of the country.⁵⁷

In 1907 Harry Sampson recalled in the Transvaal Legislative Assembly that organised labour learnt from the Tarbutt

55. Shanks to Creswell, 26.9.1903, Creswell Papers, envelope 7. On Raitt and Stewart see their letters dated 24.9.1903 and 23.10.1903, respectively, in Creswell Papers, envelope 7.

56. Creswell to Stewart, 23.10.1903, Creswell Papers, envelope 7.

57. Debates, 28.12.1903, p.75. Note similar outlook of Lord Milner when he opposed the rise of a "white proletariat" - C. Headlam (ed.), The Milner Papers (South Africa) 1899-1905, II, p.459.

letter that the purpose of Chinese labour was to tear out trade unionism by the roots.⁵⁸ But there were also other indications during 1902 and 1903 that the mining houses were determined to prevent the rise of a strong working-class movement. R. G. Fricker, C. D. Rudd and Drummond Chaplin, all directors of gold mining companies, openly declared their opposition for political reasons to expanding greatly the white labour force.⁵⁹ In addition, the mining engineers on the Rand were distinctly opposed to the formation of labour unions, for they referred to trade unionism as "that trail of the serpent" in their memorandum presented to Chamberlain during his Transvaal tour.⁶⁰ "No-one who is acquainted with the views that prevail among the circles of South African finance," wrote the British Liberal M.P., Herbert Samuel, "would seek to deny that this dread of a second Australian democracy influencing the political and economic future of the Rand is one of the chief motives that direct the policy of the more far-sighted men among the groups."⁶¹

The need for labour organisation was further emphasised when several prominent anti-Chinese leaders seemed to be victimised on account of their views. As the Board of the Village Main Reef Mine passed a vote of censure on Creswell after his evidence to the Labour Commission, his position as

58. Debates, 18.6.1907, col.114.

59. Cd.1897, p.594, on Fricker and Chaplin; Cd.1896, pp. 64-5, on Rudd quoting from The Times, 10.2.1903. See also F. D. P. Chaplin, "The Labour Question in the Transvaal," National Review, April 1903, p.296; and D. J. N. Denoon, "The Transvaal Labour Crisis, 1901-6," Journal of African History, no.3 of 1967, p.489.

60. As quoted in F. D. P. Chaplin, op.cit., p.296. Significantly, this description was recalled fifteen years later by C. H. Haggard in his article in Labour World, 21.6.1918, p.5.

61. H. Samuel, "The Chinese Labour Question," Contemporary Review, April 1904, p.463.

mine manager became untenable and he therefore resigned.⁶² Wybergh's resignation as Commissioner of Mines was announced on 2 December when he accused the Government of being "too capitalistic in tendency" and of having lost touch with the people. However, it seems that he would have been dismissed for incompetency, had he not resigned.⁶³ The following day W. F. Monypenny gave up his post as editor of the Star because the Chamber of Mines, which controlled the newspaper, had officially declared its support for Chinese labour, which he had steadfastly opposed.⁶⁴ In the world of business both Howard Pim and J. W. Quinn suffered financially.

Mr. Howard Pim was the auditor for most of the Rand mines: he lost a job at every annual meeting. Mr. J. W. Quinn was, and is, the biggest baker on the Rand: but the more anti-Chinese speeches he made, the more his fashionable customers in Parktown seemed to find something wanting in the quality of his loaves.⁶⁵

By 1907 Pim incurred so much financial loss because of his independent outlook that the expression "to be Pimmed" came to refer to anyone victimised for his political activity.⁶⁶

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62. The Times, 5.3.1906, p.8, letter from W. F. Monypenny; Margaret Creswell, Frederic Hugh Page Creswell, pp.36-7; Chamberlain to Creswell, 2.1.1904, Creswell Papers, envelope 7.
63. Natal Mercury, 3.12.1903, p.11; 4.12.1903, p.7; 12.2.1904, p.7; 13.2.1904, p.12; African Review, 5.12.1903, p.375; 5.3.1904, p.396; Debates of the Transvaal Legislative Council, 29.12.1903, pp.104-5, speech by the Attorney-General, Sir Richard Solomon; Smuts to Creswell, 25.2.1907, Creswell Papers, envelope 7; D. J. N. Denoon "'Capitalist Influence' and the Transvaal Government during the Crown Colony Period, 1900-1906," pp.311-2. For strong defence of Wybergh see "A British Colonist", "British Rule in the Transvaal", Contemporary Review, March 1904, p.332 ff.
64. Natal Mercury, 4.12.1903, p.9; 5.12.1903, p.13; and Benjamin Sacks, South Africa: An Imperial Dilemma, pp.49-50.
65. The Cape, 3.9.1915, p.14, article, "Mr. F.H.P.Creswell", by "Candidus." See also R. K. Cope, Comrade Bill, p.72; biographical article on Pim in Dictionary of South African Biography, I, p.621; and Pethick-Lawrence's comments on Pim in Labour Record, February 1906, p.257.

Creswell never forgave the Corner House for his dismissal and, almost overnight, became an implacable enemy of the Chamber of Mines. Unsparing of his health and indifferent to his material welfare, he used both the public platform and the pen to denounce the mining magnates. R. W. Schumacher and Percy Fitzpatrick, both partners in Wernher, Beit & Co., who had transferred their support for unskilled white labour to Chinese labour, were ridiculed as "exceedingly bad people to go tiger-hunting with", for they possessed a wonderful facility for climbing trees when the tiger came along.⁶⁷ Drummond Chaplin, who had dismissed the white labour experiment in a few critical lines, was referred to scornfully:

While I have the highest respect for journalism, I may be excused from considering Mr. Chaplin's [sic] experience, as a newspaper correspondent in St. Petersburg and elsewhere, and as Joint General Manager in Johannesburg of a large financial company for a brief period, as qualifications which would lead me to regard him as a final judge on a matter of this kind.⁶⁸

The financial magnates, many of whom were not resident in the Transvaal, were accused of being more concerned with the share-merchant business and company flotations, where their greatest profits were obtained, than with mining proper. The Chamber of Mines was attacked as the real ruler of the Transvaal and for wanting to turn Johannesburg into another Kimberley; and its dominating rôle was bitterly denounced:

Surely the form of Trade Unionism most harmful to the colony is that which sacrifices every ideal to its own ascendancy; and no more egregious instance of such a system can be found, than that

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66. Transvaal Leader, 20.2.1907, p.12; see also Whiteside's remarks in 22.1.1907, p.11, and G. A. Mulligan's letter in 26.1.1907, p.2.
67. Creswell's letter, January 1906, as quoted in R. W. Schumacher, A Transvaal View of the Chinese Labour Question, p.34.
68. F. H. P. Creswell, "The Transvaal Labour Problem" (1904), pp. 121-2.

which the colony already possesses, in the Trade Union of Financiers and Company Directors, known as the Transvaal Chamber of Mines.⁶⁹

Nevertheless, Creswell claimed he was not anti-capitalist, merely anti-plutocrat. "The last thing I should care to pose as," he explained, "would be one who wanted to see a labour supremacy any more than a capitalist supremacy, or one who contemplated as of no account the possibility of labour troubles."⁷⁰ Continuing, he stressed:

For my part I am so little anti-capitalist that I would like to see a great many more capitalists take an interest in Transvaal industries, and if I am anti-plutocrat it is, among other reasons, because with us it means, and will mean, the domination of a small clique of financiers. Such a clique will use their political ascendancy to build up a system which will tend to protect them as far as may be from the competition of other capitalists outside their clique.⁷¹

No more relentless opponent of Chinese labour was to be found than Creswell. Towards the end of November 1903 he left for England to gather support against the introduction of the Chinese and two years later he was again in Great Britain, this time to assist the Liberal Party in its landslide election victory in which Chinese labour was the key issue. During his visits he made contact with leading British politicians like Sir Edward Grey, Lloyd George, J. E. B. Seely, Herbert Samuel and Campbell-Bannerman, besides developing into an excellent public speaker.⁷² By 1906 he had achieved a cordial relationship with Smuts and

69. Ibid., p.131. For his outlook see also his pamphlets, Chinese Labour from Within and The Witwatersrand Gold Mines and Responsible Government: Causes of the Depression. The latter was a reprint of his five letters to the Economist, 20 August to 1 October 1906, attributed to "A Special Correspondent of the Economist". His authorship can be verified by reference to his correspondence with Merriman in the Creswell Papers, 1906.

70. Chinese Labour Question from Within, p.60.

71. Ibid., p.107.

Merriman, both of whom regarded him highly. "You are right;" Smuts wrote to Merriman in May, "Creswell is a most sterling chap with whom I would venture through fire and water. Persecution and suffering have only brought out the manhood in him...."⁷³ Despite the press caricatures of him as Don Quixote, protected by his five-bob-a-day shield, or as Alice in Wonderland or as the Mad Hatter, Creswell had become a Transvaal politician of stature whose views were drawing wider support, coming in 1906 from Smuts and Merriman.⁷⁴

As a bachelor Creswell was in a better position to withstand the hostility of the mining houses than his friend, Wybergh, who was forced to move with his family to property owned by Creswell, where he embarked on poultry and dairy farming.⁷⁵ Creswell was also fortunate in being able to obtain mining work as the mining companies seemed under the misapprehension that he was a man of independent means and believed, therefore, that it was purposeless boycotting him.⁷⁶

Creswell was in complete concord with the white labour movement in its increasing antagonism towards the Chamber of Mines, in its opposition to Chinese labour and in its desire for protection from possible non-white competition. That the "white labour champion", as he was already called in November 1903, should gravitate gradually towards it, despite his upbringing, is not surprising.⁷⁷

73. 5.5.1906, p.3, Merriman Papers no.121 of 1906.
74. As Don Quixote see Earl Robert's political cartoon in Transvaal Leader, 19.1.1907, p.12; as Alice in Wonderland and the Mad Hatter see A. W. Lloyd's cartoons in the Rand Daily Mail, 26.10.1907, p.5, and 15.1.1908, p.5, or his "Sunday Times" Book of Cartoons, published in November 1907. On support from Merriman and Smuts see Hancock and van der Poel (eds.), Selections from the Smuts Papers, II, doc.296 and 303, respectively.
75. Creswell to his sister, Margaret, 11.6.1905, Creswell Papers, envelope 7.
76. Creswell to his sister, Margaret, 7 & 16.7.1906 and 21.2.1910, Creswell Papers, envelope 2.
77. For use of this descriptive tag see, e.g., Natal Mercury, 24.11.1900, 11. "P. ... 11.11.1900"

8. Organised Labour's Opposition to Chinese Labour

Organised labour never wavered in its opposition to the importation of Chinese labour. During the first half of 1903 the T.M.A.'s leaders were prominent in assisting the White League's anti-Chinese campaign.⁷⁸ On 5 August the Witwatersrand T. & L.C. declared its unanimous opposition to the Chinese; ten days later the Pretoria T. & L.C. followed this lead; and on 26 September held a public meeting which protested against the proposed importation before responsible government was granted.⁷⁹ Similarly, a special conference of the T.M.A., held on 4 October, unanimously resolved to oppose Chinese labour until a referendum determined the will of the people; and a month later its executive repudiated the claim "that they, or any of their officials, were asked or were connected with the importation of any labour into the Transvaal" and challenged anyone to prove to the contrary.⁸⁰ This statement seemed to be directed against its former presidents, A. J. Strong and E. P. Perrow, and against its ex-secretary, W. Mather, all of whom had undergone a sudden reversal of opinion in favour of Chinese labour.⁸¹ At the beginning of December the T.M.A. joined a deputation of anti-Chinese bodies, led by Quinn and Whiteside and representing the African Labour League, the National Democratic Federation and the Witwatersrand T. & L.C., which informed the Lieutenant-Governor, Sir Arthur Lawley, that it would be a breach of faith to allow the coming of the Chinese without holding a referendum.⁸²

78. A. A. Mawby, "The Political Behaviour of the British Population of the Transvaal, 1902-1906," p.120.

79. Cd.1895, p.55, no.32, on the Witwatersrand T. & L.C.; Cd.1895, p.69, no.42, on the Pretoria T. & L.C.'s opposition in August; Cd.1895, p.88, no.53 and S. A. News, 3.10.1903, p.7, for reports on the public meeting in Pretoria.

80. On its special conference see Star, 5.10.1903, p.7; on its executive's repudiation see Natal Mercury, 7.11.1903, p.11.

In January the Witwatersrand and Pretoria Trades Councils and the T.M.A. reaffirmed their opposition and Raitt was adamant in the Legislative Council that the mechanics on the Rand had not changed their views at all.⁸³ In February the special representative in Johannesburg of the South African News found that all the trade unions, except possibly Whiteside's S.A.E.D. & F.A., were still against the importation even with the restrictions laid down in the newly passed Labour Importation Ordinance.⁸⁴ Finally, despite the imminent arrival of the first Chinese, the Witwatersrand T. & L.C. unanimously endorsed its past attitude on 6 April.⁸⁵

By January 1904, however, the British population in the Transvaal, for the most part, had veered round to accepting Chinese labour, albeit reluctantly as Milner reported:

Every day confirms me in the opinion that, as far as this Colony is concerned, while no one likes the prospect of Asiatic labour, a great majority of the people are disposed to accept it as a proved necessity.⁸⁶

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81. On Strong and Perrow see Star, 16.10.1903, p.8. On Mather see Morning Leader, 23.5.1904, letter from H. W. Sampson, secretary Witwatersrand T. & L.C.; and "Labour Notes" in S. A. News, 18.6.1904, p.4 and 9.7.1904, p.5.
82. S. A. News, 6.12.1903, p.6; F. J. Grobler, "Die Invloed van Geskoolde Blanke Arbeid," pp.48-9.
83. On the Witwatersrand T. & L.C. see S. A. News, 16.1.1904, p.10, "Labour Notes"; on the Pretoria T. & L.C. see 23.1.1904, p.9, "Labour Notes"; on the T.M.A. see 26.1.1904, p.7. On Raitt see Debates of the Transvaal Legislative Council, 21.1.1904, cols.367-8.
84. 29.2.1904, p.6.
85. Morning Leader, 23.5.1904, letter from H. W. Sampson, secretary of the Witwatersrand T. & L.C. Note that the undocumented claim in S. T. van der Horst, Native Labour in South Africa, p.171, followed in G. B. Pyrah, Imperial Policy and South Africa, 1902-10, p.192, that the T.M.A. eventually agreed to Chinese labour is incorrect. Even in 1905 it was still opposed to the Chinese - Labour Record, February 1906, p.356, article by Pethick-Lawrence.
86. Cd.1899, p.4, no.3, 11.1.1904. For same opinion see V. Markham, New Era in South Africa, p.131; and R. W. Schumacher, "A Transvaal View of the Labour Question," p.13.

Recalling this period some years afterwards Creswell described how he and a few others told the miners that they were lunatics to want the Chinese and were regarded as being "outside the pale of commonsense."⁸⁷ In 1906 he conceded to Merriman that there was a section of pro-Chinese miners because the slave making instinct dies hard whereby the skilled miner smokes his pipe while the native earns his money for him. This instinct, he added perceptively, affected especially the "old-time miner" and not the artisan.⁸⁸ In addition, large numbers of miners were convinced by the contention of the Chamber of Mines that the unskilled white labour solution would result in flooding the Witwatersrand with whites living on near starvation wages and in the levelling down of the existing high wages of the skilled miners, whom the newcomers would soon replace.⁸⁹ But the two most powerful factors in changing the attitude of the unorganised white miners, and that of the Rand public too, were the intimidation applied by the Chamber of Mines through its subsidiary organisation, the Labour Importation Association, and the deteriorating economic situation. The emergence afterwards of political labour organisation as a form of retaliation seemed inevitable.

Almost from its inception early in July the Labour Importation Association organised many miners' meetings. Most of them passed motions in favour of Chinese labour despite strong opposition from officials of the T.M.A. who were present.⁹⁰

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87. Transvaal Leader, 12.6.1911, p.7. See also F. H. P. Creswell's pamphlet, The Witwatersrand Gold Mines and Responsible Government, p.10.
88. 19.5.1906 /dated inadvertently 1905/, Merriman Papers, no.81 of 1905.
89. F. H. P. Creswell, Chinese Labour Question from Within, p.55; R. W. Schumacher, op.cit., p.50; C. S. Goldmann, "South Africa and her Labour Problem," p.859.
90. C. S. Goldman, op.cit., p.859; F. J. Grobler, "Die Invloed van Geskoolde Blanke Arbeid", pp.43-4; A. A. Mawby, "The Political Behaviour of the British Popula-

On 5 August 1903 the Witwatersrand T. & L.C. complained about the "undue pressure being exerted by leading officials on the mines to induce employees to sign papers favouring importation of Asiatics."⁹¹ Subsequently, J. J. Mulvey of the Pretoria T. & L.C. objected publicly to the well-nigh compulsory attendance on pain of dismissal of miners at these meetings; Tom Kneebone, the A.S.E.'s organiser, wrote about the mining magnates' policy of "manufacturing so-called public opinion"; and the South African Guardian ridiculed the so-called miners' pro-Chinese resolutions cabled to England, explaining that decisions were taken under the eyes of mining officials and that voting was dominated by specially transported white collar workers of the mining companies.⁹² "At nearly every meeting of the men at which no mine officials were present," observed a contemporary journalist, "anti-Chinese resolutions were carried."⁹³ Raitt, therefore, during a speech in the Legislative Council was not unjustified in describing the miners' meetings as stage-managed. The mine managers, he stressed, often acted as chairmen, and shift bosses as tellers when votes were taken.⁹⁴

The miner was indeed in a weak bargaining position. According to Creswell, employees either held the same views as the Chamber of Mines or kept quiet, otherwise they were forced to seek work outside the mining industry. Most miners were subject to twenty-four hours notice and many rented

91. Cd.1895, p.55, no.32.

92. On Mulvey see S. A. News, 3.10.1903, p.8; on Kneebone A.E.J., October 1903, pp.8-9, and January 1904, p.19; on the South African Guardian extract reprinted in S. A. News, 4.12.1903, p.8. For similar contention see D. C. Boonzaier, "South African News" Cartoons (1904), especially cartoon entitled, "A Cruel Choice", reflecting intimidation of white miners.

93. S. A. News, 22.2.1904, p.6, article by its special representative on the Rand.

94. Debates of the Transvaal Legislative Council, 29.12.1903, col.220. Creswell held exactly the same opinion. See his pamphlet, Chinese Labour Question from Within, p.16.

cottages very cheaply from the mining companies; tenancy naturally depended on their retaining employment.⁹⁵ Little wonder that the South African Guardian should admire the unwavering opposition to Chinese labour by the T.M.A.:

... the work done by the officials of the T.M.A., Messrs. Fursey and Strick, barred the way to the triumph of the "financier". No effort was spared, no inducement was left unoffered, no threat was left unmade, and... no falsehood was left unsaid to cause the miners to go back on the anti-Asiatic cause.⁹⁶

PIM
P.A. League

A disastrous public meeting, which was held by the African League at the Wanderers on 14 December, provides the best example of the underhand methods resorted to by the Labour Importation Association to ensure that Johannesburg opinion appeared favourably disposed towards the introduction of Chinese labour. Five thousand people crowded into the hall and about the same number listened to speeches outside. Inside, Quinn and Pim were unable to speak being subjected to four hours of continuous heckling and disorder, but refused to relinquish the platform to the opposition. "The meeting on Monday was the worst I ever saw or heard of," Quinn wrote soon afterwards to a friend. "I have lived here 14 years, and during that time I have seen many rowdy meetings, but never anything to compare with Monday's."⁹⁷ Outside, pro-Chinese motions were overwhelmingly carried despite the efforts of the Labour leaders, Stickland and Lorimer. According to the Star, the verdict of Johannesburg was undeniably for the Chinese, but far more significant was the way in which it was obtained.

95. F. H. P. Creswell, Chinese Labour Question from Within, pp.73, 93. See also R. K. Hallack, "White Labour in South Africa, 1900-1914", (M.A. thesis, University of Cape Town, 1932), p.50.

96. As quoted in S. A. News, 4.12.1903, p.8.

97. Natal Mercury, 29.12.1903, p.9, publishes Quinn's letter in full.

Miners were given a half-day holiday and special trains were organised so that they could attend. Many of them were accompanied by "bosses" who had given them a rudimentary training on how to obstruct meetings. Far more reprehensible, however, was the hiring of over 200 ruffians at 15s. each with the express purpose of breaking up the meeting. The South African Guardian actually published photographs of these roughs being paid in the centre of Johannesburg and published affidavits taken from them as to their terms of hire. In a cable to its Cape Town counterpart the Witwatersrand T. & L.C. clearly indicated its direct association with the organisers of the meeting and its alarm at the outcome:

Labour unions, Transvaal, unanimously opposed introduction Asiatics. Our meeting broken up by 200 roughs hired at 15s each, thus free speech denied. Are compelled to appeal for help to combat this danger to South Africa.⁹⁸

In addition to intensifying hostility towards the Chamber of Mines the Labour Importation Association's methods at this meeting encouraged organised interruption and heckling at future political meetings. Ironically, Sir George Farrar was shouted down in Fordsburg in 1906 with cries like "who paid the men to break up the meeting at the Wanderers?"⁹⁹ Indeed, the origin of organised obstruction at political meetings in the Transvaal was traced back to the chaotic

98. As quoted in S. A. News, 21.12.1903, p.8. For descriptions of this meeting see Star, 15.12.1903, pp.8 & 11; Natal Mercury, 16.12.1903, p.11, and 29.12.1903, p.9, Quinn's letter; S. A. News, 15.12.1903, pp.4 & 6. On background to the meeting and on the hired ruffians and signed affidavits see S. A. News, 22.2.1904, p.6, article by its special representative on the Rand which refers to reports in the South African Guardian; S. A. News, 24.12.1903, p.9; 16.4.1904, p.4; Labour Record, February 1906, p.356, article by Pethick-Lawrence which publishes a copy of one of the signed affidavits; Debates of the Transvaal Legislative Council, 29.12.1903, cols.220 & 224, speeches by Raitt. Note that Farrar did not answer Raitt's and Hull's accusations of intimidation of public opinion in his reply to the debate on his Labour Importation Motion - 30.12.1903, cols.308-12.

proceedings at the Wanderers by a Labour journalist writing in 1913 during a particularly bad period of political rowdiness on the Rand. "The chicken that has come home to roost, as big as an ostrich," he maintained, "was hatched by American incubation expressly to put down the anti-Chinese agitation."¹

Since most of the members of the Transvaal Legislative Council were now convinced that public opinion favoured the introduction of Chinese labour, Sir George Farrar's motion requesting the Government to prepare an ordinance for this purpose was agreed to on 30 December, only Loveday, Bourke, Hull and Raitt opposing.² The draft Labour Ordinance, forwarded by Lawley for the approval of the British Colonial Secretary, Alfred Lyttelton, on 16 November, and first published on 6 January 1904, had an easy passage through the Legislative Council, as was expected, with its third reading being taken on 10 February. Two days later the Governor gave his assent and on 11 March Lyttelton cabled his Government's agreement. "It has proved to be the most unpopular of all the unpopular measures," commented W. T. Stead's Review of Reviews, soon afterwards, "for which the present Government is responsible; and that is saying a very great deal."³

The Royal assent was finally given on 11 May after determined opposition from the Liberal and Labour Parties had failed inside and outside of the British Parliament. This assent

99. South Africa, 1.9.1906, p.583. Farrar was also met with a chorus of "Voetsak" shouts to remind him of the catcall, "Voetsak Quinn", used repetitively at the Wanderers meeting in 1903 - Worker, 2.10.1913, p.1.

1. Worker, 2.10.1913, p.1.

2. Debates, 30.12.1903, pp.156-7.

3. April 1904, p.311. On the passing of the Labour Ordinance see Benjamin Sacks, South Africa: An Imperial Dilemma, p.58, and P. C. Campbell, Chinese Coolie Emigration within the British Empire, pp.176 & 180.

was granted despite the unequivocal opposition, albeit rather delayed, of the Boers, despite the equally clear opposition of organised labour in the Transvaal, despite protests by the Australian and New Zealand governments, prompted perhaps by their respective Labour Parties, and despite the disapproval of the governments of the Cape Colony and British Columbia.⁴ That the nascent Labour Party in the Transvaal, whose leaders were almost exclusively overseas-born men, should reflect, in part at least, the attitude of its counterparts in various countries of the British Empire was not surprising.

To Milner, however, the Transvaal trade unions still hostile towards Chinese labour were of no significance, for he informed the Colonial Office towards the middle of March:

As far as the European community on Rand is concerned opinion is practically unanimous. With the exception of certain trade societies, who have little influence even with the working man there, there is no one left to oppose Asiatic Labour.⁵

His claim of "practically unanimous" opinion was based on seemingly strong evidence. On 25 January Sir George Farrar presented a petition to the Legislative Council in favour of Chinese labour supposedly signed by 47 000 white males over sixteen - over half the eligible number in the Transvaal.⁶ Then on 10 March an impressive deputation consisting of representatives of Rand institutions, public bodies, commerce and

4. On the Boer opposition see S. A. News, 25.2.1904, p.7. For opposition of the British Liberal and Labour Parties see Herbert Samuel, "The Chinese Labour Question"; John Burns, "Slavery in South Africa", Independent Review, May 1904, pp.594-611; Benjamin Sacks, South Africa: An Imperial Dilemma, pp.44-51. On the Cape Colony, Australia and New Zealand see, for example, C. Kinloch-Cooke, "Chinese Labour in the Transvaal", Empire Review, February 1906, pp.36-9; and Benjamin Sacks, op.cit., pp.50-1. On British Columbia see S. A. News, 25.1.1904, p.4.

5. As quoted in C. Kinloch-Cooke, "Chinese Labour in the Transvaal," Empire Review, January 1906, p.524.

6. C. Headlam (ed.), The Milner Papers, II, p.482; V.

industry met Lord Milner at the Wanderers to protest at the British Government's delay in assenting to the Labour Ordinance. In addition to delegates from leading bodies like the Chamber of Commerce and the Johannesburg Municipality, there were miners from thirty-four mines. According to the Mayor of Johannesburg, the deputation consisted of delegates from twenty-eight organisations and thirty-seven public meetings. But the only trade union represented was the Johannesburg Cabmen's Union.⁷

Milner preferred to turn a blind eye to the way the petition was canvassed. Mine managers hawked the petition round their own mines and well-paid canvassers, employed by the Labour Importation Association, did it elsewhere. One person could sign it at any number of tables as well as at his own home; and Sir George Farrar's secretary, H. O'Kelly Webber, actually tore up 1 500 signatures all in the same handwriting shortly before presentation of the petition to the Legislative Council. Such were the rumours of intimidation of miners to sign or face dismissal that the Association of Mine Managers found it necessary to issue a denial and to report that 7 000 miners signed and 4 000 to 5 000 did not.⁸ Meanwhile in the Legislative Council, H. C. Hull dismissed the validity of the petition:

7. Star, 10.3.1904, p.7. See also V. Halperin, op.cit., pp.140-1.

8. For highly critical description of the canvassing see articles by the special representative on the Rand of the S. A. News in its issues, 20.2.1904, p.9, and 22.2.1904, p.6. For Webber's admission see his book, The Grip of Gold: A Life Story of a Dominion, pp.133-4. Why he should have fabricated this statement as A. A. Mawby, "The Political Behaviour of the British Population of the Transvaal, 1902-1906," p.132, implies, is difficult to understand. For resolution of the Mine Managers see Cd.1941, p.23, no.20. See also R. K. Hallack, "White Labour in South Africa, 1900-1914," p.30, for Herbert's Samuel's accusation that miners were being dismissed for refusing to sign.

Well, he preferred not to say anything as to the manner in which that particular petition had been got up, and how signatures had been obtained to it. All he could say was this, that evidence of that kind might do very well to bamboozle people in England, but he was perfectly certain that they in that country, who knew how these petitions were got up, would never be bamboozled by it.⁹

Nor was the deputation which waited upon Milner at the Wanderers as representative of the white workers as the Governor believed. The bona fides of the labour delegation can be questioned since the discarded officials of the T.M.A., Strong and Perrow, were two of its four spokesmen. Moreover, Strong's remarks on this occasion revealed hostility towards the labour movement, for he talked about cheap white labour becoming "the prey of professional agitators."¹⁰

The swing of public opinion on the Rand towards accepting the importation of Chinese labour was, nevertheless, undeniable by the end of 1903. The main cause was probably the worsening industrial and commercial depression. Such was the suspicion of the mining houses at this time that they were even accused of manipulating financial crises to force the Chinese issue.¹¹ Creswell, for example, pointed out that there had been a steady increase in the number of white miners employed before the verdict of the Labour Commission became known, but there was afterwards scarcely any increase until the British Government assented to the Labour Importation

9. Debates, 20.1.1904, col.354.

10. For biographical details on Strong and Perrow see pp.121-2,149 above. For report on the deputation see Star, 10.3.1904, p.7. For Milner's reference to large number of workers in the deputation see V. Halperin, Lord Milner and the Empire, p.141.

11. S. A. News, 17.2.1904, p.8, article by its special representative on the Rand; The Friend, 22.2.1904, as quoted in S. A. News, 25.2.1904, p.8; S. A. News, 6.7.1904, p.12; R. K. Cope, Comrade Bill, p.72; and A. B. Keith's statement as recorded in G. H. L. Le May, British Supremacy in South Africa, 1899-1907, p.196.

Ordinance although 8 000 more natives were employed in March 1904 than in October 1903. "Is it surprising that by March, or before," he asked, "that the local anti-Chinese opposition was powerless and beaten down, as one must admit it was?"¹² In October 1903 Sir George Farrar, indeed, had suspended underground work on his wealthy New Kleinfontein Mine for several months.¹³

There seemed much truth in the statement that the Rand public's consent to Chinese indentured labour had been won by appealing to its stomach rather than to its intelligence.¹⁴ Johannesburg was thronged at this time with the unemployed, commerce was virtually at a standstill and disillusioned immigrants, many of them Australians, left the Transvaal. By the end of 1903 commerce was forced to realise that the circulation of wealth began with the mining houses and accordingly withdrew most of its support for the African Labour League.¹⁵ That many of the white miners arrived at the same conclusion seems very likely.

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12. Chinese Labour Question from Within, pp.17-8. See also its employment statistics on p.10. For same conclusion see also statement by T. Kennerley of the Germiston branch of the A.S.E. in S. A. News, 21.2.1905, p.12; and article by the special representative of the S. A. News on the Rand in its issue, 17.2.1904, p.8.
13. R. K. Cope, Comrade Bill, p.72.
14. "A British Colonist", "British Rule in the Transvaal", p.348.
15. On the economic position see, for example, A.E.J., March 1904, p.20, report from Kneebone; F. D. P. Chaplin, "The Labour Conditions in the Transvaal", National Review, February 1905, p.1001; S. A. News, 17.2.1904, p.8, article by its special representative on the Rand, which also described the change in attitude of the commercial firms; C. Headlam (ed.), Milner Papers, II, p.482; and V. R. Markham, New Era in South Africa, p.130. On general emigration see H. M. Robertson, "South Africa", (Brinley Thomas (ed.), Economics of International Migrations p.180; on Australian emigration see Natal Mercury, 20.1.1904, p.9, and 23.1.1904, p.7.

9. Labour Importation Ordinance and Results of the Chinese Labour Controversy

The introduction of indentured Chinese labour on the gold-mines was governed by the Labour Importation Ordinance passed by the Transvaal Legislative Council on 10 February 1904. Contracts were for three years with a renewal option for a further three years after which repatriation was compulsory. To ensure that the Chinese were restricted to unskilled work a schedule of fifty-five prohibited trades was laid down, contravention of which by the employer was punishable by a fine not exceeding £500 or two years' imprisonment. The Chinese were debarred from holding fixed property and were to be confined to mine compounds except while at work and when they obtained a special permit whereby they could remain outside up to forty-eight hours.¹⁶

In Britain supporters of the Liberal and Labour Parties were highly critical of the Ordinance, agreeing with the condemnation of the Bishop of Hereford that it contained "the essentials of slavery." John Burns, for instance, asked:

Are we as a nation to incur the greater moral, ethical, social, and political damage to the fabric of the Commonwealth, in order that two British Colonies shall be dominated by Jews, peopled by Asiatics, and be sustained by forced labour in convict compounds, tempered by a weekly pass to a brothel and gambling saloons, and a ticket-of-leave for forty-eight hours to an opium den.¹⁷

The British Trade Union Congress and the Independent Labour Party both demanded the abrogation of the Ordinance as it

16. Ordinance no.17 of 1904 in Ordinances of the Transvaal, 1904, pp.75-94. For highly critical analysis and unfavourable comparison with similar legislation in other British colonies see Doris Birnbaum, "Chinese Labour in the Transvaal", Independent Review, June 1905, pp.142-153; for favourable analysis see C. Kinloch-Cooke, "Chinese Labour in the Transvaal", Empire Review, January 1906, pp.530-548.

17. John Burns, "Slavery in South Africa", pp.604-5. For reference to Bishop of Hereford see A.E.J., April 1904, editorial, pp.3-4. For British criticism, see, for

sanctioned labour unfit for human beings, while the Review of Reviews maintained that it adversely affected white workers throughout the British Empire, who resented the "wholesale importation of blacklegs and the mine owners' avowed desire to keep out trade unions." British opposition, the same journal continued, was not against the Chinese race, but rather against the Chinese worker being treated as a "mere chattel or animated pickaxe". Racialism, it warned, would not protect the white worker whose best policy would be to raise the non-white upwards:

What seems like racial animosity is really disguised brotherhood. The Asiatic must approximate to the European requirements before he can be received as an equal competitor.¹⁸

Meanwhile the protests of the Australian and New Zealand governments were inspired by concern for the future of white labour rather than by any humanitarian feeling for the indentured Chinaman.¹⁹ After all, the majority report of the Labour Commission estimated a shortfall of well over 300 000 natives within five years, hardly indicating, therefore, that the Chinese were merely envisaged as a temporary expedient.²⁰

Organised labour's opposition in the Transvaal to Chinese labour was also based on expected large scale immigration. "I can only see one ultimate result", wrote A. S. Raitt to the Star, "the emigration of the white population, the inundation

pp.458-9 and 464-7; Benjamin Sacks, South Africa: An Imperial Dilemma, p.58 ff.; and the Spectator as quoted in S. A. News, 5.3.1904, p.4.

18. April 1904, pp.312-3. See also its March issue, p.217. On the Trade Union Congress and on the I.L.P. see "Labour Notes" in S. A. News, 1.10.1904, p.4, and 23.4.1904, p.3, respectively.
19. Cd.1895, pp.142 & 131, nos. 86 & 114; S. A. News, 9.4.1904, p.4, "Labour Notes"; Cape Times, 11.1.1904, p.7; Natal Mercury, 23.3.1904, p.11.
20. See p. 152 above.

of the yellow race, the glorious triumph of the gold bug."²¹ In addition, white labour learnt from Australian and American precedents to fear the competition of the industrious Chinaman with his far lower standard of living against whom the only defence was total prohibition. Some workers like L. M. Sanderson, secretary of the Pretoria T. & L.C., regarded the Chinese as "the filthiest and most diseased of the species homo." Lastly, organised labour regarded the importation of the Chinese as a determined attempt by the Chamber of Mines to outflank trade unionism. No real attempt was therefore made to recruit the required amount of native labour, for, as Raitt stressed in the Legislative Council, native wages were only raised in February 1903 when the issue had been predetermined.²² In these circumstances organised labour was left with no other course but to insist on certain of the safeguards in the Labour Importation Ordinance so strongly criticised by the labour movement in Great Britain.

Although Raitt maintained that the Chinese would not be able to be restricted unless a form of slavery were imposed, which the civilised world would not permit, he played nevertheless no small part in ensuring that they be confined to unskilled work and that the terms of their contracts be strictly limited to a maximum of six years before mandatory repatriation. Supported by representations from the T.M.A. and the Witwatersrand T. & L.C., Raitt made certain that a schedule of fifty-five prohibited occupations, based on Sir

21. African Review, 12.9.1903, p.399. See also H. W. Sampson's remarks in Rand Daily Mail, 4.10.1907, p.8.

22. S. A. News, 3.10.1903, p.8, reports Sanderson's comments. Debates, 29.12.1903, cols.218-224 for Raitt's speech. See also Star, 14.10.1903, p.7, letter from Stickland; A. R. Colquhoun, The Africander Land, p.329; and Debates of the Transvaal Legislative Assembly, 18.6.1907, col.177, Whiteside's speech.

George Farrar's list as announced in his Driefontein speech on 31 March 1903, was included in the Labour Ordinance.²³ The general secretary of the T.M.A., S. W. Fursey, told a meeting of miners on 24 January that there was an overwhelming majority against them in the Legislative Council. Because they were beaten they now had to insist on necessary restrictions in the Ordinance and the T.M.A. had consequently written to the Attorney-General asking him to frame a schedule so as to prevent Chinese taking up trades they wished to protect.²⁴ According to another official of the T.M.A., the restrictions would delay to some extent "the hunting out of the white workers."²⁵

The first indentured Chinese labourers arrived on the Rand in June 1904 and 20 918 were working on the mines by the end of the year. They reached a maximum number of 57 828 in 1907. Their importation showed up the weakness of organised labour which was left with no alternative but to resort to political action. Indeed, the South African News now regarded Johannesburg was a "larger Kimberley overshadowed by a dozen financial groups instead of one" and The Friend was so shocked that it advocated nationalisation of the mines to "exclude private capital from social and political power."²⁶ At this stage industrial action by organised labour was out of the question because of the prevailing depression and increasing unemployment. Towards the end of the year 4 000 white men were without work in Johannesburg.²⁷ Thus it was

23. See Raitt's speeches in Debates of the Transvaal Legislative Council, 29.12.1903, col.222 and 21.1.1904, col. 368, for references to slavery; 26.1.1904, col.431 ff. for his rôle regarding the schedule; and 26.1.1904, cols. 408-12, for his part in limiting the contract renewals. See 25.1.1904, col.338, remarks made by the Attorney-General on representations from the T. & L.C. On the T.M.A. see S. A. News, 26.1.1904, p.7.

24. S. A. News, 26.1.1904, p.7.

25. S. A. News, 29.2.1904, p.6, article by its representative on the Rand.

26. S. A. News, 1.2.1904, p.6, editorial. The Friend, 22. 2.1904, as quoted in S. A. News, 25.2.1904, p.8.

not surprising that during its Labour Day celebrations on 1 April in Johannesburg the organised white workers demanded the immediate grant of responsible government.²⁸

Labour was convinced that Milner had sided with the mine owners, allowing an "alien plutocracy to crush a large section of the British people".²⁹ It regarded him with contempt; and the Witwatersrand T. & L.C. refused to participate in a reception on his return from leave in England towards the end of 1903. "The British workman in the Transvaal to-day," commented the correspondent of the South African News on the Rand, "feels he has no government to take care of him, and he is far more lonely in this respect than in the days of the Republic. He feels himself aggrieved, wounded and betrayed."³⁰

However, Labour did not stand alone. Apart from the widespread antagonism towards the Chamber of Mines throughout South Africa so brilliantly portrayed in Boonzaier's Hoggenheimer cartoons in the South African News, Labour had begun to co-operate with outspoken professional and business men on the Rand like Quinn (albeit temporarily), Creswell, Wybergh, Pim and the Australian radicals, Outhwaite and Hutchinson. Far more significant was its rapprochement with the Boers. "They love their country and would not see it defiled with Asiatics," wrote Thomas Kennerley, a leading Germiston trade unionist, "and there is some guarantee that the country's welfare would be preserved by those who love their fatherland."³¹ Jas Reid of the Pretoria T. & L.C. shared his outlook, maintaining that he would have preferred the war to have been lost

27. A. L. McDonald to Merriman, 9.11.1904, Merriman Papers, no.308 of 1904, reports on the number unemployed. On the depression at this time see also A.E.J., November 1904, p.25, report from Kneebone.

28. S. A. News, 2 April 1904, p.7.

29. S. A. News, 26.2.1904, p.5, report by its representative on the Rand.

30. S. A. News, 3.3.1904, p.3. See also 17.2.1904, p.8; and "A British Colonist", "British Rule in the Transvaal",

rather than to see Chinese imported for the winning of speedy dividends for a few persons to the detriment of the white population; and Peter Whiteside declared that he would despair of the future of the Transvaal labour movement were it not for the cordial co-operation of the Afrikaner, who gave Labour hope that it would not have to fight the great foreign capitalists single-handed when responsible government was granted.³² Not long afterwards the Witwatersrand T. & L.C. wrote to General Louis Botha conveying its best wishes for the success of the Boer Congress to be held towards the end of May 1904 and promising sincere co-operation with its members. Botha replied later on behalf of the Congress thanking the T. & L.C. for the sympathy expressed.³³ Meanwhile Smuts had complimented the National Democratic Federation, whose close association with the leaders of organised labour has already been described, on its excellent programme.³⁴

The Chinese labour agitation shattered whatever solidarity of capital and labour had survived from the pre-war period and virtually decided the result of the first general election after responsible government was granted.³⁵ The British population of the Transvaal did not unite politically in opposing the Boers. Indeed, as R. L. Outhwaite had predicted in the South African Guardian, a notable section was forced into an alliance with them - a truly remarkable development so soon after the war.³⁶

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31. S. A. News, 3.10.1903, p.8. See also his article in A.E.J., March 1904, p.21.
32. On Reid see S. A. News, 3.10.1903, p.8; on Whiteside see 16.4.1904, p.4.
33. S. A. News, 11.6.1904, p.4, "Labour Notes"; G. S. Preller, Agt Jaar s'n Politiek: Skoon Geskiedenis van die Suid Afr. Nasionale Partij, 1902-1910, p.33.
34. S. A. News, 25.2.1904, p.7. On its association with Labour see p.150-1 above.
35. J. H. Hofmeyr, South Africa, pp.179-80, supports this contention.
36. Lengthy extract from South African Guardian, reprinted in S. A. News, 23.1.1904, p.9, "Labour Notes."

Organised labour in the Transvaal could find no solidarity with the non-white miner, remaining virtually unaffected by the overseas humanitarian concern. Ironically, it was forced to insist on the legalised colour bar in the Labour Importation Ordinance in the interests of self-preservation. The native seemed to belong to a different and an inferior world, if Raitt's approach to the municipal franchise is taken as a yardstick. He moved in the Legislative Council that all non-whites be excluded from the municipal franchise. When fit to vote he suggested that they elect their own representative "who could approach and be approached by the Government". Continuing, he contended illogically:

It was true that it was unjust to debar a man from the privileges of citizenship because he happened to be a coloured man. That should not of itself be any bar. But it must be admitted that before the coloured man could be qualified to enjoy the franchise he must possess civilisation of such a nature that he thoroughly understood what this vote meant. Now he contended that it was questionable whether a native, who was even fairly educated, was fit to have the vote, because he could not understand what it was, and was not able to exercise the privilege as it ought to be exercised. The municipal vote was the outcome of centuries of white civilisation, and the natives were incapable of understanding its meaning.³⁷

CHAPTER V

TRANSVAAL, 1903-1907

The Labour Party had learned if they did not hang together they would all hang separately and they were going to be a power in the coming elections.

J.J. Ware, president Witwatersrand T. & L.C., in 1906¹

Let the workers stand together and return a good working majority of the right sort, especially Labour members, to the new Chamber,

Keir Hardie to W.W. Lorimer, secretary Transvaal L.R.C., in 1907²

1. TRANSVAAL MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS, 1903

In the absence of parliamentary elections valuable insight into the development of the political labour movement can be obtained from municipal elections. White British subjects over twenty-one, owning ratable property worth £100 or occupying property valued at £300 or at an annual value of £24, qualified for the vote.³ Although the potential support for Labour seemed large, an important element was disfranchised because only one lodger per room was eligible for the vote; and, according to Raitt, at least two-thirds of the white miners shared rooms.⁴

1. Rand Daily Mail, 1.9.1906, p.5.

2. As quoted in Transvaal Leader, 31.1.1907, p.9.

3. G.W. Eybers, Select Constitutional Documents Illustrating South African History, 1795-1910, p.51.

4. Debates of the Transvaal Legislative Council, 13.9.1905, cols. 1912-3, Raitt's comments. See also S.A. News, 29.10.1904, p.4, "Labour Notes".

The first post-war elections in Johannesburg took place on 9 December 1903 and were held on the general ticket system whereby each voter was entitled to thirty votes, one for each of the thirty vacancies. Although ten Labour candidates went to the polls, they did not campaign on a Labour platform, but divided their loyalty between two opposing "tickets". The United Conference Ticket was inspired by the Chamber of Mines, and it convened the conference of delegates representing the mines, commerce, the landed interest, the temperance party, the churches and organised labour which approved a list of thirty candidates and a common policy.⁵ This ticket, which was supported by Sir George Farrar and included well-known directors of mining companies, was also backed by the Witwatersrand T. & L.C., five of whose nominees appeared on its approved list. One of these, S.W. Fursey, the general secretary of the T.M.A., withdrew and was replaced by R. Shanks, who, although not a trade union member, enjoyed the full confidence of the T. & L.C.⁶

Trade Unionists disagreeing with the course followed by the T. & L.C. met at the offices of the T.M.A. on 8 November, formed their own Labour ticket and were intent on starting an independent labour party. However, this object was soon abandoned, and the Labour ticket joined the Municipal Reform Party, which consisted of lesser known Johannesburg citizens, disappointed, perhaps, at their exclusion from the United Conference ticket.⁷ The decision of S.W. Fursey and W.J. Strick, both of the T.M.A., and that of W.J. Phelps, secretary of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Employees, to join the

5. D.J.N. Denoon, " 'Capitalist Influence' and the Transvaal Government", pp.309-10; Star, 14.11.1903, p.11, manifesto of the United Conference Ticket. For names and allegiance of the Labour candidates see Appendix C, IV, 2 below.

6. On its supporters see Star, 9.12.1903, pp.588. On

Reform Party, is not altogether surprising as their unions were not affiliated at this time to the T. & L.C. But the same explanation cannot be applied to the candidatures of Reuben Thompson, president of the Johannesburg branch of the S.A.T.U., and to W.W. Lorimer, secretary of the Shop Assistants' Union.⁸ Obviously the T. & L.C.'s authority was proving ineffective and factionalism was extending in the labour movement. It is possible that organised labour's divided allegiance was also caused by the T.M.A.'s antagonism towards the Chamber of Mines, for Fursey, apparently convinced that the mining magnates dominated the Labour Commission and the United Conference Ticket, had withdrawn from both. In addition, the disunity may have been the result of the emergence of a left and right wing in the labour movement. Indeed, Fursey and Lorimer were later more militant than the T. & L.C.'s candidates.⁹

The platforms of the two tickets were similar, concentrating on the municipalisation and the improvement of essential public services like the tramway service, water supply and lighting system. The Reform Party differed, perhaps, in its demand for a more representative form of government for the Transvaal.¹⁰

Despite the prevailing controversy over Chinese labour, Labour's two most prominent men at this time, Raitt and Whiteside, both of whom stood on the United Conference Ticket, expressed a moderate outlook. "He did not believe in ranting

7. Star, 24.11.1904, p.10, letter from W.W. Lorimer; 29.11.1904, letter from H.W. Sampson; S.A. News, 11.11.1903, p.7.

8. Star, 14.11.1903, p.11, letter from the Witwatersrand T. & L.C.

against capitalists", commented Raitt, "as capital and labour went in harness, dragging the financial coach; they should never be separated. Troubles between the two were not introduced by either party, but by rank outsiders".¹¹ For his part, Whiteside was upset over the press description of Labour leaders as "labour agitators" and concentrated his demands on the widening of the municipal franchise, the employment of white labour by the municipality at a minimum wage and the incorporation of a fair wage clause in all municipal contracts."¹²

The election proved a triumph for the United Conference Ticket, twenty-two of whose candidates were successful, and for the former nominated town council, all of whose members were returned, except for Whiteside who was placed thirty-first. The only Labour candidates to be elected were Shanks, who came nineteenth, and Raitt, who was placed twenty-fifth. This disappointing Labour performance may have been due to apathy amongst the white workers, as the low poll of 38% seems to indicate. Nevertheless, Labour did receive a consistent 1500 to 2000 votes for almost all its candidates.¹³

9. For Fursey's withdrawal from the Labour Commission see p. 149 above; for his socialist activity see, for example, Voice of Labour, 23.10.1909, p.1. On Lorimer see pp. 110-1, 205 below.

10. Star, 14.11.1903, p.11, and 26.11.1903, p.8.

11. Star, 25.11.1903, p.10.

12. Star, 26.11.1903, p.8.

13. See Appendix, C, IV, 2, below.

Individual popularity seems to have been far more important than specific issues or groupings, for three independents headed the poll. This probably invalidates the claim made by the mining magnate, Lionel Phillips, that Whiteside's defeat was due to his unpopular opposition to Chinese labour.¹⁴ Moreover, well-known opponents of the Chinese, like Quinn came as high as seventh. In fact, the Chinese issue was avoided in election campaigning and only reached its most disturbing stage after the elections.¹⁵

Meanwhile in Pretoria the local T. & L.C.'s municipal candidates, A. Arnold and L.M. Sanderson, who were both prominent members of the S.A.T.U., were not returned. Both had allied themselves with a non-Labour group in the election campaign.¹⁶

2. GROWTH OF SOCIALISM

In January 1903 socialists were active in the Rand Parliamentary Society and introduced a "bill" to abolish the private ownership of the means of production, transportatbn and distribution of wealth.¹⁷ On 19 December they formed the Socialist Labour Party at a meeting in Johannesburg attended by 300 persons. Its main objects were to press for legislation establishing a co-operative commonwealth in the Transvaal and to educate the workers about socialism; but it also undertook to

14. Lionel Phillips, Transvaal Problems : Some Notes on Current Politics, p.44.

15. The debacle at the Wanderers took place on 14 December and the controversial petition was presented the following month. A.A. Mawby, "The Political Behaviour of the British Population of the Transvaal, 1900-1906", pp.157 & 199, concedes that Chinese labour was not an election issue and did not affect the results.

16. A.J. Downes, Printers' Saga, p.154; S.A.T.J., October 1904, p.6.

17. S.A. News, 24.1.1903, p.12, "Labour Notes".

agitate for "representative" government, probably meaning responsible government, and to nominate parliamentary candidates advocating the same principles as the Socialist Labour Parties overseas.¹⁸

The next public gathering of the socialists was held on 19 February 1904 by which time their organisation had changed its name to the Social Democratic Organisation. This meeting was called to demand "Representative Government", but here again responsible government was probably meant. I. Israelstam, who was in the chair and who had participated prominently in the previous meeting, used strong language and even threatened violence to attain this end. Supporting speakers included W.W. Lorimer, W. McLean and R.L. Outhwaite, who was not a socialist but still endorsed the motion calling for a popularly elected government. This demand, although presented in the form of a socialist treatise, was passed with only two dissenting votes. As the proceedings were without incident, the services of the "stalwart working men" who had volunteered to keep order were not called upon, but their presence was indicative of the tension surviving from the agitation over Chinese labour.¹⁹

At this stage the programme of the Social Democratic Organisation was far from being revolutionary, calling for social welfare legislation similar to that in previous Labour platforms in the Transvaal, but differed in its unequivocal socialist objective, in the absence of any demand in favour of arbitration in industrial disputes and in its exclusion of any colour discrimination.²⁰ Whether the latter was by intent or neglect is not known.

18. Star, 23.12.1903, p.1, letter from I. Israelstam.

19. Natal Mercury, 22.2.1904, p.8; Star, 22.2.1904, p.8. Writing in April 1904, H.W. Sampson refers to the existence of the "Socialistic Labour party" in the Transvaal - Morning Leader, 23.5.1904.

20. See Appendix B, IV, 6, below.

Its leaders showed, however, more militancy in their May Day speeches delivered in English, Dutch, German and Yiddish to a large cosmopolitan crowd on Johannesburg market Square. They preached the class struggle; again demanded the grant of responsible government; were strongly critical of trade unionists like Raitt and Fursey because of their ignorance of socialism; opposed arbitration in industrial disputes; and condemned crown colony rule as the product of majority capitalist opinion. To call that government, declared Jack Campbell, the first socialist to make propaganda amongst the natives, was an insult to the ~~T~~ar.²¹

Three months later the socialists again drew the attention of the public when they organised a demonstration of the unemployed on Market Square. This meeting was held under the auspices of the Socialist Propaganda Committee, presumably a subsidiary body of the Social Democratic Organisation. Speeches were delivered in English, Yiddish and Italian and were militant in tone. McLean, for example, declared:

Until they took action to destroy root and branch that hideous vampire which was sucking the blood of humanity, until they became organised as a class, they were as helpless as a disorganised mob.

But he valued constitutional action, for he urged preparation for the grant of popularly elected government so as to "strike a deadly blow at the vampire of capitalisim". As for the unemployed, the meeting resolved to call upon the Government to enforce mineowners to exploit all mines and mining claims so as to absorb those without work "at wages compatible to the cost of living in comfort". Failing compliance the Government should take

21. Star, 2,5,1904, p.9. For biographical information on Campbell see R.K. Cope, Comrade Bill, pp.82 & 98.

over the defaulting mines. Why the trade unions left it to the socialists to take up the cause of the unemployed was a valid question asked by McLean.²²

Other socialist organisations in the Transvaal by the end of 1904 were Vorwarts, which had been established at least five years earlier and which received its inspiration from the German Social Democratic Party, and the Clarion Fellowship.²³ In 1905 the Social Democratic Organisation seems to have altered its name to the Social Democratic Federation.²⁴ Not long afterwards more socialist organisations were started like the Italian Socialist Group, the Jewish Socialist Society, the Friends of Russian Freedom and the Johannesburg Socialist Fellowship.²⁵

Thus socialism had taken root in the Transvaal, drawing, as the labour columnist of the Rand Daily Mail stressed in 1906, strong support amongst immigrants from the European continent.²⁶ The socialists, who were sharply critical of trade unionist pandering to capitalists, probably attracted a more sympathetic hearing as a result of the hostility towards the mining magnates aroused by the agitation over Chinese labour.²⁷ But their militancy sometimes proved embarrassing to the trade unionists.²⁸ Indeed, the Witwatersrand T. & L.C. must have been unenthusiastic about socialism, for it rejected the Durban Clarion Fellowship's appeal for a contribution towards the expense of sending E.B. Rose, then resident in England, as the South African delegate to the International Socialist Congress in Amsterdam in 1904.²⁹

22. Star, 8.8.1904, p.8.

23. Star, 24.11.1904, p.10, letters from J.F. Bach (Back) and W.W. Lorimer. On Vorwarts in 1899 see p. above.

24. Natal Mercury, 9.5.1905, p.7; Rand Daily Mail, 23.8.1905, p.3, and 7.11.1905, p.5.

25. R.K. Cope, Comrade Bill, p.82; G.D.H. Cole, A History of Socialist Thought, vol. III, part II, The Second International, 1889-1914, p.909. For newspaper references on the Italian socialists see S.A. News, 16.8.1906, p.8; on the Friends of Russian Freedom Star, 13.11.1905, p.9, and Rand Daily Mail, 2.5.1906, p.8; and on the Johannesburg Socialist Fellowship Transvaal Leader, 29.10.1906, p.9.

