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Previously it had been the struggle for land which had determined state policy, and the question of African labour was secondary.

(A) With the industrial revolution the struggle for cheap ^{African} labour determined state policy and African land now became secondary. The land was no longer an end in itself but a means of driving the African out to work on mines, railways, docks and farms.

This was done principally by ruinous taxation, laws against squatters, the introduction of individual tenure of land in the place of tribal tenure, and the abolition of free-hold tenure.

(B) Measures such as these could not easily be enforced by the relatively weak governments of the Boer republics and Natal in the face of the African resistance that would arise. Because of this the Natal whites had to import cheap Indian labour thousands of miles across the seas and the Rand mine magnates to bring workers from China.

(This was obviously an economic absurdity. ^{was required})
~~The need for a~~ strong white state machine to drive out African labour. This was one of the main reasons for the move towards the merger of the separate South African states into the Union - one of whose first Acts was the land Act which, at the expense of immense suffering, deprived the African of all rights to the land and turned the Reserves into labour reservoirs.

HISTORY OF THE Liberation MOVEMENT

The liberation movement, whose leaders are today charged with treason, is a fusion of two streams into a mighty river.

The one stream is that of the oppressed 'non-white' national groups against the oppression of the dominant whites.

The second stream is the struggle of the working people against the bosses common to all industrial countries.

The purely national struggle has its source deep in the earliest history of modern South Africa beginning with the first futile battle in 1659 of the Khoi-Khoi (known to the whites as 'Hottentots'), led by Chief Auksumayo, against the seizure by Van Riebeeck of the best pasture lands in their Cape Peninsula.

Until 1870 the basic conflict in South African society was this conflict between different national entities. And the root of that conflict was the struggle for control of the land.

Some of the names which stand out as landmarks in this struggle are Makana and Mosheshoe, Dingaan, and Moselekatzé, who fought back at the head of their people.

SERFDOM

The whites, whenever they were strong enough to do so, seized all the good land. The Africans who had been there before were reduced to a status similar to that known in Europe as serfdom. The white was master of the land and its occupants. The African worker for the white master and in return was allowed to till his own plot. He was not a slave, for he could not be sold as an individual, but if the land was sold he went with it, and he was tied to the land as securely as the serf by the vagrancy laws under which he would be arrested if he left it, and the fact that he had nowhere else to go.

In the 1870's the discovery of diamonds at Kimberley led to the transformation of the miner economy. Money and machinery poured into the country. Great railway and road projects began.

CAPITALISM

Until then almost everyone had made his living at work connected with farming and marketing farm produce. Now the industrial revolution began. Farming ceased to be the basis of the country's livelihood. Mining became that basis. A capitalist economy began.

With capitalism, a new class was born—the proletariat, that body of men who possess no way of earning their food except by selling their power to work in return for wages.

Kimberley in the 1870's was the source, beginning as a tiny trickle, of the second stream of struggle, running beside that of the struggle between the "non-white" and the white—the struggle of the working-class (irrespective of nationality) against the bosses (irrespective of nationality). The mines needed men to dig and build and carry; the railways needed men, the ports needed men. The cry went out for black labour.

AFRICAN Proletariat

At Kimberley the African proletariat was born. It was a most difficult birth. As if aware of the misery of the future the infant fought against those who would wrest him forth.

As long as the African was able to eke out an existence from his soil he saw no reason to go out and be the white man's labourer. He may well have argued that there was as much reason for the white man to come and work as his herdboy as there was for him to go and work as the white man's herdboy.

The life of the cheap black labourer was not very attractive. Wages were 6/- a month plus

the white workers—who were brother proletarians—regarded the Africans with fear and hostility.

The diamond rush had led to a huge immigration of white workers from Europe hopeful of making a quick fortune.

