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work in progress

Editorial

This is the 4th issue of Work in Progress, and the editors would like to bring a few matters to the attention of readers and contributors.

+ Language: We have received a number of critical comments, suggesting that some of the language used in WIP articles is unnecessarily complex and specialised. Unfortunately, these criticisms do not always refer to the same articles, and this suggests that what may be comprehensible and useful to one group, appears as academic jargon to another. This does not, however, absolve the editors or contributors from the responsibility of writing clearly and concisely, and avoiding unnecessarily technical terms. It should also be noted, however, that some of the issues WIP deals with are complex, and oversimplification would not allow one to do justice to that complexity. Contributors have a duty to explain the concepts and ideas they use, and to write lucidly; readers have a reciprocal duty to make the efforts to situate the language used within the debates and analysis offered.

If readers who are worried about language used in WIP articles could contribute specific criticisms, this would assist greatly in the production of a more readable publication.

+ Finances: WIP has no source of income, other than money returned from the distribution of issues. Thus far, the 4 issues produced have been paid for by individuals, and the amount recouped has been considerably less than the initial outlay. We do ask that, when you receive your copy, you contribute an amount of 50 cents to the person distributing, which would then be passed on to the editors.

We also appeal to those individuals who are salary earners to consider becoming donor members of WIP. This entails contributing a minimum of R3 per month to the publication. In return the donor will receive a copy of every WIP prduced. This will allow us to build up a secure financial footing for the production of future issues. Contributions can be sent to the editorial address below.

+ Contributions: In this issue we carry an article on Swaziland. This is a small contribution to what we hope will become a growing debate on the nature and consequences of intensified conflict in southern Africa. We appeal for contributions, especially on issues

like southern Africa, the state, security trials and other regular features in WIP. The nature of the publication, its sub-divisions and format, make it very easy to contribute, and we insist that there are many people with ideas and information worth sharing who are not doing so. Contributions and correspondence should be sent to the address which appears below.

+ Distribution: We want WIP to reach a large range of groups involved in divergent forms of activity. If you have access to a group of people - who may be your close friends, or an organisation - and feel willing to distribute a certain number of each issue of WIP, please contact the editors, and this can be arranged. We do ask, however, that if this is done, you attempt to recover 50 cents an issue from those who can afford it.

+ Editorial Address: Each of the first 3 issues produced had a different editorial address. We apologise for this inconvenience and confusion, and state that from now onwards our permanent postal address is:-

The Editors,
Work in Progress,
c/o Students' Union,
University of Witwatersrand,
1 Jan Smuts Avenue,
JOHANNESBURG
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The nature of WIP, which is to stimulate debate and present controversial views, ensures that the views expressed do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the editors.

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"Only Riot Repairs - Liquor Stores" (Star, 20/2/78)

The only repairs so far done to public buildings damaged during the June 1976 riots have been to liquor outlets, a West Rand Administration Board spokesman said today.

The board had repaired only these facilities of the more than 80 buildings damaged during the unrest because they were income-making, the spokesman said.

Thirteen beerhalls, two bar lounges and seven bottle stores have so far been repaired.

During the riots 25 office complexes were wrecked along with 22 bottlestores, 28 beerhalls and eight lounges.

Altogether an estimated R7-million was originally claimed by the board in insurance. It also claimed it was losing up to R2-million a month through the loss of the liquor facilities.

The spokesman said the board's property in Soweto was suffering from an "ongoing process of vandalism".

He appealed to Sowetans to prevent this damage because of its cost to the community itself.

The liquor outlets were a major target for rioters during the 1976 unrest. More than half the income for running Soweto and other West Rand townships came from these outlets.

The Swaziland Connection

With the intensification of conflict in Southern Africa, Swaziland, already heavily dependent on Southern Africa for economic survival, is becoming more politically integrated with South Africa's objectives and strategies. This is not necessarily surprising, for Swaziland's position as a periphery of South Africa is not only economically determined, but has political, legal, cultural and ideological manifestations as well. Indeed, one might generalise that statement, and suggest that imperialism is never solely an economic relationship. Rather, it incorporates other relations of subordination, control and penetration as well. Thus, while an economic foundation is the basis for the imperial relationship, these economic relationships only circumscribe the parameters within which non-economic relations (also imperialist) emerge and operate. (More generally, the structure of economic relations are primarily, but not totally, responsible for the maintenance of a country's position in the international imperial chain, which itself maintains the dominance of global capitalism).

At the same time, it would be incorrect to see Swaziland as some 'unwilling captive' of South Africa, held in bondage through a structural relationship independent of developments and struggles in Swaziland. The maintenance of the imperial relationship is crucially linked to the nature of the class alliance which holds power in Swaziland. Whatever that alliance is, (and this is itself a problematic question, deserving of research and analysis in its own right), it is profoundly conservative, and has interests closer to the maintenance of current power relations in Southern Africa, rather than the radical restructuring of the whole sub-continent. The chance of far-reaching and basic change is a possibility today, but this was not forseen with any clarity before 1975. The taking of State power in Angola and Mocambique by alliances committed formally to a socialist alternative, together with developments in Namibia and Rhodesia, put this possibility on the agenda for the whole of Southern Africa. But as this trend emerges, so the alliances linked to the propping up of a capitalist status quo strengthen their links with each other in the furtherance of a common interest. (The granting of a huge sugar concession to Tate and Lyle by the Swazi State shortly after the exposures of Tate and Lyle's labour practices on the Natal Sugar Estates is an interesting indication of what interests are expressed by the Swazi State).

It is in this context that one can view a series of recent events in Swaziland. They may not all be related, but on the other hand do have a similarity of orientation. Taken collectively they suggest that there is an increasing complicity between repressive mechanisms of the South African

State, and the Swazi State.

Sometime in January 1976, it appears that two men were kidnapped from just outside the village of Big Bend, near the South African border. The men were Mr. Victor Mayisela, a South African who has taught in Swaziland for many years, and Mr. Caiphus Mamba, a Swazi national.

With them at the time of the kidnapping was a Mr. Shabangu, who claimed in a statement to Swazi police that while he and the other two men were driving home, they stopped to help a man on the side of the road whose car appeared to have broken down. This was on the road between Big Bend and Golela, the Northern Natal border post.

Immediately they stopped, a group of men, including some whites, attacked them, and Mayisela and Mamba were forced into a parked car. According to Shabangu, he escaped after an attempt by the group of men to force him into the boot of the car, and was subsequently admitted to hospital with a number of cuts and bruises.

Swaziland sources have suggested that Victor Mayisela could have been kidnapped in error, the real target being Victor Mayekiso, who is alleged to be a PAC activist in exile.

It may be recalled that, some 13 years ago, Rosemary Wentzel, a South African exile granted political asylum in Swaziland, was kidnapped from the same area, and driven accross the border into South Africa. There she was tricked into driving off in a car alone, where she was immediately apprehended in a Security Police roadblock. She was then detained by the S.B. under the 90 day detention law.

Two accused in the recent Maritzburg ANC trial (S vs Gwala and others), claimed that they were kidnapped from Swaziland by the South African Police, detained under section 6 of the Terrorism Act, and finally brought to trial to face charges of Terrorism. While on trial, they brough an application to the Natal Supreme Court, applying for their return to Swaziland. While the application was being heard, the Attorney-General for Natal issued an order in terms of the Internal Security Act, instructing that neither of the applicants could be released from custody until their Terrorism trial was over. This meant that even if the court had ruled that they had been unlawfully abducted, they would still face charges of Terrorism in South Africa. However, the application was refused, and eventually the two accused, Joseph Nduli and Cleophas Ndlovu were found guilty, and sentenced to effective terms of eighteen and fifteen years inmprisonment. In rejecting their application to be released, the Judge found that even if the two had been kidnapped, the Natal Supreme Court had jurisdiction to try them.

Nduli and Ndlovu then appealed to the Aopelate Division in Bloemfontein, but the appeal was refused. The Chief Justice, with four other judges of appeal concurring, found that the application would only have merit if it had been shown that the kidnapping had been authorised by the South African Government. Even if they had been kidnapped from Swaziland territory, and the kidnappers had included South African police, the arrest was not authorised by the South African State. Accordingly, the South African Courts had a right to try them.

Thus, on this decision, if members of the Security Police enter a foreign territory and abduct a person, bringing them back to South Africa to face charges, the Courts have the jurisdiction to try that person, illegal abduction notwithstanding, unless the accused can show that the abduction was authorised by the State. This appears to be precisely what happened in the case of Ndlovu and Nduli.

Shortly after the kidnapping of Mayisela and Mamba, a top ANC exile resident in Swaziland, Ablon Duma, was seriously injured by a parcel bomb sent to his private post-office box in Manzini. Duma is cited by the State as a co-conspirator in the current ANC trial in Pretoria (S vs Sexwale and others). This was the second attempt on his life: last year, he became suspicious of a parcel sent to him, and when police opened it, it was found to contain high explosives.

Shortly after the bomb blast, an anonymous caller telephoned a newspaper and claimed that the PAC was responsible for the parcel bomb. However, the PAC in Swaziland immediately denied this. There is a suspicious pattern in the anonymous caller syndrome. After the assasination of Rick Turner in Durban, a caller phoned a Durban Daily Paper, claiming that 'the ANC and the Black Power Movement' were responsible for Turner's murder. The ANC also denied responsibility for Turner's death, but did acknowledge involvement in other shootings in Natal. (This was not widely covered in the South African Press, although the 'anonymous caller' incriminating the ANC received front-page spreads).

Shortly after the Duma blast, Dr. Zonke Khumalo, Deputy Swazi Prime Minister said in a statement that he regretted the fact that some refugees from South Africa 'tend to pursue their subversive objectives' while in Swaziland.

A month after the Duma attack, a bullet-ridden, blood-stained vehicle belonging to him was found six km. inside Swaziland on the road to Mocambique. Swaziland sources say that the occupants of the truck were John Majola and Willie Nyoni, both South African exiles connected to the ANC. It is believed that they were returning from Mocambique at the time

of the attack, and at the time of writing, it is not known what has happened to them.

The next in a series of events occured when Dr. Ambrose Zwane, former leader of the banned Swaziland opposition party, was arrested twice on the same day in Swaziland. Initially, he was picked up by the Swazi police for refusing to surrender his passport to the State, which had issued an order withdrawing it. After his sister had handed over the passport to the Swazi authorities, Zwane was released, only to be redetained 2 hours later.
(Note: Zwane's sister is a Mrs. Mamba. It is not known whether she is related to Caiphus Mamba, kidnapped with Victor Mayisela).

Not only is Dr. Zwane a well-known opponent of King Sobhuza's government who has spent three periods under the Swazi detention laws. He is an ex-South African, believed to be sympathetic to the ANC, and once active in ANC circles himself. A Dr. Zwane is cited as a co-conspirator in the Pretoria ANC trial. Zwane is believed to have just returned from Mocambique when he was arrested, and his passport confiscated, and is also believed to have close connections with Frelimo activists in Mocambique.

A recently released Swaziland detainee, John Walker, reports that an ANC recruit, Dumisana Manzi, 22, is being held in detention in Swaziland, after admitting to police that he had undergone military training in Moscow.

Walker also claimed that a Manzini businessman, Ambrose Simelane, who has PAC connections, is being detained in the maximum security section of Swaziland's Matsapa Prison.

There is also the case of three young ANC members, recently arrested in Swaziland. Zacharia Winfred Madela, 24, a former clerk at Baragwanath Hospital, Thamasanqa Humphrey Makhuba, 23, and Thuthuka Dennis Hluba, 22, both ex-students of Naledi High School, Soweto, were arrested by Swazi police 5 km from the Oshoek border post leading to South Africa.

The three were charged with carrying 'weapons of war', and illegal possession of firearms, and on March 14th, were found guilty as charged. One of the accused claimed that they had been leaving South Africa, and that the weapons were for their safety if spotted by the South African Police. The Chief Magistrate of Swaziland accepted a defence contention that the three men were involved in a war in their own country (South Africa).

All three were sentenced to a years imprisonment for illegal possession of arms of war, and a further 400 days (or R400) for illegal possession of firearms.

The events detailed above are sufficient to create a strong suspicion that the Security Police and related State wings in South Africa are making a concerted attempt to smash ANC and PAC activity in Swaziland. This is not new. Neither is the suspicion that Swazi authorities are lending some sort of assistance to the S.A.P. in their efforts, which is sometimes masked behind a posture of being opposed to the present set up in South Africa. (Swazi authorities did protest very strongly to South Africa about the kidnapping of Nduli and Ndlovu). What is new is the scale and obviousness of both South African agents' activities, and the increasing assistance offered by the Swazi State in controlling the activities of South Africa's banned organisations.

CLASSES IN AFRICA

One of the most important tasks which currently face serious analysts is the development of concepts adequate to the analysis of class struggle in peripheral capitalist societies. Thusfar, the attempts at location and identification of classes and class interests in the Third World have been bedevilled by either the direct application of concepts more appropriate to the developed capitalist world, or a rather eclectic and unrigorous descriptive methodology which is of little use in understanding and changing the reality of peripheralised formations. The attempts to understand class formation and class interests in the Third World have a very direct bearing on contemporary struggles, in that they determine possible class alliances - which groups have similar enough interests to ally in the struggle against an enemy with objectively antagonistic interests. This obviously leads directly to the unresolved questions of possible alliances between workers, peasants, the 'national' bourgeoisie, state functionaries, the traditional petty bourgeoisie, etc. This paper is nothing other than an attempt to clear away some of the obfuscating 'wood' in this debate, in the hope that the rejection of certain inapplicable tools of understanding will lead to the development of more adequate ones.

The most common way of looking at class formation in Africa has been through the initial category of the 'labour aristocracy'. This category has been used in a number of differing ways by various writers in assessing the revolutionary potential of the working class, or sections of that working class. A particular confusion exists ab initio, in that the term has been utilised to refer to social formations during different historical periods, and under the impact of different types and fractions of capital (merchants or productive capital, imperial or national capital, monopoly or competitive capital). These differing uses of the category must be isolated before we can begin to consider its specific applicability to Africa.

The initial formulation of the term 'labour aristocracy' was used to refer to the British working class, or a section of that class, during the second half of the nineteenth century (ie during the period of British imperial and colonial expansion). Thus, we see Engels writing to Marx in 1858:

> "The English proletariat is actually becoming more and more bourgeois, so that this most bourgeois of all nations is apparently aiming ultimately at the possession of a bourgeois aristocracy and a bourgeois proletariat alongside the bourgeoisie. For a nation which exploits the whole world this is of course to a certain extent justifiable." (1)

Sometime later, in a letter to Kautsky, Engels re-iterates the point:

> "You ask me what the English workers think about colonial policy. Well, exactly the same as they think about politics in general. There is no workers' party here, there are only conservatives and liberal-radicals, and the workers gaily share the feasts of England's monopoly of the world market and the colonies..." (2)

It is in this tradition of imperial expansion, and 'superprofits' derived from the exploitation of cheap labour and raw materials in the colonies, that Lenin is led to describe certain sections of the working class in imperialist social formations as

> "craft-union, narrow-minded, selfish, case-hardened, covetous, petty-bourgeois 'labour aristocracy', imperialist minded, imperialist bribed and imperialist corrupted...." (3)

A number of interpretations are possible of the 'classical' position, outlined above:

1 (a). that the whole of the working class in the various imperial social formations is a labour aristocracy with no revolutionary potential, in that the super-profits extracted from the satellised formations allow inflated wage rates to be paid to the 'aristocratic' working class.

(b). that this relationship is only operative regarding the upper stratum of the working class.

2 (a). that, by virtue of an international social division of labour (ie within the very structure of international capitalist production) the group which is usually referred to as the working class in the metropolitan centres is not an exploited proletariat, but is structurally determined as some intermediate group;

(b). that this relationship is only operative regarding an upper stratum of the working class.

3. that, within the structure of national production within an imperial social formation, a 'labour aristocracy' exists vis-a-vis other workers, eg. craft workers organised into craft unions as opposed to the vast mass of unorganised wage labourers in Britain at the end of the nineteenth century.

Much of the current debate on the applicability of the concept 'labour aristocracy' to a group of wage and salary earners in Africa revolves around the validity or otherwise of certain ideas put forward by Arrighi and Saul. (4) However, I suggest that the way Arrighi and Saul use the term in their writings differs from any of the formulations above, which relate to workers within an imperial social formation. Accordingly, it is important to spell out clearly and precisely what the Arrighi-Saul formulation refers to, and, by implication, how the critics of the term 'labour aristocracy' understand its application to Africa.

Unfortunately, many of the critics of Arrighi and Saul's work do not do full justice to the relative complexity of their ideas, which are at least partially located within the tendential nature of capitalist production in Africa. For example, Richard Jeffries argues that Arrighi and Saul

> "suggest that only the peasantry produce any significant economic surplus, and that all urban wage earners take part in expropriating this surplus.....It is simply perverse to suggest that skilled manual workers, even if in government employment.... are essentially non-productive." (5)

This sort of summary, and the oft-repeated reference (exemplified below) to an admittedly unrigorous formulation on wage levels, do not do justice to the analysis advanced by Arrighi and Saul:

> "Wage workers in the lower stratum are only marginally or partially proletarianised as, over their life cycle, they derive the bulk of the means of subsistence from their families from outside the wage economy. Wage workers in the upper stratum, generally a very small minority, receive incomes sufficiently high (say 3 - 5 times those received by wage workers in the lower stratum) to justify a total break of their links with the peasantry." (6)

More importantly, the very fact that the complexity of the Arrighi-Saul analysis is not detailed, means that the critiques of their position tend to be crude and inadequate, such as the Jeffries method of showing

(a) that the wage differential between skilled and unskilled workers in one industrial area in Ghana is not 3 or 5:1, but 2:1 (7), or

(b) that the difference between migrant peasant and fully proletarianised workers' income is not sufficiently large to warrant structural differentiation of the two groups. For example, certain writers in the field claim that

> "The essence of the critique of the labour aristocracy thesis as applied to Africa, rests firmly on a questioning on empirical grounds of the view that income differentials between urban households and rural households are as large as often supposed."(8)

These approaches neglect the fact that the location of classes, and their relation to each other in conflict, must initially (but not only) be at the level of relations of production (ie in terms of the relationship of agents to the means of material production, and the production and appropriation of surplus in whatever form it is produced). It is not wages which are the basic determinant of class interests, despite what a whole generation of economistic trade union leaders seem to imply.

With these brief introduction, we can turn to the original Arrighi-Saul formulations.

1). Labour aristocrats in Africa.

For Arrighi and Saul, the 'labour aristocracy' includes not only the semi-skilled or skilled wage labourers involved in production or service industry, but also the bureaucratic elites and sub-elites in Africa. This conception is clearly different from the way 'labour aristocracy' is used by both Engels and Lenin, as outlined above.

The Arrighi-Saul category has largely severed all ties with the subsistence sector (ie it is fully proletarianised, in that it is totally divorced from ownership or control of its traditional means of production, and does not partially rely on the subsistence sector for the reproduction of its labour power).

The labour aristocracy is involved in 'discretionary' consumption which "absorbs a significant proportion of the surplus produced in the money economy." (9)

Absorption of the surplus product produced in the African economy takes place in three differing ways:
a). export of profits by 'non-indigenous' companies (including multi-nationals and foreign governments);
b). investment in production, usually in the form of investment in capital intensive techniques;
c). consumption by the labour aristocracy well above the consumption of goods socially recognised as necessary for the reproduction of labour power.