26. 2.5.1906, p.9.

27. On pandering to capitalists see their speeches reported in Star, 2.5.1904, p.9.

3. LABOUR POLITICS IN 1904 AND FORMATION OF THE TRANSVAAL LABOUR PARTY

Although in February 1904 the Social Democratic Organisation was the first political organisation to hold a public meeting to demand responsible government for the Transvaal, other bodies had advocated this earlier. In 1902 the proposed Labour League's platform assumed that a democratic parliamentary system would soon be established; and a year later the National Democratic Federation, which was strongly associated with organised labour called for responsible government in its programme. In addition, the miners' leaders, Furse and Strick, had made the same demand.³⁰

Not surprisingly therefore Transvaal Labour called for the immediate grant of responsible government at its Labour Day meeting held on Good Friday, 1904. About 2000 persons heard Furse's scathing criticism of the Transvaal administration, passed motions reiterating organised labour's opposition to Chinese labour and calling for the improvement of work conditions on the mines, and welcomed the formation of the first federal Australian Labour Government under Chris Watson. In an impressive show of solidarity fourteen labour organisations, including the Witwatersrand and Pretoria Trades and Labour Councils and the T.M.A., participated in the Labour Day parade.³¹

Encouraged by these developments trade unionists began to stress the need for political action. Two weeks after he had presided over the Labour Day meeting, Peter Whiteside declared in Cape Town that trade unions must be concerned with politics. "All over the world", he explained, "Labour has become a factor in politics."³² Similarly, Tom Kneebone,

28. See, for example, Star, 8.8.1904, p.8.

29. S.A. News, 13.8.1904, p.4, "Labour Notes".

30. On the League's attitude see Appendix, B,IV,4; on that of the Federation see B,IV,5; and on Furse and Strick's standpoint see A.A. Mawby, "The Political Behaviour of the British Population of the Transvaal, 1900-1906", p.172.

31. S.A. News, 2.4.1904, p.7.; Natal Mercury, 22.3.1904, p.11
R.K. Cope, Comrade Bill, pp. 74-5; A.E.J., June 1904, p.20, report from Kneebone.

32. S.A. News, 16.4.1904, p.4.

the A.S.E.'s organiser, who was upset over the rejection by the Legislative Council of Raitt's motion proposing an employers' liability ordinance, urged political action by the workers.³³ Significantly, both Whiteside and Kneebone were Australians.³⁴

Towards the beginning of July Milner announced that elected members would shortly be added to the Legislative Council. About the same time the Witwatersrand T. & L.C., possibly anticipating elections, considered forming a political labour league and called a meeting for this purpose on 13 July. Although approving the principle this meeting referred the question to a five-man committee: Whiteside of the S.A.E.D.&F.A., Fursey of the T.M.A., Raitt of the A.S.E., Parkes of the A.S. of C. & J., and Stickland of the S.A.T.U.³⁵ By selecting such prominent labour leaders from the five largest trade unions in the Transvaal, the T. & L.C. showed that it was seriously interested in political action.

At the same meeting the Council decided to contest the forthcoming municipal elections in Johannesburg; and subsequently it called for nominations from its affiliated unions for final selection by ballot of its members.³⁶ The T. & L.C. adopted its own municipal platform and declined the Chamber of Commerce's invitation to combine forces in a joint ticket explaining that it had decided to promote its own independent Labour ticket.³⁷ Of the ten Labour candidates who went to the polls under the auspices of the T. & L.C. nine were trade unionists and the tenth was the Rev. C.A. Lane, editor

33. A.E.J., April 1904, p.18, report from Kneebone. For his support for political action see also S.A. News, 6.8.1904, p.4, "Labour Notes".

34. Gitsham and Trembath, Labour Organisation in South Africa, pp. 160 & 179.

35. "Labour Notes" in S.A. News, 16 & 23.7.1904, pp. 5 & 10, respectively. See also F.J. Grobler, "Die Invloed van Geskoolde Blanke Arbeid", p.53.

36. S.A. News, 13.8.1904, p.4, "Labour Notes"; S.A.T.J., September 1904, p.6.

37. S.A. News, 24.9.1904, p.3, "Labour Notes".

of the Transvaal Messenger, who was initially nominated by a trade union and had agreed in writing to support the Labour platform.³⁸ Raitt stood aloof, preferring the United Conference Ticket, and resigned in August as secretary of the parliamentary committee of the T. & L.C.³⁹ In fact, no member of the powerful Johannesburg branch of the A.S.E. stood on the Labour ticket. Whether its members were reluctant to come forward out of deference to their president, A.S. Raitt, is not known; but discord seems to have been present once again in the ranks of Labour.

The municipal platform of the T. & L.C. contained the usual Labour demands for municipalisation of essential public services, democratisation of the electoral system and municipal taxation on the basis of the unimproved land value, but those for the election of the mayor by ratepayers and payment of councillors were new in the Transvaal. The latter plank lost votes and was therefore altered the following year. The popular demand for "direct employment of white labour wherever possible" reveals agreement with Creswell's attitude.⁴⁰ Since the electorate was very sensitive to any infringement by the native upon what it regarded as the white man's sphere of work, Lane was forced to contradict rumours about his concern for native welfare and even advised "all niggers to keep off the footpath and walk on the road".⁴¹

When voting took place for the twelve vacancies on 26 October Labour fared disappointingly with most of its candidates occupying positions at the bottom of the poll. Only Whiteside, who came eleventh, proved successful and even Raitt was defeated, obviously affected by loss of Labour support.⁴² Contemporary Labour columnists attributed this

38. "Labour Notes" in S.A. News, 1 & 15.10.1904, both p.4; Rand Daily Mail, 17.10.1905, p.5. For list of Labour candidates see Appendix C,IV,3 below.

39. Transvaal Leader, 23.11.1907, p.9; S.A. News, 13.8.1904, p.4, "Labour Notes".

40. For the platform see Appendix B,IV,7, below; for the alteration see B,IV,9, and Rand Daily Mail, 23.8.1905, p.3.

41. Transvaal Leader, 24.10.1904, p.10. On Lane see also 26 & 27.10.1904, pp. 4 & 8 respectively. On preserving the White man's sphere see "S.A.", "Black and White in the Transvaal". Monthly Review, July 1906, p.14.

poor performance to the disfranchisement of a large bachelor section of the population, apathy of the workers and failure of the T. & L.C. to advertise its candidates sufficiently, being unable to afford to do so.⁴³ However, an unsympathetic editorial writer of the Transvaal Leader found the Labour platform unacceptable to the electors:

The demand for payment of their services estranged the sympathies of very many who would like to vote for a working man candidate, while the promise to Australianise our institutions aroused active hostility.⁴⁴

Meanwhile in the Pretoria municipal elections the solitary Labour candidate, L.M. Sanderson, who was then secretary of the local T. & L.C., was not returned.⁴⁵

The Witwatersrand T. & L.C. had now advanced to the stage where it promoted independent political action, but had failed to present a united front of organised labour in the municipal elections in 1903 and in 1904. It seemed less likely to achieve this after W. Wallace Lorimer and John F. Back, prompted perhaps by the slowness of the T. & L.C. in founding its proposed political labour league, formed the Transvaal Labour Party, (the T.L.P.) in November 1904.⁴⁶ As a mutually disparaging exchange of letters in the Star shows, the T. & L.C. refused to co-operate with the T.L.P. and was soon at loggerheads with it.⁴⁷ H.W. Sampson, secretary of the T. & L.C., accused Lorimer and Back, chairman and secretary of the T.L.P., respectively, of usurping without warning or advice the name rightfully describing his Council, for, with only one or two exceptions, the whole of organised labour was affiliated to it. In addition, he repudiated any connection between the T. & L.C. or its political labour league, then in the course of formation, and the T.L.P.⁴⁸ Back and Lorimer

43. S.A. News, 29.10.1904, p.4, "Labour Notes"; Rand Daily Mail, 3.10.1905, p.4, "Labour Notes".

44. 28.10.1904, p.6.

45. S.A.T.J., October 1904, p.6.

46. Star, 19.11.1904, p.10, and 24.11.1904, p.10, letters from Back.

47. For refusal to co-operate see S.A. News, 24.12.1904, p.4, "Labour Notes".

48. Star, 21.11.1904, p.10, letter from Sampson.

denied the T. & L.C.'s exclusive right to speak for labour, pointing out that it was not a political party and that it did not include organisations like the S.D.F. and the Clarion Fellowship which were also part of the labour movement. On the other hand, the T.L.P. was open to all workers prepared to support its programme and to abide by its constitution, and trade unions could join as a body.⁴⁹ Sampson's retort was tactless and unnecessarily vicious:

After reading their various explanations, I am of opinion that a second Labour Party as well as the other organisations mentioned in the two letters exist in name only, and are used as the hobby of a handful of individuals seeking notoriety. Meanwhile, the real Labour Party have so far progressed as to contest the recent municipal election under their proper title

Further the Trades and Labour Council do claim the right, and undoubtedly are entitled to speak on behalf of thousands of workers here⁵⁰

Born in Scotland in 1874 where he was initiated as a member of the Good Templar Order by Keir Hardie, Lorimer was one of the three founders of the Scottish National Council of Shop Assistants and a member of the British I.L.P. from its inception in 1893. After the Anglo-Boer War he became involved in the Rand labour movement when he was a delegate to the Witwatersrand T. & L.C. of the Shop Assistants' Union during its existence. In October 1903 he was one of the Labour candidates who joined the Reform Party in the Johannesburg municipal elections.⁵¹ In contrast, Back, who was born in England in 1872, seemed out of place in labour and socialist politics, being a trance medium and psychic therapist and a seller of health foods. In 1901 he spent thirty-one days in a gaol in England for refusing to allow his child to be vaccinated and, after his arrival in South Africa in 1902 or 1903, he still regarded vaccination as "an exploded medical nostrum". Beyond working as a painter in England for several years, Back seemed to have no labour credentials before he helped to form the T.L.P.⁵²

49. Star, 24.11.1904, p.10, letters from Back and Lorimer.

50. Star, 29.11.1904, letter from Sampson.

51. Transvaal Leader Weekly Edition, 2.2.1907, "Political Who's Who".

52. Natal Mercury, 14.12.1903, p.11; Transvaal Leader, 15.1.1907.n.7: Voice of Labour, 25.9.1909.p.2. advertisement:

As the T.L.P. adhered to the socialist objective it was not surprising that its programme called for a greater government rôle in land development and in mining. Otherwise its platform mainly reflected non-controversial demands of the Transvaal labour movement for social welfare measures and a popularly elected government. It advocated, for example, establishing an arbitration board for the settlement of industrial disputes, an eight hour working day, old age pensions, free education and "full self-government". It seemed to favour white manhood suffrage although its relevant clauses did not exclude non-whites and may have been purposely left ambiguous. Its support for "the initiative and referendum" whereby the electorate would be able to initiate, give its assent to and reject legislation illustrates labour's obsession for the most democratic form of government.⁵³ Yet the T.L.P., unlike the National Democratic Federation and the Social Democratic Organisation, did not advocate in its platform the enfranchisement of women.⁵⁴

The T.L.P. claimed that it held forty meetings on Johannesburg Market Square during 1905, but it probably attracted few members beyond its original founders.⁵⁵ Its cause was not helped by the sustained ridicule of the Rand Daily Mail's labour columnist.⁵⁶ Nevertheless, the T.L.P. proved of sufficient importance to bring Lorimer and Back to the forefront of the political labour movement on the Rand.

53. For objective and programme of the T.L.P. see Appendix B, IV, 8, below. B. Spoelstra, "Die Bewindsaanvaarding van die Botha-Regering oór Transvaal as Selfregerende Britse Kolonie in 1907", Archives Year Book for South African History, 1953, II, p.339, erroneously accepts this platform, which was published in November 1904, as the labour platform in 1906.

54. Compare Appendices B, IV, 5, 6 and 8, below.

55. Rand Daily Mail, 14.2.1906, p.4, "Labour Notes"; 23.2.1906, p.8, letter from "Nemosa"; Star, 14.9.1905, p.7; Walker and Weinbren, 2000 Casualties, p. 319.

56. "Labour Notes" in Rand Daily Mail, 23.5.1905, p.5; 30.5.1905, p.5; 11.7.1905, p.4; 28.11.1905, p.5; 28.12.1905 p.5. See also Lorimer's defence in 24.5.1905, p.6.

4. ORGANISED LABOUR AND FORMATION OF
POLITICAL PARTIES, 1904-05

Several political parties were stated in the Transvaal towards the end of 1904 and the beginning of 1905 in keen anticipation of the grant of elective parliamentary institutions. The formation of the T.L.P. and its failure to attract trade union support has already been described. On 22 November the Transvaal Responsible Government Association, (the T.R.G.A.), was founded and it proved critical of the Milner administration and the Chamber of Mines, did not distrust Boer aspirations, accepted the need for Chinese labour and, as its name suggests, advocated the immediate grant of responsible government. Its formation was, perhaps, one outcome of the agitation for responsible government carried on since June by E.P. Solomon, H. Hull and Harry Solomon. The Association formed few branches during its two year existence and seems to have been controlled throughout by its original committee which mainly consisted of professional and commercial men and diamond mine-owners.⁵⁷

No labour representatives attended the series of meetings leading to its formation, but W.H. Andrews, A.S. Raitt and P. Whiteside signed its original manifesto calling for the immediate grant of responsible government. Others signing included R. Shanks and C.A. Lane, both of whom had been associated with labour, and the anti-Chinese champions, J. W. Quinn, H. Pim, F.H.P. Creswell and W. Wybergh.⁵⁸ However, none of the above seems to have joined the T.R.G.A. except for Quinn, who resigned in April, and Pim who was never an active member.⁵⁹

57. A.A. Mawby, "The Political Behaviour of the British Population of the Transvaal 1900-1906", pp. 171, 194, 196-7, 200, 255, 279, 296-8; "Transvaaler", "Political Parties in the Transvaal", National Review, May 1905, p. 469.

58. Star, 25.11.1904, p.11; "Transvaaler", op.cit., p.474.

59. Star, 26.11.1904, p.11, letter from D. Dalgety, secretary of the T.R.G.A.; A.A. Mawby, op.cit., p. 255.

The radical and labour leaders were much less attracted to the Progressive Association which was formed on 29 November and had amongst its leading members the well-known mining magnates, Farrar, Fitzpatrick and Chaplin. It fully supported Milner's government, distrusted the Boers, was highly satisfied with the Chinese presence on the mines and advocated the grant of representative government as a preliminary step towards the later concession of responsible government. It formed many branches and claimed an individual membership of thousands;⁶⁰ and its leaders showed little respect for the T.R.G.A. Thus Fitzpatrick dismissed it as "negligible" in numbers and quality and Chaplin described it as the "unconscious agency for the promotion of Boer ideals".⁶¹

The Progressive Association's main opposition, Het Volk, which was the mouthpiece of the Afrikaner population, was formed in January. It was strongly hostile to Milner, supported responsible government and advocated repatriation of the Chinese.⁶²

At the same time the Witwatersrand T. & L.C., in spite of Raitt's opposition, had second thoughts about founding a political labour league.⁶³ However, it referred this subject once more to a sub-committee. It also decided, in the face of the opposition of the A.S.E. delegates, Andrews and Kneebone, to accept Whiteside's motion limiting its financial support in parliamentary and municipal elections to bona fide trade union representatives.⁶⁴

60. Star, 29.11.1904, p.15; A.A. Mawby, op.cit., pp. 192, 201, 208 & 210; G.H.L. Le May, British Supremacy in South Africa, p. 172.

61. A.A. Mawby, op.cit., p. 200 on Fitzpatrick; and on Chaplin see his article, "The Labour Question in the Transvaal", National Review, January 1906, p. 848.

62. B. Spoelstra, "Die Bewindsaanvaarding van die Botha-Regering", pp. 324-6, 330-1; A.A. Mawby, op.cit., p. 212; "Transvaaler", op.cit., pp. 479-82; N.G. Garson, "Het Volk": The Botha-Smuts Party in the Transvaal" Historical Journal, IX, 1 (1966), p.105 ff.

63. Star, 13.1.1905 and 3.2.1905, as referred to by A.A. Mawby, "The Political Behaviour of the British Population of the Transvaal", p. 244.

64. S.A. News, 11.2.1905, p.3, "Labour Notes".

Organised labour's sympathies lay with the opponents of the Progressive Association. Its attitude to the Afrikaner continued to grow warmer, as its reaction to the death of President Kruger in July 1904 and participation in the funeral in Pretoria six months later, clearly showed. White workers recalled happier days under Republican rule and how Kruger warned the mine-owners that the state would not hesitate to nationalise the mines if they stopped working them in order to obtain their demands.⁶⁵ Thomas Burt, doyen of British "Lib-Lab" M.P.'s recorded that General Botha told him that the Boers had been deeply touched by the attitude of the workers at Kruger's funeral.⁶⁶ The printers had good reason indeed to place a wreath on Kruger's grave, for his government had imposed a 100% duty on imported printing which Milner had lifted completely.⁶⁷

Kneebone saw hope for the workers in cohesion with the Boers and warned against their being misled by "flag-waving and bunkum patriotism"; and Whiteside and Shanks expressed pro-Boer feeling in public.⁶⁸ Afrikaner leaders must also have been delighted with Whiteside's opposition to the motion in the Johannesburg Municipal Council, proposed by the Mayor, to present a farewell address to Milner regretting his departure and thanking him for his great services to the Transvaal.⁶⁹ Thus it was not surprising that General Botha should be a guest speaker at the annual dinner of the Pretoria branch of the A.S.E. in June 1905. He described, significantly, the fair play accorded the white worker by president Kruger and looked forward to co-operation between Boer and Briton.⁷⁰

65. Star, 8.8.1904, p.8, speech by Lorraine; 18.2.1905, p.9, speech by Whiteside; S.A. News, 19.11.1904, p.7, "Labour Notes". Thomas Burt, A Visit to the Transvaal, p.74. It is significant that Creswell should write in 1905 about the threat by the Chamber of Mines to close down mines as follows: "Bitterly as we opposed Mr. Kruger, there were many of us who no doubt admired the way he stood no nonsense of this kind from the Chamber". - Chinese Labour Question from Within, p.99.

66. Thomas Burt, A Visit to the Transvaal, p.74.

67. S.A.T.J., December 1904, p.6, and March 1905, p.10.

68. On Kneebone see A.E.J., January 1905, p.16, and May 1905,

49. On Whiteside and Shanks see Star, 18.2.1905, p.9.

In view of organised labour's continued support for responsible government, it was natural that its leaders should co-operate with the T.R.G.A. at public meetings early in 1905 at which self-government was demanded.⁷¹ To their disappointment the British government issued on 31 March the Letters Patent giving the Transvaal an elective legislative assembly of thirty to thirty-five members with six to nine officials and an independent executive council of officials. Only the Progressive Association was pleased with the Lyttelton Constitution. "The situation was such that although they were going to get representation", declared Whiteside, "it would be so emasculated that their voice would practically powerless".⁷² The proposed payment to M.L.A.s of not more than £200 per annum in contrast with the £500 to existing M.L.C.s, and the requirement that candidates deposit £100 towards the state's election expenses, certainly militated against the appearance of labour candidates.⁷³

On 15 April Het Volk and the T.R.G.A. concluded an electoral pact, claiming to have eliminated the "racial" question in politics. They attacked the Lyttelton or "Hoggenheimer" Constitution, protested loyalty to the imperial connection, demanded self-government and reached a compromise on the Chinese question whereby Het Volk agreed not to raise it for five years.⁷⁴ In the opinion of the Rand magnate, Abe Bailey, the T.R.G.A. had committed political suicide, leaving a clear field for the Progressive Association and Het Volk.⁷⁵

69. S.A. News, 1.4.1905, p.4, "Labour Notes".

70. S.A. News, 13.6.1905, p.5. See also A.E.J. August 1905, p.18, report from Kneebone.

71. See, for example, Rand Daily Mail, 16.1.1905, as quoted in Cd. 2479, p.34; Star, 19.1.1905, p.10, and 18.2.1905 p.9.

72. Rand Daily Mail, 17.7.1905, p.4.

73. Ibid., 7.2.1906, p.4, "Labour Notes", and 14.3.1906, p.4, "Labour Notes". The T.R.G.A.'s manifesto on the Constitution objected to the low payment of M.L.A.s - Rand Daily Mail, 6.5.1905, p.5.

74. G.H.L. Le May, British Supremacy in South Africa, p.179; B. Spoelstra, "Die Bewindsaanvaarding van die Botha-Regering", p.332; A.A. Mawby, "The Political Behaviour of the British Population in the Transvaal", pp.220,284-5; D.C. Boonzaier's cartoon in S.A. News, 29.4.1905, p.10.

75. A.A. Mawby, op.cit., pp. 221-2.

The T.R.G.A. seemed eager to include labour in the electoral pact and started negotiations with representatives of the Witwatersrand T. & L.C. at a meeting in the Trades Hall towards the end of May. Amongst those representing the T.R.G.A. was G.A. Hay, the diamond mine-owner, who had recently presented a fine original painting to the Witwatersrand Trades Hall and Workmen's Club on its opening and who became a Labour M.L.A. in 1924.⁷⁶ Delegates decided to recommend to their respective organisations to combine in support of the T.R.G.A. platform, leaving labour free, however, to press its own industrial demands. Further details, like co-operation at elections, were left over for a future conference.⁷⁷

The June monthly meeting of the T. & L.C. agreed that organised labour should act in unison with the T.R.G.A. and Het Volk at elections provided it was granted a satisfactory quota of candidates; and it rejected the suggestion that the Progressive Association be approached to establish its attitude to the labour platform. However, nothing came of this proposed triple alliance, for the conference that was to finalise it never eventuated.⁷⁸

Yet Botha wrote to Hay on 10 June stating the intention of Het Volk to co-operate with the T.R.G.A. and the "Workmen";⁷⁹ and in a widely publicised speech in July, marking his return from a visit to Australia, Whiteside favoured the proposed alliance. He maintained that the aims of Het Volk were honest and supported the T.R.G.A. on the self-government issue, but reserved his opinion on its other objects.

76. On the gift see Rand Daily Mail, 23.5.1905, p.5., "Labour Notes"; on the delegates see S.A. News, 23.5.1905, p.5.

77. "Labour Notes" in Rand Daily Mail, 23.5.1905, p.5, and 6.6.1905, p.8; S.A. News, 23.5.1905, p.5.

78. "Labour Notes" in Rand Daily Mail, 13.6.1905, p.5; 11.7.1905, p.4; 17.10.1905, p.5; S.A. News, 9.6.1905, p.5; Natal Mercury, 10.6.1905, p.9; Rand Daily Mail, 9.6.1905, p.8.

79. As quoted in Guardian, 9.5.1924, p.1, which can be located in the Star library newscuttings.

He was sharply critical of the Progressive Association which he accused of being dominated by the Corner House.⁸⁰ Meanwhile the Daily Express, which was started in the first week of July as the official organ of the T.R.G.A., showed a decided sympathy towards organised labour.⁸¹

Not all labour leaders were happy with the harmonious relations with Het Volk and the T.R.G.A. W. Wallace Lorimer, for instance, wrote to the press that there was a far greater difference between the initiative and the referendum, to which the trade unions were pledged, and responsible government, than between the latter and representative government. Moreover, although Lorimer believed that labour could obtain more of its demands from the Progressives, he contended that an independent labour party was essential.⁸²

Meanwhile the Progressive Association claimed great progress and Farrar reported in September that it had over thirty thousand members spread over forty-three branches.⁸³ Kneebone conceded that workers had joined it, but explained:

He was satisfied that most of the members of the Progressive Party were working men who had been terrorised into it. Flag-waving was no good to right-thinking men. They should be careful of it. He was not afraid of the flag being abused by the loyal white people of this country, nor of its being jumped by their Dutch fellow-subjects. They must remember that the Dutch were not so far ahead as they were in political and labour movements, and they must help them.⁸⁴

80. Rand Daily Mail, 17.7.1905, p.4, or Natal Mercury, 17.7.1905, p.8, or Star, 17.7.1905, p.11, or S.A. News, 18.7.1905, p.5.

81. A.A. Mawby. "The Political Behaviour of the British Population of the Transvaal"; pp. 216-7 & 253; S.A. News Weekly Edition, 13.9.1905, p.14, "Labour Notes".

82. Star, 31.5.1905, p.8. See also 25.5.1905, p.11, letter from F.J. Tiddy; A.A. Mawby, op.cit., p. 253; and Rand Daily Mail, 6.3.1906, p.5, "Labour Notes".

83. A.A. Mawby, op.cit., p. 208.

84. Rand Daily Mail, 1.9.1905, p.4. On politics of the miners see also 1.8.1905, p.5, "Labour Notes".

5. FORMATION OF THE TRANSVAAL POLITICAL
LABOUR LEAGUE

Organised labour was not prepared to forego independent political action however much it supported the T.R.G.A. and Het Volk on specific issues.⁸⁵ Expected elections under the Lyttleton Constitution probably prompted the labour columnist of the Rand Daily Mail to stress in June and July 1905 the immediate need for a political labour league and may have added a sense of urgency to the deliberations of the political labour league committee of the Witwatersrand T. & L.C.⁸⁶ By the end of July the Council had resolved to found the proposed league whose constitution and platform it agreed to in August.⁸⁷ On 31 August the Transvaal Political Labour League, (the P.L.L.), was formally launched at a public meeting in the Trades Hall.

Meanwhile representatives of the T. & L.C., S.D.F., T.L.P. and other labour groups, including probably Vowarts, held conferences to consider the achievement of political unity in the labour movement.⁸⁸ Little success was accomplished, as the inaugural public meeting of the P.L.L. showed. It was not well attended and all the main speakers, Andrews, Kneebone and George Steer, were members of the A.S.E. Although advertised to speak, neither Whiteside nor Sampson did so. Nor do the names of Back and Lorimer of the T.L.P. and Israelstam of the S.D.F. appear in newspaper reports.⁸⁹ The Rand Daily Mail's labour columnist gave an unconvincing explanation that persons like Whiteside were moved to take a back-seat by a self-sacrificing desire to allow "little known spokesmen" to make the public acquaintance.⁹⁰ This represented an ill-disguised slight against Andrews, then president of the T. & L.C., and against

85. Rand Daily Mail, 17.7.1905, p.4, speeches by Whiteside and Kneebone.

86. For advice of the labour columnist see his "Labour Notes" in Rand Daily Mail, 13.6.1905, p.5; 27.6.1905, p.5; and 11.7.1905, p.4. Part composition of the league committee is revealed in "Labour Notes" in 4.8.1905, p.5.

87. "Labour Notes" in S.A. News, 5.8.1905, p.6, and 2.9.1906.

Kneebone, the organizer of the A.S.E. since 1903. The 199
absence of Back and Lorimer is logical, as the T.L.P.
stood aloof from the P.L.L.⁹¹ Isrealstam, however,
appeared to support the League a fortnight later.⁹² Once
more labour was obviously divided by factionalism. The
clash of personalities is also indicated by the various
claims as to who founded the P.L.L. Some writers point to
Whiteside's pressure after his return from a visit to
Australia; others claim that Sampson was the real founder.
On the other hand, Andrews's biographer stresses his
influence as president of the T. & L.C.⁹³

The inaugural meeting of the P.L.L. elected a provisional
organising committee of three office-bearers and twelve
additional members. Andrews became president, Kneebone
vice-president and treasurer, and A. Hossack, former vice-
president of the Cape Town T. & L.C. and member of the S.A.
T.U., secretary.⁹⁴ The non-selection of either Whiteside
or Sampson as one of these office-bearers is surprising in
view of their seniority in the labour movement. This meeting
was not asked to approve the P.L.L.'s constitution and
platform as it was intended to leave this to the League's
first annual conference which was, however, never held.
During its existence, the P.L.L. therefore operated under
its provisional constitution and platform.⁹⁵

88. S.A. News, 24.8.1905, p.5; Rand Daily Mail, 23.8.1905, p. 3. The participation of Vorwärts is surmised from the information given in 1928 by one of its officials, Gabriel Weinstock, that he was a delegate to the P.L.L. - Minutes of the Seventh Regular Session of the Committee of Investigation of the S.A.L.P., 28.5.1928, p.13, in the S.A.L.P. records. On Weinstock's connection with Vorwärts see Rand Daily Mail, 24.4.1906, p.5, "Labour Notes".

89. Rand Daily Mail, 1.9.1905, p.8; Star, 1.9.1905, p.10. On those advertised to speak see S.A. News, 2.9.1905, p. 3, "Labour Notes".

90. 5.9.1905, p.4.

91. Daily Express, 14. & 16.9.1905, as cited by A.A. Mawby, "The Political Behaviour of the British Population of the Transvaal", p. 245. See also Rand Daily Mail, 19. 9.1905, p.5, "Labour Notes".

92. Star, 15.9.1905, p.8.

93. On Whiteside see S.A. News, 5.8.1905, p.6, "Labour Notes", and Walker and Weinbren, 2000 Casualties, p.319; on Sampson Rand Daily Mail, 3.10.1905, p.4, "Labour Notes", and Labour World, 26.7.1918, p.6, statement by Ware; on Andrews see R.K. Cope, Comrade Bill, p.75.

94. Rand Daily Mail, 1.9.1905, p.4. On Kneebone's dual office see his letter in Star, 26.10.1905, p.8.

95. Letters from Kneebone in Star, 26.10.1905, p.8, and 27.10.

The P.L.L. drew much of its inspiration from Australia and New Zealand where its name had been widely used.

"Australia had proved", Kneebone declared at this time, "that the working men had as much brains as the other classes"; and the Rand Daily Mail's labour columnist wrote, indeed, that the League's platform followed closely that of a similar organisation in New Zealand.⁹⁶

Two significant omissions in the P.L.L.'s programme were the absence of the socialist objective and any reference to Asiatic or contract labour. Nevertheless, the platform did direct several planks at the mining magnates without actually attacking the economic system. It advocated, for example, a graduated tax on mining profits, death duties, taxation of "unimproved mineralised areas" and an absentee tax.⁹⁷

Despite the absence of reference to Chinese labour labour leaders still opposed it as adamantly as before.⁹⁸ On 24 October the executive of the P.L.L., identical presumably with its provisional organising committee, resolved, for example, that it was "in the best interests of the workers that the Chinese labour experiment be terminated at the earliest possible moment." A copy of this resolution was sent to Lord Selborne for submission to the British Colonial Secretary.⁹⁹

96. For Kneebone's statement see Rand Daily Mail, 1.9.1905, p. 4; for that of the labour columnist 29.8.1905, p.4, "Labour Notes".

97. For the platform see Appendix B, IV, 9 below.

98. See, for example, S.A. News, 14.1.1905, p.13, "Labour Notes" (letter from the T.M.A.'s secretary); 4.2.1905, p.13, "Labour Notes" (quotes third annual report of the Witwatersrand T. & L.C.); 22.4.1905, p.5, (report of Labour Day speeches in Johannesburg); 9.6.1905, p.8, (speech by the T.M.A.'s secretary); Rand Daily Mail, 3.7.1905, p.5, (T.M.A.'s deputation to Selborne); Star, 17.7.1905, p.11, (speech by Whiteside).

99. Cd. 2819, p.19, no.7.

The P.L.L.'s platform concentrated on the need for social welfare legislation, but also demanded responsible government based upon white adult suffrage and seemed eager to conciliate the Afrikaner, advocating "union of the white races" and "equal rights for the Dutch and English languages". In fact, the League hoped to enrol many Afrikaner members.¹

In September and October the P.L.L. held a series of public meetings with the object of forming branches. In Johannesburg, Fordsburg, Germiston and Krugersdorp branches were certainly established and Whiteside became president of the first-named branch and Ware of the second. This campaign slowed down as attention was transferred to the approaching municipal elections which were to prove disastrous for the P.L.L.

One of the first tasks of the P.L.L. concerned political freedom of railwaymen. Coinciding with the formation of the League, the president of which, Andrews, was employed in the Braamfontein railway workshops, the C.S.A.R.'s management circularised employees with the terms of its previously unenforced Regulation 27; this forbade railway employees to join a political association on pain of dismissal. However, after a P.L.L. deputation had protested to the railway authorities and after the League had threatened to hold a railwaymen's protest meeting on 10 October, the C.S.A.R. agreed to suspend the enforcement of this regulation.³

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1. Rand Daily Mail, 29.8.1905, p.4, "Labour Notes"; and 1.9.1905, p.4, speech by Kneebone. For its platform see Appendix B, IV, 9 below.
 2. On the Johannesburg branch see Star, 15.9.1905, p.8, and S.A. News Weekly Edition, 20.9.1905, p.11; on Fordsburg Rand Daily Mail, 7.10.1905, p.8; on Germiston S.A. News, 23.9.1905, p.5, "Labour Notes"; and on Krugersdorp E.J. Grobler, "Die Invloed van Geskoolde Blanke Arbeid", p.60. See also "Labour Notes" in Rand Daily Mail 19.9.1905, p.5; 26.9.1905, p.5; 3.10.1905, p.4; and 24.10.1905, p.4.
 3. "Labour Notes" in Rand Daily Mail, 19.9.1905, p.5; 26.9.1905, p.5; 3.10.1905, p.4; 10.10.1905, p.8; A.S.E. Monthly Report, September 1908, p.11.

6. Johannesburg Municipal Elections, 1905,
and Labour Factionalism

Despite its formation of the P.L.L., the T. & L.C. nominated and financed the labour candidates in the Johannesburg municipal elections held in October 1905.⁴ In these elections the general ticket system was replaced by the ward system, but labour's disappointing performance at previous elections was repeated. None of the three labour candidates who went to the polls was returned. Andrews came closest, being narrowly defeated by the former labour candidate, the Rev. C.A. Lane, by only twenty-one votes in Ward VII, which combined the Braamfontein railway centre with the wealthy Parktown area. Both Sampson and J.H. Brideson, an engine-driver of long standing, were heavily defeated in wards where white workers predominated.⁵ This poor showing was partly attributed to continued apathy amongst the workers, plural voting, and the reluctance of the small shopkeeper and the white collar worker to support labour; these it was said were moved by a feeling of superiority towards the manual worker.⁶ But in the case of Andrews and, to a lesser extent, Brideson, their support was greatly reduced as a result of a severe bout of factionalism disrupting the labour movement.

On 13 October Andrews delivered a public speech which had unfortunate repercussions, for the press reported that he denied the T. & L.C.'s authority for his candidature beyond the provision of his election expenses. He was also supposed to

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4. Rand Daily Mail, 29.9.1905, p.8, and its "Labour Notes", in 4.8.1905, p.5, and 5.9.1905, p.4; also Star, 28.10.1905, p. 11, comments of T. Landye, secretary of the T. & L.C.
5. For election statistics see Appendix C, IV, 4 below. For biographical sketches of the candidates see Rand Daily Mail, 3.10.1905, p.4, "Labour Notes". For optimistic forecast and analysis of voters in the wards see "Labour Notes" in Rand Daily Mail, 12.9.1905, p.5; 3.10.1905, p.4; and 10.10.1905, p.8.
6. "Labour Notes" in Rand Daily Mail, 24.10.1905, p.4; 14.11.1905, p.5; and 21.12.1905, p.3.

have stated that he would represent, if elected, all sections of the ward in which he was standing and not only labour. To add to his difficulties the chairman of his election committee, A.S. Raitt, invited prominent men in the ward to act as chairman of Andrews's public meetings. One of these was even Sir Percy Fitzpatrick who was unable to accept, but nevertheless sent Andrews an excellent testimonial. Worse still, Andrews received the support of a Mr. Sharwood of the House of Albu at one of his meetings and both the Rand Daily Mail and the Sunday Times backed his candidature. Not surprisingly, his continued loyalty to the T. & L.C. became suspect.⁷

The labour columnist of the Rand Daily Mail, who wrote under the pen-name of "Worker", was indignant that Andrews had not yet troubled to deny the content of his controversial speech and denounced him as a traitor to the cause of labour:

It is an absolute impossibility for any one man to represent all the varied interests contained in any one ward of the Municipality. With the exception of Labour most other interests have ample representation. It is to make good this deficit that Mr. Andrews and his colleagues have been sent forward by the Trades and Labour Council, and to represent the workers' interest first. Many candidates in the past have fallen through endeavouring to ride the high horse over those whose interests he [sic] at first espoused. To put the matter plainly I advance the view that most working men would as well vote for someone directly⁸ opposed to their views, as that someone's nominee.

The provisional organising committee of the P.L.L. seemed to share the same attitude, for at a hastily summoned meeting about which its president, Andrews, was not informed, it resolved to deplore in the press Andrews's disavowal of T. & L.C. influence over his candidature. Whiteside and Sampson, who were both present, probably prompted this move.⁹ "The

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7. Voice of Labour, 26.8.1910, p. 389 (publishes Fitzpatrick's testimonial) & 19.1.1912, p.ii; Rand Daily Mail, 24.10.1905, p.9 (letter from "Spero Meliora") & 25.10.1905, p.6 (editorial); Star, 25.10.1905, p.6 (letter from A.S. Raitt) & 9.8.1910, p.5 (article by "Filius Populi"); Transvaal Leader, 26.10.1905, p.8; and R.K. Cope, Comrade Bill, pp. 75-76.
8. 24.10.1905, p.4. For similar criticism see his "Labour Notes" in 7.11.1905, p.5.

whole business", concluded Raitt, "was conducted in a hole and corner manner and entirely out of order, Mr. Andrews having no notice or warning of the cowardly attack that was to be made on him behind his back".¹⁰

The P.L.L.'s censure resolution enabled Lane to undermine Andrews's support amongst the workers. He declared, for instance, in his manifesto:

Workingmen of Ward VII should therefore vote for Mr. Lane, who has always been the consistent friend of the workers, and is not under any obligation to their employers.¹¹

In the Fordsburg ward Brideson's late candidature may have caused the split in the labour vote there.¹² The T.M.A., or at least its president, T. Schadwell, campaigned for his opponent, Dr. D.W. Frazer.¹³

Schadwell's action was not inconsistent with the T.M.A.'s politics at this time. It published its own parliamentary platform consisting of six industrial planks directly affecting miners and, although affiliated to the T. & L.C. and involved in the formation of the P.L.L., it seemed eager to start its own political association to contest the elections expected under the Lyttelton Constitution.¹⁴

Labour divisions continued to widen. Whiteside was the target of many insinuations at the Carpenters' dinner in Fordsburg on 22 October and was forced to warn those present that a strong labour party could never be established whilst its leaders were continually being undermined.¹⁵ "Worker" of the Rand Daily Mail supported this plea:

9. Star, 24.10.1905, p.11; 7.11.1905, p.9 (letter from A. Hildebrandt defending Whiteside and Sampson); 28.10.1905, p. 11 (Landye of the A.S.E. attacked Whiteside's "traitorous" action); Rand Daily Mail, 4.11.1905, p.8 (letter attacking Whiteside and Sampson); and R.K. Cope, Comrade Bill, p.76.
10. Star, 25.10.1905, p.6.
11. Transvaal Leader, 26.10.1905, p.8.
12. "Labour Notes" in Rand Daily Mail, 10.10.1905, p.8, and 11. 1.1906, p.5.
13. Rand Daily Mail, 24.10.1905, p.4, "Labour Notes"; F.J. Grobler, "Die Invloed van Geskoolde Blanke Arbeid", p.61.
14. For the platform see Appendix B, IV, 10, below; for other details see "Labour Notes" in Rand Daily Mail, 24.9.1905, p.5; 10.10.1905, p.8; 14.11.1905, p.5.
15. Rand Daily Mail, 24.10.1905, p.4, "Labour Notes".

We have been held up for years through lack of confidence and petty jealousy of would-be Labour leaders who are always discounting the good effect and baulking the purpose of those working conscientiously.¹⁶

But there was no stop to the recrimination. The press published numerous fiercely partisan letters; the T. & L.C. appointed a sub-committee to discover "Worker's" identity, which it failed to do; trade unions like the A.S. of C. & J. and the A.S.E. sided openly with Andrews; Kneebone criticised Whiteside for unconstitutionally associating the P.L.L. with the T.R.G.A. at a public meeting in Germiston on 23 October; Tom Landye, the secretary of the T. & L.C., launched a vicious attack on Whiteside at the latter's public meeting at Jeppestown; and the Operative Bricklayers' Society deplored this attack and resolved unanimously to record "its very high appreciation of Mr. Whiteside's valuable services as Labour leader of the workers in the Transvaal".¹⁷ When the provisional organising committee of the P.L.L. met on 29 October it became evident from the heated discussion that it had made enemies of some of the most powerful trade unions on the Rand.¹⁸ Three days later the T. & L.C. condemned those responsible for the P.L.L.'s censure of Andrews, accusing them of "malicious intention". Delegates refused to accept Andrews's resignation as president; and obviously believed his explanation that he had been unable to correct the controversial report without a certain delay owing to pressure of work and his statement that he had never repudiated his pledge to labour and to its platform.¹⁹ Soon afterwards recrimination assumed a different

16. Ibid.

17. On abusive letters see, for example, Rand Daily Mail, 31.10.1905, p.5; A.A. Mawby, "The Political Behaviour of the British Population of the Transvaal", p.245, which provides a useful list of those published in the Star; Rand Daily Mail, 4.11.1905, p.8 (letter from "Another Worker"); and Star, 3.11.1905, p.6 (letter from J.P. Anderson). On the A.S. of C. & J. see Rand Daily Mail, 30.10.1905, p.5, and 4.11.1905, p.8; on Kneebone Star, 27.10.1905, p.7; on Landye Star, 28.10.1905, p.11; on the Bricklayers Star, 31.10.1905, p.9; and on identity of "Worker" Rand Daily Mail, 4.11.1905, p.8 (letter from "Another Worker").

18. Rand Daily Mail, 30.10.1905, p.5.

form when Kneebone distributed copies of an advertisement in which Whiteside had carelessly allowed his name to be used to recommend a cheap line of imported suits at a time when trade unionists generally supported protection for local industry.²⁰

To "Worker" dissension in the Rand labour movement was caused by problems of leadership and lack of discipline. He therefore suggested that a public meeting of workers be convened by the P.L.L. and the T. & L.C. under an impartial chairman like Dr. Davidson Buchanan, the socialist churchman expected shortly on the Rand, to decide who should be leader and who should be labour parliamentary candidates. But his suggestion was not followed; and his veiled cut at Andrews over his uncompromising temper and soreness in defeat at the municipal elections, scarcely promoted conciliation.²¹

"Worker" was in fact one of the worst divisive influences in the movement. His column, which started in May 1905 and continued for about thirteen months, sided with the Whiteside-Sampson faction and consistently belittled its opponents. Its attacks in 1905 on Lorimer and his T.L.P. have been described already.²² In May "Worker" criticised the A.S.E. for alleged opposition to the building of the Trades Hall and chided Andrews for failing to pay adequate tribute to Whiteside and Sampson when he declared the Hall open at an official ceremony on 20 May.²³ He eulogized Whiteside on his return from Australia in July as the one and only labour leader on the Rand and, in marked contrast with Andrews and the A.S.E., gave Sampson an excellent press. Despite his status as the only

19. Rand Daily Mail, 3.11.1905, p.3. See also 4.11.1905, p.8, for letter from J.J. Ware stressing the existence of a strong minority opposed to the T. & L.C. attack on the P.L.L.; Star, 3.11.1905, p.9; and R.K. Cope, Comrade Bill, p.76.

20. R.K. Cope, Comrade Bill, pp. 76-77. See also Rand Daily Mail, 21.11.1905, p.5, "Labour Notes" which accused "G.W. R." [Ripper of the A.S.E.] of being the initiator of the "scandal"; and 21.11.1905, letter from "Notliks".

21. "Labour Notes" in Rand Daily Mail, 31.10.1905, p.5; 7.11.1905, p.5; and 14.11.1905, p.5.

22. On the T.L.P. see p. 191 above. For duration of "Labour Notes" see Appendix E below.

23. Rand Daily Mail, 23.5.1905, p.5; 6.6.1905, p.8 and 13.6.

Labour M.L.C., Raitt was virtually ignored.²⁴ As the T. & L.C. regarded the column as detrimental to itself and to its affiliated unions, it wrote to the governing board of the S.A.T.U. asking it to take drastic action against "Worker" since it believed him to be one of the members of that union. However, the S.A.T.U. resolved to await proof that the member complained about was in fact the author of the objectionable column.²⁵

This member was almost certainly H.W. Sampson, as his enemies alleged subsequently.²⁶ "Labour Notes" gave the S.A.T.U. excellent coverage as it did labour activity in East London and Cape Town, where Sampson had worked for several years before settling in Johannesburg. His appointment in 1905 as secretary and manager of the Trades Hall and Workmen's Club placed him in an ideal position to have kept contact with all sections of Rand labour.²⁷ Further evidence suggesting his authorship is the column's attack on the management committee of the Trades Hall for the low salaries paid its officials.²⁸ In addition, the column's style and penchant for backbiting point to Sampson's authorship, since backbiting was a feature of his political career before and after the publication of "Labour Notes".²⁹

Dissension at this time was probably caused by other factors besides a leadership struggle. There was obviously rivalry between the trade unions as they seem to have stood behind their respective leaders; and about a year afterwards Andrews attributed the P.L.L.'s repudiation of his candidature

of the A.S.E.".

24. On Whiteside see Rand Daily Mail, 4.7.1905, p.5 and 20.7.1905, p.4. The A.S.E.'s presentation to Raitt on his departure for England for medical treatment was not mentioned, in contrast with Sampson's "rest" in East London, - Rand Daily Mail, 16.1.1906, p.5 "Labour Notes" (on Sampson) and 9.2.1906, p.5, (on Raitt's departure).

25. S.A.T.J., April, 1906, p.7.

26. Star, 9.8.1910, article by "Filius Populi"; Voice of Labour 19.1.1912, p.ii.

27. On his appointment see "Labour Notes" in Rand Daily Mail, 3.10.1905, p.4, and 16.1.1906, p.5; and S.A.T.J., June 1905, p.5.

28. 20.2.1906, p.4, and 2.3.1906, p.9.

to his consistent opposition to an alliance between Labour and any other party.³⁰ Certainly, Whiteside was moving closer towards Het Volk and the T.R.G.A. and this may have upset members of the predominantly British A.S.E. and A.S. of C. & J.³¹

Outside of the Rand labour movement Whiteside was accepted as the chief spokesman for organised labour in South Africa.³² Sir George Farrar suggested he might be repatriated to Australia to the advantage of the Transvaal and, in that event, offered to contribute towards a monument in his memory. "In the very remote contingency of any desire on the part of the men to perpetuate my memory", replied Whiteside modestly, "I devoutly hope that no capitalistic money will ever be used for such a purpose"³³ About the same time his speech at the engine-drivers' banquet was taken by the public to represent the first detailed statement of the political aims of the "labour party" on the Rand.³⁴ Indeed, his status within the labour movement would probably have been unquestioned had there not been the oversensitive reaction to Andrews's alleged link with the mining magnates. He was undoubtedly the most capable of the labour leaders at this time. Raitt had virtually abdicated all right to the leadership by refusing to stand on the labour municipal ticket in 1904 and by his opposition to the formation of the P.L.L.

30. A.S.E. Monthly Report, August 1906, p.13.

31. Star, 9.8.1910, p.5, article by "Filius Populi".

32. See, for example, Star, 17.7.1905, p.11; 1.9.1906, p.8; "Labour Notes" in S.A. News, 16.4.1904, p.4, and 20.7.1905, p.10; and R.K. Cope, Comrade Bill, p.66.

33. Star, 24.7.1905, p.7. For Farrar's offer see Rand Daily Mail, 22.7.1905, p.8.

34. Rand Daily Mail, 17.7.1905, p.4.

Moreover, although only thirty-nine he began to suffer from ill-health, dying at the end of 1907.³⁵ Andrews was at this time a much lesser figure than either Whiteside or Raitt.³⁶

Internal dissension had limited the effectiveness of the P.L.L. but it survived, nevertheless, into the first four months of 1906. In January J. Pitman of the bricklayers' society and J.P. Anderson of the Tramwaymen's Union replaced Andrews and Kneebone as president and vice-president, respectively. Their appointment was subject to the approval of the League's first annual conference which was never held.³⁷ In the same month the Fordsburg branch of the P.L.L. brought forward J.J. Ware to contest the municipal vacancy in Ward V, but still obtained the approval and financial support of the T. & L.C.³⁸ Nor did the Johannesburg branch collapse quickly. It held a meeting at the end of November 1905, for example, at which Creswell lectured on the free white market versus Chinese labour and also present were Mr. and Mrs. F.W. Pethick Lawrence of the British labour movement and Dr. Davidson Buchanan.³⁹

However, if labour was to present a united political front, it had to form a new organisation. The Witwatersrand T. & L.C. retained little confidence in the League and, according to "Worker" writing in April 1906, virtually from the P.L.L.'s inception they had a "cat and dog relationship".⁴⁰

35. Star, 9.8.1910, p.5, article by "Filius Populi". For Raitt's aloofness from labour see pp. 188 & 193 above. On his ill-health see, for example, Rand Daily Mail, 9.2.1906, p.5, and its "Labour Notes" in 13.6.1905, p.5.

36. Star, 9.8.1910, p.5, article by "Filius Populi".

37. Rand Daily Mail, 16.1.1906, p.5, "Labour Notes".

38. Ibid.

39. Rand Daily Mail, 28.11.1905, p.5, "Labour Notes".

40. Rand Daily Mail, 19.4.1906, p.4. For similar opinion see also Star, 9.8.1910, p.5, article by "Filius Populi".

Nor did the T.M.A. seem enthusiastic about the League, for it did not invite the P.L.L.'s chief spokesmen, Whiteside and Sampson, to speak at an important public meeting on 10 December 1905, attended by 1500 persons.⁴¹ Against this background, as Andrews appreciated, organised labour stood little chance of success in parliamentary elections.⁴²

7. Labour Divisions; Chinese Labour; and the Constitution Commission

Towards the end of 1905 and beginning of 1906 political excitement revived in the Transvaal. On 21 December the new British prime minister, Campbell-Bannerman, announced the prohibition of further importation of Chinese labour pending a decision by a self-governing Transvaal. The Progressive Party and the mining industry were up in arms and accused the Liberal government of courting industrial disaster not only for the Transvaal but for the coastal colonies too, which derived much of their revenue from the transit trade.⁴³ It then seemed clear that the Chamber of Mines wanted the Chinese on a permanent basis.⁴⁴

In February the British government upset the same interests further when it abrogated the Lyttelton Constitution and stated its intention to grant responsible government to the Transvaal. For this purpose it sent a constitution commission, headed by Sir Joseph West Ridgeway, to the Transvaal and it arrived towards the end of April.

Meanwhile depression and unemployment grew worse on the Rand. The Witwatersrand T. & L.C. became alarmed in March that the Chamber of Mines was turning the economic screw as it had threatened in President Kruger's time and had done

41. Rand Daily Mail, 28.11.1905, p.5, gives list of invited members.

42. Rand Daily Mail, 28.12.1905, p.5, "Labour Notes".

43. R.W. Schumacher, A Transvaal View of the Chinese Labour Question, pp. 31, 52&56; G. Kinloch-Cooke, "Chinese Labour in the Transvaal", Empire Review, February 1906, pp. 23, 34-35; F.D.P. Chaplin, "The Labour Question" (1906), p.849.

44. P.C. Campbell, Chinese Coolie Emigration within the British Empire, pp. 202-3; Hancock and van der Poel (eds.)

effectively before the arrival of Chinese labour. Claiming to speak for all Transvaal workers, the T. & L.C. wrote to the British Colonial Secretary, Lord Elgin, explaining that the mining magnates were precipitating an economic crisis by stopping work on several producing mines and suspending constructional operations before the halt in importation of Chinese labour had any possible chance of affecting the mining industry. They hoped thereby, according to the T. & L.C., to accentuate the industrial distress which existed before the Liberal government's advent to power and so to coerce the public on the Rand into demanding unrestricted importation of indentured labour.⁴⁵

Despite the mounting unemployment, the tension over the Chinese issue and the imminent arrival of the constitution commission, labour remained preoccupied with internal difficulties during the first quarter of 1906. On the industrial front, the A.S.E. balloted its members whether to secede from the T. & L.C. They voted, however, to remain affiliated.⁴⁶ Meanwhile the annual meeting of the T. & L.C. was surprisingly free of recrimination, owing perhaps to the absence of the A.S.E. delegates, and elected J.J. Ware of the stonemasons' society as president, possibly because he commanded the respect of the Whiteside-Sampson and Andrews-Kneebone factions.⁴⁷ A split occurred in the plasterers' trade union resulting in an attempt to found a rival society, and the powerful S.A.E.D. & F.A. found itself opposed by the newly-formed Transvaal Mining Engine Drivers and Firemen's Association.⁴⁸

45. Rand Daily Mail, 26.3.1906, p.3, published the T. & L.C.'s letter. On 15 January the Chamber of Mines declared that 6 405 white skilled miners would lose their jobs on repatriation of the Chinese, thus adding to the T. & L.C.'s concern. For worsening depression see also "Labour Notes" in Rand Daily Mail, May and June 1906, and A.A. Mawby, "The Political Behaviour of the British Population of the Transvaal", pp. 249-50.

46. "Labour Notes" in Rand Daily Mail, 2, 11, 16 & 24.1.1906, pp. 4,5,5 & 8, respectively.

