

Struggle in Discourse:
The *International's* Discourse against Racism
in the Labour Movement in South Africa
(1915-1919)

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Contents

Abstract		i
Chapter one	Introduction	1
Chapter two	The <i>International</i>	12
Chapter three	Theoretical framework	33
Chapter four	Discourse analysis	60
Chapter five	Class, race, nation	79
Chapter six	Roots of the ISL's anti-militarism	88
Chapter seven	Struggles within the ISL	97
Chapter eight	Struggles outside the ISL	113
Chapter nine	Discourse analysis: anti-militarism	147
Chapter ten	Discourse analysis: trade unions	178
Chapter eleven	Conclusion	204
Appendices		
Bibliography		

Abstract

The *International*, as the weekly newspaper of the International Socialist League, articulated from 1915 to 1919 an ideology which stood opposed both to organised labour and nationalist movements in South Africa. This situation reflected significant historical struggles during this period, which constitutes essential background to the discourse of the *International*.

The *International's* writers opposed the institution of trade unionism in the labour movement because it was fragmented on the lines of skill and race. They opposed both the National Party and the South African Native National Congress because they advocated racial (and national) rather than working class interests. Instead, these writers, according to their international socialist paradigm, advocated a working class united irrespective of race and skill at the level of industry.

To analyse these ideological positions, discourse analysis provides a fruitful method for locating its dynamics in relation to other positions and extra-ideological (contextual) practices. The *International's* writers generated a socialist position against racism by engaging in an ideological struggle in discourse. They articulated their anti-racist position from international socialism's critique of the 'languages' of both militarism and trade unionism in the discourse of labour.

Within the discourse of militarism, the working class was signified as divided between hostile nations. These writers applied this as a metaphor to the division of the local labour movement and criticised the latter accordingly. In

their view, just as workers were divided between the nations (nationalism), so they were divided within the nation (racism) in South Africa. One context cohered with the other, and both agreed with imperatives of international capitalism. This was fundamentally opposed to the principles of international socialism which characterised the *International's* discourse.

Within the dominant discourse of labour, workers were signified as divided between different trade unions on the basis of skills. Furthermore, in the South African context, trade unions organised only white workers, and ignored the far larger proportion of black labour. In this context, the *International* advocated industrial unionism, and criticised the narrow base of the white trade unions for fragmenting and weakening the working class in South African.

The *International's* writers were thus led by the discourse of international socialism to a new discourse, whereby not white workers alone, but a racially-united working class movement would be the key to a socialist future in South Africa. Their struggle entailed a bid in and over discourse to rearticulate the sign of the 'native worker' within their own discourse as the dominant discourse type. Underpinning their struggle was a fundamental opposition to capitalist class relations.

Chapter one

Introduction

1.1. Introduction

Any historical account of resistance to racial discrimination in South Africa would be incomplete without a mention of a small socialist group which formed on the Witwatersrand in 1915. Yet the contribution these people made towards the struggle against racism in South Africa requires more explanation than the cursory attention given in most literature on the subject.

Their story begins when their anti-war ginger group, the International Socialist League (ISL), broke away from the South African Labour Party (SALP) in September 1915. The ISL, and the War on War League from which it was formed, had failed to dissuade the SALP's rank and file from supporting war against Germany in 1914 (see Chapter six). The ISL subscribed to the principles of international socialism,¹ and therefore opposed any policy which threatened working class solidarity. The war made British and German workers enemies in the interests of their national governments and international capital.²

¹ Since Karl Marx proclaimed in his Communist Manifesto in 1847 that 'the working men have no country', the basic form of socialist organisation has been international, rather than national. Marxist internationalism posits that working class members in all nations have a prior loyalty to all workers in all nations, and not to their national bourgeoisie. Marx, in the Manifesto, said communists 'in the national struggles of the proletarians of the different countries point out and bring to the front the common interests of the entire proletariat, independent of all nationality' (Feuer 1959: 20, 26; Hunt 1950: 153).

² Anti-militarism derives less from the writings of Karl Marx than it does from the ideas of the socialist generation which arose after his death – particularly the founders of German Communism, Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg. The evils of war were not the problem so much as capitalist militarism, which Liebknecht understood as an 'army against people', rather than a 'people's army'. The socialist parties of the Second International (see footnote No. 3) had built up their strengths on the basis of 'peaceful' capitalism, and had debated a great deal on what to do in the event of war. The revolutionary Marxists were among the most resolute in this opposition to war. They and others understood militarism to be the product of class societies, the history of which at the same time one of conflict of states and nations, and one of class struggles within them. Capitalist militarism, they saw, arose out of economic rivalry on the world market, 'at home' to suppress the working class, and (in colonial militarism) to suppress 'the natives'. So the internal and the external aspects of militarism were part of the same capitalist logic. For Liebknecht, anti-militarism was class war (Young 1988: Chapter 3) (see Chapter six, footnote No. 1).

The ISL's weekly newspaper, the *International*, condemned militarism at every turn. The onset of war had led to the collapse of the Second International. But these writer-activists also saw a correspondence between the division between nations at war and the division between crafts in the trade union movement (see Appendix A).³ Within the mining industry, for example, engineers were organised in one union, engine drivers in another, as were carpenters and all other trades. Each union bargained separately with management, and out of concert with other unions. Furthermore, black workers were forbidden to organise, and were subjected to a host of other discriminatory measures designed to maintain their subordinate position in the labour hierarchy. But their cheap labour status posed a constant threat to white job security. For this reason, the protection of 'white jobs' became a virtual *raison d'être* of the trade union movement. And so there existed tripartite relations of antagonism between white workers, black workers and management, for whom the continued fragmentation of labour as a class (divide and rule) was an advantage (see Appendix B).

This situation in large part constituted the backdrop against which the ISL fashioned its policy against racism. In reaction to militarism, the *International's* writers came to understand nationalism as contrary to the socialist imperative of international working class solidarity. As a result, the *International's* position towards the South African Native National Congress

³ The Second International was founded in Paris on 14 July 1889 out of a loosely knit array of Marxist and non-Marxist political parties and labour organisations, together representing many shades of socialist opinion. It formally adopted Marx's basic principles – the class struggle, international unity, proletarian action, and the socialisation of the means of production. Member organisations had only to give a general adherence to these principles. How these principles were applied contradicted Marx's conviction 'that the capitalist system could not be reformed and must therefore be completely abolished' (Hunt 1950: 149). The steady growth in the standard of living among the working class made them more likely to want reforms within capitalism, than its destruction. The Second International therefore found itself defending and demanding further reforms within the framework of the existing order, 'rather than with attempting to destroy that order in accordance with its principles. And it was less inclined to revolutionary action as it was in substantial agreement with liberal-bourgeois democracy in demanding peace abroad ... and the extension of parliamentary institutions. It may be taken as a universal principle that no labour organisation, whatever its professed creed, will seek to overthrow the capitalist system so long as this is making profits ... that the rank-and-file are mainly concerned with obtaining that higher standard of living' (*ibid.*: 150-151).

was hostile, calling it and its newspaper (*Abanto Batho*) middle class and racist (pro-black) (see Section 9.4.).

In reaction to trade unionism, the ISL advocated the industrial unity of all workers irrespective of skill or race. This thesis shows that it was within a combination of anti-militarism with anti-trade unionism (labour) articulated in the language of international socialism that the *International* approached the race question in South Africa. The resultant policy was a call for the industrial unity of all workers irrespective of skill or race, as Figure 1 illustrates.

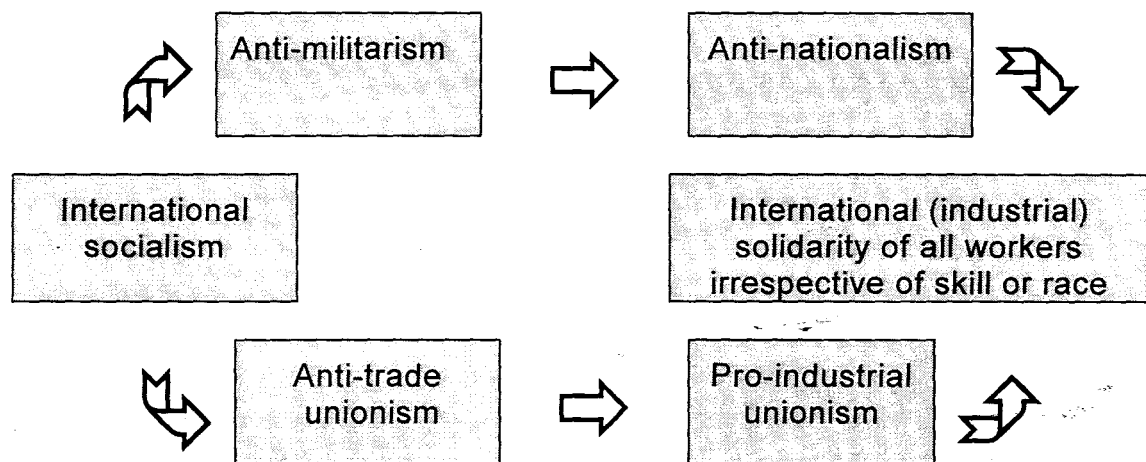


Figure 1

Militarism was, therefore, more than the occasion of the ISL splitting from the SALP, and trade unionism was more than an outmoded response to management. Both were symptoms of a labour movement incapable of embracing a revolutionary class struggle, and the *International's* view on race was fashioned in the language of both. This link has been largely ignored in the paucity of literature dealing with the ISL and its newspaper. At most, the war is seen merely as the occasion of the ISL breaking away from the SALP; and anti-militarism as an interregnum which occupied the ISL until it woke up to a more urgent issue of racism.

Enthusiasm in the ISL for its campaign against racism was not overwhelming. And those few members who took up the cause saw black oppression less as a race than as a class issue. This view corresponded with the ISL's essentially binary outlook on society. At its 1917 Annual Conference, the ISL declared that '(s)ociety is divided into two classes: the working class, doing

all the labour; and the idle class, living off the fruits of labour,' (*International* 7/12/17). All other social fractions, such as race, gender and nationality were subsumed under the class fraction (Legassick 1973: 7, 10).⁴

The ISL therefore called on white workers to organise, not on a sectional craft basis, but together with all workers of any craft and race at the level of industry; to seize it and thereby to destroy capitalist relations of production. No less a measure, they insisted, would destroy 'ruling class' power and alleviate the privations suffered by all workers, blacks included. The call for industrial unity was not unique, but the emergence of an anti-racial position gave the socialist argument in South Africa a significantly different tone and agenda from its European counterpart. It also marked the origin of a distinctive stance against racism that has reverberated in South African socialist discourse to the present day.

From the evidence I put forward, this outlook of a non-racist class struggle was less the achievement of the ISL as an organisation than of its mouthpiece, the *International*. More specifically, this achievement belongs to its editors: David Ivon Jones and Sydney Percival Bunting. While the paper articulated the thinking of the party, it was the paper that led the party away from the segregationist policies for which the SALP was better known (see Appendix C). It is the way by which this non-racial discourse developed in the *International* that this dissertation seeks to explain.

1.2. Overview of chapter

This chapter provides an overview of the thesis.

- Section 1.3. states the aim and objective of the thesis.

⁴ Admittedly, this standard Marxist binary model squared uneasily with the more obvious division of South African society into a relatively small group of politically free whites and a far larger group of politically unfree blacks subject to a range of discriminatory labour practices and legislation. Racism served white worker interests by justifying their position in the labour hierarchy as an aristocracy of labour. However, I do think Martin Legassick's claim that 'such an attitude precluded any serious analysis of the economic structures and mechanisms of social control which produced, maintained and reinforced South African racialism' (1973: 3) is a little spurious in the light of the discourse theory I employ in this dissertation. The thinking current in the ISL was appropriate to the discourses of its time. It was the conditions of later socialist discourse which enabled an awareness such as Legassick's.

