

12. See American Universities op cit pp 279-288.
13. Grenfell ms.
14. Wheeler and Pelissier op cit p.141
15. Grenfell ms.
16. Grenfell ms.
17. Grenfell ms.
18. American Universities op cit p.322
19. Grenfell ms.
20. John Marcum op cit p.141
21. Berrington Moore The Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy Harmondsworth 1974 p.505

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labour action

Technical Officials' Association: (see WIP, 9) The Association backed down in its confrontation with and threatened strike action against the Chamber of Mines. Some mines were said to have suffered large losses (R1-million on one mine) due to a 'go-slow' by the officials, but this was probably compensated for by the amount saved on postponed salary increases.

The settlement was reached after the association had lost an unspecified number of its members to the other mine officials associations which accepted

the Chamber's pay offer... (Star, 79.07.20).

Motor Industry: (eastern Cape) (see WIP, 9) The unions representing these workers won across the board increases of an average of about 8% with further increases due in March, 1980.

The wages were negotiated between employer representatives (Ford, GM and Volkswagen), the 'coloured' National Union of Motor Assembly and Rubber Workers of South Africa, the white South African Iron and Steelworkers' Union, with attendance by the African United Automobile, Rubber and Allied Workers' Union. The negotiations took place after workers had threatened strike action.

The amount of nonsense that is presented on the unemployment position in the columns of the commercial press in South Africa, and then put forward as scholarship, seems to be on the increase.

Prize-winning report of the month must be that of the Star (79.10.16) in its reproduction of the neo-Malthusianism of the latest Volkskas Economic Review:

If South Africa does not succeed in lowering the birth rate, there can be little hope of a satisfactory solution to the problem of unemployment.

Billions of rands may be squandered on social plans, which will have a reduced economic impact with little hope of getting to the root of the problem.

But what must be avoided is an emotional approach to this solution (?) ...

VOLK, WHICH VOLK?

Greater impetus should be given with everyone's co-operation to the recent decline in the high rate of population growth.

....

A lower birth rate will lead to higher per capita welfare, and in turn to better nourishment, health, housing and education. It will also relieve the pressure on the provision for housing, food subsidies, transport, education and medical facilities.

South Africa has reached a stage in its industrial development where future growth will emanate increasingly from the more capital-intensive sectors.

The last paragraph is, of course, closer to what it is all about. But no mention of who is to benefit from the "future growth"; why it will "emanate increasingly from the more capital-intensive sectors"; or why the working class (overwhelmingly African) should decrease their numbers in the interests of the beneficiaries of capital-intensive growth (mainly large-scale local and foreign capital).



Elite Upholsterers: (Babelegi, BophuthaTswana) On the 30th August, 1979, 200 workers from this factory went on strike, demanding higher wages. The factory is situated in the notorious exploitation growth-point in this 'homeland' (see WIP, 8).

Manager, Henry Velkof, told workers that those who wanted to leave should do so, and that they were automatically dismissed. Only one report appeared on this strike (to our knowledge), namely in Post, 79.08.31.

Further information required.

Clover Ice Cream: (Pretoria) A sales driver employed by this firm was reported to have been dismissed in August after a disagreement with Herman, a mechanic, over a scratched vehicle. Herman then fetched a pistol from his home, accused Johannes Ramokgopa of trying to "become a white man" and threatened to shoot him. Ramokgopa was fired by manager Viljoen when he laid a complaint against the mechanic.

Wolpert Coal Merchants: (Booyens) Four workers were fired after a newspaper exposé of the non-existent cleaning facilities at the firm - workers had to wash themselves from drums in full view of passing trains.

Most of the workers fear dismissal as they are migrants and live in hostels - their presence and accommodation in urban areas, therefore, being dependent on employment.

Wolpert denied that the workers had been fired, and said that they had "left the company because they were not registered" (Post, 79.08.10).