Arrighi and Saul do not state that all surplus appropriated is produced by the peasantry, although their implication is that at least the majority of the surplus product is appropriated from surplus produced by the peasantry (and they would, I think, include partially proletarianised migrant workers involved in the capitalist production of surplus value under the category of peasant production). This does not necessarily assert that fully proletarianised workers, part of the 'labour aristocracy' category, are not themselves involved in the production of surplus value.

Arrighi and Saul want to argue that, because there is no major land shortage in the subsistence sector, and because that sector has the ability to absorb many more family units than it presently supports, full proletarianisation in Africa is a 'voluntary process', whereby the total severence with the subsistence sector, and full reliance on unsupplemented wage labour, is freely chosen by a worker when he feels that the material rewards in urban-based production will be

higher than that of rural subsistence production.

This 'optional' proletarianisation takes place when

> "the incomes derived from wage employment are high enough to make the worker uninterested in the maintenance of reciprocal obligations with the extended family in the traditional sector. More specifically, his income must be sufficiently high and reliable to allow him to support his family in the town and to save enough to insure himself against distress in periods of unemployment, sickness and in his old age. The difference between this income and the low migrant labour wage rate will normally be considerable." (10)

The structure of the post-colonial State bureaucracy tends to ensure provision of such wages and salaries. During the post-independence period very little attempt was made to alter significantly the structure of the colonial administration. The 'Africanisation' of the bureaucracy involved the assumption of the basic salary attached to posts previously held by colonial administrators, and led to a situation of vast disparity between the wages and salaries of the 'bureaucratic elites and sub-elites' and the majority of wage earners.

The vastly inflated wages and salaries paid to the bureaucracies are partially shown in the dramatic increase of government administrative expenses in Africa between the years 1959 and 1962. For example, during this period, Guinea's administrative expenses rose by 80% and Mali's by 60%. (11)

This tendency for the State bureaucracy in Africa to be involved in the wastage of the surplus produced through both inflated wages/salaries, and discretionary consumption, is parallelled by the structure of foreign investment and industrial production. The emergence of a large disparity between wages and salaries of state bureaucrats, and workers involved in non-state production, coupled with the political power of the urbanised wage labourers (partially due to their role in the struggle for national liberation), meant that a steady rise in certain wages followed.

This rise in wages tends to have important structural effects on both investment, and techniques of production. Specifically, a steady rise in wages tends to strengthen the level of capital intensity of investment.

> "Capital intensity generally means that labour is a lower proportion of costs, so that the individual concern is more willing to concede wage increases (especially foreign oligopolies which can pass on cost increases to the consumer). However, this reinforces the tendency towards capital intensive (or labour saving) growth and a 'spiral process' may ensue." (12)

However, only a small selection of wage labourers benefit from this 'spiral process'. The growth rate in Africa just prior to, and since independence has been low (the period 1950-65 being about 2% per annum on average). (13) This 'wage mechanisation spiral' has resulted in a relative decrease in the number of people in wage employment, and an ever-widening gap between urban and rural incomes. A majority of wage labour in Africa is partly proletarianised migrant labour, and is unable to acquire the skills and specialisation needed to be productive when combined with capital intensive techniques. These

> "peasants temporarily in wage employment, cannot gain from the wage mechanisation spiral.....since higher individual incomes are matched by a reduction in their wage employment opportunities. The higher wages and salaries, however, foster the stabilisation of the better paid section of the labour force whose high incomes justify the severance of ties with the traditional economy. Stabilisation, in turn, promotes specialisation, greater bargaining power, and further increases in the incomes of this small section of the labour force...."(14)

The basis of surplus appropriation by forms of imperialism has changed in Africa. Purchasing labour-power below its socially determined value, or lengthening the working day (which increases the surplus labour time worked, and hence increases the rate of exploitation) has, with the increasing investment of the multi-nationals, become less important than constantly revolutionising means of production (including techniques), and cheapening wage goods, and this form of maintaining a rate of exploitation, and hence profit, needs a small, skilled or semi-skilled, stabilised labour force, to which relatively high wages can be paid.

Accordingly, the nature of multi-national investment and production in Africa tends to reinforce the 'labour aristocracy' in its position of relative privelege vis-a-vis the semi-proletarianised peasantry, and peasantry proper, who jointly constitute by far the majority of producers in Africa.

It is in this context that Arrighi and Saul claim that the labour aristocracy, comprising both fully-proletarianised wage labourers and the bureaucracy, is the 'hegemonic class' in Africa, and that this 'hegemony' is tied closely to the international dominance of finance and multi-national capital.

Highly schematically, then, we may summarise the Arrighi-Saul position as follows: the labour aristocracy

1). consists of an alliance between bureaucratic elites and fully-proletarianised wage labourers;

2). is at least partly a result of the maintenance of the administrative wage structure of the colonial period, and the structure of investment and production under multi-national capital;
3). absorbs surplus produced by the peasantry, and partly proletarianised peasantry, through 'discretionary consumption' over and above subsistence consumption;
4). is fully proletarianised, but that this full proletarianisation is a voluntary process, undertaken only when the urban productive sector is seen to be materially more lucrative than rural, or migrant sectors;
5). is the hegemonic class in African social formations.

It should be noted that this position differs in a number of respects to that of Lenin or Engels, who also use the concept labour aristocracy. The two concepts refer to different strata of society, entail different explanations of how and why this stratum emerges, presuppose the dominance of different types of capital, operative in different historical periods. The only major similarity, and hence the confusion, is that to both Lenin-Engels, and Arrighi-Saul, the labour aristocracy is a group which becomes increasingly conservative, and turns its back on the naturally revolutionary potential of the working class.

One final point remains to be made in this section. Arrighi and Saul have, on occasion, been accused of a form of peasant messianism, ie that the peasantry is the social class in Africa most likely to bring about revolutionary change in society. This is based on their suggestion that, within the context of the labour aristocracy thesis, one might do well to examine closely Fanon's assessment of the peasantry as the main revolutionary force. In fact, what Arrighi and Saul say is

> "considerable attention must continue to be paid to....(Fanon's) hope for significant transformation in post-colonial Africa (based) upon the peasantry's outrage at widening economic and social differentials....." (15)

Thus the conclusion postulated in some of the literature on classes in Africa - that Arrighi and Saul are totally supportive of Fanon's belief in peasants as the motor of Third World history - is clearly misplaced and exaggerated.

2). The Critiques of the Labour Aristocracy Thesis.

The major thrust of the criticisms of the labour aristocracy thesis in Africa has involved the empirical testing of the category against certain specific events. In particular, two case studies of the

Sekondi-Takoradi transport workers strike of 1961 in Ghana (16), are considered important by some in dismissing the concept as being of use (at least in West Africa).

The Sekondi-Takoradi strike material is used to show the basic militancy of the transport workers, and the identification of various other groups (unemployed, migrant workers, women market vendors) with the strikers. The events of the strike themselves are situated within the specific nature of the Ghanaian economy, which at this time, seems to show major differences when compared with the majority of other sub-Saharan societies.

For example, multi-national investment was considerably less than in Kenya or Uganda at this stage. Partially as a consequence of this, and partially due to relatively abundant labour supplies, wages for workers in both government and private sectors have tended to remain depressed over a long period of time. The real wage level of skilled and unskilled workers, considered together as a group, fell considerably between 1939 and 1968 (17) . In addition to this, the wage differential between skilled and unskilled transport workers at the time of the strike was something less than 2:1.

In these studies of the Sekondi-Takoradi strike, it is also argued that the real income of transport workers in the area of the strike was not appreciably higher than that of the peasantry. (18) The value of this particular judgement seems doubtful, as it seems an exercise in futility to attempt to quantify, in money terms, what is produced in the subsistence sector, and then to compare it with wages received in an urban productive or service industry. Nevertheless, for the moment we will accept the assertion that there was not a major difference between urban and rural producers in the area at that time.

It should also be noted that Sekondi-Takoradi is a relatively peculiar area in Ghana. It is, possibly more than any other African city (excluding Southern Africa) a working class community, with by far the majority of inhabitants being unskilled or semi-skilled workers. The 1955 Population and Household Budget Survey estimated that about 90% of earnings in Sekondi-Takoradi came from wage labour, compared with 67% in Accra. and 22% in Kumasi (the other major industrial centre in Ghana). (19)

At the time of the strike, about 25% of the total male labour force in Sekondi-Takoradi ($\pm$ 43,000) were employed in the Railways and

and Harbours Administration, the majority of whom were classified as skilled or semi-skilled. The railway and harbour workers tended to work in the closely concentrated harbour area, or the Sekondi railway workshops, and lived in close and regular contact in the railway villages.

To summarise some of the major forces operative at the time of the strike at Sekondi-Takoradi:

1). Multi-national investment, with its tendency to strengthen the intensity of capital investment, was less pronounced than in most other African societies;

2). Labour supplies in Ghana in general were abundant, and wages for workers in productive or service, government or private sectors, were not appreciably higher than real income in the subsistence sector (this being subject to our earlier reservation regarding quantification in money terms of subsistence produce);

3). The wage differential between skilled and unskilled workers was not vast (less than 2:1);

4). The Sekondi-Takoradi area has an exceptionally high percentage of earnings through wage labour (90%);

5). The skilled and semi-skilled railway and harbour workers

   a). worked and lived in physically integrated environs;

   b). in terms of their physical living areas, there was considerable interaction between them and other less skilled workers, unemployed, lumpenproletariat elements, etc. (ie there was very limited residential segregation based on income distribution within the working class).

It was in this context that, in September 1961, the railway and harbour workers in Sekondi-Takoradi staged a seventeen day illegal strike. The immediate reason for the strike was Nkrumaah's July budget, whereby

i). all those earning approximately the wage of a skilled worker, and above, were subject to a 5% deduction as part of a compulsory saving scheme; and

ii). a property tax would be levied on all houses categorised as larger than 'average'.

Although, during 1961, the real wages of skilled and unskilled workers were lower than those of the previous year, they were still higher than any other year since 1939 apart from the previous year. (20)

Accordingly, there were no unusual pressures of an economic nature on the skilled and unskilled workers, and although the July budget

proposals did affect many of the skilled workers, the nature of the budget did not affect semi- and unskilled workers, nor the unemployed.

Jeffries suggests that it is therefore unacceptable to see the strike in terms of a 'labour aristocracy' attempting to maintain its position of relative privilege in the face of austerity measures. Indeed, from the available situational data, it does seem that an explanation at the level of narrow economism is inadequate. The militancy of the striking workers was an important factor:

> "The staging of an illegal strike for seventeen days in the face of detention of leaders and threats of military intervention was clearly an intensely militant act - and the enthusiastic support they received from the unskilled workers, market women, and even some of the unemployed.....derived rather from the wider significance these economic issues assumed in the context of the politics of the national labour movement." (21)

The manner in which the strikers put forward their grievances in many ways struck at the basis of the rule of the Congress People's Party (CPP), Nkrumah's ruling governmental party. The protests against party corruption and nepotism, the lack of consultation with the majority of people on issues, the lack of a mass base, and the nature of corruption in the National Housing Corporation, whereby very limited low-cost housing was provided for unskilled workers, all suggest that the strike was an intense expression of class struggle, not merely at the level of economic structures, but at the more conscious level of the political.

It is from this Ghanaian data that certain writers have rejected the notion of 'labour aristocracy' as being applicable to African workers. What an analysis of the Sekondi-Takoradi strike does show is that the notion of an alliance between bureaucratic elites and fully proletarianised workers is open to serious doubt. If, as Arrighi and Saul would have it, this alliance is the hegemonic group in African social formations, the intensity of the conflict between state and strikers would be exceptionally difficult to explain.

Even at the level of income distribution, there appears to be a considerable discrepancy between the wages/salary paid to bureaucratic elites, and the wages paid to skilled workers.

> "By 1970 the differential ratio of the lowest paid to highest paid in government service was 1:39.....and the failure of wages to keep step with inflation meant that all but the most senior of skilled workers were living on, or just below, the poverty datum line." (22)

but, despite this, the Ghanaian material on the Sekondi-Takoradi strike seems to have to take account of certain exceptional features, as mentioned above, and perhaps all we can validly conclude from it , in terms of the specificity of prevailing economic and other social conditions, is that the category 'labour aristocracy'

a). does not encompass an alliance between bureaucratic elites and proletarianised workers, and

b). does not appear to have applicability to the structural relationships prevailing in a specific industrial centre in Ghana.

I shall return to the sorts of conclusions one can draw from this material below.

The material on the Lagos proletariat (23) is also fairly conclusive on the question of an alliance between proletarianised workers and the bureaucratic elites, but again little definitive data on the structural position of wage earners viv-a-vis other class fractions or strata, emerges.

Lagos also has certain specific productive conditions worth noting. It is an area where wage labour has been long established, and where the workers were actually organised into viable trade unions under colonial rule.

The legislated minimum wage rate for urban workers was, in 1971, £13 per month (£157p.a.), compared with a rural average income of ±£35p.a. (subject to our earlier objection to quantification of rural production in cash terms). However, the urban minimum wage rate in Lagos was quite specifically stated to be for the reproduction of the labour power of the worker only, not the family unit. This problem is compounded by Peace's rather simplistic assertion that "in my view once a worker enters the factory floor then he is 'proletarianised'". (24)

Accordingly, Peace's work does not really draw an adequate distinction between fully proletarianised workers, and migrant workers partially reproduced through subsistence production.

An examination of the 1970 Adebo Commission, and actions flowing from its recommendations, will serve to illustrate certain points. The Commission was convened by the Nigerian Federal Government to investigate wages and salaries in view of the "intolerable suffering at or near the bottom of the wage and salary levels." (25)

After a few months of investigation, an interim cost of living allowance (cola) was awarded to all daily wage labourers, and to

various sections of salary and wage earners. This award was made explicitly for workers in the public sector, but a strong recommendation was also made that private investors and employers should implement the 'cola' award. The Federal Government ratified both recommendations, but almost immediately, the Federal Commissioner for Labour exempted all wholly or partly owned expatriate companies from the compulsory payment.

The actual details of negotiations between the unions, government and expatriate management is not relevant near. But what is important is that, after almost a week of procrastination, go-slows and isolated strikes in afew factories, this spread and escalated into widespread strikes and lockouts throughout Lagos and certain industrial estates North of Lagos (the Iketja estates).

The strikes and lock-outs, which are of more fundamental importance to the multi-nationals than limited wage increases, in that their capital intensity ensures that value added by variable capital is a limited production cost, led to a fairly general agreement by the multi-nationals that the Adebo award should be re-extended to the private sector, and the Federal Government re-instated its initial acceptance of the cola award in the privare sector.

The first point to emerge from this dispute is that any attempt at suggesting a linear or uncomplex relationship between bureaucratic elites and proletarians is inadequate, unless situated in terms of the different interests of various fractions of capital, the relation of the dominant fraction to the State, etc. Clearly, one cannot simply postulate an alliance between bureaucrats and workers, and where this alliance does exist, it can never be 'hegemonic' vis-a-vis the State.

What is also interesting is the sort of conclusions Peace draws from his analysis of the Adebo strikes:

> "Undeniably specific economic interests were the subject at issue....In some ways Lagos workers could be said to be acting in protection of distinct sectional interests on the lines of the labour aristocracy thesis. But such a formulation....is... misleading; it assumes that by pressing for material improvement accruing directly to themselves wage-earners are thereby depriving other groups of the same resources which would fall to them in other circumstances. But, as indicated above, wage increases successfully fought for by the proletariat are generally viewed as acting to the benefit of others in the Lagos area; the amount of money circulating there increases substantially <u>to the advantage of the huge heterogeneous petty bourgeois category</u>." (26) (emphasis added.)

This misconception of the nature of the 'labour aristocracy' thesis is repeated by Peace where he suggests that Arrighi and Saul are basically wrong in their suggestion that

> "marginal increments in wages and salaries benefit workers alone when, in effect, such increments have repercussions throughout the urban area and promote economic and political identification between the labour force and non-wage earners." (27)

This error is directly attributable to Peace's earlier-noted misconception about the nature of proletarianisation as process, and his related inability to locate the terms of the debate accurately. The point about the labour aristocracy thesis is not that it claims that salary and wage increases do not benefit groups fulfilling distributive or circulatory functions, but that this aristocracy is seen as appropriating surplus produced by the peasantry and partly proletarianised migrant workers, and accordingly has no revolutionary potential.

The Lagos material, as interpreted by Peace, again seems to assist little in assessing the usefulness of the concept 'labour aristocracy', except inasmuch as it again points to the weakness of postulating the category as incorporating an alliance between bureaucratic elites and proletarianised workers. For the rest, the sorts of conclusions Peace reaches are not necessarily disputed - they just do not address themselves to the specific problem as articulated.

Saul, in a 1973 article (28), and largely in response to the Peace and Jeffries work on Nigeria and Ghana respectively, reconsiders the labour aristocracy thesis as originally developed by Arrighi and himself. He tentatively rejects it on two major grounds:
1). that the distinction between bureaucratic elites and workers is far greater than originally perceived, and that the encompassing term blurs these important distinctions, and
2). that, although proletarianised workers are in a relatively privileged situation as regards migrants and peasants, they may identify 'downwards' with the mass of exploited in Africa, rather than aspiring to junior elite status. This may be partially a response to the inability of capitalism in 'peripheral' areas to provide the material benefits necessary to buy off or co-opt elements of the working class. Saul, while warning against 'proletarian messianism' in assessing the revolutionary potential of the proletariat proper in Africa, ends by accepting the possibly

'progressive' role of those workers previously classified as labour aristocrats.

My comments on Saul's tentative conclusions appear later in this paper.

3). The Problem Identified.

We have now noted the formulation, and certain contemporary criticisms of the labour aristocracy thesis as related to Africa. The major critiques of the Arrighi-Saul postulates relate, not to its conceptualisation, but to its inability to account adequately for selected empirical material.

In particular, the difficulty at the level of empirical data in maintaining a clear distinction between the privileged and dispossessed sections of the working class, and between fully proletarianised and migrant workers, has led to a qualified rejection of the thesis. Coupled with the militancy of 'aristocratic workers' in some situations, the identification of migrants and unemployed with the demands of skilled workers, and the increasing gap (both in wages and interests) between the bureaucratic elites and the proletariat, the evidence against the existence of a labour aristocrarcy in Africa, as formulated by Arrighi and Saul, is strong.

But what exactly is the concept meant to clarify - what is its usefulness intended to be? Essentially, the thesis aims at telling us something about class formation in Africa, and more importantly, about the sorts of class alliances that are possible within a social formation dominated by multi-national investment, together with the operation of capitalism in a 'post-colonial' situation.

In other words, the basis of the problematic is the revolutionary or conservative potential of fully proletarianised workers, migrant workers, peasant producers and bureaucratic elites in peripheral capitalist societies, and the sorts of alliances which may emerge between those groups in the unfolding of class struggle. The real task of the concept 'labour aristocra cy' is to tell us something about class location and class interests in the post-colonial formations of Africa.

It is in these terms that both the usefulness of the concept, and the validity of the critiques, must be assessed.

4). Fanon and the peasantry.