- Section 1.4. previews its theoretical framework.
- Section 1.5. previews how the *International's* campaign against racism will be explained as discursive struggle.
- Section 1.6. previews the discourse analysis procedure used in this thesis.
- Section 1.7. indicates the thrust of each chapter, thus giving an overview of the entire thesis.

1.3. Aim and objective of dissertation

This thesis aims to describe how the *International's* campaign against racism in the South African labour movement was fashioned within the language of anti-militarism and labour (specifically anti-trade unionism). Sections 1.4. and 1.5. preview the theoretical tools by which this aim is pursued. Although the sample on which this study is based contains almost all issues published over a four-year period from September 1915 to September 1919, the actual period analysed extends to the ISL's January 1919 Annual Conference. The *International's* emerging policy on race reached an apotheosis at this time. Further coverage on race issues does not appear to have adjusted this policy in any way.⁵ As a discourse analysis, the objective of this thesis is to reveal the paradigm by which the paper's policy on race and racism might be understood.

1.4. Theoretical framework: a preview

The theoretical framework of this thesis is discourse theory. Discourse may be defined as any communicative event which presumes a sender and a receiver (such as a news report). A discourse is both 'the organisation of language above the level of the sentence' (Fiske 1989: 14), and a socially-determined system of language use by which a certain sense can be made of a specific topic or social

⁵ SP Bunting's biographer, Eddie Roux, says: 'With the end of the war in November, 1918, the revolutionary movement all over the world grew rapidly.... Native affairs began to play a smaller part in the activities of the ISL, as well as in the pages of its newspaper. Who could be bothered with politically backward and largely unorganised Africans when such resounding events were happening overseas? Work among Africans, never very popular with the rank and file in the League, was crowded out or left to a few "cranks," of whom Bunting and Jones were the most outstanding and persistent' (1944: 46).

experience. Accordingly, the *International's* discourse against racism in the South African labour movement was shaped by the language of both militarism and labour, of which trade unionism formed a significant part.

This theory is teased out by a combination of concepts derived from British Cultural Studies⁶ (henceforth culturalism), semiotics,⁷ structuralism and post-structuralism. The structuralist approach is dominant here, with semiotics used as its direct application, and culturalist and post-structuralist concepts serving to balance its excesses. As post-structuralism can be said to be simply 'a fuller working out of the implications of structuralism' (Seldon & Widdowson 1992: 125), I will after this chapter conflate both terms as structuralism.

Structuralism essentially views language as an underlying system (structure) manifested in explicit uses of language. Structures are 'typical ways of assigning meaning' to a topic (Roelofse 1982: 84). That is, any actual speech (*parole*) is a direct manifestation of a finite language system (*langue*).⁸ 'At any given moment there exists a working system, a set of rules from which all "speeches" may be derived' (Seldon & Widdowson 1992: 108). Early excesses

⁶ Cultural studies is an interdisciplinary field which examines texts and their power relations within contexts. The field is founded upon a neo-Marxist conception of culture as a signifying-practice interwoven with all social practices (Hall 1981: 22). While cultural studies assumes that meanings are indivisibly linked to a social structure and its history (Fiske 1987b: 255), it also accords a greater independence of ideology from the economic base than does a 'political economy' approach to culture – which 'insists that the economic processes and structures of cultural production are more significant than their cultural-economic aspect' (Hall 1981: 35).

⁷ Semiotics is a form of structuralism. Both concentrate on the internal rules for the production of meaning in text where its elements find meaning by their difference from each other. But if a distinction is to be made, semiotics studies the systematic forms of text, whereas structuralism focuses more widely on the ways that 'a cultural system produces a set of texts or signs' (Jensen 1991: 24). Semiotics sees language as a sign system in which its components become meaningful by virtue of their differentiation from other elements in the system. Sign-systems can be 'decoded' on the basis of knowledge of culture and the sign-system (Hawkes 1977: 16; Seiter 1992: 50).

⁸ The terms often used in semiotics to denote these structures, and which derive from Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure, are *parole* or 'speech' (surface structure) and *langue* or 'language' (deep structure). The terms distinguish between an utterance (*parole*) and the abstract language system (*langue*) which the utterance always articulates. On this basis a language constructs its formation of words on the basis of its own internal and self-regulating (-sufficient) rules, and not on the basis of an external reality. '*Langue* is the social aspect of language: it is the shared system which we (unconsciously) draw upon as speakers. *Parole* is the individual realisation of the system in actual instances of language' (Seldon & Widdowson 1992: 104). The idealist view of language, which posits reality as transparent in language, is thereby rejected.

of this approach, best associated with Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure, stem from its ahistorical (synchronic) tendency to focus exclusively on the system, and to ignore *parole*. This leads to an inability to explain struggles over meaning and how a structure of meanings (language) might change.

This inability to explain struggle is addressed in later semiotic theory, which attributes change in *langue* to creative (or deviant) uses of language which have become naturalised through recurrent use.⁹ But both views are important to this study. The ahistorical approach serves to explain discourse as a determinate system, while later views help to explain discursive struggle as a creative restructuring of that system.

In other words, where structuralism posits a necessary yet arbitrary connection between signs and meanings (or signifiers and signifieds), post-structuralism focuses on the essential instability between signs and meanings. 'The sign is not so much a unit with two sides as a momentary "fix" between two moving layers' (Seldon & Widdowson 1992: 126). Post-structuralism adds to the structuralist view of discourse as an impersonal language system the notion of a 'speaking subject', and discourse as language-in-use. The ahistoricism of structuralism is thereby widened with the historicism (diachronicism) of social context, which provides a theoretical space in which to see meaning as a contested process.

These schools of thought share a common opposition to any humanistic view of a writer as 'the origin of the text, its creator and progenitor' (Seldon & Widdowson 1992: 120). Instead of writers producing meaning, these schools see meaning as pre-existing them in a language system that 'speaks itself' through the writer. Writers only have the power to reassemble already existing meanings, drawing upon a storehouse of language and culture that subsists in the discourses in which social subjects participate, and which precede them.

⁹ Later developments in semiotics are often associated with French structuralist Roland Barthes. These ideas are covered in Chapter three.

1.5. Towards a theory of discursive struggle

Out of this view, this dissertation explains how the *International's* socialist discourse against racism in South Africa was not invented *ex nihilo*, but was restructured from, and out of an opposition to, meanings which were dominant in the discourses of militarism and labour. Each of these sites of language use (discourses) constituted sets of meanings which these writers contested; not from without, but within each discourse in which they participated and to which they were subject.

The importance of this point lies in its anti-humanist way of seeing the writer as a social subject constituted in discourse, rather than as the creative source of everything he or she writes. Such a view loses sight of the fact that individuals think and act within the parameters of particular discourses. But the determinism of structuralism should not preclude individual creativity. An acceptable theoretical position must therefore account 'for both the determining effect of conventions and the strategic creativity of individuals, without reducing practice to one or the other' (Fairclough 1989: 9-10).

For example, in the discourse of labour during the *International's* time, blacks were represented by whites as inferior, and as naturally suited to unskilled manual labour. These meanings were manifested in the ways by which trade unions sought to keep blacks subordinated in the labour hierarchy. In response, the *International's* writers engaged in a struggle to delegitimise¹⁰ these meanings. This semiotic practice entailed a struggle to shift the signifier 'natives' from its 'inferior' signified in the dominant white discourse, to the signified 'equal' in their own non-dominant discourse. This process is determined in that the parameters of possible articulations are limited to the resources available to them in the systematic language of labour. Creativity is delimited by determination, as Figure 2 illustrates.

¹⁰ Legitimation refers to those processes whereby the possession and exercise of power and authority are mobilised and constructed as 'right' or 'just', guaranteed by its own 'natural' moral superiority, and taken for granted as such. The effectiveness of this process occurs mostly at the level of common sense, when the contingency of historical conditions has become naturalised as the way things 'are in reality', independent of human agency (Thompson 1990: 60, 61-62, 106).

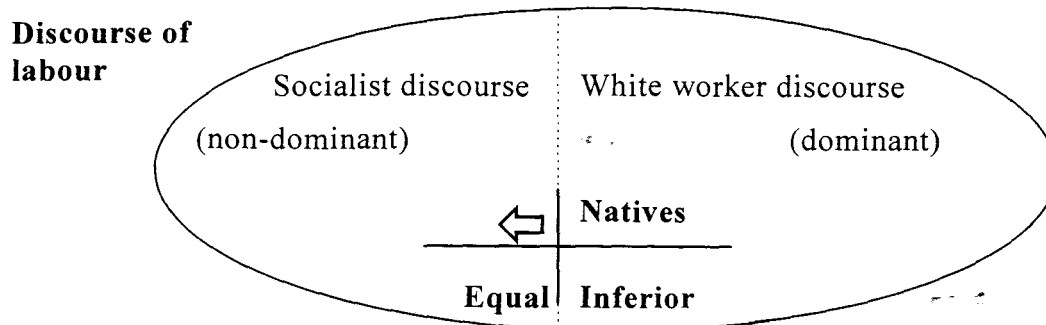


Figure 2

This process indicates that the parameters of creativity are limited to (determined by) the finity of resources available in the discursive realm, that constitutes the underlying structures which determine (limit) the variety of surface structures (texts) possible in any discursive event. Finity means that within a particular discourse there is a limit to what can be said to be true in a way that coheres with the entire (systemic) discourse. For example, the dominant white labour discourse could not include a ('socialist') statement such as 'blacks are equal to whites'.

While this view of social struggle is an anti-humanist one, it avoids seeing struggle as a process separate from individual action. Struggle also depends on social subjects (constituted in discourse) developing a critical consciousness of the language they articulate, as well as the non-discursive conditions (such as state policy and the actual power relations between opposing groups) which form an integral part of their struggles.

1.6. Discourse analysis

Discourse is a complex of text, discursive practice and socio-cultural context. Context can generally be described as the situation to which the communication refers. The text comprises the syntax of its surface forms, and its semantic (discursive) meaning relations. Semantics (in the field of semiotics) aims to explain how texts are meaningful (O'Sullivan *et al.* 1992: 277), or 'the relationship between signs and the objects they refer to' (Renkema 1993: 21). Discursivity means that meaning in a communicative event is culturally-derived in an immediate situation of social action (text production), in a wider formation

of discourse, and at the wider social and historical level (context of production). In other words, discourse is not a property of text, but is those structures brought to the production and interpretation of text. Due to the close correspondence between the semantic and the discursive, I will continue to refer exclusively to the latter. Not least among my reasons for making this option is the greater ability of the discourse concept to explain relations between language and power, and resistance to that power.

Discourse analysis may be defined as the interpretation of the linguistic forms of texts in terms of the social-cultural and historical contexts in which these texts are produced. Context includes the institutionalised sites of language use (discourses) individuals use to make sense of particular topics in ways that are meaningful to both text producers and receivers. However, discourse as an institutionalised use of language also functions as an interface between text (*parole*) and context (*langue*). More specifically, it is at the discursive level that text and context are linked, and at which a cohesion can be detected between their non-discursive forms, as Figure 3 indicates. The complexities of these relations are discussed in Chapters three and four.