47. Rand Daily Mail, 16.1.1906, p.5, "Labour Notes".

Even Whiteside's post as general secretary of the S.A.E.D. & F.A. seemed insecure because of his anti-Chinese attitude. To save members of his association from embarrassment, he was apparently forced to miss the debate on repatriation of the Chinese in the Johannesburg Municipal Council.⁴⁹

On the political front the divisions persisted. "Worker" defended the P.L.L. and criticised its detractors, but the T.L.P. no longer provoked his wrath, for he praised Lorrimer's pamphlet, An Appeal to the Members of the Transvaal Labour Party, as a good start to propaganda work. This seemed another pointer to Sampson's authorship of the labour column since the T.L.P. subsequently co-operated with the P.L.L. in giving evidence to the West Ridgeway Commission in apparent competition with the T. & L.C.⁵⁰ The S.D.F. seemed to have been absorbed by the Friends of Russian Freedom, which was primarily a social organisation; and Vorwarts showed dwindling interest in politics after it failed to obtain a beer licence for its new premises, having apparently adopted the motto: "no beer, no politics".⁵¹ Even the Witwatersrand Labour Day Committee experienced bickering and discord.⁵² In these circumstances it was not surprising that the Progressive Party did not invite any labour organisation to its political conference held in March, and attended by Het Volk and the T.R.G.A.⁵³

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48. On the plasterers see Rand Daily Mail, 31.1.1906, p.8, "Labour Notes"; on the engine-drivers 16.4.1906, p.5 and its "Labour Notes" in 19.4.1906, p.4.
49. See, for example, Rand Daily Mail, 8.5.1906, letter from W. Lee.
50. On criticism of P.L.L.'s detractors see, for example, Rand Daily Mail, 14.2.1906, p.4, "Labour Notes"; on sympathy towards T.L.P. and Lorrimer see *ibid.*; on joint evidence in competition with the T. & L.C. see Star, 9.8.1910, p.5, article by "Filius Populi".
51. Rand Daily Mail, 23.2.1906, p.8. On the Friends of Russian Freedom see also Transvaal Leader, 24.7.1906, p.9.
52. Rand Daily Mail, 19.4.1906, p.4, "Labour Notes".
53. Rand Daily Mail, 6.7.1906, p.5, "Labour Notes".

However, internal differences did not prevent organised labour from uniting at the Labour Day meeting in Johannesburg in April, no less than twenty organisations being represented. This meeting resolved to reaffirm organised labour's unaltered opposition to imported indentured labour and seemed to accept Kneebone's demand for the gradual repatriation of Chinese workers on the mines and their replacement by natives. According to Kneebone, the number of native labourers would be greatly increased if the W.N.L.A.'s monopoly of their recruitment were abolished.⁵⁴

Meanwhile pro-Chinese gatherings were held on the mines and petitions favouring continued importation were circulated. This movement culminated in a deputation to Selborne on 12 May, claiming to represent 6 000 miners, satisfied with the presence of the Chinese. Its bona fides, however, were open to doubt, for its leaders unjustly told Selborne that "the policy of the Miners' Association had always been against the interests of the working man".⁵⁵ Still, Creswell conceded that a large number of miners, especially on the East Rand where the mines were largely worked with Chinese labour, feared for their positions should the Chinese be forced to leave. He also admitted that a certain section of miners, mainly old-time skilled hands, were pro-Chinese because the slave-making instinct died hard and they could not face a change. But the trade unions, he argued, were practically solid against the Chinese remaining on the Rand.⁵⁶ The T.L.P. was unequivocally opposed to the Chinese presence, but the P.L.L. had modified its attitude by the beginning of March. It now favoured a

54. Rand Daily Mail, 14.4.1906, p.5. The T.M.A. remained in favour of Chinese repatriation - Rand Daily Mail, 3.4.1906, p.8, and Cd. 3 025, pp.188-9 (Appendix viii)

55. Cd. 3 025, pp.188-9, (Appendix viii). On miners' meetings and signing of petitions see also Star, 18.1.1906, p.11; 12.5.1906, p.11; S.A. News, 8.5.1906, p.5, and Rand Daily Mail, 28.5.1906, p.5.

56. Creswell to Merriman, 19.5.1905 [1906], Merriman Papers
no. 81 of 1905

referendum on the issue of all Transvaal voters for the first legislative assembly.⁵⁷

Labour was not united on the basis of the franchise, which became a matter of controversy with the constitution in the melting pot. Early in March a petition was started in favour of one vote, one value; and the "Equal Rights Petition", as it was called, was eventually signed by 41 000 Transvaal white males. Tom Kneebone, together with members of the Progressive Party and the T.R.G.A., was actively associated with its promotion.⁵⁸ But A. Hossack, the secretary of the P.L.L., was not pleased with the petition, accusing the middle class people behind it of acting in a "backstairs manner".⁵⁹ Moreover, the P.L.L. and the T.L.P. favoured division of the Transvaal constituencies on a population basis, and not according to the electorate, partly because they supported the women's franchise, partly because they wished to limit the influence of the mining magnates and partly because they hoped that the mining companies would be encouraged to bring families to South Africa.⁶⁰

During the early part of 1906 there was at least one encouraging advance for the political labour movement on the Rand. Standing with the support of the T. & L.C. and the Fordsburg branch of the P.L.L., J.J. Ware was returned to the Johannesburg Municipal Council, having won the Fordsburg by-election on 1 February.⁶¹

57. On the T.L.P. see Rand Daily Mail, 2.1.1906, "Labour Notes", and Lorimer's speech in Rand Daily Mail, 14.4.1906, p.5.; on the P.L.L. Rand Daily Mail, 6.3.1906, p.5, "Labour Notes"

58. Rand Daily Mail, 9.3.1906, p.5; A.A. Mawby, "The Political Behaviour of the British Population of the Transvaal", p.320

59. Rand Daily Mail, 14.4.1906, p.5.

60. A.A. Mawby, op.cit., pp.317, 319 & 322. See also T.R.G.A.' pamphlet, Speeches Delivered at a Public Meeting, Held on Wednesday, 20th June, 1906, p.6, speech by E.P. Solomon.

61. "Labour Notes" in Rand Daily Mail, 11, 16, 31.1.1906, pp. 5, 5, & 8, respectively; and 7.2.1906, p.4. For election statistics see Appendix C, IV, 5, below.

Born in Australia in 1858 Ware, or "Honest John" as he was often referred to, played a minor part in the formation of the labour party in Sydney before his arrival in the Transvaal in 1897. Afterwards he became a prominent member of the South African Operative Masons' Society and was elected president of the Witwatersrand T. & L.C. in 1906.⁶²

8. Pretoria Politics, 1905-1906

In January 1905 the Pretoria T. & L.C. announced its unanimous support for the grant of responsible government to the Transvaal, and favoured white adult suffrage and division of constituencies on a population basis in the event of the female franchise not being introduced.⁶³ Soon afterwards some of its members were associated with the Pretoria Responsible Government Association which, however, came to regard their views as too extreme.⁶⁴ During 1905 James Reid, one-time member of the T. & L.C. and a railway worker, was active in the Progressive Association's Pretoria branch; and he was even sent to Britain by one of the mining houses to counter the anti-Chinese propaganda of Creswell and Stickland. Not surprisingly, Pretoria workers repudiated his claim, to represent organised labour.⁶⁵ He must not be confused with John Reid, prominent member of the Pretoria T. & L.C., secretary of the local branch of the A.S.E. in 1906 and member of the Transvaal Indigency Commission.⁶⁶

62. Gitsham and Trembath, Labour Organisation in South Africa, p.160; Voice of Labour, 4.9.1909, p.9, and 9.10.1909, p.4. In 1915 Ware was returned to the Senate.

63. Cd. 2 479, p.89.

64. Star, 1.2.1905, as quoted in A.A. Mawby, "The Political Behaviour of the British Population of the Transvaal", p.346.

65. For Reid's membership of the Progressive Association see A.A. Mawby, op.cit., pp. 344-6; and Rand Daily Mail, 22.7.1905, p.8; for his presence in England and his sponsor see D.J.N. Denoon, "Capitalist Influence' and the Transvaal Government, 1900-1906", p.328 and also Rand Daily Mail, 1.7.1905, p.7. "Labour Notes". See this last source for

By August 1905 the Pretoria T. & L.C. was thinking in terms of political organisation, for it wrote to the Witwatersrand T. & L.C. requesting a copy of its political programme.⁶⁷ Six months later the Council appointed a committee to investigate the question of forming a political organisation.⁶⁸ By April the Transvaal Independent Labour Party, (the Transvaal I.L.P.), was established in Pretoria and its programme published.⁶⁹ The role the T. & L.C. played in its formation is not clear, but several of the Council's office-bearers were prominent members. The T. & L.C.'s secretary, Archibald Crawford of the A.S.E., was a member of the I.L.P.'s propaganda committee and the Council's auditors, E. Chadwick of the A.S. of C. & J. and John Reid, were elected to the general committee.⁷⁰ The election of J.T. Bain as Chairman and A. Brittlebank as a member of the general committee indicates some link with the pre-war I.I.L.P.⁷¹ After his return to the Rand from a prisoner-of-war camp in Ceylon, Bain had worked in the Braamfontein railway workshops, then in Pretoria and in 1906 on the Premier Diamond Mine.⁷²

66. A.A. Mawby, op.cit., p.384, makes this error. For biographical information on John Reid see, for example, A.S.E. Monthly Report, December 1908, p.15, and Transvaal Leader, 6.6.1908, p.12, "Labour Notes".

67. Rand Daily Mail, 4.8.1905, p.5.

68. Rand Daily Mail, 10.1.1906, p.6.

69. Rand Daily Mail, 16.4.1906, p.5.

70. Compare office-bearers of the T. & L.C. in Rand Daily Mail, 10.1.1906, p.6, with members of the I.L.P.'s general committee in Star, 19.4.1906, p.7, and with the members of its propaganda committee (Ross, Crawford, Fergusson and Brittlebank) in Rand Daily Mail, 30.6.1906, p.11.

71. On Bain as chairman see Rand Daily Mail, 10.5.1906, p.8; on Brittlebank as committee member Star, 19.4.1906, p.7, and on the pre-war I.I.L.P., pp.92-96 above.

72. R.K. Cope, Comrade Bill, p.77.

The participation of Crawford is significant, for it provides the first evidence of his political activity. Within a few years he had become a labour member of the Johannesburg Municipal Council, leader of the "red-hot" socialists on the Rand and editor of Voice of Labour, a militant socialist weekly; and in 1910 described himself as "a terror of crook Labour leaders". Born in 1883 in Scotland where he qualified as a fitter, Crawford came to South Africa with the Imperial troops in 1902. He worked for a short period on the C.S.A.R. as a fireman after the war had ended and was then employed in the Pretoria railway workshop for four years until he was dismissed in 1906 for agitation against alleged unjust retrenchment. In 1903 he joined the A.S.E.⁷³

The Transvaal I.L.P. was not started as a militant labour organisation. The preamble to its platform consisted of a straightforward justification of labour's right to political representation without any mention of the class struggle, and the statement of the socialist objective in its platform was qualified:

The nationalisation or municipalisation of the means of production, distribution, insurance and exchange, such as railways, lighting, waterworks, etc.

For the most part its programme was a repetition of previous demands by organised labour save for its greater emphasis on land development, its call for a "just and firm native policy" and its proposal for a government commission on share transactions. Although the preamble stated the intention to "bring together all who earn their living as workers" and the platform advocated the division of constituencies to give fair representation to "all classes of the community", the Party demanded the franchise for white adults only. Significantly, the platform opposed importation of Asiatic labour or any contract labour, skilled or unskilled.⁷⁴

73. S.A. Who's Who, 1910, p.93; Gitsham and Trenbath, Labour Organisation in South Africa, pp.159-60; Voice of Labour, 14.10.1910, p.442 and, for quotation, 9.9.1910, p.403.

74. The preamble and platform see Rand Daily Mail, 16.4.1906.

At the end of May a public meeting, at which Bain announced that the I.L.P.'s membership stood at 500 persons after only two months' existence, approved the party's platform and general policy.⁷⁵ Earlier the I.L.P. had sent a deputation to present its views to the West Ridgeway Committee.⁷⁶

The Party was hostile towards the crown colony administration. Bain, for instance, deplored the prevailing discontent, dissatisfaction and almost despair amongst Transvaal inhabitants, and explained:

These conditions could not have come about had it not been for the blundering, culpable, and he might almost say criminal neglect of its duties by the present Legislative Assembly [Council] and it would help them little if they did not when the time came put in a different body of men.⁷⁷

At the same time it aligned itself with the forces opposing the Progressive Association. Smuts and Outhwaite, a radical Australian journalist who had opposed Joseph Chamberlain in the British general election in January, addressed its public meeting on 4 July at which those present resolved not to support parliamentary candidates who failed to advocate repatriation of the Chinese and prohibition of their importation in future.⁷⁸ A month later Smuts and Creswell were guest speakers at the I.L.P.'s meeting in the Pretoria Town Hall. The motion agreed to showed how much the I.L.P. supported Creswell's anti-Chinese crusade and his white Transvaal outlook:

That this meeting, after hearing Mr. Creswell, is of the opinion that the employment of white workmen should be more generally encouraged, and that the sending of work out of the Colony by either the Government or the railway administration is deserving of the severest censure and condemnation, and that as early a date as possible legislation should be introduced to prevent any work which it is possible to do in the Transvaal being sent out of it, and to prevent the introduction of Asiatic or any contract labour into this country.⁷⁹

75. Rand Daily Mail, 31.5.1906, p.3.

76. Rand Daily Mail, 10.5.1906, p.8.

77. Rand Daily Mail, 31.5.1906, p.3.

78. South Africa, 7.7.1906, p.31. On Outhwaite see Star, 18.1.1906, p.8.

On 5 September Smuts and Outhwaite again addressed an I.L.P. meeting in Pretoria. On this occasion the motion passed represented a direct attack on the mining houses and the Progressive Association.⁸⁰

Meanwhile organised labour was able to promote its aims in another way. In April it started The Transvaal Trades and Labour News, a weekly journal of trade unionism and politics edited by J. McNally of the S.A.T.U.⁸¹ At this time the Rand labour movement had no such organ to publicise its activities.

9. Formation of the I.L.P. on the Rand

Sampson's claim in 1911 that he and a few others formed the I.L.P. seems to corroborate his authorship of the labour column of the Rand Daily Mail;⁸² for on 20 February 1906 "Worker" proposed that a branch of the I.L.P. be started on the Rand, hoping that it would unite the warring factions of political labour.⁸³ "Anything is better than the present state", agreed an anonymous press correspondent a few days later.⁸⁴ At the beginning of March "Worker" was distressed that the recent departure of a certain person for England was rumoured to be connected with the establishment of an I.L.P. on the Rand. "Those on the spot may find themselves fore-stalled", he commented, "and appreciate the idea, but not the promoter". This seems a characteristic slight directed at Raitt.⁸⁵

79. S.A. News, 14.8.1906, p.2. On Creswell's anti-Chinese crusade at this time see F.J. Grobler, "Die Invloed van Geskoolde Blanke Arbeid", pp.50-51.

80. Transvaal Leader, 6.9.1906, p.5.

81. "Labour Notes" in Rand Daily Mail, 24.4.1906, p.5, and 22.5.1906, p.3; S.A.T.J., May 1906, p.5 and June 1906, p.16.

82. Labour Leader, 30.6.1911, p.401, interview of Sampson in England.

83. Rand Daily Mail, 20.2.1906, p.4.

84. Ibid. 23.2.1906, p.8.

About this time the P.L.L. took the initiative and held meetings with delegates from Vorwarts and the T.L.P. regarding the formation of an I.L.P. Their discussions culminated in a conference on 22 April at which it was agreed to combine forces in one party. Trade union representatives joined this conference after this decision had been taken. The provisional committee elected represented executive members of the participating political labour organisations and, therefore, did not include the A.S.E. leaders, Andrews and Kneebone. Sampson and Hossack were chosen as chairman and secretary, respectively, and the committee members elected were Back, Lorimer, Whiteside, Ware, Weinstock, Kennerley, Price, Rudolf and Blenck.⁸⁶

Before this conference took place, apparently a trade union, presumably the A.S.E., was unhappy with political developments and invited the T. & L.C., political organisations and trade unions to send delegates to its own conference which was to consider the formation of an I.L.P. "Worker" denounced this move as "preposterous" and accused those responsible of deliberately failing to propose the idea of an I.L.P. at the well-attended Labour Day meeting on 13 April.⁸⁷ Nor was "Worker" pleased that the I.L.P. was launched in Pretoria at this time, for he wrote:

85. Rand Daily Mail, 2.3.1906, p.9. On Raitt's departure see 9.2.1906, p.5. Stickland, who had fallen out with the S.A.T.U. and Sampson, also visited England, but left the Rand in December 1905 - S.A. News, 23.12.1905, p.11; S.A.T.J., February 1905, p.7, and August 1905, p.5.

86. "Labour Notes" in Rand Daily Mail, 6.3.1906, p.5; 14.3.1906, p.4; 19.4.1906, p.4; 24.4.1906, p.5; and 21.5.1906, p.8; S.A.T.J., May 1906, pp.4-5; Star, 23.4.1906, p.9. For committee members see Rand Daily Mail, 23.4.1906, p.7.

87. Rand Daily Mail, 19.4.1906, p.4.

Whether this last formation is by accident or design I am not in a position at present to state though it is connected by some with the desires of one at present absent from the Colony.⁸⁸

Again, he seems to have been attacking Raitt. "Worker" then asserted that three separate I.L.P.'s were in the process of formation and referred to the peace-making role of the president of the Witwatersrand T. & L.C.:

What a nerve-racking time President J. Ware must be having through all this string-pulling. Trying to please all parties is a dangerous proceeding at any time, and it is more so now that it has become open war.⁸⁹

Sampson's provisional committee of the I.L.P. was immediately active. At its meeting on 6 May it decided to protest against Selborne's action in upholding the W.N.L.A.'s monopoly by refusing licenses to the new Labour Company for recruitment of native labour; it wanted the British government to amend its circular on Chinese repatriation so that they could be repatriated immediately at the expense of the importers; and it was upset at the Johannesburg Municipal Council for passing a motion of a contentious political nature, expressing opposition to Chinese repatriation.⁹⁰ According to "Worker", Ware had become "quite the hero of the hour in labour circles" by opposing this motion during the town council debate on it.⁹¹ The same provisional committee sent a deputation to make joint representations on behalf of its three constituent bodies to the West Ridgeway Committee. The Witwatersrand T. & L.C. sent its own delegation.⁹²

Whether the unity conference apparently envisaged by the A.S.E. ever took place is not known. It is possible that it eventuated in a conference on 29 April at which trade union representatives held discussions with delegates of the I.L.P. founded the previous week. This meeting agreed to convene a

88. Rand Daily Mail, 19.4.1906, p.4, "Labour Notes".

89. Ibid.

90. Rand Daily Mail, 7.5.1906, p.8.

91. Rand Daily Mail, 12.5.1906, p.4.

92. "Labour Notes" in Rand Daily Mail, 12.5.1906, p.4, and

public meeting on 13 May at the Trades Hall, at which the I.L.P. would be officially launched as the united political labour party of the workers on the Rand, and it appointed J.H. Crompton of the S.A.T.U. as the party's organising secretary. It agreed also that Dr. Davidson Buchanan should take the chair at the public meeting and that the order of speaking should be decided by ballot so as not to offend any section of the labour movement. Since the various labour factions had found a common cause, "Worker" announced that he would fall into line and bury the hatchet".⁹³

The inaugural meeting, which was attended by between 300 and 400 people, proved a great success and the political labour movement seemed united. A committee of twenty-five persons, of which five were members of the A.S.E., was appointed to draft the I.L.P. constitution and platform. Buchanan controlled proceedings capably and succeeded in smoothing over disagreements. He referred, for instance, Jack Campbell's motion that the socialist objective be adopted, to a subsequent meeting when policy was to be considered.⁹⁴ Although there was some dissent from the emphatic opposition to Chinese labour of Sampson's provisional executive, most of those elected to the committee of the reconstituted party, as Creswell noted with satisfaction, were well-known opponents by Chinese labour.⁹⁵

On 1 July the I.L.P. held its first general meeting of members at which its platform and constitution were approved.⁹⁶ A few weeks later delegates of the Johannesburg I.L.P., including Sampson, negotiated with the Pretoria I.L.P., then called the Transvaal I.L.P., with a view to combining forces. Significantly, all the delegates were trade unionists.⁹⁷ At a further conference on 30 September the constitution of the united Transvaal party was agreed to. Johannesburg was represented

93. Rand Daily Mail, 2.5.1906, p.9. See also 1.5.1906, p.9, and its "Labour Notes" in 21.5.1906, p.8.

94. Star, 14.5.1906, p.9; Rand Daily Mail, 14.5.1906, p.8, and its "Labour Notes" in 22.5.1906, p.3; Rand Daily Mail, 21.5.1906, p.8, letter from "Veritas"; A.S.E. Monthly Report June 1906, p.4.

by Sampson, Mark Lucas, Campbell and J.P. Anderson, and Pretoria by Bain, John Reid, Crawford and Ross.⁹⁸ Like the P.L.L., the constitution of the I.L.P. provided for the formation of branches, membership of which was open to individuals. In January 1907, Mark Lucas, general treasurer of the Transvaal I.L.P., as the unified party was then called, told the Transvaal Indigency Commission that his organisation had a membership of 1 000 persons divided amongst nine branches, each of which was entitled to send delegates to its administrative council meetings. At the apex the I.L.P. was controlled by an executive committee of five members. Judging by Sampson's evidence, however, Lucas's membership figure was a gross exaggeration.⁹⁹ Its candidates in elections were required to sign a pledge "to support in every way the principles of the party, to refrain from cross-voting or from opposing other Labour candidates at elections"; and were even expected to place an undated resignation in the hands of the administrative council. Its parliamentary representatives were to form "a distinct group of members, with its own whips" and were to abstain strictly from identifying themselves with any other political section or party.¹

The increasing popularity of socialism was shown by the I.L.P.'s adherence to the socialist objective.² Its parliamentary platform followed closely that adopted by its Pretoria members in April. There was, however, greater concentration on industrial measures. The demand for the initiative and the referendum was added, but for compulsory arbitration courts to

96. A.S.E. Monthly Report, September 1906, p.51.

97. Rand Daily Mail, 23.7.1906, p.3.

98. Transvaal Leader, 16.5.1908, p.13, "Labour Notes".

99. T.G. 11 of 1908, paras. 1 031-2, 1 137-9, evidence of M. Lucas; para. 2 347, evidence of Sampson.

1. Transvaal Leader, 1.12.1906, p.9; and its "Labour Notes" in 16.5.1908, p.13.

2. Labour Leader, 30.6.1911, p.401, Sampson interviewed; Rand Daily Mail, 27.12.1906, p.5, letter from S. Mainwaring;

settle industrial disputes "conciliation boards" were substituted.³

The I.L.P. on the Rand does not seem to have been particularly active until its public meeting at Fordsburg on 31 August. Ware maintained then that labour was going to be a significant factor in the coming parliamentary elections. Andrews hoped that the I.L.P. would hold the balance of power between the two major parties in the Transvaal legislative assembly and Whiteside allayed fears about the I.L.P.'s socialism. He conceded that capital was essential, but when it abused its privileges so as to be inimical to white labour, the I.L.P. had a perfect right to be anti-capitalist. Nevertheless, this did not preclude them from cherishing the higher ideal of socialism for some future time, for in the Transvaal only the capitalists were benefitting from the existing economic system.⁴

It is not clear who served on the executive committee of the Transvaal I.L.P. at the time of the general election, but it probably consisted of Bain as president, Back and Lorimer as vice-presidents, Crawford as general secretary and Lucas as treasurer.⁵ Lorimer seems to have been chairman, and J.P. Anderson secretary, of the I.L.P. on the Rand before its amalgamation with its Pretoria counterpart.⁶ Each of these office-bearers was a dedicated socialist.

3. See Appendix B, IV, 11, below and p. 217 above.

4. Rand Daily Mail, 1.9.1906, p.5; Star, 1.9.1906, p.10.

5. Bain's election is surmised from his taking the chair at the first annual meeting of the Transvaal I.L.P. - Rand Daily Mail, 14.10.1907, p.8. - and from the reference to him as founder of the party - Transvaal Leader, 16.5.1908, p.13, "Labour Notes". On Back and Crawford see Rand Daily Mail, 30.3.1907, p.5; on Lucas T.G. 11 of 1908, para. 1 027; on Lorimer and Crawford - Rand Daily Mail, 31.13.1906, p.8.

6. Star, 22.9.1906, p.9.

This explains perhaps why the trade unions failed to rally round the I.L.P.⁷

10. A.S. Raitt in the Legislative Council 1903-1906; The Colour Question

Not all the Legislative Councillors gave their unqualified support to the Chamber of Mines and to the Milner and Selborne administrations. Raitt, for example, was one of the most independent, as his unwavering opposition to the importation of Chinese labour illustrated. He fought hard for the interests of white labour, showed genuine concern for the welfare of the native miner and proved a definite asset to the labour movement.

In 1903, Raitt was partly responsible for the limitation of Sunday work on the mines to essential services and, in 1905, for the restriction of the hours of labour of white persons under eighteen on the mines.⁸ In January 1904 he argued eloquently in favour of his employers' liability motion, stressing that most miners, prior to engagement, were compelled to sign away any claims they might have been entitled to under the Common Law in event of injury. Yet, when a division was taken, he only received the support of Harry Solomon and William Hosken.⁹ Year after year it was Raitt who drew the Council's attention to the alarming accident rate on the mines and who demanded the appointment of more labour inspectors.¹⁰ In 1905 he unsuccessfully pleaded for two additional public holidays

7. Labour Leader, 30.6.1911, p. 401, Sampson interviewed.

8. Debates of the Transvaal Legislative Council, 13.7.1903, p.203; 15.7.1903, pp.238-241; 15.9.1905, cols. 2 109-13; 18.9.1905, col. 2 133. See Rand Daily Mail, 4.8.1905, p.5, for important role of the Witwatersrand T. & L.C. in proposing amendments to the Mines Works and Machinery Regulations Amendment Draft Ordinance through its representative A.S. Raitt.

9. Debates, 18.1.1904, cols. 315-21.

10. Debates, 18.1.1904, cols. 316-7; 31.7.1905, cols. 765-70; 19.7.1906, cols. 691-2; 13.8.1907, cols. 681-3.

for the miners who then enjoyed Xmas and Good Friday only - the latter being conceded the year before; and pertinently contrasted the thirty-four-hour week advocated by the majority report of the Civil Service Commission with the fifty-six hours worked by most miners, generally underground "in a foetid atmosphere laden with dust" courting miners' phthisis, and warned:

It must not be forgotten that the workmen of the Witwatersrand are after all the basis of the whole fabric, and it is impossible to think that such a condition of affairs can exist under anything like peaceful circumstances when the superstructure and the basis are so very different, when the conditions are so onerous in the one case and so comparatively comfortable in the other.¹¹

In 1903 in the debate on the Municipal Elections Draft Ordinance Raitt pressed in vain for the principle of the referendum and for payment, in certain circumstances, of town councillors.¹² Two years later he tried unsuccessfully to widen the municipal franchise to include more than one lodger per room and so enrol a large number of miners.¹³ But he strongly opposed the extension of the franchise to non-whites because he believed they were not ready for it and because such a move would conflict with the Peace of Vereeniging. This he explained when moving his successful proposal to debar all non-whites from the municipal voters' roll. He preferred that they should elect their own separate political constitutions with which the Commissioner of Native Affairs would keep constant contact.¹⁴

Raitt recognised the native as a permanent factor in South Africa who could not be ignored, but maintained that "if the white were to be put on the same footing, there would be trouble."¹⁵

11. Debates, 15.9.1905, col. 2100. See also cols. 2099-2103.

12. Debates, 8.6.1903, pp.42, 68-69.

13. Debates, 13.9.1905, cols. 1912-4, 1965-8.

14. Debates, 3.6.1903, pp.32-33; 10.6.1906, col.1119. See also A.R. Colquhoun, The Africander Land, pp.87-88.

15. Debates, 29.12.1903, col. 223.

Much to his credit, he was not afraid to plead for better conditions for native miners. For example, in the lengthy debate in 1905 on the second reading of the Coloured Labourers Health Regulations Draft Ordinance he was the only non-official member to speak in support of the Government. This was the measure which the state badly needed to reduce the appalling mortality rate of native miners and which the press criticised as "coddling the Kaffir". Raitt drew attention to a report of the Transvaal Medical Officer of Health describing conditions in native mine compounds and proceeded to launch a scathing attack on those responsible:

I do not think I have ever yet seen a more shameful exposure brought to the light of day in what is considered a civilised and Christian land. I consider that before such a state of affairs could possibly exist there must not only have been the grossest carelessness, but also the grossest cruelty and the sooner it is stopped the better. Would honorary Members of this Council believe me when I say that in many of the compounds on the Witwatersrand today, the natives only get one hot meal a day, and that is at night, and for the rest of the twenty-four hours they have to make the best they can of their cold mealie pap.¹⁶

He was also very concerned about the fate of ill and injured native miners. "Some of the mines do not care a rap", he boldly declared, "and the wretched men have to do the best they can".¹⁷ This sympathy for the native possibly explains Raitt's renomination to the Legislative Council in February 1907, for, of all those selected, only Lionel Curtis, Richard Feetham and he were not wedded to the doctrine of "white man's country".¹⁸

However, Raitt's humanity did not extend to the Indians whose insanitary habits he strongly criticised. He attached

16. Debates, 15.9.1905, col.2059. See also cols.2054-2078. On "coddling the Kaffir" see Patrick Duncan's comment in col.2074. H.J. and R.E. Simons, Class and Colour in South Africa, 1850-1950, p.95, are thus incorrect in their assertion that labour leaders were not concerned with native welfare on the mines.

17. Debates, 15.9.1905, col.2084.

18. G.H.L. Le May, British Supremacy in South Africa, 1899-1907, p.210.

He ~~attached~~ little value to Hosken's contention that Great Britain had protected the rights of British Indians in the South African Republic to the point of taking up arms, for he knew of no influential person in the Transvaal who had supported that attitude.¹⁹

Organised labour shared Raitt's hostility towards Transvaal Indians. For example, in January 1903 the Witwatersrand T. & L.C. complained to Chamberlain about the influx of Indians whose labour competition it feared; at the end of the following year its secretary, H.W. Sampson, publicly supported the restriction of Indian immigration and their enforced segregation in locations; and about the same time labour delegates to a convention on the Asiatic question were responsible for the resolution demanding legislation to prohibit any class of Asiatic from being employed in skilled trades.²⁰

The Witwatersrand T. & L.C. devoted much of its attention to promoting employment of white labour and, therefore, to preventing non-white competition. Not surprisingly it proved very sensitive to reports of Chinese doing skilled work.²¹ Its opposition to non-whites entering the skilled ranks was clearly illustrated by the following motion it passed in August 1905:

That this Council render the Engine-drivers' Association every possible assistance to get the certificate system extended to all classes of drivers and firemen, and to ensure that no certificates be granted to persons of colour.²²

19. Debates, 5.7.1904, col.58.

20. On the T. & L.C. see R.K. Cope, Comrade Bill, p.67; on Sampson Star, 5.12.1904, p.12; and on the convention S.A.T.J., November 1904, p.5, and December 1904, p.6.

21. See, e.g., Rand Daily Mail, 4.8.1905, p.5, and Ware's speech as reported in 1.9.1906, p.5.

22. Rand Daily Mail, 4.8.1905, p.5.

In 1904 the T. & L.C. already attained some success in forwarding its white labour policy when Whiteside secured the insertion of a fair wages clause in municipal contracts.²³ In February 1906 a further concession was obtained when the Johannesburg Municipal Council, on the motion of Whiteside, accepted the principle of giving preference to tenderers employing white skilled labour.²⁴ Whiteside, indeed, was amongst the most racially prejudiced of the labour leaders, for Lord Selborne reported that "there was no more determined opponent to the admission of any native or coloured man to any part of a tramcar".²⁵

None of the political labour organisations formed after the war advocated extending the franchise to non-whites, except possibly the Social Democratic Organisation in 1904.²⁶ In June 1906 Dr. Abdurahman, president of the African Political Association, wrote from Cape Town to Sir Joseph West Ridgeway on the Rand, carefully distinguishing between natives and coloureds as defined by the Native Affairs Commission and contending that coloureds were not excluded from the franchise in terms of the Peace of Vereeniging. Continuing, he pertinently asked why the British Liberal Government should be less progressive than the British rulers fifty years previously when the Cape franchise was established. Shortly afterwards he went to England in a vain attempt to obtain the franchise for the coloured people in the Transvaal.²⁷ Meanwhile organised

23. S.A. News, 30.7.1904, p.10, "Labour Notes".

24. Labour World, 26.7.1918, p.6, article by Ware. See also Rand Daily Mail, 6.3.1906, p.5, "Labour Notes" and 14.3.1906, p.4, "Labour Notes".

25. Nicholas Mansergh, South Africa 1906-1961: The Price of Magnanimity, p.70. On race prejudice see also pp.39-40 above; and Thos. Burt, A Visit to the Transvaal, p.26.

26. See, e.g., Appendices B, IV, 6, 9 & 11 below.

27. Natal Mercury, 13.6.1906, p.8; Natal Witness, 20.6.1906, p.5.

labour in the Transvaal forwarded a resolution to Ramsay MacDonald protesting against any extension of the vote to non-whites and thereby again showed itself a heretic amongst labour organisations.²⁸

As early as June 1903 Hosken had rebuked Raitt for his role in excluding the non-white from the municipal franchise.

They had heard that afternoon, and from a representative of democracy, too, which was rather surprising, that coloured races must be kept in subjection; no matter how much they advanced in education, and civilisation, no matter how much they might endeavour to raise themselves in the social scale.²⁹

Two years later Olive Schreiner advised Johannesburg workers that there had to be an organised union of all who labour;³⁰ and in September 1906 the Rand Daily Mail read the I.L.P. a lesson in labour doctrines:

In every country the Independent Labour party represents, or professes to represent, the workers. Here it represents those who are desirous of watching other people work. That is the illogical position of the Independent Labour party in the Transvaal. It impresses socialism into its service. Socialism means community of interests, State ownership of land, and the means of production. There can be no community of interest where racial prejudice leaves one race in possession of the dignity of labour and another and darker coloured race in possession of nothing but the privilege of doing the work of which the former claims the dignity, the responsibility, and the wages³¹

Transvaal labour leaders, then, must have been aware of their heretical attitude.

28. A.P.O., 18.9.1915, p.8; 16.10.1915, p.3. No specific labour organisation is mentioned, but it seems likely that the Witwatersrand T. & L.C. was responsible.

29. Debates, 3.6.1903, p.33.

30. Letter to Johannesburg Shop Assistants' Union read at its public meeting in July 1905 published in S.C. Cronwright-Schreiner (ed.), The Letters of Olive Schreiner, pp.386-7. See p.37 above for short extract.

31. editorial, 26.9.1906, p.6.

11. Political Alignment in 1906

On 31 July the British government announced the main outlines of the long-awaited constitution granting the Transvaal responsible government. By letters patent on 6 December this constitution was promulgated and it provided for white manhood suffrage on the basis of one vote, one value, in single member constituencies, and for a nominated upper house. The fate of the Chinese miners was left within the jurisdiction of the first Transvaal parliament under self-government and thus Chinese labour remained a keen political issue.

Whiteside expressed in August the attitude of organised labour when he welcomed the constitution and was delighted at the prospect of the Chinese Labour Ordinance being repealed. However, he was not pleased with the nominated upper house, regarding its justification to safeguard the natives as "flimsy"; and he would have liked the suffrage extended to women.³²

At least by June opponents of the "baneful power of Hoggenheimer" were practically united in objecting to the continued presence of the Chinese on the mines, for the T.R.G.A. had reversed its stand. E.P. Solomon, its president, now warned that if the Progressive Party won the elections free Chinese miners would be ousting whites from their jobs.³³ Het Volk, the T.R.G.A. and organised labour

32. S.A. News, 2.8.1906, p.5; Rand Daily Mail, 1.9.1906, p. 5.

33. T.R.G.A. pamphlet, Speeches Delivered, 20th June, 1906, pp. 25-26. For reversal of policy see also Smuts to Merriman, 30.8.1906, Merriman Papers, no. 198 of 1906. For Smuts's reference to "baneful power of Hoggenheimer" see W.K. Hancock and J. van der Poel (eds.), Smuts Papers, II, p. 271.

were also united in opposing so-called capitalist ascendancy. Smuts reported in his Memorandum on the Transvaal Constitution that the real balance of political power had passed to the Chamber of Mines; Creswell was distressed that the increasing gold output was accompanied by increasing growth of poverty and that increasing dividends from the mines were accompanied by a declining attractiveness of the Witwatersrand as a field for investment; George Hay, one of the leaders of the T.R.G.A., denounced "the baneful oligarchy of wealth" whose first principle was to rob South Africa for the rest of the world and feared lest Johannesburg should become another Kimberley; and an I.L.P. public meeting in September endorsed this attitude, resolving:

That this meeting, being of the opinion that considering the terrible danger which threatens the people of this country in having a mining majority returned to Parliament, pledges itself to oppose any and every candidate who does not pledge himself to secure to the people of this State their fair share of the total profits derived from the mining industry. 34

But no party representing a combination of these elements emerged.

In August, Wybergh, Creswell, Outhwaite and others started the Reform Club as their political mouthpiece. It was hostile towards the mining houses, strongly opposed Chinese labour and hoped to build a united white nation. 35 Whiteside seemed to be associated, for he was a prominent speaker at its public meetings on 22 August and 7 September. 36

34. Transvaal Leader, 6.9.1906, p.5. On Smuts see Smuts Papers, II, pp. 217-8; on Creswell his pamphlet, Witwatersrand Gold Mines and Responsible Government, p.1; and on Hay T.R.G.A. pamphlet, Speeches Delivered, 26th June 1906, pp. 19-20.

35. South Africa, 25.8.1906, p.551; 1.9 1906, p.583; Natal Witness, 18.8.1906, p.10; A.A. Mawby, "The Political Behaviour of the British Population of the Transvaal", p.293.

36. South Africa, 25.8.1906, p.551; Transvaal Leader, 8.9.1906, p.10.

On 20 September the Reform Club, the Transvaal Political Association, which functioned in Pretoria, and the T.R.G.A. combined to form the National Association with policies similar to the Reform Club.³⁷ Members of the I.L.P. on the Rand attended this conference, but left early after other delegates had evidently rejected their proposition that the Association should become a wing of the I.L.P. which was supposed to represent 60 000 workers. No representative of organised labour was elected to the Association's committee.³⁸

The amalgamation of organised labour and Het Volk as one political party was never entertained since they drew their following from totally different sections of the white population. Nevertheless, they were becoming more reconciled to each other. Smuts, for instance, addressed several I.L.P. public meetings in Pretoria.³⁹ Ware declared at the Labour Day meeting in Johannesburg that, although labour intended to be independent, he would prefer to be dominated by the Boers than by the mining magnates; Whiteside explained in September that after the experience of the last four or five years he would not be unhappy with a Het Volk majority in the Legislative Assembly; and Back, an ardent socialist, asserted at the same meeting that the workers were better off before the war when unemployment was the exception and not the rule, as it was then, and that the Boer was not such "a screw" as the mining magnates, although he was also fond of his pound of flesh.⁴⁰

37. B. Spoelstra, "Die Bewindsaanvaarding van die Botha-Regering", pp.339, 378-9; Transvaal Leader, 28.9.1906, p.8.

38. Natal Mercury, 22.9.1906, p.10; Star, 21.9.1906, p.8, and 22.9.1906, p.9, letter from the I.L.P. For the committee see Natal Mercury, 28.9.1906, p.6.

39. See p.218 above.

40. On Ware see Rand Daily Mail, 14.4.1906, p.5; on Whiteside and Back 25.9.1906, p.5.

In August the Progressive Association attempted to conciliate organised labour. It published a list of thirty-six approved parliamentary candidates who would give the best possible representation to British interests and included Shanks and Raitt as labour representatives.⁴¹ Raitt denied giving his consent or even of having prior knowledge of his inclusion and was critical of the lack of consideration accorded organised labour in offering it two seats only.⁴²

At the same time the Federated Association of Mine Employees, of which F.H. Hodgkinson was secretary, was formed in obvious competition with the T.M.A. and may have been inspired for this purpose by one of the mining houses. It wanted miners to get into closer touch with the leaders in the industry, opposed unskilled white labour as economically impossible and morally degrading, and advocated proper parliamentary representation, guarding against support for candidates who would "hamper or strangle" the mining industry in any way. Even though Hodgkinson claimed that it had a membership of 1 600 in January, it probably disappeared after the general election a month later.⁴³

Another short-lived dissident labour organisation was the United Democratic League, which was started on

41. Natal Witness, 18.8.1906, p.5. At this time Shanks was no longer considered a representative of organised labour.

42. Ibid., 22.8.1906, p.6.

43. Natal Mercury, 11.8.1906, p.9; Rand Daily Mail, 8.9.1906, p.4; T.G. 11 of 1908, paras.1558-61, 1678-89, evidence of Hodgkinson. See Debates of Transvaal Legislative Assembly, 23.6.1909, col.650, for Whiteside's comment on bogus trade unions.

6 June and which professed to be anti-capitalist. Its president was Richard Mansfield, an auctioneer, and its treasurer P.J. O'Flaherty till his expulsion on 9 July. It seemed to have a mysterious source of income whereby it was able to dispense charity to its unemployed members at 15/- per day. Not long after its formation it was ridiculed into obscurity by unpleasant court proceedings instituted by its own members.⁴⁴

Meanwhile in the Johannesburg municipal elections labour contested all the wards where vacancies occurred. At least four out of the five labour candidates were sponsored by the I.L.P., for George Milligan, an engine-driver, may have stood simply as a trade unionist.⁴⁵ Only Ware was successful, increasing his majority at Fordsburg, and Whiteside, Andrews, Back and Milligan were all well beaten.⁴⁶ Significantly, Andrews received the support of R. Shanks and Howard Pim, both prominent members of the National Association.⁴⁷

The I.L.P. was naturally disappointed and saw in the results the need for organisation. On the other hand, the Rand Daily Mail welcomed the outcome as it believed the labour candidates were endeavouring to overthrow the whole social structure with their socialist doctrines.⁴⁸

Outside of Johannesburg I.L.P. municipal candidates fared still worse. Buxton and Henderson in Pretoria and Coop and Wade in Potchefstroom all came last in the wards they contested.⁴⁹

44. Rand Daily Mail, 25.6.1906, p.5; Natal Mercury, 7.8.1906, p.9; and South Africa, 1.9.1906, p.583.

45. Compare Rand Daily Mail, 25.9.1906, p.8, Sampson's comment, with 1.11.1906, p.6, reference to Milligan.

46. For detailed results see Appendix C, IV, 6, below.

47. Rand Daily Mail, 16.10.1906, p.8.

48. On I.L.P. disappointment see Rand Daily Mail, 1.11.1906, p.8; on attitude of the Rand Daily Mail, 1.11.1906, p.6, editorial.

12. Formation of the Transvaal Labour Representation Committee

Trade unions on the Rand were not prepared to give the I.L.P. carte blanche in the legislative assembly elections. About the beginning of November the Witwatersrand T. & L.C. therefore asked its affiliated members to nominate parliamentary candidates. After the Council had decided how many it could afford to support, it intended holding a ballot amongst its members to determine the final nominations.⁵⁰ Several societies proposed candidates, for example, the Johannesburg branch of the S.A.T.U. H.W. Sampson, the Benoni branch of the A.S.E. W.B. Madeley, and the T.M.A. R.J. Stickland.⁵¹ The last-mentioned was immediately subjected to a bitter attack, reminiscent of the labour recrimination following the P.L.L.'s censure of Andrews, by a correspondent of the South African Typographical Journal.⁵² Being both a bookbinder and a miner by profession, Stickland was a member of the S.A.T.U. and the T.M.A., but had been suspended from holding office for three years in the printers' society for supporting, contrary to its instructions, free trade at a meeting of the T. & L.C.⁵³ Towards the beginning of December the I.L.P. selected Whiteside, Sampson, Lorimer and Ware as the first of its official candidates.⁵⁴

49. For Pretoria results see Rand Daily Mail, 1.11.1906, p.8; for Potchefstroom 2.11.1906, p.8.

50. S.A.T.J., November 1906, p.4.

51. On Sampson see S.A.T.J., December 1906, pp.4-5; on Stickland Rand Daily Mail, 14.12.1906, p.8; and on Madeley A.S.E. Monthly Report, December 1906, p.5.

52. S.A.T.J., December 1906, p.5.

53. S.A. News, 23.12.1905, p.11, "Labour Notes"; "Labour Notes" in Transvaal Leader, 5 & 12.12.1908, pp.5 & 14, respectively; S.A.T.J., August 1905, p.5.

54. Transvaal Leader, 1.12.1906, p.9; 11.12.1906, p.3.

In Pretoria the I.L.P. appealed to the trade unions for financial assistance to contest the elections. At least the printers responded, for they voted to contribute 6d. per member per week as an election levy.⁵⁵ In December the I.L.P. seemed intent on contesting all six Pretoria constituencies.⁵⁶

Organised labour on the Rand realised the urgent need for a co-ordinating body to control the selection of labour candidates and allocate their constituencies. Following British precedents it therefore founded the Transvaal L.R.C. on 9 December at a conference attended by delegates of the Witwatersrand T. & L.C., S.A.E.D. & F.A., A.S.E., S.A.T.U., Tramway Employees' Union, I.L.P., Sons of Russian Freedom, Vorwarts and Italian Socialist Society. The T.M.A. refused to fall into line until its conference with the L.R.C. on 23 December.⁵⁷ According to A.D. Donovan of the South African News, the labour ranks were at last unified, whereas previously they had as many divisions as there were offices in the Johannesburg Trades Hall.⁵⁸

The L.R.C. meeting on 30 December began the task of approving labour candidates and allocating their constituencies, and it also elected office-bearers and committee members for the ensuing year. Andrews became president, Lorimer secretary and Weinstock secretary. Those chosen were widely representative of the trade unions and the socialist organisations. Mathews's election as one of the

55. S.A.T.J., November 1906, p.4, and December 1906, p.5.

56. S.A. News Weekly Edition, 23.2.1907, p.17, article by A.D. Donovan dated 24.12.1906.

57. Rand Daily Mail, 20.12.1906, p.4; 24.12.1906, p.8.

58. S.A. News Weekly Edition, 23.1.1907, p.17, article dated 26.12.1906.

vice-presidents marked his return to the forefront of labour politics after an absence of seven years and showed that his pro-Boer sympathies in 1899 were certainly not held against him.⁵⁹ From the L.R.C.'s committee it is clear that the Pretoria I.L.P. was not involved in its formation.⁶⁰ Labour in Pretoria formed its own L.R.C. although this step seemed unnecessary because of an absence of discord between the local T. & L.C. and I.L.P. whose leadership seems to have coincided.⁶¹

The Transvaal L.R.C., which functioned on the Witwatersrand, like its British counterpart was a federal organisation consisting of delegates from affiliated bodies in proportion to individual membership. The T. & L.C. was specifically restricted to one vote. The L.R.C.'s object was "to promote and finance Labour candidates in all governing bodies". Its candidates were required to sign a carefully worded solidarity pledge binding them to the authority of the L.R.C. and to the party caucus in public bodies, and to furnish an undated resignation from the public organisation for which they were standing.⁶²

Another labour organisation formed at this time was the British and Transvaal Union, also called the Transvaal Anti-Socialist Labour Union. R. Mansfield of the discredited United Democratic League was its president and soli-

59. On the meeting see Rand Daily Mail, 31.12.1906, p.8; on the committee and its wide representation see Appendix D, II, below; on Mathews see pp.91-93 above.

60. Although Crawford was on the committee, he had probably moved from Pretoria to the Rand by this time.

61. On existence of the L.R.C. see Voice of Labour, 31.12.1909, p.7. In 1908 Frank Nettleton was secretary of the Pretoria T. & L.C. and of the I.L.P. and president of the L.R.C. - Transvaal Leader, 6.6.1908, p.12, "Labour Notes".

62. For constitution see Appendix A, VI; on undated resignation see Transvaal Leader, 11.2.1907, p.7, and Star, 9.8.1910, p.5, article by "Filius Populi".

tary candidate for the Legislative Assembly, but withdrew before polling day. The Union aimed to safeguard British ideals and institutions and launched a scathing attack on the socialism advocated by the "so-called Labour Parties". "The flag of socialism has been hoisted", it explained, "whereby the cause of Labour and trade unionism are besmirched". Its integrity was challenged publicly by the treasurer of the Transvaal I.L.P., Lucas, who declared that he had proof that Mansfield was in the pay of the Progressive Association - an accusation naturally denied by Mansfield.⁶³

13. General Election

The Transvaal general election took place on 20 February 1907. Not only had the L.R.C. the difficult task of presenting a united labour front, but it also had to curb the number of labour contests so as to fall in line with the anti-Progressive alliance of Het Volk and the Nationalist Association.

As early as 12 December General Botha had presided over a conference of supporters of this alliance. Delegates agreed that a united front should fight the Progressive Party and made a special appeal to organised labour for its co-operation.⁶⁴ By the end of the month Het Volk and the National Association had concluded an election pact, but the L.R.C. had proved evasive. Labour appeared

63. For the Union's attack on Labour see S.A. News Weekly Edition, 30.1.1907, p.7, and on the union's back-ground see also Rand Daily Mail, 29.12.1906, p.7, letter from Mansfield; and Transvaal Leader, 12.2.1907, p.10. For Mansfield's withdrawal from the elections see Transvaal Leader, 11.2.1907, p.12; for Lucas's accusation 19.1.1907, p.13; and for Mansfield's denial 22.1.1907, p.10.

64. Star, 13.12.1906, p.9.

to be opposing Nationalists with as much determination as they were the Progressives, both on the Rand and in Pretoria. "It now appears that it is against the sacred traditions of Labour as set down by the Keir Hardies", commented A.D. Donovan, "to make any agreement, arrangement, plan or deposition with any other political party".⁶⁵ During January the total number of labour candidates rose to at least twenty-three. At Newtown and at Langlaagte labour men seemed likely to oppose each other and in the country districts two labour candidates came forward briefly, although they had not the slightest hope against Het Volk.⁶⁶

In Johannesburg the L.R.C. continued to negotiate with representatives of Het Volk and the National Association throughout January and participated in a conference of the three parties at the end of the month. Hard election bargaining took place, for example, Wybergh moved from Sampson's constituency, City and Suburban, to Marshallstown, Andrews withdrew from Clifton (Braamfontein) in favour of George Hay, and the Het Volk - Nationalist alliance gave Labour a straight contest against Progressives in Boksburg East, Boksburg West and Germiston Central. In addition, an understanding was arrived at whereby Labour assisted the electioneering of certain of the alliance's candidates and vice versa. Het Volk seemed to support nine Labour candidates on the Rand and was

65. Article dated 24.12.1906 in S.A. News Weekly Edition, 23.1.1907, p.17. See also his article dated 26.12.1906 in 23.1.1907, p.17. Ironically, Keir Hardie was in 1903 a party to the secret MacDonalld - Herbert Gladstone entente between the Labour and Liberal Parties which proved largely responsible for Labour's impressive performance in the British general election of 1906 - F. Bealey and H. Pelling, Labour and Politics, 1900-1906, pp.298-9. See also Hardie's advice to Lorimer in the quotation at start of this chapter.

66. S.A. News Weekly Edition, 9.1.1907, p.9, and 30.1.1907, p.15.

particularly sympathetic towards Whiteside, Sampson, Stickland and Madeley. Constituency bargaining proved unsuccessful, however, at Newtown, Fordsburg and Georgetown where leading members of the I.L.P. opposed candidates of the Het Volk - Nationalist alliance. Significantly, the I.L.P. countenanced election co-operation, for Lucas offered to retire from Fordsburg on condition that Lorimer were given a free contest against his Progressive opponent in Newtown.⁶⁷

By nomination day on 9 February the Transvaal L.R.C. had achieved a great deal. It had prevented labour candidates from opposing each other; it had concluded arrangements with the Het Volk - Nationalist alliance whereby its own election prospects were greatly enhanced; and it had sanctioned all twelve labour candidatures on the Witwatersrand. The L.R.C., then, had succeeded in creating a united political front of all the dissident elements of the trade union and socialist movements.⁶⁸

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67. S.A. News Weekly Edition, 6 & 13 February 1907; Louis Karovsky, "Experiments in National Partnerships" (Hjalmar Reitz and Harm Oost (eds.), Die Nasionale Boek), p.103; R.K. Cope, Comrade Bill, p.84; National Party, Cape Province, pamphlet, The Nationalist-Labour Pact : Past and Present, 1907-1924, pp.13-14. See also on conference of 30 January and on election bargaining Transvaal Leader, 2.2.1907, p.10, and 4.2.1907, p.12, letter from the L.R.C.'s secretary, Lorimer. On Lucas's offer see Rand Daily Mail, 15.2.1907, p.3; and for final list of Labour candidates Appendix C, III, below. In the beginning of February Smuts stated that Het Volk supported nine labour candidates - Transvaal Leader, 11.2.1907, as quoted in C.R. Ould, "General Smuts's Attitude to White Labour Disputes between 1907 and 1922" (M.A. thesis, University of the Witwatersrand, 1964), p.11.
68. For endorsement of all the Witwatersrand Labour candidates by the L.R.C. see Transvaal Leader, 26.1.1907, p.12; 2.2.1907, p.10; 4.2.1907, p.12, letter from R.J. Carroll. A.A. Mawby, "The Political Behaviour of the British Population of the Transvaal", p.369, incorrectly states that not all labour candidates subscribed to the L.R.C.

In Pretoria J.T. Bain seemingly played a leading role in negotiations with Het Volk, the outcome of which is not known.⁶⁹ But the labour candidates in the rural constituencies and in five of the six Pretoria seats withdrew, and only in the Berea division did organised labour go to the polls. Here the Pretoria L.R.C. nominated John Reid after he had narrowly defeated Bain in a ballot of members of affiliated organisations.⁷⁰ Reid, who was involved in a straight contest with the Nationalist candidate, M.R. Greenlees, received the open support of the Progressive Party without compromising his allegiance to Labour.⁷¹

Reid and George Preston, the Labour candidate at Georgetown, lost their railway jobs because the C.S.A.R. enforced its regulations, as contained in Circular 199 at this time, prohibiting railwaymen from taking a prominent part in political activity. Despite protest meetings, the Transvaal L.R.C.'s deputation to Selborne and Hardie's intervention with the British government, the British Colonial Secretary, Lord Elgin, refused to order the suspension of these regulations. As a result, railwaymen naturally were reluctant to stand for election unless victory was virtually assured. This seems to explain why labour leaders like Bain and Kennerley were not nominated.⁷² On the other hand, Andrews's decision to withdraw his candidature was not a great Labour sacrifice

69. Transvaal Legal Defence Committee's pamphlet, The Story of a Crime, p.13.

70. Voice of Labour, 31.12.1909, p.7.

71. Transvaal Leader, 17.1.1907, p.10, and 25.1.1907, p.8; Debates of the Transvaal Legislative Assembly, 22.8.1908, cols.1937-8; O.F. Brothers, The First Transvaal Parliament, p.57.