Perhaps the most explicit protagonist of the peasantry as the group most objectively revolutionary, was Frantz Fanon. Very clearly, Fanon rejects the working class as the bearer of a revolutionary consciousness, and argues that it is the peasantry who are destined to fulfil a revolutionary role.

> "The peasantry is systematically disregarded for the most part by the propaganda put out by the Nationalist parties. And it is clear that in the colonial countries the peasants alone are revolutionary, for they have nothing to lose, and everything to gain. The starving peasant, outside the class system is the first among the exploited to discover that only violence pays." (29)

This glorification of the role of the peasantry is paralleled by a rejection of the proletariat proper -

> "It cannot be too strongly stressed that in the colonised territories the proletariat is the nucleus of the colonial population which has been most pampered by the colonial regime. The embryonic proletariat of the towns is in a comparatively privileged position. In capitalist countries, the working class has nothing to lose; it is they who, in the long run, have everything to gain. In the colonial countries the working class has everything to lose; in reality it represents the fraction of the colonised nation which is necessary and irreplacable if the colonial machine is to run smoothly.....It is these elements which constitute also the 'bourgeois' fraction of the colonised people." (30)

At the same time, Fanon is forced to accept that certain problems exist with conceptualising the peasantry as THE revolutionary group (he seems somehow to locate them outside of class relations!) In particular, the conservative nature of the peasantry, coupled with its isolated existence, makes it possible for the ruling bourgeoisie to utilise peasants for reactionary means. It is in response to this that Fanon introduces his urban revolutionary vanguard - the lumpenproletariat,

> "that hord of starving men, uprooted from their tribe and from their clan, constitut(ing) one of the most spontaneous and the most radically revolutionary forms of a colonised people... the gangrene ever present at the heart of colonial domination... the pimps, the hooligans, the unemployed and the petty criminals, urged on from behind, throw themselves into the struggle for liberation like stout working men. These classless idlers will by militant and decisive action discover the path that leads to nationhood.....The prostitutes, too.....all hopeless dregs of humanity, all who turn in circles between suicide and madness will recover their balance, once more go forward and march proudly in the great procession of the awakened nation." (31)

The final element in Fanon's 'class' analysis of Africa which we need to detail briefly is the role of the traditional chiefs and

feudal leaders, which he sees as being maintained in their position by the colonisers, but nonetheless possessing a "moral authority over the peasants with whose help they defend the traditional society, which is a source of the strength of the nation." (32)

Although it is admitted that some of Fanon's intuitive insights are more subtle and valuable than those outlined above, we must assess his general analysis rigorously in terms of any explanatory value it may have regarding classes in Africa. His class analysis is so crude as to be all but useless, and seriously misleading. Briefly, one notes the following areas of major weakness:

1). The potential of a group (class) in a social formation is not based upon 'what it has to lose or gain' but on its objective position firstly within production itself, and then more completely in terms of its relationship to the structures and practices (ideological, political, legal etc) which constitute society.

2). The peasantry is in no ways an undifferentiated mass. Any analysis of the role of rural producers must draw distinctions between

a). the rural proletariat,

b). migrant workers,

c). subsistence agricultural producers 'who are also differentiated),

d). capitalist farmers employing wage labour.

Fanon seems to include all of the above in one composite category - the peasantry.

3). Fanon suggests that both the peasantry and the lumpenproletariat stand outside of class relations. In general terms, it is totally unacceptable to suggest that any social group stands outside of class relations and class conflict. The totality of relations and structures in a society place all agents into different social classes, and because they are material relations, no agent escapes them.

4). The suggestion that a lumpenproletariat may lead a revolution is absurd. This becomes even clearer when we discuss below what may, and may not, constitute a social force.

5). The basis of 'spontaneity' which seems integral to revolutionary activity for Fanon is a totally inadequate way of conceptualising the complex unfolding of class struggle, and the strategies, tactics and alliances which this presupposes.

6). Given that the material determination of Chiefs and traditional leaders is from within a sector of society dominated by, and subordinated to, capitalist relations, it is incorrect to attribute

anything other than a reactive and backward-looking role to the leaders of traditional society.

We accordingly find Fanon's formulations, while at least having the merit of considering the question of interests (rather than the size of the pay packet), of no assistance in assessing the question of the objective determination of proletarians in Africa.

5). The reaction to peasant messianism - worker wishfulness, or proletarian patronage.

The reaction to the glorification of the role of the peasantry is preeminently found in the writings of Jack Woddis, who puts forward an argument which supports the contention of a revolutionary proletariat. Fundamentally, Woddis argues
1). that the evidence in Africa is that the majority of workers remain "unskilled, casual, migrant low-paid labourers who could in no sense be regarded as'pampered'".(33)
2). that, in the struggle for national independence, the role of the trade unions and workers was so great and militant as to reflect and instil a sense of revolutionary class consciousness;
3). that, since independence, the unions and workers have become more exploited and in opposition to governments unpopular with the vast majority of the people. Accordingly, the working class, if organised into a revolutionary party, is the leading revolutionary force.

Woddis' position has been summarised as follows:

> "There exists within the modern economic sector in Africa an economically exploited working class. This class is socially allied with the rest of the masses. Its unions have generally proven themselves socially conscious and radical, their policies being opposed to the interests of the exploiting classes and oppressive regimes. They are the leading force for the further development of the continent." (34)

The problem with the above conceptualisation (proletarian patronage) is that it rather crudely transports Marxist categories applicable to developed capitalism, to a situation of capital's peripheral operation. The complexity of a working class which has a conventional proletarian role in production, but is within a social formation predicated upon the articulation of both capitalist and pre-capitalist forms of production, is blurred by a dogmatic insistence that analysis is about categories, not methodology.

Clearly, whatever the class situation of proletarians is in Africa, it cannot be identical to that of workers in Western Europe and North America. The very structure of the economy upon which class

formation is based, is different. This difference includes not only a specificity of the mode of operation of imperial capital in one of its forms, but also the existence of a vast number of rural producers who have not been forcibly seperated from their traditional means of production. This situation necessitates careful application of the methodology of class analysis to Africa, not the imposition of categories.

6). Some general propositions.

Our survey of some of the material, both conceptual and empirical, on the labour aristocracy thesis, seems to have been of very limited value in telling us anything about classes in Africa. I want to suggest that the problem is actually a conceptual one, and that it is as pertinent to the Arrighi-Saul propositions as it is to their critics.

This incorrect conceptualisation is, I will argue, a function of inadequate statements about classes in social formations, and how they are identified.

The problem with the material which allegedly refutes the Arrighi-Saul thesis is that it is situated on the identical ideological terrain and, implicitly, accepts the same methodological criteria. This means that if the original formulation of the problem was inadequate, the critiques, operating within the same inadequate conceptualisations of the problematic, will reproduce the initial inadequacies.

This sort of methodological proposition is precisely what the important Poulantzas-Miliband debate on the state in capitalist society is about. (35) Poulantzas claims (correctly, I suggest), that by taking standard ideological propositions, and empirically refuting them, one remains within the same ideological constraints as those who put forward the initial propositions. To argue about whether the state is neutral presupposes that it is a matter of import. A redefinition of the problematic, necessarily entailing the production of a different set of concepts aimed at the production of knowledge, would rather ask questions about the nature of the capitalist state's 'bias' in favour of the bourgeoisie. (This is of course subject to the important reservation that the generation of a new problematic, not influenced by bourgeois theory, is a process, and in a way is never ended while capitalist social relations remain).

In these terms, the criticisms of the Arrighi-Saul formulation, which do nothing other than to refute their propositions empirically, are of little use in advancing our understanding of class formation in Africa.

For example, Arrighi and Saul assert that there is a vast income differential between what they want to call 'labour aristocrats', and the mass of semi-proletarianised workers, and that this separates 'labour aristocrats' from migrants in terms of class interests.

Jeffries attempts to refute this by showing that such an income differential either does not exist, or, where it does, it is not as large as Arrighi and Saul suggest. Accordingly, he suggests that the class interests of fully and partly proletarianised workers are more similar than Arrighi and Saul suggest.

But the point is that, in this example, the initial conceptualisation is incorrect. Location of classes and class interests is not done through the relative size of wages received. Wages are a juridical relationship reflective of more fundamental economic relationships, which we call relations of production (the relations men enter into in the production of commodities). These include the relationships of ownership and control over the means of material production, as well as forms of surplus production and appropriation. It is these relationships which, for example, are at the base of the distinction between workers and capitalists. Of course, these economic relations serve as only the basis of class location. Also important are political, ideological, juridical etc. relations and structures, which go up to determine the totality of class formation. However, initial identification is at the level of relations of production.

If, as in the case of Arrighi and Saul, the initial mode of class location is incorrect, any criticisms of the conclusions reached which does not totally redefine the problematic is of limited value.

This is precisely the difficulty of dealing with the Arrighi-Saul formulation. We can recall that their basic propositions were:

1). the bureaucratic elite/proletarian alliance is based on mutually held relatively high salary/wage scales;
2). the wage structure of post-colonial states and the multi-nationals reinforces the relatively high income of bureaucratic elites and proletarians;
3). the labour aristocracy absorbs surplus produced by the peasantry

through its spending and consumption of goods, socially defined as other than 'necessary' consumption;

4). full proletrianisation is on a 'voluntary' basis, undertaken only when wages offered exceed material rewards in the subsistence sector;

5). the labour aristocracy, by virtue of its privileged position and related access to power, is the 'hegemonic' class in post-colonial society.

All these propositions attempt to locate classes on the basis of the size of paypacket, and the debate on the issue, from Woddis to Fanon, from Jeffries to Peace, operates within that accepted conceptualisation. It is for this reason that the debate is so inconclusive and of limited strategic or analytic use.

7). Classes in Africa.

I have already stated my opposition to an economistic conception of class, which locates classes only in regard to economic relations. As Poulantzas has it,

> "there are bases of exploitation other than the direct and private ownership of means of production, which involve exploitation of labour.....(O)wnership is intended to convey a social relationship. That includes not only the control and appropriation of surplus....but such political, ideological, legal and other forms that accompany them." (36)

Accordingly, while any attempt at class location must begin at the level of the mode of production (in the sense of determinant economic relations), such analysis must also take into account the complexity and importance of non-economic relations as well. But, within the various African social formations, there exist not just one mode of production, but various residual modes under the dominance of capitalism. This means that the existence of 'pure' classes, as located at the abstract level of the pure mode of production, will not exist, and therefore

> "class analysis for an African society must....proceed from the identification and analysis of co-existing modes of production, and from an investigation of the process of interaction or articulation between the modes." (37)

Let me assert, as a working proposition, that capitalism in its 'peripheral' or 'underdeveloped' aspect (which is one side of a transitive relationship of global capital, and not an independent or separate form) tends far less than its developed manifestation to destroy or absorb pre-capitalist forms of production. In other words, there is a complex tendential relationship of conservation-dissolution,

as opposed to a tendency of absorption applicable to developed capitalism. The reasons for this are long and complex. Suffice it to say that this is partially due to the nature of capital initially dominant in Africa (merchants capital), and the nature of its penetration into pre-capitalist forms of production. It also relates crucially to the depression of the value of labour power, whereby the value of labour power is determined at the level of the individual worker, rather than the family unit.

The nature of class location is accordingly very complex, in that one has social classes predicated both on capitalist forms of production, as well as preserved pre-capitalist production. This means that certain groups exist which have no historical existence in eg. Western Europe, except perhaps as residual categories during the transition from feudalism to capitalism.

What I want to do now is to draw some distinctions between differentiated groups within a peripheralised social formation. The first two groups are common to all capitalist formations, while the third possibly has a specificity to Third World societies. Following Poulantzas (38), one can talk of

a). social categories which are groups of agents who exist dominantly by virtue of a special relationship to the non-economic structures and practices of society. Significant examples of social categories are

i). the bureaucracy, in terms of its relation to the State, and State apparatuses;

ii). intellectuals, by virtue of a special overdetermined relationship to the ideological apparatuses of the social formation.

b). Class fractions, which are sections of actual classes. A class (as opposed to a category) exists as determined by economic, ideological and political relations in society, ie is a result of the total articulation of the structures and practices which constitute society. A class also only exists in relation to another class, with whom it has an antagonistic relation of conflict. Within a class, or class fraction, one may distinguish between class strata, which relate to non-fundamental indices of stratification. Conflicts between class strata are thus not basically antagonistic, whereas there are important distinguishing features between fractions.

The third and final distinction suggested may be called social strata. By these groups, I refer to collective agents which are predicated upon a combination of modes of production, or are

themselves residual classes from a dominated mode of production. One can include peasants, traditional leaders, etc. in this category, which clearly has a far more direct and pertinent applicability to peripheralised social formations, as opposed to imperial metropoles.

Within the framework of the above, I want to put forward some very tentative comments about certain social groups in Africa. These comments are nothing more than suggestive, in that the purpose of this paper has been to clear the way for a discussion on classes.

a). The labour aristocracy: I suggest that this concept has no explanatory role, and fulfils a distorting function. Fully proletarianised workers, where they occupy a relatively 'privileged' position vis-a-vis migrants are a class stratum, structurally undifferentiated from other workers in the productive process, in that they produce value, and have surplus value appropriated from them. In the case of certain service sectors, surplus labour is appropriated from workers under capitalist conditions of production.

There is accordingly no reason to doubt the potentially revolutionary interests of proletarians in Africa, and there are no structural conditions militating against the growth of revolutionary consciousness. There is also no reason to dismiss the possibility of an alliance between migrants and the proletariat proper. The term 'labour aristocracy' implies that, within the production process itself, there is something structural which differentiates the interests of 'labour aristocrats' from other workers (eg. the distinction between craft workers, and newly proletarianised industrial workers).

Although, in his article reconsidering the labour aristocracy thesis in Africa (40), John Saul seems to have come to similar conclusions, I want to emphasise that his conclusions are based upon a faulty methodology, operating within an inadequately defined problematic. If analysis is to be valid as methodology (ie applicable to more than one specific situation), then the definition of the problematic is vital. It is on these grounds that Saul's analysis is considered inadequate, although, almost by good fortune, he arrives at an adequate conclusion.

Finally, on this point, I am in no way suggesting that a discussion such as this is adequate out of the context of forms of worker consciousness in Africa. I do, however, suggest

that a structural location of classes or class fractions is necessary prior to an assessment of the specific forms of consciousness which may emerge in specific conjunctures.

b). The peasantry: They exist as an effect of the articulation of modes of production. The peasantry proper (ie small agricultural producers, producing primarily for subsistence, but also for the market) is a residual class within a dominated mode of production.

c). The bureaucracy: does not exist as a class itself, but in relation to the State apparatuses; accordingly, it can only be the effect of the State's relation to the structures and practices of society, and to other classes. A bureaucracy's functioning is not determined by its class membership, but rather by the specific nature of the state and its apparatuses.

What remains to be done, and what is not even considered above, is the question of which of these groups, either singly or in alliance with other social groups, can exist as social forces, ie have a direct influence on the events, trends and transformation of a society.

Note: I wrote this paper in October 1976, and it bears all the problematic marks of a formal seminar paper (including a rather turgid and complex style). Typing it out now, I am aware of disagreements with many of the positions argued 17 months ago. I have, however, not altered it in any material way, and hope that it can serve as a catalyst for a debate on classes in imperialised social formations - vital if we are to fully understand the dynamics of the continent we live in.

Glenn Moss.

Notes:

(1) Engels to Marx, October 11th, 1858.
(2) Engels to Kautsky, quoted in Lenin, V.I.: Imperialism, the highest stage of capitalism.
(3) Lenin: Imperialism.....
(4) See Arrighi and Saul (1968), (1969) and (1970).
(5) Jeffries 1975a:60.
(6) Arrighi and Saul 1969:158-159.
(7) Jeffries 1975:61.
(8) Sandbrook and Cohen 1975:204.
(9) Arrighi and Saul 1968:149.
(10) Arrighi and Saul 1970:121.
(11) Arrighi and Saul 1968:160.
(12) Arrighi and Saul 1968:147.
(13) ibid.148.
(14) ibid.148.

(15) Arrighi and Saul 1969:169.
(16) Jeffries 1975a.
(17) Jeffries 1975b.
(18) Jeffries 1975a:60.
(19) Jeffries 1975b:270.
(20) Jeffries 1975a:61.
(21) Jeffries 1975b:263.
(22) ibid.276.
(23) Peace 1975.
(24) ibid.284.
(25) cited ibid.284.
(26) ibid.290.
(27) ibid.298.
(28) Saul 1975.
(29) Woddis 1973:41
(30) cited ibid.45.
(31) cited ibid.47-48.
(32) ibid.53.
(33) ibid.113.
(34) Waterman 1975:15.
(35) see eg. chapter 11 in (ed) Blackburn 1973.
(36) Poulantzas 1975:3
(37) ibid.4.
(38) esp. Poulantzas 1973a and 1973b.
(39) Poulantzas 1973a:78.
(40) Saul 1975.

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PALEFACES - SOME COMMENTS ON WHITE ENGLISH SOUTH AFRICAN POETRY OF THE SEVENTIES

This article has for its subject matter an anthology of English South African poetry of the seventies: 'A World of Their Own' (A.D. Donker,1976). Its intention, however, is not one of explication except in a negative sense. For the problems posed by the poems in this anthology do not arise out of a difficulty of ideas or linguistic innovation. Not at all. The problem is one of seeking explanations (other than that of an evident lack of genius) for a mediocrity and poetic failure so pervasive that it appears well nigh mystical in its impenetrability.

But this failure has its uses. 'A World of Their Own' is for the most part an extremely 'reasonable', 'humorous' and controlled' body of evidence of the failure of these poets to come to grips with South Africa; and, since poetry is a cultural product, it could also be said to reflect the failure of White English South Africans as a whole to come to grips with their country. The Black poets represented in this anthology also make for a sad story, but lack of space prevents me from dealing with them here. Nevertheless, if only for the above reason, I urge you to read this book. But bearing in mind the following comments. For the seduced are invariably seductive.

The situation of the White English South African Poet (W.E.S.A.P.) is scarcely a happy one. Firstly, he creates a form of communication which has been increasingly displaced by mass media. Secondly, he is restricted by the enforced schizophrenia of apartheid from many areas of experience (cf. the image of the Black presented in these poems: the fact that he is always evoked through those reifications 'houseboy', 'garden-boy' etc., fairly illustrates the consequences of this restriction - the Black is never more than a White label, however ironically manipulated). Thirdly, he lacks a genuine audience for his work - culture is a product of society and not of university faculties.

Moreover, the White English to whom he addresses his work can only make the situation more unhappy. Being generally no more than a dead collection of people it is inevitable that their hunger should be not for poetry, but for those activities - television, most films etc. - which serve to anaethetize their fear of breaking into a more real existence. And since art only becomes such through a community of people, and since the White English are anything but that, it follows that they can have no art. Their poetry dies because they are not a community who could imbue it with life through adopting it as an important element in their culture. And, finally, the White English poet is further alienated by the characteristic way in which he writes. It is this latter feature which will concern me most in the rest of this article. (But it ought to be mentioned that given impoverished poetry arising out of this impoverished situation, that it is natural that those who want bread and not sack should have to go to European and American poets: this is just as much an attempt to compensate for a local cultural deprivation as it is to evade it.).

