

Unions hail Anglo plan for Africans

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Labour Editor

THE announcement by Anglo American Corporation yesterday that, in principle, it is prepared to recognise and even assist responsible African trade unions in all its enterprises could provide a huge boost to the growth and acceptance of African trade unionism.

Trade unionists see the Anglo American move as a major breakthrough, since apart from its mines, the group either controls or wields great influence in leading companies involved in construction, motor assembly and manufacturing, which collectively employ tens of thousands of Africans.

Mr Gavin Relly, head of the three-man committee which decides Anglo's day-to-day policy, indicated last night that its attitude towards African trade unions was likely to extend to all these companies.

"In practice, managements have got to hoe their own row, but if approaches come from responsible people and the thing looks practical, then dealing with an African trade union would be the right course," he said.

Companies in which Anglo American has large direct or indirect financial interests

include the big LTA construction group; Mondi paper, Union Carriage and Wagon Company; McCarthy Roadway and McCarthy Main Holdings (motor assembly and motor retailing); Verreeniging Refractories, ropes and matings; Highveld Steel and Vanadium; Scaw Metals; and Bruynzeel-Plywoods.

In terms of Anglo's approach, it is prepared, in the right circumstances, to allow African unions to recruit on its premises and even to help in the training of union officials or assist with organisational problems.

PROBLEMS

Mr Relly stressed, however that there were many problems and clearly Anglo is not giving carte blanche to all and sundry who want to set up Black trade unions.

And although Anglo has stated that the policy applies to its mines as well, Mr Relly referred to a recent speech by Mr Harry Oppenheimer, Anglo's chairman, in which he doubted whether trade unionism for Africans could be universally applied at this stage.

Anglo's approach was nevertheless probably summed up by Mr Oppenheimer when he said there was nothing in the law to prevent employers negotiating with African unions, adding:

"And it seems to me that if they can be shown to be truly representative, employers should give careful consideration to the conditions under which they would be prepared to do so, for it must surely be unrealistic and therefore foolish for employers, or the Government for that matter, to try and behave as if these Black unions did not exist."

African trade union leaders as well as the Trade Union Council of South Africa last night welcomed Anglo's move.

Mr Arthur Grobbelaar, Tuccsa's general secretary, was dubious whether any effective trade union body could be organised on the mines so long as the present migrant labour system persisted, but he felt Africans should "take up the challenge" and organise themselves in the group's industrial companies.

Mrs Lucy Myubelo, leader of the 18 000 National Union of Clothing Workers, the country's biggest African trade union, said Anglo's stance was "the kind of thing we have been waiting for for years" and felt it would give a big boost to the African trade union movement.

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Buthlezi warns of 'hurricane of change'

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Staff Reporter

CHIEF GATSHA BUTHELEZI of KwaZulu warned yesterday that the failure of separate development would turn Black nationalism from a "whispering wind into a hurricane that would sweep aside" not only "White racists" but even those who believed in conciliation.

The chief was the guest speaker to the United Progressive Jewish congregation of Johannesburg at Temple Emanuel.

He said the new Black nationalism had become exclusive, which alarmed many Whites, but its father was White supremacy which was also exclusive.

Black nationalists no longer wanted to reconcile White-Black interests after the door had been slammed so forcibly in the faces of the Black people for so long.

The cry of the African nationalist of the past had been for a vote, the emerg-

ing nationalist was gradually adopting as his slogan "the bullet speaks louder than the ballot."

He had been asked overseas why he did not go underground in the political sense.

"While we are not a police state, the network of informers and agents provocateurs who infiltrate separate development politics, makes South Africa to have almost the makings of a police state.

SWEET

"So, under the circumstances, to think of an underground apparatus here is out of the question. However, when people are as desperate as Black nationalists are getting by the day, wisdom is never a guiding factor."

Black South Africans were forced to look northwards for acceptance and identification, Chief Buthlezi said, "and with clear rejection here, if we have any self-respect left, we will soon find it impossible to contemplate a mixed society of any sort".