72. Transvaal Leader, 31.12.1906, p.8; 8.1.1907, p.6; 18.1.1907, p.7; 29.1.1907, p.7; 31.1.1907, p.9; Rand Daily Mail, 31.12.1906, p.8.

to the anti-Progressive coalition, for the rules of the A.S.E. prohibited him from accepting a public position as long as he was its paid full-time organiser.⁷³

Unlike the other major parties, the L.R.C. did not have wealthy supporters to promote its election campaign. Still, the trade unions did assist the Labour candidates — not unexpected, since at least nine were unionists.⁷⁴

Sampson, for example, was voted £40 by members of the S.A.T.U. and John Reid had three quarters of his election expenses paid by the Pretoria branch of the A.S.E.⁷⁵

However, some years later, Sampson stated that in 1907 Labour was without funds or organisation and were "like children in electioneering";⁷⁶ but he probably exaggerated, for the daily press reveals that the Labour candidates were as publicly active as their opponents. In addition, they received the assistance of two Natal Labour M.L.A.s, Nelson Palmer and C.H. Hagggar, who addressed several of their public meetings.⁷⁷

The policies advocated by the various parties were similar, although Labour was more concerned over the need for industrial legislation and more insistent that polling day should be declared a public holiday. A Progressive supporter actually maintained that, but for Labour's "conscientious hatred of capital", its "very ordinary" platform suggested the greater likelihood of its co-operation with the Progressives than with the ultra-conservative Boers;⁷⁸ and the Chamber of Mines proceeded

73. A.S.E. Monthly Report, February 1908, p.20; Voice of Labour, 18.12.1909, p.7; Transvaal Leader, 8.8.1908, p.14, "Labour Notes".

74. For analysis of occupations see Appendix C, III, below.

75. On Sampson see S.A.T.J., February 1907, p.5; and on Reid A.S.E. Monthly Report, December 1908, p.15.

76. Labour Leader, 30.6.1911, p.401.

77. Rand Daily Mail, 18.2.1907, p.8; Transvaal Leader, 11.2.1907, p.7, and 12.2.1907, p.11.

to woo white labour by granting the white miners, shortly before the elections, an eight hour day, working at the face.⁷⁹ On the other hand, Preston asserted that because the programmes of Labour and Het Volk were so similar and he was standing in a labour and not a Boer constituency, he was more entitled to the support of Georgetown electors than his Het Volk rival, H.C. Hull.⁸⁰

Despite the socialist objective of the I.L.P., socialism was not an election issue and seemed to be carefully avoided by the Labour candidates. When challenged on this subject, Whiteside explained that socialism was merely a beacon light and stated that nationalisation of the mines was then impossible. Indeed, Lucas, one of the most ardent socialists on the Rand, favoured individual enterprise in the development of local industry; and Voice of Labour commented in 1909:

Socialism was in the field at the last parliamentary election, but arrived so late that - not only was it not a factor, but it held Socialism up to ridicule. Just think of it. The champions of a cause that is to save the World finding their courage only after the fight was practically settled.⁸¹

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78. Unidentified author, "South Africa : The Political Situation in the Transvaal", National Review, February 1907, pp.1066-75. It describes party policies in detail. Another valuable summary can be found in Transvaal Leader, 19.2.1907, p.12.
79. S.A. News Weekly Edition, 6.2.1907, p.8, and 13.2.1907, p.9.
80. Transvaal Leader, 20.2.1907, p.7. Note that it is unlikely that the L.R.C. adopted a specific programme.
81. 13.11.1909, p.6. On Whiteside see Star, 22.1.1907, p.10; on Lucas Transvaal Leader, 29.1.1907, p.11. For absence of socialism in speeches of I.L.P. leaders see also Transvaal Leader, 26.1.1907, p.10 (Crawford); and 20.2.1907, p.7 (Preston and Back).

On at least one occasion, Lorimer, the secretary of the L.R.C., did advocate nationalisation of the mines. But of all the candidates Lorimer made the most unreasonable demands and probably commanded little support as a result. He wanted lawyers barred from parliament, proposed to eliminate the legal profession by having the law written in "plain tinkers English", countenanced violence against state illicit liquor trappers, supported employment of women by the C.S.A.R. and at similar wages to men, and would have liked the Transvaal to have been ruled by another Kruger so as to have the Chamber of Mines under proper control.⁸²

Labour, then, failed to appeal to voters to divide along class lines in an election dominated by three issues: Chinese labour, the Hoggenheimer bogey and Boer loyalty. The Progressives insisted on retention of the Chinese until suitable substitute labour could be recruited and feared for the future of British institutions and ideas in the hands of a Het Volk government. Their opponents advocated repatriation of the Chinese on expiry of their contracts and prohibition of future importation, being convinced that adequate native labour was available; and stressed that Progressive rule would entail government by the Chamber of Mines.⁸³

82. Transvaal Leader, 2.2.1907, p.13; Rand Daily Mail, 15.2.1907, p.3.

83. "South Africa: The Political Situation in the Transvaal", National Review, February 1907, pp.1066-75; Transvaal Leader, 19.2.1907, p.12; Smuts to Merriman, 23.12.1906 and 25.1.1907, Merriman Papers, no.230 of 1906 and no.7 of 1907; N.G. Garson, "'Het Volk': The Botha-Smuts Party in the Transvaal, 1904-11", Historical Journal, no.1 of 1966, pp. 114-5.

Only three Labour candidates, Whiteside, Sampson and John Reid, were successful in the general election, a triumph for Het Volk which secured an overall majority of the sixty-nine seats.⁸⁴ Reid's victory had been generally expected in view of the railwaymen in his constituency.⁸⁵ Still, considering Labour's poor showing in municipal contests and persistent factionalism, its performance was one of the surprises of the elections.⁸⁶ In Ophirton, Germiston Central and Langlaagte, the Labour candidates were very narrowly defeated; and, indeed, Labour's poll was more impressive than that of the National Association and deserved greater success.⁸⁷ The Labour candidates who fared worst were the three I.L.P. leaders, Lorimer, Lucas and Preston, who had opposed representatives of the Het Volk-Nationalist coalition and of the Progressive Party.

Political opponents of the mining houses regretted the defeat of the Nationalist candidates, Creswell and Pim, who had stood in the Bezuidenhout Valley and Parktown seats, respectively. These were the two men Olive Schreiner most wanted to be elected.⁸⁸ However, Wybergh's return in Marshallstown and Hay's in Clifton ensured that their views would be expressed in the Legislative Assembly.

Lord Selborne added to the excitement of polling day by announcing the members of the new Legislative Council.

84. See Appendix C, III, below.

85. S.A. News Weekly Edition, 27.2.1907, p.8.

86. Transvaal Leader, 25.2.1907, p.9; O.F. Brothers, The First Transvaal Parliament, p.54.

87. S.A. News Weekly Edition, 27.2.1907, p.15; O.F. Brothers, op. cit., p.54.

88. Olive Schreiner to Merriman, 26.2.1907, Merriman Papers, no.16 of 1907. For disappointment of Smuts and Merriman see Hancock and van der Poel (eds.), Smuts Papers, II, pp.322, 327.

All parties were unhappy, particularly the Transvaal L.R.C., all of its nominees: T.G. Town, W.H. Andrews, G. Milligan, T. Landye, P. Whiteside and J.J. Ware, being rejected. It had submitted these names after a ballot of members of its affiliated organisations. Even though Selborne nominated A.S. Raitt in the labour interest, both the Transvaal L.R.C. and I.L.P. contended that the "Labour Party" had no direct representation on the Council.⁸⁹ Due to disputes with labour organisations, details of which are not known, Raitt declined to stand in the general election although he apparently still would have had the support of the L.R.C.⁹⁰

After the election, reports circulated that prominent Labour supporters had been victimised by the mining houses.⁹¹ Walter Madeley, who had courageously opposed Sir George Farrar in the Boksburg East constituency whilst working as a fitter on one of his mines, certainly became persona non grata to the industry and was possibly dismissed from his job early in May 1907 because of his Labour candidature.⁹²

89. A.S.E. Monthly Report, December 1906, p.5; Transvaal Leader, 26.1.1907, p.12, and 7.3.1907, p.9; Rand Daily Mail, 26.2.1907, p.4; S.A. News, 27.2.1907, p.4. The names given above are in order of votes received. For disapproval by other parties see S.A. News, 27.2.1907, p.4; and A.A. Mawby, "The Political Behaviour of the British Population of the Transvaal", pp.309-10.

90. Transvaal Leader, 23.11.1907, p.10, obituary.

91. Rand Daily Mail, 11.3.1907, p.8; Star, 29.3.1907, p.9.

92. Transvaal Leader, 9.5.1907, p.8, speech by Shanks; C.L. Henderson's unpublished autobiography, p.84.

CHAPTER VI

TRANSVAAL, 1907 - 1910

If they lent countenance to the exploitation of the blacks for their own profit they had no right to complain against their exploitation by the wealthy classes. And what was more, until they were prepared to be just all round, to every child of Adam's race, they would have no justice done to them. They could only win freedom for themselves by helping to make others free at the same time, and if, while they fought for themselves they were at the same time perpetuating the enslavement of others, they were only creating another privileged class and solving no problem.

James Keir Hardie, Johannesburg,
February 1908¹

1. Miners' Strike, 1907

The miners' strike in 1907 on the Rand had such important repercussions for the political labour movement that it merits detailed description. It represented the first major conflict over the white man's position in the labour force - conflict that was to recur often until the Nationalist-Labour government of 1924 finally entrenched the industrial colour bar on the mines. It represented the first concerted protest against the alarming miners' phthisis death toll and against mining conditions in general and it was, in part, a struggle for recognition of trade unions.

The strike, which Raitt had actually predicted in 1905, started on 1 May 1907 near Germiston. The T.M.A. prompted white miners on the Knights Deep to down tools after attempts at negotiation with the management had failed. They objected to the requirement that white miners should supervise three rock-drilling machines instead of two or one, and to the reduction in contract rates from 70s to 60s per fathom.

1. Rand Daily Mail, 19.2.1908, p.8.

Within two weeks the T.M.A. had managed to extend the strike to twelve other producing mines; and, after the Chamber of Mines rejected requests to go to arbitration, it called a general strike of all white miners whose employers were affiliated to the Chamber. Starting on 22 May, the "general strike" affected forty-two mines and, according to the miners' leader, Mathews, resulted in 6 000 men staying away from work.² But against a background of depression and severe unemployment the strike was doomed from its first day. Indeed, the **mine-owners** could not have chosen a better time to embark on a policy of dilution of white labour and retrenchment.³ They seem to have appreciated that the largest single item of mine expenditure was white wages and salaries, for George Albu suggested at this time: "why not make the native the real miner, ... and thus save much of the money paid for white men for work they never perform."⁴

The T.M.A. was then one of the worst organised trade unions on the Rand with an active membership below 1 000 and possibly as low as 300.⁵ That it should have succeeded in bringing out so many men surely indicates that the miners' grievances were well-founded.

On 1 June T. Willis, president of the T.M.A., told General Botha that the three machine system was devised to force the white man out of the country. Shortly afterwards Mathews informed the Mining Industry Commission that one of the aims of the Chamber of Mines was to employ "one white man on a level".⁶ Obviously miners were fearing for their livelihoods.

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2. T.M.A. circular in Natal Witness, 18.5.1907, p.12; C.R. Ould, "General Smuts's Attitude to White Labour Disputes", pp.1, 12; F.J. Grobler, "Die Invloed van Geskoolde Blanke Arbeid", p.73 ff.; Transvaal Leader, 27.5.1907, p.8 (for Mathews's claim). On Raitt's prediction see Debates of the Transvaal Legislative Council, 15.9.1905, col. 2100.
 3. The Times, 24.8.1907, p.3, letter from J.B. Robinson; S.A. Tribune, 21.9.1907, p.6.
 4. As quoted in F.J. Grobler, op cit., pp. 71-72. On largest item of expenditure see Report of the Mining Industry Commission, p. 122, para. 13.
 5. Voice of Labour, 13.5.1910, p.220, "The Truth about the Miners' Strike", R.K. Cope, Comrade Bill, p.89; Mary Fitzgerald's autobiographical notes, pp. 2-4; Gitsham and

The abnormally high mortality rate on the mines has already been described.⁷ Suffice it to add that the estimate of an Australian visitor, that the death rate, from all causes, of the British army during the Anglo-Boer War was less than that of Rand rock-drillers from 1905-1907, was not exaggerated.⁸ In 1907 miners accurately asserted that the life expectancy of a machine driller was five to seven years and expected that the three machine system would increase the miners' phthisis hazard, thereby further shortening their lives.⁹ In these circumstances, Mat Trewick, General Secretary of the T.M.A., made a reasonable demand on 1 June to Botha that his government should endeavour to prolong the miners' lives and improve their work conditions; and Mathews stated with conviction in July to the Mining Industry Commission:

As long as white men are cheap there will not be any alterations, until they [the employers] are coerced Say we are asked to run three or four machines, and we have been told we can run eight machines, they do not care whether there is any alteration underground or not as long as we become skilled machines and get the work out, and if we die, well, they have the whole world to select from. We are about tired of it. We came out on strike for this thing¹⁰

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6. On Mathews see T.G. 2 of 1908, p.445, para. 4876; on Willis Transvaal Leader, 4.6.1907, p.7.
 7. See pp. 34-36 above.
 8. A. Pratt, The Real South Africa, p. 159.
 9. T.G. 2 of 1908, p.428, para. 4569 (Mathews); p.687 (Crean).
 10. T.G.2 of 1908, p.436, para. 4709. On Trewick see Transvaal Leader, 4.6.1907, p.7.

Lesser grievances were the lack of public holidays - miners enjoyed Good Friday and Christmas only; dismissal at twenty-four hours notice, followed by immediate eviction from a mining company cottage, if accommodated in one; a working day of from eight to sixteen hours; and "systematic swindling" of wages due for contract work.¹¹

Another strike issue was the refusal of the Chamber of Mines to recognise the right of collective bargaining.

Robert Raine, a mine manager, admitted in 1908 that he employed few trade unionists and these were marked men in case of agitation.¹² On some mines it apparently was accepted policy to mix white miners of different nationalities so as to lessen the chances of combination.¹³ Not surprisingly therefore, the Chamber rejected suggestions that it should go to arbitration over the strike. Mathews maintained, with justification, that the strike could have been averted had the employers been prepared to meet Union representatives in a spirit of confidence.¹⁴

During the first half of May the Germiston Chamber of Commerce and the S.A.E.D. & F.A. tried unsuccessfully to induce the mine-owners to negotiate with their employees.¹⁵ Subsequently several deputations of the T.M.A. waited upon the government vainly insisting that it compel the mining magnates to accept arbitration; and strikers and their supporters reiterated this demand at public meetings held at this time. But the Chamber of Mines was not interested in meeting strikers whom it referred to scornfully as agitators and whose grievances it dismissed as unreal.¹⁶ Moreover, as the mining magnates were winning the strike they had nothing to gain from arbitration.

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11. T.G.2 of 1908, pp.1402-6. See also on public holidays T.G.2 of 1908, p.1405 and S.A. News, 21.4.1906, p.11, "Labour Notes"; on twenty-four hours notice T.G.2 of 1908, p.447; on miners' cottages T.G.2 of 1908, p.1427 (evidence of J.E. Riley); on hours of work T.A.S.1 of 1908, p.9 (evidence of Mathews); and on "systematic swindling" of wages Transvaal Leader, 27.5.1907, p.8 (speech by Sampson), T.G.11 of 1908, p.69, para. 1580 (evidence by Hodgkinson), T.G.47 of 1909, p.7 (report of the Inspector of White Labour), and Rand Daily Mail, 28.12.1905, p.5, "Labour Notes"
12. T.A.S. 1 of 1908, p.85.
13. Transvaal Leader, 2.9.1909, p.7.

Their lack of sympathy with the miners was shown in another way. Louis Julius Reyersbach, president of the Chamber of Mines and chairman of Rand Mines Limited, attacked the "too extravagant mode of living" of "spoilt" Cornishmen in his evidence on 13 June to the Mining Industry Commission.¹⁷

The strikers obtained widespread sympathy and support. The outspoken mine-owner, J.B. Robinson, whose mines were not affected by the strike, donated £2 000, whilst R.L. Outhwaite, who had raised the miners' morale at their public meetings, left for England in mid-June where he collected £2 000 for strike funds.¹⁸ Leading members of the National Association, like Shanks, Wybergh and Creswell, openly sympathised with the strikers; Wybergh actually advocated compulsory working of idle mineral areas on penalty of confiscation so as to absorb the white unemployed and Creswell dismissed the Transvaal Leader's contention that the strike was the outcome of intimidation by paid agitators.¹⁹

Nor were the labour leaders slow in expressing their support. J.F. Back, for instance, told a miners' meeting in Germiston that the mine-owners really wanted to eliminate the white miners; Raitt, who introduced three miners' deputations to the government, asked pertinently what value could be set on high wages if a man were to live for five or six years only, and advised solidarity of the miners without recourse to violence; the Labour M.L.A.s, Sampson and Reid, blamed the mining magnates for the strike; J.J. Ware, one of the most conservative of the trade union leaders, condemned the three machine system as "legalised murder" on more than one occasion; and Archibald Crawford, then secretary of the Transvaal I.L.P. and one of the leaders of the unemployed, T. Landye,

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14. Transvaal Leader, 5.9.1908, p.11. See also T.G.2 of 1908, p.461, para. 5115.
15. C.R. Duld, "General Smuts's Attitude to White Labour Disputes", pp.2,13.
16. Ibid:, pp.12-14; F.J. Grobler, "Die Invoed van Geskoolde Blanke Arbeid", p.75 ff. For example of public meeting see Transvaal Leader, 27.5.1907, p.8; and for report of one of the miners' deputations 4.6.1907, p.7.
17. T.G.2 of 1908, p.107, paras. 757-9, and p.108, paras. 760-2; 437, paras. 4726-7.

secretary of the L.R.C., and R.J. Stickland, defeated Labour candidate in the general election, spoke publicly in favour of the strikers.²⁰ In mid-June an Australian labour and socialist propagandist, Wilson Wilson, arrived on the Rand and did much to hold the strikers together besides promoting labour principles.²¹

The Witwatersrand T. & L.C. organised public protest gatherings and appealed to the trade unions to assist the strikers financially; and the A.S.E., at least, did so.²² However, the miners most urgent need was for sympathetic strikes, which the craft unions were not prepared to risk. The Engineers, for example, sent their organiser, Andrews, to Durban once the strike had started because it feared that his close association with the T.M.A. might involve it in the dispute.²³ The Engine-Drivers were more directly concerned; indeed, Ware stated that if they stayed away from work the strike would be won immediately.²⁴ Whiteside found himself in an invidious position: as general secretary of the S.A.E.D. & F.A. he was expected to give a lead, but as a member of the Transvaal Mining Industry Commission, which was appointed on 4 May 1907, he obviously was required to be cautious about his public utterances. Thus on 15 May he led a deputation of his union to the Minister of Mines, J. de Villiers, and pressed for compulsory arbitration to settle the strike, explaining that members of his union working on the mines were placed in a predicament as to whether to transport strike-breakers or not.²⁵ On 28 May Whiteside and Milligan conducted a ballot of

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18. On the funds given by Robinson and Outhwaite see article by "Observer", "The Truth about the Miners' Strike", in Voice of Labour, 13.5.1910, p.220. For Outhwaite's public support see, e.g., Transvaal Leader, 6.5.1907, p.8; 27.5.1907, p.8; Natal Witness, 14.6.1907, p.5; 22.6.1907, p.11.
19. On Shanks and Wybergh see Transvaal Leader, 9.5.1907, p.8; and on Creswell 27.5.1907, p.11.
20. On Back see Transvaal Leader, 6.5.1907, p.8; on Raitt 9.5.1907, p.5, and F.J. Grobler, "Die Invloed van Geskoolde Blanke Arbeid", pp.76,81 & 90; on Sampson Transvaal Leader, 27.5.1907, p.8; on Reid 30.5.1907, p.10; on Ware 6.5.1907, p.8, and 13.5.1907, p.8; on Crawford 9.5.1907, p.8, and 27.5.1907, p.8; on Landye 27.5.1907, p.8; and on Stickland, 8,10,13.5.1907, all p.8, and 7.6.1907, p.7.
21. Natal Witness, 6.7.1907, p.11; S.A. News Weekly Edition, 10.7.1907, p.5; R.K. Cope, Comrade Bill, p.92. Note that F.J. Grobler, op. cit., p.86, errs in referring to Wilson as secretary of the I.L.P.

members of the S.A.E.D. & F.A. on the strike issue and it resulted in a large majority being in favour of continuation of work. Not only did the T.M.A. bitterly resent this decision, but labour militants came to heap abuse on Whiteside for his passive role in the strike.²⁶

On 25 May the T.M.A. suffered a further setback when Smuts called in Imperial troops to disperse strikers at the Croesus and Geldenhuis Deep mines. In addition, the acting-Commissioner of Police prohibited under Kruger's Law 6 of 1894 all meetings of more than six people within three hundred yards of the shaft-heads.²⁷ In vain did the T.M.A. protest against these restrictions.²⁸

It was also unsuccessful in preventing the mine-owners from recruiting several thousand indigent Afrikaners to take the strikers' places. Afrikanerdom seemed very pleased with this development. F.E.T. Krause, M.L.A., encouraged the unemployed Afrikaners in his Vrededorp constituency to grasp their chance, but advised them not to lower existing wage rates.²⁹

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22. Transvaal Leader, 20.5.1907, p.7, and 27.5.1907, pp.7-8; S.A.T.J., June 1907, p.3, and July 1907, p.3. On A.S.E. financial assistance see A.S.E. Monthly Report, April 1908, p.10.
23. R.K. Cope, Comrade Bill, p.91. See also A.S.E. Monthly Report, July 1907, p.10.
24. Transvaal Leader, 27.5.1907, p.8.
25. Transvaal Leader, 16.5.1907, p.9.
26. On the ballot see Transvaal Leader, 1.6.1907, p.9, and Natal Witness, 1.6.1907, pp.5 & 11; on the engine-drivers' role in the strike Transvaal Leader, 30.5.1908, p.12, "Labour Notes"; for Trewick's attack on the engine-drivers Natal Witness, 6.7.1907, p.11; for abuse heaped on Whiteside Voice of Labour, 1.4.1910, pp. 148-9, article by "Porcupine", and 20.5.1910, p.239, article by T. Glynn; and for defence of Whiteside Voice of Labour, 13.5.1910, p.220, article by "Observer".
27. C.R. Ould, "General Smuts's Attitude to White Labour Disputes", p.6; F.J. Grobler, "Die Invloed van Geskoolde Blanke Arbeid", pp.79-80; R.K. Cope, Comrade Bill, p.90.
28. Transvaal Leader, 4.6.1907, p.7, report of T.M.A. deputation to Botha.
29. For the influx see, e.g., Transvaal Leader, 17.5.1907, p.5, and 3.6.1907, p.8; on Krause's action Natal Witness, 25.5.1907, p.11; Transvaal Leader, 13.8.1910, p.16, "Labour Notes" (extract of Krause's letter to Star, 21.5.1907); F.J. Grobler, op. cit., pp.80-81. C.R. Ould, op. cit.,

On 30th May the Minister of Mines commented :

One very hopeful feature in the strike is that at last South Africans are taken on. Up till now the workmen have been very jealous to allow competitors to come in. Between £150 000 and £175 000 leaves this country per month in white wages alone.³⁰

And ex-president M.T. Steyn shared this attitude.³¹

Significantly, the mining magnates welcomed Afrikaner miners not only because they were helping them win the strike, but also because they were less conscious of labour organisation than their British rivals.³² In addition, Reyersbach told the Mining Industry Commission in June that the Afrikaner was "not as spoilt as a Cornishman" and could live cheaper.³³ According to J.B. Robinson, who opposed displacement of the British miner, the Rand press under the control of the Chamber of Mines urged the employment of Afrikaner miners so strongly that it was resuscitating "racial" enmity.³⁴

Possibly the most important reason for the failure of the strike was the ease with which the Chinese miners were able to perform the work of their white superiors.³⁵ On 1 June the T.M.A. deputation to Botha complained that Chinese were doing skilled work contrary to the law; and a month later Mathews actually blamed them for the failure of the strike.³⁶

30. J. de Villiers to Merriman, 30.5.1907, Merriman Papers, No. 52 of 1907.

31. Steyn to Merriman, 11.9.1907, Merriman Papers, No. 98 of 1907.

32. Natal Witness, 7.6.1907, p.4, editorial, and 8.6.1907, p.11; Transvaal Leader, 25.7.1908, p.14, "Labour Notes".

33. T.G.2 of 1908, p.100, paras. 664-5.

34. The Times, 24.8.1907, p.3. For examples of "racialism" to which Robinson objected see Transvaal Leader, 27.5.1907, p.8, letter from "Britisher"; 30.5.1907, p.10, letter from "Africander"; 24.5.1907, letter from "Ware Afrikaner" quoted by C.R. Ould, "General Smuts's Attitude to White Labour Disputes", pp. 28-29.

35. T.G.13 of 1908, p.28, para. 54; A.P. Cartwright, The Gold Mines, p.160.

36. On the deputation see Transvaal Leader, 4.6.1907, p.8; on Mathews T.G.2 of 1908, p. 443, paras. 4836 & 4840.

Meanwhile the strike was slowly petering out. On 4 July the strike committee made a final show of defiance by threatening to call a general strike of all white workers unless the Government immediately introduced a compulsory arbitration bill in parliament, but this proved a futile gesture.³⁷ Shortly afterwards the strike committee held several meetings with Government spokesmen and was forced to acknowledge defeat. It called off the strike from 28 July.³⁸

The T.M.A. suffered a shattering defeat. Their leaders were blacklisted by the mines; those strikers who were re-employed returned like "whipped curs" at reduced wages and on the managers' terms; and those who were not, swelled the ranks of the unemployed or left South Africa.³⁹ Towards the end of August 2 000 unemployed men signed a petition to the Government pleading for repatriation to their home countries.⁴⁰

The failure of the strike revealed the urgent need for effective labour organisation. The T.M.A. had erred in taking strike action without consulting other trade unions whose support it later expected.⁴¹ As a result labour leaders began to call for organisation along industrial lines, cutting across craft union sectionalism, and for an all-inclusive federation of labour. According to Bain, the latter was much more important than a federation of the South African colonies.⁴²

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37. S.A. News Weekly Edition, 10.7.1907, p.5; R.K. Cope, Comrade Bill, p.91; C.R. Ould, "General Smuts's Attitude to White Labour Disputes", pp. 15-16.
38. W.H. Andrews, Class Struggles in South Africa, p. 19; C.R. Ould, op.cit., pp. 16-21.
39. Voice of Labour, 13.5.1910, p.230, article by "Observer"; R.K. Cope, Comrade Bill, p. 92; T.G.2 of 1908, pp.685-6, paras. 8790 & 8793; The Times, 24.8.1907, p.3, letter from J.B. Robinson, C.R. Ould, op. cit., pp.21-25; Worker 27.3.1909 (press-cutting in Trembath, I, p.121.)
40. The Times, 23.8.1907, p.3.
41. Voice of Labour, 13.5.1910, p.230, article by "Observer".
42. S.A. Tribune, 3.8.1907, p.8; 17.8.1907, p.10; 31.8.1907, p.10 (for Bain's comment); 21.9.1907, pp.6,8; Rand Daily Mail, 7.2.1908, p.8; Transvaal Leader, 30.5.1908, p.12, "Labour Notes"; and A.S.E. Monthly Report, July 1907, pp. 13-14.

Far from being crushed, the T.M.A. began a period of rapid expansion. By the end of 1907 it had appointed two full-time organisers, J. Coward and Mathews. The latter, who replaced Trewick as general secretary in January 1909, was a leading advocate of industrial unionism and, as the industrial turmoil in 1913 showed, was mainly responsible for building up the T.M.A. into a formidable trade union. Mathews, who was overawed by no-one, least of all the mining magnates, also became an important labour politician.⁴³

The need for an independent labour party was self-evident. The struggle over the white man's position on the mines had merely been deferred, miners' grievances had still to be redressed and the Chamber of Mines had yet to negotiate with the miners' leaders. Labour hostility towards the Chamber and by association, the Progressive Party, increased inevitably. For example, both Ware and Crawford declared that the Randlords would put the Union Jack through the mill if they could extract any gold from it.⁴⁴ "Now that the elections are over and their services are no longer required", commented J.B. Robinson on the position of the miners, "a deliberate attempt is being made by a cosmopolitan junta to hound British workmen out of the Transvaal."⁴⁵

Disillusion of organised labour with the Het Volk government was not immediately apparent. The miners' deputations to the government came away convinced of its sympathy for their cause; on 4 July Crawford indeed stated that Het Volk sided with the strikers, but had to be coerced into passing an arbitration act; and, about the same time, Whiteside stated in the Legislative Assembly that the government was "more nearly akin to the sympathy of the people of the country" than the Progressive Party, and, therefore, it was more likely to accord consideration to the demands of Labour.⁴⁶ But on 18 August J.T. Bain told a joint

43. On paid organisers see S.A. Tribune, 7.12.1907, p.2; Transvaal Leader, 9.5.1908, p.13, "Labour Notes"; on Mathews Transvaal Leader, 2.1.1909, p.11, "Labour Notes"; Rand Daily Mail, 7.2.1908, p.8; R.K. Cope, Comrade Bill, pp. 92-95; Appendices D, II, III & IV below.

44. On Ware see Rand Daily Mail, 29.10.1907, p.4; on Crawford Transvaal Leader, 27.5.1907, p.8.

socialist-labour demonstration that, as a past consistent supporter of Het Volk, he felt ashamed that it failed to rise to the occasion during the strike.⁴⁷ In March 1908 at an I.L.P. meeting on the unemployed Mathews attacked Smuts and Botha for being just as "capitalistic" as Sir George Farrar; and a year later the secretary of the South African Council of the A.S.E. and former vice-president of the L.R.C., J. Morgan, denounced the government in strong terms :

It is monstrous to think that these tinkers at statemanship see in the spoilation of the workers the highest object to which they can put their genius.⁴⁸

After Smuts stated publicly in January 1910 that South Africa would have been ruined if the miners' strike had been successful, Mathews retorted that it was now clear that Het Volk worked hand in hand with the Chamber of Mines, despite seeming sympathy for the miners. "The Labour Party", he concluded, "could now fight its fiercest without any hope of favours to come."⁴⁹

Nevertheless, Het Volk had tried to retain a benevolent image. On 4 May 1907 it appointed the Mining Industry Commission, and four days later the Mining Regulations Commission, to probe the industry's labour questions and miners' grievances; in June Botha confirmed that the Chinese labour experiment would come to an end on the expiry of their indentures; in 1907 it conceded the Workmen's Compensation Act and in 1909 the Industrial Disputes Act; although it rejected strikers' pleas for assisted repatriation, it granted £2 000 to the T.M.A. for alleviation of distress; and

45. The Times, 24.8.1907, p.3. For similar attitude see Natalian, 5.7.1907, p.3; S.A. Tribune, 3.8.1907, p.8; R.K. Cope, Comrade Bill, p.92.

46. On miners' deputations see F.J. Grobler, "Die Invloed van Geskoolde Blanke Arbeid", p.73 ff.; on Crawford S.A. News Weekly Edition, 10.7.1907, p.5; on Whiteside Debates, 3.7.1907, cols. 655-6. On Het Volk sympathy for the strikers see also G.S. Preller, Agt Jaar Politiek, p.54.

47. S.A. Tribune, 31.8.1907, p.11.

48. A.S.E. Monthly Report, November 1909, p.3. On Mathews see Rand Daily Mail, 9.3.1908, p.8.

on 20 September 1907 it appointed A.S. Raitt to the new post of Inspector of White Labour.⁵⁰ However, organised labour strongly resented the intervention of Imperial troops in the strike at the instigation of Smuts.⁵¹

One of the most significant results of the strike was the influx of Afrikaners to the mines which it initiated. As has been noted already, Afrikaner leaders welcomed this development, which not only alleviated in part the plight of the indigent Boer, but also gave Het Volk greater political influence on the Rand. On the other hand, organised labour faced the prospect of dwindling support because it consisted almost exclusively of overseas-born men who had adopted an aristocratic attitude towards the less fortunate Afrikaner workers. This was based on their superior skill and therefore higher wage value. By insisting on the maintenance of the fair wage clause the Britisher obviously discriminated against the Afrikaner who was prevented thereby from offering his less-skilled labour at a cheaper price.⁵² The Transvaal's large loss of white population, 1906-1910, caused by the depression and aggravated by the strike, was thus a further set-back for the British-orientated Transvaal labour movement.⁵³

In 1905 85,4 per cent of white miners on the Rand were born in Great Britain. By 1910 employment of Afrikaners had caused this proportion to drop to 62,8. Afterwards they streamed to the

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49. Transvaal Leader, 29.1.1910, p.13, "Labour Notes". For Smuts's statement see Voice of Labour, 28.1.1910, p.44.
50. F.J. Grobler, "Die Invloed van Geskoolde Blanke Arbeid", pp.95-104; C.R. Ould, "General Smuts's Attitude to White Labour Disputes", pp.22, 26-27.
51. Transvaal Leader, 4.6.1907, p.7; Natalian, 5.7.1907, p.3; W.K. Hancock, Smuts, I, p.237.
52. Report of the National Organising Committee of the S.A.L.P., 1.1.1930; Tom Mann, Memoirs, pp. 321-2.
53. On population loss see, e.g., M.H. de Kock, Economic History of South Africa, p.144; Transvaal Leader, 13.3.1909, p.3, "Labour Notes".

mines at such a rate that in 1922 they represented 80 per cent of the white labour force.⁵⁴ The attitude of organised labour to the Afrikaner therefore assumes great significance.

2. The Labour Presence in Parliament, 1907-1910

Het Volk had thirty-seven representatives in the Legislative Assembly with its sixty-nine members; its partner in the Government, the National Association, six; the Progressive Party twenty-one; and Labour three only. Nevertheless, Labour made its presence felt.

In important debates, such as those on Closer Union (1908) and the Draft South Africa Act motion (1909), Whiteside was often third speaker. He proved to be one of the most outstanding debaters in the Assembly and became noted for his pungent turn of phrase.⁵⁵ On the other hand, as Hjalmar Reitz recorded many years afterwards, Sampson was hardly a man to set the Apies River on fire. Still, he was a frequent speaker and showed a careful command over his subject matter.⁵⁶ Reid was neither a skilful debater nor a frequent speaker, but did valuable work as a member of the Indigency and Railway Commissions and of the commission of enquiry into the administration of Koel Kamers Co. Limited.⁵⁷

Wilfred Wybergh, although officially a member of the governing coalition, showed in his speeches and voting a closer affinity to the Labour Party.⁵⁸ His colleague of the National Association,

54. For 1905 proportion, see Cd. 2563, no.22, pp.29-30, quoted in A.A. Mawby, "The Political Behaviour of the British Population of the Transvaal", p.289; for 1910 M.H. de Kock, op. cit., p.442; for 1922 S.P. Bunting, Red Revolt: The Rand Strike, January-March, 1922, p.10, and Tom Mann, Memoirs, p.322.

55. See, e.g., Debates of the Transvaal Legislative Assembly, 19.6.1907, cols. 172-182; 6.7.1908, col.506; 22.6.1909, col.646; Transvaal Leader, 23.5.1908, p.9, "Labour Notes"; interview, 26.4.1964, with Thomas Boydell; interview, 24.1.1965, with Louis Karovsky, a close friend of Whiteside and well-known election organiser in the 1920s.

56. H.J. Reitz, The Conversion of a South African Nationalist, p.115. For an example of his careful command of detail see Debates, 23.7.1907, cols. 1384-92.

George Hay, was also linked by the labour columnist of the Transvaal Leader, with the Labour Party, and was undoubtedly sympathetic towards many of its policies. However, his value to any party was limited by his infrequent attendance at debates. "To make speeches in Parliament was to bore the already bored", he explained in 1910, but this was a weak excuse for his lack of performance.⁵⁹ Wybergh and Hay eventually joined the S.A.L.P. in mid-1910 and in 1915, respectively.⁶⁰

In the Legislative Council Raitt remained a loyal labour spokesman although, unlike Whiteside and Sampson, he owed no allegiance to the Transvaal L.R.C. But on 20 September 1907 he was obliged to resign on accepting his appointment as Inspector of White Labour. His replacement, M.J. Greenlees, who was a member of the National Association, had no connection with the Transvaal labour movement.

From the first sittings of the Legislative Assembly Whiteside was forced to declare the independence of the Labour Party and to deny Progressive accusations that its representatives were "hangers-on" to the coat-tails of Het Volk.⁶¹ Nevertheless, he stated that Het Volk was more sympathetic to Labour than the Progressive Party and congratulated the Government on the drivers of its steam roller during the debate on Chinese labour in June 1907.⁶²

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57. Transvaal Leader, 6.6.1908, p.12, "Labour Notes". For an example of his inept debating see Debates, 22.8.1908, cols. 1935-40.
58. See, e.g., Debates, 17.7.1907, cols. 1096, 1102; 13.8.1907, col. 2300; and other numerous utterances in Debates, 1908-1910; "Labour Notes" in Transvaal Leader, 9.5.1908, p.13, and 13.6.1908, p.14; Star, 6.9.1910, p.8, editorial.
59. Rand Daily Mail, 23.6.1910, p.3, valedictory letter to his Clifton constituents. See also "Labour Notes" in Transvaal Leader, 9.5.1908, p.13, and 13.6.1908, p.14. His performance in the Assembly has been judged by the lack of reference to him in its debates.
60. On Wybergh see Transvaal Leader, 16.7.1910, p.11; on Hay S.A.L.P. Records, Executive Committee Minutes, 11.8.1915, p.314
61. Debates, 3.7.1907, col. 633 (Farrar) and cols. 655-6 (Whiteside). See also Star, 26.3.1907, p.8, and 28.3.1907, p.9; Transvaal Leader, 20.6.1908, p.14, "Labour Notes".
62. Debates, 19.6.1907, cols. 182-3; 3.7.1907, cols. 655-6.

The Labour M.L.A.s were certainly staunch advocates of the policies of organised labour. They fully supported the repatriation of the Chinese indentured labourers; they guarded the interests of the workers during the passage of the Workmen's Compensation Bill; they objected to the "biblical sauce" in the Education Bill of 1907; they protested at the lack of ways for redressing railwaymen's grievances during debates on the Railway Regulations Bill of 1908 which prohibited strikes by railway employees; and they and Wybergh demanded that the electorate be consulted on the Draft South Africa Act. In addition, they unsuccessfully moved that May 1st should be declared a public holiday; they protested at the victimisation for his political views of the Pretoria labour leader, Frank Nettleton, by the C.S.A.R., and they and Wybergh championed the rights of white women, including the female franchise. Whiteside exposed the deplorable pay and accommodation of the police force; he and Hay advocated an export duty on uncut diamonds so as to promote a local diamond-cutting industry; and Sampson pressed for better conditions for the Government printers.⁶³

The rejection in 1908 of Whiteside's Eight Hours Bill came as a great disappointment to organised labour.⁶⁴ After its first reading Whiteside had it referred to a select committee of which he was appointed chairman. Ironically, its majority report recommended that the Bill be dropped, forcing Whiteside to present a minority report which was also signed by Wybergh and Reid.⁶⁵

The Labour spokesmen were also active in pressing for better mining conditions. In 1907 Whiteside accused the Government Mining Engineer of distinct partiality towards the Chamber of Mines and called for the appointment of more mine inspectors. "We have grave complaints about men dying like flies from phthisis", he continued, "and yet, ... there seems to be a lackadaisical policy, as far as these regulations are concerned."⁶⁶ In the Legislative

63. Debates, 1907-1910.

64. S.A.T.J., September 1908, pp.9-10; November 1908, p.7; Transvaal Leader, 22.8.1908, p.6, "Labour Notes".

Council Raitt stressed again the mounting accident rate on the mines which he claimed was higher than anywhere else in the world. As in previous years, he pleaded eloquently for an increase in the number of inspectors.⁶⁷ The following year, during the debate in the Legislative Assembly on his Eight Hours Bill, Whiteside declared "that as far as underground conditions were concerned it was something akin to cruelty to animals to expect miners to work anything over eight hours a day"; and denounced the mining magnates for refusing to negotiate with their employees, explaining :

If one man dared to open his mouth with the Britisher's right to express his opinion, what ensued was black-listing and the famous "voetzak" policy.⁶⁸

On several occasions Whiteside drew attention to the distress of miners' phtisis sufferers and pleaded with the Government to help in alleviating their plight. In July 1908, for instance, he wanted part of the Government surplus to be allocated to those men "who had been the means of creating the bulk of it."⁶⁹ Thus the Labour Party was pleased at the end of 1908 when the Government, on the urgent recommendation of the Mining Regulations Commission, made it compulsory for water to be provided underground so as to reduce the dust hazard for miners; in March 1909 when the Government reported satisfactory progress in its negotiations with mine-owners over the establishment of the Springkell Sanatorium; and in June when it granted £1 500 to this institution.⁷⁰ Meanwhile Reid obtained the agreement of the Legislative Assembly to raising the age-limit of all underground miners, irrespective of race, from fourteen to sixteen years.⁷¹

66. Debates, 30.7.1907, cols. 1702-5.

67. Debates of the Legislative Council, 13.8.1907, cols. 681-3.

68. Debates of the Legislative Assembly, 19.8.1908, cols.1756,1760.

69. Debates, 28.7.1908, col. 1168. See also 31.3.1909, Cols.113-5.

70. Debates, 15.6.1909, cols. 314-5 (on supply of water); 31.3.1909, col. 166 (on Springkell); 16.6.1909, col. 406 (on the grant).

71. Debates, 1.7.1909, col. 942; 2.7.1909, col. 946.

Nor were the Labour M.L.A.'s silent on the equally pressing problem of the unemployed. In June 1907 they enquired whether the mining companies could be forced to work idle claims, but dropped this matter after the Government replied in the negative.⁷² A year later Sampson contended that alleviation of unemployment was more important than the Closer Union motion then under discussion and Reid expressed disillusion with the professed good intentions of the Government, explaining :

Much sooner would he have seen only one penny surplus if the Government had provided money to save men and women from starvation. He hoped that he would never see in that House or any Parliament of United South Africa a Treasurer dilating on his surplus while so much privation and distress existed. To him the surplus represented the heart-burnings of men, the tears of women, and the misery of children.⁷³

And in 1909 Sampson urged the establishment of labour bureaux and the grant of more money in aid of the unemployed.⁷⁴

In their attitude to non-whites the parliamentary Labour Party and Wybergh largely reflected the views of the trade union movement in the Transvaal. They uttered not a word of dissent on the Government's anti-Asiatic legislation in 1907; advocated extended use of white labour in accordance with the majority report of the Mining Industry Commission of which Whiteside had been a member; and opposed employment of contract labour on the mines.⁷⁵ Sampson obviously supported a statutory colour bar on the mines, for in 1910 he proposed unsuccessfully that blasting certificates be granted to Europeans only.⁷⁶ However, the Labour M.L.A.'s and Wybergh opposed race discrimination in the Workmen's Compensation

72. Debates, 20.8.1907, col. 2579.

73. Debates, 9.7.1908, col. 658. See also 22.6.1908, col. 110, on Sampson's claim.

74. Debates, 15.6.1909, cols. 359-60.

75. On support for anti-Asiatic legislation see Sampson's speech in Rand Daily Mail, 4.10.1907, p.8. On white labour policy see e.g., Debates, 26.6.1908, col. 260 (Whiteside); 30.7.1908, col. 1284 (Sampson); 20.4.1910, cols. 486-9 (Whiteside, Wybergh, Reid and Sampson. On contract labour see, e.g. Debates, 11.7.1907, cols. 864-5 (Whiteside); 17.7.1907, col. 1096 (Wybergh).

Act of 1907, in the Industrial Disputes Act of 1909 and in the debate on the Eight Hours Bill. They did so partly for humanitarian reasons and partly because the exclusion of non-whites would handicap white workers.⁷⁷

In the debate in March 1909 on the Draft South Africa Act Whiteside showed by his attitude to the franchise that organised labour had not broadened its outlook towards non-whites, despite Keir Hardie's eventful visit to the Rand in February 1908. Indeed Whiteside advocated that the exclusively white franchise of the inland colonies should be entrenched in a similar way to the Cape non-white franchise. Wybergh also strongly criticised the non-white franchise and stated that natives were totally unfit for democratic institutions within any period of time that he could contemplate.⁷⁸ Thus it was left to William Hosken, a Progressive M.L.A. and one of the Rand's commercial leaders, to champion the non-white cause. He agreed with the standpoint of the Cape Argus that the colour line drawn in the Draft Act was "a blot on the conscience of humanity"; and two months later he again adopted the same attitude, explaining :

He adhered to the opinion that the colour line drawn in the Bill was a mistake; that it was contrary to modern civilisation and contrary to good government to draw such a line; but the only way to bring about successful government in any country was to bring the submerged people who had not come up to the standard of civilisation up to that standard and then to admit them to citizenship.⁷⁹

Above all, the Labour Party was most concerned with measures threatening the white man's position in the labour market. Thus Whiteside attacked the Progressive demand for the retention of Chinese labour as a thinly disguised move to oust white miners.⁸⁰

77. On Workmen's Compensation Bill see Debates, 22.7.1907, col. 1284 (Sampson); 12.8.1907, col. 2300 (Wybergh); Debates of the Legislative Council, 16.8.1907, cols. 822-3, and 19.8.1907, cols. 875-6 (Raitt). On the Industrial Disputes Bill see Debates of the Legislative Assembly, 7.6.1909, col. 78 (Whiteside); col. 86 (Sampson); cols. 92-3 (Wybergh). On the Eight Hours Bill see Debates, 16.6.1908, col. 1753 (Whiteside).

78. Debates, 31.3.1909, col. 131 (Whiteside); 1.4.1909, cols. 192-6 (Wybergh). On Hardie see p. 40 above & pp. 295-7 below.

79. Debates, 2.9.1909, col. 23. For earlier statement see 1.4.1909

Similarly, the Labour M.L.A.'s and Wybergh objected in 1908 to the Native Tax Bill and the Natives Occupation of Land Bill, claiming that their main purpose was to drive the native from the land into competition with the white labourer in the towns and on the farms. "He protested very strongly against anything in the shape of forced labour", commented Whiteside on the Tax Bill. "If the Government pursued the policy indicated in the Bill", he continued, "it would go on to show that they had no sympathy with the white workers of that Colony." Wybergh agreed, declaring that the Bill's differential taxation in favour of the urban native "was simply and solely the principle of forced labour".⁸¹ They were even supported by Andries Stockenstrom, a member of Het Volk, who regretted that the findings of the Mining Industry Commission, of which he was the chairman, were being ignored by the Government and that "the lawgivers for some time past had been practically legislating in such a manner as to handicap the white labourer as against his coloured brethren."⁸²

The debate on the Natives Occupation of Land Bill, which was eventually withdrawn by the Government, provided Wybergh with an opportunity to outline his scheme of territorial segregation for the native. He revealed at the same time how close he was moving to the Labour Party and showed concern for native welfare, despite his vehement opposition to the non-white franchise in any form:

He had heard tirades of abuse directed against the wicked mineowners, but he did not see that the mineowner was any more wicked than the landowner. If they were trying to get cheap labour, he did not see that there was a single pin to choose between them.

... it was disgraceful and immoral to think of hindering the natives from rising in the scale of civilisation.⁸³

80. Debates, 19.6.1907, col. 179.

81. Debates, 26.6.1908, col. 255. For Whiteside's comment see col. 260.

82. Debates, 26.6.1908, col. 259.

83. Debates, 6.7.1908, cols. 538, 541.

At ensuing parliamentary sessions Wybergh and the Labour M.L.A.'s expressed disappointment at the lack of legislation on behalf of the white workers. In March 1909 Sampson maintained, for instance:

There is but one industrial statute on our book today. No country in the world can show so little attention having been paid to the producers of all the wealth of the country. Every other interest has been well served, but the workers of South Africa have been entirely ignored and their position will not be bettered by the Union Parliament.⁸⁴

A year later Wybergh regretted that the Government had ignored the findings of the Mining Industry Commission and the Indigency Commission and protested at the delay in presenting the final report of the Mining Regulations Commission, which had been appointed three years previously; and during the same debate Whiteside and Sampson stressed that miners' grievances had been general knowledge for years and should have been comprehensively dealt with before the first Union parliament sat.⁸⁵

Labour was certainly justified in complaining, for the only legislation passed of direct and immediate benefit to the white workers were the Workmen's Compensation Act (No. 36 of 1907) and its amending Act (No. 11 of 1910); The Shop Hours Act (No. 32 of 1908) and its amending Acts (No. 29 of 1909 and No. 14 of 1910); the Mines, Works, Machinery and Certificates Act (No. 32 of 1909) and its amending Act (No. 11 of 1910); and, lastly, the Industrial Disputes Prevention Act (No. 20 of 1909). Not surprisingly the extra-parliamentary Labour Party was equally disappointed. Thus the half-yearly conference of the Transvaal L.R.C., held in August 1909, "regretted that several acts of benefit to Labour had been dropped, and those passed were far from fulfilling expectations and promises"; and the official organ of the A.S.E. commented :

84. Debates, 31.3.1909, col. 148. For similar disillusion see also 19.8.1907, cols. 2511-2 (Whiteside); "Labour Notes" in Transvaal Leader, 6.6.1908, p.12 (Reid), 29.8.1908, p.11 (Sampson); 10.7.1909, p.12 (Sampson).

85. Debates, 21.4.1910, col. 525 (Wybergh); col. 524 (Sampson); col. 526 (Whiteside).

The failure of the contract labour clause in the Aliens Bill, and of the Eight-Hour Day Bill, through non-support of the Government, the shelving of the Mining Industrial Commission Report, and the non-publication of the Mining Regulations Commission Report is a sad example of misplaced confidence.⁸⁶

The Labour M.L.A.s were strongly criticised within the labour movement for their lack of militancy and caucus discipline. They also invited attack over their attitude to certain matters such as the miners' strike and the Cullinan Diamond motion. For example, in October 1907 the first annual conference of the Transvaal I.L.P. repudiated any responsibility for their actions, and in 1909 and 1910 Voice of Labour constantly heaped abuse on the Labour M.L.A.s.⁸⁷

Considering the glaring grievances of the miners and the plight of the unemployed, militant M.L.A.s would have been more popular and possibly more effective. In 1910 the Minister of Mines actually conceded that the average life expectancy of underground rock-drillers was not longer than seven-and-a-half years, but proposed no legislation to compensate them.⁸⁸ In the same year a deputation representing 5 000 "poor whites", former Australian residents, pleaded with the Australian premier, Andrew Fisher, then on a visit to South Africa, to charter ships to take them home. "Evidence was also forthcoming", commented Ambrose Pratt, who accompanied Fisher on his tour, "that 10 000 other ex-Australians would have jumped at such a chance to fly from the country where the starving white man may not do "Kaffir work", even though he would."⁸⁹ Indeed, he does not seem to have exaggerated, for both Whiteside and Harry Solomon stated in the Legislative Assembly in April 1910 that approximately 25 000 whites had left

86. A.S.E. Monthly Report, March 1909, p.4. On the L.R.C. see its official report published in Voice of Labour, 21.8.1909, p.13.

87. Rand Daily Mail, 14.10.1907, p.8; Voice of Labour, 21.8.1909, p.13; 1.4.1910, p.149; 22.4.1910, p.186.

88. Debates of the Legislative Assembly, 26.4.1910, cols. 635-6.

89. A. Pratt, The Real South Africa, p. 258.

the Transvaal in the previous five years.⁹⁰ Thus there were grounds for the attack launched on Sampson at the L.R.C. conference in August 1909 for his failure to introduce a bill, as proposed by a special sub-committee in 1907, to oblige the Government to work its gold claims on the East Rand. This, it was hoped, would help alleviate unemployment. Yet these so-called Bewaarplaatsen were sold to adjoining mining companies.⁹¹ Moreover, it should have not been left to Tom Mann in April 1910 to arouse the public regarding the miners' cause.⁹² However, the Labour M.L.A.s were probably subdued on these matters because they had been misled by the Government. It seems to have used the commissions, from which organised labour expected so much, to shelve, rather than to expedite, urgent industrial legislation. In addition, the Labour M.L.A.s had few opportunities as the parliamentary sessions were dominated by the closer union debates.

But the lack of caucus discipline was inexcusable. In 1907 Whiteside was acknowledged as parliamentary leader, but afterwards Sampson repudiated his leadership and declared allegiance to the L.R.C. only. So unpleasant did Sampson, apparently supported by Andrews outside the Legislative Assembly, make things for Whiteside that he held aloof from the political labour movement until April 1910 and announced in 1908 his intention not to stand for parliament again. Still, the L.R.C. retained confidence in him, for it pleaded with him to change his mind. Even the official organ of Sampson's own trade union, regretted Whiteside's decision and praised his unquestioned integrity. Continuing, it complimented the Labour Party "strongman" for never descending to the parochial slander of his detractors. Meanwhile the cat and dog existence led by Whiteside and Sampson, who were to become

90. Debates, 13.4.1910, col. 309 (Whiteside); 25.4.1910, col. 627 (Solomon).

91. Voice of Labour, 21.8.1909, p.7, letter from R. Petrinovitch.

92. Tom Mann, Memoirs, pp. 244-5; Debates of the Transvaal Legislative Assembly, 26.4.1910, cols. 635-6.

enemies for the rest of their lives, certainly harmed the image of the political labour movement.⁹³

Whereas Whiteside supported the underlying principle of compulsory investigation in the Industrial Disputes Bill, Sampson favoured compulsory arbitration. Whiteside advocated unification of South Africa, Sampson federation; and, after Whiteside proposed the dissolution of the Legislative Assembly and a general election on the issue of closer union, Sampson, seconded by Reid, moved that a referendum should be taken.⁹⁴ There were also other differences amongst the Labour M.L.A.s. Those over the Horse Racing and Betting Restriction Bill should have ended Sampson's political career. The Attorney-General explained that 124 race meetings a year on the Witwatersrand were far too many and wanted to restrict them to Saturdays and public holidays. Both Wybergh and Reid supported this reasonable measure, claiming that the people should be protected against themselves. However, Sampson maintained that the gambling instinct of the workers should not be interfered with - an attitude inconsistent with his earlier support for taxation of beer.⁹⁵ It seems extremely unlikely that he was sincere, for he had recently been given a substantial stake and a director's position in a gambling company - offers which Whiteside had the good sense to refuse. Not only did Crawford reveal in Voice of Labour that Sampson had a large financial stake in securing the defeat of the bill, but he also accused the Labour M.L.A. of using his position as president of the S.A.T.U. to canvass work

93. Star, 9.8.1910, p.5, and 10.8.1910, p.8, articles by "Filius Populi"; Report of the Commission of Enquiry to the S.A.L.P. Special Conference, 8 July 1928, p.11 (affidavit by L. Karovsky), in annual conference files of the S.A.L.P. records; Voice of Labour, 18.12.1909, p.15, and 1.4.1910, p.149; interviews with Boydell and Karovsky. For L.R.C. support for Whiteside see "Labour Notes" in Transvaal Leader, 14.11.1908, p.12, and 21.11.1908, p.13; for attitude of the South African Typographical Journal see its issue, December 1908, p.13.