It takes little imagination to discover how poets like Mann, Hope, Greig, Gray, Butler, Livingstone and Swift have attempted to cope with this situation. Presumably they know that things are going to hell and that nobody gives too much of a damn about their poetry. They must certainly know that they are poets in chaotic times. Their reaction to this is to keep plugging stoically away at the humane virtues, and to plump for the sanity of social realism. All of which is neatly packaged in carefully crafted verses: a structure.

Despite the necessity of structure and despite its almost obsessive attraction in times of especial insecurity, it is often no more than a disguise for an essential vacuity and an inessential cliché. And thus it is with the above poets. Contentless structures. These are men who are not going to be caught with their pants down...And in this they reveal something of their artistic lineage. It goes back with few umbilical hitches to those small English English poets of the '50's who rejected the Pound/Eliot revolution and settled for Hardy again. The result of this was a gray and humble little poetry, self-conscious, ironic, mature, resolutely avoiding taking a long shot at any significant matter and eschewing any intensity of feeling that might just heighten the blush on their pedestrian versifying. But their ironies, complexities and ambiguities à la Empson, Richards and Leavis merely concealed (or revealed) their defeat; their straitjacket versifying their fear of claiming too much for poetry, of the Drunken Boat. And, consequently: a verse as deep as Ditchwater, suburbia,

Academe.

Most of the W.E.S.A.P.'s have dosed themselves with the above formula for the preservation of civilized decency. And if they do transgress it, it is with big,cold toes well in advance. Irony is the survival kit. In 'Being and Nothingness' Sartre writes: 'In irony a man nihilates what he posits within one and the same act; he leads us to believe in order not to be believed; he affirms to deny and denies to affirm; he creates a positive object but it has no being other than its nothingness' (p.47). And thus Chris Mann in the last two stanzas of 'Concerning Most People', nicely accommodating himself to his defeat:

> "Now I find I watch myself,
> Perform a pantomime,
> In corridors, nodding, courteous,
> Grinning gamely all the time.
>
> That's my life if you want it,
> Spontaneous as bread,
> Staling as the dryness spreads,
> Deep within my head." (p. 106)

And that's that. From catalepsy to catalepsy. The poem negates itself through an irony which can only presuppose a perpetuity of grinning and rhyming. And it misses the very essence of irony, that it is a means of taking into account those contradictions whose denial can only mean a foreshortened vision. But it is only a means. But Mann, as do many of the other poets, never gets out of it at all. Hence the first failure.

And the language itself? Guy Butler 'launches' his 'Farmer' (note, among others, the seaside cliché) in this way:

> "The sandstone stoep, festooned with bits of biltong
> is the bridge of his liner. From there he pilots
> three thousand morgen of good Karoo veld
> through sizzling doldrums of drought and stormy good seasons;
> barks laconic orders at the 'boys'
> who, wringing stained hats in yellow hands,
> cringe on the blue gravel deck three feet below him."(p.17)

And this, according to Professor Butler, is poetry! Another example, Chris Hope's 'Hell-Bent with Seminarians':

> "The Trans-Natal Express glides through the night
> As I grope down the swaying corridor
> Into the dining-car's uneasy light
> To sit with three young men." (p.77) etc.,etc.,etc.

Further quotation is unnecessary: the anthology is shot through and through with this type of language. And what is its significance? It is the syntax and lexicon of the bourgeois: cool, level-headed, dust-dead, carefully cleaned of those imponderables, myth, symbol - the language of the clerk with a briefcase. It is that everyday,

'ordinary' language which expresses an automatized experience of the world. And if only this feature is borne in mind it will provide at least one good reason why (despite all the local colour: dongas, velds and Kruger Park creatures) this poetry is deracinated. The bourgeois, let alone their syntax,have never come to grips with anything. That is what they are all about.

A number of other general features are worth mention. A surprising number of these poems take the form of a narrative, they tell a story. Why? One among many obvious reasons is the security of realism, of the story. Both for the writer and the reader realism is the most easily comprehended and, hence, least unnerving genre. Along with this type of pandering to complacency, goes an astute emphasis on the phenomenal world: gin, tea-times - all the paraphenalia of White middle-class life. Presumably this concentration on the actual is to root the poems in 'reality', in 'society'. But since this actuality is so much a matter of facades (gin, tea, etc.) the effect of invoking it is actually to uproot the poems: they become contaminated through their hackneyed use of cliché. The phenomenal merely provides the security of cliché as does the narrative structures which contain them.

Moreover, the satirizing of White English South Africa through irony (Greig, Mann and Hope are the main exponents) invariably fails, and not simply through the contradictions inherent in the art form of satire itself. Flaubert understood perfectly that if one is to satirize the bourgeois one has to have an exceedingly refined version of their language. For, if not, the writer undercuts the possibility of effective criticism by being subsumed under that which he is satirizing (and this, incidentally, is the fault of Nadine Gordimer's 'The Conservationist'). And thus when Mann writes in 'To My English-Speaking Countrymen':

> "Whether you're plump
> And stretch the leather of the Rand Club
> Waiting for a chaffeur
>
> To take us from the wine,
> Or, skinnier, queue for the bus
> That brings us to suburban meat
> Respectability rules the day."(p.109) etc.,etc.,etc.

He is not, as André Brink maintains in his back-slapping cant in the introduction to this anthology, flaying 'respectability' through 'respectable verses'; no, this bourgeois language is merely consoling the reader with the knowledge that Mann is a bourgeois like himself.

(In general one would think that separation, division and alienation would be themes literally haunting the work of these poets. But, no.

These aspects are to be found in the language itself. It could be argued that the very mode of their poetry is a form of apartheid.)

Another significant feature is the absence of any poetry on the Afrikaner. It seems that there is an implicit assumption that the English are in the same camp as them. Presumably because of a common guilt and complexion - although the English prefer to have 'conscience' instead of guilt. But a few lines from Mayakovsky may very well prove to be apposite:

> "And only
> God
> above
> indeed
> knew they
> were creatures
> of a different breed"

However that may be, however the Afrikaner as such is not named and however much he is a spectral presence behind the mumbo-jumbo of the more political poems, he is never dealt with specifically. And in one poem on the Afrikaner nation, Douglas Livingstone's 'The Heritage' (p.104), there is 'a search for myths' (perhaps because the truth is too obvious) which would explain the rapid transformation of the Afrikaner from trekker to bureaucrat; there is no suggestion that the true source of bemusement might be the fact that he has changed so little despite his changing circumstances. But that's all. Otherwise there is only some vague talk about 'White South Africans'.

But Douglas Livingstone's 'a search for myths' - this is probably the most profound single phrase in this singularly unprofound anthology. It is a commonplace that South Africa is held together by a nexus of peoples dreaming each other. Myths create the practical barriers which in turn create those bridging fantasies which reinforce the myths. But these poets do not delve into the human psyche, the real home of myths. Rather, they simply cough up without comment their manifestations: 'resettlement areas', 'houseboys', etc. Nor do they attempt to delineate the effects of unknowing and the consolation of fantasy that this results in on the human psyche. Neither do they search for myths, nor do they exhibit a searching of the myths. The result, of course, is that the myths continue breeding happily away in the mind.

These poets are committed, though. Engagée. But the force of their commitment is something like this: we would like to inform you that the situation is getting dangerous, portenuous, that while you are at tennis or curing your legs Jackson is honing his panga in the tool-shed, that while you are taking tea in your rehabilitated Cape

Cottage some by no means celestial darkest night might home in on you - so beware, the Ides are on the march. It's called being aware. Aware of what ? Awareness? One can read the papers for that.

Otherwise their commitment is presumably to Life, the whole polyglot hog of it. And this is all very well. One can, in Zbigniew Herbert's words -

> "write of love
> and also
> once again
> in dead earnest
> offer to the betrayed world
> a rose" ('Five Men') -

precisely because that is also a part of Life. But he ought to have mentioned that only so long as one's offering is a rose is a rose is a rose. For the fact is that, with the exception of Livingstone and Cullinan, these poets can neither write of love nor with love (cf. the 'love' poems of Greig and Gray). And it follows naturally if they are so insipid on this 'eternal', if their commitment is so paltry on this score, they are scarcely going to be convincing when they turn to socio-political themes (cf. Jonker and Breytenbach for a standard of comparison). On linguistic evidence their commitment is effectively to nothing.

It is no incidental fact that these poets should be so concerned with the past in one form or the other. For the past is one of the elements indissolubly linked to any conception of identity. And identity is always a concern of the writer since it provides the framework in terms of which his understanding of things is defined. But the notion of identity causes genuine problems for the W.E.S.A.P. When he finally has to give up asking 'who am I?', and has to settle for 'to whom do I belong, with what do I identify?' - problems.

For, to begin with, he cannot possibly belong to his own kind because they are not a 'kind' at all. The very principle of bourgeois affluence which commandeers the life of the White English prevents a community of English people. Its effect is to make them as independent as possible, particularly from each other. And the proof? Have an English poet address his kind as 'My People' and 'My People' will immediately scurry for their handkerchiefs or wives. The English are 'individuals', not a people. The lost tribe lost because they are not a tribe. And so the residual question: 'where do I come from?' And generally the only honest answer would seem to be 'from my parents, from my grand-parents - it's from them that I derive my identity' (Or, if you don't like them, your lover...I don't know).

And it is this which is the real reason for the veritable

obsession (unobtrusive nevertheless) with the past in the form of relatives: cf. 'Great-Great-Grandmother', 'The Billiard Room', 'The Race', 'Never Golden', 'Concerning Most People', 'The Wives' Tales', 'My Grandfather's House', 'In My Father's Room' etc. They are the only source of identity. History begins with them and ends with me. Voids over the end of each end (or the Atlantic). Void in me.

And this is genuinely a disturbing phenomenon. But inevitably it is obscured in the above poems. One gets no sense that these poets have ever questioned why they happen to be writing so much about 'Mom' and 'Dad'. And, in all seriousness, unbelonging and the consequent loss of identity it involves is certainly one of the afflictions of the English in South Africa, nor is it without precedent in the twentieth century as a whole (in literature Kafka is the obvious avatar). The English, however, have always evaded this fact through a wadding of dinners and ideas; anything but that radical ultimate, pain itself.

And this is reflected in their poetry too. Neither does it 'wound' nor, to use Berryman's words again, does it 'terrify and comfort'. On the one hand this may simply be an artistic failure; on the other, it would seem to stem from an evasion of experience. For from none of these poets does one get the sense that they have been beggared, like Ingrid Jonker and Breyten Breytenbach,by what they have witnessed. And it is not mere conjecture to say that it is perhaps because of this that no real voice has been wrung from them. Poetry like bread for those trying to live, and not sack for the bourgeois. When Guy Butler writes in one of his usual flat-footed felicities (he is striving to sound humble):

> "Come.
> The hour is yours,
> the invitation open and urgent.
> Come." (p.13) etc.,etc.,etc.

one can rest assured that 'Whoever-Whatever-You-Are' (the title of this poem). 'renewal' 'salvation', 'self-knowledge', etc. is certainly not going to come if this stanza really reflects the intensity of his plea for it. Moreover, one can be certain it won't want to come if it is called 'Whoever-Whatever-You-Are.' And it doesn't. We get a moral instead.

Stephen Watson

analogy and aberration

A CRITIQUE OF EAGLETON'S CRITICISM AND IDEOLOGY

"Unfortunately,however,it happens only too often that people think they have fully understood a new theory and can apply it without more ado from the moment they have mastered its main principles,and even those not always correctly. And I cannot exempt many of the more recent 'Marxists' from this reproach,for the most amazing rubbish has been produced in this quarter, too." - Friedrich Engels

1

Terry Eagleton's new book (1) has already had a certain amount of influence in literary circles in South Africa. This work proposes a Marxist critical method capable of giving initial form to a 'literary science' with which critics can examine the ideological and social relations elaborated in and through various forms of literature, as well as the mode of operation governing the producing and disseminating of literary forms in different social formations and historical epochs. Implicitly, the book also poses questions about the 'scientific' potential of literary criticism.

However, as literary critics from our universities have been so indoctrinated by the 'prac.crit.' approach (which can deal in a meaningful way only with aesthetics, and even this reflected through a liberal ideology which refuses to see its own limitations and subjectivity) there has been little to prepare them for a 'scientific' discourse. Thus, it is perhaps necessary to subject Eagleton's book to closer scrutiny.

It is obvious immediately that this work contains a few interesting and provocative discussions. Particularly of interest are the critique of the Scrutiny school and of Raymond Williams, and the criticism of the Althusserian conception of the insertion of 'art' into a society's superstructure. But much of what is of value is hidden from us behind a smokescreen of terminological and conceptual confusions almost

dizzying in their ability to mystify. Moreover, the author is not above contradicting himself, often within the same page (2).

Eagleton, it would seem, has adopted an unfortunate approach to questions of 'literary science'; and his misunderstanding is set squarely in and around the chapter entitled 'Categories for a Materialist Criticism' (3). It is with these misunderstandings that I will briefly deal in what follows.

2

Central to Eagleton's hypothesis is the concept of literary 'production' and the 'literary mode of production' (sic). This refers to the structures of literary "production,distribution,exchange and consumption" (p.47) which may co-exist in a particular social formation,and change during history e.g. it is possible in South Africa to talk of the co-existence of certain oral traditions among indigenous peoples which have been changed (by newspapers,radio etc.) but not overcome by the growth of literacy. In a capitalist society, however, the major way literature is produced and distributed is via publishing houses, libraries and the commercial sector. Thus literature has specific ways of being produced, which may relate to social relationships at different stages of history, such as tribal bard-chieftain, medieval poet-patron, author-publisher relationships, and so on.

Nevertheless, the artist's individualised creative process cannot be seen as 'production' with regard to the structure of the economy of a society (4). In complex societies production is a collective process.

> "In the social production of their life,men enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will,relations of production which correspond to a definite stage of development of their material productive forces. The sum total of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society,the real foundation,on which rises a legal and political superstructure and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness. The mode of production of material life conditions the social,political,and intellectual life generally." (Marx,Preface to 'A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy',1859)

As an example, within the capitalist mode of production the artist 'produces', say, a manuscript or a painting (which are commodities differing in use-value from each other and from other items) which is sold to his publisher or art dealer as a commodity (and these, transformed into exchange-values, now differ only in quantity)

after which the published manuscript or displayed work of art will enter into the production-consumption cycle as a commodity (5). The actual publishing process usually has little or nothing to do with the artist. While different types of commodity contain qualitatively different types of concrete labour and differ in use-value, they contain an equal amount of abstract labour and differ in exchange-value only in quantity:

> "food which satisfies a biological need is qualitatively completely different from,say,musical instruments which can satisfy an aesthetic need. Both are use-values because they satisfy a need...items which have a different material form,like a piano and a car,and yet which are equal in exchange,must have something in common and have an equal amount of it. This common property of all commodities is human labour...if we think of labour from the point of view of the tasks it performs,that is,if we think in terms of concrete labour,it is obviously true that there are many different forms of labour varying according to the nature of the use-values they produce, and that these different forms are not directly comparable with each other. For example,the particular types of labour and skills used in car manufacturing are not those required to make pianos. But just as use-values that are materially different from each other and satisfy quite different needs,share the common property of being use-values,so the different forms of concrete labour share the common property of all being labour. This can be called abstract labour and all the different types of concrete labour,the different types that make pianos and cars for instance,are all different forms of abstract labour.
> Abstract labour is the quality that all commodities have in common. Its crystallisation in the form of a commodity gives that commodity value. In other words value is abstract labour embodied in a commodity." (Kay,1975)

As the value of commodities has only a social reality, which they acquire insofar as they are expressions of a particular social substance viz.human labour, it follows as a matter of course that value can only manifest itself in the social relation of commodity to commodity. It is precisely the social nature of abstract labour that makes it invisible in the process of production, as Gerstein observes: while concrete labour can be seen directly, abstract labour appears only in its effects.

Consequently the writer can be said to be in the same relation to the publisher as, for example, an inventor to a large manufacturer. The creative process is entirely different from the economic production process, which gives books, pianos, cars, refrigerators, machines etc. an economic existence as commodities quantified in terms of their exchange-value.

That Eagleton conflates the individualized creative process and

the production of books etc. as commodities is beyond doubt: he specifically situates literature (as a blanket term) within both base and superstructure of society, and claims it figures at once within material production and ideological formation (6). Indeed, his understanding of commodity production in various historical epochs is scanty, to say the least:

> "In the case of literary production, the materials and instruments employed normally perform a common function within the GMP (by this he means the dominant mode of production-ks) itself. This is less true of certain other modes of artistic production, many of whose materials and instruments, though of course produced by the GMP, perform no significant function within it. (Trombones and greasepaint play no world-historical part within general production)" (p.49)

But trombones, greasepaint and books are all commodities, and the 'world-historical' role the author ascribes to literature is misnamed. What I presume he is attempting to isolate here is the important role literature can play in the ideological reproduction of the social formation.

The weakness and misconceptions inherent in Eagleton's 'scientific' categories are amply demonstrated by the fact that he cannot even logically complete the analogies he has drawn to economic production. The theory of value, vital to an understanding of Marxist economics, can have no consequent application to his discourse apart from a nonsensical attempt to rename aesthetics 'literary value' (7).

3

What has been discussed above ties up with his concept of a supposed 'literary mode of production' which he claims to be a "unity of certain forces and social relations of literary production in a particular social formation" (p.45). The 'literary mode of production' is seen by Eagleton as a particular substructure of the 'general mode of production', presumably meaning the dominant mode of production in the economic sense (such as, for example, the feudal mode of production or capitalist mode of production) (8).

Now societies vary in the way their productive processes utilize means of production and labour. The production of books as commodities is therefore part of the economy of a literate society (and this should not be fudged into saying that oral literature plays a part in the economy of its society, as Eagleton tries to do - it rather serves an ideologically reproductive role, as mentioned). The concept 'mode of production' schematizes the production process in such a

way as to define the basic relations according to which it functions. It keys itself upon the materialist premise that economic factors are crucial in the determinance of a social formation:

> "My view that each special mode of production and the social relations corresponding to it,in short,that the economic structure of society is the real basis on which the juridicial and political superstructure is raised, and to which definite social forms of thought correspond: that the mode of production determines the character of the social,political and intellectual life generally.." (Marx,Capital Vol. 1)

In any production process surplus is produced, but the way this surplus is appropriated by different social groups varies: this is the crucial way in which modes of production differ from one another. The nature of the manner in which they differ is the mode of appropriation of surplus-labour. In capitalist society, for instance, the direct producers (workers) have their surplus-labour appropriated by non-producers (owners of the means of production,capitalists) in the specific form of surplus-value: for the capitalist, the purpose of production in the CMP is the accumulation of capital and the profit-motive. In such a society the economic aspect of art which exists as commodity production/distribution for the market has substance only as interlinked in the wider capitalist mode of production.

Indeed, the debate raging at the moment on 'modes of production' centres around whether the term is applicable to a whole social formation or to the economic level of the social formation. It is a concept which is broad in scope (the argument is to how broad it is): contrary to this, the production of literature is here a tiny sector of the economy. It is impermissible to categorise modes of production in terms of the different commodities produced, or by the geographical areas in which they take place.

I do not intend to follow Eagleton's 'modes of production' confusion any further, but simply to point out that the 'forces of literary production' (p.47) and 'social relations of literary production' (pp.50-53) are based on a 'literary production' model which is entirely incorrect.