The white immigrants, with their education and training, became, naturally, the skilled labour on the mines. Large numbers of Africans were recruited but they were, at first, merely fetchers and carriers for the white men. They were men who walked straight from a primitive tribal society into the industrial age. Completely illiterate, they had no comprehension at all of machinery, nor any tradition of industrial discipline. In tribal society, the tasks of the men had been milking the cows, erecting and defending the kraals, and sometimes hunting. The women had done all the farming, and it was only at about this time, when the plough was replacing the hoe that the African division of labour was altered and the men became active farmers.

FIRST Trade Unions

The white workers—imbued with their strong British trade union tradition—began to form themselves into unions almost as soon as they settled into their jobs. A branch of England's Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners was established in Cape Town in 1881 and in Durban in 1882.

But it did not even enter the heads of the white workers to bring in the Africans as well.

At first this was not because the white workers saw the Africans as dangerous competitors—an approach which was to dominate their actions a few years later—but because they did not see the Africans as workers like themselves at all. They were like pack-horses, and their function was to carry burdens where the white man told them.

In the beginning, at Kimberley, there were thousands of little white and a few Coloured capitalists. Each one staked his claim, and, sometimes on a plot as small as seven square yards, each was a mine-owner and employer of African labour.

As the surface scratching gave way to deeper digging, the need for machinery and capital grew, and the process of amalgamation began.

By 1884 almost a whole capitalist cycle had been completed. The thousands of small white employers of labour had been pushed out of the capitalist class into the class which owned nothing but its power to work. The white proletariat had been born, and economically it was the brother of the black proletariat which it, in its small way, had exploited before.

If economics were a mechanical determiner of destinies, white and black worker would have stood together in class solidarity against the mine-owner. But it is not.

WHITE Workers vs Black

The white worker saw—and saw correctly—that as far as he was concerned the biggest immediate danger was that the bosses would reduce him to the position of the black man. The black man received a pittance, and if he could do the white man's work for a pittance, the boss would surely employ black labour.

And while that would certainly benefit the black man it would equally certainly bring down the wages received by the white man.

The fact was—and the white workers had the brains to see it—that anybody who talked to them about the solidarity of all labour should have his head examined. For the short-term interests of the white and the black workers were sharply opposed, although their long-term interests were, and are, identical.

Most people concern themselves with their immediate interests and leave the distant future to look after itself. The white workers were no exception. They were willing to listen to the voice of those who, speaking of the solidarity of all workers meant by that

most famous of them, Bill Andrews, who have fought against all odds for the recognition of the fact that the white and black workers are brothers.

The white working-class made a very great contribution to the progressive movement. It brought to South Africa the experience of trade union solidarity and struggle which had been gained at the cost of immense suffering and heroism in Britain. Its militant strikes and bloody wage-battles set an example from which the African workers were quick to learn.

The white workers brought with them the techniques of class struggle, techniques which the Africans were quickly to add to those which they themselves had learnt in the course of their national struggle.

Thus at Kimberley was seen the first bubbling of the little river that was to swell into the National liberation movement.

In next week's article we shall begin to map out its course.

NEXT WEEK: THE FIRST NON-EUROPEAN POLITICAL ORGANISATIONS.

● PYJAMA GAME

OH, those naughty window displays!

A "realist" in P.E. has been complaining, a Les Undesirables, about the nighties seen displayed in shop windows. "Feminine night apparel of a very intimate nature."

Such displays must have a "very undesirable effect on our vast Native population" chirps this bird.

YOU, WOLF, YOU. I BET YOU SIMPLY ENJOY YOUR WINDOW SHOPPING.

● HOT TIP

SAW a picture of a top hat in the local daily the other day. Nice grey one, too. Not that I fancy top hats.

But who do you think was under the hat?

NONE OTHER THAN "ONSE" ABIE BLOOMBERG, POSING FOR THE CAMERA AT THE ASCOT RACE-TRACK IN ENGLAND.

Well, well, the Coloured people's "rep" taking time off to hand out tips for the sport of kings.