94. On the Industrial Disputes Bill see Debates, 7.6.1909, cols. 71-79 (Whiteside); cols. 83-86 (Sampson); "Labour Notes" in Transvaal Leader, 11 & 18.7.1908, pp. 7 & 15, respectively (Sampson) and 29.5.1909, p.13 (Whiteside). On closer union see Debates, 31.3.1909, cols. 129 & 134. (Whiteside); cols. 145-9 (Sampson); cols. 149-50 (Reid).

for E.R. Adlington & Co. of which he was an employee. Although Sampson eventually won a libel suit against Crawford and was awarded £2 damages instead of the £500 claimed, the magistrate stated that there was a good deal of justification in Crawford's articles.⁹⁶

Initially Labour was also divided over the election of the Transvaal Senators to the first Union parliament. Het Volk indicated that it would be prepared to give some of its surplus votes to Whiteside in the election which was to be conducted under the system of proportional representation with the single transferable vote. However, Reid was keen to stand and was supported by the newly-formed S.A.L.P. of which Sampson was chairman and of which Whiteside was not yet a member. But on 14 April Whiteside joined the party and Reid agreed to withdraw. As a result Whiteside was nominated six days later for the Senate by Sampson and Reid and by Dr. Krause of Het Volk and Wybergh, and was officially declared elected on 22 April.⁹⁷

His election sparked off a venomous attack by militant socialists on his past political career. "Only the safe man is encouraged", concluded the Voice of Labour, and the act of encouragement is intended as an example of docility and sycophantic subservience to those who would follow the footsteps of Peter - the quondam darling of the people turned deserter."⁹⁸

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95. Debates, 29.6.1909, cols. 830-3 (Attorney-General); cols. 842-4 (Sampson); col. 847 (Wybergh); 30.6.1909, cols. 884-5 (Reid). On the taxation of beer see 12.7.1907, col. 944 (Whiteside); col. 957 (Sampson).
96. Star, 28.9.1910, p.11; Voice of Labour, 18.12.1909, p.15; 18.2.1910, p.74-75; 7, 14 & 21.10.1910, pp. 434-5, 442-3, & 454, respectively.
97. Debates, Joint Sitting of Both Houses, 20.4.1910, cols. 482-3; 22.4.1910, col. 567; Transvaal Leader, 16.4.1910, p.13, "Labour Notes", and 18.4.1910, p.11, letter from H.W. Sampson; Star, 9.8.1910, p.5, article by "Filius Populi".
98. 22.4.1910, p.186.

In a scathing review of Whiteside's role as general secretary of the S.A.E.D. & F.A., as leader of the parliamentary Labour Party and as alleged strike-breaker in the miners' strike, a prominent member of the T.M.A., writing under the appropriate pen-name of "Porcupine", commented:

I would strongly recommend the Trades and Labour Council to strike a medal in honour (or dishonour) of Peter's election, and would suggest on the obverse side the representation of an engine-driver with a card on his chest inscribed "18/4 per day of twelve hours", underwritten "Are you leaving me to this Peter?"

On the reverse side I would suggest a figure seated on an elevation representing General Botha with Peter Whiteside on his knees, this figure surmounted by three white feathers, one to commemorate his absence from the division on the Eight Hours Bill, one to commemorate his attitude on July 4th, 1907 [the miners' public meeting threatening a general strike] and one for his absence from the Good Friday [1910 Labour Day] demonstration through fear of being pulled off the platform. The whole to be superseded "I crawl to thee".

Just one more rub then I will leave Peter. If a title is bestowed upon members of this Upper House - say, Lord - I would advise him strongly to consider the suitability of Lord Anyside of Blacklegburg.⁹⁹

This incredible recrimination mainly stemmed, therefore, from Whiteside's subdued reaction to the miners' strike. On 25 June 1907 Whiteside certainly moved that owing to the mine-owners refusal to agree to arbitration the Government should introduce legislation to deal with future industrial disputes. However, on 10 July, as a result of Government pressure, Whiteside amended his motion, apparently without consulting his colleagues, so as to omit any reference to the conduct of the mineowners. In this form his proposal was unanimously carried, but there seemed little urgency over it, for Smuts explained that much study would be required before the Government embarked on any legislation.¹

Nor did the Labour M.L.A.s enhance their image amongst labour militants by supporting the presentation of the magnificent

99. Voice of Labour, 29.4.1910, p. 196.

1. Debates of the Legislative Assembly, 25.6.1907, cols. 406-9; 10.7.1907, cols. 796-800; Natal Witness, 13.7.1907, p.10.

Cullinan Diamond to King Edward VII as a mark of the Transvaal's gratitude for the magnanimous grant of responsible government. Ironically, the Progressive Party opposed this on the grounds of the prevailing widespread unemployment and depression.² In 1910 Voice of Labour recalled :

It was just in the depth of our greatest of great depressions that a Labour caucus decided to send the valuable Cullinan diamond to the King. The unemployed were offered 2s per day because the Government could not afford more, yet they could send a diamond worth half a million to one man with a hereditary mock right to rule!³

3. L.R.C., 1907-1910

The Transvaal L.R.C. remained the most important political labour organisation on the Rand until it was absorbed by the S.A.L.P. as its Witwatersrand District Committee.⁴ It seems to have operated under three different constitutions during its three year existence. The main guiding hand behind the first was probably H.W. Sampson, who was responsible for the candidate's pledge and the undated resignation, which were also inserted in the later constitutions. These disciplinary measures, however, proved ineffective, for neither Wilfrid Walker nor Archibald Crawford resigned from the Johannesburg Municipal Council when the L.R.C. called upon them to do so. The last constitution was drafted towards the end of 1908 by Andrews and Mulvey, both of the A.S.E., and Mathews of the T.M.A.⁵

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2. Debates, 19.8.1907, cols. 2509-10 (Farrar); 2510-12 (Whiteside); 2522-4 (Sampson); 2525-6 (division list).
 3. 22.7.1910, p.243. For similar criticism by left wing leaders see Rand Daily Mail, 7.10.1907, p.8; 28.2.1908, p.8; and S.A. Tribune, 31.8.1907, pp. 10-11
 4. Transvaal Leader, 27.11.1909, p.14, "Labour Notes"; Voice of Labour, 18.12.1909, p.5.
 5. On first constitution see Appendix A. VI, below; on the second Transvaal Leader, 30.4.1907, p.5; on the third S.A.T.J., November 1908, p.7. On Sampson's authorship see Voice of Labour, 4.9.1909, p.9, and 13.11.1909, p.4; and on authors of third constitution S.A.T.J., November 1908, p.7. For continued acceptance of the undated resignation see, e.g. Star, 29.6.1910, p.8, editorial, and Transvaal Leader, 27.5.1912, p.11. On Walker see Star, 19.10.1908, p.7 and on Crawford Transvaal Leader, 29.10.1910, p.12, "Labour Notes".

Judging from its office-bearers, trade union influence dominated the L.R.C., especially after the general election in 1907. With the exception of the S.A.E.D. & F.A., all the major trade unions were represented on the last committee of the L.R.C.⁶ The Engine-drivers seceded in 1908, possibly as a result of their unpopular role in the miners' strike. Although this was a big loss, the L.R.C. increased its membership towards the end of the same year when Vorwarts rejoined and the Benoni branch of the A.S.E. affiliated.⁷

Voice of Labour, the mouthpiece of Rand militant socialists, maintained that the L.R.C. never aspired to any functions beyond the allocation of parliamentary and municipal seats to contending nominations of its affiliated trade union, socialist and labour organisations, and the supervision of the performance of its representatives on those public bodies.⁸ However, this is not accurate. The L.R.C. interceded with Botha during the miners' strike, urging arbitration to settle the dispute; on 7 June 1908 it adopted a platform of six planks; in February 1909 it protested at the exclusion of labour representatives from the Government's Municipal and Drink Commissions; and six months later it deplored the "action of the Education Department in requiring parents to pay for their children's school material".⁹ Similarly, in 1908 it advised the Minister of Mines that his draft conciliation bill, which had been submitted to it for comment, was unsatisfactory because compulsory awards were not provided for, white labour only was considered, the conciliation clauses were

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6. See Appendix D, 11, below. See also Voice of Labour, 21.8.1909, p.7, letter from R. Petrinovitch attacking domination of the L.R.C. by the trade unions.
 7. On the Engine-drivers and Benoni Engineers see S.A.T.J., November 1908, p.6; on Vorwarts Transvaal Leader, 10.10.1908, p.13, "Labour Notes".
 8. 21.8.1909, p.8, editorial.
 9. On the strike see F.J. Grobler, "Die Invloed van Geskoolde Blanke Arbeid", pp.88-89; on its platform Appendix B, 1V, 12, below; on the Commissions, Transvaal Leader, 3.4.1909, p.6, "Labour Notes"; and on the Education Department Voice of Labour, 21.8.1909, p.13.

not good and corresponding measures elsewhere had been unsuccessful.¹⁰ In March 1909 it strongly objected to certain clauses in the Draft South Africa Act.¹¹

During its short existence the L.R.C. was involved in the annual municipal elections on the Witwatersrand at the end of 1907. Both its Johannesburg municipal candidates, A. Crawford and W. Walker, were returned with comfortable majorities on polling day, 30 October 1907, for a three year term of office. Despite his avowed militant socialism and youthfulness of twenty-three or twenty-four, Crawford secured the backing of the L.R.C. and of leading trade unionists like Andrews, Ware and Mathews.¹² In the Roodepoort-Maraisburg elections Lorimer was defeated again, but on the East Rand E.R. Pearce, a builder, and J. Coward, one of the T.M.A.'s organisers, were returned by narrow margins. Their success was, perhaps, the result of greater public sympathy arising from the miners' strike.¹³ However, the Labour ticket of eight in the school board election was completely routed. Subsequently Ware accepted office as one of the four Government nominees. Significantly, the Labour ticket included five prominent members of the I.L.P., two of whom, Clara Rathouse and Hay Wilson, were women.¹⁴

In the 1908 Johannesburg municipal elections the L.R.C. supported four trade union candidates, Sampson of the S.A.T.U., Landye of the A.S.E., Mathews of the T.M.A., and Jackson of the A.S. of C. & J. Only Jackson proved successful.¹⁵ Mathews's

10. S.A.T.J., November 1908, p.7.

11. See Appendix B. 1V, 13, below.

12. S.A. Tribune, 28.9.1907, p.9; Rand Daily Mail, 2.10.1907, p.6. For results see Appendix C, 1V, 7 below.

13. For Roodepoort results see Rand Daily Mail, 1.11.1907, p.8; for East Rand 31.10.1907, p.8.

14. Rand Daily Mail, 20.12.1907, p.7; S.A.T.J., January 1908, p.5.

15. See Appendix C, 1V, 8, below.

defeat in Fordsburg seems to have been a surprise, despite his uncalled for attack on Rand capitalists as "Jews".¹⁶ On the East and West Rand there do not seem to have been any Labour candidates.

The municipal elections in 1909 were held for the first time under the system of proportional representation with the single transferable vote.¹⁷ The original L.R.C. candidates in Johannesburg were two leaders of the I.L.P., J. Berman and W.H. Pritchard, and the trade unionist, J.J. Ware, but Berman was forced to withdraw when he was informed that his name did not appear on the voters' roll; and he was replaced at the last moment by J.J. Mulvey of the A.S.E.¹⁸ An election manifesto was published showing no trace of the I.L.P.'s socialist dogma, despite the statement in its preamble that the three official labour candidates were standing "in response to the unanimous invitation of the Witwatersrand Trades and Labour Council, the Labour Representation Committee and the Transvaal Independent Labour Party".¹⁹ Of the ten successful candidates Ware was placed second and Mulvey sixth; and Pritchard filled thirteenth place in a total list of twenty-two nominees. As Labour obtained about a fifth of the votes polled, its representation was therefore fair.²⁰ Indeed, labour organisations seemed pleased with the results.²¹ In Benoni, two Labour candidates were elected, including Tom Jones, the secretary of the local branch of the A.S.E., who was returned unopposed.²² In Krugersdorp, Roodepoort and Germiston, however, the Labour candidates were all defeated.²³

16. Voice of Labour, 12.8.1910, p.372.

17. T.G.5 of 1910, Report on the Municipal Elections ... by John H. Humphries.

18. Voice of Labour, 30.10.1909, p.6; A.S.E. Monthly Report, November, 1909, p.3.

19. Voice of Labour, 2.10.1909, p.14.

20. For the results see Appendix C, IV, 9, below.

21. S.A.T.J., November 1909, p.9; A.S.E. Monthly Report, November 1909, p.3.

22. Transvaal Leader, 13.11.1909, p.12, "Labour Notes".

In Pretoria the local L.R.C. survived until it was absorbed by the S.A.L.P. in 1910. It held a conference with the Transvaal L.R.C. on 17 May 1908 at which the principle of amalgamation was agreed to, but nothing further seems to have eventuated.²⁴

Its leading spokesman was probably Frank Nettleton, a coach-maker by trade. Before his arrival in South Africa in 1889 he had been a member of the I.L.P. in Sheffield and of the United Kingdom Society of Coach Makers. About 1904 he settled in Pretoria, after having worked in Cape Town and Durban; in the following year he was elected secretary of the local T. & L.C., holding that post for several years afterwards; and in 1907 and 1908 he was president of the L.R.C. In 1909 he was discharged from the C.S.A.R. because of his political activity; and about the same time he founded the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants which had 15 000 members within two years.²⁵

In municipal elections the Pretoria L.R.C. was not very successful. In 1907 its candidates, Bain and Nettleton were easily defeated.²⁶ The following year Nettleton and G. McLean fared no better, but in 1909 the former was at last returned.²⁷ Nettleton's election was probably due to the replacement of the ward system with proportional representation.

23. Voice of Labour, 30.10.1909, p.6.

24. S.A.T.J., November 1908, p.6.

25. Gitsham & Trembath, Labour Organisation in South Africa, p.173; Transvaal Leader, 6.6.1908, p.12, "Labour Notes"; Durban Election Bulletin, 5.2.1921, p.2; Voice of Labour, 30.10.1909, p.7. In 1920 he became Labour M.L.A. for Umbilo.

26. Rand Daily Mail, 31.10.1907, p.8.

27. On 1908 elections see Transvaal Leader, 29.10.1908, p.6; and on 1909 Voice of Labour 20.10.1909, p.6; S.A.T.J. November 1909, p.4.

4. I.L.P., 1907-1910, and the Socialist Movement

Leading labour politicians such as Whiteside, Sampson, Andrews, Ware and John Reid supported the formation of the I.L.P. in 1906 and remained active members at least until the general election the following year. Thereafter the three Labour M.L.A.s seemed to repudiate any connection with it.²⁸ For its part, the first annual conference of the party, held in October 1907, unanimously repudiated responsibility for the actions of the parliamentary Labour Party and resolved :

That our experience of our first session of a Het Volk Government demonstrates more than ever the necessity of a real live Labour and Socialist Party in Parliament.²⁹

Andrews, although not in the forefront of I.L.P. activity, participated in its public meetings and helped to form the Braamfontein branch in October 1908.³⁰ On the other hand, Ware disappeared from the party's platforms in 1907 probably because he objected to its socialism.³¹

As lukewarm socialists, Sampson and Reid must have found the increasingly vociferous socialist utterances of the I.L.P. leaders, Crawford, Bain and Lucas, a source of embarrassment.³² After some personal friction Whiteside seems to have fallen out with I.L.P. executive members whom he denounced as "a lot of rotters".³³ But he was not afraid to welcome the steady advance of the socialist movement, maintaining that "the doctrine, in the hands of the more worthy and steadfast of its exponents, must seem to the toilers of the world as a gospel of hope - a possible break in the clouds of misery in which so much of the life of the ordinary worker is doomed to be passed;" and in the Legislative Assembly he boldly asserted :

28. Voice of Labour, 21.8.1909, p.8, editorial; 18.12.1909, p.15; 22.4.1910, p. 186.

29. Rand Daily Mail, 14.10.1907, p.8.

30. Rand Daily Mail, 9.3.1908, p.8; Transvaal Leader, 6.10.1908, p.10, "Labour Notes".

31. Voice of Labour, 4.9.1909, p.9; 9.10.1909, p.4; 7.10.1910, p.434; Star, 28.9.1910, p.11.

32. On Sampson see Transvaal Leader, 30.5.1908, p.12 "Labour Notes"; on Reid 6.6.1908, p.12 "Labour Notes".

The fear has been that the Socialists may get into this august body. There is no need to trouble about it. It does not matter what you do; this new train of thought, this new school of ideas, is going to get into the National Parliament of South Africa, and we are going to have a majority in it before long. (Laughter). Members laugh at such a prophesy. Do they ever read the newspapers and see what is going on in all parts of the world - in the United Kingdom, in Germany, in Australia, in America and elsewhere?³⁴

Although socialism proved a frequent topic of discussion in trade union publications at this time, organised labour was generally unfavourably disposed towards it. However, according to the labour columnist of the Transvaal Leader, socialism, in a restrained form, was making headway amongst the more thoughtful and educated men in the labour movement on the Rand. He claimed that the miners were definitely opposed to socialism, but that the recognised leaders of the I.L.P. were "whole hoggers".³⁵ Ironically, the miners' leader, Tom Mathews, fitted into the latter category.³⁶

After the Transvaal socialist movement had been invited to send delegates to the International Socialist Congress in Stuttgart, the various socialist societies on the Rand held a conference in March 1907 and selected Mark Lucas, then treasurer of the Transvaal I.L.P., as their official delegate.³⁷ Their faith in the international working class and socialist movements was again expressed on 18 August 1907 when a public meeting, held under the auspices of the I.L.P., Vorwärts, the Italian Socialist Federation and other socialist organisations, accepted the motion of J.T. Bain declaring solidarity with those present at the Stuttgart Congress and stating that the federation of the world would ultimately be brought about by similar international congresses of workers.³⁸ Meanwhile Lucas unsuccessfully proposed

34. Debates, 31.3.1909, col. 133; for earlier statement see Transvaal Leader, 23.5.1908, p.9.

35. 2.5.1908, p.15. For discussion in trade union publications see e.g., A.S.E. Monthly Report, September 1908, p.12; December 1908, pp.34-35; S.A.T.J., February 1908, pp.9-11; March 1908, p.12; August 1908, pp. 5-6.

36. See, e.g., Rand Daily Mail, 9.3.1908, p.8.

at the Congress that an international language be adopted so as to facilitate communication between socialists.³⁹

Back on the Rand in October, Lucas reported that he would have travelled 100 000 miles to have heard Jaures's speech on militarism at the Congress. Van der Velde, Chairman of the International Socialist Bureau, had drawn particular attention to South Africa's direct representation for the first time; and the entire Congress had greeted the news of the support for the Cullinan Diamond presentation by the Transvaal Labour M.L.A.s with the utmost derision.⁴⁰

The annual conference in 1907 of the Transvaal I.L.P. made several significant decisions. Delegates agreed that the party headquarters should be moved from Pretoria to Johannesburg; and they elected Bain as president, and Brittlebank and Mathews as vice-presidents, all of whom had been prominent in the pre-war I.I.L.P. Lucas moved that the party should alter its name to the Socialist Labour Party, arguing that it was pointless "hiding under the cloak of Labour". Although Bain ruled the motion out of order as no prior notice of it had been given, delegates accepted Lorimer's suggestion that a special conference should be convened to consider this delicate issue.⁴¹

In February 1908 the Johannesburg branch decided by a two-to-one majority to support the proposed change in name. H.B. Levinsohn claimed that the main purpose of the I.L.P. was not so much to meddle in politics but rather to educate the public on socialism. Moreover, under the existing name they could not be in a more deplorable state of organisation. Crawford had obviously been influenced by Keir Hardie's visit a week earlier,

38. S.A. Tribune, 31.8.1907, p.11.

39. Ibid.

40. Rand Daily Mail, 7.10.1907, p.8.

41. Rand Daily Mail, 14.10.1907, p.8.

for he advised co-operation with trade unionists, even if they were not advanced socialists. He would only support the formation of a propaganda socialist society providing its political equivalent, the I.L.P., remained. W.C. Salter, a friend of Hardie, feared that a change of name would scare away valuable trade union leaders for the sake of a "handful of socialistic cranks." On the other hand, Rathouse referred to overseas precedents where the word socialism had been successfully kept in the forefront.⁴²

Soon afterwards, notwithstanding the attitude of the Johannesburg branch, the special conference decided that it would not be expedient to change the name of the party.⁴³

Ironically, it was Crawford who eventually became the chief opponent of compromise. On 26 June 1909 he was mainly responsible for the formation of the Johannesburg Socialist Society. Intended initially as a propaganda movement only, it was soon competing with the I.L.P., much to the annoyance of the latter's members.⁴⁴ Perhaps this was the reason why Crawford was not re-elected in July as the President of the Johannesburg branch of the I.L.P.⁴⁵

By August, Voice of Labour, which was edited by Crawford and was the official organ of the Socialist Society, had started to attack the I.L.P. :

The political wing of Socialism, or what did represent it in the past - the I.L.P. - is sold to an unholy alliance, with the opportunist element of the Movement; in fact it may now be regarded as little more than a tool of labour politicians Had it not been for the "wobblyness" of the I.L.P. it is just possible that a Socialist Society should not have been required.

In addition, Voice of Labour opposed the I.L.P.'s affiliation to the L.R.C., contending that this alliance reduced the I.L.P. to a "jellyfish" party.⁴⁶ Three months later the same paper

42. Rand Daily Mail, 28.2.1908, p.8. On Salter and Hardie see p.17 above.

43. Rand Daily Mail, 9.3.1908, p.7.

44. Voice of Labour, 27.5.1910, p.241; Transvaal Leader, 3.7.1909, p.12.

45. Transvaal Leader, 31.7.1909, p.13.

46. 7.8.1909, pp. 8-9.

referred scornfully to Pritchard, the I.L.P. candidate in the Johannesburg municipal elections, because he had changed his convictions so as not to prejudice the election chances of the other L.R.C. candidates. "To temporarily desert a 'Socialist' for a 'Labour' Party", Voice of Labour explained, "is not a heinous offence to any but the deeply-studied, revolutionary, class conscious Socialist."⁴⁷

About this time the Socialist Society expanded its activity, establishing branches in Pretoria and in Boksburg. On Xmas day, 1909, at a conference presided over by J.T. Bain, its three branches joined forces in launching the South African Socialist Federation. The acting officials elected were James Davidson as secretary and Mary Fitzgerald as treasurer.⁴⁸

Davidson, a clerk by occupation, was the first secretary of the Johannesburg Socialist Society, and in July 1909 was elected secretary of the Johannesburg branch of the I.L.P. Born in Scotland about 1877, he arrived in Cape Town in 1898, becoming a member of the local S.D.F. on its inception in 1904 and its secretary afterwards.⁴⁹ Mary Fitzgerald, who became well-known in 1911 as "Pickhandle Mary", grew up in Ireland. In 1902 she emigrated to South Africa and shortly afterwards took up employment as typist to the T.M.A., a job she held for eight years. Her husband was the proprietor of Voice of Labour at this time.⁵⁰

Meanwhile the I.L.P. seems to have survived in Johannesburg and on the West Rand only, whereas in 1908 it was also active in Pretoria and in Germiston.⁵¹ Towards the end of 1909 the

47. 6.11.1909, p.6.

48. Voice of Labour, 6.11.1909, p.1; 31.12.1909, pp. 6,8,9.

49. Voice of Labour, 9.9.1910, p.403; Transvaal Leader, 31 July 1909, p.13.

50. Mary Fitzgerald Papers in Johannesburg Public Library. The Government Archives, Pretoria, supplied the information on the proprietorship of Voice of Labour after Appendix E below had been completed. Its information was taken from a correspondence file in the archives of the Colonial Secretary, ref. no. CS 877 no. 15580.

51. For branches in 1908 see Rand Daily Mail, 9.3.1908, p.7; and Transvaal Leader, 19.12.1908, p.13. "Labour Notes": for demise of Pretoria branch Voice of Labour, 18.9.1909; p.3;

Johannesburg branch, undoubtedly the most important remnant of the party, affiliated with the S.A.L.P. on the understanding that it would retain its own name; and, throughout the following year, it continued to function.⁵² At this time W.C. Salter, a tailor by occupation, seems to have been its leading spirit up till his death in September 1910.⁵³

Notwithstanding its lack of members, the I.L.P. was an important labour organisation, 1906-1909. It had parliamentary and municipal candidates standing under its auspices; and, as will be described later, it played an important role in the unemployed movement, came to terms with the non-white population in accordance with international labour principles and participated prominently in the formation of the S.A.L.P.

Besides the South African Socialist Federation, which did not attract many members despite the enthusiasm of its founders, and the I.L.P., socialist organisations on the Rand in 1910 were Vorwarts, the Jewish Socialist Society and the Socialist Labour Party. The last-mentioned, which claimed to be the political expression of industrial unionism and whose leaders included Israelstam, Campbell and McLean, was antagonistic towards Crawford's party.⁵⁴ In January 1909 the I.L.P., Vorwarts and the Jewish Socialist Society co-operated in establishing a socialist centre known as the International Socialist Hall.⁵⁵

5. The Unemployment Position

By the beginning of 1907 the white unemployed position was causing grave concern. According to Outhwaite, the Rand Aid Association assisted 5 000 persons in the first quarter of 1907,

52. Transvaal Leader, 27.11.1909, p.14, "Labour Notes"; Star, 30.6.1910, p.8, letter from C.H. Hagggar; Rand Daily Mail, 28.9.1910, p.8.

53. Rand Daily Mail, 14.9.1910, p.6, obituary.

54. Voice of Labour, 22.4.1910, p.187; 2.9.1910, pp.396-7; Transvaal Leader, 22 October 1910, p.12, "Labour Notes".

55. Transvaal Leader, 23.1.1909, p.15, "Labour Notes".

whereas in the same period in 1906 it had helped only 1 200.⁵⁶ This situation was aggravated by a decrease in the employment of white miners and railwaymen and, subsequently, by the miners' strike.⁵⁷ Meanwhile an unemployed camp was started in Milner Park and was supported by £5 000 donated by J.B. Robinson.

In January 1907 the Witwatersrand T. & L.C. attributed the increasing unemployment to stoppage of construction work, importation of manufactured goods which could be produced locally, restriction of the grant of licences for mining development work, and lack of capital due to gold mining profits being sent out of the country. As a solution it suggested the establishment of state controlled agricultural colonies, state assistance to prospectors on alluvial fields, preference for local industry, state-assisted repatriation of overseas immigrants, promotion of public works, opening up of Government mines and state preference for skilled and unskilled white labour as against non-white labour.⁵⁹ Sampson blamed the situation on the Labour Importation Ordinance of 1904 as a result of which capital had lost all confidence in the future of the Transvaal, fearing possible competition from free Asiatics should it have started new industries; and he favoured a definite ratio for all industries of five blacks to one white.⁶⁰

Not unexpectedly the labour movement supported the cause of the unemployed. Unemployed workers formed a notable section of the impressive Labour Day procession in Johannesburg on 29 March; and at the demonstration afterwards the following motion was agreed to :

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56. Transvaal Leader, 2.5.1907, p.7.
57. T.G.13 of 1908, pp.122-3, para. 234, on decrease in employment opportunities.
58. Transvaal Leader, 6.2.1907, p.8; T.G.11 of 1908, pp. 243-5 evidence of Joseph Hale, president of the Unemployed Organisation, at the Camp.
59. T.G.11 of 1908, pp.93-94.
60. Ibid., pp.94-99; Rand Daily Mail, 4.10.1907, p.8.

That this meeting of workers hereby calls upon the Government to officially recognise its duty to find work for the unemployed workmen of the Transvaal, and urges the necessity of immediately proceeding with public works wherever possible; also the necessity of throwing open all mineralised areas available and Government lands, and the granting of full facilities for the same being prospected and worked by poor citizens.⁶¹

The following year the first plank on the Transvaal L.R.C.'s short platform demanded a "Right to Work Bill".⁶²

Of all the labour organisations on the Rand, the I.L.P. demonstrated the most sympathy for the unemployed. As most of the men without work were unorganised, the trade unions tended to show lesser concern.⁶³ Thus it was Archibald Crawford, then general secretary of the Transvaal I.L.P., who led at the end of April 1907 a widely publicised march to Pretoria of 300 unemployed workers from the Robinson camp in Milner Park, Johannesburg; other prominent leaders of the same party, for example Bain, Salter and J.P. Anderson, also participated.⁶⁴ Despite the widespread public sympathy evoked by the marches, Smuts offered the unenticing prospect of work at two shillings a day in the fever district of Louis Trichardt. In Bain's opinion this placed the unemployed man "lower than a Kaffir"⁶⁵ Not surprisingly therefore, a public meeting on Church Square, Pretoria, which was attended by participants in the march, rejected the Government's offer and, on the motion of Crawford, called for legislation to compel the exploitation of idle mineral areas, for greater employment of whites on the mines and for the establishment of farm colonies for the unemployed.⁶⁶ The march, then, accomplished nothing beyond focussing public attention on the distress of the unemployed.⁶⁷

61. Rand Daily Mail, 30.3.1907, p.5.

62. See Appendix B, IV, 12, below.

63. Transvaal Leader, 2.5.1908, p.15, "Labour Notes".

64. Transvaal Leader, 29.4.1907, p.8, and 2.5.1907, p.7.

65. Transvaal Leader, 2.5.1907, p.7.

66. Transvaal Leader, 1.5.1907, p.8.

67. Transvaal Leader, 4.5.1907, p.7; 6.5.1907, pp.7-8.

A week later, Crawford, who described himself as "Chairman of the unemployed", appealed in the press for public assistance for those without work, explaining that two shillings a day was degrading for white men.⁶⁸

About the same time, Bain submitted to Smuts and to the Transvaal Indigency Commission his own detailed scheme for the solution of the unemployment problem, proposing to bring the unemployed men and idle land together. Bain's "industrial army" was to be assisted initially by a state grant of land and agricultural equipment and was to move about the country establishing viable farms, which were to be taken over by members of that "army" after they had served a five year apprenticeship. Bain claimed that his scheme would increase the agricultural population and, therefore, free the Transvaal from domination by the mining industry; and that it would provide a valuable reserve defence force in the event of a native uprising.⁶⁹

In March 1908 Bain's ideas received the full support of the I.L.P., and they were again submitted to Smuts soon afterwards. A few days later at an I.L.P. public meeting in Johannesburg, attended by 2 000 persons, Bain called on the Government to give immediate effect to his scheme and urged also that municipal and other public bodies should devise ways and means of finding work for the unemployed at a living wage. On the other hand, Mathews declared that the only remedy for unemployment was the nationalisation of the land and capital of the Colony. Under the existing system, he saw no hope for labour, for there was always an army of unemployed to step into the shoes of the workers.⁷⁰

68. Transvaal Leader, 7.5.1907, p.5.

69. Transvaal Leader, 2.5.1907, p.8; S.A. News, 26.3.1907, p.5; T.G.11 of 1908, pp.385-6.

70. Rand Daily Mail, 9.3.1908, p.8.

One concrete result of the agitation over the unemployed was the formation of the General Workers Union, the object of which was to organise all those workers not already members of existing trade unions. Started towards the end of 1907, it attracted 600 members during its one-and-a-half year existence. The I.L.P. leaders, Salter and Crawford, seem to have been its main driving forces.⁷¹ Indeed, Crawford's Voice of Labour was originally started as the official organ of this union.⁷² By not securing the co-operation of the craft unions and the Witwatersrand T. & L.C., it seems to have hastened its own demise.⁷³

6. White Labour Policy and Attitudes towards the Native.

The publication on 10 March 1908 of the report of the Mining Industry Commission gave a marked impetus to the white labour movement. The majority report, which was signed by five of its six members, represented a complete justification of Creswell's views - not surprising as his dominating influence was generally acknowledged.⁷⁴ Thus it recommended that the mines should gradually eliminate their dependency on imported and local non-white contract labour by employing free unskilled white labour on an increasing scale. This it regarded as economically feasible, and socially essential. Furthermore, the majority report was firmly committed to the vision of a white South Africa :

It is clear to us that under the conditions imposed by civilisation and modern principles of government the people who do the work of a country will in the end inherit it. Whether the mass of coloured labour, actual and potential, in South Africa, will encroach year by year upon

71. Rand Daily Mail, 25.11.1907, p.7; S.A.T.J., January 1908, p.5; Voice of Labour, 6.5.1910, p.211.

72. Voice of Labour, 25.2.1910, p.90, editorial.

73. S.A.T.J., October 1908, p.3, and January 1909, pp.11-12; Transvaal Leader, 30.5.1908, p.12, "Labour Notes"; Voice of Labour, 6.5.1910, p.211.

74. See, e.g., Transvaal Critic, 13.3.1908, p.245; political

the field of employment and the means of livelihood of white men, or whether the tide is to be turned so that white labour will enter into the entire field of industry in South Africa and occupy it to a constantly increasing extent, is one issue. Upon this may be said to depend the other great issue, remote as it may appear to be today, whether the vast expanses of South Africa so eminently adapted to white occupation shall be the home of a great white people or be the habitation and breeding place of masses of natives and other coloured people of mixed races, in all degrees of semi-barbarism and semi-civilisation.⁷⁵

Generally, organised labour agreed with its findings. This is clearly shown by the evidence of Andrews on behalf of the A.S.E. and Ware on behalf of the Witwatersrand T. & L.C. to the Commission. Both rejected as a fallacy the argument that whites were degraded by doing unskilled work. Reviving memories of the Tarbutt letter, Ware accused the Chamber of Mines of rejecting the employment of unskilled whites for political reasons :

I say as regards efficiency and economy the white man could beat the Kaffir any and every time if allowed to do it, but they don't want white men here, because as a political machine he will get control of the whole of the Transvaal; they want the Kaffir, and to put the white man out.⁷⁶

Further support for extended use of unskilled white labour came from Lucas, representing the I.L.P.; Hale, the Unemployed Organisation at the Robinson Camp; and H.W. Sampson, the Witwatersrand T. & L.C.; in their evidence in 1907 to the Indigency Commission.⁷⁷ In addition, the Transvaal L.R.C. and the Witwatersrand T. & L.C. seem to have welcomed the findings of the Mining Industry Commission; in June 1908 the L.R.C. included the demand for prohibition of contract labour

75. Report of the Mining Industry Commission, p.132.

76. T.G.2 of 1908, p.1421, para. 20402. See p.702 ff. for statement submitted by the A.S.E. and evidence of W.H. Andrews; p.1402 ff. for statement by Witwatersrand T. & L.C. and evidence of Ware.

77. T.G.11 of 1908, p.50, paras. 1042-4 (Lucas); pp.93-94 (T. & L.C.'s statement); p.96, paras.2413-2427 (Sampson); pp.244-5 (Hale).

in its platform; and in October 1909 its three Johannesburg municipal candidates signed a manifesto which included a demand for "the direct employment of white labour where practicable".⁷⁸ "An indentured white man or an indentured Kafir", declared Andrews on Labour Day, 1908, "was as much a danger as an indentured Chinaman".⁷⁹

However, as Mathews and Coward informed the Mining Industry Commission, the T.M.A. was not in favour of native labour being superseded by white.⁸⁰ Still, the Inspector of White Labour, R. Shanks, reported in 1909 that the white man's prejudice against unskilled underground work as being "the work of Kaffirs" was not as strong as previously.⁸¹

As an avowedly socialist organisation it might have been expected that the I.L.P. would express solidarity with non-white workers in a common struggle against capitalism. Yet in January 1907 Lucas, its treasurer, advocated implementation of a socialist economic system to solve the unemployment problem and to "build up a solid white community in the Transvaal", and Crawford, its secretary and the so-called leader of the unemployed, appealed in May 1907 to businessmen and the general public for assistance for the unemployed so as to make the Transvaal "once and for all a white man's country".⁸² A year later the same attitude seems to have been held, for the labour columnist of the Transvaal Leader wrote that the I.L.P. was not affiliated to the British I.L.P. because it refused to fit natives into its scheme of universal brotherhood.⁸³ However,

78. For L.R.C. attitude to the Commission see S.A.T.J., November 1908, p.6; for the T. & L.C. Transvaal Leader, 30.5.1908, p.12, "Labour Notes". For the L.R.C. platform see Appendix B, IV, 12, below; and for municipal manifesto see Voice of Labour, 2.10.1909, p.14.

79. Transvaal Leader, 18.4.1908, p.8.

80. T.G.2 of 1908, pp. 459-60, paras. 5087-9 (Mathews); p.480 (Coward). See also Transvaal Leader, 9.5.1908, p.13, "Labour Notes".

81. T.G.47 of 1909, p.5.

82. Transvaal Leader, 7.5.1907, p.5. On Lucas see T.G.11 of 1908, p.51, para. 1056.

83. 16.5.1908, p.13.

A. Brittlebank, a vice-president of the I.L.P., rejected the idea that the Transvaal could ever become a white man's land and maintained that intermixture of its various races was inevitable. His sardonic view is reflected in the following extract from one of his many letters to the press :

The remedy is, I believe, to be found in reform movements of an economic nature. If the Indians and Chinamen are expelled the Kaffir still remains, and as they live more natural lives and become educated they will not only predominate, but demand political rights. The only other alternative which can act as a deterrent to the increase of the coloured race in Africa is for the Christians to murder the whole lot and appropriate their cattle. This can easily be brought about, and will be in accordance with previous experience.⁸⁴

Realising that the native had to exist somewhere, the supporters of the white labour policy began to advocate his territorial separation from the white inhabitants of the Transvaal. At least by October 1907 "Mr. Segregation Wybergh" was publicly propagating this policy; the disappearance of the military danger had resulted in the emergence of the social peril, which was accompanied by degrading intermixture of races; South Africa had to avoid sinking to the position of a black republic like Liberia; nor was a state of black slaves and white loafers any more acceptable; thus the only solution was the division of South Africa between whites and blacks, and, therefore, the natives had to be granted sufficient land to develop along their own lines, governed for the present by whites in their own interests and not for the purpose of obtaining their labour. Claiming justice for all the races of the British Empire, he declared :

In Basutoland the white man's interests should be sacrificed to Basuto interests. India, too, should be governed not for the benefit of Manchester cotton merchants or English civil servants, but for the good of the Indians.⁸⁵

84. Rand Daily Mail, 30.10.1907, p.8.

85. Indian Opinion, 12.10.1907, pp.420-2, quoting The Friend. For reference to "Mr. Segregation Wybergh" see Indian Opinion, 20.2.1909, p.91.

About this time the president of the Witwatersrand T. & L.C., J.E. Riley, supported this policy, although he was prepared to allow the black man to enter the "white Transvaal" providing he had reached the white man's standard of living and earned a white man's wage.⁸⁶ Two years later the segregation policy was publicly propagated by H.W. Sampson, then president of the Witwatersrand T. & L.C. and the S.A.T.U. and shortly afterwards first chairman of the S.A.L.P. He justified the division of South Africa into black and white states on the following grounds :

1. the white and coloured races being separated by nature, they were unfitted for social relationship or intercourse;
2. intermingling was not conducive to the best moral or economic interests of either race;
3. exploitation of one race by another was wrong in principle;
4. social and economic disabilities of the native races would react upon the white working class;
5. with the implementation of the white labour policy the natives would have to be given a quid pro quo by the return of land taken from them by whites;
6. the lack of native policy left the natives in an unsettled state.⁸⁷

Meanwhile the white labour movement attracted an increasing number of adherents. In April 1908 a group of legal men founded the South African Forward Party which stood for a white South Africa and territorial separation of the native peoples. It proved short-lived, however, and had no connection with organised labour.⁸⁸ In the following month the White Labour Association was formed and became a far more significant organisation. Its main purpose was to promote the implementation of the recommendations of the Mining Industry Commission. Wybergh was elected its president; Creswell and O.H. Evans, the

86. T.G.2 of 1908, p.1426, para. 20477.

87. Voice of Labour, 25.9.1909, p.9.

88. Indian Opinion, 18.4.1908, pp. 172 & 178; Transvaal Leader, 15.4.1908, p.8; S.A. Review, 24.4.1908, p.5; Voice of Labour, 25.9.1909, p.3.

president of the Witwatersrand T. & L.C., became two of its vice-presidents; and Andrews, Ware and W. Walker sat on its committee.⁸⁹ Peter Whiteside was also prominent on its public platforms, declaring in June :

The process of eliminating white men underground had been going on to a serious degree, and the White Labour Association had been formed without regard to party politics for the purpose of defending the white workers in the mines. The policy of the big mining houses was not in the direction of opening up every sphere and providing every opportunity for the white workers.⁹⁰

Two years later this body was still functioning, and, according to Creswell, had caused a marked swing in public opinion.

In this it was assisted by the Sunday Times and the Rand Daily Mail and by prominent men like Lionel Curtis and Patrick Duncan.⁹¹

The latter, in October 1909, actually founded the White Expansion Society as a study group. It failed, however, to secure the co-operation of the Witwatersrand T. & L.C. which regarded its formation as unnecessary.⁹² Another organisation founded at this time and which had the promotion of white labour as one of its objects was Arbeid Adelt. Started in Pretoria as a trade union mainly catering for the semi-skilled Afrikaner, it may have been inspired by Het Volk, although this is not clear.⁹³

Creswell remained an important leader of the white labour agitation, stressing that the great expansion of the mining industry was not benefitting the white workers. The total wage bill of the indentured non-white miners had increased in marked contrast to that of the white miners. Thus legislation had become necessary to secure the rewards of the industry to South

89. Transvaal Leader, 2.5.1908, p.9.

90. Transvaal Leader, 13.6.1908, p.10.

91. Transvaal Leader, 7.5.1910, p.11. See also Voice of Labour, 14.8.1909, p.9., editorial.

92. Transvaal Leader, 6.11.1909, p.15, "Labour Notes".

93. Natal Mercury, 17.9.1909, p.5; Voice of Labour, 25.9.1909, p.3; Star, 13.10.1909, p.10; and for its constitution Transvaal Leader, 9.4.1910, p.11.

Africa and not only to the shareholders and the natives from Portuguese East Africa. "I am not a member of the Labour Party myself", he continued in April 1909, "but I believe I have fought some fights which are essentially in the Labour interests as hard as any Labour man"⁹⁴ That he should join this party a year later was not therefore surprising.

Even Tom Mann, who had been a prominent organiser of the unskilled workers in England in the 1890s, was reported to have considered a just scheme of segregation as the fairest and safest solution of the Rand labour problems, declaring in Johannesburg towards the beginning of 1910 :

I approved of the discontinuation of Kanaka labour and of the deportation of the Kanaka labour to their own islands, because I realised that the contact of these people with the white man was good for neither and demoralising for both. Under such a conviction, based on incontrovertible facts, I would be prepared to support a segregation scheme in South Africa, if it gave justice and fair treatment to the natives.⁹⁵

On the other hand, Crawford and his Voice of Labour condemned the white labour policy as "bunkum fallacy" and as a "White Kaffir policy", contending that the non-white also had to live and that its implementation would result in the collapse of the mining industry as capitalists would no longer obtain a return on their capital invested.⁹⁶

Since white labour was convinced that non-whites, especially Chinese, were doing skilled work and other work customarily the white man's preserve, it continued to insist on the enforcement of an industrial colour bar.⁹⁷ At the same time it was becoming increasingly obsessed with the

94. S.A. Review, 16.4.1909, p.8, "Magnates vs. White Labour" by F.H.P. Creswell.

95. Transvaal Leader, 5.3.1910, p.6.

96. See, e.g., Voice of Labour, 14.8.1909, editorial; 18.3.1910, p.129.

97. On non-white "encroachment" see T.G.2 of 1908, pp. 1403-5; A.S.E. Monthly Report, March 1907, p.15; March 1909, p.7; December 1909, p.8.

prospect of non-white competition driving it out of the labour market. Thus the labour columnist of the Transvaal Leader maintained

that if it were proposed to open the way for the natives to learn trades or to qualify to compete with the white man in the labour market, it would be the signal for the outburst of a stormy protest from every white worker in Africa such as would shake the very foundations of the country.⁹⁸

Not surprisingly, therefore, the A.S.E. advocated in 1907 to the Mining Regulations Commission that non-whites be debarred from taking charge of boilers, winches, engines and other machinery and that they should be prevented from obtaining certificates for engine-driving.⁹⁹ Similarly the S.A.E.D. & F.A. demanded that all engine driving be confined to whites; and Ware and Wybergh urged the legislative exclusion of all non-whites from skilled work, as did the Labour Day meeting in Johannesburg in 1910. "If this was to be really, and not only academically, a white man's country", declared W.R. Jackson, a Johannesburg municipal councillor and a member of the A.S. of C. & J., at this meeting, "this should be legislated against until such time as the coloured labourers were able to come up to the white man's level."¹

Organised labour was also anxious to extend job reservation outside the mining industry. For instance, in 1908 the Labour caucus in the Johannesburg Municipal Council urged successfully that non-whites be prohibited from working as bakers and butchers.² This outcome was welcomed by the Witwatersrand T. & L.C. which would have liked the same policy applied to the municipal parks and gardens.³ Significantly, when G. Hay Wilson, the secretary

98. Transvaal Leader, 5.11.1910, p.11.

99. A.S.E. Monthly Report, August 1907, p.21. See also T.G.2 of 1908, pp. 702-3.

1. Transvaal Leader, 26.3.1910, p.7. On the S.A.E.D. & F.A. see T.G.2 of 1908, pp.1475-6, paras. 21259-66; on Ware, Rand Daily Mail, 29.10.1907, p.4; on Wybergh T.G.2 of 1908, p.1125.

2. Rand Daily Mail, 9.1.1908, p.7; 20.1.1908, p.7; 31.1.1908, p.3.

3. Rand Daily Mail, 31.1.1908, p.3.

of the Transvaal I.L.P., asked a meeting of white journeymen bakers towards the end of 1907 whether they would object to native bakers if they obtained a white man's wage, he was not well received.⁴

Obviously the colour bar was irreconcilable with accepted principles of trade unionism as Keir Hardie was quick to emphasize during his visit to the Transvaal in February 1908. He declared that the labour man who would drive the Kafir into the sea was a disgrace to the labour movement, which embraced all races and creeds, and maintained that unless organised labour was prepared to do justice to the native and to oppose his exploitation, it did not deserve justice itself. To solve the problem of non-white competition, he advised raising the non-white to the white standard of living by insisting on a minimum wage based on white standards. Partly as a result of his pro-Boer stand during the Anglo-Boer war, partly as a result of his unqualified condemnation of the way Natal had crushed the native rebellion in 1906, but mainly as a result of his "rabid negrophile" attitude and the anti-native prejudice in the Transvaal, Hardie experienced unprecedented hooliganism and rowdyism at his public appearances. In Johannesburg his murder was even feared.⁵ "He is the greatest humbug who has yet reached our shores", wrote a member of the Johannesburg branch of the A.S.E., "and I hope all who have the courage of their convictions as white men will not hesitate to dissociate themselves from any welcome which may be engineered by those amongst us who are only happy when busy agitating over fancied grievances." Continuing, he showed how badly Hardie's views could be twisted :

4. Rand Daily Mail, 25.11.1907, p.7.

5. Rand Daily Mail, 17. to 21.2.1908; Keir Hardie articles in Labour Leader, 24.4.1908, p.267, and 22.5.1908, p.324; S.A.T.J., March 1908, pp. 11-12. For use of words, "rabid negrophile" see S.A. Tribune, 1.5.1908, p.7.

... I consider his ideas of social equity between black and white are totally opposed to the principles of trade unionism. He advocates the same wage for both races. Does he suggest that the native receive the same wage as the white man? This is economically impossible and absurd nonsense. On the other hand he surely expects white men to drop to the level of the Kaffirs, which is still more ridiculous.⁶

Other trade unionists seemed to have shared this hostility, but Hardie did receive a cordial reception at a closed meeting in the Johannesburg Trades Hall.⁷

Hardie's ideas were not completely rejected by the Transvaal labour movement. In March 1908 delegates to a special conference of the Transvaal I.L.P. voted unanimously in favour of minimum wage legislation; and at a Labour Day meeting shortly afterwards, Andrews declared that organised labour could not draw a line and say that the native could not cross it. He explained that the Labour Party wanted all men and women to be free, but added that "there was plenty of room for the Kafirs on the farm, which was the place the Kafir would like to be."⁸ Perhaps the general secretary of the T.M.A., Mat Trewick, was also moved by Hardie's visit, for he stated in May that the native was entitled to expect, in return for his lost independence, that openings would be made available to him whereby he could raise himself.⁹

But organised labour had expressed concern over non-white working conditions before Hardie's visit. Raitt's stand has already been described; and, in his evidence to the Mining Industry Commission, Mathews had shown marked sympathy towards the native miner. He suggested that the compound system was not slavery, but akin to it, and advocated that the natives should work in the same freedom as the white miners, competing with them at the minimum wage of 10s a day.¹⁰ About the same time the Witwatersrand T. & L.C. recommended to the Commission

6. Rand Daily Mail, 15.2.1908, p.8, letter from G.W. Davies.

7. S.A.T.J., March 1908, pp. 11-12

8. Transvaal Leader, 18.4.1908, p.8. On the I.L.P. see Rand Daily Mail, 9.3.1908, p.7.

9. Transvaal Leader, 9.5.1908, "Labour Notes", p.13.

that native miners be better fed, housed and treated and that contract prices for work they had completed be fully paid for.¹¹ However, when organised labour advocated the extension of the Workmen's Compensation Act and the Eight Hours' Bill to include non-whites, it did so only partly from humanitarian concern as it feared that these measures would cause the white worker to become still more expensive and, therefore, further handicapped in competition with the black man.¹²

Keir Hardie did not advocate publicly the organisation of non-whites, but the fearless way he stressed that the labour movement recognised no race limitations certainly implied this. Tom Mann, who toured South Africa for six weeks at the invitation of the Witwatersrand T. & L.C., was not as courageous. Although favouring industrial unionism, at first he carefully avoided, in deference to his tour organisers, dealing with the non-white in his propaganda. "Tom Mann may be a strong man in countries where no colour problem exists", declared Voice of Labour, "but in this country he has shown himself weak, not because he is presented with a strange set of circumstances (for we could excuse this) but because his constant associates are pushing the unsocialist position".¹³ However, much to the embarrassment of his hosts, he eventually called for the organisation of non-white workers.¹⁴

11. T.G.2 of 1908, p.1406.

12. T.G.2 of 1908, p.1402 (Witwatersrand T. & L.C.); T.A.S. 1 of 1908, p.25 (Mathews); pp. 42-43 (Pretoria T. & L.C.); p.113 (Shanks).

13. 25.3.1910, p.139. On his visit see his Memoirs, p.244 ff.; Voice of Labour, February to April 1910; "Labour Notes" in Transvaal Leader, 26.2.1910; 5 & 12.3.1910; 9.4.1910.

14. Voice of Labour, 18.3.1910, p.123; 25.3.1910, p.139; 1.4.1910, p.153.

The Labour M.L.A.s, Sampson and Reid, were in favour of opening the trade unions to skilled coloured artisans as had happened in the Cape; and, indeed, unions in which Sampson had participated.¹⁵ But he would have preferred separate unions for non-whites subservient to, and governed by, the white unions.¹⁶ However, Ware told the Mining Industry Commission that "the Cape boys" were the very worst workers and that organised labour would certainly debar them from entering the unions in the Transvaal; and Sampson conceded that there was strong prejudice against coloured trade union membership, but believed that this would weaken with time.¹⁷ Natives, on the other hand, were quite beyond the pale to the white trade unionists, as the Voice of Labour emphasised in a scathing attack on the Witwatersrand T. & L.C.:

The various anti-colour resolutions carried by the Council show at once that they do not themselves represent the cause of Labour. There are 300,000 coloured native workers on the Rand, two-thirds of whom work on the mines. Surely the Trades Council, however much it may dislike them, cannot say those people are not workers. They are the real labourers, and the Trades Council does not represent them "in any shape or form".¹⁸

Meanwhile Brittlebank wrote about the native's right to advance, stressing that socialism embraced white and black persons.¹⁹ In mid-1909 Mathews resigned as vice-president of the Johannesburg branch of the I.L.P., partly in protest at its decision to incorporate the claims of the native in its propaganda; and, about the same time, the Johannesburg Socialist Society, which adopted a constitution granting

15. Debates of the Transvaal Legislative Assembly, 22.6.1909, cols. 645-6. For Sampson's role in organising Cape non-whites see T.G.11 of 1908, p.96, paras. 2434-50; Transvaal Leader, 28.11.1908, p.14, "Labour Notes".

16. Natal Mercury, 31.5.1910, p.11.

17. Rand Daily Mail, 29.10.1907, p.4 (Ware); T.G.11 of 1908, p.96, paras. 2447-9 (Sampson).

18. 8.4.1910, p.162. See also Transvaal Leader, 17.7.1909, p.11, "Labour Notes".