Royal Dairy: (Salt River, Cape) Post, 79.08.31, carried the only Transvaal report on the refusal to work by some 120 workers employed by this firm. Department of Manpower officials were called to settle the dispute over the non-payment of promised pay rises.

Further information required.

Doreen's Transport Cartage: (Johannesburg) Police watched while some 30 African workers struck for an increase of R10,00 on the \pm R20,00 a week they were earning. They returned to work after winning a R4,00 increase (Star, 79.08.17).

South African Railways, Kaserna Depot: (Jeppe, Johannesburg) Post reported that about "1 000 railway cartage drivers" stopped work after being told that they would not be paid on the 27th of the month (August) as was usually the case.

"Wives of most drivers who are migrant labourers came to collect some money from their husbands but were forced to return empty handed" (79.08.28).

The Star (79.08.28) reported that an SAR spokesman said that the "stoppage affected about 100 men..." Work continued the next day.

Carborundum-Universal SA (Pty): (Benrose, Johannesburg) Five despatch clerks were fired for alleged theft and were joined by seven colleagues who resigned in sympathy. The seven said that the liaison committee had not been involved, as it should have been, in the

case of the dismissal of the five other clerks (Post, 79.08.18).

DTB Cartage Company (Pty) Ltd: (Durban) About 200 African workers went on strike in protest at wages (wages between R15 and R22 a week) (79.08.27). They said that they needed "at least about R50,00 a week to keep our heads above water".

The dispute also prevented about 40 'Indian' drivers from going about their own work. While not actively supporting the strike by their African fellow-workers they said that the wages paid to the strikers were a disgrace. The drivers earn between R45,00 and R50,00.

Security Police arrived on the day the strike started. A director, Geoff Tasker, asked the men what they wanted, returned 30 minutes later, and fired a number of them.

It was reported that Tasker took on 47 of the dismissed workers the next day and engaged 38 new workers from the Labour Bureau. He denied the workers' accusations about wages and increases.

Rainbow Chicken Processing Plant: (Hamersdale, Natal) On the 29th August about 400 workers had teargas thrown at them by police. The police said that this was to disperse them ("the mob"). 55 people were arrested. Armed "riot police" attended the incident.

The events that led to the strike started a few weeks earlier when a woman worker was dismissed from the plant. Workers demanding her re-employment stayed away from the plant and were subsequently also fired.

They were then re-employed, but at "beginner's wages".

This further dispute over wages gave rise to the large-scale action by the workers and the police action against them.

Members of FOSATU (the Federation of South African Trade Unions) and a FOSATU affiliated union (the Transport and General Workers' Union) became involved when requested to do so by workers. They were to have met with management.

The TGWU was reported to have had contact with the factory's liaison committee since early 1979. The TGWU said that the strike related more to refusal to negotiate with the committee than with the firing of the women worker.

Production returned to normal on the 30th of August. Police still escorted workers to and from the Mpumalanga township that serves the border industrial area of Hammarsdale (also the scene of one of the spate of bus boycotts in Natal during the past few months).

The 55 workers arrested appeared in the magistrate's court in nearby Camperdown on the 27th September on charges of public violence. They pleaded not guilty and were reported to have been remanded in custody until 28th October (other reports have it that the Union paid their bail).

Balmoral Mine: (Germiston) About 300 miners at this privately owned small gold mine stopped work and demanded an increase in daily wages from R2,65 to R5,00 on the 14th September, 1979.

"Security policemen and officials from

the mine and the Department of Co-operation and Development are agreed that the strike is illegal", is how the Star put it (79.09.14). Riot police were on stand-by at the mine and the workers were given the choice of returning to work or being fired.

The mine, a member of the Boshoff Group (not affiliated to the Chamber of Mines, as was quickly pointed out), resumed work on the 15th. Ten miners "chose to leave" (according to the Star) or were "discharged for instigating the strike" (according to a mine official, quoted in the RDM).

Mine management gave no increases as the R2,65 they earn is "more than what is stipulated in their contracts".