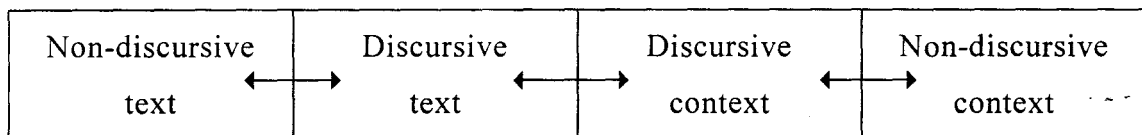


Figure 3

While this entire thesis is an informal qualitative discourse analysis, a more formal procedure will be applied in six instances of text analysis, concerning six different topics. The procedure comprises two phases: textual analysis and contextual analysis. The first consists of a linguistic analysis of specific text fragments. In contextual analysis these findings are interpreted in relation to the discourses and other contexts in which these texts were produced. This procedure is used in this thesis to reveal the deep structures which fashioned the *International's* discourse against racism.

1.7. Outline of dissertation

Following this chapter, **Chapter two** provides a brief description of the conditions under which the *International* was published, including biographical material on its main writers. An indication is also given of trends in the paper's coverage of key topics. The data are provided in a table in Appendix D.

Chapter three provides the theoretical foundation for this dissertation, previewed in Sections 1.4 and 1.5.

The discourse analysis procedure previewed in Section 1.6. is given fuller treatment in **Chapter four**.

Chapter five discusses the three concepts class, race and nation around which the *International's* discourse was structured.

Chapter six examines the foundations of the *International's* struggle against militarism. Here I deal more fully with the ISL's formation, introduced in Section 1.1. and parts of Chapter two.

Chapter seven discusses the *International's* struggle against racism within the ISL. These issues concerned the development of the *International's* policy towards black workers.

Chapter eight examines the *International's* struggle against racism outside the party structures.

Chapter nine aims to reveal the deep structures of the *International's* discourse against militarism. This chapter applies the formal discourse analysis procedure, discussed in Chapter four, to three texts concerning the topics of class, nation and race.

Chapter ten applies the same procedure with the aim of revealing the deep structures of the *International's* discourse of labour. The analysis is applied to three texts concerning the topics of trade unionism, industrial unionism and political action.

Chapter eleven concludes this thesis by evaluating the *International's* discursive struggle, and the value of discourse analysis in media research. This chapter suggests areas for possible further research.

Chapter two

The International

2.1. Introduction

This chapter provides a brief description and history of the *International*. It was a socialist political party newspaper published on the Witwatersrand from 10 September 1915 until 1 January 1926, when it was renamed the *South African Worker*.¹ The chief purpose of the four-page weekly (published every Friday of the year, except over Christmas or New Year, when it ‘had a fortnight’s holiday’ (*International* 21/12/18)² was to propagate the policies of the International Socialist League of South Africa (ISL); but also articulated other voices of the political left in the South African labour movement in general, and in the ISL in particular.

2.1.1. Chapter outline

- Section 2.2. describes how the purpose of the paper was understood by those most closely concerned with its publication.
- Section 2.3. lists the writers who contributed to paper, along with a count of their frequency. This is followed with brief biographies of editors Sydney Percival Bunting (2.3.1.) and David Ivon Jones (2.3.2.).

¹ ‘With this issue the Communist Party (SA) makes important changes in its weekly organ. The *International* was the name chosen at a time when the International Socialist League (SA) stood out in contrast with the jingoistic SALP. When simultaneously it began to stress the need of enlisting all workers in South Africa – irrespective of race or colour in the working-class movement – the title became doubly appropriate, and has served to typify the principles of the Communist Party to this day’ (*South African Worker* 1/1/26).

² The page size of the paper was 28 by 38.5 centimetres, being slightly larger than A3 tabloid. The masthead’s font is Ultra-compressed Helvetica set in 60 point. The copy was laid out in three columns at the most, and occasionally set over one and a half columns. During the latter half of this sample the tendency was to stick to single columns. The headline font was Windsor Elongated, and the body text was set in 12 point Times Roman. The strap beneath the masthead was in a font very similar to Horley Old Style Light and Worcester Round Roman. But the lower-case ‘r’ indicates that it was neither of these. I have not been able to determine which font it was. Among the other features was the use of period markers at the end of the headlines and masthead. These features, and the indentation of introductory paragraphs, were typical newspaper features at the time. A reduced copy of the front page of one edition showing these features is provided in Appendix E.

- Section 2.4. gives an account of financial issues that confronted the ISL's Press Committee, showing that the survival of the paper was never certain.
- Section 2.5. concludes the chapter by refocusing on the aim of the thesis.

2.2. A party newspaper with a political mission

The policy of both the ISL and its paper was initially to 'propagate the principles of International Socialism and anti-Militarism, and to maintain and strengthen International working class organisation' (*International* 1/10/15). To these objects, 'industrial unionism' was added in January 1917 (19/1/17) (see Section 7.2.). This formula was scrapped in January 1919, and the policy became to 'establish the socialist commonwealth' (10/1/19). To this was added a page of principles submitted by the ISL's Benoni branch, and which took up the entire front page of the previous edition (4/10/19).³

The route by which the *International's* small band of writers fashioned the Marxist and international socialist outlook of their paper was largely constrained by the discourses of the reformist and pro-war South African Labour Party from which the ISL emerged in mid-1915. At its inception, apart from opposition to militarism the outlook of the ISL was marginally less reformist than its SALP parent body (Hirson & Williams 1995: 162). '(T)here were no discernible differences over attitudes of segregation, to the organisation of blacks or methods by which socialist objectives should be pursued' (*ibid.*: 148). The developments that did emerge in the ISL can largely be credited to its newspaper, as this thesis (particularly Chapter seven) will show. By late 1916, it began to champion the organisation of black workers as the authentic working class in South Africa (*ibid.*: 150, 159). Socialism had either to acknowledge black workers in the fullest sense, or declare itself bankrupt (*International* 17/3/16).

³ The article (*International* 4/1/19) begins with an exposé of Marxist theory concerning class struggle. The topic shifts towards the place of black workers in the revolution which, begun in Russia, and was expected to spread to South Africa. The mood is optimistic.

This conversion towards black workers was a slow one. It began with an anti-militarist position that appealed to the international unity of all industrial workers. This view functioned as a metaphor for the later appeal for the organisation of all workers, irrespective of skill or race. That is, the international unity of all workers between the nations was the mould in which the industrial unity of all workers within the (South African) nation was cast. According to historians Baruch Hirson and Gwyn Williams (1995), no other newspaper in South Africa articulated this view. 'The urgency of ending the war and the need for a new international, and the need to organise black workers' separated the *International* from all other journals in the region (1995: 150).

The paper's socialist and new-found non-racist voice was a lone one in a hostile political and industrial wilderness. The fact that racist attitudes were common among white workers (socialists among them) renders unlikely the possibility of these writers having articulated a non-racist ideology rooted in white working class culture. The isolation this distinction brought with it contributed in no small measure to the paper's perilous existence. The party it represented was small, and its writers were even fewer.⁴ The working class its writers claimed to represent showed scant respect for its internationalist cause. And to ISL members the paper 'still had to demonstrate that it had something new to say' (Hirson & Williams 1995: 149).

The paper had a small number of correspondents (see 2.3.), and was cash-strapped to the point where its editor, David Ivon Jones (1883-1924), at times had to forego his salary.⁵ But the paper did nothing to improve its popularity. It railed against capitalism and the government; it attacked the sectionalism of white trade unions, and scorned the racial agendas of both African and Afrikaner nationalism. When black labour protests broke out on the Rand

⁴ Eddie Roux says that in 1919 '(t)he total membership could not have been more than a few hundred' (1944: 46).

⁵ Baruch Hirson and Gwyn Williams say '(t)he League had not been able to pay Jones for some time before he left Johannesburg' in March 1918 (1995: 189).

during 1917-18,⁶ the paper responded ambiguously. It hailed the spontaneous action as a vindication of its editorial policy, but also said black workers were not yet organised for strike action.

During its short existence the *International* had taken a stand against the colour bar. From the pens of its main contributors came a string of articles informed by contacts with Africans. Some had been involved in the wave of African working-class action across the Witwatersrand in 1918 and were members of the Industrial Workers of Africa, others were leading members of the Transvaal National Congress who came to ISL meetings. From this followed several interventions in debates on general grievances; the land question, class demands, and so on' (Hirson & Williams 1995: 181).

Insofar as the paper survived, 'much credit must go to ... Jones, who carried the burden of seeing it to the press for the first two years', and Bunting (1873-1936) 'who worked with Jones to alter the perception of socialism in South Africa' (Hirson & Williams 1995: 149). Historian Martin Legassick calls these two British immigrants the 'most "advanced" of the white party activists' (1973: 3). Another significant writer was JM Gibson⁷ (with 102 referenced articles beginning with the 17 November 1916 edition), 'who wrote an ideas column to help in the education of the membership' (Hirson & Williams 1995: 149). But of all those who had a hand in producing the paper:

(t)he demands of the writers were immense and Jones ... had little time for rehearsing ideas before committing them to print. In a period of rapidly changing events speedy changes in copy for the printer was needed. Besides major stories (and these were presumably edited), there were lead articles and the selection of documents and fillers to complete each issue.

⁶ The social turbulence of the 1910s generally comprised of two movements: white workers opposed to replacement by blacks, and of black workers objecting primarily to an escalating cost of living. While the *International* certainly commented extensively on these movements, and offered guidance towards its own socialist agenda, it was not organically linked to either movement. Some ISL members were involved in debates and public meetings held by the SANNC during 1917-1918. But comment on these activities found in the *International* was generally critical of white workers, critical of the bourgeois leadership of the SANNC, but full of praise for what Bunting considered to be the somewhat misguided spontaneity of emerging resistance among black workers. These ISL members also had formative links with the short-lived Industrial Workers of Africa (IWA) during this period. However, the IWA was never a mass movement.

⁷ I have been unable to determine more about JM Gibson's background apart from ascertaining that he was an original member of the ISL's Press Committee and a prolific writer in the *International*. RK Cope says he was a leader in the Building Workers' Union, which attempted to amalgamate the various craft unions in the building trade and, failing to do so, launched the Building Workers' Industrial Union in 1917 (1943: 186).

Precisely who assisted in the many tasks required for the production of a weekly is uncertain (*ibid.*: 148-149).

The *International's* writers regularly criticised the commercial press for reporting events in such a way as to support what they perceived as capitalist class interests. A socialist living in Umkomaas on the Natal South Coast, LD Goodenough, wrote: 'We often complain of the way the capitalist press distort, suppress or invent news in the interest of the capitalist class.' He called for a socialist news agency to correct this imbalance (2/2/17).⁸

In one of his weekly articles, JM Gibson wrote 'no issues are allowed publicity in the capitalist press except the issues which capital wants to raise. That is a safe enough axiom for socialists to go on' (5/10/17). Of the leader articles in the commercial papers, Gibson said

these were 'the most effective weapon in the insidious armoury at their disposal to keep the workers ignorant of their status as slaves, dependent on the class in control of economic forces. It is continually trotting out the

⁸ On another occasion, the *Sunday Times* reported on an ISL meeting due to take place that on the 'evening' of 5 August 1917. In fact, two meetings were planned for that day. A conference concerning a peace conference due to be held in Stockholm was held from 10.00am to 6.00pm in the Trades Hall in Rissik Street. The meeting was to formally nominate ISL chairman Bill Andrews to attend the conference. The ISL barred the press from this meeting, but issued a press statement afterwards. The *Sunday Times* report, under the headline, 'Puerile pacifists', referred to the ISL as that 'august body which held Sunday evening meetings on the Town Hall steps until the citizens took the law into their own hands and severely mauled several of the comrades' (*Sunday Times* 5/8/17). ISL meetings had in fact been held more regularly before that time, and had indeed attracted what the *International* called 'capitalist-inspired hooliganism'.