19. Worker ¹⁵ [1909] p.11, "Labour Notes". See also on the Socialist Society Voice of Labour, 4.12.1909, pp. 6-7; 4.3.1910, p.103.

membership irrespective of colour, race or creed, recognised that non-whites also belonged to the labour movement.²⁰

However, although the socialists were beginning to appreciate the need to organise the black workers, they seem to have been unwilling to do so themselves as the Voice of Labour conceded in March 1910 :

... Voice is not concerned whether or not an attempt is made to organise coloured [native] workers. Rather do we think organisation would come better from within the coloured workers' own ranks. But one thing is necessary. The white worker must face the position.²¹

Instead, it was left to S.P. Bunting to pioneer the organisation of natives during the First World War. Ironically enough, in 1909 he was secretary of Patrick Duncan's White Expansion Society.²²

The Transvaal labour movement had obviously not heeded the advice given by Olive Schreiner in 1905 that there should be organised union of all workers.²³ Nor had it been greatly influenced by Hardie's insistence that the working class movement knew no race barriers. Save for a few socialists, the movement had continued to support job reservation and the legislative restriction of skilled work to Europeans; and its more thoughtful leaders had justified this as the white man's only defence against non-white competition while the indentured labour system operated on the mines. At the same time, organised labour, with the exception of the T.M.A., was evidently supporting the Creswell-Wybergh scheme of territorial segregation for the native population and their vision of a white man's country. To the white workers this policy was particularly

20. Transvaal Leader, 17.7.1909, p.11, "Labour Notes". See also on the Socialist Society Voice of Labour, 4.12.1909, pp. 6-7; 4.3.1910, p.103.

21. 18.3.1910, p.123.

22. E.R. Roux, S.P. Bunting: A Political Biography, ch.4.

23. For this advice see p.37 above.

attractive since it advocated extended employment of white labour, it partly salved the labour conscience aroused by Hardie and Mann, and it did not upset the racially prejudiced trade unionist.

7. Attitudes towards the Indian.

As anti-Indian sentiment was probably most pronounced in the organised labour sector of the Transvaal's white population, it was not surprising that it should support the Government's anti-Asiatic legislation passed in 1907: the Asiatic Law Amendment Act, which was designed to check the influx of illegal Asiatic immigrants and had amongst its requirements the humiliating ten-digit fingerprint registration; and the Immigration Restriction Act, which prohibited further Asiatic immigration. Thus H.W. Sampson wanted all further entry of Asiatics disallowed, but did concede the right to remain in the Transvaal to those Indians already settled there; and called for support for the Government in case of overseas interference so as to prevent the Transvaal from becoming a coolie colony like Natal. J.E. Riley believed that Indians should not have any rights in the Transvaal, maintaining that they should first work out their own salvation in their own country. Similarly, T. Mathews and W.H. Andrews advocated the repatriation of Asiatics resident in the Transvaal and the prohibition of future immigration. "He would not do an injustice to any man", Mathews explained in February 1908, "but he would not work with a "Sammy" who lived on rice - that was the question." Continuing, he claimed that within twenty-five years Natal would be worked exclusively by non-whites with perhaps one white man as overseer to a factory or plantation. "It was not a question of colour", stated Andrews, "but as a Trade Unionist he recognised that these men who would work for low wages were enemies. The standard of living must be upheld."²⁴

24. On Sampson see T.G. 11 of 1908, pp. 96-97, paras. 2429-33, 2451-7, and Rand Daily Mail, 4.10.1907, p.8; on Riley T.G.2 of 1908, and Rand Daily Mail, 4.10.1907, p.8.

The annual general meeting of the Witwatersrand T. & L.C., held in January 1908, resolved to express its full support for the Government's action against Transvaal Indians and took strong exception to the protest of the London Trades Council at the treatment of British Indians in the Transvaal. In a letter to this Council, the Witwatersrand T. & L.C. defended its attitude on racial and economic grounds:

The Asiatic - with his rice and water standard of living, or rather level of subsistence, and with his centuries of a servile past; with his caste laws and his absolute refusal to assimilate with white civilisation except as a wage-slave or fierce business competitor - the Asiatic comes to settle as a blight upon the land, bringing with him the absolute destruction of all our hopes to evolve out of our present state of capitalistic confusion, and the destruction of all our hopes for the amelioration of our lot which are centred in the unity of the workers in each section of the world. Your attitude is therefore of direct advantage only to the few capitalists who pull the strings in this country, by providing them with a weapon to be used against us wherever necessary - or rather a cheap substitute to replace us in nearly every walk of life, unless we can adapt ourselves to the rice and water standard. It is not a question of sentiment, it is a question of life and death - whether we are to hand over South Africa to the Asiatic or not.²⁵

Amongst the labour leaders at this time only A. Brittlebank of the I.L.P. seems to have defended the Transvaal Indians. He questioned whether "sober, industrious people" who sold goods at small profits, thereby adding to the workman's purchasing power, were a curse to the community. He condemned the Asiatic Law Amendment Act as a "piece of class legislation which all self-respecting persons should resist regardless of ulterior consequences"; denounced fingerprint registration as identification normally reserved for criminals; and contrasted the entry into the Transvaal without any query of the "scum of America and Europe, the Stock Exchange gamblers", with the "most reprehensible" prejudice against British Indian subjects and Asiatics generally.²⁶ About a year later Brittlebank again came to the defence of the Indians, questioning the christianity of the Transvaal Government :

25. As quoted in Rand Daily Mail, 17.1.1908, p.7.

26. Rand Daily Mail, 30.8.1907, p.8, letter from Brittlebank.

Curious to relate, the Christian religion commands men to love each other, yet our Christian rulers endeavour by every possible and illogical device to expel their fellow-subjects from British soil, and imprison British Indians who refuse to comply with a law, in the making of which they had no voice.²⁷

Towards the end of 1907 organised labour reacted to Mahatma Gandhi's passive resistance campaign against the anti-Asiatic legislation by trying to stir up an anti-Indian movement. The Witwatersrand T. & L.C. held a public meeting on 27 November, which appointed Whiteside, W. Walker, W.A. Farrar (the secretary of the T. & L.C.), Mathews and Wybergh as a committee to secure continuity of this movement, and which also decided to approach the mayor of Johannesburg to call a public meeting to express approval of the Government's Asiatic policy.²⁸ It is not clear whether the mayor agreed to this meeting, but a crowded gathering was held in the Johannesburg Trades Hall on 3 February 1908 at which a movement was inaugurated to oust Indians from the Transvaal by boycotting all Asiatic traders and employers of Asiatic labour. The main speakers were Mathews and Andrews who encountered only one opponent, a certain Guilaroff. He advocated fighting Asiatic competition by demanding minimum wage legislation and courageously declared that his wife would continue to buy from Indian traders as she had to manage the best she could; and, not unexpectedly, he received an extremely hostile reception. The same meeting elected a White League Committee to encourage whites to avoid dealing with "coloured persons in any shape or form" and a Co-operative Committee to start co-operative stores so as to dispense with the need for going to the Indian trader.²⁹

27. Star, letter from Brittlebank, quoted in Indian Opinion, 16.1.1909, p.32.

28. Transvaal Leader, 28.11.1907, p.8.

29. Rand Daily Mail, 4.2.1908, p.4.

Within a week the co-operative movement had spread to Vrededorp and one supporter had forwarded a draft prospectus appropriately entitled, "Anti-Sammy Limited."³⁰ However, it seems unlikely that either the co-operative movement or the White League ever went beyond the planning stage. More success seems to have been achieved by the White Hawkers' Association whose object was to combat Indian hawkers. Ironically enough, two leaders of the I.L.P., Crawford and Berman, ran this association.³¹ But after Hardie's visit Crawford changed his convictions and, like Brittlebank, became a staunch supporter of the Indian cause.³²

8. Non-White Political Rights.

Organised labour was finding it progressively more difficult to evade the question of non-white political rights. In 1907 Mark Lucas represented South Africa at the international socialist congress in Stuttgart which instructed delegates to fight the exploitation of the native populations in the colonies and to go amongst them as missionaries.³³ Towards the beginning of 1908 Keir Hardie appealed on the Rand for justice "to every child of Adam's race", and, towards the middle of 1909, he wrote in the Labour Leader, which circulated widely among labour men in South Africa, that equal qualifications should ensure equal rights. "To say to a man that no matter how talented or how wealthy he may be", Hardie continued, "his colour will for ever be a bar to his becoming a citizen, is to invite trouble".³⁴ Meanwhile Olive Schreiner, who was highly respected by South African socialists, was advocating the extension of the franchise to non-whites in all

30. Rand Daily Mail, 11.2.1908, p.7.

31. Rand Daily Mail, 11.2.1908, p.7; Star, 28.7.1910, p.10, letter from "S.H.E."

32. Labour Leader, 2.7.1909, p.422, article by Crawford; Indian Opinion, 23.1.1909, p.41; 15.1.1910, p.19.

33. Rand Daily Mail, 7.10.1907, p.8. See also Review of Reviews, October 1907, p.378.

four of the South African colonies. "If we raise the dark man", she explained, "we will rise with him; if we kick him under our feet, he will hold us fast by them."³⁵

The question of non-white membership of the Transvaal I.L.P. was precipitated by an Indian joining its ranks at an open-air meeting without his colour being spotted by the organisers. This subject was therefore raised at its annual conference in October 1907 at which W.C. Salter proposed on behalf of the Johannesburg branch that membership be thrown open to all races. A two hour debate ensued during which two motions in favour of establishing separate non-white branches went to the vote, neither of which was passed. As a result, qualifications for membership remained the prerogative of the individual branch which could accept non-white members as there was no constitutional bar to their entry into the party.³⁶

Scarcely had Hardie left the Rand when the Johannesburg branch raised the issue again. Its meeting at the end of February agreed to propose at the I.L.P.'s special conference on 8 March that the party be opened to all races. Salter was again prominent in urging this stand.³⁷ However, the conference refused to agree to an unequivocal declaration on membership by the time its chairman, J.T. Bain, closed the subject with his ruling that such a declaration was unnecessary as the constitution debarred no person from joining, subject to the consent of the branch to which application was made.³⁸

34. Press-cutting in Trembath I, p.401. For Hardie's utterances on the Rand see Rand Daily Mail, 17.2.1908, p.7; 19.2.1908, p.8; S.A.T.J., March 1908, pp. 11-12.

35. Uys Krige (ed.), Olive Schreiner: A Selection, p.190. For her association with South African socialists see pp. 13-14 above.

36. Rand Daily Mail, 14.10.1907, p.8.

37. Rand Daily Mail, 28.2.1908, p.8.

38. Rand Daily Mail, 9.3.1908, p.7.

By 1909 the Johannesburg branch had become the main mouth-piece of the I.L.P. and its activity seems to have been accepted as that of the Party as a whole. Towards the beginning of the same year this branch issued a manifesto on the Draft South Africa Act with which Hardie or Olive Schreiner would have fully agreed. Although it conceded the danger of enfranchising all Non-Europeans because of their general backward state of development, it demanded that the franchise should be extended to "all adult citizens fit to exercise it irrespective of race, sex, colour or creed"; and it recognised at last the identity of interest of all workers:

The sole use of the political machine is to secure the emancipation of wage slaves without regard to colour. As the coloured people are wage slaves like ourselves, they have an identity of interest with us. If we antagonise them they will always be available for the capitalists to use against us, to subdue and degrade us. They are actually being used in this direction now.³⁹

Being an off-shoot of this branch of the I.L.P., the Johannesburg Socialist Society naturally adopted a constitution granting membership irrespective of colour, race or creed.⁴⁰ Its official organ, the Voice of Labour, did not quarrel with labour leaders for opposing the grant of the franchise to all non-whites. "But denying of citizenship even unto one coloured man", it continued, "irrespective of utility, morality, extraction, the editor protests against."⁴¹ Not unexpectedly, the Cape Town non-white journalist, F.Z.S. Peregrino, complimented the Voice of Labour on its attitude with which he wholeheartedly agreed.⁴²

Meanwhile the trade union leaders who dominated the Transvaal L.R.C. were not prepared to support the socialists' standpoint. When the Draft South Africa Act was considered at its annual meeting held on 28 February 1909, delegates agreed

39. See Appendix B. 1V, 14, below.

40. Transvaal Leader, 17.7.1909, p.11, "Labour Notes."

41. 31.7.1909, editorial. See also 14.8.1909, p.9.

42. Voice of Labour, 14.8.1909, pp. 6-7.

to demand the election of the house of assembly on the basis of white adult suffrage, but conceded that any person already enfranchised should not be deprived of that right. To afford Non-Europeans a platform for their political views, the meeting decided to advocate a native and coloured peoples assembly with advisory powers on non-white welfare.⁴³ Shortly afterwards the Pretoria L.R.C. held a joint conference with the local T. & L.C. on the Draft Act and also opposed the extension of the Cape Colony's non-white franchise.⁴⁴ On 28 March the Witwatersrand T. & L.C. organised a public meeting to protest against the contents of the Draft Act. At this meeting Andrews proposed, with support from Whiteside and Wybergh, a motion demanding that the Cape's franchise be never extended to the other provinces without a referendum of voters in the provinces concerned. Wybergh argued that the natives were totally unfit for the franchise and that it would be no less a calamity for them, as for the whites, were they to receive it; instead, they should be territorially segregated and governed in those areas in their own interests.⁴⁵ That he should be welcome on a labour platform shows not only that Wybergh was gravitating towards that party, but also how much the trade unions were opposed to the non-white franchise. According to Indian Opinion, Wybergh regarded that franchise "like King Charles' head of famous memory", having assumed "the mantle of apostle of the anti-coloured-franchise party."⁴⁶

At least by September 1909, Harry Sampson, president of the Witwatersrand T. & L.C. and of the S.A.T.U., had changed his views. He distinguished between the "purely Kaffir races" which should be territorially segregated, as Wybergh proposed,

43. See Appendix B, 1V, 13, below.

44. Transvaal Leader, 27.3.1909, p.6, "Labour Notes".

45. Transvaal Leader, 27.3.1909, p.6, "Labour Notes";
29.3.1909, p.7; Natal Mercury, 29.3.1909, p.6.

46. 20.2.1909, p.91.

and coloured persons; and was in favour of granting the coloureds, who were defined as having one European parent, full political, industrial and social rights.⁴⁷ As Sampson's own printers' union had opened its ranks to coloureds and Indians in the Cape and Natal, his attitude was not surprising.⁴⁸

9. Unification of South Africa.

The Transvaal labour movement approved of closer union of the South African colonies, but not of the Draft South Africa Act produced early in 1909 by the National Convention, from which it had been excluded and towards which it was hostile. Thus the annual conference of the Transvaal L.R.C., held on 28 February 1909, affirmed the principle of unification, but called for a referendum on the Draft Act many of the clauses of which it strongly criticised. For example, it wanted the Senate abolished, the Legislative Assembly elected, on universal white adult suffrage without the disfranchisement of existing non-white voters; an advisory assembly for the non-white population; the residential qualification for becoming an M.L.A. reduced from five years to six months; the payment of M.L.A.s raised to £500 per annum; and polling day to be declared a public holiday.⁴⁹ Shortly afterwards a joint conference of the Pretoria L.R.C. and T. & L.C. adopted a similar attitude. Also urging that a referendum be held, the conference was particularly concerned over the attainment of the most democratic electoral system possible, and, therefore, demanded the abolition of the Senate, triennial general

47. Voice of Labour, 25.9.1909, p.9. For earlier views of Sampson see Indian Opinion, 20.2.1909, p.91.

48. T.G.11 of 1908, p.96, paras. 2434-50; Transvaal Leader, 28.11.1908, p.14, "Labour Notes", and 12.6.1909, p.13, "Labour Notes"; Debates of the Transvaal Legislative Assembly, 22.6.1909, cols. 645-6.

49. See Appendix B, 1V, 13, below.

elections and the initiative and the referendum.⁵⁰

Meanwhile the I.L.P. in Johannesburg added its support to the call for a referendum, regarded the Draft Act as entirely unsatisfactory, "though not unexpected as a fruit of exclusive capitalist deliberation", and was very critical of the proposed Senate which it wanted to replace with the initiative and the referendum.⁵¹

As a public meeting at the end of March under the auspices of the Witwatersrand T. & L.C. showed, organised labour was united in demanding that the electorate be consulted on the Draft Act.⁵² It probably also agreed with Andrews's statement that the Act had been drawn up in "secret conclave by the most reactionary elements in South African life" and also shared the disillusion of a member of the A.S.E., who wrote:

We are told by the leading politicians of South Africa that if we will only open our mouths and close our eyes while they administer this delicious confection of theirs that all the social ills will disappear, but when one comes to question these gentlemen closely on any one of these ills their knowledge seems to be very limited indeed.⁵³

But, as has been described already, organised labour was not united in its attitude towards the non-white franchise. Crawford actually attacked Andrews in the columns of the Labour Leader for assuming the role of the Witwatersrand T. & L.C.'s chief spokesman against the extension of the franchise to all non-whites.⁵⁴

As the labour leaders were active supporters of the Johannesburg Women's Suffrage League, it was not surprising that the Transvaal L.R.C. and the Johannesburg branch of the

50. Transvaal Leader, 27.2.1909, p.13, "Labour Notes".

51. See Appendix B, 1V, 14, below.

52. Transvaal Leader, 29.3.1909, p.7. See also "Labour Notes" in Transvaal Leader, 27.2.1909, p.13; 6.3.1909, p.13, 27.3.1909, p.6; A.S.E. Monthly Report, April 1909, p.3.

53. A.S.E. Monthly Report, February 1909, p.13. For Andrews's views see his article in Labour Leader, 23.4.1909.

54. Labour Leader, 2.7.1909, p.422, article by Crawford.

I.L.P. favoured the extension of the vote to women. However, the L.R.C. wanted it granted to white females only.⁵⁵

10. Dissension in the Labour Movement

It was impossible for the Transvaal labour movement to flourish while it was plagued with disunity and recrimination. In the Legislative Assembly, as has been described already, Whiteside and Sampson were not on speaking terms, and only the latter seems to have acknowledged the authority of the Transvaal L.R.C. over his conduct. Such was the bitter feeling between these two M.L.A.s that Whiteside at one time vowed to secure Sampson's defeat at the next parliamentary elections.⁵⁶

Both Ware and Crawford were returned to the Johannesburg Municipal Council with the support of the Transvaal L.R.C., but it is doubtful whether Crawford acknowledged its authority in 1909. The following year the feeling between these two labour leaders rivalled that between Whiteside and Sampson. To Voice of Labour Ware was "one of the brightest lights in the Kingdom of Skunkdom, absolutely unworthy of the support of any respectable working man with his nob on and his wits about him"; and to Ware Crawford was not a leader of labour but rather a "misleader" whose opinions did not rise above the level of contempt.⁵⁷

In the powerful A.S.E. the organiser, W.H. Andrews, had unwisely provoked the anger of the secretary of its South African Council, Tom Haynes, by referring to him as an "old fossil"; and in the well-established S.A.T.U. its president, H.W. Sampson, was at loggerheads with J.H. Crompton, the secretary of its Johannesburg branch.⁵⁸ Nor was the trade

55. Compare Appendices B, IV, 13 and 14 below. For labour support of the Women's Suffrage League see Transvaal Leader, 27.2.1909, p.13, "Labour Notes".

56. Star, 9.8.1910, p.5, article by "Filius Populi"; Affidavit by L. Karovsky in Report of Commission of Enquiry to Special Conference of the S.A.L.P., 8.7.1928, p.11; Voice of Labour, 31.12.1909, p.6.

57. For denunciation of Ware see Voice of Labour, 29.4.1910, p.197; for Ware's comments on Crawford see Star,

union image improved by Crawford's skit on their full-time officials :

Wanted, Organiser for a Trade Union - no self-sacrificer need apply - able to gossip all day with other paid officials - offices and telephones provided for the purpose - wirepullers preferred. Apply "Secretary", Easy Bluffed Trade Unionists, office of this paper.⁵⁹

In addition, public estimation of the labour movement dropped still lower when the former secretary of the Witwatersrand T. & L.C., W.A. Farrar, was sentenced on 18 June 1908 to six months hard labour for misappropriation of the Council's funds; when Crawford was threatened with sequestration of his estate towards the end of the same year and, about the same time, was fined £2 for calling someone who had sold short-weight bread a common thief; when the labour and socialist organs, Worker and Voice of Labour, proceeded to attack each other; and when Sampson brought a libel suit against Crawford in 1910.⁶⁰

Thus it was not surprising that the labour columnist of the Transvaal Leader should regret the disunity in the labour movement in May 1908; that Jimmy Trembath, the much admired Kimberley labour leader, should do the same in October 1909; and that Bain and Andrews hoped that Tom Mann's visit to the Rand would unite the antagonistic sections of the labour movement.⁶¹

58. On the A.S.E. see A.S.E. Monthly Report, January 1909, pp. 6-7, and February 1909, pp. 6, 8-9; on the S.A.T.U. S.A.T.J., February 1908, p.15, and March 1908, p.15.

59. Voice of Labour, 7.1.1910, p.1.

60. On Farrar see S.A.T.J., August 1908, p.14; on Crawford "Labour Notes" in Transvaal Leader, 12.12.1908, p.14, and 25.12.1908, p.5; and S.A.T.J., December 1908, p.6; on the labour and socialist organs see Appendix E below; and on the Sampson vs. Crawford libel suit Star, 28.9.1910, p.11; Voice of Labour, 7.14,21.10.1910.

61. On the labour columnist see Transvaal Leader, 9.5.1908, p.13; on Trembath Worker, 9.10.1909, press-cutting in Trembath I, p.95; on Bain, Voice of Labour, 7.1.1910, p.5; and on Andrews Voice of Labour, 4.3.1910, p.102.

The need for a strong leader became essential. Whiteside was the logical contender for the leadership of the S.A.L.P. considering his seniority amongst labour men, his public recognition since 1902 and his undoubted oratorical ability. However, his passive role in the miners' strike in 1907, the withdrawal of his engine-drivers' union from active labour politics and his late entry into the S.A.L.P. to secure his election, with the support of Het Volk, to the Union Senate, relegated him to the background.⁶²

Even though the militant socialists were extremely critical of Andrews, he seems to have been well-qualified to assume the leadership. However, as the organiser of the A.S.E., he was prevented by his union from accepting an executive post in another labour organisation. It argued that he should devote all his time to the society which paid his salary.⁶³

Crawford was an ambitious and an impatient young man, but was attracting declining support from a small circle of militant socialists. Undoubtedly the stormy petrel of the labour movement at this time, he was expelled from one labour organisation after another following his decision towards the end of 1909 to stand as a socialist candidate for Fordsburg in the first elections for the Union parliament.⁶⁴

Unlike Crawford, Sampson's integrity was doubtful. That he should have been selected as the first Chairman of the S.A.L.P. in October 1909 was a poor reflection on the Transvaal labour movement in view of his consistent penchant for backbiting and intrigue. As has been noted already, in 1904 Sampson had denounced Lorimer; in 1905 he had joined Whiteside in censuring Andrews; in 1905-1906 he was probably the author of the controversial labour column in the Rand Daily

62. See pp. ~~253-4, 271-2, 274~~ above. For withdrawal of the S.A.E.D. & F.A. see Voice of Labour, 1.4.1910, p.148.

63. For criticism of the socialists see, for example, Voice of Labour, 18.12.1909, p.7; 22.4.1910, p.191. On his restricted political activity see A.S.E. Monthly Report, February 1908, p.20, and November 1908, pp.8-9.

64. See 30.6.1910, p.8, letter from C.H. Haggan; Voice of

Mail; and, at least from 1908, he had fallen out with his parliamentary colleague, Whiteside. Moreover, his political career might well have come to an end after Crawford had exposed his financial stake in securing the defeat of the Horse Racing and Betting Restriction Bill and had revealed his canvassing for municipal orders for Adlington & Co. of which he was an employee. However, Sampson was in a powerful position in 1909, being president of the politically orientated S.A.T.U. and of the Witwatersrand T. & L.C.⁶⁵

CHAPTER VII

CAPE AND ORANGE RIVER COLONIES, 1900 - 1910

Now, gentlemen, you do not represent the workers of the colony You represent the dominant caste in this country - the white people You are in this country really the aristocracy.

John X. Merriman to organised labour in 1908¹

CAPE TOWN

1. Trades and Labour Council and Political Labour League

As on the Rand, the T. & L.C. was the main force behind the emergence of the labour party in Cape Town. But the Cape Town T. & L.C. had by no means the same resources or influence as its Witwatersrand counterpart.² It secured government recognition as late as 1904 when the parliamentary select committee on workmen's compensation invited it to send a witness to represent the working class;³ and, in 1905, it consisted only of the carpenters', engineers', printers', masons' and plumbers' societies whose total membership was between 500 to 1000 persons.⁴

This local "parliament" of skilled tradesmen was revived towards the end of the Anglo-Boer War and immediately showed

1. As quoted in Indian Opinion, 13.6.1908, p.258.
2. Compare the half-yearly financial statement of the Cape Town T. & L.C. in S.A. News, 18.6.1904, p.4, "Labour Notes", with that of the Witwatersrand T. & L.C. in 16.7.1904, p.5, "Labour Notes".
3. S.A. News, 23.4.1904, p.4. "Labour Notes".
4. S.A. News, 4.3.1905, p.5., "Labour Notes". The total membership has been taken from J.H. Howard's evidence in 1907 in T.G. 11 of 1908, p.202 para. 4823.

political orientation. At the end of 1901 it adopted a constitution one of the objects of which was to secure representation "on local boards and in parliament";⁵ and in May 1902 it presented an address to the New Zealand prime minister, Richard Seddon, then on a visit to Cape Town, looking forward to the time when South Africa would vie with New Zealand in the field of democratic legislation and praising his rise from the ranks of the miners to his country's highest office.⁶

Shortly afterwards, inspired perhaps by Seddon's stay, the T. & L.C. commenced a period of sustained political activity. It called public meetings to protest at government-assisted immigration which was taking place in spite of the existing depression; it supported Thomas Harris, a spokesman for the unemployed, in his successful candidature for the Cape Town Municipal Council; it seems to have backed the unsuccessful candidature of the quasi-labour nominee, Dr. A.E. Seller, in the Legislative Assembly by-election on 6 November 1902; it was in contact with Dr. Darley Hartley, a good friend of the worker and a prominent member of the South African League, concerning the formation of an independent democratic party; and, under the energetic guidance of its secretary, Walter Clemesha, it began to register many workers on the parliamentary voters' roll.⁷

5. See Appendix A, II, below.

6. Cape Times, 27.5.1902, p.5. See also S.A. Review, 30.5.1902, p.33.

7. On the protest meetings, see S.A. News, 4.3.1905, p.4, "Labour Notes"; S.A. News, 24.9.1902, p.3, letter from the secretary of the T. & L.C. to Sir Gordon Sprigg; Natal Mercury, 9.12.1902, p.9; on support for Harris "Labour Notes" in S.A. News, 20.9.1902, p.5. and 27.9.1902 p. 5; on support for Seller S.A. Review, 14.11.1902, p.21; on contact with Hartley S.A. News, 3.1.1903, p.2, "Labour Notes"; and on the drive to register voters S.A. Review, 10.10.1902, p.9; and "Labour Notes" in S.A. News, 3.1.1903, p.8; 7.2.1903, p.8; 14.2.1903, p.6.

Against this background it was not unexpected that a political labour league should be inaugurated at a public meeting held on 25 April 1903 under the auspices of the T. & L.C. But the birth of the first genuine labour party in the Cape Colony requires a more detailed explanation. Firstly, the existing depression was undoubtedly an important factor, for it reduced labour's ability to ward off employers' attacks on living standards and made direct action in the form of strikes virtually hopeless. Political action was sought, therefore, to obtain industrial legislation such as a compulsory arbitration act to settle industrial disputes. For three reasons the economic situation in Cape Town was especially pressing: the coastal colonies were worst hit by the post-war slump; the depression more affected urban than rural areas; and immigrants still entered the Colony, encouraged by false reports of bright prospects and added to the unemployment problem.⁸

Secondly, neither of the existing Cape political parties seemed likely to provide a political home for organised labour. The South African Party was rurally based and drew its main support from the Afrikaner population, whereas organised labour in Cape Town consisted largely of workers of British stock. On the other hand, the Progressive Party, to which labour was "racially" attracted, was associated with De Beers and the leading capitalists in the Colony. This Hobson's choice facing the democratic worker was well illustrated by the radical weekly, the South African Review, in 1902:

On the one side he sees a seditious party, which, albeit hopelessly irreconcilable in the long run with democratic principles, courts him with honeyed words, and hides the trail of a landed oligarchy and a disloyal propaganda under the dust of anti-capitalism. On the other he sees a Party, which has natural affinities with democracy, degraded into a gang of sordid capitalists and greedy political agents, who persistently do their level best to drive him into the arms of Bondism and the South African News.⁹

8. For existence of the depression see L.M. Thompson, Unification of South Africa, p. 52 ff.; M.H. de Kock, Selected Subjects in the Economic History of South Africa, p. 144.

Thirdly, as the same weekly observed, immigrants had arrived from Australia and New Zealand who were not disposed towards resting quietly under a system which left the working man "absolutely a cipher in the government of the country".¹⁰ Walter Clemesha, the driving-force behind the T. & L.C. from May 1902 until his departure for the Rand in March 1903, was an Australian who was evidently dedicated to advancing the power of the working-class movement; another Australian, H.P. Gordon, although a recent immigrant, was more responsible for the formation of the P.L.L. than anybody else; and a third Australian, C.J. Craig, who had participated in politics in his homeland, was one of the League's leaders.¹¹ This inspiration from overseas was clearly shown in Gordon's speech at the P.L.L.'s inaugural meeting:

We are on the eve of a General Election, and one would suppose that at the beginning of the twentieth century, having regard to the experience in experimental legislation that we witness in the Australian colonies and New Zealand, the Labour bodies here would be so much alive to their own interests, as to realise the necessity of full and effective organisation. Now at the present time Labour here is in a state of chaos. It was much the same in Australia and New Zealand fifteen years ago, but there, owing to the conflicts with Capital which resulted in disastrous and prolonged strikes, the Labour bodies were drawn together in such a compact force, that when organised Labour made its first essay upon the constituencies it practically swept the field.¹²

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8. For existence of the depression see L.M. Thompson, Unification of South Africa, p.52 ff.; M.H. de Kock, Selected Subjects in the Economic History of South Africa, P.144.
9. 14.11.1902, p.21.
10. Ibid.
11. On Clemesha see S.A. News, 21.3.1903, p.7, "Labour Notes"; on Gordon S.A. News, 30.4.1904, p.3. "Labour Notes"; 21.5.1904, "Labour Notes"; 26.10.1904, p.3; 8.5.1906, p.8 (political cartoon); on Craig S.A. News, 12.9.1903, p.4. "Labour Notes"; and 10.12.1903, p.7, "Labour Notes".
12. S.A. News, 27.4.1903, p.7. For similar statement by T.J. Gibson see S.A. News, 7.11.1903, p.7.

The P.L.L. was not very active immediately after its formation and only adopted its rules on 26 August 1903 and its programme shortly afterwards.¹³ By October, however, it was holding regular fortnightly meetings, inspired, perhaps, by the approaching elections.¹⁴

Although the rules of the P.L.L. provided for individual membership, branch formation and half-yearly general meetings, the League did not survive long enough for the T. & L.C. to be able to relinquish control over it. Membership was open to "all wage-earners, irrespective of race or colour" who agreed to its rules and platform, and its parliamentary candidates were limited to bona fide working men, that is, persons earning their "daily living by manual labour". With such limitations it was natural that the rules of the League should carefully guard against anything jeopardizing the independence of the parliamentary labour party which it envisaged.¹⁵

The P.L.L.'s programme, concentrating as it did on the need for social welfare legislation and electoral reform, differed little from contemporary labour platforms. Thus Richard Seddon was able to comment:

... the objects of your League appeal to my sympathies very profoundly Old-age pensions, compulsory arbitration, free and compulsory education, "fair-wage" clause in Government contracts, restriction of Asiatic immigration, a Factories and Workshops Act, etc., are measures for which in this Colony [New Zealand] I have fought for years and fought successfully.¹⁶

13. For the rules see Appendix A, III below; for first appearance of the programme given in Appendix B, I, 2, see Seddon's letter published S.A. News, 5.1.1904, p.10.

14. S.A. News, 3.10.1903, p.5.

15. See Appendix A, III, below.

16. Seddon to Sam Blight, secretary of the P.L.L., 10.11.1903, as published in S.A. News, 5.1.1904, p.10.

Above all, weight was placed on electoral reform so essential for labour candidates; thus the first two demands of the League's programme called for

Amendment of the electoral law, so that a Parliamentary candidate shall contribute nothing towards the Returning Officers' expenses.

£300 a year to members of Parliament.¹⁷

The first arose from section forty-eight of the Constitutional Ordinance of 1852, as amended by the Order in Council of 1853, whereby candidates for the Legislative Assembly were liable for the returning officers' expenses up to the amount of £50;¹⁸ and, according to the League, this section was devised in a spirit of class consideration, especially since it did not apply to the Legislative Council.¹⁹ The second demand was brought about by the small payment of £90 to parliamentary representatives which certainly militated against the appearance of labour candidates. Although payment of M.P.s had not started in Great Britain, adequate salaries were paid at this time in Canada, Australia and New Zealand.²⁰

One of the most significant features of the platform, in marked contrast with labour programmes in the Transvaal, was its completely non-racial character; thus two of its planks called for

Equal political rights for all civilised men.

Equal rights for promotion of coloured citizens²¹ in the Government service, according to merit.

17. See Appendix B, I, 2, below.

18. Cape of Good Hope Statutes, 1652 - 1905, vol. I, p.515.

19. S.A. News, 5.12.1903, p.5, "Labour Notes".

20. S.A. News, 12.12.1903, p.4, "Labour Notes".

21. The demand for restriction of Asiatic immigration, which arose from the Chinese labour agitation on the Rand, can,

2. Cape Town P.L.L. and Elections

The League's first trial of strength came in the Legislative Council elections for the Western Circle in November 1903. Here it supported Dr. A.H. Petersen on the assurance that he stood as an independent candidate and that he agreed to its platform.²² Evidently, unbeknown to the P.L.L., Petersen was a member of the South African Party and had been brought forward by the Afrikaner Bond as an independent candidate.²³

The reasons for the League's support were set out in a well-publicised circular, the main feature of which was the denunciation of the Progressive Party as a front for De Beers, as the Tammany Hall of the Cape Colony and as the suspensionist party. In addition, it associated Dr. Jameson with the pro-Chinese movement on the Rand.²⁴

Other sections of the labour movement also campaigned for Petersen. They were Isaac Purcell's recently formed WorkingMen's Union of District Six and the African Political Association, (the A.P.O.), led in its electioneering by the Klipheuvel Coloured farmer, John Tobin. At this stage the A.P.O., which was founded by a number of non-whites in 1902, may have been very much under the wing of the S.A.P. Certainly, Tobin was a staunch supporter of that Party.²⁵

22. S.A. News, 24.10.1903, pp.9 & 14; 7.11.1903, p.11.

23. T.R.H. Davenport, The Afrikaner Bond (1880 - 1911), p.249.

24. The circular was published in full in S.A. News, 31.10.1903, p.4.

25. For Purcell's support see S.A. News, 23.10.1903, p.6; 3.11.1903, p.6; for the A.P.O.'s S.A. News, 7.11.1903, p.7. On origins of the A.P.O. see A.P.O., 5.6.1909, p.9, and J.S. Marais, The Cape Coloured People, 1652 - 1937, p.276; and on its outlook at this time S.A. News, 7.11.1903, p.7; 24.11.1903, p.6; and 25.11.1903, p.6.

Although Petersen's return by a comfortable margin was undoubtedly due to the support of the Afrikaner Bond, the fact that he topped the poll in the working class area of Woodstock was very encouraging for the labour movement.²⁶ During an interview with the South African News after the declaration of the results Petersen expressed his gratitude to several labour leaders for their active help in his campaign and, therefore, obviously valued their assistance.²⁷

Labour's campaign to secure the election of Petersen was significant for another reason. It brought into closer contact for the first time the different groups of the Cape Town working class, Britisher, Russian, Pole and non-white; previously they had apparently acted independently of one another. Thus the labour columnist of the South African News wrote:

We have today the pleasant facts that officials of English trade unions pay regular visits to the meetings of coloured men and foreigners, and speak and act with them as fellow workers, and that the Coloured organisations have resolved to work hand in hand with the White labour bodies.²⁸

The Cape Colony's first post-war general election for the legislative assembly took place in January - February 1904. At first, the P.L.L. hesitated before seeking independent parliamentary representation and wrote to Dr. Jameson for his views on labour legislation. Having received no reply, it was

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26. For final result see S.A. News, 13.11.1903, p.6; for poll in Woodstock, 12.11.1903, p.5. In the other urban areas Petersen came last.
27. S.A. News, 13.11.1903, p.7. For examples of credit claimed by labour for Petersen's victory see "Labour Notes" in S.A. News, 14.11.1903, p.11, and 21.11.1903, p.4.
28. 21.11.1903, p.4. For harmonious meeting attended by various sections of the labour movement see S.A. News, 7.11.1903, p.7. "Labour Notes"; and for Tobin's comment 14.11.1903, p.11, "Labour Notes".

left with no alternative but to press forward;²⁹ and by October it had three candidates in the field. Still, the P.L.L. remained a little apprehensive and sought the advice of the British Labour Party and of the prime minister of New Zealand, Richard Seddon.³⁰

In compliance with its rules the League's three candidates were all "plain, blunt workmen". Its chairman, Charles J. Craig, a member of the A.S. of C. & J. and a resident in Cape Town for seven years, stood in in the Cape Town constituency; one of its founders, Andrew Corley, also a member of the A.S. of C. & J. and a Cape Town resident for about seven years, stood in Woodstock; and its secretary, Thomas Gibson, a popular engine-driver who assumed office in October 1903 as full-time organiser for the Cape Colony of the S.A.E.D. & F.A., was its second candidate in Woodstock.³¹ Evidently, all three were not well-known outside trade union circles.

Isaac Purcell, a prosperous merchant and landlord, also came forward as a labour candidate in the Cape Town constituency. Not being a manual worker, he could not become one of the P.L.L.'s candidates; he stood, therefore, under the auspices of the Working Men's Union of District Six of which he was the chairman. This Union was founded on 8 July 1903 and operated as a social club until Purcell transformed it into a political organisation for his own election purposes. In keeping with this development Purcell based much of his election appeal on his residential qualifications. "District Six

29. S.A. News, 27.8.1903, p.6, and 29.12.1903, p.8.

30. On the British Labour Party see S.A. News, 28.10.1903, p.11; on Seddon S.A. News, 5.1.1904, p.10.

31. On Craig see S.A. News, 3.10.1903, p.5. (occupation); 31.10.1903, p.4. (chairman); 5.12.1903, p.10 (as Cape Town resident); on Corley 3.10.1903, p.5. and 9.1.1904, p. 9. "Labour Notes" (occupation); 27.2.1904, p.10, "Labour Notes" (as Cape Town resident); on Gibson 3.10.1903, p.5; 17.10.1903, p.3.; and 7.11.1903, p.7. Strictly speaking, as a trade union official, Gibson was not a manual worker.

was where he had his 'mansion'. He had lived amongst working men all his life and would feel out of place amongst the silk-hatted clique now."³²

In the same constituency a probable third category of labour candidate appeared. Here the irrepressible, self-styled labour champion, Thomas Harris, stood as an independent Progressive after he, like Purcell, failed to obtain the backing of the P.L.L., seemingly because he, too, was not a manual worker.³³

Not content with its involvement in the Cape Town and Woodstock constituencies, the P.L.L. circularised candidates in other divisions and leading politicians, questioning them on six planks in the labour platform.³⁴ Indeed, so moderate were these demands that J.H. Hofmeyr agreed, with minor qualifications, to support them.³⁵ Others reacted still more favourably and, as a result, the P.L.L. announced its support for the candidatures of Louw and Thompson for the Wynberg constituency, Jeppe for Simonstown and Lezard for Kimberley, all of whom were standing as independents.³⁶

Considering the P.L.L.'s support for these candidates, it was to be expected that it should eventually recognise Purcell as an independent labour candidate, adopting an attitude of "friendliness, sympathy and support".³⁷

32. Cape Times, 16.1.1904, p.6. For biographical information on Purcell see Cape Times, 11.1.1904, p.9. and W.H. Harrison Memories of a Socialist, p. 23; on the Working Men's Union and on Purcell's failure to obtain the P.L.L.'s nomination "Labour Notes" in S.A. News, 18.7.1903, p.4, and 21.11.1903, p.7.

33. S.A. News, 5.12.1903, p.10, letter from C.J. Craig. For H.P. Gordon's justification of the P.L.L.'s restriction of its candidates to manual workers see S.A. News, 10.12.1903, p.7.

34. S.A. News, 17.10.1903, p.3.

35. For this information I am indebted to Dr. T.R.H. Davenport of Rhodes University.

36. "Labour Notes" in S.A. News, 16.1.1904, p.10, and 23.1.1904, p.9. For the P.L.L.'s appeal to the voters in Simonstown to support Carl Jeppe see S.A. News, 20.1.1904, p.10.

Earlier it had refused to co-operate with the Working Men's Union and had rejected its claim to be a bona fide labour organisation.³⁸

Meanwhile the Progressive Party and its press attacked the labour candidates with tooth and nail venom. Dr. Jameson dismissed the "labour party" as "humbug"; Amos Bailey, the Progressive nominee in Woodstock, referred to its candidates as "riff-raff"; and Runciman, who stood in Simonstown, wanted the labour movement in Cape Town to be smothered.³⁹ The Cape Times, the Cape Daily Telegraph and the Eastern Province Herald accused the labour candidates of being inspired by the Afrikaner Bond; and, in the case of Purcell, there seems to have been justification.⁴⁰ It is true that the S.A.P. organ, the South African News, gave its unqualified support to the labour candidates since it naturally rejoiced in their opposition to the Progressives;⁴¹ but no evidence has been found to suggest that the S.A.P. had any agreement with the trade union nominees.

Labour countered by protesting its loyalty to the British crown and coining slogans, such as the one declaring:

The flag is as safe in the hands of the British⁴² workmen as in those of the nomadic capitalists.

37. S.A. News, 9.1.1904, p.9. "Labour Notes".

38. S.A. News, 10.10.1903, p.9, and "Labour Notes" in 21.11.1903, p.4, and 19.12.1903, p.13.

39. For Jameson's comment see S.A. News, 5.11.1903; for Bailey's 13.1.1904, p.4; and for Runciman's 30.1.1904, p.10.

40. Cape Times, 16.1.1904, p.6.; 21.1.1904, p.6; Cape Daily Telegraph, 13.1.1904; E.P. Herald as quoted in S.A. News 3.10.1903, p.5. On Purcell see S.A. News, 7.10.1907, p.6.

41. S.A. News, 13.2.1904, p.4. "Labour Notes".

42. S.A. News, 24.10.1903, p.14, "Labour Notes".

It stressed domination of the Progressive Party by the directors of De Beers and other capitalists and accused the Progressives of feigning opposition to the introduction of Chinese labour on the Rand.⁴³ In addition, Labour pursued an active election campaign without, of course, the financial resources of the Progressive Party.

But all this proved in vain. Labour attracted negligible support at the polls, none of its candidates being close to election. Worse still, the working class voter, when faced with a choice of various categories of labour candidates, preferred the official trade union nominees least of all - the "plain, blunt workmen". It was ironical, indeed, that Thomas Harris should do better than Purcell and the P.L.L.'s candidates.⁴⁴ Obviously, the idea of an independent labour party was foreign to the vast majority of Cape Town workers.

In Woodstock the Labour essay at the polls turned into a fiasco following the late entry into the contest of Arthur Douglass, who had been defeated in Grahamstown by Jameson. Some labour followers felt that a ticket of two including Douglass and one of the P.L.L.'s candidates would enhance labour prospects. Thus Gibson was approached to withdraw; not only did he refuse, but he proceeded to "rat" to the Progressives and to denounce his co-labour candidate, Corley.⁴⁵

Coming after Dr. Petersen's encouraging victory, the election results were certainly a setback for organised

43. See, for example, S.A. News, 10.12.1903, p.7; 30.1.1904, p.10

44. For the results see Appendix C, I, 2 below.

45. S.A. News, 30.1.1904, p.10, "Labour Notes"; 12.2.1904, p.6; 13.2.1904, p.4; 27.2.1904, p.10; Cape Times 11.2.1904, p.5; 13.2.1904, p.8.

labour. Moreover, Labour should have been favoured by the prevailing depression and by the Chinese labour controversy on the Rand. Why then did it fare so poorly? Firstly, with the war scarcely at an end, the "racial" issue dominated Cape politics allowing little scope for a third party. Secondly, the rudimentary organisation of Cape Town workers and inadequate resources of the trade unions, then in their infancy, made successful electioneering very difficult. Lastly, the inept selection of the candidates of the P.L.L., who were little known outside trade union and artisan circles, reduced the vote for Labour. This was shown by the greater impact of Purcell and Harris.

Weak as Labour was, its participation in the elections had one happy result. The Progressive Party included in its election manifesto the demand for an employers' liability bill and, true to its promise, placed on the Statute book in 1905 the Workmen's Compensation Act.⁴⁶

A less happy sequel was the fate of Corley. Unable to find employment, despite being an excellent carpenter, he was forced to emigrate to New Zealand towards the end of February; and, according to London's Daily News, he had been practically hounded out of the Cape Colony.⁴⁷ His departure was a great loss to the Cape Town labour movement since he had shown a sound grasp of labour

46. S.A. News, 7.1.1904,p.7; 26.3.1904,p.4, "Labour Notes"; 3.6.1905,p.8, "Labour Notes".

47. South African News, 25.2.1904,p.9; 27.2.1904,p.10, "Labour Notes". Corley claimed that his political activity also caused his son to be victimised. For Daily News comment see extract in S.A. News, 16.4.1904, p.4, "Labour Notes".

principles, declaring that the working class movement embraced all workers, Dutch, British, non-whites and others.⁴⁸ Whereas he severed his connection with Cape Town labour circles amidst great sympathy, this was certainly not the case with Gibson. As a result of his disloyal conduct during the elections he became persona non grata to the T. & L.C.⁴⁹

3. Cape Town Social Democratic Federation.

One of the most noteworthy features of labour history between the 1904 and the 1908 elections was the rôle played by the Cape Town S.D.F. Some detail must therefore be given about its background.⁵⁰ It was founded in May 1904 through the efforts of a certain Blagburn, formerly a member of the West Ham branch of the British S.D.F.; W.H. Harrison, an ex-guardsman from London and a carpenter by trade; and Jack Erasmus, a recent arrival from New Zealand and a reporter of the South African News whose labour columnist he later became. However, during most of its existence J.H. Howard, who was its secretary for several years, was its main guiding spirit.

It attracted a cosmopolitan membership of which the British trade unionist was the predominant element.⁵¹ Olive

48. See, for example, S.A. News 23.4.1904, p.4, "Labour Notes"; and 21.12.1903, p.8.

49. S.A. News, 12.3.1904, p.4, "Labour Notes".

50. Unless otherwise specified the foregoing account is based on the first annual report of the S.D.F. in S.A. News, 8.6.1905, p.8; Howard's evidence to the Transvaal Indigency Commission - T.G. 11 of 1908, p.198 ff.; and W.H. Harrison, Memoirs, passim.

51. On cosmopolitan following see, for example, S.A. News Weekly Edition, 18.4.1906, p.14.

Schreiner sent messages conveying her support and well-known ministers of religion such as Davidson Buchanan and Ramsden Balmforth joined. All shared an abiding faith in the socialist millennium; for instance, Abraham Needham, one of its leading members and a regular contributor of poetry in The Owl, wrote:

I see a flame of splendour
 That lights a distant sky,
 It flashes through the valleys
 And poison vapours fly.
 I see an army marching
 With shouts of victory,
 Aloft, the banners floating,⁵²
 'Tis the Army of the Free.

Up till about 1910 the S.D.F. pursued an active existence. It held numerous propaganda meetings and issued many leaflets; it published the Cape Socialist under the editorship of A. Needham during 1905 - 1906; it continually agitated for an improvement in the unemployment situation; mainly during 1904-1907, it co-operated with the T. & L.C. in labour politics; it contested municipal and parliamentary elections; and it participated in the most important of the founding conferences of the S.A.L.P.

From its inception the S.D.F. advocated the socialist objective and its first annual report declared unequivocally:

We stand before our community as the representatives
 of international revolutionary socialism.....⁵³

Yet, the fighting platform which was adopted in 1904 avoided socialist dogma and resorted, in socialist terminology, to palliative measures which were generally supported by reformist labour bodies.⁵⁴ On this basis co-operation with the local

52. From "The Coming Dawn" published in Voice of Labour, 11.12.1909, p.1.

53. S.A. News, 8.6.1905, p.8. On the objective see W.H. Harrison, Memoirs, p.5.

54. See Appendix B, I, 3, below.

T. & L.C. was not difficult.

4. Labour Electoral Association, Labour Advance Party and Labour Representation Committee

The Cape Town P.L.L. seems to have ceased to function after its crushing defeat in the 1904 general election. In its place, by March 1904, the T. & L.C. appointed a parliamentary committee.⁵⁵ But realising that it had no hope of success in parliamentary elections, the Council did not bring forward any candidates in the elections in June - July 1904, occasioned by the enactment of the government's additional representation bill. Nevertheless, two quasi-labour candidates, Purcell and H.P. Gordon appeared in Cape Town.

Purcell, who stood as an independent in the Legislative Council elections in the Western Circle, foreshadowed later political developments by appealing for the support of the working and farming classes, maintaining that their interests were identical.⁵⁶ Whether he managed to secure the official backing of any labour organisation is not known; on the other hand, the Afrikaner Bond certainly favoured his candidature and probably was responsible for his reasonable support at the polls which, however, was less than half that of his Progressive opponent's.⁵⁷

Gordon, who contested the Woodstock constituency in the Legislative Assembly elections, also stood as an independent. Despite receiving the active support of the T. & L.C., he

55. "Labour Notes" in S.A. News, 12.3.1904, p.4; 26.3.1904, p.4; 2.4.1904, p.7.

56. See Purcell's reply to his election requisition in S.A. News, 1.6.1904, p.11.

57. On Bond support see Afrikaner Bond, Kaapstad Tak ("Districts Bestuur"), Notule, 18.5.1904, in the South African Library. For the election result see S.A. News, 30.6.1904, p.7.

made little impression on polling day,⁵⁸

About the same time the newly-formed S.D.F. approached the T. & L.C. about a mutual scheme for co-operation.⁵⁹

Not long afterwards they tried unsuccessfully to organise a South African labour congress of trade unions and socialist societies;⁶⁰ and in 1905 they combined forces in organising a well-attended May Day public gathering, probably Cape Town's first.⁶¹

A few months later, for the purpose of the municipal elections, this co-operation was evident again. The S.D.F. and the T. & L.C. formed a joint committee, which they called the Labour Electoral Association, and, on 26 August, it adopted a five plank municipal platform showing no trace of socialist influence. The platform was then sent to all the municipal candidates in the form of a questionnaire; and, after the replies had been studied, the Association decided at its meeting on 2 September, which was attended by the coloured leaders, J. Tobin and F.Z.S. Peregrino, to support Drake, Forsyth and Parker, a builder, a doctor and an architect, respectively.⁶² Although this was a long way from

58. On the T. & L.C.'s support see S.A. News, 9.7.1904, p.5, and 25.6.1904, p.3; for the result S.A. News, 14.7.1904, p.6.

59. S.A. News, 9.7.1904, p.5, "Labour Notes".

60. First annual report of the S.D.F. in S.A. News, 8.6.1905, p.8

61. Ibid.; see also S.A. News, 3.5.1905, p.3.

62. On its formation see "Labour Notes" in S.A. News, 26.8.1905 p.10, and 2.9.1905, p.3; for the platform Appendix B, I, 4, below; and on 2 September meeting S.A. News Weekly Edition, 13.9.1905, p.14, "Labour Notes".

But more than official trade union blessing was needed. The Labour Advance Party relied too much on the personal magnetism of Buchanan, who was attracting a large following at his weekly church services at the Opera House.⁶⁷ Thus, after his departure for the Rand in November, enthusiasm for the party rapidly waned and it ceased to function early in 1906; and all attempts by the T. & L.C. to revive it proved unsuccessful.⁶⁸

During its short existence the Labour Advance Party achieved little beyond arousing temporary interest in independent labour representation and focussing attention on the plight of the unemployed.⁶⁹

Weak as the political labour movement appeared to be in 1906, it still attracted the notice of a few parliamentarians of the Progressive Party and the S.A.P. Thus representatives of both parties held discussions with delegates of the T. & L.C. in mid - 1906; and Professor Freemantle actually assured those delegates that he would do his best to make the S.A.P. so sympathetic towards the working man that the need for an independent labour party would not arise.⁷⁰

But the T. & L.C. was not impressed. In June and July it decided that direct representation of labour was essential and seems to have been intent on converting its parliamentary committee into an L.R.C. on the British model.⁷¹ However,

67. S.A. News Weekly Supplement, 8.11.1905, p.iii; S.A. News, 28.10.1905, p.3, "Labour Notes".

68. "Labour Notes" in S.A. News, 10.3.1906, p.3; 17.3.1906, p.11; 26.5.1906, p.10;

69. "Labour Notes" in S.A. News, 30.9.1905, p.10; 7.10.1905, p.3; 14.10.1905, p.3; S.A. Review, 29.9.1905, p.17.