Raleigh Cycle Factory: (Springs) On the 17th September about 600 workers employed by this firm downed tools for about five hours. This followed rumours that foremen's wages had been secretly increased by 42c an hour "to upgrade (their) standard".

African Commerce Developing Company: (Benrose) Yet another sordid scene of victimisation played itself out at this firm, involving unskilled workers complaining about working conditions. The firm manufactures staples.

Eight women workers lodged a complaint about working conditions to managing director Chain: They stand from 06h00 to 18h00 with a 30 min break for lunch - during which time they are not allowed to leave the factory premises; they are not allowed to receive phone calls despite the fact that many are mothers with small children at home; they are always threatened with dismissal; etc.

A week later the person who wrote the petition out was fired. A woman who went to find out why was also fired. The other six then walked out.

Manager Benson said that it was a coincidence that Khanyisile Sibanyoni was fired after the letter - "She was unsuitable for the job". He continued: "An agitator has been at work - that's what we call it in the UK" (Post, 79.10.11).

Toyota: (Wynberg, Transvaal) Confusing reports appeared relating to a strike and dismissal of workers from this firm. Apparently four workers were called to the office of the warehouse manager (Brits) at Toyota on 9th October, to sign "warnings for not having reached production targets". Two of the workers affected would not do this - and when they had returned to their work section they were joined by other workers in demanding an explanation for the warnings - a new measure.

Fourteen workers insisted on seeing Brits but were escorted off the premises. They were supported by about 80 other workers who then stopped work.

A meeting of all workers, with management, police and an inspector from the Labour Department, was then called. The workers were told to return to work on the 11th October. All but 25 of them were taken back into employment. The 25 were paid on Friday, 12th October, and dismissed.

Many of the workers are members of the Metal and Allied Workers' Union (a member of FOSATU). At the meeting at the factory the issue of a constitution for the liaison

Heinsmann Electric Company: (Elandsfontein, near Johannesburg) This company is owned by the Barlow Rand Group. In 1976 events related to recognition of the union (the Metal and Allied Workers' Union) and the rejection of by the workforce of liaison and works committees. (The events and the issues are covered in some detail in South African Labour Bulletin, 3,7 of 1977)

Trade Unionists: The banning orders imposed by the government on some trade unionists in 1976 were lifted recently. They are those on Loet Douwes-Dekker, the Tyackes (connected with the Urban Training Project before their bannings) and also those on Charles Simkins (economist at the University of Natal) and John Frankish (who had had connections with the labour movement in Cape Town).

In Cape Town an African trade union organiser from the Western Province General Workers' Union and his family were nearly killed in a petrol bomb attack. The bomb was thrown through the window of Howard Marawu's house in Gugulatu on the 17th October. The family managed to escape through the back door and windows.

During the same week as the fire bombing Dave Lewis of the same 10 000 strong WPGWU, received four death threats, some referring to the incident involving Howard Marawu. Dave Lewis also had the tyres of his motor car slashed.

committee also came up. Workers wanted a different constitution, but this was turned down by management.

MAWU is said to be contemplating legal action against the firm over victimisation, as 18 of the union's most active members were amongst those dismissed.