4

It should by now be clear what Eagleton is really doing by means of his 'scientific theory' (9). He is drawing superficial analogies and using these as models. In formulating his 'materialist approach to the problem of value' (sic) in literature, he says:

> "...such a method must re-enact the founding gesture of Marxist political economy and re-consider the

> question of value on the site of literary production ...Literary value is a phenomenon which is produced in that ideological appropriation of the text,that 'consumptional production' of the work,which is the act of reading. It is always relational value: 'exchange-value'. The histories of 'value' are always a sub-sector of the histories of literary-ideological receptive practices..." (pp. 166-7).

The use of 'value' in such a context, which refers to ideological relations and effects, is obfuscatory, as any Marxist will know: it is changing this concept to nebulous, pseudo-scientific jargon (10). In addition to such model-building, he indulges often in what seems to be a simple renaming process. Some readers might be titillated, perhaps, to have aesthetics designated a 'science of value', reading referred to as 'literary consumption' (p.42) or the transmutation of dramatic text to stage production as 'theatrical practice' (p.66) but such imprecise glorifying of language is in essence superficial.

The point is that literature has its most important effects at the level of the social and ideological superstructure of society. Thus, to conflate by means of analogy the concept of mode of production (a general theory of economic structure) into ideological and aesthetic terms is far from making a theory of literature 'scientific'. Marx notes the necessity for

> "the distinction...between the material transformation of the economic conditions of production,which can be determined with the precision of natural science,and the legal,political,religious,aesthetic or philosophic - in short,ideological forms in which men become conscious of this conflict and fight it out." (Preface,op.cit.)

This is not to deny that the parameters within which various forms of literature are 'produced' (i.e. actualized) have important effects on the quality and manner of ideological dissemination within a society: the study of the ideological effects of literature has as a necessary constituent, in other words, an examination of the structures whereby it is formed and disseminated, and should not only regard 'effects on the reader'.

Now, you may ask, is this not what Eagleton appears to be striving towards, despite his misconceptions? Granted he makes a few basic mistakes, but at times he seems to be prey merely to a semantic confusion, and he does point his attention in an important direction. Does it not all boil down to a carping on words?

But problems exist in the Marxist paradigm precisely because some of its formulations are still of a very general abstract nature - in particular, its literary criticism is not yet generally impressive: and

that is why, beyond any question of words (which are usually indecisive in theoretical matters) Eagleton's models are parodies of the theory he pretends to ascribe to. He does not encompass the idea of a complex and open-ended social theory, rather seeking a basic recipe to enable him to understand everything from economics to art. Use of his model will, I believe, lead to a 'science' which is both structuralist in its execution and static in its possibilities (11).

Explicit in Criticism and Ideology is the search for a 'literary science'. Now, while the whole idea of literary science is an interesting one where much further debate is possible (a debate which partly will centre around the meaning of 'science'), dialetical materialism can claim to be scientific precisely because it is a dynamic theory, applicable to concrete analysis and yet modifiable due to its dialectical relationship with the 'real'. Eagleton's analogies are, finally, in opposition to such a theory. In the study of South African literature, some literary critics are becoming aware of the enormous importance of a criticism which takes account of contextual considerations, the study of class struggle on an ideological level, the manner in which oral and written literature have interacted historically among black people, and so on. For a critic wishing to construct tools with which to approach so many new and difficult areas, Eagleton clearly demonstrates what not to do. His 'scientific' approach is facile, haphazard and misconceived. Thus, following his example, a few ill-understood concepts would be enough to start with. The rest would depend on the vividness of the critic's imagination and the height of his or her ivory tower.

Kelwyn Sole

Footnotes

1. Eagleton T. - Criticism and Ideology (NLB, London, 1976). All unacknowledged page references hereafter will be to this work.
2. "...in capitalist formations above all literature belongs at once to 'base' and 'superstructure' - figures at once within material production and ideological formation" (p.41), is followed by "All literary production, in fact, belongs to that ideological apparatus which can be termed the 'cultural'"(p.56).
And again: "With the growth of printing, however, extensive speculative book production and marketing finally integrate the dominant LMP into the GMP as a specific branch of general commodity production...Only with a certain stage of development of the GMP is the relatively autonomous existence of an LMP possible. Literary production and consumption presuppose certain levels of literacy.."

(p.49)
3. For a similar mistaken approach to the problem nearer home see M. Nupen - 'The Idea of a Critical Sociology of Music' Bolt 11,1974.
4. While Eagleton at one point makes this distinction (see p.51), the major thrust of his work is to deny it. It can easily be seen how,in his terms,artists become 'proletarians'. (Moreover,I feel the problem relates to the weakness of the Althusserian concept of 'theoretical practice':but will not take it further here).
5. The woolly and confused nature of Eagleton's formulations is evinced in the manner in which he describes this process: "The literary producer stands in a certain social relation to his consumers which is mediated by his social relations to his patrons, publishers,and distributors of his product. These social relations are themselves materially embodied in the character of the product itself" (p.50). See also p.47.
6. In a slightly different context: "It is only by the materialist concept of productive labour,as the definitive relation between text and production,that such a notion can be demystified...The relation between text and production is a relation of labour: the theatrical instruments (staging,acting skills and so on) transform the 'raw materials' of the text into a specific product..." (p.65).
7. "If,then,a 'science of literary value' is an element of the science of ideologies,is value to be abandoned to some mere ideological relativism?...It is at this point that we need to re-open the question of textual production in relation to the problem of value. For if there can be a science of the ideologies of value, there may also be a science of the ideological conditions of the production of value. Such a science would not reinsert value 'within' the product,but would rather reinsert the conditions of textual production within the 'exchange relation' of value" (pp. 168-9).
8. However: "A distinct mode of production thus determines the specific mode of consumption,distribution,exchange and the specific relations of these different phases to one another."(Marx,Contribution op.cit.). Marx is talking in the broad economic sense. For Eagleton's view of the articulation between LMP and GMP, see p.49.
9. The author says that Trotsky affirms the "relative autonomy of art" in his literary criticism, but "struggles painfully towards the categories in which it might be theorised" (p.171). But Trotsky is talking about the autonomy of art on the ideological level,and **not** (as Eagleton does) of the 'relative autonomy' of the 'literary mode of production' from the 'general mode of production'.
10. By 'consumptional production' I presume he refers to "the text's own proffered modes of producibility" which are "naturally constructed by the ideological act of reading" (p.167), by which he is in fact saying nothing more remarkable than that reader and product (book) ideologically reaffirm each other within certain parameters.
11. His notion of articulation of 'literary modes of production' is, as an example,essentially structuralist. See p.45.

THE COURTS

Readers of WIP 3 will remember the summary of certain security trials of interest. We list below certain further information on trials and related developments in the courts, in the belief that much of interest is reflected in the proceedings. We again note the deliberate policy of the conservative opposition press in covering only that which is sensational, while ignoring the many trials in which both established leadership, and young militants are sent to jail for lengthy periods.

Accused: Samuel Malepane and John Moethudi.
Charged under the Terrorism Act. Reported in WIP 3.
The two accused were charged with founding the South African Freedom Organisation (SAFO),which aimed to overthrow the State by violence and revolution. Both were from Soweto. Both had been mentioned in the indictment of Paul Langa, who was earlier sentenced to 30 years under the Terrorism Act. Both Malepane, and certain state witnesses alleged that they had been assaulted and tortured while in detention. Malepane, testifying in his defence, claimed that Khotso Seatlholo, former leader of the Soweto Students Representative Council, had tried to recruit him for military training.

Malepane was found guilty of founding SAFO, which inter alia aimed to cripple the economy of the country by bombing government and business buildings, incited persons to persuade taxi drivers not to transport workers to railway stations or places of work and to aid strikes, and unlawfully aid students in their fight against Bantu Education. Malepane was also found guilty of attempting to recruit people for military training.
Moethudi was found not guilty. Malepane was sentenced to 5 years.

Accused: Mosima Sexwale and 11 others.
In this trial, the 'Pretoria ANC trial', twelve people are charged with furthering the aims of the ANC through a vast number of different activities. Possibly one of the most important trials to have come to court in years, the media appears to have deliberately played down its importance. The trial had to start anew after the presiding Judge died. During the State case, State advocate Michael Donen (an ex UCT student) told the court that six witnesses who had originally given state evidence, could no longer be contacted.

One of the two accused to give evidence in his defence, Elias Masinga,

told the court that he had previously been involved in South African Students Movement (SASM) activities. He further said that the SSRC was an action wing of SASM, and that Tsietsi Mashinini, president of the SSRC, had been secretary of SASM.
The trial has now been adjourned to hear argument, and judgement in a matter in which some of the charges are very serious, can be expected in the not too distant future.

Accused: Mountain Qumbella and Mathews Huna.
These two Guguletu men, aged 49 and 27 respectively, recently arrived on Robben Island to begin their ten year sentences for contravening the Terrorism and Internal Security Acts.
The men were convicted of inciting, encouraging, aiding or commanding young people in the Peninsula to go for military training which could endanger law and order in the country, or which could possibly help others who were intending to endanger the security of the State.

The alternative charge, under the Internal Security Act, alleged that they had encouraged, incited or aided others in the Peninsula to further the aims of the ANC or Umkhonto we Sizwe.

The judgement took place on January 31st in Malmesbury and was nearly five hours long. The courtroom was packed. The magistrate, J.G. Vermeulen, recalled each detail of the evidence, saying he trusted completely the evidence of the state witnesses, who had mostly been detained under section 6 for several months before the trial.

On the other hand, he said, he did not believe any of the evidence given by either of the two accused, and he was prepared to overlook the contradictions in the state's evidence.

The contradictions could be regarded as minor, he said, and were understandable, since the incidents had occured so long ago (about a year). Witnesses could not be expected to remember every detail. "Qumbella did not seem like a trustworthy and open witness," said Vermeulen. "Huna was just as weak."

Their defence lawyer, Ben Kies (instructed by Mallinick, Ress, Richman and Company), said in arguing for them:
"It is important to realise they were not involved in these activities for their personal interest. When one is involved in a struggle, one's sensitivities to other people sometimes become blunted. It is no secret that there was a revolt against Bantu Education and the

accused simply decided to involve themselves."

The atmosphere in the court was sombre and tense. At two stages during the judgement, police pointed to members of the public and hauled them out for a few minutes questioning. They were students, who later said they had been detained and were asked what they were doing there.

After the judgement, the crowd stood in the narrow courtyard between the court cell and the vehicles waiting to take the men back to prison. After a few minutes silence, a priest began singing 'Nkosi Sikelele' softly; he was joined by the crowd, the voices grew louder, and they sang for over half an hour: freedom songs, hymns and chants.

Eventually the men appeared and were driven off in separate cars back to prison, waved farewell by a mass of raised fists....and barking police dogs tugging at leashes at the other side of the courtyard.
Sentence: 10 years each.

Accused: Winnie Mandela.
Found guilty in the Bloemfontein Regional Court of breaking her severe banning order. Readers will recall that she has been banished from Soweto to a small township in the Free State.
Sentence: 6 months suspended for four years, on condition that she is not convicted of any offence contravening her present order, or any one which replaces it.
After the court adjourned, about 50 black youths demonstrated outside, singing Nkosi Sikelele. They were dispersed by security police, and 8 were arrested. All youths, they have been charged with contravening the Riotous Assemblies Act.

Accused: Moses Jabu Mkwanazi.
Charged under the Terrorism Act, having allegedly ferried people to Swaziland for military training. Acquitted of Terrorism Counts, after a state witness said that an identity parade, in which she pointed out the accused, was faked.
Mkwanazi was, however, found guilty of contravening two counts under the immigration act, and sentenced to 9 months on each count. He has given notice of appeal against that conviction.

Accused: 27 black journalists charged with holding a protest march in Johannesburg over the banning of the Union of Black Journalists, and

the continued detention of a number of journalists. They were found guilty as charged, and fined R100-00 or 50 days. The major feature of the trial was the refusal of the presiding magistrate to listen to a statement made by one of the journalists on behalf of all the accused. He said that he was not prepared to listen to political speeches, and claimed that the statement was being used as an opportunity to criticise Minister of Police and Prisons, Jimmy Kruger. The magistrate also accused instructing attorney Shun Chetty of being personally and emotionally involved in the issue after Chetty told the magistrate that since blacks did not enjoy parliamentary representation, the street was their parliament.

Accused: Stanley Pule, Isaac Mhlekwa and Nogaga Gxekwa.
Charged under the Terrorism Act with furthering the aims of the PAC, and undergoing military training. Pule and Gxekwa were acquitted on all charges. Mhlekwa was found guilty of giving military training to others in Zululand. The Judge, Mr. Justice Hoexter, said that he had treated the evidence of most of the State witnesses with utmost caution, as they were accomplices and had been in detention for a long time. They might therefore have been more responsive to suggestions when making statements to the police.
On leaving the dock, Pule and Gxekwa were rearrested by security police.
Mhlekwa was sentenced to 8 years. It was pointed out that he had been in custody for 21 months before sentence.

Accused: Zeph Mothopeng and 17 others.
Bethal PAC trial. Accused are charged with furthering the aims of the PAC over a number of years, including on Robben Island. 17 of the accused are suing the Minister of Police for assult while in detention.

Accused: Elleck Nchabeleng.
An 18 year old, charged under the Terrorism Act with having undergone 'terrorist' training, and being in possession of weapons and ammunition. He is the son of one of the Pretoria ANC accused. The trial is being held in Nelspruit.

Accused: Christopher Hlongwa (19) and Garry Nyemba (21).
Charged in the Johannesburg Regional Court with having undergone military training. Appears that the two were not defended, and pleaded guilty in terms of the Criminal Procedure Act.
Sentence: 5 years each.

Accused: Tommy Charlimagne.
Charged with furthering the aims of Communism, in that he furthered the aims of the ANC. 50 years old, and a former Robben Island Prisoner, he was tried in the East London Regional Court. Found guilty. The main state witness was an accomplice, Mathemba Makapela. Sentence: 8 years on one count, 4 on the other. Sentences to run concurrently.

Accused: Wellington Sobandla.
Also charged in the East London Regional Court with similar activities to Charlimagne. Aged 45, and also an ex Robben Island Prisoner. Makapela also main state witness against him.
Two state witnesses, called to give evidence, refused to testify against Sobandla. Sam Gajula, a former Island prisoner said that he was an innocent man, yet was being held in custody. Rufus Rwexu, who was warned as an accomplice, refused to give evidence claiming that he had been told what to say by the police. He also alleged that he had been tortured,and shown a picture of the body of Steve Biko, and told that if he did not co-operate, he would follow Biko. Both Gajula and Rwexu were sentenced to a years inprisonment for refusing to testify. Rwexu appeared unsteady on his feet and was led staggering out of court.
Sobandla was found guilty of becoming a member of the ANC, and taking part in its activities.
Sentence: 3 years on each count, to run concurrently.

Accused: Itken Ramudsuli and Enoch Duma.
Charged under the Terrorism Act. Duma is a journalist on the Sunday Times. They are accused of furthering aims of the ANC, and planting explosives on a railway line. The hearing was postponed to April 10th, in Krugersdorp.

Appeal: SASO/BPC nine.
Originally convicted of contravening the Terrorism Act after a 2 year trial in Pretoria. An application for leave to appeal against conviction was refused by the Appeal Court on March 1st.

Appeal: Maritzburg ANC trial.
Nine men originally found guilty under Terrorism, and senteced to periods of inprisonment ranging from 7 years to life, were granted leave to appeal by the Appelate Division after the trial Judge refused leave to appeal.

Accused: Mojalefa Romeo, a youth of 17 and a girl of 16.

These three appeared in the Port Elizabeth Regional Court on March 1st, charged under the Terrorism Act in that they allegedly conspired to undergo military training outside of South Africa.
The case was postponed until March 22nd, and the accused were not represented.

Accused: Mary Moodley.
Mrs. Moodley, who has been banned for fifteen years, was at one time a prominent member of the Congress Alliance, the Coloured People's Congress and the Federation of Women. She is charged with possession of a banned book, the African Communist.

Accused: Tom Waspe.
After nearly three months in detention, Tom Waspe was released and charged with possessing unlawful literature and an unlicensed firearm. The case was remanded until March 21st.

Accused: 12 Kagiso(Krugersdorp) Students.
Originally charged with arson, the charge against these students has been changed to the more serious one of Sabotage (which has a minimum sentence of 5 years). The case was due to continue on February 7th, but has not been reported.

Accused: Frank Chikane and 6 others.

Chikane was in detention for a lengthy time, having been originally picked up on June 6th, 1977. He has now been charged with six others under Public Violence. The trial is due to take place in Krugersdorp.

Accused: Fana George Sithole.
Banned to Umlazi, Sithole is charged with having contravened his banning order.

Accused: 28 members of the Human Rights Organisation.
Originally 34 people were arrested in Ga-Rankuwa and charged with attending an illegal prayer meeting. 6 were refused bail, all being executive members of the Human Rights Organisation. They were subsequently granted bail at a later court appearance. The case was remanded until April 12th.

Accused: Edwin Mankoe and Thomas Mashele.
Charged under the Internal Security Act with being members of the banned South African Students Organisation (SASO). Case remanded until March 29th.

Accused: 17 Mdantsane students.
These accused were originally arrested in September, shortly after the funeral of Steve Biko. They were charged with murdering two black policemen after the funeral. They appeared in court on January 31st, when bail was refused for the fourth time.
On 27th February, they again appeared in court, and bail was again refused, although the State was still not ready to proceed with its case. The group is aged between 15 and 19, and includes two school-girls. At the last hearing, the case was postponed to March 23rd.
The accused remain in custody.

Accused: Brian Brown.
Former administrative director of the banned Christian Institute, Brown was charged with contravening his banning order by preaching in church. Subsequently, charges were withdrawn, and it was announced that Brown had applied for an exit permit.

Accused: Raphael Khoza (21) and William Sekgabuthle (18).
Charged with public violence in the Pretoria Regional Court. The principal of Mamelodi High School, J.S.Lekala gave evidence for the State. The incident involved the stoning of Mamelodi High School in July 1977.

Accused: Gladwell Mbali.
Charged in the East London Regional Court with continuing to be, or becoming a member of the PAC. He had previously served a 12 year sentence on Robben Island. The hearing is being held behind closed doors.
Two state witnesses, Elias Mzamo and Henry Funani Siwisa, refused to testify, and were sentenced to 12 months imprisonment each.

Accused: Joseph Mayedwa and Siyetha Simon.
Also charged with becoming or continuing to be a member of the PAC in the East London Regional Court. Both also ex-Robben Island prisoners.

Accused: A 15 year old Port Elizabeth youth.
Sentenced to 5 years under the Sabotage Act for being part of a mob which attacked two township homes. The trial took place in the Algoa Park Police Station, and a defence application to have it moved to a court room was refused by the magistrate.

Accused: Canzi Lisa.
Charged in Johannesburg under the Terrorism Act. Found guilty of planting a bomb on a petrol tanker, communicating with the ANC in

Botswana about the bomb, distributing ANC pamphlets, and illegally possessing a pistol, ammunition and TNT. Sentenced to 5 years.

Accused: Xolile Msenge (20).
Initially pleaded guilty to four counts of arson, one of attempted arson and two of malicious damage to property in Port Elizabeth. In applying for leave to enter a new plea of not guilty, an advocate pointed out that two of the counts of arson involved incidents at schools 5 km apart which occured at exactly the same time.