70. Rand Daily Mail, 5.6.1906, p.7. See also S.A.T.J., June 1906, p.12.

71. "Labour Notes" in S.A. News, 30.6.1906, p.3; 16.7.1906, p.8.

the T. & L.C. moved slowly and only established the Cape Town L.R.C. at a series of public meetings during the first quarter of 1907.⁷² As the president of the Council and main driving force behind the new organisation, G.H. Parkhouse, explained, the workers were unable to find a political home in either of the existing parties and therefore had to form their own political party:

It is impossible for the lion of capital to lie down with the lamb of labour. If you put men into Parliament whose objects are opposed to yours, then you deserve your fate. I have not seen a single Act passed for your benefit except the Workmen's Compensation Act, which took the Trades Council 18 months to get passed and 12 months to get remedied.⁷³

As the L.R.C.'s constitution has not been located, not much is known about its membership; but the T. & L.C. ensured its own dominance by appointing seven of the eleven original members of the L.R.C.⁷⁴ More, however, is known about its programme, which was published in the press. It was based on that of the defunct Labour Advance Party, but excluded the latter's socialist preamble and placed greater emphasis on industrial demands.⁷⁵

Although during the foundation of the L.R.C. a certain amount of trade unionist antagonism was shown towards the "red-flag" brigade,⁷⁶ the L.R.C. publicly supported the S.D.F. candidate, Arthur Ridout, in the municipal elections in September 1907.⁷⁷ However, this assistance did not

72. S.A. News Weekly Edition, 6.2.1907, p.9; S.A. News, 9.2.1907, p.6.

73. S.A. News, 9.2.1907, p.6.

74. Ibid.; S.A. News, 16.2.1907, p.6.

75. See Appendix B, I, 5 below.

76. S.A. News, 16.2.1907, p.6; S.A.T.J., March 1907, p.2.

77. S.A. News, 9.9.1907, p.6.

prevent Ridout from coming last at the polls.⁷⁸

5.2 General Election, 1908

Cape Town's band of socialists, although numerically insignificant, was at this time alive to every opportunity for advancing the socialist cause to which it displayed an almost religious devotion.⁷⁹ They saw in the Cape Colony's second post-war general election an excellent propaganda field and, as early as September 1907, therefore issued a manifesto announcing the formation of "The Socialist Party" with an unequivocal socialist programme and an entirely constitutional approach to political action.⁸⁰ However, this so-called party probably was never established and merely represented another name for the S.D.F. Indeed, the S.D.F. announced in October that Needham, Hunter and Howard would stand as the socialist candidates in Cape Town and, in this regard, looked forward to trade union co-operation, as was given in the municipal elections.⁸¹

But the trade unionists were determined not to leave labour politics entirely to the socialists. Thus on 17 October a combined conference of the T. & L.C., the L.R.C. and other labour organisations took place and it adopted the "fighting platform" of the "Cape Labour Party", the contents of which were mainly drawn from the programme of the L.R.C.⁸²

78. S.A. News, 13.9.1907, p.6.

79. The Cape, 6.3.1908, p.9, article by A.D. Donovan; Labour Leader, 8.5.1908, p.292, article by Keir Hardie.

80. See Appendix B, I, 7, below.

81. S.A. News Weekly Edition, 9.10.1907, p.24.

82. See Appendix B, I, 6, below. See also S.A. News, 30.3.1908, p.6.

Twelve days later a similar conference approved a list of possible labour parliamentary candidates, all of whom probably were trade union members.⁸³

It is confusing that the L.R.C. did not embrace all the organisations present at these conferences and that the press began to refer to the political labour movement as the Cape Labour Party. But the T. & L.C. still retained its dominant rôle even though G.J. Bruce, a non-trade union member, was referred to as the "leader" of the Cape Labour Party. Like so many other labour politicians in South Africa, Bruce was an Australian. At this time, he was apparently secretary to Sir Jacobus Graaff.⁸⁴

In the end, no labour or socialist organisation in the Cape Colony contested the Legislative Council elections in January 1908; and only Tom Maginess, of the Labour Party, also referred to as the L.R.C., and J.H. Howard of the S.D.F., came forward in the Cape Peninsula in the Legislative Assembly elections of March 1908, both standing in the Cape Town constituency where there were seven vacancies.

Maginess, who was one of the most prominent members of the T. & L.C. and of the local branch of the A.S.E., was born in Belfast in 1877 and first joined the A.S.E. there. After working in Scotland and the U.S.A. too, he arrived in Cape Town in 1902. In 1908, being a mechanical engineering instructor at the South African College, he was less vulnerable than most of his colleagues on the T. & L.C. to victimisation for his political activity.⁸⁵

83. S.A. News, 30.10.1907, p.6; S.A.T.J., December 1907, p.9.

84. For references to Bruce as the "leader" see Cape Daily Telegraph, 2 & 23.3.1908; and on his occupation Dr. R. Forsyth's letter, 8.5.1951, in the Historical Committee file of the S.A.L.P. Records.

85. Worker, 26.3.1914, p.5; S.A. Who's Who, 1915, p.248; S.A. Review, 6.3.1908, p.15.

Some description of his election campaign is warranted because of its significant features. His speeches reflected no extreme demands and seemed to concentrate on the need for protection of local industry, closer settlement along the lines of Australia and New Zealand, civil service reform and better facilities for technical education.⁸⁶ As a result of his vigorous protectionist policy he secured the backing of Cape Town manufacturers' and builders' associations and caused an independent weekly, The Cape, to refer scornfully to him as

the nominee jointly of the Protectionist Employers and a handful of pathetic trade union delegates who have never recovered their heads since Sir Pieter Bam began to write affectionate letters to them and who will never forget the night they dined with the Manufacturers' Association.⁸⁷

A more important feature was the attitude of the non-white population to Maginess and his party and vice versa. In contrast with the position in the 1904 general election, the coloured community was united in opposing the Labour Party in 1908. Coloured spokesmen justified this stand by pointing to the exclusive pro-white attitude of the T. & L.C.s throughout South Africa.⁸⁸

Following the liberal tradition of the Cape Colony the L.R.C. programme in 1907 had not shown any colour bias; and Maginess opposed the restriction in any way of the non-white franchise.⁸⁹ But Cape Town white trade unionists were

86. S.A. News, 20.3.1908,p.6; 7.3.1908.

87. 6.3.1908,p.6. See also The Cape, 28,2.1908,p.4. S.A. News, 27.2.1908,p.2 (letter from J.Davidson, then a member of the S.D.F.); Voice of Labour,14.1.1910,p.1.

88. S.A. News Weekly Edition, 6.11.1907,p.9; S.A. News, 25.2.1908,p.8.

89. On Maginess see S.A. News Weekly Edition, 12.2.1908,p.9; S.A. News, 20.2.1908,p.6.

insincere in their protestations. When Keir Hardie visited the Cape Peninsula during the height of the electioneering, the local Labour Party would have nothing to do with him, in spite of having sent him an invitation in June 1907 to stop over in the Mother City during his world tour. It had become alarmed at his hostile reception in Natal and in the Transvaal and obviously feared loss of votes by being associated with such a well-known champion of the non-whites. Yet, despite their differences of opinion, Natal and Transvaal labour leaders had welcomed Hardie.⁹⁰

Ironically enough, Hardie's public meeting in Cape Town, which was organised by the S.D.F., was his most enthusiastic public reception during his South African tour. At this meeting he embarrassed the Labour Party further by reading those present a lesson in the principles of international socialism.⁹¹ Shortly afterwards, the socialist leader, W.H. Harrison, expressed his strong disapproval of the local Labour Party's insult to Hardie and wrote to the press leaving no doubt about the race prejudice of that party:

I have hitherto refrained, though often accused, from using anything but honest criticism of the methods of that party, emanating as it does, from a portion of the Trades and Labour Council of which I am a member; yet I feel now compelled to say that it would be well for these gentlemen if the word "labour" (in the political sense of the word) was by them properly understood. ⁹²

Meanwhile the S.D.F. and its parliamentary candidate probably benefitted from the publicity it received during Hardie's visit. The Cape, while noting that Howard and his colleagues believed in nothing but the "Red Banner of Revolution", conceded that they were sincere;⁹³ and this

90. Labour Leader, 22.5.1908, p.324, article by Hardie; S.A. News, 2.3.1908, p.6.

91. S.A. News, 2.3.1908, p.6; W.H. Harrison, Memoirs, pp.19-22.

92. S.A. News, 29.2.1908, p.6.

93. 6.3.1908, p.6.

sincerity might have impressed many non-whites, for one of their leaders declared:

The Socialists appeared to mean well, and were, ⁹⁴
at any rate, the friends of the coloured people....

When polling took place on 12 March 1908 all seven of the successful candidates in the Cape Town constituency were Unionists. Considering the labour performance in the 1904 general election, Maginess did well to be placed ninth among the fourteen candidates. Indeed, his vote exceeded that of the three S.A.P. nominees. The election of a Labour M.L.A. for Cape Town therefore seemed not far distant. Howard, however, came last, but to attract over 1000 votes for socialism was, nevertheless, a notable achievement.⁹⁵

The much improved Labour performance probably was one outcome of the "unparalleled depression" in the Cape Colony during the Jameson Government's term of office.⁹⁶ It probably was also due to the years of spadework of the T. & L.C. and the S.D.F.

6. Decline of the S.D.F.; Draft South Africa Act

During 1908 and 1909 the S.D.F. continued to be interested in securing socialist representation on public bodies. Towards the end of 1908 three of its members unsuccessfully contested the Cape Town municipal elections; in the following year four socialists stood with the same result; and, about the same time, two members failed to achieve election to the School Board.⁹⁷

94. S.A. News, 25.2.1908, p.8. The statement was made by P. le Roux, a supporter of the S.A.P.

95. See Appendix C, I, 3 for the result.

96. For Jameson's reference to "unparalleled depression" see Progressive Party manifesto in S.A. News Weekly Edition, 2.10.1907, p.9.

97. S.A. News, 15.9.1908, p.5; Voice of Labour, 2.10.1909, p.11; Voice of Labour, 11.9.1909, pp.6 & 8.

Further publicity was attracted by an unusual yet highly successful venture in mid-1909. For three months the S.D.F. daily handed out free meals to numerous starving and under-nourished children and, at one stage, the daily order to the baker was as much as 2000 loaves of bread.⁹⁸ This was charitable work indeed, but charity to be expected from the Salvation Army rather than from a supposedly Marxist organisation whose main object was to replace the capitalist system and not to prop it up.

About this time the S.D.F. probably reached the peak of its influence. Labour leaders outside the Cape Colony, like W.H. Andrews, H.W. Sampson and C.H. Haggar, were impressed then by the strength of the socialist movement in Cape Town; and Crawford even wrote in 1910 that the S.D.F. was "the undoubted source of all past genuine effort for Socialism in South Africa."⁹⁹ However, it started to decline towards the end of 1909 and the beginning of 1910 when several of its most enthusiastic members left Cape Town. Davidson, McKillop and Blake moved to the Transvaal; Fraser and Bateman to Rhodesia; and A. and W. Needham to Tasmania.¹ About the same time trade unionists and socialists started to attack each other and, within the S.D.F., anarchists denounced the "opportunist" socialists.²

98. S.A.Review, 3.9.1909, pp.6 & 10. See also 2.7.1909, p.10; and 9.7.1909, p.3.

99. Voice of Labour, 25.11.1910, p.503. On Andrews and Sampson see Transvaal Leader, 2.1.1909, p.11; "Labour Notes"; on Haggar and Sampson see Voice of Labour, 11.2.1910, p.70.

1. Voice of Labour, 11.2.1910, p.70.

2. On trade unionists vs. socialists see Worker, 9.10.1909, p.95, article by Trembath in Trembath I, p.95; and S.A.T.J., October 1909, p.7. On disunity within the S.D.F. see Voice of Labour, 25.11.1910, p.503.

During April 1909 the Cape Town T. & L.C. and Labour Party held joint discussions on the Draft South Africa Act and defined their attitude towards it. Although approving of the principle of closer union, they objected to the undemocratic property qualifications required for Senators and to the nomination of a number of them, they wanted the state to pay the returning officers' fees in elections and they opposed the disfranchisement of any person then enjoying the vote.³ Evidently therefore, they were not over concerned about the race discrimination in the Draft Act. Thus Merriman was not unjustified when, on 4 June 1908, he rebuked a deputation from organised labour by stating that it did not represent the "real" workers, but only the dominant caste, the white people.⁴

Instead, it was left to the S.D.F. to protest on behalf of the non-white workers. It resolved in June 1909:

that the words "of European descent" contained in the clauses of the Draft Act of Union, are contrary to all Democratic principles, and an insult to the coloured races of South Africa. This meeting therefore calls upon the Socialist and Labour members of the British Parliament to demand the elimination of these words.⁵

CAPE COLONY (OUTSIDE CAPE TOWN)

7. Port Elizabeth.

Labour candidates appeared in Legislative Assembly elections for the Port Elizabeth constituency in 1904 and 1908, but detailed information on their sponsors has been difficult to find. Probably no T. & L.C. was behind the essay at the polls in 1904 as it was evidently only established in 1905 with an initial affiliation of the printers', carpenters', engineers' and boilermakers' trade unions.⁶

3. S.A.T.J., May 1909, p.2.

4. Indian Opinion, 13.6.1908, p.258.

5. A.P.O., 19.6.1909, p.10. See also Voice of Labour, 21.8.1909, p.4.

6. A.J.Downes, Printers' Saga, p.231. The S.A.News, 13.6.1903, p.12, "Labour Notes", referred to the formation of a T. & L.C., but, if founded, it must have been short-lived.

Early in 1903 a working-men's registration society was started to add the names of working men to the voters' rolls;⁷ and, by the end of the same year, the British Workmen's Political and Defence Association was established. It brought forward its own parliamentary candidate, William A. Urie, in the following year.⁸

Urie's speeches show his labour orientation, for he favoured an eight hour day, a workmen's compensation act, and free and compulsory education, and opposed the introduction of Chinese labour on the Rand.⁹ But he was not criticised by the daily press for his programme; the criticism was mainly personal abuse. The Eastern Province Herald suggested that the "labour party" could have found a more fitting representative from a dozen other mechanics; and the Cape Daily Telegraph concluded:

His candidature cannot be regarded in any other light than that of a stupid joke, and it is a great pity that jokes of this kind can be perpetrated upon a large and busy community.¹⁰

In addition, the press accused him of being connected with the Afrikaner Bond, but he naturally denied this. "I could win a seat easily", complained Urie, "but I cannot afford to buy a Newspaper Plant like the Jameson Party - they have the Papers under their Cliques Direction".¹¹

Trade union reaction to his campaign is not known, except for the apparent hostility of the local branch of the S.A.T.U.¹²

7. S.A. News, 3.1.1903, p.2, "Labour Notes".

8. S.A. News, 5.12.1903, p.5, "Labour Notes".

9. Cape Daily Telegraph, 31.12.1903; E.P.Herald, 15.1.1904.

10. 13.1.1904, editorial. For attitude of the E.P.Herald see its issues, 6.2.1904 and 10.2.1904.

11. Cape Daily Telegraph, 19.1.1904. For alleged association with the Bond see E.P.Herald, 15.1.1904 and 12.2.1904; Cape Daily Telegraph, 11.2.1904, p.5.

12. Cape Daily Telegraph, 25.1.1904, letter from H.Dart, past secretary of the local branch of the S.A.T.U.

Urie, however, did not attract widespread support on polling day, 10 February 1904, although he obtained a fivefold increase in votes as compared with Hammond in 1898.¹³

In the interests of the town's workmen, Louis Thomas Williams was nominated for the Port Elizabeth constituency in the 1908 general election by Tom H. Collocott, president of the local branch of the S.A.T.U. in 1906 and 1907.¹⁴ That G.J. Bruce, the "leader" of the Cape Town Labour Party, came to Port Elizabeth to assist Williams's campaign is further proof of his labour affiliations.¹⁵ In addition, the Eastern Province Herald conceded that Williams was standing as a "representative in the Labour interest" and regarded his candidature as an error of judgment by the "Labour organisation" since labour would be fairly represented by the Progressive ticket of five.¹⁶

Little else is known about his campaign, which was afforded poor coverage in the local press, but it probably was more effective than Urie's since Williams polled over a thousand votes on 1 April.¹⁷ Coming ninth of eleven contestants, Williams might have been responsible for the defeat of the fifth Progressive by an independent candidate.

8. East London.

During the 1920's East London had a Labour M.L.A. and a Labour mayor. But, prior to 1910, there were no great forward strides in labour politics and there is no evidence that an independent labour party was formed. However, the foundations were laid by the formation of trade unions and an active T. & L.C.

13. See Appendix C, I, 2 below.

14. E.P.Herald, 5.3.1908. On Collocott see A.J. Downes, Printers' Saga, p. 232.

15. Cape Daily Telegraph, 23.3.1908.

16. 30.3.1908. Was the "Labour organisation" the T. & L.C.?

17. See Appendix C, I, 3 below.

About the turn of this century trade unions were started, for example, the local branch of the S.A.T.U., in the formation of which H.W. Sampson played a leading rôle, the A.S. of C.J. and the A.S.E.¹⁸ Then, in September 1903, while the carpenters were on strike, a movement was started to form a T. & L.C. However, the Council was only established in April or May of the following year.¹⁹

The T. & L.C. regarded political action as one of its duties. Thus one of its first moves was to approach the local Legislative Councillor demanding an arbitration act, a workmen's compensation act and a duty on imported joinery and printing. About the same time it endorsed the stand of the British Labour Party for independent labour representation and it contributed towards E.B. Rose's expenses as the South African delegate at the international socialist congress in Amsterdam in 1904 - a contribution which the Witwatersrand T. & L.C. refused to give.²⁰ Unfortunately, no further details have been found on the T. & L.C.'s political activity during the last years of the Cape Colony.

9. Kimberley, 1900 - 1905

The concentration of industrial population in Kimberley after the discovery of diamonds should have provided a foundation for a strong labour movement. But, for reasons described already, De Beers dominated the industrial and

18. On the S.A.T.U. and Sampson see A.J. Downes, Printers' Saga, p.170 ff; on the first trade unions Hugh Hamilton Smith, "The Development of Labour Organisation in East London, 1900-1948", (M.Econ, thesis, Rhodes University College, 1949), pp. 65-66.

19. Hugh H. Smith, op.cit., p.66 ff. See also S.A. News, 11.3.1905, "Labour Notes".

20. Summary of the first annual report of the T. & L.C. in S.A. News, 11.3.1905, p.15. On the attitude of the Witwatersrand T. & L.C. see p.185 above.

political life of the town.²¹ Writing in 1909, J.F.Trembath, then the most prominent labour leader in Kimberley, explained:

Everyone knows that there has never been such a thing as true public opinion on the Diamond Fields since the creation of De Beers Consolidated Mines. It has been a modern "Old Sarum", with puppet voters and "dummy" public men. Woe to the unwary citizen who risked his money on a contest without the individual support of the "Company". He had friends once, and perhaps a business, but then his views were always so open to objection.²²

This view was also shared by Smuts who maintained in 1910 that no-one was ever able to represent Kimberley in parliament who was not recommended and supported by De Beers.²³

The first attempt to consolidate labour forces by the formation of a T. & L.C. took place towards the end of 1903, but it was not successful.²⁴ Shortly afterwards a "labour movement" was organised for the 1904 general election, but it lasted for a few weeks only.²⁵ This "movement" presumably supported Lazard, an independent candidate for the Legislative Assembly in the Kimberley constituency, since the Cape Town P.L.L. called on the workers to vote for him after he had agreed to its platform.²⁶

A big step forward was taken in February 1905 when the T. & L.C. was founded with an initial membership of four societies.²⁷ Within two months De Beers was evidently intent

21. See pp. 26-29 above.

22. Worker, 30.1.1909, Trembath I, p.70.

23. Transvaal Leader, 6.8.1910, p.10.

24. A.J.Downes, Printers' Saga, p.161; Worker, 30.1.1909, article by Trembath, Trembath I, p.70.

25. S.A.News, 29.7.1905, p.9, article by Trembath.

26. S.A.News, 23.1.1904, p.9, "Labour Notes". For the result of the contest in which Lazard was not successful see S.A.News, 12.2.1904, p.8.

27. S.A.News, 29.7.1905, p.9, article by Trembath; Worker, 30.1.1909, article by Trembath, Trembath I, p.70.

on crushing the Council's existence. On the plea that it had its own benefit society for employees, De Beers pressed for exemption from the Workmen's Compensation Bill, then being considered by parliament, and the T. & L.C. opposed this action with unfortunate consequences. All the employees of De Beers on the Council were discharged; and, in protest, the T. & L.C. organised several public meetings in which they were assisted by Tom Kneebone, the A.S.E. organiser on the Rand. One of those victimised was the later cabinet minister and M.P. for Benoni, 1910 - 1947, Walter B. Madeley, who was curtly told by the General Manager of De Beers

Well you will talk, and that is why you won't get back into the Company again. 28

The T. & L.C. won the immediate struggle since De Beers was not exempted from the provisions of the Workmen's Compensation Act. But the victimised members of the T. & L.C. were not reinstated and were forced to seek employment outside Kimberley, mostly on the Rand.²⁹

An important outcome of the dispute was the political interest it stimulated. For instance, R. Locker, the chairman of the T. & L.C., declared that Kimberley's parliamentarians represented the capitalists, leaving the workers no alternative but to elect their own labour representatives.³⁰ "It is only the first skirmish for political freedom in South Africa", commented Kneebone, "and should be taken to heart by the whole of the workers here".³¹

28. Natal Mercury, 9.5.1905, p.7. Madeley was then vice-president of the T. & L.C. - S.A. News, 8.7.1905, p.10, "Labour Notes".

29. For descriptions of this agitation see Trembath article in Worker, 30.1.1909, in Trembath I, p.70; "Democrat's" article in S.A. News, 8.7.1905, "Labour Notes"; and Kneebone's reports in A.E.J., July and September 1905.

30. S.A. News, 16.5.1905, p.5. See also statement by H. Walsh, one of the discharged men in 27.5.1905, p.5.

31. A.E.J., July 1905, p.19.

Not surprisingly therefore, the T. & L.C. founded early in June the South African Political Labour Association whose objects were

to obtain direct Labour representation on all municipal and Parliamentary bodies; to accomplish reforms in municipal and Parliamentary procedure;³² and generally to improve the workers' condition.

Its programme concentrated on the need for social welfare legislation and, like the platform of the Cape Town P.L.L., it stressed the need for electoral reform, objecting to the payment by candidates for the Legislative Assembly of the returning officers' expenses.³³

The Association, however, never fulfilled the optimistic hopes of its founders. As its name suggests, it was intended to open branches all over South Africa, but this never eventuated.³⁴ Even in Kimberley there was a lack of enthusiasm, especially after the victimised men left to take up employment in other towns. Indeed, the Association probably ceased to function after it had brought forward Trembath, the secretary of the T. & L.C., to contest the municipal elections on 12 December 1905.³⁵

Trembath, who was heavily defeated, seems to have been the first labour municipal candidate in the Cape Colony.³⁶ He was not disheartened by this setback and continued until 1910 to pioneer industrial and political labour organisation in Kimberley, being undoubtedly the foremost labour leader on the diamond-fields. A Cornish compositor by background,

32. Worker, 30.1.1909, article by Trembath in Trembath I, p.70.

33. Ibid.

34. Ibid.

35. For its existence during the second half of 1905 see press cuttings in Trembath I, pp.8 & 125. On Trembath's candidature see Rand Daily Mail, 12.12.1905, p.4, "Labour Notes"; S.A. News, 16.12.1905, p.11, "Labour Notes"; and press-cuttings in Trembath I, pp.8, 11 & 21.

36. S.A. News, 14.10.1905, p.3, "Labour Notes".

Trembath arrived in Cape Town in 1897 as a young man of twenty-two years. Soon afterwards he participated in the formation of the local T. & L.C. and by 1900 he had moved to Kimberley. From 1905 to 1911 he served as secretary of the T. & L.C. during which time he also became well-known for his many articles in the labour and non-labour press.³⁷ Thus it was not surprising that he should have been offered in 1909 the editorship of The Rand labour weekly, the Worker.³⁸

10. Kimberley, 1906 - 1910.

Political labour activity seems to have declined during 1906, 1907 and most of 1908 - a decline linked, perhaps, with the slump in the price of diamonds and large exodus of workers, including several leaders of the T. & L.C.³⁹ No labour candidate came forward in Kimberley in the 1908 general election and, indeed, the four Progressive Party candidates for the Legislative Assembly were all returned unopposed.⁴⁰

Eventually, high-handed methods of De Beers again stimulated organised labour's interest in political action. In October 1908 De Beers decided to abolish the Saturday half-holiday for its employees and "locked-out" 100 strikers objecting to this deprivation. There then ensued a two-and-a-half month agitation which attracted labour leaders from the Rand and Durban; W.H. Andrews, T. Mathews, H.W. Sampson, C.H. Haggard and A. Crawford helped to maintain the morale of the strikers and enliven the public protest meetings.

37. Trembath Papers, especially Book I, p.210, (autobiographical notes); Forward, 13.5.1932, obituary.

38. Press-cutting in Trembath I, p.483.

39. Worker, 30.1.1909, article by Trembath in Trembath I, p.70.

40. E.P. Herald, 5.3.1908.

According to his biographer, Andrews appreciated that De Beers would never re-employ the strikers, but saw in the strike a wonderful chance to expose the capitalists and make socialist propaganda on a grand scale.⁴¹ In the end, the locked-out men were not reinstated, but the Saturday half-holiday was restored.⁴²

Meanwhile the public in Kimberley was moved and showed this in the municipal elections during the agitation. In Ward Six, Walter McQueen, one of the leading organisers of the strike, was only defeated by ten votes by the De Beers nominee. So elated was the Kimberley correspondent of the South African Review that he claimed:

The result of the election in Ward 6, the only contested Municipal Election in Kimberley, has been the severest slap in the face that De Beers has ever experienced.⁴³

However, no political labour organisation seems to have been formed during or immediately after the agitation. The presence of Archibald Crawford probably inspired the formation of the all embracing General Workers Union, but it soon became defunct following the victimisation of its chairman, Chapman, and secretary, Trembath.⁴⁴ Indeed, the situation in Kimberley was depressing. "Our position is as rats in a cage", reported a local resident, "we cannot escape to freedom, because the country generally is in a bad state for workers, and money is tight;"⁴⁵ and Haggar

41. R.K. Cope, Comrade Bill, p.101.

42. Ibid., pp.101-2; Worker, 30.1.1909, article by Trembath in Trembath I, p.70; A.S.E. Monthly Report, October, November, December 1908, January and February 1909, passim.

43. 18.12.1908, p.21. On the contest see also R.K. Cope, Comrade Bill, p.102.

44. "Labour Notes", in Transvaal Leader, 23.1.1909, p.15; 30.1.1909, p.14; and 17.4.1909, p.13. See also 1909 press-cuttings in Trembath I, pp.104 & 483. Miss P.G.T. Trembath informed the writer that De Beers warned that anyone employing her father would not obtain its business.

45. S.A. Review, 6.2.1909, p.16, letter from "an English Woman".

declared that he had never been so disgusted with a town as with Kimberley and thought that De Beers should be ashamed of the position.⁴⁶ About the same time the craft unions, except for the S.A.T.U., were struggling to survive.⁴⁷

Against this background, labour's jubilation at the return to the town council in April 1909 of Jimmie Trembath - a "martyr" of the late strike - can well be imagined. He won the Ward Four by-election by the narrow margin of ten votes and, in December, was re-elected with an increased majority. On the latter occasion 1500 Trembath supporters made a triumphal march through Kimberley.⁴⁸

Trembath's election victories were magnified out of all proportion, even though he was the first labour representative on a public body in the Cape Colony.⁴⁹ His December success was referred to as the "De Beers Waterloo" and he was acclaimed as the "mere compositor" who bearded the "Hoggenheimers in their dens".⁵⁰ But this optimism proved premature.

Before ending this section it is worth recording that a Fabian Society was started in Kimberley towards the end of 1908. A.R. Bishop, a pharmacist, was its first president and Trembath was also actively involved in its formation.⁵¹

46. The Friend, 4.11.1908, p.5.

47. Press-cutting (1909) in Trembath I, p.84.

48. Press-cuttings (1909) in Trembath I, pp.35 & 41; Transvaal Leader, 17.4.1909, p.13, "Labour Notes"; S.A.Review, 10.12.1909, p.21; 17.12.1909, p.13; 24.12.1909, p.5; Worker, 25.12.1909, in Trembath I, p.102; S.A.T.J., January 1910, p.13.

49. As first labour representative see A.S.E. Monthly Report, October 1909, p.8.

50. S.A. Review, 24.12.1909, p.5, article by its Kimberley correspondent.

51. Transvaal Leader, 2.1.1909, p.11, "Labour Notes"; press-cutting (end of 1908) in Trembath I, p.192.

Secondly, Trembath's genuine concern for the non-white is significant. Towards the end of 1909 Isaac Joshua, the secretary of the Kimberley branch of the A.P.O., dismissed rumours that Trembath agreed with the colour policies of the labour organisations on the Rand and declared:

Mr. Trembath ... was the only man in Kimberley who had stood on a public platform and openly declared that he would accept no Constitution that drew a colour line. He was also the only one who had courage enough to tell the people of Kimberley the truth concerning the trouble with Indians in the Transvaal. Captain Browning [Trembath's opponent in the municipal elections] had suddenly taken great interest in the coloured man, but the only man who raised his voice for equal rights was Trembath. 52

ORANGE RIVER COLONY

11. Bloemfontein.

Before the Anglo-Boer War several craft unions must have existed in Bloemfontein, for a branch of the S.A.T.U. was certainly active by 1898.⁵³ But no attempt at political labour organisation seems to have been made and the white workers must have voted for representatives of the professional, mercantile and agricultural interests.⁵⁴ After the war, the absence of parliamentary elections delayed the emergence of a labour party. However, this delay was also caused by the lack of industrial activity comparable with that on the Rand and by the divisive "racial factor". Nevertheless,

52. Press-cutting (about the end of 1909) in Trembath I, p.54. On Joshua's office see press-cutting (1909) in Trembath I, p.66.

53. A.J. Downes, Printers' Saga, p.162.

54. The Friend, 14.2.1907, p.4, editorial.

Bloemfontein's proximity to Johannesburg and to Durban ensured that the political labour movement could not remain dormant indefinitely.

By mid-1903 craft unions in Bloemfontein formed a T. & L.C., but it proved short-lived.⁵⁵ When it was revived two years later it accepted political action as one of its functions.⁵⁶ However, this Trades Council also survived for a short period only; and thus there seems to have been no co-ordinating industrial body for the trade unions in the Orange River Colony during the few years before the unification of South Africa.⁵⁷

Although the Letters Patent granting the O.R.C. responsible government were published as late as 5 June 1907, political activity, in expectation of that concession, had gathered momentum beforehand. The Orangia Unie and Constitutional Parties, with their respective Afrikaans and English speaking supporters, were founded; and, not to be outdone, the Bloemfontein I.L.P. was formed towards the end of 1906, prompted initially by the S.A.T.U.⁵⁸

At a series of meetings early in 1907, at least one of which was attended by the president of the Transvaal L.R.C., W.H. Andrews, the I.L.P. adopted a not unusual labour programme with little trace of socialist influence.⁵⁹ At the same time

55. "Labour Notes" in S.A. News, 20.6.1903, p.4; and 15.8.1903, p.5.

56. S.A. News, 5.8.1905, p.6, "Labour Notes"; Rand Daily Mail, 4.8.1905, p.5; 8.8.1905, p.5, "Labour Notes".

57. Transvaal Leader, 2.10.1909, p.15, "Labour Notes".

58. On this prompting see S.A.T.J., May 1908, p.4. For dating of its information see Duff's remarks in The Friend, 23.2.1907.

59. The Friend, 14.2.1907, p.5; 23.2.1907; and 2.5.1907. For the programme see Appendix B, III, below.

the party seems to have been uncertain about independent political action and, therefore, held negotiations with Sir John Fraser of the Constitutional Party and General Hertzog of Orangia Unie.⁶⁰ However, nothing seems to have been achieved and in August the I.L.P. was still undecided about election co-operation.⁶¹

Meanwhile John Duff, a tailor by trade, was rapidly emerging as the dominant figure in the Colony's labour movement.⁶² At the Labour Day demonstration on Bloemfontein Market Square in May 1907, attended by about 2000 persons, he announced his intention to contest the general election as a candidate of the I.L.P.⁶³ Yet the solitary I.L.P. candidate to come forward was J.C. Crockett, who intended to contest the Bloemfontein Railway Division. But poor organisation led to his disqualification on nomination day when he failed to obtain a seconder; and his appeal to the High Court on 12 November proved unsuccessful.⁶⁴

Thus no labour candidates went to the polls in November, but two Constitutional Party candidates were connected, to some extent, with the I.L.P. Arthur Godfrey Barlow, a former editor of The Friend and then the organising secretary of the Constitutional Party, who was easily elected in the Bloemfontein Park constituency, had been a committee member of the I.L.P. during the first few months of its existence; and his elder

60. The Friend, 14,16,18 & 23.2.1907; R.K. Cope, Comrade Bill, p.86.

61. S.A. Tribune, 31.8.1907.

62. R.K. Cope, Comrade Bill, pp.85-87; Walker and Weinbren, 2000 Casualties,p.19.

63. Transvaal Leader, 2.5.1907,p.8.

64. Bloemfontein Post, 6 & 12.11.1907.

brother, Alfred William Barlow, a quantity surveyor by occupation who was soundly defeated in the Midlands Town (Ladybrand) division, was also associated with it. As chairman of the I.L.P., the latter presided over Keir Hardie's crowded and enthusiastic public meeting in Bloemfontein in February 1908.⁶⁵

During 1908 the I.L.P. ceased to function and there followed a lack of interest in political labour organisation until the Kimberley Lock-out in October led to Transvaal and Natal labour leaders stopping over in Bloemfontein. They helped to form the General Workers Union and its apparent successor, the O.R.C. Labour Party. The latter, which was established towards the start of 1909, had as its president, J. Knowles, and vice-president, N.J. Eddy, both of the S.A.T.U., and as its secretary, John Duff. Evidently, socialist influence was strong, although this was not reflected in its policies.⁶⁶

The party's attitude to non-whites is not clear. On the one hand, one of its main constituent elements, the S.A.T.U., succeeded at the end of 1909 in persuading the Bloemfontein Municipal Council to insert a fair wage clause in its contracts for municipal printing whereby, amongst other provisions,

65. On Arthur Barlow see his autobiography, Almost in Confidence, passim; as organising secretary see The Friend, 11.2.1907; on his election as M.L.A. Bloemfontein Post, 21.11.1907; on his association with the I.L.P. The Friend, 23.2.1907. On Alfred Barlow see S.A. Who's Who, 1915, p.16 for biographical information; on his defeat see S.A. News, 22.11.1907; on his membership of the I.L.P. see Bloemfontein Post, 13.12.1907, and The Friend, 24.2.1908, p.5. Arthur Barlow left the Unionist Party in 1914 to join the S.A.L.P. and was elected a Labour M.L.A. in 1921 and 1924.

66. Transvaal Leader, 2.10.1910, p.15, "Labour Notes". On the General Workers Union see The Friend, 4.12.1908, p.8; and 18.11.1908, p.8.

contractors were obliged to confine their skilled work to whites.⁶⁷ On the other hand, the labour columnist of the Transvaal Leader reported that most of the members of the O.R.C. Labour Party favoured Sampson's manifesto advocating the territorial segregation of the native population and equal rights for the coloured, and that only a small section supported Crawford's non-racial stand.⁶⁸

67. Voice of Labour, 25.12.1909, p.1; S.A.T.J., April 1910, p.4.

68. 2.10.1910, p.15.

CHAPTER VIII

NATAL, 1900-1909

There is no question whatever that the immense bulk of our supporters, as well as those in other Colonies, recognise that the white ideal must be maintained, and we cannot afford to indulge in pious platitudes on a subject than means life or death to us materially.

Nelson P. Palmer, M.L.A.,
parliamentary leader of the Natal
Labour Party.¹

Labour politics, 1900-1909, in Natal followed a distinct pattern. At first, organised labour supported quasi-labour candidates and M.L.A.s, then, together with socialists, it founded political organisations which contested the general election in 1906 with surprising success. Less than a year later, these organisations had combined with the trade unions to form the Natal Labour Party, which immediately pursued an active existence. It employed a full-time organiser, published its own weekly organ and convened the first of the founding conferences of the S.A.L.P. Unlike the situation in the Cape and Orange River Colonies, organised labour was a significant factor in Natal politics.

1. Quasi-Labour Candidates and M.L.A.s

The Durban Trades Council, which claimed at the end of 1901 to represent all the local craft unions, maintained a happy relationship with the Durban Borough M.L.A.s of Natal's second legislative assembly, especially with M.S. Evans and J.S. Wylie. It therefore regretted the decision of these two not to stand for re-election.²

1. Natal Mercury, 11.12.1908, p.3.

2. First and second annual reports of the Trades Council in Natal Mercury Weekly Edition, 9.11.1900, p.27, and 25.10.1901, p.6, respectively.

But before the general election was to be held, a by-election took place on 22 May 1901 in the Borough constituency. Here, J.G. Maydon, an ex-M.L.A. and part-proprietor of a sugar estate, opposed Henry Ancketill, the leading disciple of Henry George in Natal and a journalist by occupation.³ The Trades Council does not seem to have openly favoured either candidate although both took the trouble to address it during their election campaigns.⁴ This is strange since Ancketill's manifesto and his speeches were strongly orientated towards the interests of white labour and showed extremely advanced thought. Thus he wanted the importation by the State of indentured Indian labour to be stopped, a fair wage clause inserted in government contracts and a minimum wage of 8/- a day set for white state employees; advocated the enfranchisement of women and regarded poverty as a social crime, explaining that there would be no poverty if justice were the accepted order.⁵ By contrast, Maydon expressed the views of the countryside; he supported continued importation of indentured Asiatic labour and plural voting and opposed redistribution of seats, which was strongly favoured by Ancketill.⁶ Not surprisingly therefore, A.L. Clark and Harold Attersoll, later leaders of the labour party in Natal, signed Ancketill's election requisition.⁷ The election result must surely have encouraged the radical movement, for Ancketill, still comparatively unknown in the division, obtained only 152 votes fewer than Maydon.⁸

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3. On Maydon see Natal Mercury Weekly Edition, 10.5.1901, p.3 and 3.5.1901, p.19; on Ancketill 10.5.1901, p.11; 17.5.1901, p.13; Durban Borough Voters' Roll in Natal Government Gazette, 15.7.1902, p.1198; and p.70 above.
 4. Natal Mercury Weekly Edition, 3.5.1901, p.19.
 5. For his manifesto see Natal Mercury, 27.4.1901, p.5; for speeches by him Natal Mercury Weekly Edition, 10.5.1901, p.11 and 24.5.1901, p.13.
 6. Natal Mercury Weekly Edition, 3.5.1901, p.19.
 7. Natal Mercury, 27.4.1901, p.5.
 8. Natal Mercury Weekly Edition, 24.5.1901, p.5; and, for post-mortem, 31.5.1901, p.4.

Shortly afterwards Natal held its third general election under responsible government. Eight candidates went to the polls on 27 September for the four positions in the Durban Borough constituency. Here, the Trades Council brought forward its own nominee, moved, perhaps, by the unwillingness of Evans and Wylie to stand and by the militancy of its newly-elected president, R.E. Hale, who was also president of the local branch of the A.S. of C. & J.⁹ Originally, the Council intended to support someone from their own ranks, "from the lathe, the bench, the scaffold, or any trade", but found that it had neither the finances nor the organisation to do so.¹⁰ Thus it chose William McLarty, an insurance agent who owned an estate and general agencies business. He was born in Scotland about 1858 where he worked as a carpenter and a builder before emigrating to Australia in 1886. Ten years later he was transferred to Durban by a large insurance company and soon became known as the "premier" of the Parliamentary Debating Society and as the president of the local branch of the Y.M.C.A.¹¹ His labour credentials, then, were not impressive; perhaps the Council was attracted by his Australian experience.¹²

However, McLarty was in full agreement with the Council's platform which it drafted for election purposes.¹³ Principal features of the platform were its concern for the improvement of the lot of the white worker and for electoral reform, notably for the redistribution of political power on the basis

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9. On Hale see Natal Mercury Weekly Edition, 1.3.1901, p.9; 27.9.1901, p.2.
 10. Natal Mercury Weekly Edition, 13.9.1901, p.22.
 11. Twentieth Century Impressions of Natal: Its People, Commerce, Industries and Resources, pp.48-49; Natal Mercury Weekly Edition, 20.9.1901, p.27.
 12. McLarty made frequent references to Australia and New Zealand. See, for example, Natal Mercury Weekly Edition, 13.9.1901, p.23 and 20.9.1901, p.13.
 13. On his agreement see Natal Mercury Weekly Edition, 13.9.1901, p.22; for the platform Appendix B,II,4, below.

of the white population. Surprisingly, it contained no reference to non-whites, but Hale expressed his Council's hostility in no uncertain manner. "It was better that every sugar-cane should wither", he declared, "rather than that their homes should be polluted and the country ruined by the black and yellow agony now in this Colony."¹⁴

A feature of the labour essay at the polls was the rift that developed between Hale and McLarty. The former rashly accused state officials of corruption, forcing McLarty and the Trades Council to dissociate themselves from his remarks.¹⁵ Possibly as a result, Hale was not re-elected as president of the Council towards the end of the year and seems to have disappeared from the forefront of local labour activity.¹⁶

Also contesting the Durban Borough constituency was Henry Ancketill, whom the press regarded as a labour or quasi-labour candidate.¹⁷ The Trades Council's attitude was explained by Hale:

Mr. Ancketill has come forward in an independent capacity as a land reformer. He had no doubt a very large amount of support from the public, but he had never been an accredited representative of the trades and labour organisations of this town.

Although their sympathies were with him, yet they wanted a man to go into the House who would be able to voice labour interests¹⁸

Significantly, Ancketill was supported publicly by Nelson Palmer, who was later to become parliamentary leader of the Natal Labour Party.¹⁹

14. Natal Mercury Weekly Edition, 27.9.1901, p.12. See also 13.9.1901, p.22; and for hostility of the S.A.T.U. S.A.T.J., July 1901, editorial.

15. Natal Mercury Weekly Edition, 27.9.1901, pp.12, 14 & 15.

16. He was replaced by D. Anderson of the Bricklayers' Society - Natal Mercury Weekly Edition, 25.10.1901, p.6.

17. Natal Mercury Weekly Edition, 20.9.1901, p.7, and 4.10.1901, p.5.

18. Natal Mercury Weekly Edition, 13.9.1901, p.22.

19. Natal Mercury Weekly Edition, 20.9.1901, p.21, and 27.9.1901, p.16.

The election resulted in the return of Ancketill and the defeat of McLarty, who, nevertheless, obtained over a thousand votes.²⁰ The Trades Council was satisfied with the outcome since its candidate was chosen only two weeks prior to polling day, it employed no canvassers and it had used no cabs. Thus it looked forward to success in the future and decided to establish a parliamentary fund to finance working class candidates.²¹

Meanwhile F.S. Tatham, leading Natal advocate, soldier and parliamentarian, headed the polls in the Pietermaritzburg City constituency.²² He was exceedingly popular among the workers, especially the railwaymen as their strike in 1902 showed, and, although never an official labour candidate, he came to be regarded as one of the champions of the white working class in the Legislative Assembly.²³

The advent of peace over South Africa brought with it no advance in the political labour movement in Natal.²⁴ Another general election took place in December 1902, but no official labour candidate appeared. In the Durban Borough seat all four sitting members were returned unopposed and, in Pietermaritzburg City, F. S. Tatham again obtained the most votes.²⁵ His cordial relationship with the labour movement

20. See Appendix C, II, 3, below.

21. Annual report of the Trades Council in Natal Mercury Weekly Edition, 25.10.1901, p.6.

22. For result see Natal Mercury Weekly Edition, 27.9.1901, p.25.

23. Twentieth Century Impressions of Natal, pp.49,51; Natal Witness, 14.7.1906, p.4, and 21.7.1906, p.16; S.A.T.J., March 1902, pp. 10,12; Gillian Tatham, The Tatham Family in South Africa. Note that F.J. Grobler, "Die Invloed van Geskoolde Blanke Arbeid", pp.113-5, has confused F. S. Tatham with his brother Ralph, who later came to be regarded as the black sheep of the family. "

24. S.A.T.J., December 1902, p.15, summary of the annual report of the secretary to the Trades Council.

25. Natal Mercury, 18.12.1902, p.10.

was shown before these elections. Thus on 20 November 1902, in addressing the Durban Trades Council, he stressed his opposition to Indian immigration and advised support for Ancketill since the latter's views on the Indian question were closer to theirs than the other Borough candidates.²⁶ Evidently, the Council approached Tatham to contest the Borough constituency, but he declined.²⁷

Besides Tatham and Ancketill, Natal's fourth legislative assembly had another member taking a keen interest in the welfare of the white working class. He was McLarty who had been returned unopposed in a by-election in the Borough constituency on 30 June 1903.²⁸ On this occasion there seems to be no evidence of official Trades Council backing, but his election requisition does reveal the names of several leading members of the local branch of the S.A.T.U.²⁹ Still, McLarty regarded himself as a labour representative, although his election committee in 1903 and in 1906 had no official connection with the labour movement.³⁰

McLarty continued to be on excellent terms with the Durban Trades Council, consulting it, for instance, in November 1904 and in May 1905 before introducing his unsuccessful compulsory arbitration and conciliation bill.³¹ At the same time he remained concerned with the grievances of the white workers and probably was responsible for the Early Closing Act of 1904, though he preferred his original bill dealing with the hours of shop assistants.³² Up till 1910, indeed, he

26. Natal Mercury, 21.11.1902, p.8.
 27. Natal Mercury, 4.12.1902, p.10.
 28. Natal Mercury, 1.7.1903, p.9.
 29. W.P. Clarke, Jos Edwards, H.A. Wilson. For the requisition see Natal Mercury, 26.6.1903, p.1.
 30. On being a labour representative see Debates of the Legislative Assembly, 14.11.1906, p.17. See also letter from W. Wade of the S.A.T.U. in Natal Mercury, 27.8.1906, p.6.
 31. Natal Mercury, 9.11.1904, p.9, and 3.6.1905, p.11.

seems to have retained the sympathy of at least a section of organised labour.³³

Meanwhile Anckettill served on the Redistribution Commission, which advocated the abolition of plural voting and the reduction of the lodgers' franchise to two years;³⁴ continued to demand land reform; and pioneered the struggle for the enfranchisement of women. Already in 1901 he had introduced a bill for the enfranchisement of women - the first in South Africa; in the following year his wife and he founded in Durban the first women's enfranchisement league in South Africa; and in 1905 he presented to the Legislative Assembly Natal's first female suffrage petition.³⁵ While Tatham and McLarty made little or no impact on the labour movement, Ancketill played no small role in the inclusion of two important planks in the S.A.L.P.'s platform: the enfranchisement of women and the taxation of land values.³⁶ Furthermore, his ideas on social reform must have inspired an interest not only in Henry George's writings, but also in political labour action and in socialism.

2. Emergence of Political Labour Organisations 1903 - 1906

It is not clear what caused a crowded public meeting of craft unionists on 16 September 1903 in Durban to adopt a resolution calling for the formation of a political labour league.³⁷ It may have been the continuing depression and

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32. Natal Mercury, 17.11.1904, p.13, letter from B. Shlom; 30.12.1904, p.10; 8.7.1905, p.15; Rand Daily Mail, 17.10.1905, p.8, "Labour Notes".
33. See, for example, S.A.T.J., August 1907, pp. 5-6; November 1908, p.3; December 1908, pp.11-12; November 1909, p.3.
34. Natal Mercury, 5.11.1904, p.13; 15.9.1905, p.7.
35. Women's Enfranchisement Association of South Africa, Enfranchising Women: Historical Survey; I.K. Cross, "The Women's Movement in South Africa" in Women of South Africa, pp.306-8; Natal Mercury, 29.6.1903, letter from "M.O." and 15.9.1905, p.7.

consequent large number of unemployed or the anti-Chinese movement on the Rand. Certainly, in December, when William Blundell, the secretary of the Durban branch of the S.A.T.U., tried to establish his Natal Democratic League, there were outside influences. As he himself stated, he was in contact with Quinn and Whiteside, the co-signatories of the minority report of the Transvaal Labour Commission. But if conclusive proof is needed it can be obtained easily by comparing the manifesto of Blundell's proposed political party with that of the National Democratic Federation, which was founded on the Rand in September 1903.³⁸ In any event, the proposed labour league and Blundell's party, both of which were directed at the white working class, were still-born.

A much more enduring organisation, formed at this time, was the Durban Clarion Fellowship, which seems to have survived for about four years. As its name indicates, the Fellowship presumably drew its inspiration from the world of Robert Blatchford, the socialist editor of the Clarion and the author of Merrie England. It was mainly an educative body, seed sowing rather than harvest reaping at its regular Sunday gatherings. Amongst its many activities were two significant fund raising campaigns within one-and-a-half years of its inception. The first helped to send E.B. Rose as the South African representative to the Amsterdam Socialist Congress of the Second International, and the second supported the parliamentary candidature in England of H.M. Hyndman, the veteran leader of the British S.D.F., a rigidly Marxist organisation.³⁹

36. See Appendix B,V,2, below.

37. Natal Witness, 17.9.1903, p.5.

38. On outside support see report of the Natal Democratic League's only public meeting in Natal Mercury, 4.12.1903, p.9. For the respective manifestos see Appendix B,II,5 and B,IV,5 below.

39. On the Clarion Fellowship in England see F. Bealey and H. Pelling, Labour and Politics, 1900-1906, p.169; on the Natal equivalent "Labour Notes" in S.A. News, 21.1.1905

A study of the leading members of the Durban Clarion Fellowship reveals two important features. The first was the presence of an important trade union element. William Blundell was in 1904 its organiser of open-air propaganda; George Robertson, who sometimes presided at its meetings, was a railway timekeeper and a member of the Trades Council; and A.L. Clark, one of its leading lecturers, was to become a few years later president of the Natal Railwaymen's Association and has been described as the father of railway trade unionism in South Africa.⁴⁰ The second feature concerns the defunct N.P.L. C.H. Hagggar, A.L. Clark, G. Robertson and H. Attersoll, who were prominent members of it in 1899, became equally prominent in the Clarion Fellowship. As was the case overseas, the conversion, therefore from the land reform ideas of Henry George to socialism was not found difficult.⁴¹

One of the first matters attracting the attention of the Fellowship was the proposed introduction of indentured Chinese labour on the Rand. After the Natal Parliament had rejected in January by thirty votes to two a motion deprecating the importation of the Chinese, and had dismissed Richard Seddon's proposal of a joint colonial protest,⁴²

40. For Blundell's trade union see Natal Mercury, 14.12.1903, p.11; as open-air organiser Natal Mercury 28.3.1904, p.8. For Robertson's background see Rand Daily Mail, 30.5.1905, p.5, "Labour Notes"; as chairman of a meeting Natal Mercury, 8.2.1904, p.8. On Clark see Gitsham and Trembath, Labour Organisation in South Africa, pp.164-5.

41. On members of the N.P.L. see p.72 above; on Henry George as the first step to socialism p.6. above. A random glance through the Natal Mercury, 1904-5, revealed the following Clarion Fellowship lecturers and lectures:

C.H. Hagggar, "Taxation or Tribute" (11.5.1905, p.7.)
 "Individual [sic] Socialism" (21.9.1905, p.10)

A.L. Clark, "Imperialism" (18.2.1904, p.15); "The Industrial Revolution and its Lesson" (2.6.1905, p.7).

G. Robertson, "Socialism, the Greatest Phenomenon of the Century" (15.7.1905, p.13):

W. Blundell, "Unemployed Problem" (8.2.1904, p.8).

H. Attersoll, "Something about Humanity" (18.5.1905, p.10);
 "Women and the Present System" (17.6.1905, p.16)

leaders of the Clarion Fellowship and organised labour, together with Ancketill and a few others, launched an anti-Chinese movement in Durban. R.J. Smith, the secretary of the local Trades Council, claimed, indeed, that his organisation had taken the initiative and denied that the agitation was engineered from the Rand.⁴³ Several public protest meetings were held in February and March at which the mining magnates, Lord Milner and the Chinese were strongly attacked. Haggart, for instance, declared :

He had known Chinese labour at its best, and at its worst, and he could say Chinese labour was an unmitigated curse. It was a certainty that if once the Chinese came in, they would overrun the whole sub-continent.⁴⁴

and Ancketill explained :

The importation of Asiatics will perpetuate the advantages of the capitalists. This they have worked for, but the people have been too blind to see it! The Asiatic policy is tantamount to handing the whole of the mining industry, and virtually the government of South Africa, over to the capitalists for ever!⁴⁵

Surely such utterances served to increase anti-capitalist sentiment, and to stimulate moves for political labour organisation.

However, this outcome was not evident until the first May Day celebrations were held in Durban in 1905 - celebrations organised by the Trades Council, which, at this stage, claimed a membership of eight societies representing a little over 1 000 men. Here, speakers denounced capitalism, but without openly propagating socialism, and supported the formation of an independent labour party. Indeed, one of the resolutions stated :

42. Natal Mercury, 13.1.1904, p.9; 14.1.1904, pp.8-9.

43. Natal Mercury, 24.2.1904, p.10.

44. Natal Mercury, 17.2.1904, p.13.

45. Natal Mercury, 1.3.1904, p.13, letter from Ancketill. For his speeches in similar vein see 20.2.1904, p.13, and 21.3.1904, p.9. For reports of the anti-Chinese meetings see 17.2.1904, p.13; 20.2.1904, p.13; 21.3.1904, p.9.

That this meeting of the workers of Durban considers the time ripe for direct labour representation in the House of Assembly, and urges one and all to take every advantage of the franchise so as to secure unto themselves the right of using that power in the interest of labour at all future elections.⁴⁶

The formation in the following month of the Durban Workers' Political Union, (the D.W.P.U.), was thus not unexpected. It was started under the auspices of the Clarion Fellowship, one of whose leaders, H. Attersoll, became its first president; and its purpose was to secure labour representation in parliament and to organise workers who were not associated with the existing trade unions.⁴⁷

Soon after its inception the D.W.P.U. obtained an opportunity to test its political strength. On 9 September Ancketill resigned as M.L.A. for the Durban Borough constituency, explaining that, as a poor man, he could not afford to remain in office.⁴⁸ Shortly afterwards two candidates appeared: M.S. Evans, who, as has been pointed out already, was on friendly terms with organised labour, and C.H. Haggar, the official nominee of the D.W.P.U.⁴⁹

Their election platforms scarcely differed and, indeed, Haggar accused Evans of defending a programme he had first publicised.⁵⁰ Both sought the support of the Trades Council and addressed its meeting on 19th October. Although Haggar obtained a slight majority in votes, the Council decided not to support either candidate, leaving each of its affiliated societies to choose for itself.⁵¹

46. Natal Mercury, 2.5.1905, p.8. The details on the Trades Council were given at this meeting.

47. Natal Mercury, 23.6.1905, p.6. On the role of the Fellowship see S.A. News, 17.6.1905, p.7, "Labour Notes".

48. Natal Mercury, 15.9.1905, p.7.

49. On Evans's position see also Natal Mercury, 24.8.1905, p.8, and 26.8.1905, p.10. For Haggar as the D.W.P.U.'s nominee see 16.10.1905, p.7.