The *Star's* reporter appears to have received the ISL press statement, but passed what the *International* considered to be negative comments on its contents, questioning in stinging fashion the ISL objection to the war effort (*Star* 6/8/17). The *Rand Daily Mail* (6/8/17) confused this conference with the second meeting which was to be held at Town Hall immediately afterwards. The *Mail* reported that 'the conference' had been abortive, 'although at six o'clock on Sunday they were ringing up League members to get a report of the conference' (*International* 10/8/17). The Town Hall public meeting was broken up by 'citizens in khaki'. The *International* attributed this melee to incitement by the *Sunday Times*. Bunting warned that 'the *Sunday Times* gutter journalism 'will one day recoil' on itself. 'We still believe that journalism, even capitalist journalism, can be conducted in a gentlemanly manner. The public must see through this forced sneer of the *Mail* people. The *Star* can hit hard, and it is welcome to. But it reported the conference minus the sneer (that the conference was abortive), and made no appeal to the hooligans' (*International* 10/8/17. Brackets inserted).

The *International* also complained about the 'biased' way the commercial papers reported on the 'propaganda' tour of Natal and the Free State in January 1918 by the African Political Organisation's (APO) Transvaal leader, Talbot Williams. These papers, the *International* claimed, gave 'lengthy reports of his purely pro-colour agitation,' but ignored what he had said about the class struggle (8/2/18).

jargon of prejudice, cant and twaddle calculated to dope the egoism of the workers... (fanning) the flame of prejudice, nationally and sectionally within the community' (4/1/19. Insert in brackets).

From the *International's* point of view, the commercial press was just an instrument of capitalism. 'Capital sets in motion the press, to keep alive colour prejudice to prevent white and black workers combining,' one writer complained (12/10/17).

At the ISL's First Annual Conference in January 1916, the Press Committee noted that some readers had complained about the 'lack of humorous articles' in the *International*. 'We take a serious view of our mission,' Jones replied in the next issue. 'We have no desire to issue a "Tit-bits" journal' (14/1/16). He pointed out that the ISL was 'a young movement' that had 'not yet produced its practised writers' (26/11/15), yet had to stay with local writers to give the paper 'a local taste while preaching universal principles'. He said this debarred the paper 'from the easier if more entertaining journalism of the scissors and paste' (14/1/16).

For Jones the policy of the paper had to adhere to the revolutionary character of the international socialism, treading an editorial line somewhere between being 'rebellious but negative' and 'revolutionary but academic' (26/11/15). He realised this task was a precarious one, leading either to the ISL being seen as a 'sect of peculiar people', or heralding the 'consummation of a revolutionary party palpitating with the issues of the working class struggle' (*ibid.*). However, whatever doubts he may have had, '(o)ccasional attacks on the paper in the capitalist papers, notably the *Star*, seem to indicate that the *International* is on the right lines' (14/1/16).

2.3. Writers and activists

It seems possible to attribute the *International's* easy adherence to international socialist discourse, which its writers endeavoured to thereafter apply to local experience, to their being mostly immigrants – bringing socialism to their adopted country, as it were. The two most prominent figures associated with the fortunes of the *International* were alternate editors Jones and Bunting. Among

the other contributors were ISL chairman Bill Andrews⁹ (with 14 articles published during this period); SG Rich, a Durban school teacher and United States socialist (14 articles), Cape Town socialist and Industrial Socialist League member Wilfred Harrison (13) and his compatriot, Manuel Lopes (10).

Of Johannesburg socialist and Irish immigrant John Campbell (7), Jones wrote: 'A gnarled exterior hides in him one of the most brilliant minds. His knowledge of socialism and general literature has not been exhausted by anyone in South Africa. A Marxian to the core, he has the key of interpretation to all events present and past' (21/1/16). Other contributors¹⁰ were ISL Management Committee members: CB Tyler (4), Sam Barlin (2) and the Jewish-speaking branch's S Buirski (2), former Socialist Labour Party¹¹ member Andrew Dunbar (2), and Australian immigrant and founding ISL member James Forrester Brown (1).¹²

⁹ Born into a working class family in Suffolk, England, William (Bill) Henry Andrews (1870-1950), emigrated to South Africa in 1893. He worked as a fitter on the Transvaal Railways, and helped form the first Trades and Labour Council in 1902. In 1909 he became the first chairman of the South African Labour Party. He became the chairman of the ISL when he, Bunting, Jones and others left the SALP over the war issue (Simons 1983: 42).

¹⁰ A number of other socialists contributed to the *International*. From Durban there Harry Haynes (4), who in January 1920 was the leader of the Durban municipal Soviet (Simons 1983: 229). Gordon Lee was a member of the Industrial Workers of the World in Durban (3). Another Durbanite was Richard J. Hall (1). Others are known ISL members: TP Tinker, the ISL secretary during Jones's absence (2), Robert Barnet (1) and his wife C Barnet, who was the secretary in 1916 of the ISL's Johannesburg Women's Entertainment Committee (1); James Clark (1), EH Becker (1), HC Hanscomb, on trial with Bunting in 1918 (1), WJC Gibson (4) (possibly a relative of JM Gibson), S Ward (3), CB Tyler (4), and TC Davies of the ISL's Benoni branch (1). Two correspondents were Alfred F Symons was a socialist in Oudtshoorn (1), and Isaac Vermont, of the Social Democratic Federation in Cape Town (1). The acronym 'Cincinnatus' (1) was David Ivon Jones (Hirson & Williams 1995: 187). I suspect the enigmatic 'Sen Yah' (10) as well as 'Beronia' (10), who also might have been Jones. Others whom I have also been unable to identify were Dora B Montefiore (1), Julian (2), 'Brigham' (4), and A Warsauer (1). I think DNS was Durban socialist Dan Simons (4). The initials I have been unable to determine are: FJN (1), MHF (1), TCD (1), CB (2), RJH (1), LM (1), ABD (1), ES (2), and FET (1).

¹¹ The influence of the Socialist Labour Party is discussed in Section 7.2.

¹² A former miner in Australia, he succeeded Tom Matthews as general secretary of the Miners' Union in 1915. Forrester Brown had often in the past urged white miners to accept coloured miners as their equals, and to organise African miners. Jones wrote of him in 1915: 'An international socialist in outlook as well as by profession, he realises the needs of the coming time in South African industrial organisation perhaps more keenly than any other trade union leader. He has already raised his voice on behalf of the organisation of the native, and the necessity of making the Kaffir a free labourer before any further advance can be made in working class emancipation' (*International* 17/1/15).

2.3.1. Sydney Percival Bunting

Sydney Percival Bunting was born into a middle class family in London in 1873. He was the great grandson of Wesleyan leader Jabez Bunting, who features in historian EP Thompson's *History of the English Working Class* (1984: 387-391). An Oxford graduate, SP Bunting came to South Africa as a lieutenant in the British army in 1900. He remained in South Africa after the war, took a law degree, and set up a practice in Johannesburg.

In 1910 he became sympathetic with the views of the Labour Party, and joined the party in September that year. In March 1914 he was elected to the Transvaal Provincial Council on its ticket. The former Transvaal Commissioner of Mines, Wilfred Wyberg, and former mine engineer Frederick Creswell, were his friends. These two were to become arch-foes of the ISL in 1915. But Bunting supported Creswell in the 1910 parliamentary elections. He came to share both these men's belief in the advancement and protection of jobs for white workers (white labour policy) (see Appendix F).¹³ Bunting helped found the colonial White Expansion Society in 1909, became the secretary on its Witwatersrand District Committee, and was elected to its national executive in 1912. He managed the SALP newspaper, the *Worker*, in 1912 and sat on its editorial board (Gerhardt & Karis 1987: 13; Roux 1944: 16-17; Simons 1983: 142-143, 166-167, 172).

After assisting veteran trade unionist Charles Mussared to raise funds for the Tonypandy strikers in Wales, Bunting began to shift towards socialist thinking. This shift was spurred on by Bunting's shock at the state's response to the 1913 strike on the Rand. Sparked off by a minor incident at the New Kleinfontein Mine in May that year, the strike indicated how deep-seated white worker grievances were at the time (Cope 1943: 135, 142-143; Davenport 1987: 263, 268; Katz 1976: 103; Roux 1944: 16-17; Simons 1983: 156).¹⁴ The

¹³ Bunting was initially opposed to the white labour policy, but came out in favour of it in 1908 – persuaded in this direction by members of an Australian cricket team sailing home after a tour of England. A white labour policy was firmly established in Australia at that time.

¹⁴ The new manager at the New Kleinfontein Mine in May 1913 instructed five white mechanics employed underground to work an extra three hours on Saturdays. The mechanics objected, and were dismissed. The incident led to a strike for the recognition of the Transvaal

incident that jolted Bunting most was when troops gunned down strikers outside the Rand Club (see Appendix G). He published his sympathy for the strikers in the *Worker* on 10 July 1913. He conceded that the burning down of the Johannesburg railway station was an act of 'ill-directed hooliganism', but approved of the *Star* newspaper offices being torched by strikers because it took sides with the mining houses during the strike. 'And so ended the first act of South Africa's working class revolution, whose end is not yet,' he wrote. He cancelled his membership of the Rand Club (Cope 1943: 135; Roux 1944: 18-19; Simons 1983: 157-158; Walker & Weinbren 1961: 144-154).

Although Bunting had shifted his sentiments towards the working class, his attitude to black workers remained unchanged. When he stood for the Bezuidenhout seat in the 1914 Provincial Council elections, his 3000 word election manifesto set out a case for the SALP's white labour policy. He declared that the party would do away with class distinction and reconstruct society into a 'white man's heaven' (Simons 1983: 173; Roux 1944: 19-21).¹⁵ While he was on the Council, it secured the provision of free secondary school education for white children in the province; denied the municipal franchise to coloureds and blacks; outlawed coloured learning trades at school; and banned blacks from using the trams (Simons 1983: 173-174).

At this stage, however, Bunting also began to realise the labour movement represented only white (particularly English-speaking) workers. He had already developed an interest in Afrikaner workers and impoverished tenant farmers (bywoners). This was a significant step considering that 'racism' was

Federation of Trades as a legitimate negotiating body for the labour movement, for an eight-hour day, and the reinstatement of the dismissed mechanics. By the end of June, 18 000 miners on 63 mines were on strike. The strikers urged Africans to down tools, which they did in July. But the state acted quickly against these African strikers, who were driven underground at rifle point with white workers in support. In court the black strikers said they struck under duress. But they were convicted anyway for 'obeying the white men'. The white strikers were never prosecuted.

¹⁵ The 1914 Provincial Council elections showed public hostility towards the Riotous Assemblies and Criminal Law Amendment Bill pushed through parliament after the failed general strike of that year. The Bills were seen as a direct attack on trade unions, and a measure to subjugate white labour. Of the SALP's 25 Transvaal Provincial Council candidates, 23 were returned. However, failing to gain control of the executive, the SALP councillors could not fully implement their white labour policies.

undertstood at the time more as a national than as a colour question. Of black workers, however, he did warn that they would soon organise, but did not indicate if this would be with or without white workers. He held the party view that Africans were better suited to agriculture in the reserves than to industry in the cities (Simons 1983: 173; Roux 1944: 19-21).

Bunting evidently believed in the cause of white labour no less than the average SALP member, and may have remained so had war not broken out in 1914. Following his expulsion from the party Executive over his opposition to militarism, he grew to become the main force by which the ISL came to show increasing interest in black workers.