Accused: Billy Sopotela (20).
Found guilty of attending an unlawful gathering. On review, a Grahamstown Judge set aside the conviction on the grounds that the charge sheet did not make sense. The count under which the accused was convicted read that he
"did wrongfully and unlawfully organise any boycott or took part in any organised boycott with the object of causing loss, disadvantage or inconvenience to anyone or anybody in that pupils of the Jabuva High School must no attend classes."

Appeal: Johannes Ndhlovu and 5 others.
Originally found guilty of Sabotage, in that they broke into a shop outside Germiston, set it alight, attacked people trying to put out the fire, and damaged the shop owners car. The accused were not represented at their trial, and the appeal was based on the submission that the Trial Judge, Justice Theron, had failed to explain the provisions of the Act to the accused.
It was found that the trial judge did fail to explain the position to the accused, and that this was an irregularity. However, the Appeal Court ruled that this had not prejudiced the accused, and the appeal was dismissed.

Accused: Joseph Mahlangu (19).
Found guilty in the Johannesburg Regional Court of taking part in an unlawful march in Orlando West on August 5th, 1977. Sentenced to 3 years imprisonment.

Accused: Normal Ramonotsi (28), Zazi Magubane (19) and Tosca Manana(18).
Charged with public violence after a riot at Edendale Technical college. Found guilty. Ramonotsi sentenced to 3 years (half suspended), Magubane 2 years (1 suspended), and Manana to 5 strokes.

Accused: Ephraim Malimabe and David Ralesego.
Found guilty of throwing stones at the police, and barricading a road. Both sentenced to 3 years (one suspended). The magistrate said

that while there were contradictions in police evidence, one had to take a commonsense approach to the probabilities.

Accused: Solomon Mahlangu and Mondy Motloung.
This trial arose from the urban guerilla attack in Goch Street, Johannesburg, last year. Motloung was found unfit to stand trial, and declared a State President's patient. It is thought that he suffered brain damage in being clubbed with a metal pipe during his arrest in Goch Street.
Mahlangu was found guilty on various counts of murder and terrorism. The most interesting part of the trial is his evidence in defence. If it is true, then it raises serious questions about the method of recruitment, and nature of training, given by the ANC.
Mahlangu, aged 20, was sentenced to hang by Justice Theron.

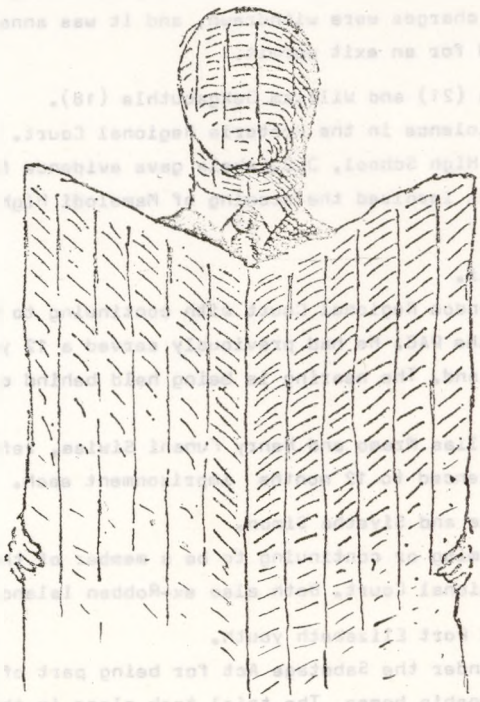
Accused: 10 Cape Town youths.
Ten of Cape Towns young section 6 detainees made their first appearance in court in February after several months in detention, to face charges of sabotage and public violence.
On the Attorney-General's instructions, bail was refused for all except two 17-year olds, both of whom had been the subjects of recent Supreme Court interdicts in attempts to restrain security police from allegedly assaulting them.
The court was filled with an expectant crowd of parents and friends who packed the gallery to see the detained youths whom they had not seen for four to five months.
Only 5 of the 10 can be named, the rest being between 15 and 17 years old. The five are: Joseph M. Pantshwa (19), Mzonke S. Jack (18) and Sipho Singiswa (18): all three charged with sabotage and assault; Kildas J. Boqwana (18) and Mzolosi S. Pasiya (21) also face a sabotage charge.
On the grounds that they were both juveniles, the magistrate cleared the court when the two 17 year olds applied for bail. (they were the only two of the ten allowed to apply for bail). The press was also sent out of court, a measure rarely taken, even when the court sits in camera as in the case of the Malmesbury trial.

Accused: Sipho Aaron Madondo.
Convicted under the Terrorism Act after what appears to have been a one day hearing. The trial seems to be the result of a shootout between guerillas and South African Police near Pongola on November 3rd, 1977. According to the Argus (3/11/77) a white policeman was wounded in the incident. According to the trial details, a guerilla, Toto Skhosana, was burnt to death after the police razed a hut to the

ground.

Madondo told the court that he left school after the June 1976 riots, came into contact with ANC members, and received military training in Germany.

The trial was due to continue on March 21st.



OPEN LETTER to MS S BROWN

In replying to Ms Brown's "Theory, Concepts, Analysis and the Bandwagon" (WIP, November 1977, 2) it is necessary to summarise the arguments, to refresh the readers' memories and for clarification.

The "methodological misconception" under review revolves around the relation between reality and perception. Ms Brown argues that reality only exists when perception breathes life into it. Theory constitutes the structural framework underlying perception, ostensibly guaranteeing an objectivity and adequacy to the process of perception. The realm of theory is composed of an integrated and interrelated series of concepts, each series specific to the sphere of reality requiring the life-giving force of perception. The language in which these concepts are expressed constitute the realm of jargon.

There are two types of incompetent social analysts on the contemporary South African scene. Firstly, those who analyse with no theoretical basis at all. Secondly, those dilettantes who eclectically misuse concepts specific for other disciplines. The roots of "the repetitive flaws" lie in the failure of the above categories of analysts to appreciate the nature of the relationship outlined above.

This view of Ms Brown requires close scrutiny. She reduces the inadequacy of the social analysts she anonymously refers to, to "methodological misconceptions". This obscures the true nature of any ineptness of the authors she bears in mind. This inadequacy can only be located in the material, that is, class position of the respective authors. The inability to be more specific on this fundamental issue is due to my ignorance of the particular authors and their works that the authoress has in mind. The authoress, nevertheless, expresses an unabashed subjectivist view of history which runs counter to any materialist conception of history. She suggests that all these anonymous authors have to do to rehabilitate themselves is to grab hold of a theory (any theory?), and to stop lifting concepts from disciplines beyond their ken. Not only will this reform validate

their analyses, but it will also create a change in the reality encompassed by their theories!!!

Such are the dangers of a romantic view of history, and a simplistic dabbling in weighty ontological problems.

In covering up the "repetitive flaws" of the phantom analysts, Ms Brown further avoids a confrontation with a theory of science, particularly a social science (of history, politics, etc.). To contend that theory is the "attempt to specify the framework of perception and subject it to testing" is to court fundamental disagreement.

Society is not a laboratory (except perhaps to a seasoned cynic). One can not hypothesize about society, and then set up a laboratory experiment under ideal conditions to see if it holds. As in the physical sciences, theories derive from conscientious and scrupulous observation and collection of data. Unlike the physical sciences, which can be subject to controlled testing under ideal conditions, social theories are only tested retrospectively (ignoring for the moment the possibility of social prediction). These tests are not carried out in a laboratory, but in the real world, that is, on the battlefield of the class struggle. To suggest that a social theorist can test the validity of his theories under laboratory conditions is to commit an indecent act of academic arrogance of Poulantzian proportions.

I submit that Ms Brown has fallen into the self-same trap that her victims fell into. She makes use of jargon that helps to clarify her position not at all; in fact it serves to obscure the heresies in her own position. I wish Ms Brown a pleasant journey on the Bandwagon on which she clearly has become a fellow traveller.

UR Blewitt

COMMENTS

a) The summarising paragraphs are a pretty thorough mirepresentation: unless this is the author's intention, I can only suggest that he read my article again. The central point I make is that theory operates on a number of levels, ranging from the 'philosphical' to the exercise of concrete and immediate organisational strategy. Thus work on any of the levels or with any of the concepts has implications for all the others: an analytical approach which only recognises strategic issues is as flawed as one that confines itself to rarified philosophical debate.

b) 'Laboratory conditions': a peculiar idea. I agree that the area of testing of analysis is the kinds of strategies it implies for struggle. A main point of my article is to discuss what is meant by 'scientific theory' for the purpose of analysis: it would be interesting to get a response on that level.

c) One interesting point: "this inadequacy can only be located in the material, that is, class position of the respective authors." Yes and No. One cannot simply base a discussion of any individual's work on his material derivation; e.g. Marx or Lenin might be categorised petty-bourgeois in terms of their material class derivation. This by no means determines the orientation of their thought and its strategical implications. (Visions of debate: "Your problem is that you are petty-bourgeois." "No, I'm not." "Yes you are", etc.) It might be more instructive to point out with what type of movement a particular analyst identifies himself/herself by the strategical implications of their work (e.g. Lenin against Kautsky).

d) A fruitful area for constructive discussion is 'academicism', and the position of intellectuals in general. Academics, whether seen as petty-bourgeois or intellectuals, occupy a position within ideological state apparatuses. This tends to structurally impose the separations I criticize: between theory and empirical work, between analysis and strategy, etc.

e) 'Heresies'? This implies a notion of 'true and false consciousness'; that for the earnest seeker there is an 'objective line' somewhere to be found. The difficulty with this is that the materialist considers ideas and positions as they are formed

by the context of the economic/social class struggle. How then can a heresy, an offence against the 'true', exist? There are no super-historical referents: rather, theoretical and ideological positions grow out of the parameters of one's time and the choice of possibilities the class struggle defines. Those in search of an absolute point of reference, an ideal and pure 'line' not subject to change, should rather choose religion, where such solaces are offered.

Susan M Brown

Further Notes ON THE "SQUATTER PROBLEM"

If the number of research projects, newspaper articles, booklets, conferences, pamphlets and council (of one kind or another) resolutions are anything to go by, then the "squatter problem"/ "housing problem" must surely be one of the most direct and threatening manifestations of the present crisis in South Africa.

These "Further Notes ..." are an attempt to focus more closely on the issue, expanding some of Amanda Younge's points (see WIP 3) and rejecting others as lacking usefulness in coming to an understanding of the specific nature of the provision of housing in South Africa. My first comments will, therefore, be in response to Younge's contribution:

- the conventional responses, while by far not all in agreement as to the solution, all relate to "remedies" offered within the present structure - i.o.w. relating to the control of labour, or to control of those who fulfil a function of a reserve army of labour (those at present unemployed) or the marginalised labour force (those permanently unemployed, excluded from direct exploitation under capitalist relations of production).

  Younge situates the issue within the capitalist mode of production, or at least mentions that that is where it is to be situated and states that: "If the causes can be obscured, the solutions which are adopted will be essentially palliative, and will in no way resolve the basic contradictions at the root of the 'problem'";

- however, it is hardly possible to discuss such a contradiction (antagonistic) as that between capital and labour on the same level as a "contradiction" between "Constantia and Crossroads", or between town and country, as Younge does. The contradiction between capital and labour arises out of production while the other inequalities mentioned relate to distribution. While redistribution in South Africa is desirable, whether it be between urban and rural areas or black and white workers (and even some capitalists would like to see the grossest inequalities eliminated), it is not possible without a change in the relations of production;

- consequently, her discussion of the town/country "contradiction", especially if applied to the South African social formation, is not a very useful starting point;

- a further criticism is that not enough of a distinction is made between the provision of housing under the "system of anarchic free enterprise" (i.o.w. a directly capitalist system of providing a commodity, housing), and state intervention in the provision of housing "essential to the reproduction of labour power".

  The works referred to by Amanda Younge, while engaged in a most useful debate around the issue of urbanisation and housing, cannot be directly appropriated and applied to a situation of peripheral capitalism. (The same would hold for a discussion of the capitalist state, where concepts developed in response to state function in advanced capitalist society do not always transfer to the specifics of social formations occupying different positions in a world capitalist system).

Where does that leave us then? In a position where it is necessary to return to Lamarche's main hypothesis and to move from there to the specifics of the South African situation:

> "Even if some problems exist which are specific to the city as such, at the economic level there is no specifically urban social relation. There are only class relations determined by the contradiction between capital and labour." (my emphasis - gm) (Lamarche, 1976:86)

This means that it is necessary to look at the present "squatter problem" against the background of the history of proletarianisation in South Africa - a history that has led to specific economic, political and ideological measures by the state to aid the process of accumulation, and also to "maintain and create the conditions for social harmony."

South African capitalism, both in its monopolistic form, eg in mining and the sugar estates in the early period, and as competitive capital, eg agriculture and early industrialisation, developed on the basis of a low-wage policy. It was at times directly argued, and mostly just accepted, that part of the costs of reproduction of labour power, i.e. of the labourer and family, was covered by agricultural production in the reserve areas. The twin institutions of compound housing for 'single' workers and the migrant

labour system served to perpetuate the system of labour exploitation and the accompanying justification. (This process is euphemistically described by Smit and Booysen (1977:5): "(T)he principle of impermanence was introduced in the urbanisation process of the Black population).

Initially the mining houses and the sugar estates provided shelter (compounds) for the bulk of the proletariat. Other African workers in the urban areas provided their own housing in areas around the 'white' industrial and commercial areas. In 1923, however, the Natives (Urban Areas) Act was passed, making provision for slum clearance and segregation. In 1920 the Housing Act had been passed, embodying the idea "that the main responsibility for housing the poorer section of the community should rest upon the local authorities" (Byrd, 1952:108) "From 1923 until 1937 housing was provided almost exclusively for migrant labourers..." (Smit & Booysen, 1977:6) As the Transvaal Local Government Commission stated (quoted in Smit and Booysen, 1975:6):

> "...the native should only be allowed to enter the urban areas, which are essentially the White man's creation, when he is willing to enter and to minister to the needs of the White man and should depart therefrom when he ceases so to minister".

(Indeed, this position has not changed much. Mr PTC du Plessis said in Parliament that:

> "... the position here is that certain people are being allowed to work in White South Africa. That is basically why those people are here."

and

> "However, the Black people and we do not want to wage war on one another. After all, we are interdependent, but because we are interdependent and allow those people to come and sell their labour here, it does not mean that we are giving them a permanent birthright here for generations to come, for then they would also have a political claim to this country." (Hansard, 1978:columns 635 & 636)

According to Smit and Booysen "local authorities had neither the funds nor the administrative machinery to enforce the law of 1923." Industrial development during the war years demanded an increase in the labour force and squatter camps arose necessitating recourse to war measures to control squatting. Stadler (1978) suggests that the influx of families into the urban areas during and after the war relates to the failure of the reserves "to provide part of the family's subsistence", and also to evictions from white-owned farms. With wages below family subsistence level (the justification for this stated above), "(s)quatting may be

seen ... as an attempt to reduce the cost of subsistence in a situation in which, because of the swollen "reserve army" moving into the city relatively unimpeded by influx controls, wages could be held down during a period of rapidly rising living costs". (Stadler, 1978:4) In other words, a working class attempting to cope in a defensive situation.

But there is another side to the equation. The cost of reproduction of labour power involves not only obvious cost of food, but also of education, housing, transport, etc. And this, I suggest, is the direction from which the "housing problem" should be initially approached in South Africa. Squatter movements, food organisations, transport boycotts are some working class responses in the class struggle. Influx control, provision of housing by the state, the 'homelands' policy and urbanisation within these regions, bulldozing of squatter communities, low-cost housing, the Urban Foundation, represent some of the responses by capital. But also to be looked at is conflict over distribution of costs in financing these measures to lower reproduction cost of labour power and hence of wages. In connection with this last point Stadler concludes that it is monopoly capital that escapes costs, at least during the 1940s:

> "City finances were drawn from two main sources: rates on the capital value of land and profits from services. Except qua property-owners in the city, the great interests in Johannesburg did not contribute to the city's finances. Mining land was not (and is still not) subject to rates. Thus the burden of providing the city's finances fell mainly on the city's petty-bourgeoisie and - as tenants - its working classes." (1978:7-8)

Smit and Booysen distinguish a third phase in government action as it relates to urbanisation in South Africa. This phase dates from 1950 with the Group Areas Act and the Native Services Act of 1952, "which provided that employers should make a contribution towards financing services for their Black employees" (1977:6), i.e. to subsidise transport and provide services in housing schemes. The transport subsidy was necessitated by the implementation of the Group Areas Act and the consequent removal of blacks from 'white' areas. These measures cannot be divorced from the establishment of labour bureaux.

Horrell (1971) points out that new housing schemes during the 1950s were established on an "economic" basis. In other words the inhabitants had to repay capital costs, interest, and administrative charges over a period of time. As has pointed out above

these costs enter into the determination of wages, through the effect on the cost of reproduction of labour power.

A fourth phase is dated from the 1960s with further control over provision of family housing in 'white' areas - permission had to be obtained from the Department of Bantu Administration and Development. "In addition, from 1 January 1968 Blacks could only rent houses in Black residential areas in White urban areas and they were encouraged to '... build houses in Black towns in homelands of their own national unit where they could also acquire freehold'". (Smit and Booysen, 1977:10) Further all 'non-productive' Africans (elderly, widows, etc) would be resettled in the 'homelands'. Since the mid-1970s a two-pronged policy seems to be followed. The first is that of the "urbanisation of the homelands". Proclaimed towns in the 'homelands' (Transkei excluded) increased from 66 in 1970 to 86 in 1976 "while 129 had been delimited or partly delimited". (Smit and Booysen, 1977:19) These towns are developed and controlled by the South African Bantu Trust, the 'homeland' governments and the 'development' corporations. Urbanisation of the 'homelands' is directly related to proximity to industrial development centres (cf Smit and Booysen, Appendix B, 1977:40) Some additional factors in explaining the growth of these areas would be the resettlement of 'non-productive' people from 'white' urban areas (especially since 1967); clearing of 'black spots'; changes in labour relations and utilisation in agriculture; structural and cyclical unemployment; redrawing of 'homeland' boundaries.

Increase in urban population in 'homelands':

1960 : 33 486
1970 : 594 420
1975 : 984 271
(calculated from Smit and Booysen, 1977:19 & Appendix C. For more detailed information on the kwaZulu region see maps and table at the end of this article)

The second 'prong' of the housing policy is that of providing improved services for a stabilised petty bourgeoisie and part of the workforce (those in permanent employment, and with 'skills' related to production under monopoly capitalism) within black urban areas in 'white' areas. It is this field that the direct involvement of monopoly capital through the Urban Foundation (UF) and indirectly through changes in state policy can be seen. The Urban Foundation draws the link between housing improvement and land tenure on the one hand, and on the other the needs of

The Urban Foundation pledges itself:-

- To work towards nomalising land tenure for all urban residents;
- To help create a situation where all people have direct access to building societies and other free market lending institutions for the purpose of financing the purchase of their homes;
- To investigate new forms of financing individuals to acquire or improve their own homes;
- To develop and demonstrate imaginative new ways of extending the options open to urban residents in regard to the construction of their own homes.