50. Natal Mercury, 26.10.1905, p.7.

51. The minutes of this meeting are given in Natal Mercury, 4.9.1906, p.9.

The Trades Council, then, was not behind Haggar's candidature. Its president, W. Wade, a past president of the local branch of the S.A.T.U., was actually hostile towards him. "For myself," he declared a year later, "I will always claim my political freedom, and refuse to be hide-bound by any institution, and especially by the Socialist clique."⁵² Indeed, Wade resigned his presidency in January 1906 "on account of the Socialistic element continually pushing forward its political views to the detriment of trade union matters."⁵³ This conflict over socialism and over political action led to the secession of other members and, shortly afterwards, to the demise of the Council.⁵⁴

Thus the socialism of the Clarion Fellowship was unacceptable to certain craft union leaders. Yet its candidate, Haggar, was no socialist, being at best a supporter of the New Zealand policy of "State Socialism" which embraced "the public regulation of labour conditions, the abandonment of the strike weapon and the nationalisation of key enterprises in order to secure their conduct in accordance with the public interest".⁵⁵ Indeed, in August 1906 he referred to Richard Seddon as his old friend and teacher.⁵⁶ But Haggar was a master of evasion and probably was never sure of his own attitude; for instance, he declared during his election campaign in 1905:

52. Natal Mercury, 30.8.1906, letter from Wade.

53. A.J. Downes, Printers' Saga, p.237.

54. Natal Mercury, 25.8.1906, p.11; 27.8.1906, p.5, letter from Wade; Rand Daily Mail, 3.4.1906, p.8, "Labour Notes"; A.S.E. Monthly Report, August 1906, p.9.

55. G.D.H. Cole, Socialist Thought: The Second International, Part II, p.891.

56. Natal Mercury, 24.8.1906, p.9. On his support for New Zealand "state socialism" see 3.5.1905, p.10, and p.8 above.

One single, fundamental principle must govern society and this principle must be either individualism, that is egotism, or the solidarity, the cohesive fellowship of mankind, that is altruism. At the present day, neither fellowship nor egotism is ruling alone, but a combination of both which is unreasonable as it is inconsistent.⁵⁷

Haggar lost the Durban Borough by-election on 26 October 1905, but the result showed that the D.W.P.U. had substantial support.⁵⁸ This augured well considering that Haggar had fought a popular ex-M.L.A., who had the support of the local press and several craft union leaders.

Inspired, perhaps, by Haggar's performance, John Connolly succeeded in March 1906 in founding the Natal Railwaymen's Association, one of the principal objects of which was to secure representation in parliament; and, indeed, he made no secret of his intention to stand for the Klip River division in the next general election. Shortly afterwards, branches were opened in Ladysmith, Pietermaritzburg and Durban, and Connolly, having resigned from the service of the Natal Government Railways in Ladysmith, assumed office as the Association's full-time organising secretary.⁵⁹

Surprisingly, Connolly had no trade union background. Born in Ireland in 1871, he was trained for a military career and served seven years with the Dublin Fusiliers, six of which were spent in India. In 1897 he arrived in Durban and in the following year joined the N.G.R. at Ladysmith.⁶⁰

57. Natal Mercury, 14.10.1905, p.13. For his attitude towards the socialist objective see his article, "Organised Labour as a Political Factor", State, June 1910, p.941.

58. See Appendix C, II, 4 below.

59. Rand Daily Mail, 3.4.1906, p.8, "Labour Notes"; Natalian, 5.7.1907, p.9; F.J. Grobler, "Die Invloed van Geskoolde Blanke Arbeid", p.118.

60. Natalian, 5.7.1907, p.9; South African Who's Who, 1910 p.87.

Connolly also played a leading role in the formation in June 1906 of the General Workers' Political Association of Pietermaritzburg. A feeling of urgency was no doubt provided by the impending general election. Although its main office-bearers were drawn from the professional and business classes, there were several skilled workers on its committee.⁶¹ Like Connolly, its chairman and most prominent member, Nelson Pond Palmer, hitherto had little or no connection with the labour movement, although, as has already been noted, he was associated with the N.P.L. before the war and with Ancketill after it.⁶² He was born in London in 1865 and settled in Natal in 1898 where he worked as an accountant. Before 1906, he had sat on the Pietermaritzburg Town Council.⁶³

As its name indicates, the principal purpose of the G.W.P.A. was to obtain labour representation in parliament; and its programme was certainly drafted to appeal to the white working class. It therefore called for social welfare measures, electoral reform and anti-Indian legislation. Surprisingly, however, both its constitution and platform, save for anti-Asiatic demands, contained no colour discrimination. Membership, for instance, was open to

all workers and sympathisers who agree to actively advance the cause of labour representation, and pay a subscription of one shilling per month to the Association.⁶⁴

But its supporters probably agreed with Haggart's race prejudice at its foundation gathering. He deprecated the teaching of skilled trades to natives whilst whites were tramping the streets of Durban and declared that the next time he was born, he would be born black.⁶⁵

61. Compare list of committee members in Natal Witness, 25.6.1906, p.6, with their occupations as given in the Pietermaritzburg City Voters' Roll in Natal Government Gazette, 24.7.1907, p.589 ff. For office-bearers see Appendix D,V, below.

62. See pp. 72 & 358 above.

63. Natalian, 1.2.1907, p.8; South African Who's Who, 1908, p.304.

64. Natal Witness, 25.6.1906, p.6. For constitution and platform see Appendices A,V and B,II,6 below.

65. Natal Witness, 11.6.1906, p.6.

3. General Election, 1906, and By-Elections, 1907

Labour emerged with flying colours in mid-September when Natal held its second post-war general election. Four official labour candidates stood and all four were elected.⁶⁶ In the absence, except in Durban, of a central co-ordinating body such as the Transvaal L.R.C., the labour candidates were sponsored by different labour organisations. But when parliament sat after the elections, there was a distinct labour caucus of four M.L.A.s with R.H. Tatham as their acknowledged leader.⁶⁷

In the Durban Borough constituency - numerically the largest in Natal and with the largest concentration of working class voters - no less than four candidates : McLarty, Evans, Haggar and Cunningham, claimed that they had the workers' interests especially at heart.⁶⁸ Only Cunningham, who entered the contest very late, was not elected. But only Haggar was openly backed by an official labour organisation. "I have been chosen", he reported "not by one party or by one clique, or by one section, but by the Natal Labour Representation Committee which is composed of representatives of the various societies."⁶⁹ However, he did not name those societies; presumably they included the D.W.P.U., the Clarion Fellowship and possibly a number of trade unions. On the other hand, W. Wade, who, as has already been noted, was hostile towards Haggar, was certain about the composition of the Natal L.R.C.:

66. See Appendix C, II, 5 below.

67. Debates, 14.11.1906, p.17.

68. Natal Mercury, 5.9.1906, p.6; Natal Witness, 1.9.1906, p.5

69. As cited by Wade in his letter to Natal Mercury, 27.8.1906, p.6.

The Natal Labour Representation Committee is not composed of any other society than the Clarion Fellowship under many aliases, i.e. the Social Democratic Federation, the Political Workers Union, &c., the strength of which does not amount to 100, and the number of electors in that body is ridiculously small. The trades have not been approached with a view to supporting Mr. Haggart, for the simple reason the Committee knows the trades have no sympathy with the Socialist propaganda. This is the reason why the late Trades Council refused to exist; the Socialist minority insisted on trotting out their rabid ideas to the detriment of trade matters in general. As the late president of that defunct body, I claim the vote of all trade unionists for Mr. McLarty, who was put into the House by the Labour Party, and who has always fought for their rights and principles.⁷⁰

Obviously, some trade unionists opposed the formation of the L.R.C., the president of which was A.L. Clark, who had been prominent in the Clarion Fellowship and the pre-war N.P.L. Another significant supporter was Harry Norrie, a Scottish tailor and a militant socialist.⁷¹

The second L.R.C. candidate was Ralph Heathcote Tatham, brother of the well-known political figure and soldier, F.S. Tatham, K.C., M.L.A. Like his brother, Ralph Tatham qualified as an advocate, but concentrated, however, on his interests in real estate. Oddly enough, in 1904, he refused an offer to contest a seat for the House of Commons on behalf of the British Conservative Party.⁷²

After joining the D.W.P.U., Tatham was asked to stand in the Borough constituency, but preferred to contest Durban County where his main property investments were situated. There seems little doubt about his sympathy for the labour movement since he offered to assist financially the local labour monthly publication, The Spark, and since he declared publicly:

70. Ibid. See also Natal Mercury, 24.8.1906, p.9; 30.8.1906, p.9.

71. Natal Mercury, 24.8.1906, p.9.

72. Men of the Times: Pioneers of the Transvaal and Glimpses of South Africa, p.357; Gillian Tatham, The Tatham Family in South Africa.

I go further, and say that even if I had suggested that I stand for Durban as a representative of the working men, I would not have been ashamed of having done it.⁷³

Meanwhile, as was expected in the Klip River Division, John Connolly came forward on behalf of the Natal Railwaymen's Association. He announced that he was "running as a 'Labour candidate' in the interests of the workers generally" and that he had adopted "the programme of the Labour party in Durban and Maritzburg."⁷⁴

The fourth labour candidate was N.P. Palmer, who stood in the Pietermaritzburg City Division. Originally, the G.W.P.A. brought forward Palmer and an advocate, R.D. Clark, but the latter withdrew from the contest explaining that his views were not sufficiently "robust" for the labour cause.⁷⁵

The policies advocated by the labour candidates, with their usual demands for democratisation of the electoral system, social welfare legislation and more equitable taxation, differed little from those of some of their rivals, notably, Evans and McLarty.⁷⁶ Indeed, Haggar and McLarty admitted the similarity of their platforms and argued about who was the first exponent of the ideas therein;⁷⁷ and, on another occasion, Haggar accused his opponents of stealing items from his programme.⁷⁸ Thus, it was not surprising that the Natal Witness should consider that three labour candidates, and not one (Haggar), had been elected in the Durban Borough constituency; for all three had subscribed to the essentials of the Labour Party platform.⁷⁹ Moreover, Palmer's outlook could scarcely

73. Natal Mercury, 27.8.1906, p.7. For further information on The Spark, see Appendix E below. Note that H.J. and R.E. Simons, Class and Colour in South Africa, p.103, have confused Dan Taylor, a non-labour M.L.A. elected in 1907, with R.H. Tatham.

74. Natal Witness, 21.8.1906, p.2.

75. Natal Witness, 17.8.1906, p.6; 18.8.1906, pp.4, & 13; 21.8.1906, p.5.

76. For programme of the Natal L.R.C. see Appendix B, II, 7 below.

77. Natal Mercury, 12.9.1906, p.9.

78. Natal Mercury, 4.9.1906, p.9.

have been extreme if the same paper referred to his platform as "a good one on the whole"⁸⁰ Nevertheless, the press succeeded, especially in Haggar's case, in giving a socialist tag to the labour candidates.⁸¹

The labour candidates probably differed most from their opponents in the weight they placed on their anti-Indian sentiments. Whereas most candidates agreed that Indian immigration should cease, Haggar wanted Natal to deport her "Coolies" as Queensland had done with her "Kanakas".⁸² Not surprisingly, Indian Opinion regretted Haggar's election.⁸³ Meanwhile Connolly demanded the compulsory repatriation of all indentured Asiatics and called for a minimum wage act to combat cheap Indian labour; and Palmer and Tatham declared that the Asiatic should be prevented from eliminating the European from all walks of life. Whereas Palmer opposed any further Indian immigration, Tatham was against abrupt termination of it.⁸⁴ Their utterances represented a popular appeal to race prejudice - an appeal, indeed, common to Natal labour organisations since the formation of the Working Men's Association in Durban in 1888.⁸⁵

As the Natal Mercury conceded, the return of all four labour candidates was one of the notable features of the general election. This success requires an explanation. Three of the candidates were well-known public figures: both Palmer and Tatham were former town councillors and Haggar, ever since his arrival in Durban in 1898, had been in the forefront.

80. 14.9.1906, p.4.

81. See, for example, Natal Mercury, 14.9.1906, p.5, editorial; 24.9.1906, p.4; Natal Witness, 18.9.1906, p.6, letter from W.S. Cravt.

82. Natal Mercury, 1.9.1906, p.10. See also S.A. News, 17.10.1906, p.6.

83. 22.9.1906, p.676.

84. On Connolly see Natal Witness, 7.9.1906, p.6; on Palmer - 18.9.1906, p.6; on Tatham Natal Mercury, 27.8.1906 and 18.9.1906, p.9.

85. See p.59 above on the W.M.A.

of public life, in two by-elections, in refugee work during the war, in the anti-Chinese agitation and as a prolific press correspondent. Their prominence, then, combined with their moderate speeches, obviously swayed many voters into acceptance of an independent labour party in parliament; in addition, they may have had a wider appeal than Connolly because of their non-working class background which gave them an appearance of "respectability". On the other hand, Connolly's railway service must have won him many votes on a purely occupational or class appeal, since the Klip River Constituency included the railway centre at Ladysmith. But, probably, there were other factors involved. Their triumph may have been one outcome of existing European discontent and desire for change. Unemployment was still serious, the depression had not lifted and the Zulu revolt had barely been crushed. Nobody could accuse Labour of having no policy, which hardly could be said of most of the other candidates. Indeed, at this time, Natal politics were governed generally by personalities rather than by political parties and principles.⁸⁶

The small parliamentary Labour Party suffered a severe setback when R.H. Tatham, its leader, resigned his seat on 3 December 1906, explaining that he had formally lodged notice of insolvency. He had speculated, mainly in land, but, due to depreciation of values and the commercial depression, his ventures had failed.⁸⁷ This was poor publicity for the party. "The political prophet of hundreds of hardworking Natal men in humble circumstances", commented the Natal Witness, "was a speculator who failed for a quarter of a million."⁸⁸

86. L.M. Thompson, Unification of South Africa, p.41.

87. Natal Witness Weekly Parliamentary Supplement, 8.12.1906, p.2; Transvaal Leader, 6.2.1907, p.5; Natal Mercury, 5.4.1907, p.6 and 6.4.1907, p.11.

88. 21.1.1907, p.4, editorial. For similar criticism see Jos. Edwards's remarks in S.A.T.J., February 1907, p.7, and April, 1907, p.10.

With this background, the Natal L.R.C. fought the Durban County by-election on 3 January 1907, and the G.W.P.A. the Pietermaritzburg City by-election fifteen days later - the latter contest being caused by the resignation of A.T. Oliff. The labour candidate in Durban was Walter Knox, a grocer, and in Pietermaritzburg, Carl Wood, a businessman;⁸⁹ thus the trade unions evidently continued to take a back-seat in labour politics.

The labour candidates were convincingly defeated by more popular opponents, both of whom were former M.L.A.s.⁹⁰

4. The Natal Labour Party

The formation in 1907 of the Natal Labour Party, (the N.L.P.), was a notable advance in the colony's political labour organisation. The party was founded on 1 April in Pietermaritzburg at a conference attended by at least twelve labour and socialist bodies, representing three to four thousand persons; and its constitution and programme were adopted on 20 May in Durban at a further conference.⁹¹ Like the Transvaal L.R.C., the N.L.P. was an indirect party, membership of which was acquired through one of its affiliated societies. Although its annual conference in 1908 envisaged the formation of branches, this never seems to have materialised.⁹²

A study of the office-bearers and committee of the N.L.P. during its two-and-a-half year existence reveals strong trade union influence within the party.⁹³ Indeed, save for the A.S. of C. & J., all the trade unions had affiliated with the

89. The occupations have been discovered in the voters' rolls in the Supplement to the Natal Government Gazette, 28.8.1906, p.886, no. 3030 (Knox); 24.7.1906, p.620 (Wood). But, on Wood, see also Natal Mercury, 4.1.1907, p.5.

90. For results see Appendix C, II, 6 & 7.

91. Times of Natal, 3.4.1907, p.6; Natal Mercury, 21.5.1907, p.7; S.A.T.J., May 1907, pp. 6-7; June 1907, pp. 7-8. See also Appendices A, VII (constitution) and B, II, 8 (programme) below.

92. S.A. Tribune, 24.4.1908.

N.L.P. by the end of 1908;⁹⁴ the Natal Railwaymen's Association, with its 786 members joined early in the same year and probably was the largest single constituent group in the party.⁹⁵ At least initially, the socialists also found the N.L.P. acceptable. Although they failed to secure the inclusion of the socialist objective in its constitution, the membership clause did state:

Trade Unions, Labour, Socialistic, and other organisations may be affiliated to the Natal Labour Party,⁹⁶

From its inception the N.L.P. showed steady progress. In August 1907 it started its own weekly official organ, the South African Tribune, which survived for nine months.⁹⁷ In the following year the party employed Haggar as its full-time organiser and was even able to send him on a propaganda tour to Bloemfontein and Kimberley.⁹⁸ Meanwhile the party was handling an impressive volume of correspondence partly due to its wide range of activities.⁹⁹ It made arrangements for a South African tour by well-known British labour leaders (this proved abortive) and it initiated the movement which led to the formation of the S.A.L.P.¹

Its main office-bearers remained virtually unchanged. A.L. Clark was its president throughout its existence, while George Robertson presided at its meetings when Clark was overseas. Jos. Edwards of the S.A.T.U. was its treasurer in 1907 and secretary in 1908 and 1909.² Significantly, all three were trade unionists.

93. See Appendix D, VI, below.

94. The Friend, 4.11.1908, p.5, statement by Haggar. See also S.A.T.J., September 1908, p.11.

95. S.A. Tribune, 8.2.1908, pp. 4 & 6.

96. Natal Mercury, 21.5.1907, p.7.

97. See Appendix E below.

98. S.A. Tribune, 8.2.1908, p.2; Natal Mercury, 3.11.1908, p.8; 11.12.1908, p.3.

99. Natal Mercury, 11.12.1908, p.3.

The electoral strength of the N.L.P. was never really tested since it did not fight any elections during its brief existence. However, it did participate in the Durban Borough by-election on 4 April 1908. In this contest it publicly supported J.S. Wylie, the Combined Redistribution Committee candidate, and denounced his opponent, J.G. Maydon, an ex-minister of railways and harbours, as a representative of the reactionary forces of privilege and monopoly and as an enemy of the movement then urging the redistribution of seats on a democratic basis.³ Whether the N.L.P.'s support carried much weight is not clear, but Wylie was surprisingly elected by an overwhelming majority.⁴

The party operated with success in other activities, too. For example, it persuaded the Durban town council to adopt a fair wage clause in all municipal contracts; through the Labour M.L.A.s, it intervened in connection with the N.G.R.'s dismissal of men over sixty and secured some alleviation of the position; it foiled efforts by a Natal factory to import Malay tailors; and, on behalf of the unemployed, it interceded with the Mayor of Durban, who proved indefatigable in providing many destitute persons with municipal relief work.⁵

Towards the end of 1909, however, support for the N.L.P. had clearly declined.⁶ True, the newly-established S.A.L.P. was expected to replace it, but the disastrous railway strike

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1. Natal Mercury, 15.4.1909, p.3, annual report of the N.L.P.'s secretary.
 2. See Appendix D, VI, below. On Robertson substituting for Clark see Natal Mercury, 15.4.1909, p.3; 1.6.1909, p.7.
 3. N.L.P.'s manifesto as published in Natal Mercury, 4.4.1908, p.12.
 4. Natalian, 10.4.1908, p.4; Natal Mercury, 6.4.1908, p.5.
 5. Natal Mercury, 15.4.1909, p.3, annual report of the N.L.P.'s secretary; S.A.I.J., September 1908, pp. 10-11; October 1908, p.5.
 6. Clarion, 25.3.1910, article by "Pufff"; S.A.I.J., November 1909, p.3; Natal Mercury, 6.12.1909, p.5.

earlier in the same year, divisions over policies toward non-whites and the departure of Haggar for the Rand destroyed its once promising future. These subjects, however, will be described in later sections of this chapter.

Unlike their counterparts in the Transvaal, the Natal Labour M.L.A.s generally accepted the authority of the extra-parliamentary party, save on its colour policy, and dutifully attended its conferences.⁷ In Palmer and Haggar, the N.L.P. had two excellent debaters and, in Connolly, a courageous, independent spokesman.⁸

According to Haggar, the Labour M.L.A.s made a considerable impact on the Natal Parliament:

... when the Taxation Bills were introduced in Natal they were so tinged with "Labourism" that the Chairman of Committees, himself well versed in such matters, twitted the Minister in charge with having joined the Labour Party. He, the Minister, was the very man who declared he "had no time for Socialism". Who else ever talked about men taxed in proportion to their obligations to the State; in proportion to the opportunities given by the State? The introduction of the First Offenders' Probation Bill; the resuscitation of the Indian Labour Question, which resulted in the Commission which had done so much towards a satisfactory solution; and the Education Commission which has been the means of immense improvements, are all the outcome of the Labour Party in Natal. And by the admission of the most hostile portions of the press, but for the timely intervention of one of the Labour Members the Referendum Act would have been a finished farce.⁹

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7. For attendance at conferences see, for example, S.A. Tribune, 24.4.1908; Natalian, 12.6.1908, p.5. On differences on colour policy see Natal Mercury, 15.4.1909, p.3.
 8. Debates, 1906-1909; Natalian, 1.2.1907, p.8 (on Palmer); 24.5.1907, p.10 (on Haggar); 5.7.1907, p.9 (on Connolly); "Bretwalda", "Natal Politics", African Monthly, December 1907, pp. 103-4
 9. C.H. Haggar, "Organised Labour as a Political Factor", pp. 936-7. For similar review see L.H.H. Greene's contribution in Voice of Labour, 8.7.1910, p.320.

For once, Haggar did not exaggerate. His First Offenders' Bill in 1907 and his European Children Protection Bill in 1908 both obtained government approval; the Education Commission emanated from his proposal, seconded by Palmer; and the latter succeeded in securing a government commitment to the manufacture within the colony of all goods for the public service wherever possible.¹⁰

On the other hand, many N.L.P. proposals were rejected. In July 1907, for instance, Palmer's Poll Tax Removal Bill was defeated; similarly in 1909, Haggar's Women's Suffrage Bill and his Factories Bill, which he modelled on New Zealand precedents.¹¹ In addition, Labour was particularly active on matters dealing with non-whites, especially with the Indians. But this subject, and the Labour M.L.A.'s attitude to the Draft South Africa Act and to the 1909 Railway Strike, will be dealt with later in this chapter.

Like most of the urban representatives in the Natal Parliament, Palmer and Haggar were not admirers of the government. Thus the latter declared in 1908:

You find the men who ought to be responsible sitting as calmly as petrified mummies. They really seem to be intellectual somnambulists. They live unconscious of the evil they are doing, and unconscious of the State in which they live.¹²

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10. On 1907 bill see Debates, 30.7.1907, pp. 408-9; on 1908 bill 1.9.1908, pp. 30-31; 24.9.1908, p.481, 28.9.1908, pp. 487-8; on Education Commission 25.11.1909, p.559; and on local manufacture of goods 18.8.1908, pp. 289-293; also Natal Mercury, 3.11.1908, p.8, for tailors' gratitude and 4.1.1909, p.5 for Palmer's accusation of state evasion of promises.
11. On Poll Tax Bill see Debates, 29.7.1907, pp. 384-394; on the Suffrage Bill 19.10.1909; 1.11.1909, p.237 ff.; 3.11.1909, pp. 280-1; Natal Government Gazette, 21.9.1909, p.798, for the Bill; on the Factories Bill, Debates, 1.11.1909, pp. 223-237; and, for the Bill, Natal Government Gazette, 21.9.1909, pp. 798-9.
12. Debates, 18.6.1908, p.47. See also "Bretwalda", "Natal Politics", pp. 103-4.

Connolly, however, towards the end of Natal's fifth parliament under responsible government, showed sympathy towards and respect for the Moor administration and rejected the accusation that it was the worst the colony had experienced. As a result, he was forced to repudiate rumours that he had "sold" himself to the government.¹³

5. Attitudes towards Non-Whites.

Towards the end of 1906 and in 1907 the Labour Party in Natal was deeply involved in stirring up racial antagonism. The Labour M.L.A.s toured the Colony trying to gather public support for their proposed legislation to curtail and eventually to abolish Asiatic trading. "Was the white man to go from this country, or was he to go under?" asked Haggar on 23 November 1906; and Indian Opinion commented on his campaign:

If the angel Gabriel wore a black skin; and Mr. Haggar were to meet him, the angelic visitor would be promptly dubbed an imp of satan by the new M.L.A.¹⁴

Meanwhile R.H. Tatham's licensing bills and a similar anti-Indian motion proposed by Haggar received scant treatment in the Legislative Assembly.¹⁵ Undeterred, Haggar introduced in July 1907 a bill proposing the abolition of Indian immigration from 31 December 1908 and the repatriation of all indentured Indians on completion of their contracts. In justification, he explained :

13. Natal Mercury, 26.4.1910, p.5, letter from Connolly. See also Clarion, 25.3.1910, article by "Puff".
14. Indian Opinion, 24.11.1906, p.874. For Haggar's question see 1.12.1906, p.899; on the anti-Asiatic propoganda by the Labour M.L.A.s, and their tour 27.10.1906, p.783; 1.12.1906, p.900; Natal Witness, 17.11.1906, p.14; Natal Mercury, 15.4.1909, p.3 (Haggar's recollection).
15. Debates, 14.11.1906, p.20; 3.12.1906, p.137; 11.12.1906, p.201.

The European and the Asiatic cannot blend. They cannot stand upon the same social level. They have not the same moral tendencies or principles. They are not only alien in blood and race, but they are alien in spirit and aims, and that may be the one explanation of the terrible fact that wherever you have a civilized and cultured race on the one hand and an alien and servile race on the other, you have national degradation.

Although this bill was rejected, the Legislative Assembly resolved, with Haggar's approval, that the Government should enquire into the feasibility of the repatriation of Indians on expiry of their indentures.¹⁶ Shortly afterwards Haggar proposed a further anti-Asiatic motion. He called on the Government to introduce legislation to prohibit the issuing of trading licences to persons known as "Asiatics", "Arabs", and "Arab Traders"; this prohibition was to be enforced after a stipulated date, not later than 31 December 1912. However, his motion was defeated by twenty-eight votes to ten.¹⁷ Thus Haggar had become one of the leading enemies of the Indian people in Natal.¹⁸

From attacking Asiatic labour and traders to defending the white man's sphere was a natural step. Thus the manifesto issued by the Labour M.L.A.s for the purpose of the Legislative Assembly by-elections in January 1907 declared :

We appeal to you to support the Labour candidates and help us to secure the White Man's chance to the White Man.¹⁹

Similarly, Nelson Palmer's unsuccessful motion on 23 July 1907 demanded that

all goods for the service of the Government shall, wherever possible, be manufactured within the Colony, by European labour only.²⁰

16. Debates, 9.7.1907, pp. 192-3. See also 23.7.1907, pp. 334-344.

17. Debates, 30.7.1907, pp. 400-403.

18. Natal Witness, 3.8.1907, p.3, "Topics of the Town", 1.8.1907, p.4, editorial.

19. Natal Mercury, 1.1.1907, p.3.

20. Debates, 23.7.1907, p.315.

And Haggar obtained the approval of the Legislative Assembly for his proposal :

it is, in the public interest, undesirable to employ Asiatics on the N.G.R. in positions usually filled by white men and where white men are available at reasonable wages.²¹

Not unexpectedly, the policies of the Labour M.L.A.s accorded with the views of most members of the extra-parliamentary party. Thus the N.L.P.'s platform, at this time, advocated "Adult European Suffrage", immediate stoppage of indentured Asiatic labour" and "compulsory repatriation of all indentured Asiatics in the Colony on expiry of their indentures."²² Originally, the draft platform favoured adult suffrage, but Jos. Edwards succeeded in altering this after he had explained that the non-racial franchise in the Cape Colony had proved disastrous.²³

Already, however, there were indications of dissent. In June 1907 Harry Norrie wrote to the press protesting at Haggar's anti-Indian sentiments which he claimed were in direct opposition to the attitude of the D. & P.U; and he accused Haggar of springing anti-Indian proposals on the workers without prior consultation.²⁴ In December 1906 Connolly had explained in the Legislative Assembly:

I have no objection to skilled workers of whatever colour. If a Coolie is able to do the work which a white man can do, I have no objection to him being employed to do it if he is paid at the same rate of wages - simply because I know I can rely upon the superiority of the white man in every case to see that he will be employed.²⁵

21. Debates, 17.9.1907, pp.479-480.

22. Platform as published in Natal Mercury, 21.5.1907, p.7. For general attitude see S.A. Tribune, 3,10,17,24, 31.8.1907.

23. Natal Witness, 2.4.1907, p.6.

24. Natal Mercury, 29.6.1907, p 7.

25. Debates, 5.12.1906, pp. 164-5.

And, a year later, Connolly made a strong plea at Ladysmith for fair treatment for Indians and natives.²⁶

In mid-1908 there occurred a remarkable volte face in the colour policies of the N.L.P. This was brought about not through Connolly's or Norrie's influence, but as a result of Keir Hardie's eventful visit to Natal, 11-16 February 1908. Hardie was clearly unwelcome in the Colony. In 1906 he had condemned the Natal Government's handling of the native rebellion in the most scathing terms, not only embarrassing the local labour movement, but also provoking the wrath of many white Natalians. "Keir Hardie, by his foul libels on his fellow countrymen," commented a columnist of the Natal Mercury, "deserves any treatment which may be accorded him. Such a man is a disgrace to his country."²⁷ Furthermore, Hardie arrived in Durban after fraternising for two months with all classes and races in India. But popularity meant little to Hardie who proceeded to reiterate his condemnation of the way Natal had crushed the Zulu rebellion. "Where so-called statesmen failed to find a policy that involved justice to the coloured races", he defiantly informed a hostile public meeting in Ladysmith, "the Labour Party would find one."²⁸ At this gathering, and at others, he boldly advocated equal wages for equal work, irrespective of colour, and the setting of a minimum wage based on white living standards. This policy, of course, was not new in Natal and, as already has been noted, had been advocated beforehand by Connolly.

26. Labour Leader, 17.4.1908, p.244, article by Keir Hardie.

27. 21.7.1906, p.15, "The Man in the Moon" page. For examples of Hardie's criticism see South Africa, 1.9.1906, p.605 and 8.9.1906, p.676; for example of embarrassment of the Natal labour movement Natal Mercury, 24.8.1906, p.9," statement from Haggard.

28. Natal Witness, 22.2.1908, p.10.

The public and the press dealt harshly with Hardie. For instance, in the Durban Town Hall, he was not even accorded the courtesy of a hearing.²⁹ Nevertheless, he succeeded in impressing upon the N.L.P. that the labour movement recognised no barriers of colour, race or creed. Thus, at its annual conference two months afterwards, the N.L.P. appointed two sub-committees to reopen its native and Asiatic policies.³⁰

The reports of these committees, which were adopted by a congress of the N.L.P. in June 1908, were clearly influenced by Hardie. That on Asiatic policy explained :

... your Committee are unable to differentiate between the coloured or Asiatic workers, as to the best policy to be adopted in securing the just and equal rights of both the European and the free Asiatic workers of the Colony, but would recommend the party to agitate, educate, and work to promote the adoption of such legislation as will secure a minimum wage for all skilled and unskilled workers in the Colony.

and that on native policy began :

As the primary object of the Natal Labour Party is to protect and safeguard the interests and rights of the working-class population, and, as these will be best conserved and protected by a wise and just policy of protection of the rights of the native races, this Congress affirms³¹

In this way, the N.L.P. endeavoured to take a non-racial stand, but this proved too much for the Labour M.L.A.s Palmer and Haggart; the former warned of possible severance from the party and the latter supported him, explaining in his usual patronising and obscure manner:

29. For report on the Town Hall meeting see Natal Witness, 14.2.1908, p.5; for examples of the press reaction Natalian, 21.2.1908, p.6, editorial; Natal Witness, 19.2.1908, editorial. For general account of Hardie's visit see his articles in Labour Leader, 17.4.1908, p.244 and 22.5.1908, p.324 and Emrys Hughes (ed.), Keir Hardie's Speeches and Writings, pp.131-2.
30. S.A. Tribune, 24.4.1908.
31. For reports of the sub-committees on Asiatic and native policies see Appendix B,II,9, below.

... it was the right discussion at the wrong time, as they had not yet mastered the alphabet of the matter. They all agreed that the establishment of a standard wage and day for standard work was the best method, but that drove them to this - one meant killing the Indian, the other meant starving him to death. He stood for the method of value for value, for common honesty, and would assert that equal conditions meant the complete defeat of the free Indian. The latter was here, and as such should have the opportunity to exercise his opportunity, but should not be allowed to endanger the chance of another.

By contrast, Connolly, vigorously supported the new policy, in the drafting of which he had taken a leading role:

some of the responsible leaders of the Labour Party had taken up an attitude of hostility to the Asiatics that betokened an utter disregard of the simplest principles of equity as well as a most inexplicable ignorance of the obvious tendency of modern industrial methods.³²

At this congress Connolly established himself as one of the most advanced spokesmen on colour problems in the South African labour movement. Not only did he denounce the popular emotional appeal to white sympathy of his parliamentary colleagues, but he actually proposed

The encouraging, by every means in their power, the industrial organisation of the coloured workers, skilled and unskilled, and to endeavour to secure the gradual recognition and the extension of their political rights.³³

Not surprisingly, Indian Opinion gave unqualified praise to Connolly and congratulated the N.L.P. on its report on the Asiatic population.³⁴

But Connolly proved unable to convert Haggard and Palmer to his line of thinking. This was shown in the third session of Natal's last Legislative Assembly. Labour pressure in 1907 may have been responsible for the Government's Asiatic bills of 1908, which Haggard and Palmer supported. The Immigration

32. Natal Mercury, 8.6.1908, p.6. See also Natalian, 12.6.1908, p.5.

33. Natal Mercury, 8.6.1908, p.6.

34. 27.6.1908, p.274.

Prevention Bill and the Indian Licences Stoppage Bill, after a successful passage through parliament, were disallowed by the British Government because they would have prevented a class in the Colony from pursuing a normal, legitimate and necessary occupation. Nevertheless, in the same year, a Dealers' Licences Bill received the necessary sanction and it empowered licensing officers to reject applications without giving reasons therefor. Evidently, this Act was designed to reduce the number of Indian traders.³⁵

The unrelenting racialism of Haggar and Palmer in the debates on these bills was well illustrated when the second reading of the Indian Existing Licences Bill was taken. Both considered that Indian traders who were deprived of their trading licences should not be compensated. "They come for personal gain," Haggar explained, "no matter what it costs the community in which they live, and I think that it is a point we must not lose sight of."³⁶ Why labour representatives should have been so obsessed with eliminating the Indian traders in Natal, is difficult to understand.

About the same time, Connolly sharply criticised government policy towards non-whites. In fact, Keir Hardie could scarcely have used stronger terms. Connolly condemned the Indian Licences Stoppage Bill as contrary to the interests of Natal's working classes; and, on behalf of the extra-parliamentary N.L.P., he repudiated Palmer's and Haggar's stand on the Indian Existing Licences Bill, declaring that this measure was "absolutely unjust" and that all who claimed to represent labour or justice and equity were opposed to it. Furthermore,

35. Mabel Palmer, History of the Indians in Natal, pp.69,85,86; Debates of the Natal Legislative Assembly, 14.7.1908, p.326 ff.; 15.7.1908, p.355 ff., especially p.361 (Haggar) and pp.369-70 (Palmer); 21.7.1908, pp.456 & 465.

36. Debates, 3.8.1908, pp.63-64. For Palmer's attitude see pp. 72-73. For comment of Indian Opinion, see its issues, 17.7.1909, p.307 and 3.9.1910, p.289.

he stressed in the same debate that neither the N.L.P. nor the international labour movement discriminated between races.³⁷ Although he supported the Indian Immigration Prevention Bill, he did so on completely different grounds to his Labour colleagues. He voted for it, because he considered the indentured labour system "absolute slavery".

I say it is a disgrace for any British Colony to bring people here for five years under the conditions they are brought here, and then if they do not re-engage for another five years or clear back again, we have to force them to do so by putting a tax which is absolutely impossible for them to pay. For my part, I would rather see all the industries of Natal go under than this system of indentured labour should go on, but I hold that there is not the slightest fear of the sugar or any other industry going under by the stoppage of Indian labour.³⁸

In other debates on colour questions Connolly delivered similar fighting speeches. He condemned the Government for its handling of Dinizulu's arrest, for presuming his guilt before the Court trial and for "illegal" and "contemptible" withdrawal of his salary.³⁹ He hoped that McLarty's "hardy annual" motion for the insertion of a fair wage clause in Government contracts did not intend to exclude the black man from skilled work, although he conceded the right of white labour to preference.⁴⁰ In addition, he objected to Haggar's European Children Protection Bill since it was confined to whites.⁴¹

Although Palmer and Haggar had ignored the N.L.P.'s policy on non-whites, the party took no disciplinary steps against them. Indeed, its conference in October 1908 decided unanimously that these two M.L.A.s should be endorsed as

37. On the Licences Stoppage Bill see Debates, 15.7.1908, pp. 370-2; 27.7.1908, pp. 536-7; on the Existing Licences Bill 3.8.1908, pp.70-72.

38. Debates, 21.7.1908, pp.456-8.

39. Debates, 24.6.1908, pp.105-6.

40. Debates, 11.8.1908, p.165.

41. Debates, 10.9.1908, p.227.

official Labour candidates in the event of a general election occurring in the near future.⁴² The split Labour vote on the Government's Asiatic Bills was raised at an administrative council meeting of the N.L.P., but the matter was amicably settled; and at the annual conference in April 1909, Norrie denounced the stand taken by Palmer and Haggart as a violation of the party's constitution; yet delegates apparently accepted Palmer's explanation that there was a general understanding that the Labour M.L.A.s had liberty of action on Asiatic policy.⁴³ Perhaps, delegates appreciated that the adoption of the party's non-racial outlook was tantamount to committing electoral suicide, but this is conjecture.

6. Natal Railway Strike, 1909.

On 22 April 1909 the Natal Railway Strike started, and soon involved over 2 000 N.G.R. employees spread throughout the Colony and, at its peak, brought the railway service to a standstill in Durban; but by 7 May it had collapsed. The strike was a serious industrial crisis.⁴⁴ Although no official declaration on the strike by the N.L.P. has been found, the Party was not only sympathetic towards the strike, but was virtually identified with it. Thus, a description of this strike is very relevant to this study.

The immediate cause of the strike was the introduction of piecework in the railway workshops, but the railwaymen had grievances outstanding since 1902. They demanded, for instance

42. Natal Mercury, 5.10.1908, p.6.

43. Natal Mercury, 15.4.1909, p.3. See also Voice of Labour, 15.12.1909, p.2, article by Norrie.

44. For general accounts of the strike see R.K. Cope, Comrade Bill, pp.103-7; F.J. Grobler, "Die Invloed van Geskoolde Blanke Arbeid" pp. 123-132.

normal overtime and Sunday pay, an eight to nine hour working day for the running staff, and an end to retrenchment and work on short time which had been brought about by Government financial difficulties. As early as April 1907 John Connolly, then secretary of the Natal Railwaymen's Association, warned the minister of railways and harbours

that the railway service is in such a generally unsatisfactory condition at the present time that this decision [reduction of overtime rates] may prove the proverbial last straw that has been piled on to the shoulders of the men.⁴⁵

But little notice was taken of this advice, nor of the list of railwaymen's grievances presented to the prime minister in June 1907 by the president and secretary of the Railwaymen's Association, A.L. Clark and Connolly, respectively.⁴⁶ A year later, the latter again warned the Government of possible trouble and accused it of neglect and slipshod treatment of railway servants.⁴⁷ Considering that Connolly was a Labour M.L.A., that Clark was also president of the N.L.P. and that the Railwaymen's Association was one of the largest constituent societies of the Party, it was almost inevitable that the N.L.P. should be associated with the strike.

Before the men stopped work, recognised labour leaders opposed strike action since the Railwaymen's Association was not prepared for it at all. Even W.H. Andrews, who was on holiday in Durban at this time, painted the case for downing of tools as black as he could.⁴⁸

45. Times of Natal, 27.4.1907, p.6.

46. Natal Mercury, 10.6.1907, p.5.

47. Debates of the Natal Legislative Assembly, 24.6.1908, pp. 107-9.

48. Debates, 19.10.1909, pp.97-99 (Haggard's speech); 4.11.1909, pp. 322-3 (Connolly's speech); Forward, 12.8.1927, p.7.

The strike, however, started as a spontaneous non-political protest and involved, initially, Durban blacksmiths led by a young Scot, Andrew Dunbar, who had only arrived in Natal a few years previously. He was elected chairman of a strike committee which soon succeeded in pulling out railwaymen in Durban, Maritzburg, Ladysmith and elsewhere.⁴⁹ Thus, grievances there obviously were.

A day after the start of the strike Haggar and Palmer held discussions with the premier, F.R. Moor, and obtained the promise of a government enquiry board. Haggar then reported back to the strike leaders and, far from advising them to trust the Government and to return to work, he evidently helped to make the strike more effective.⁵⁰

At first the authorities showed up badly; Moor had confessed to the Labour M.L.A.s that he was unaware of railwaymen's grievances.⁵¹ But gradually public sympathy turned away from the strikers. On 25 April the Government repeated its offer of a railway enquiry board, providing the strikers returned to work, but the strike committee rejected this and demanded redress of the grievances which they listed. To this the authorities replied with a threat to lock-out all strikers not at work on 3 May; strikers then faced not only dismissal, but loss of superannuation and other benefits. Obviously less confident of victory, the Strike Committee offered on 30 April to cut down on its minimum demands, but the Government was not interested.⁵²

49. On Dunbar see Natal Mercury, 10.5.1909, p.5 and Walker and Weinbren, 2 000 Casualties, pp. 28 & 197.

50. Star, 26.8.1910, p.8 (article on Haggar); Natal Mercury, 29.4.1909, p.7 (statement by Connolly); 22.5.1909, p.10 (Haggar's denial that he instigated the strike); Debates of the Natal Legislative Assembly, 19.10.1909, pp. 97-99 (Haggar defends his role in the strike); Natal Mercury, 26.4.1910, p.5 (statement by Connolly).

51. For Moor's confession see Natal Mercury, 23.4.1909, p.6, speech by Haggar.

52. Natal Mercury, 26.4.1909, p.7; 27.4.1909, p.9; 1.5.1909, p.12. See also F.J. Grobler, "Die Invloed van Geskoolde Blanke Arbeid", pp. 124-5.

Amongst the labour leaders Connolly alone raised his voice against the continuation of the strike. On 27 April at Ladysmith before a hostile crowd of railwaymen, some of whom called him a "turncoat", he urged acceptance of Moor's promise that the strikers would not be penalised and that the report of the proposed enquiry commission would be accepted. In their heart of hearts, Connolly claimed, the labour leaders knew he was right, but they had not the courage of their convictions.⁵³ This was a bold step for a former secretary of the Railwaymen's Association. But, as events proved, Connolly gave the correct advice and had it been followed much hardship would have been avoided, and the railwaymen would have won a partial victory.

However, a new militancy was permeating the labour movement in Durban. Former labour champions such as F.S. Tatham and W. McLarty, who tried to persuade the strikers to resume their duties, were swept aside; and, in a heated moment, Dunbar even called Tatham a traitor.⁵⁴ A few days later thousands of workers attended the Durban May Day celebrations at which great enthusiasm for the working class movement was evident.⁵⁵

Meanwhile, save for Connolly, the N.L.P. leaders urged the strikers to stand firm behind one another. Palmer and Haggar were frequent speakers at their daily public meetings in Durban and Maritzburg; Haggar acted as the intermediary between the strikers and the authorities, and was actually appointed the official press correspondent of the Strike Committee; and, about the same time, Jos. Edwards, the secretary

53. Natal Mercury, 29.4.1909, p.7.

54. On Tatham see Natal Mercury, 23.4.1909, p.7, and for Dunbar's attack 30.4.1909, p.7; on McLarty 28.4.1909, p.7, and Debates of the Natal Legislative Assembly, 4.11.1909, p.430.

55. Natal Mercury, 3.5.1909, pp.8-9.

of the N.L.P., became chairman of the Strike Finance Committee.⁵⁶

But neither labour militancy nor the active assistance of the N.L.P. leaders could maintain the solidarity of the strikers indefinitely. Nor could Dunbar's inspiring leadership, Andrews's undoubted organisational talents and Haggar's eloquence achieve the same object. On 3 May the strikers at Ladysmith resumed work; shortly afterwards those in Pietermaritzburg followed suit; and on 7 May the diehards in Durban streamed back to the railway service.

As with the Transvaal Miners Strike in 1907, large scale victimisation followed the collapse of the Natal Railway Strike. Over two hundred railwaymen were not re-employed. As the minister of railways explained, preference had been given to those who had been misled over those who misled.⁵⁷ The only beneficial outcome of the strike seems to have been the appointment on 15 June 1909 of the promised Railway Enquiry Board on which Thomas Boydell, the later cabinet minister, served as one of the two elected representatives of the railwaymen.⁵⁸

Not surprisingly, the failure of industrial action led several labour and socialist leaders to call for the strengthening of political labour organisation; and the formation in June 1909 of the Durban Workers' Political Association may have been prompted by this attitude.⁵⁹ But, as the first elections for the South African parliament showed, white workers,

56. For speakers at the public meetings, see, for example, Natal Mercury, 26.4.1909, p.7; 28.4.1909, p.7; 30.4.1909, p.7; 8.5.1909, p.8; on Haggar as official press correspondent Strikers' Bulletin as quoted in Natal Mercury, 29.4.1909, p.6; on Jos. Edwards, Natal Mercury, 26.4.1909, p.6. Note that A.L. Clark was overseas at this time - Natal Mercury, 29.3.1909, p.6.

57. For the minister's explanation see Debates of the Natal Legislative Assembly, 4.11.1909, p.324; also 19.10.1909, p.92. On the number of those victimised see Natal Mercury, 13.5.1909, p.6, statement by Haggar; Star, 26.8.1910, p.8.

58. F.J. Grobler, "Die Invloed van Geskoolde Blanke Arbeid", pp. 131-3.

especially the railwaymen, had become disillusioned with labour politicians.⁶⁰ Surely, the disastrous strike in 1909 must have been the main cause of this disillusionment, for, as has been shown, the N.L.P. was closely identified with this struggle. Certainly, Haggart suffered a marked decline in popularity and, probably as a result, he moved to the Rand towards the end of 1909,⁶¹ Undoubtedly, he was a political opportunist par excellence, for the labour militant of May 1909 had written to Merriman the previous year, deprecating strike action and explaining apologetically :

Although I am known as one of the "Labour Politicians" of South Africa, I may say, I have no sympathy with many of the methods employed and branded "Labour"; I stand for the conditions of Prosperity and Peace.⁶²

7. Unification of South Africa.

The Closer Union Resolutions passed by the Inter-colonial Conference in Pretoria on 4 May 1908 was the main topic of discussion at a conference of the N.L.P. on 22 August and at its continuation meeting a week later. After a wide divergence of opinion had been expressed, delegates eventually agreed to Haggart's motion in favour of a federation of South Africa:

That in the opinion of this Conference although such closer union as shall guard mutual interests in South Africa is desirable, the time is not ripe for such union as unification implies, but that federation would be calculated to promote prosperity and peace.⁶³

Meanwhile in the Legislative Assembly the Labour M.L.A.s. unsuccessfully opposed the adoption of the Closer Union

59. Natal Mercury, 10.5.1909, p.5; 11.5.1909, p.5; 13.5.1909, p.3; 18.5.1909, p.3. These included C.H. Knowler, C.T. Pownie, Dunbar, P. Frazer, T.W. Marshman and W.H. Andrews. On the Workers' Political Association see its first annual report in the Boydell Collection, Vol.1. p.52.

60. For results see Appendix C, V1,2 below. For disillusionment of white workers see Boydell Collection, Vol.8, Palmer to Boydell, 19.9.1910.

Resolutions. They maintained that Natal would be under-represented at the National Convention, that a unitary constitution was undesirable and that the Government could not be trusted in negotiations since it had already given way on equal state representation at the Convention; and Haggar even declared that Natal was being intimidated into closer union. When the choice of delegates to the Convention was raised, the Labour M.L.A.s, with the support of a few other members, demanded that the electorate be consulted. They did so because of the heavy responsibility involved and because the Natal Parliament was not democratically elected.⁶⁴ However, they made little impact and, inevitably, when an informal ballot was held in the Assembly to choose the delegates to the Convention, no Labour M.L.A. was elected.⁶⁵

Natal labour leaders were not united in their attitude towards the Draft South Africa Act which was published in February 1909. Connolly regarded it as the most democratic and far-reaching document ever evolved, but Haggar commanded wider support for his critical assessment:

We do not cut down the fruit-bearing apple tree because it has a wart on its trunk.⁶⁶

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61. Star, 26.8.1910, p.8; Clarion, 25.3.1910, article by "Pufff"
 62. 17.10.1908, Merriman Papers, No. 261 of 1908.
 63. Natal Mercury, 31.8.1908, p.8. See also 24.8.1908, p.6.
 64. Debates, 18.6.1908, pp.42-43 (Palmer); 30.6.1908, pp. 212-4 (Palmer); 24.6.1908, p.109 (Connolly); 1.7.1908, pp.231-2 (Connolly); 30.6.1908, pp.195-6. See also C.H. Haggar, "Organised Labour as a Political Factor", p.938. Note that L.M. Thompson, Unification of South Africa pp. 352 & 354 incorrectly refers to the participation in these debates of four Labour M.L.A.s. Dan Taylor was not a member of the N.L.P.
 65. Debates, 28.7.1908, pp. 548-9.
 66. Natal Mercury, 23.2.1909, p.5. For Connolly's attitude see 23.2.1909, p.5; 27.2.1909, p.15.

Indeed, the N.L.P.'s conference on 27 March adopted Haggar's approach and agreed to accept the Draft Act providing certain amendments were made, notably the abolition of the Senate. Considering the Party's liberal colour policy adopted in June 1908, it was not surprising that a delegate should propose the deletion of the clause restricting M.L.A.s to persons of European descent. By this time, however, Hardie's influence was minimal and the motion was defeated by eleven votes to four. Nevertheless, the proposal to limit the franchise for the House of Assembly to white adults, was not passed.⁶⁷

Shortly afterwards the Natal Legislative Assembly considered the Draft South Africa Act. Although Palmer and Haggar, with the Imperialist group, were the most prolific movers of amendments, they stressed that they did not oppose the principle of closer union since they differed in detail only.⁶⁸ Thus these two regretted the lack of uniformity of the white franchise, demanded that the Senate be abolished and that a more rigid constitution be obtained, and favoured the raising of the salaries of M.L.A.s from £300 to £500 a year and the shortening of the life of parliaments from five to three years.⁶⁹ All the Labour amendments, however, were heavily defeated, except for one proposed by Palmer which passed without a division. This demanded that the provincial executive committee should be chosen by the majority party in the provincial council.⁷⁰

67. Natal Mercury, 29.3.1909, p.6.

68. L.M. Thompson, Unification of South Africa, pp. 352- & 357. See also Palmer's speech in Debates, 31.3.1909, p.22.

69. Debates, 15.4.1909, pp.275-280; Natal Legislative Assembly Votes and Proceedings, 15.4.1909, pp.112-3.

70. L.M. Thompson, op cit., pp.357-8. For numerous Labour amendments in the committee stage see Debates, 7 to 15.4.1909, p.122 ff.

On the other hand, Connolly welcomed the Draft Act and urged its adoption without amendment. Nevertheless, he would have preferred a uniform non-racial adult franchise. "I am not in favour", he explained "of preventing anybody from having a say in the government of the country simply because he happens to be black instead of potato-coloured or white". Surprisingly, in defiance of the stand taken by the N.L.P., Connolly supported the provision for a Senate which he regarded as a safeguard against hasty legislation.⁷¹

On one amendment, at least, the Labour M.L.A.s were in agreement. They supported Haggart's proposed deletion of the clause restricting members of parliament to persons of European descent. Their argument was based, however, not on liberal colour beliefs, but, evidently, on difficulties of definition.⁷²

Towards the beginning of May the National Convention met in Bloemfontein and amended the Draft South Africa Act, which was subsequently approved by the parliaments of the Cape Colony, the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony. On 10 June 1909 the Natal electorate approved the Act by a large majority.⁷³

In no uncertain way the N.L.P. advised voting against the amended Draft Act. Thus its meeting on 30 May resolved unanimously :

... seeing that none of the amendments asked by this party have been put into the Act, and in consideration of the fact that the democratic principle of proportional representation with regard to the Legislative Assembly has been withdrawn, whilst still affirming the principle of union, now declares against the draft Act as at present constituted, and pledges itself to use all its powers to defeat it at the referendum.⁷⁴

71. Debates, 6.4.1909, p.101 ff.

72. Debates, 15.4.1909, p.268 ff.

73. L.M. Thompson, Unification of South Africa, p.396.

74. Natal Mercury, 1.6.1909, p.7.

This was followed by a sharply worded circular on the Draft Act, objecting chiefly to the Senate and its high property qualifications, to the deletion of the previous provision for proportional representation and to the lack of safeguards for Natal's railway employees.⁷⁵ But organised labour was also opposed to union as a form of protest at the failure of the railway strike and at the victimisation stemming therefrom.⁷⁶

As was to be expected, labour leaders campaigned actively for the anti-union movement.⁷⁷ Indeed, towards the end of May the Imperialist and Labour groups merged to form the Natal League to oppose union. It held several successful public meetings and on 4 June issued a manifesto appealing to voters to reject the Draft Act. But, lacking in funds and cohesion, it did not attract wide support.⁷⁸ In fact, when the referendum took place the so-called labour vote was reported to be divided. Evidently, the followers of the Social Democratic Party, of which Harry Norrie was the main inspiration, supported union on the broad principle of breaking down barriers and frontiers. They also hoped that union, more than anything else, would unite the labour movement throughout South Africa.⁷⁹

75. Natal Mercury, 1.6.1909, p.7. According to Thomas Boydell, organised labour in Natal was inclined to be anti-union on the language question. It was afraid that Dutch would become a requirement for promotion in the public service - interview, 26.4.1964.

76. See, for example, Natal Mercury, 13.5.1909, p.5; 21.5.1909, p.5.

77. See, for example, Natal Mercury, 5.6.1909, p.13; 7.6.1909, p.9.

78. L.M. Thompson, Unification of South Africa, p.394.

79. Transvaal Leader, 19.6.1909, p.15 "Labour Notes". The Social Democratic Party presumably was the successor to the defunct Clarion Fellowship.