BOYCOTT BITES

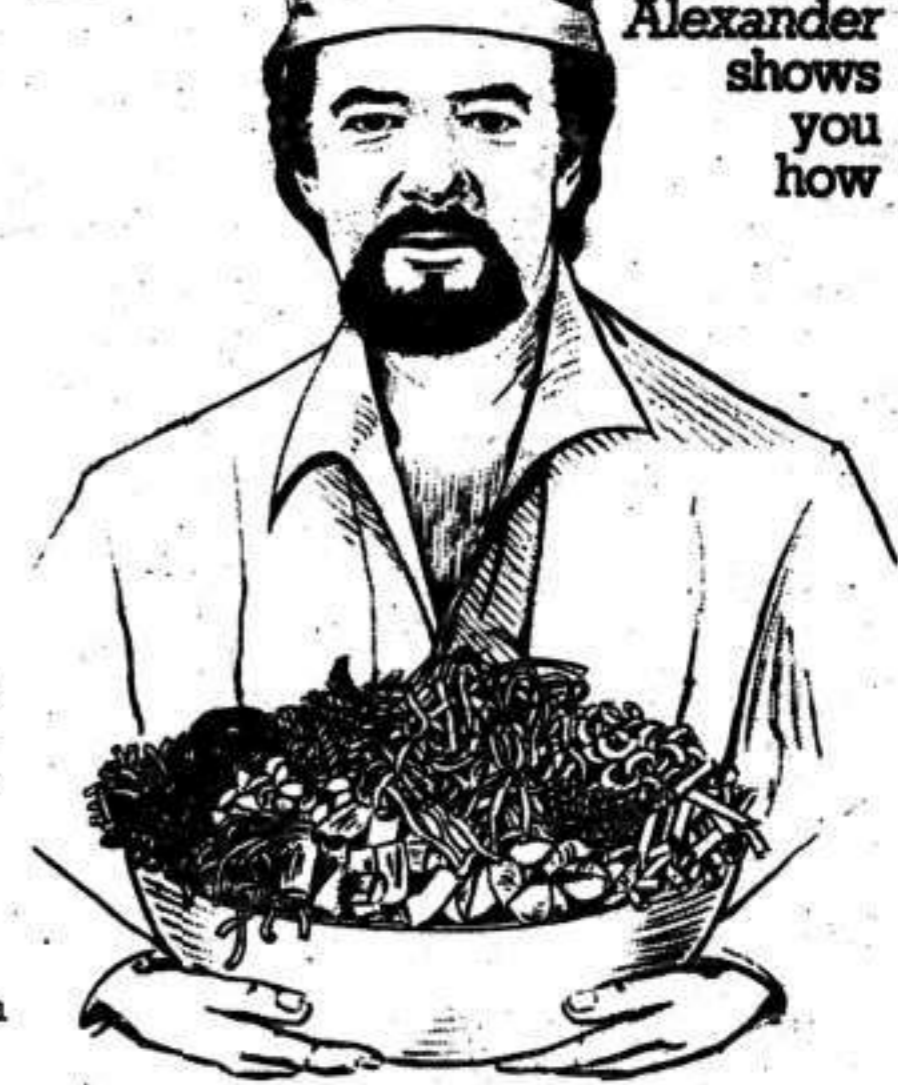
Despite recent negotiations between representatives of Fatti's and Monie, and striking workers, a settlement of the conflict has not as yet been reached. Accordingly, the consumer boycott of all F & M products continues, amidst growing signs that the company is being hard-hit by the boycott campaign.

F & M's after-tax profits dropped by almost half in the first six months of 1979 - from R363,000 in the period January-July 1978 to R186,000 in the corresponding period for this year (1979).

The company has denied that the drop in profits has been caused by the boycott campaign. However, their unusual promotional activities suggest that this is not so. Special offers on their products, the employment of extra salesmen, and expensive newspaper advertising all imply that the company is having serious difficulties in coping with the boycott of its products. An example of recent Fatti's and Monie advertising in a Johannesburg newspaper, no doubt prompted by the dramatic drop in their profits, is shown below:

Lekka Pasta!

...Robin Alexander shows you how



"Come along and find out just how 'lekka' pasta is for summer and the holiday season. Yes, ma'am - Fatti's & Monie's pasta in salads and cool snacks is well and truly in these days. You'll be surprised and delighted when you taste and see these new ways with Fatti's & Monie's famous pasta!"

See you at the **FATTI'S and MONIE'S TASTE TREAT**
HYPERMARKET, NORWOOD, from 09h30 and BEDFORD CENTRE, BEDFORDVIEW from 11h15.
SATURDAY 27 OCTOBER 1979.