2.3.2. David Ivon Jones

David Ivon Jones, born in Aberystwyth, Wales, in 1883, came to South Africa in November 1910. In 1907, he had first emigrated to New Zealand where he hoped to find a cure for his tuberculosis. From there he moved to South Africa, where he began working for two of his brothers living in the Orange Free State. From there he moved to a third brother living on the Witwatersrand in June 1911, where he worked as a bookkeeper for the Transvaal Victoria Falls Power Company. That year he joined the SALP, accepted its segregationist outlook, and became its general secretary in 1914, the year he was elected to the Transvaal Provincial Council.

Jones was of the Unitarian Christian denomination, and he threaded Biblical metaphor into his journalism. His political outlook had initially been a mix of Welsh nationalism, Tolstoyianism and admiration of Boer resistance against Britain (1899-1902). And, like Bunting, he may have remained little more than an exemplary SALP member had the 1913 strike and the war not occurred. 'The outbreak of the war saved him from the fate of a successful liberal-labour man, enmeshed in white politics and aloof of the aspirations of the black majority' (Simons 1986: 40).

Along with the left wing in the SALP, he 'denounced the government's pro-war policy' in 1915, broke away with the ISL, and became its first secretary-editor, 'responsible for producing the *International*, a weekly paper of high

repute among radical socialists' (Simons 1986: 40). The immediate conditions of the war and the white labour movement absorbed his attention, as it did all ISL members. But he also came to an early awareness of the place of black workers in the labour movement. Along with Bunting, he committed himself to campaigning against racial discrimination in the labour movement (*ibid.*: 41).

As secretary, organiser and editor, Jones played a pivotal role in the fortunes of the ISL. 'He chaired the most important meetings or spoke from the platform, organised support for League candidates at election for Parliament and for provincial and municipal councils, maintained contacts in Europe and ensured that the *International* appeared regularly' (Hirson & Williams 1995: 155).

Many of the articles were written by Jones... Many of the articles were unsigned and, although Jones's style can be traced, it is not certain whether they represented his own ideas, or whether he drafted collective articles (Hirson & Williams 1995: 148-149).

Jones's achievements were all the more remarkable given his failing health. And that the *International* continued to be published uninterrupted (bar once) is testimony to other ISL members, especially Bunting.¹⁶ Jones's first absence due to ill-health was when he accompanied Bunting on a 'much needed' holiday in Cape Town in February 1916 (Hirson & Williams 1995: 155). But the paper appeared in their absence. Jones fell ill again in August, and left for a Zululand sugar farm 'owned by a fellow socialist', who could possibly have been Andrews (Hirson & Williams 1995: 158; *International* 22/8/16).¹⁷ This was at a crucial time in the paper's development, when the party began to make black workers 'the target of its organisation activities.... This became Jones's priority when he returned to the Witwatersrand' (Hirson & Williams 1995: 159).

¹⁶ My database of the first four volumes of the *International* shows that, apart from the week of New Year, the paper only failed to appear once: No. 90, which should have appeared on 22 June 1917. It appeared on 29 June instead, when it explained that Jones had overtaxed himself assisting Andrews in his Benoni election campaign.

¹⁷ Following an article Andrews wrote in Zululand in 1917, concerning the futility of resisting the proletarianisation of Africans, whom he said possibly had to 'go through the industrial machine before anything can be done with him', Bunting remarked that it was not clear if Andrews said this 'as a Marxist or as a farmer seeking labour' (*International* 15/12/16).

Jones fell ill again in November 1916 after standing as a candidate in the Benoni municipal elections. In Ward 2 he polled 387 votes, 'being an advance of 106 votes over the combined vote of Bunting and Jones in this ward last year' (*International* 27/10/16). Jones is not mentioned in a second article on the elections on page 4. But on the front page of the next issue, readers were told of Jones's absence.

The editorial touch which readers of the *International* have learnt each week to expect will be missed in this issue, for our Editor and Secretary, overwrought, by the strain of being a Municipal candidate and election agent as well, is confined to his bed by what we hope and believe is purely a passing indisposition (3/11/16).

It was not. He was granted leave until the end of the year, 'recuperating with friends near town' (17/11/16). Three weeks later he left to visit Andrews on his Zululand farm and was seen off at Park Station 'by a number of comrades who heartily wished him every possible benefit for the change' (1/12/16). He returned on 13 January 1917 (12/1/17).

Jones overtaxed himself again after assisting Andrews in a Benoni provincial council election campaign, and was sick for five weeks (9/6/17). By February 1918 he was exhausted, and 'was released as editor only after he had completed the edition of 1 March' (Hirson & Williams 1995: 180). Bunting took over as editor and TP Tinker as ISL secretary. The new incumbants must have come to appreciate Jones's efforts. 'All comrades who are ready to give regular help at the office in the work of publishing the *International* ... please notify Comrade Tinker.... Volunteers urgently needed for this job' (1/3/18).

Jones meanwhile had left for Durban where he linked up with Pietermaritzburg socialist Laurie (LHH) Green, with whom he helped revive Durban's dormant ISL branch, attracting one Coloured and two Indian workers (22/3/18).¹⁸ They met at SM Petterson's Point Road shop before securing a meeting place at St George's Hall in Smith Street (15/3/18).

¹⁸ The claim by Hirson and Williams (1995: 188) that 'several Coloured and Indian comrades had met' with the Durban ISL is an overstatement according to a report in the *International* (22/3/18). But the *International's* brief report contains either an interesting misprint or a metaphor: 'All beginnings are difficult, and we don't expect quick harvests. But the fields are white. It is only the labourers who are few'.

Apart from sickness, Jones at this time was also broke. Petterson employed him at 20 pounds a month from April, to manage a team of workers in Linga Linga in Mozambique to dismantle heavy machinery to be dispatched to the Grindrod Whaling Company in Durban (Hirson & Williams 1995: 189). Jones contracted malaria during his first month there, but stayed until January 1919 when he left to attend the ISL's Annual Conference in Johannesburg. He 'arrived just after the whole thing was over' (*International* 10/1/19). But he was also too ill to resume his post as secretary-editor, and left to convalesce at Pietermaritzburg's Sweetwaters Sanatorium.

The Bolshevik revolution in Russia was at its height at the time, and Jones is accredited for having been the first in the ISL to understand its significance (Bunting 1983: 56). As editor of the *International*, he had provided East European immigrants on the Rand with news of the revolution absent in the commercial press (Gerhardt 1987: 43; Roux 1944: 48-49; Roux 1978: 134; Simons 1983: 40). Now in the sanatorium, he (and Green) penned a pamphlet, 'The Bolsheviks are Coming'. Both were arrested for distributing the pamphlet, and were tried and convicted for incitement to public violence. Jones was evicted from the sanatorium.

Even when absent from Johannesburg, Jones kept in regular correspondence with the newspaper. In a filler he wrote: 'We have just been told for the first time that Greek mercenaries are fighting the Bolsheviks in the Ukraine' (*International* 4/4/19). In the next issue a Greek immigrant, later identified as 'Comrade Macrides', was said to have taken exception to a comment Jones made about the ancient Greeks. Macrides demanded 'to fight a duel with the writer if he does not apologise' (11/4/19). Jones did apologise after learning that Greece was in a state of conscription, and that Greek regiments were being withdrawn from the Ukraine. Jones represented the African continent at the Communist International in Moscow in 1921. He stayed on to do translation work, but died there in 1924.

2.4. The business of running the *International*

When the *International* reached its one hundredth issue, acting-editor Bunting declared the paper's two year's uninterrupted run as the longest achieved by any labour paper in South Africa. 'This is the only working class paper in South Africa' (7/9/17). He denied the South African Native National Congress mouthpiece, *Abanto Batho*, publishing at the same time, was a proletarian newspaper. Instead, it was middle class and 'pro-black' (*International* 26/1/17). In comparison, the *International* appealed to 'the actual wage-earner, bringing him a message of good hope and faith. And we feel prouder to think that it is the wage-earner, black as well as white, who reads its pages with the greatest avidity' (13/4/17).

Bunting, and Jones before him, attributed the survival of the *International* to the strength of the ISL. Bunting said the *International's* achievement was symptomatic of the 'unquestioned' position the ISL enjoyed as a 'political party of the revolutionary working class of South Africa' (26/1/17). Only the ISL had 'the energy to keep afloat a paper of the working class' (7/9/17). He said 'few South African weeklies can boast' the circulation enjoyed by the *International*. He probably meant the actual readership, when he said 'every copy goes out among the workers, and every copy is read by two or three' (*ibid.*).

2.4.1. Subscribers

Of particular interest here was getting the *International* into workshops and factories. 'The experience of comrades is that in every workshop there are a few, generally the best workmen too, who will read the *International* with interest and finally embrace its principles. Don't let the tinder of working class revolution lie about you dormant and not apply the spark of education to it' (18/1/18). Bunting had written earlier that he wished helpers would move beyond merely reading and distributing the paper, to organising and agitating as well (2/2/17).

The paper also aimed to keep socialists in other centres around the country in touch with the League. 'With these comrades our paper furnishes a common

meeting ground' (7/9/17). Part of the League's 'educate and organise' programme was to sell the paper at its open-air meetings where, in Jones's opinion, it was well received.¹⁹ 'The crowd, while calling it a rag, are commencing to look forward to the reading of it' (10/12/15). To this end the paper published an appeal for more people to assist 'the few devoted comrades in the various centres' in distributing it, and to send names and addresses of prospective 'class conscious' subscribers so that issues could be posted to them (2/2/17).

In November 1915 the number of subscribers was given as 'about 450' (19/11/15). But by 1917 this number had dropped to an undisclosed level. In January 1918 Bunting advised subscribers to pass on their copies to friends, getting them to subscribe. 'We will do the rest,' he said (18/1/18). Circulation improved by December 1918, when he wrote that '(o)ur circulation has been increasing very rapidly.... By every post we receive from all parts enquiries for literature or subscriptions to this paper' (21/12/18). It was interest in the Russian Revolution that swelled circulation. By April 1919 circulation and subscriptions had 'doubled in the last six months' (11/4/19).

Apart from the 450-odd subscribers mentioned in 1915, no total circulation figures are given in any other issue of the *International*. But a few clues do give a reasonable estimate. Jones put the cost of publishing the paper, running the League's office, and paying his salary as secretary in 1917 at between 65 and 70 pounds a month (9/11/17). Bunting complained that the one penny selling price of the paper did not cover the monthly printing costs of about 'two and a half pennies' per copy (13/9/18). Ten months earlier, readers were told that a good month brought in 20 pounds from subscriptions and sales

¹⁹ The *International* was also sold at other parties' meetings. At an election meeting in Boksburg, an SALP Provincial Councillor, A Ruffles, described the paper on sale at his meeting as a 'dirty little rag of the international socialists'. An ISL member objected at the time, and posed a question. Ruffles shouted that 'what right had a man like that, a foreigner, a war on war international socialist, who ruined the Labour Party, and who sold dirty literature, and had never done a day's work in his life, to ask a question'. Ruffles then sat down. The chairman of the meeting urged the audience to 'stop these socialists from selling their dirty literature in Boksburg north'. The editor reported that from then on the *International* sold briskly at the meeting (*International* 15/9/16).

(9/11/17). Before that, in a defence for not publishing abusive letters, Bunting said the paper cost 30 shillings per column to print. 'We want that column to be productive,' he said (21/9/17).

Twelve columns puts the printings costs at 18 pounds an issue. That would leave a mere two pounds profit in a good month. The 18 pounds printing costs at two and a half pence per copy gives 1728 copies a week in 1917. If each copy was read by three people, as Bunting claimed (7/9/17), the actual readership would be 5184 which, at 17.3 per cent of the 30000 white workers registered on the Rand in 1918 (Simons 1984: 220), is a good circulation considering the ISL's political isolation. I do suspect, however, that the true number printed was a round figure – probably 2000 copies.

