

cutters are from the Transkei and many workers there choose between cane-cutting and mining.

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### THE MAKING OF THE WORKING CLASS

In the last issue we were told of the discovery of diamonds. We saw that all men had the right to dig for diamonds and workers could sell their labour to whom they pleased.

#### RESTRICTIONS

But these conditions did not last. The High Commissioner, Barkly, passed a Master and Servants' Act which said that only magistrates could give licences to claim land for digging. The act did not say that only white could have licences - it said that only reliable people of good character should be given licences, but it was easy for white racists to make sure that few Blacks could get land.

The Master and Servants' Act also extended the pass system to Kimberley. Employees had to be registered and they were not allowed to leave the town without permission. This was done to prevent workers from leaving their jobs if they were not satisfied. The workers were not allowed to strike, and they were not allowed to leave either.

But mineowners were still not satisfied. They wanted more workers. They could only get them if they could get Black farmers to work as labourers.

What happened next is what happens in every country which changes from a system of making living from the land to a system where men are forced to work in mines and factories for money. The mineowners and the rich farmers combined to force Africans off the land. They both wanted cheap labour. Laws were passed which made it very hard for Africans to survive on the land.

#### AFRICANS FORCED TO WORK IN THE TOWNS.

Forced Labour : The Squatter Law forced a tax on all African men who did not work for whites. Another tax increased the amount paid by all African men to the government. For most men, the only way they could pay these taxes was to contract themselves to the mines for money.

For the squatters, selling their crops was made even harder when their rents were raised. By this time the government was in possession of most of the land and they refused to release any of it to Black farmers. When railways lines were built, the trains did not go into Black areas. This made transport costs very high for those wanting to sell their crops in the towns.

#### WORKING CLASS

And so more and more people from all over the country were forced to seek work. They went first to the diamond mines in Kimberley then later to the gold mines of the Transvaal. Towns around the mines grew rapidly. Soon shops and factories were established. Many people who had come to the towns to seek work for money did not return to the impoverished land but made their homes in the towns. In this way the working class was born.