I WONDER WHAT THOSE POOR, KICKED-ABOUT, HARD-WORKING, BELOW THE BREADLINE VOTERS THINK ABOUT IT.

● STALE NEWS

TALKING about bread, figures tell me that the old cost of living is going higher and higher. Was higher at the end of May than it ever was before, with retail prices climbing from 209.5 last year to 218.6 this year.

I suppose the speech from the throne on July 4 will use up a whole hour in order to tell us simply: "Tighten your belts, people."

ME. I'M LOOKING FORWARD TO THE TIME WHEN PEOPLE START TAKING OFF THOSE BELTS AND GIVE SOMEBODY A GOOD LAMBASTING.

● FOREIGN AID

OO! I could hardly believe my ears.

Imagine workers toddling along to the Special Branch and asking their advice in the choice of a trade-union secretary.

Well, believe it or not, it happened in Port Elizabeth.

They even had the race and sex of the secretary worked out, too—European female.

THEY DIDN'T GET WHAT THEY WANTED, BUT IF THE OTHER WORKERS SAT ON THEM, WELL, THEY ASKED FOR IT.

● ISM

POLITICAL language appears to have adopted another word. A French politician the other day spoke about "Fascists and parachutists."

EXPULSIONS Supported

I wholeheartedly support the action of the ANC Transvaal Working Committee for the expulsion from the ANC of Messrs Lebello and Madzunya, because the purpose of the two gentlemen is to disrupt the entire movement of the ANC and furthermore, to

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The life of the cheap black labourer was not very attractive. Wage rates—£6 a month plus lodgings on the diamond field, in 1882; 15/- to 25/- on Transkei farms in 1896; and about 15/- per week at the Cape Town docks in the same year, were not sufficient to bring in the steady flow of labour required.

RULE next par—

It was necessary to drive the African out to work—to create an African proletariat.

By definition a proletariat is a man who owns nothing but his power to work. The need of the rulers of South Africa then was to strip the African of all but his labour power, to take from him all rights to the land from which he could gain food or graze cattle.

The rulers of South Africa battled to drive the Africans out to become the labourers in industry. Such is the drama of history—the ruling class struggled so hard precisely in order to create the African working-class, the class which would inevitably one day challenge and take over from its creators.

WHITE Workers—

Ironically, while the white owners of the mines and industries were so eager to welcome the African workers—who were potentially their greatest class-foes,

and, sometimes on a plot as small as seven square yards, each was a mine-owner and employer of African labour.

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Most people concern themselves with their immediate interests and leave the distant future to look after itself. The white workers were no exception. They were willing to listen to the voice of those who, speaking of the solidarity of all workers, meant by that all white workers, and meant by it too, solidarity against anything which would strengthen the opportunity of the black worker to compete with the white and thus improve his lot.

And so the very first strike recorded in South African history was a strike by the white workers against the very first attempt by the employers to reduce them to the level of the Africans.

THE First Strike—

After each shift the mine-owners required the black workers to strip naked and submit to a search for stolen diamonds. When, in 1883, the mine-owners announced their intention to extend this system to include the European and Coloured diggers as well, the men went on strike.

After over a year of sporadic labour stoppages, riots, and, on one occasion, a bloody affray in which eight workers were shot dead and forty others wounded by mine police guards, the owners finally abandoned the proposal.

The pattern was set for the hostility towards African advancement which has been the hallmark of the majority of white trade unionists—against which stand out like beacons the names of many advanced white workers' leaders,

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If the two gentlemen feel that the ANC policy of collaboration with other racial groups is wrong it is advisable for them to form an organisation of their own in which they will have the opportunity to preach hatred, frustration, racialism and other racial feelings.

Let us have nothing to do with these racialistic leaders and stand firm behind our leaders who are fighting for freedom, all irrespective of colour, race and creed.

South Africa is a common place for those who live in it.

Mayebuy Africa.

JAMES J. MALIMABE
Ficksburg, O.F.S.

— on Oct 15 1883

Symbolically, the first strike