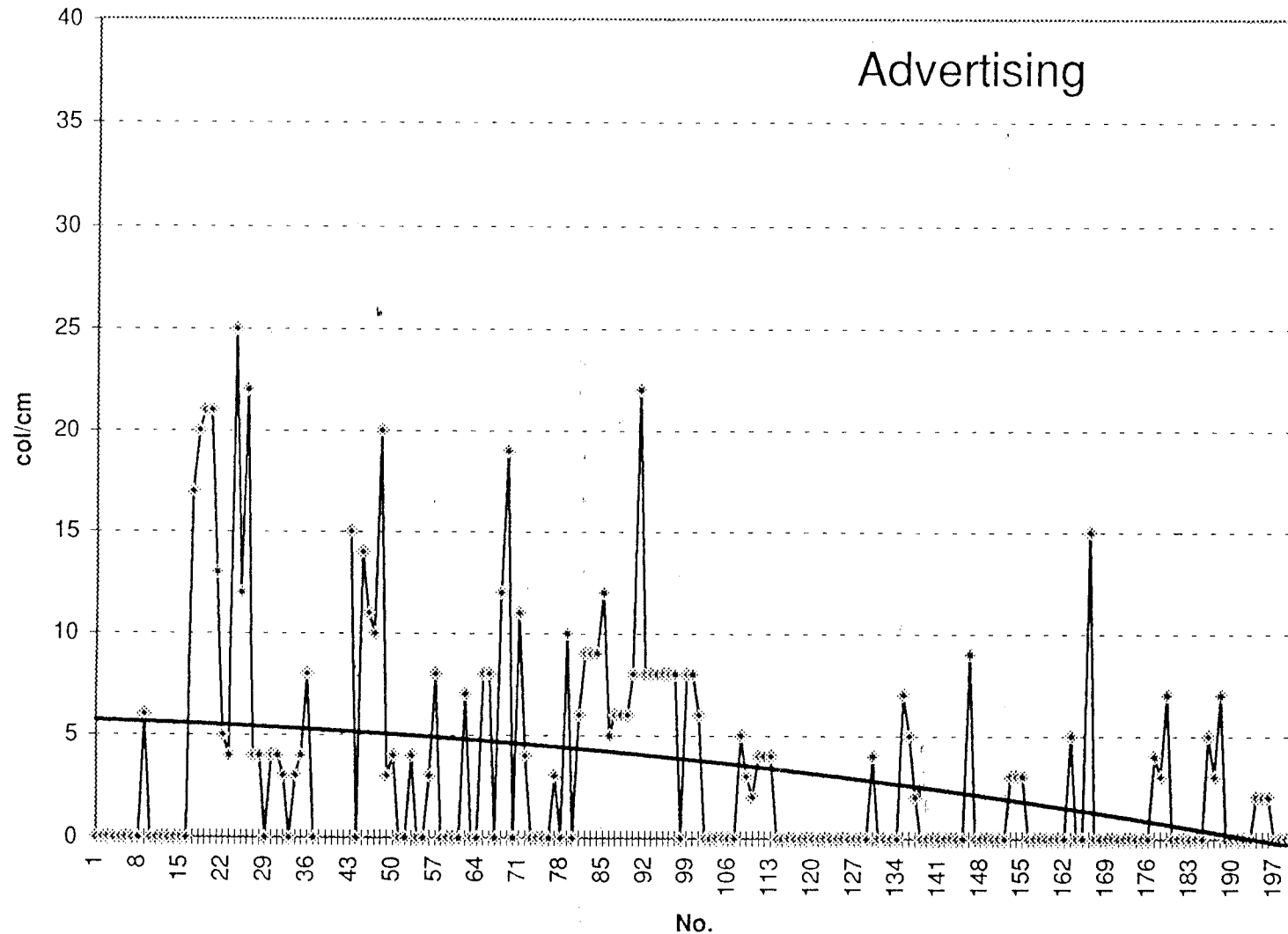
2.4.2. Advertising

When Bunting stepped in as acting-editor for a short time in June 1917 (when Jones was sent to recuperate after over-exerting himself during Andrews' election campaign) he suggested advertisers might consider using the *International* for business purposes. He added that the paper would not alter its editorial policy to favour advertisers, whom he invited 'in their own interests to boost their wares before our public, who will be found not bad customers at all' (29/6/17).²⁰

The *International* carried very little advertising, and consisted almost wholly in the form of legal notices (see Graph 1 on advertising content). Bunting placed the first advert (5/11/15) seven weeks after the paper was launched. Thereafter he placed a further 14 by 1919. One was for a 'small house' which was 'preferably furnished' (30/5/19). But the main advertiser was ISL member and solicitor Charles Clingman, who placed 47 adverts (14/1/16 to

²⁰ There were 78 advertisements placed (5/11/15 to 29/6/17) up until the time Bunting appealed for advertising, and 32 placed after that time until the last advert placed on 8 August 1919. As Bunting's appeal came in the 90th number, the average rate of advertising until that time was 0.86 advertisements per edition. The last edition (in the fourth volume) was number 200. With 32 advertisements appearing in 110 editions, the average rate fell to 0.29 advertisements per edition. Advertising was not mentioned among the sources paying for printing costs. It is not hard to see why. Among the ISL's advertisements is one for 'handsome reproductions of Karl Marx ... 18 in x 16 in', selling for £1 apiece. 'Should be in every Socialist home' (9/4/17).

Graph 1



GRAPH 1: The trendline shows a steady decrease in advertising (see column K in Appendix D) over a four year period. Following Bunting's plea for advertising in issue No. 90 (29/6/17), No. 91 recorded the next highest count, 22 col/cm, matched only by the same count in No. 26, which was 3 col/cm lower than the 25col/cm recorded two issues before that. Before Bunting's plea, 48 issues (450 col/cm) carried some advertising. Afterwards, this fell to 35 issues (205 col/cm) over a similar period. The average (excluding issues which carried no advertising) in the first period was 9.4 col/cm. And in the second period, 5.9 col/cm.

26/4/18). Others who placed notices were L. Yatt (3), James Forrester Brown (2), R Skinner (2), H Glass (5) and Jacob Neppe (3).²¹ A firm called 'XYZ' advertised for a 'qualified dental mechanic ... at standard pay' (22/9/16). An advert in Yiddish appeared once (24/8/17):

Those advertising goods and services were Durban socialists SM Pettersen, and a Johannesburg bookseller, J Bacharach, who placed 15 adverts. Pettersen advertised oilskins (4/2/16) and 500 pairs of slippers at half a guinea a pair: 'A good pair of slippers adds immensely to one's pleasure at the end of a day's work' (11/2/16). The same number of slippers were advertised again the following month (3/3/16), as well as 'suits and overcoats' (17/3/16). He did not advertise in the *International* again, but a notice in 1918 offering him and his wife condolences for the death of their son (1/11/18) indicates he had not fallen out of favour with the ISL. Earlier that year he had been among three Durban delegates to the ISL's 1918 Annual Conference (11/1/18). But in the 1920s he became a National Party senator (Hirson & Williams 1995: 262).

2.4.3. Fighting for survival

The main cause of the paper's financial woes does not appear to have been a lack of advertising, which was never substantial, but a five shillings a year drop in contributions and subscriptions. A significant reason for this decline in revenue was that many benefactors and subscribers who had been willing to support a temporary cause against militarism, were less enthusiastic about a long-term commitment against racism. This shift had become more pronounced by early 1917.

Due to financial concerns, the Press Committee suggested at the Annual Conference in January 1917 that the *International* be turned into a monthly. The Committee also thought the paper would not survive unless its policy was

²¹ There is no other mention of L Yatt or R Skinner in the literature concerning this period. H Glass may have been a relative of the better-known Frank Glass, who was a founding member of the ISL, as was attorney James Forrester Brown. Jacob Neppe's premises were used for ISL activities. His notice concerns a change in trading premises.

altered to suit its donors²² – sticking to war rather than branching into race issues (see Graphs 2, 3 and 4 below on militarism and race).

But those more closely responsible for its editorial and publication realised early that, as an exponent of working class opposition to war, the *International* could not remain there, except by a not very edifying tightrope performance. They realised it had to dig right down into the very depths of the revolutionary class struggle.... And it is for this uncompromising working class defiance of capitalism in war and peace, and the implications of that international working class unity right here in South Africa that our little paper has worked, and fought, and educated and agitated (26/1/17).

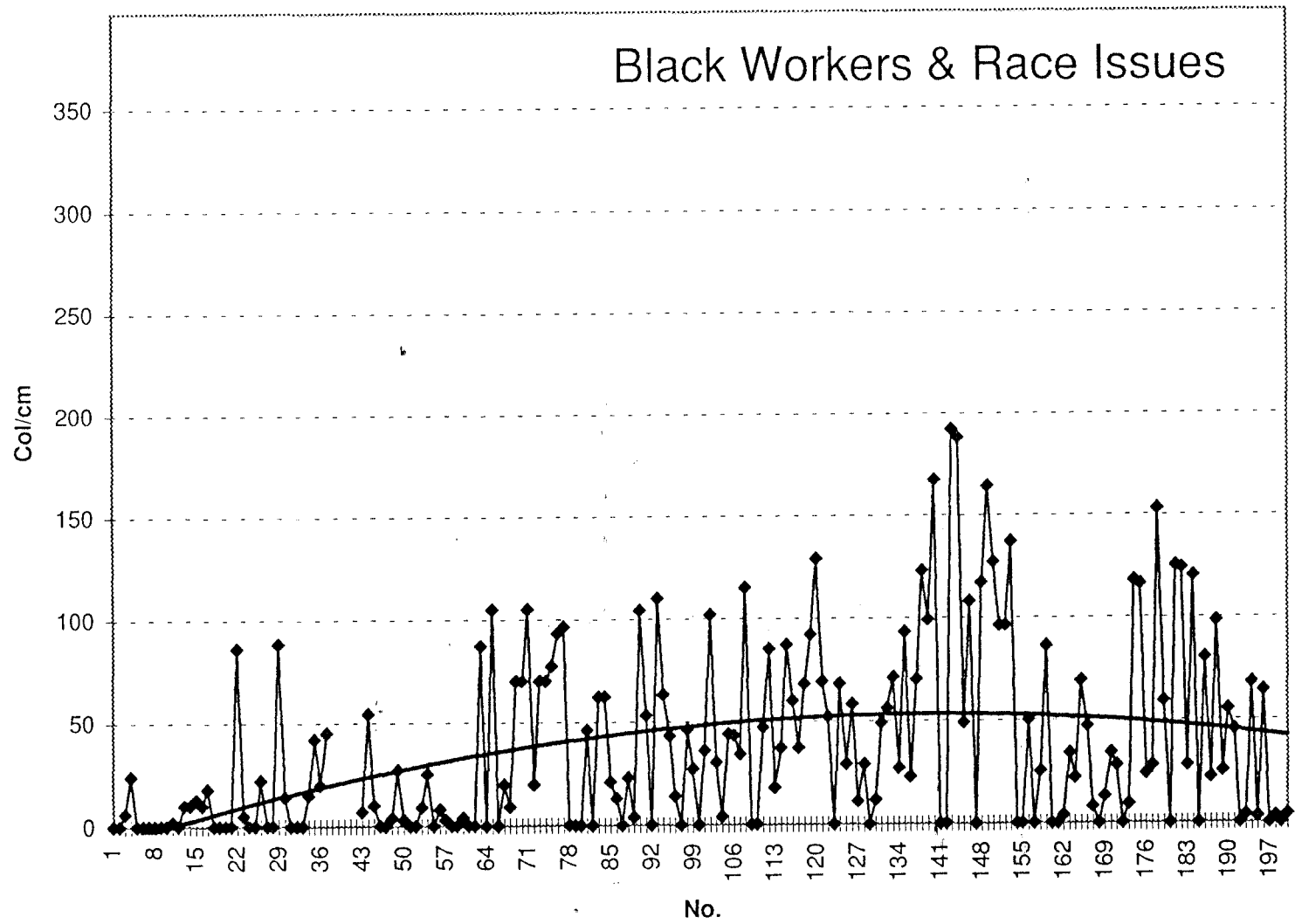
Both suggestions were turned down. ‘There was an all but unanimous desire evident to carry on the paper in the coming year with unabated vigour’ (19/1/17). But owing to the important place the newspaper played in the ISL’s programme, and the threat finances posed to the continuance of the paper, the conference decided to make both the Press and the Finance Committees sub-committees of the ISL’s Management Committee (*ibid.*).