(from an Urban Foundation booklet - African, Indian and Coloured Housing in the Durban- Pietermaritzburg Area, December 1977)

monopoly capital for a stable, trained (industrially and ideologically) labour force. The latter aspect is reflected in the UF Code of Conduct. Among the proposals are:

- To strive for the recognition of basic rights of freedom of association, collective bargaining, the 'lawful withholding of labour' as a result of industrial disputes, and protection against victimisation resulting from the exercise of these rights;
- To strive for the maintenance of 'viable living standards';
- To initiate training programmes to improve the productivity and skills of employees to enable them to achieve advancement in technical,administrative, and managerial positions. (RDM, 8/12/77)

This code did not meet with any opposition from the Minister of Labour.

After this very brief historical look at the provision of housing let me return to a theory of housing in capitalist social formations, and specifically to a theoretical framework for an analysis of housing in South Africa. This attempt raises more questions than it provides answers to a theory of housing in South Africa but, I would argue, these questions do indicate a direction for future work.

Housing has a dual function under the operation of capitalist relations. Firstly, housing is a commodity such as any other, although with specific problems related to land and property, and realisation of the value of the commodity. (see for example Lamarche, 1976) Secondly, housing is a necessity in the reproduction of labour power - in other words just as the worker and his/her family have to be supplied with the means (wages) sufficient to purchase food and clothing, etc., the value of labour power

also includes housing (shelter). Of course, the items included in the determination of the value of labour power are socially determined, i.e. they are the result of class struggle, and of the development of the forces of production (a motor car may be considered to be a social necessity to a white 'worker' in South Africa; education appropriate to the demands of assembly line production may be a necessity in a reproduction of a section of the black labour force in South Africa at the present time).

Pickvance (nd:59) argues that the dual nature of housing , i.e. use-value in the reproduction of labour power, and commodity, leads to two contradictions (I feel that more work needs to be done on the reasons why it is possible to separate these two aspects to housing): First - "...that between capital engaged in the building industry, and industrial capital in general. The former has an interest in a high selling price for housing, to increase its profits, whereas the latter has an interest in low housing costs since housing is a subsistence commodity whose cost enters the determination of wage levels";

Second - "...derives from the fact that housing cannot be built without land ... the source of the contradiction ... (lies in) ... the existence of the institution of landed property or private ownership of land".

I intend focussing on the second aspect of the provision of housing, namely the part played in the reproduction of labour power, and on the first contradiction. I have in the first part of these "Notes..." tried to indicate why this particular focus should be the concern of those attempting to understand the "housing problem/squatter problem" in South Africa. Let me repeat - an analysis of housing as a <u>commodity</u> would undoubtedly be of great interest, but it would relate to a very small part of the total number of houses provided.

For example, a reply given in parliament (7/2/78) reveals:

Number of dwelling units built by the <u>private sector</u> during 1977: (in the Durban and Pietermaritzburg complexes)

Whites.....	1 520
Coloureds.....	62
Asians.....	443
Bantu.....	3

As against this the amounts to be spent on housing in the 'home lands' during the book year 1977-78 total R8,5-m, with kwaZulu

due to get R2,1-m. (The provision of housing as a commodity is, of course not unrelated to the totality of housing provision). An analysis of the reasons for the collapse of property firms during the present crisis, and of the extent to which the building and construction industry has been hit would throw much light on this aspect of housing. (The crisis is probably in part related to the long production and circulation periods of capital in the building industry, and probably affected competitive capitalist firms much more than monopoly firms with their ability to "export surplus capacity".)

However, as the table on the previous page indicates, "dwelling units for Bantu, Coloureds and Asians are mainly financed and built by the public sector". Many of the concepts relating to the provision of housing directly under the conditions of capitalist commodity production are, therefore, not applicable or do not occupy as central a position within a framework for analysis. What does become important when analysing housing as an aspect in the reproduction of labour power, is the first contradiction (above), and the role of the state in "shift(ing) problems around without resolving them".

To analyse the housing "problem" or the squatter "problem" in South Africa one has to look at it in an historical perspective, and periodise according to changes within the first contradiction brought about by changes in the structure of capital in South Africa. (Because of the extent of state intervention in the South African social formation the role of the state may be a fairly direct reflection of the relative positions of sectors of capital. The state's role may not reflect the needs of the economically dominant 'fraction' of capital, but these needs will be expressed if only to oppose the role of the state at a particular moment). These changes cannot be separated from the class struggle, as various squatter movements and rent protests have shown - students in Soweto were most successful when they mobilised the community around this issue, which led to at least a postponement of proposed rent increases. The rest of this paper will be concerned mainly with a suggested theoretical framework, and a few suggestions as to possible application. Hopefully a further article could fill in this framework through an application to the South African situation.

The provision of housing (compounds) by the estates and mines (monopoly capital during the early period) was probably necessitated by the inability of the state to fulfill this function at the time. On the other hand, the particular form it took - compounds - can be explained by several factors: control could easily be maintained over a large work-force; costs are reduced in construction and provision of services; the individual members of the labour-force could be treated as 'single' male migrants as they did, in most cases, not bring their families with them.

The inter-relatedness of the system of labour exploitation in South Africa (a migrant labour system) and the specifics of the urbanisation process and provision of shelter (and part of the logic behind the 'homelands' policy), is clearly evidenced in the compound system. As Hill (1976:31) put it:

> "Since the process of capital accumulation unfolds in a spatially structured environment, urbanism may be viewed as the particular geographical form and spatial patterning of relationships taken by the process of capital accumulation."

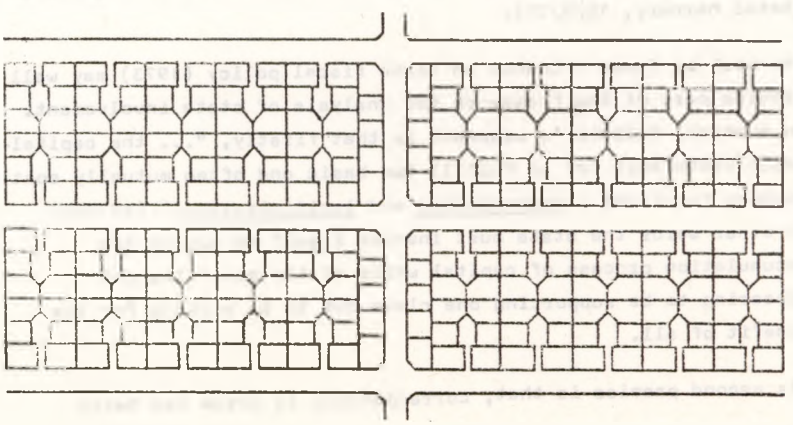
The implications, in South Africa, of the maintenance of pre-capitalist forms of production (e.g. 'traditional' communal land tenure; the power of the chiefs) can also be seen in the maintenance of geographically separate areas for the housing of, initially, the families of migrant labourers, those who cannot at any time find employment in the capitalist sector, of the labourer after 'retirement', and now of many of the labourers temselves. These areas are the reserves/bantustans/'homelands'. Families would have been, and are, housed in dwellings constructed under pre-capitalist relations - some of the materials used may be commodities produced in the capitalist sector but labour costs involved would in this case not enter into the determination of the value of labour power. The same would hold for housing the vast majority of agricultural labour. The other side of the picture would be the 'inmates' in the 'single' men's hostels.

Pickvance (nd:62), in discussing work done by Topalov, quotes him as saying that three policies may be followed in "the period of the transition to capitalism", viz "The use of pre-existing housing stock ...;... the use of rural labour;... a policy of 'self-housing' (as in the shanty towns of today)." All of these policies reduce the value of labour power, and all have been, and are, followed in South Africa.

Industrial capital, unless it is involved in the construction of housing, also benefits from a reduction in the value of labour power through the provision of housing by the state and/or of cheap housing. Despite the accompanying danger of social unrest it is during periods of economic growth that squatter communities grow. (And, of course, during periods of mass unemployment. Then the social security considerations predominate and the state apparatuses play their role in controlling these communities and separating the productive from the non-productive, while universities and research institutions organise competitions for cheap housing, upgrading present accommodation and clamouring for permanent land tenure and accompanying(?) stability increases. Wattle and daub alternatives may be the "eco-freak's" dream, but it also well serves the needs of capital to tide it over another crisis).

Attempts to reduce cost of housing have (and are) occupied the minds of many researchers, both directly state or through institutions or private. Kieser's report (1964) is but one example, and refers to "an extensive programme of research (by the National Building Research Institute of the CSIR) which resulted in a significant reduction in building costs." An example of the extent of cost-reducing research is given below, the symmetry of the design speaks for itself:

> "It is interesting to note that in Township No 13 where the so called 'Lapa' or 'Spill-out' design ... has been used the collection-mileage per service for one collection (refuse removal) is lowest." (Kieser, 1964:53-54)



An illustration of the 'Spill-out' or 'Lapa' system of township design.

Not only are attempts made to reduce costs but conflict between capitals occurs as to who is going to bear the costs of public housing. This is, I think, reflected in the struggle between local and national authorities as to who should be responsible for housing and to what extent. For example Byrd writes that

> "...since 1930, when sub-economic loans were first made available to local authorities, mainly for slum clearance and re-housing, there has been almost continuous discussion between local authorities and the Central Government as to the ratio in which losses on subsidised housing should be shared between them. But although the local authorities have successfully persuaded the Central Government to bear a constantly increasing share of the losses, the large sub-economic housing schemes so far completed have also swollen the actual losses incurred by the local authorities, thus constituting a growing burden on taxes."
> (Byrd, 1952:110-111)

This area would demand further investigation, e.g as to the origin of revenue used in the provision of housing. Within industrial capital there is further conflict between monopoly and competitive capital over responsibility for housing (see, for example, the opposition from some capitalists to the UF activities).

The enormity of state involvement in the provision of housing demands that a theory of housing in South Africa also be a theory of the state in peripheral capitalist social formations and of state expenditure. "In 1976 the public sector spent R270 million on housing in South Africa (including the homelands)", but this is not excessive in comparison with countries such as Brazil and Venezuela. (Maasdorp, 1977:20) GS Muller, managing director of Nedbank, warned that "South Africa could go bankrupt in an attempt to meet the demand for lower income housing for all race groups." (Natal Mercury, 10/9/77).

The work by James O'Connor on state fiscal policy (1973) may well provide part of the framework for analysis of state involvement. In summary, O'Connor's argument is that firstly, "... the capitalistic state must try to fulfill two basic and often mutually contradictory functions - <u>accumulation</u> and <u>legitimization</u>." (1973:6) In other words the state must involve itself in aiding the accumulation process of capital while at the same time not appearing to be supporting one class but to be working for the benefit of all.

His second premise is that, corresponding to these two basic

functions of the state, "state expenditures have a twofold character":

A. Social Capital - "indirectly expands surplus value". Of which there are two kinds
   i. social investment - "consists of projects and services that increase the productivity of a given amount of laborpower and, other factors being equal, increase the rate of profit" (eg, "State-financed industrial parks")
   ii. social consumption - "projects and services that lower the reproduction costs of labour and, other factors being equal, increase the rate of profit." (eg, housing)

B. Social Expenses - "projects and services which are required to maintain social harmony - to fulfill the state's 'legitimization' function. They are not even indirectly productive" (eg, "welfare system, which is designed chiefly to keep social peace among unemployed workers. (The costs of politically repressed populations in revolt would also constitute a part of social expenses)."

O'Connor was specifically analysing the fiscal policy of the state in the USA, but the relative importance of the various items in the fiscal policy of the state may give indications as to the nature of the specific state. In South Africa, for example, 'social expenses' are mainly of the repressive kind, with 'welfare' doing rather poorly as a control mechanism. The balance between these items becomes obvious and important during periods of economic crisis when the problems associated with unemployment can be resolved either through unemployment benefits or through direct control of the unemployed. It is of course not possible to separate any item as neatly as is suggested by the breakdown above.

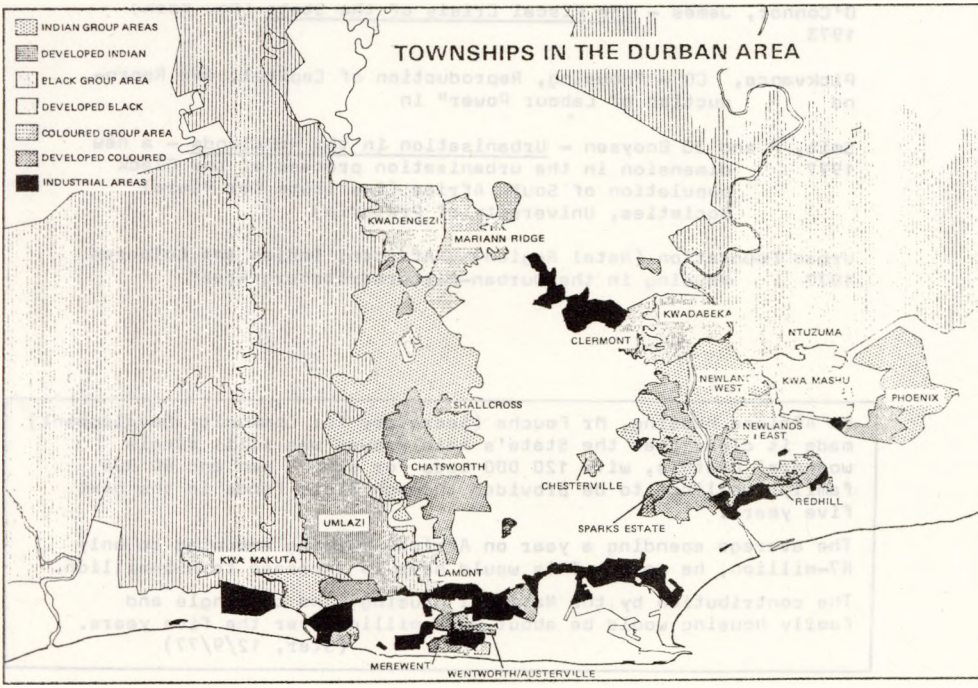
It is not my intention, and I am in no position at the moment, to apply this type of analysis to the South African situation. However, two further aspects need to be stressed because of their relevance to an understanding of the "housing problem" and of state involvement in this area. Firstly, the ways in which the state can finance these outlays, viz. "by creating state enterprises that produce surpluses which in turn may be used to underwrite social capital and social expense expenditures; second, by issuing debt and borrowing against future tax revenues; third, by raising tax rates and introducing new taxes." (O'Connor, 1973:179) The second point is that of socialising costs, or making capital as a whole and the working class pay for items that are going to benefit a 'fraction' of capital. In other

words increasing profits by decreasing the share of costs of capital in general or of a 'fraction' of capital. An obvious example of the way in which certain costs are passed on to the working class through the socialisation of social capital, in this case housing, is the manner in which township housing is financed through beer selling.

As I said earlier in the paper more questions will be raised than answers given. Hopefully I have indicated sufficiently clearly the directions in which I feel further analysis should move. I would appreciate responses to this article.

Gerhard Maré

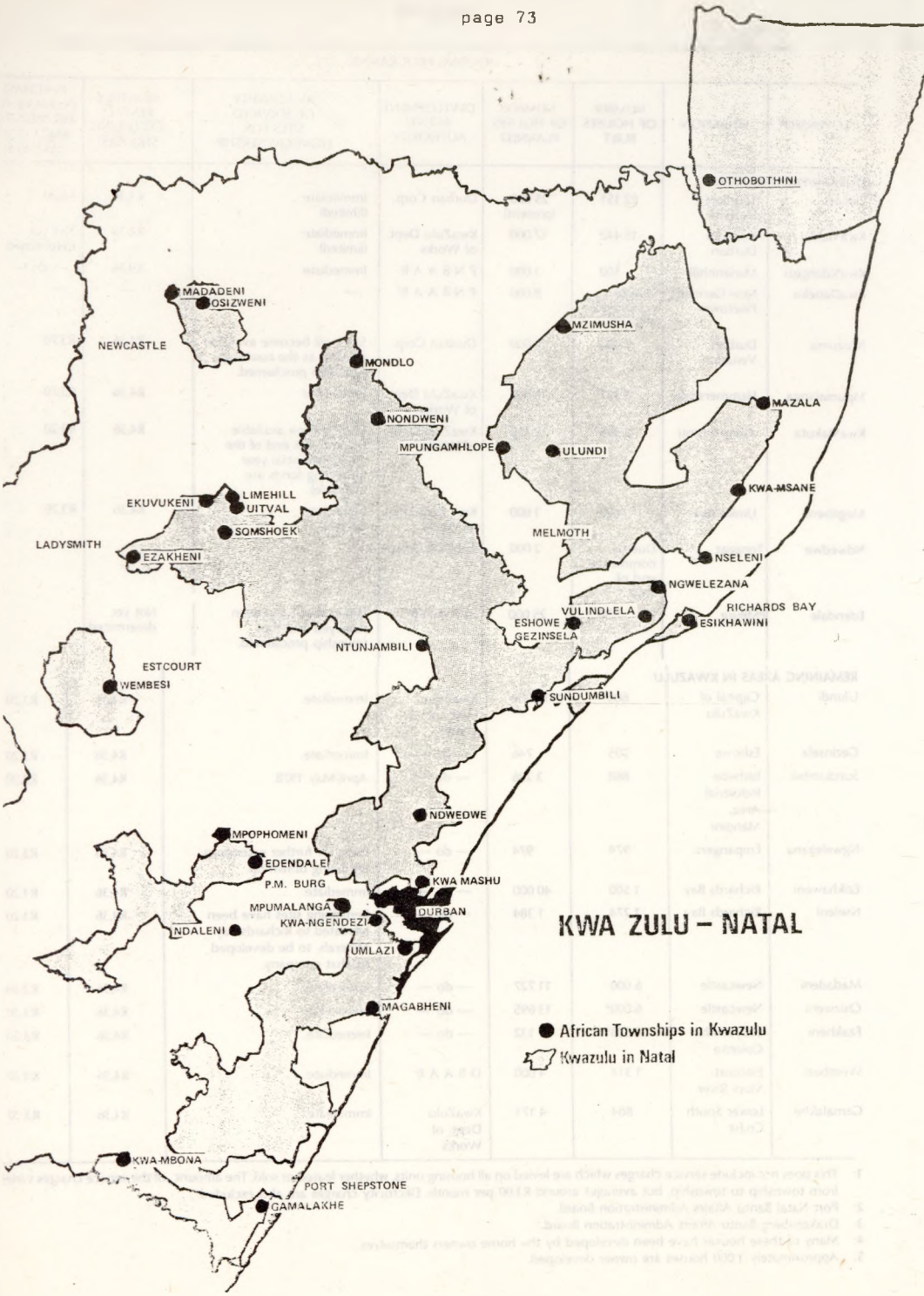
Some further information on housing in Natal (from the Urban Foundation booklet):



THE SOUTH AFRICAN BANTU TRUST AND THE DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR — KWAZULU GOVERNMENT SERVICES' HOUSING PROGRAMME