The committee appealed for any contributions from ISL sympathisers. ‘Every shilling counts,’ Bunting wrote, adding that none of the staff was remunerated, except the secretary, who received a small but unspecified stipend. As for subscribers, Bunting said they were getting ‘more than their money’s worth’ (29/6/17). And as the Press Committee thought it inadvisable in June 1917 to raise the one penny selling price, Bunting appealed through the *International* to ISL members and sympathisers to ‘decide at once’, if they had not already done so, ‘to join the little band of regular donors’ (*ibid.*).

2.4.4. Optimism

The *International* opened its fourth volume in September 1918 with a record subscribers’ list. But the paper also had a ‘record debt’ of ‘75 pounds, seven shillings and fourpence, increasing at a rate of five pounds a week’ (13/9/18). While admitting that most socialist papers ran at a loss, the Press Committee

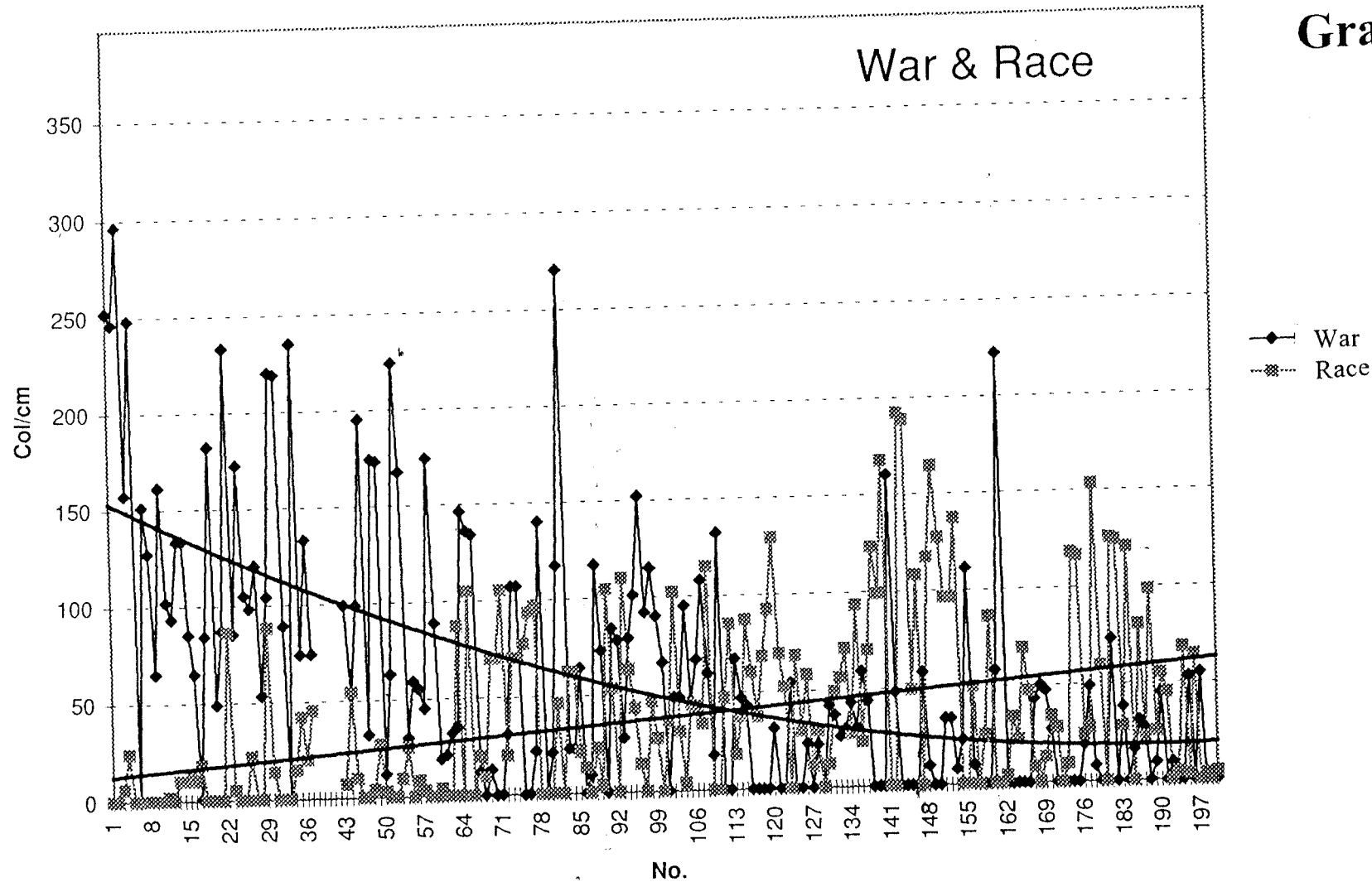
²² No list of donors is provided in any of my sources. But the note that Bunting went from door to door with a list of previous supporters indicates that there was no significant single financial benefactor, but a changing list of individual donors who gave whatever they could to the ISL’s cause (Roux 1944: 46).



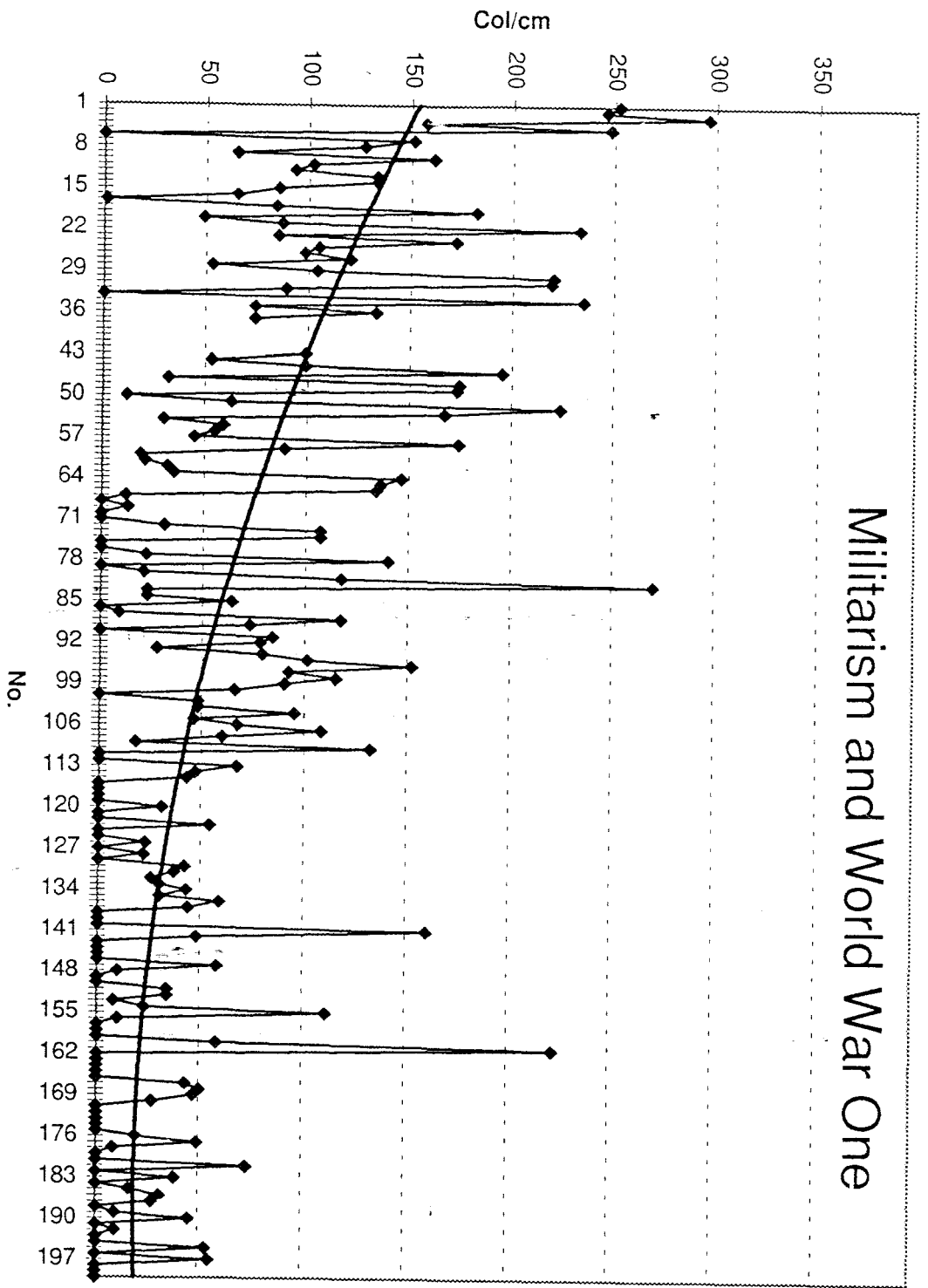
Graph 2

GRAPH 2: The trendline in Graph 2 shows a steady increase in the coverage given to black workers and the race question (see Appendix D), peaking with edition No. 144 (26/7/18), and declining at a time when the *International* gave more coverage to the revolutionary movement in Russia (see Graph 5). This trend began with a sudden increase in coverage in issue No. 139 (21/6/18), concerning the 'Bucket Strike', and continues intermittently for four months until issue No. 154 (4/10/18), shortly after Bunting and other ISL members were acquitted on a charge of incitement to public violence (see Chapter eight). The next high period begins with No. 174 (7/3/19) until No. 184 (16/5/19). The issues here were an SANNC protest in Bloemfontein, Jones's trial in Pietermaritzburg, and the 'Johannesburg Soviet'. These issues are extensively covered by Eddie Roux (1944) and Jack and Ray Simons (1984).

Graph 3



GRAPH 3: Compared with Graph 2, included on this graph, the *International* gave decreasing coverage on the war issue. The diamonds on the graph mark the topic of militarism, and the squares the race issue. Graph 4 (overleaf) showing the trend concerning the war issue only is given below. Note (on Graph 3) that 26 January 1917, when the Press Committee considered providing more material opposing militarism, and less on the race issue (so as not to offend readers), is issue No. 67, when the paper was still giving more coverage to militarism than to race.