TOWNSHIP	SITUATION	NUMBER OF HOUSES BUILT	NUMBER OF HOUSES PLANNED	DEVELOPMENT AGENT/ AUTHORITY	AVAILABILITY OF SERVICED SITES FOR HOMEOWNERSHIP	MONTHLY RENTAL[1] (EXCLUDING SERVICES)	PURCHASE INSTALMENTS PER MONTH (EXCLUDING SERVICES)
DURBAN/PMBURG AREA							
Umlazi	South of Durban	22 151	25 000 (present)	Durban Corp.	Immediate (limited)	R4,36	R3,20
KwaMashu	North of Durban	15 442	17 000	KwaZulu Dept. of Works	Immediate (limited)	R4,36	Not yet determined
KwaNdengezi	Mariannhill	500	3 000	P N B A A B	Immediate	R4,76	— do —
KwaDabeka	New Germany Pinetown	Due to commence 1978/79	8 000	P N B A A B[2]	—	—	—
Ntuzuma	Durban Verulam	2 000	10 000	Durban Corp.	Sites will become available as soon as the township has been proclaimed.	R4,36	R3,70
Mpumalanga	Hammersdale	5 317	10 000	KwaZulu Dept. of Works	Immediate	R4,36	R3,70
KwaMakuta	Amanzimtoti	2 398	2 450	KwaZulu Dept. of Works	Will become available towards the end of the 1978/9 financial year (providing funds are available).	R4,36	R3,20
Magabeni	Umkomaas	600	1 000	Kwa Zulu Dept. of Works	Immediate (limited)	R4,36	R3,20
Ndwedwe	Tongaat	Due to commence end of 1977	2 000	Tongaat Group	—	—	—
Edendale	PMBurg	50	25 000	D B A A B[3]	When sites have been surveyed and the township proclaimed.	Not yet determined.	
REMAINING AREAS IN KWAZULU							
Ulundi	Capital of KwaZulu	600	10 000	KwaZulu Dept. of Works	Immediate.	R4,36	R3,20
Cezinsela	Eshowe	505	746	— do —	Immediate.	R4,36	R3,20
Sundumbili	Isithebe Industrial Area, Mandini	868	3 226	— do —	April/May 1978.	R4,36	R3,20
Ngwelezana	Empangeni	974	974	— do —	Plans for further extensions are being drawn up.	R4,36	R3,20
Ezikhaweni	Richards Bay	1 500	40 000	— do —	Immediate	R4,36	R3,20
Nseleni	Richards Bay	1 274	1 384	— do —	Remaining sites have been allocated to Richards Bay Minerals, to be developed by that company.	R4,36	R3,20
Madadeni	Newcastle	6 000	11 727	— do —	Immediate.	R4,36	R3,20
Osizweni	Newcastle	6 000[4]	13 695	— do —	Immediate.	R4,36	R3,20
Ezakheni	Ladysmith/ Colenso	4 813[5]	9 132	— do —	Immediate.	R4,36	R3,20
Wembezi	Estcourt Mooi River	1 314	4 000	D B A A B	Immediate.	R4,36	R3,20
Gamalakhe	Lower South Coast	884	4 171	KwaZulu Dept. of Works	Immediate.	R4,36	R3,20

1: This does not include service charges which are levied on all housing units, whether leased or sold. The amount of the service charges varies from township to township, but averages around R3,00 per month. Electricity charges are also excluded.
2: Port Natal Bantu Affairs Administration Board.
3: Drakensberg Bantu Affairs Administration Board.
4: Many of these houses have been developed by the home owners themselves.
5. Approximately 1 000 houses are owner developed.


OTHOBOTHINI
MADADENI
OSIZWENI
NEWCASTLE
MZIMUSHA
MONDLO
MAZALA
NONDWENI
MPUNGAMHLOPE
ULUNDI
KWA-MSANE
EKUVUKENI
LIMEHILL
UITVAL
SOMSHOEK
LADYSMITH
MELMOTH
EZAKHENI
NSELENI
NGWELEZANA
VULINDLELA
RICHARDS BAY
ESHOWE
ESIKHAWINI
GEZINSELA
NTUNJAMBILI
ESTCOURT
WEMBESI
SUNDUMBILI
NDWEDWE
MPOPHOMENI
EDENDALE
P.M. BURG
KWA MASHU
MPUMALANGA
DURBAN
KWA-NGENDEZI
NDALENI
UMLAZI
MAGABHENI
KWA-MBONA
PORT SHEPSTONE
GAMALAKHE
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On African housing, Mr Fouche (Secretary for Community Development) made it clear that the State's main answer was still single workers' hostels, with 120 000 beds for single men and 90 000 family dwellings to be provided through State funds in the next five years.

The average spending a year on African housing amounted to only R7-million, he said. This would have to increase to R55-million.

The contribution by the National Housing Fund to single and family housing would be about R275-million over the five years.

(Star, 12/9/77)

The Government had accepted that another 400 000 houses were needed for blacks, Mr John Knoetze, chief director of the Vaal Traingle Administration Board said at the University of the Witwatersrand last night.

...

"One cannot think in terms of R10 000 a unit, but fortunately we can build for R3 000," Mr Knoetze said.

Of the 400 000 backlog, 200 000 houses were needed in homeland townships and another 200 000 for blacks living in South Africa's white areas Mr Knoetze said after his speech.

Private enterprise could play a part by making money available for building, he said.

(RDM, 15/9/77)

Mr HJ Kriel, former chairman of the Cape Divisional Council and present MPC for Parow, said at the end of last month that the demolition of the camp would definitely take place (Crossroads squatter camp).

He gave a number of reasons why this should be done:

"The squatters were a large work force and as they did not pay rent they competed unfavourably with the established labour market.

"It was the government's responsibility to protect the settled labour force and for that reason squatting was made illegal.

"People who came to cities without organising suitable accommodation knew they were doing wrong.

"The actions of the squatters who moved to the Peninsula from the Homelands could be seen as direct challenge to the authorities and as a result the autorities had to be firm.

"Squatter camps were unstable and therefore presented a security risk in times of unrest."

(Voice, 11/3/78)

Social Control and Teachers

Readers of WIP 2 will recall an article on the proposed legislation dealing with 'welfare' work, and the controls that this legislation will allow State appointees to exercise over professional 'welfare' workers, community programmes, fundraising, etc. if enacted. It was suggested in that article that the principle of those bills showed a trend towards an increasing centralisation and control in South Africa, which went hand in hand with the development of a 'total control' programme of a society in crisis.

A similar development has now taken place in another profession, that of teaching, and in many ways mirrors the trends discernable, which imply increased State control of the ideological apparatuses of society. (The overall direction of the Wieham Commission, currently investigating 'labour relation', i.e. ways of non-violently controlling the conflict between labour and capital, is another parallel development).

Now, legislation which passed through Parliament in 1976, has been made operative, and the South African Teacher's Council for Whites (SATC) has been set up. This Council will implement a number of mechanisms of direct and indirect control over those few white teachers who still see education as a creative, broadening process. There has been some criticism of the SATC in the moderate-conservative opposition press (Rand Daily Mail, Star, etc.), but this has largely focussed around the racially exclusive nature of the SATC - it is, as its name makes clear, for white teachers only.

Editorials in the Star, (7/2/78), Progressive Federal Party statements by M.P. Kowie Marais and M.P.C. Peter Nixon, and the Transvaal Teacher's Association have criticised the nature of the Council on the basis of its whites only label. This also seems to be the central concern of Black Teacher's associations like the S.A. Indian Teacher's Association. The secretary of that body, Dhama Mair, complained that the establishment of an all-white council constituted 'serious discrimination against qualified non-white (sic) teachers which would cause incalculable harm to the teaching profession as a whole.'

It may be that racial exclusiveness is not, however, the most important aspect of this new Council. Even if black teachers could be part of it, it would still be a highly undesirable development. After all, if you were a black teacher committed to a creative education process relevant to the building of an alternative social system, would you find it valuable to interact with the average white CNE- and discipline-oriented teacher?

There are other, more serious aspects to the Council which will further restrict the limited parameters of those few white teachers who are not committed to rugby, youth preparedness, Sybrand van Niekerk and the cane. These do not incorporate the rather quaint colonial-type view that it is the balance of 'English-Afrikaans forces' in the Council which is its prime undesirable aspect. (Some commentators have seen the SATC as being unfairly weighed in favour of Afrikaans teachers. The Star (9/2/78) writes that 'Educationalists in Johannesburg are concerned because the English-speaking teachers are represented by 7 members against 17 Afrikaans-speaking members.'

In reality, the cleavages between English and Afrikaans educational approaches are minimal when compared to the issues which unite them in one overall educational strategy, which serves to reproduce the fundamental relationships of inequality in South Africa).

One must rather realise that the Council has the weapons of absolute control over teachers. Registration is compulsory for any teacher who wants a permanent post in a state, or state-subsidised educational institution. This is legally enforced through the Act of Parliament setting up the SATC.

Membership of the Council (effectively compulsory for those wanting to teach in anything other than a temporary capacity) demands adherence to a Code of Conduct. Despite the fact that the Council has already registered at least 10,000 of the country's 46,000 white teachers (SATC claims 40,000 applications have been received), the Code of Conduct has still not been made available to teachers who are now bound by it. Although the provisions of the code are not known, one might speculate that they enshrine the principles of CNE, and loyalty to the dominant ideology/ morality in South Africa. A draft code was published some months back, which, inter alia, bound teachers to

+promote a Christian outlook;
+show a love for his/her country which is beyond question;
+refrain from criticising educational authorities 'unreasonably' in public or the press; contravention of this section is made a punishable offence.

Some educationalists have pointed out that all decisions of the Council, including ratification of the thusfar secret code of conduct binding teachers, have to be approved by the Committee of Education Heads. This committee includes all the State-appointed provincial directors of education. Naturally, it has been concluded by many that the Council will not even be run by teachers, but by the various government education departments.

According to a Mr. J.D.V. Terblanche, rector of the Pretoria Teachers Training College, and chairman of SATC, conduct of teachers will be controlled by a disciplinary committee of the Council, and this committee will have the power to strike a teacher off the register. This would effectively stop that teacher from being employed by anything other than a totally private educational institution; this is clearly a very strong mechanism of controlling the actions of teachers both in and outside of the classroom.

Terblanche also noted that the Council would deal with complaints against teachers forwarded by parents. One can already see little Jonny telling Mommy (who may live in Houghton or Triomf) that teacher said that maybe the Security Police maltreat detainees, and detention in solitary confinement was not very good for the detainee; or that sending people to jail for 5 years for possessing a minute amount of dagga seemed odd when farmers who assult labourers get suspended sentences or fines. Mommy complains to Council, teacher looses job. (Politics, drugs, sex and other controversial subjects are explicitly banned from the classroom by a Transvaal Education Department regulation. One presumes that means that discussions of certain types of politics, and certain approaches to controversial subjects are banned, and the Council will exist to enforce this selective embargo on discussions of reality).

However, let the reader not be fooled by the horrifying provisions of SATC. The number of teachers it will affect is pitifully small. Yet, despite the overall approach of South African education, a few men and women of calibre have survived in the nooks and crannies of the system. Many people can remember the History or English teacher who stimulated us enough to follow through a few issues sufficiently to question dominant ideology. No system, no matter how sophisticated, can perfect social control and suppress ideological struggle totally. If this was possible, change would never be a liklihood in the consciousness of classes (although, of course, changing individual or class cosciousness is linked to the material conditions in which it is rooted, as well as ideological and other forms of struggle).

But the SATC, together with other measures being enacted in South Africa - not just legislation, but the narrowing of University parameters, censorship on an ever-widening scale, the complicity of newspapers in reproducing dominant misconceptions and misinformation - suggest that the mechanisms of control are becoming greater, affecting not just the actions but the very consciousness of those who live in South Africa.

The intervention of the State into ever-widening aspects of total social existence - perhaps a defining characteristic of a society in severe economic, political and ideological crisis - continues. Control of white education on a more thorough-going and systematic basis is now being implemented. This should be considered by those groups who call for Bantu Education to be scrapped, and total 'equality' implemented between black and white education. Perhaps white education in its present form is not a desirable alternative to Bantu Education, and that radical educational alternatives, linked to a programme of social reconstruction, have to be worked out by those educationalists who wish to be 'relevant'.

At this stage, media has been effectively controlled (with a considerable degree of complicity on the part of so-called opposition media); labour, and welfare workers are now under consideration. The advent of the SATC extends the new forms of control into white education. Soon one must logically see new mechanisms to control Lawyers and University lecturers, as well as certain other social groups which may, by nature of their ideological instability, be receptive to certain ideas and approaches which run counter to dominant ideology in South Africa.

For interest, we publish below the composition of the SATC as at 15/11/77, together with the teacher's associations appointing members. It is reproduced from the official booklet put out to teachers by the SATC.

Representation on the SATC is on the basis of associations depending on the number of members registered with each teachers' association. On 15 November 1977 the Council consisted of:

Transvaalse Onderwysersvereniging (5): Messrs J.D.V. Terblanche, J.J. Katzke, J. Steyn and Professors P. van Zyl and H.C. Maree; Suid-Afrikaanse Onderwysersunie (2): Messrs M.J.L. Olivier and H.C. Botha; South African Association for Technical and Vocational Education (2): Dr I. Steyl and Mr C.D. Theron; Natalse Onderwysersunie (1): Mr E.C. Bester; Natal Teachers' Society (2): Mr G.A.H. Dale and Dr B.A. Dobie; Orange Free State Teachers' Association (2): Professors N.T. van Loggerenberg and A.J.C. Jooste; South African Teachers' Association (2): Messrs N.M. Paterson and J.L. Stonier; Transvaal Teachers' Association (2): Messrs E.M. Armstrong and F.H. Salmon; Suidwes-Afrikaanse Onderwysersunie (1): Mr I.G. du Preez; Saamwerkskoleverenigng (1): Dr J.C. Carstens; Association of White Teachers in Bantu Education (1): Mr D. van der Spuy.

The six nominated members are Mr M.L. Visagie (nominated by the Minister of National Education) and the five nominated by the various Administrators are, Prof. G.J. du Toit (Transvaal); Messrs J.A. Meiring (OFS); A.H. Gous (Cape); A.N. Montgomery (Natal); and S.T. Potgieter (SWA).

The Chairman of the SATC is Mr J.D.V. Terblanche and the Vice-chairman is Prof. N.T. van Loggerenberg. The Registrar is Mr J.L. Lemmer.

Item: 'Political Situation Threatens the Mind' (RDM, 16/12/77)
Racial tension, political instability and the economic recession had caused a substantial increase in the number of mentally ill people on the Reef, according to Mrs Vivian Budlender of the Mental Health Society of the Witwatersrand.

"It is a problem that is affecting all races," she said yesterdey.

Mrs Budlender attributed the increase of mental illness among whites to the social instability in the country - black unrest and urban terrorism - and job insecurity. The increase of mental illness among the younger blacks, she said, was being caused by frustration with the political situation in the country and unemployment.

Item: Slump of Death (Sunday Times, 12/2/78)
The recession is partly to blame for the recent spate of multiple killings, according to a top criminologist.

"It could make a normally stable person despair for the future," said Professor Herman Venter, head of the department of criminology at the University of Pretoria. "He doesn't want his family to suffer so decides to end it all."

Prof Venter was commenting on the spate of shootings on the Witwatersrand, in Pretoria and the Vaal in the past eight weeks, in which at least 15 people have died and a number have been wounded. There have been five family shootings in Johannesburg in the past week alone.

Perhaps the biggest factor, he said, was the "incredible number" of guns around and the apparent ease with which they could be obtained.

...

Statistics show South Africans to be among the most heavily-armed people in the world.

In December, 1976, 665 068 people were licensed to own a gun. Between them they owned 1 205 471 firearms.

During 1976 there were 157 713 applications for firearms, of which 154 305 were granted. In the same year 53 people were declared unfit to possess firearms. Also in 1976, 3 147 firearms were reported lost or stolen.

...

Official statistics illustrate the level of violence in South Africa. In the two years from July, 1974, police investigated 14 140 murders, 29 988 rapes and 266 528 cases of assault with intent to do grievous bodily harm.

Item: Gun-Crazy Nation (RDM, 26/1/78)

...

Spain recently took the drastic step of cancelling 65 000 of 70 000 firearm licences in the country because of escalating crime and political violence...

One in four white South Africans owns a firearm, making ours probably the most heavily-armed community in the

world. Yet four out of five gun-owners have never fired their weapons, and one expert believes only one-tenth of them are proficient in the use of arms. Some, indeed, are mentally unfit to own guns.

This is a frightening, crazy situation, and the results are there for everyone to see in the endless toll of death and injury.

Item: 'Poverty' Crimes Shoot Up (25/9/77)
The director of the Race Relations Institute, Mr Frederick van Wyk, said yesterday that "economic crimes" are increasing while crimes of violence take a plunge in black townships.

The number of people convicted of stealing food from shops is increasing. This is attributed to the high unemployment and inadequate wages.

The police and leaders of some organisations have claimed that they are responsible for the decline in crimes of violence. And social workers say that people are getting to realise the source of their problems and therefore the need to project their anger on to other blacks is reduced.

Item: Beware! The Mugger Stalks. (Star, 18/2/78)
If you have not been mugged yet, your chances of joining the growing ranks of victims in Johannesburg increases daily.

The consensus is that as unemployment grows, so will the number of muggers - until the city is crawling with them.

Item: Terror Accused Lives in a Twilight Zone (Sunday Express, 19/2/78)
Prisoners, criminals on the run, shipwrecked sailors and people involved in accidents can all have something in common.

They can show symptoms of Ganser's syndrome, a rare condition in which a person's mental state can be so severely affected by stress that he becomes confused, suffers loss of memory, or has hallucinations.

This week a panel of Psychiatrists linked Ganser's syndrome with brain damage as the reason why one of the accused in the Goch Street trial, Mr Mondy Johannes Motloung, was declared unfit to stand trail.

Item: Detainee in Mental Home (Nation, March 1978)
A Section 10 political detainee, Mr Mxolisi Mvovo, brother-in-law of the late black consciousness leader, Mr Steve Biko, has been admitted to a mental institution after spending 127 days in jail.

...

Mrs Mvovo said she was told by Maj Hansen: "He was transferred there by Security Police and will remain at the hospital for observation.

"If he happens to be certified then we will release him and he may return home. But if it is established he is shamming he will go back to prison immediately in terms of Section 10 of the Internal Security Act."

Item: The Invisible Epidemic (Star, 4/2/78)
South Africa's suicide rate, which for long has been one of the highest in the world, is climbing, according to a report yesterday - especially among urban blacks. There seems little doubt in fact that with an estimated 5 000 suicides a year in South Africa - plus 100 000 attempts - we have on our hands a sizeable epidemic. One of the tragic aspects is that suicidal behaviour is usually the result of a burst of violent self-criticism or a temporary despair; things which do not manifest themselves in spots, high fever or body pains. If they did it would be different. Medical officers would be forced to act. The public would demand it. With seven deaths a day on the Witwatersrand we would be clamouring for it.

The Province recently ruled that it would be illegal for the new Johannesburg General Hospital to establish a suicide unit because the hospital was not involved in preventive medicine.

Item: Police Guard on Soweto Schools (Post, 9/2/78)
Police were out in Soweto yesterday, guarding several schools.

Mr Jaap Strydom, regional director for Education and Training in Johannesburg, said they were called out because students were being intimidated.

...

Police activity was at its highest near Kwa-Mahlobo where police arrested several youths after chasing them through the streets. Kwa-Mahlobo is in Zone 10, Meadowlands.

Two of the youths were reported to have jumped into a manhole near the school and disappeared. Three police vans then arrived and a white officer fired two tear gas canisters into the hole to flush them out.

It was then covered with sacking and hardboard. But the youths failed to appear.