Militarism and World War One

Graph 4

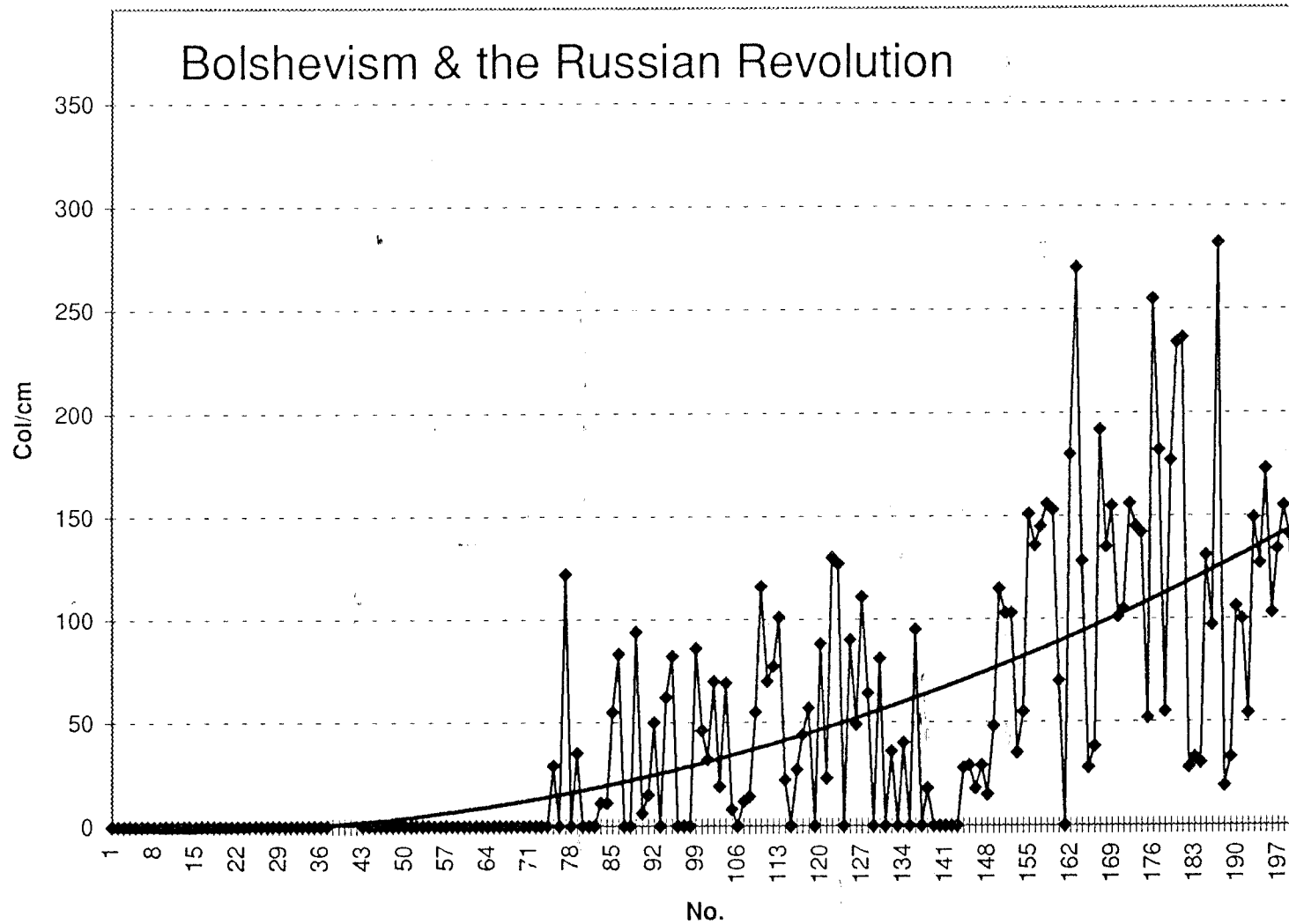
said it was no longer possible to meet the loss from donations to the Press Fund. The committee now suggested the price be raised to three pence. This was put to a readers' referendum (*ibid.*). But according to a front page notice, the response was poor, and the selling price remained unchanged (4/10/18).

Interest in Russia from October 1917 onwards brought an increase in subscriptions from mainly Eastern European immigrants, who had retained a sympathy for the revolutionary movement despite having made good on the Rand. For them the *International* supplied news in the belief that the revolution was the flowering of a movement of which the ISL was a part (see Graph 5 below on Bolshevism and the Russian Revolution). But the Press Committee also appealed for more funds, which the immigrants gave willingly (6/12/18; Roux 1944: 45). By January 1919, the Press Fund debit was 'now almost negligible, thanks to the increase in the subscribers' roll', and circulation had doubled (4/4/19, 10/1/19).

Optimism over the revolution encouraged the Press Committee to open a '10 000 shilling fund', also called the 'International Printing Press and Building Fund', to buy its own printing press. This move was advised by the League's Yiddish-Speaking Branch (28/9/17).²³ To this end, sympathisers were urged to give generously. 'The first socialist press in South Africa to be owned and controlled by the workers is about to be launched,' Bunting confidently announced. The prospect that the proposed printing works might appear more as a going concern than as a hand-to-mouth party press did not escape him. He was quick to add that there would be no shareholders. The plant would be under the sole control of the ISL (23/5/19, 18/7/19). With a barely concealed reference to the commercial press, he added that 'the crying need of the revolutionary working class is for a medium of expression unhampered by considerations of profit, political huckstering or the whims and prejudices of advertisers. We intend to supply that want. Will you help?' (18/7/19).

²³ The Yiddish-speaking Branch (YSB) was the most active of the ISL's branches. During 1881-1910 some 40000 Lithuanian, Latvian and Polish Jews emigrated to South Africa following pogroms by the Tsars against the Jews. These Eastern Europeans, who in 1913 began joining the SALP virtually *en masse*, played a significant role in the socialist movement on the Rand (Mantzaris 1987: 160-67).

Graph 5



GRAPH 5: The *International's* coverage of Bolshevism was given increasing attention from issue No. 75 (9/3/17) onwards.

The total count in this sample is 8862 col/cm, exceeded only by the 11626 col/cm published on militarism.

Confident that the money would come, the Press Committee located a linotype machine and other plant for the new printing works which they planned to start in August 1919. Premises were found in Neppe's Building, on the corner of Fox and Maclaren Streets, in the centre of Johannesburg (opposite the police station). The Committee also planned to increase the *International* to eight pages. According to the *International*, the eight page edition began with its fifth volume on 12 September 1919 (22/8/19).²⁴

But extracting the donations promised for the machinery was another matter. 'The sellers of the plant want to handle their money,' Bunting appealed (18/7/19, 15/8/19). He also thought an eight-page paper would be too much for him to edit in his spare time, which he had given unstintingly for eighteen months as acting-editor. Jones was therefore brought back as full-time editor (22/8/19). But Bunting, far from ready to lay down his pen, continued to produce articles on a weekly basis. The larger paper also amounted to more work for him (Roux 1944: 45-46).

As the Russian phenomenon became stale news, financial support for the paper dwindled. Paying for the the new press, and keeping it running, 'became a constant cause for anxiety' for Bunting. He went from door to door with long lists of past sympathisers, begging for money to keep the paper alive (Roux 1944: 45). The compositors (members of the Typographical Union) the ISL employed to run the press had to be paid weekly, and the manager had to be handled carefully. His mercurial temper was not helped by having to decipher Bunting's appalling handwriting. The linotypists had an equally bad time. Bunting would redraft his copy a number of times until his manuscripts were almost illegible (*ibid.*: 46).²⁵

²⁴ The selling price of the paper also increased from 1d. to 3d. 'The annual subscription will be 10s., half-yearly 5s. Adjustments in the accounts of our old subscribers will be made accordingly' (*International* 22/8/19).

²⁵ The Press Committee appears to have had trouble with previous printers. The first was 'Noordelike Drukkers Matskappij Beperk', then the United Printing and Publishing Company (7/1/16); The Rex Printing Works (28/1/16); Printers Limited (5/5/16); Viljoen & Co. (22/9/16); Elite Printing Works (1/12/16); and then back to United Printing (1/6/17) until the end of the fourth volume when the ISL acquired its own plant. That Johan H Schoeman of the 'Noordelike Drukkers' had an article published in the *International* (24/3/16) suggests that each of these companies possibly had links with the ISL.

2.5. Conclusion

The *International* was a small, cash-strapped organ struggling to survive with inadequate resources and minimal advertising. Its policy was avowedly internationalist, and was shaped by socialist resistance to the tide of jingoistic patriotism that swept through labour ranks at the outbreak of the war. Resistance to militarism moulded the way the *International's* writers approached.

This chapter briefly maps out some of the conditions surrounding the *International's* campaign against against racism in the white labour movement. This campaign was bound to the ISL's opposition to militarism which fractured labour along national lines, and in opposition to trade unionism, which fractured labour along lines of skill (and race). It was within this network of ideas that the *International's* writers came to see black workers as sharing a common class position with white workers. The biographies of Jones and Bunting indicate that this position did not come with the paper ready-made. This developed in tandem with other struggles that constituted the development of these writers.

This chapter is necessarily introductory, and leaves unexplained the question of how and why the *International's* discourse shifted the way it did. A humanistic approach might attribute this change to Bunting's and Jones's qualities alone, attributing this development to their abilities as individuals. A structuralist position rejects such idealism, and instead might attribute this development to their being subjects of (as opposed to merely subscribing to) discourse. In other words, they were structured in the discourses in which they participated, and these discourses constrained the conditions of their struggle. A theoretical framework within which this phenomenon may be understood is developed in the next chapter.

Chapter three

Theoretical framework

3.1. Introduction

Chapter one indicates that the *International's* campaign against racism in the white labour movement was waged at the level of language – the language of militarism, and the language of labour. These sites of language use, or discourses, are socially-determined and used to make sense of specific topics and social experiences (Fiske 1989: 14, 15).¹ Accordingly, the topics above may be called a discourse of militarism, and a discourse of labour. The *International's* intervention in these discourses was a struggle against the common sense ways in which 'workers', for instance, were signified as artisans, semi-skilled or unskilled in the dominant discourse of labour, and how they were signified as national fractions in the discourse of militarism. These writers were therefore engaged in a struggle over meaning.

This chapter therefore sets out a critical² theory of discursive struggle as both a creative and a determined semiotic practice of disarticulating a sign from one formation of discourse and articulating it in one's own discourse. This struggle over meaning arises at intersections of different discourses, and entails a struggle over the power to make one's own representations common sense for all social groups.

¹ In French structuralism, the term 'discourse' has meanings not usually associated with 'language', which is often used to mean a transparent medium in which the world is known 'as it is'. Discourse locates our knowledge of the world in language itself, suggesting that language and 'reality' are 'inextricably linked, and that particular situations produce certain kinds of language which in turn shape and determine events. Language is produced by a particular set of social relations which obtains at a certain time and place. Such language is never neutral or ideologically innocent, but designed to convey particular kinds of knowledge to achieve certain effects, usually of power and domination' (Webster 1990: 63).

² I use the term 'critical' here in the generic sense as a critique of ideology and the effects of domination, and not specifically according to the critical theory of the Frankfurt School, nor the economic determinism characteristic of 'official' Marxism. Critical theorists pay particular attention to explaining how relations of social domination are sustained. For instance, a critical conception of ideology see it as essentially linked to the process of domination. To study ideology, therefore, is to study ways in which meaning serves to sustain relations of domination (Thompson 1984: 4).

3.1.1. Chapter outline

The argument begins in Section 3.2. with an explanation of how the concepts of determination and creativity fit within the broader structuralist and culturalist parameters of this thesis.

- The argument then focuses on language as both an interpretative practice and a socially-constructed system of representation (3.2.1.).
- Section 3.2.2. distinguishes between discourse, text and context.
- Section 3.2.3. discusses the relations between discourse, knowledge and power in a short overview of French philosopher Michel Foucault's theory.
- Section 3.2.4. develops these views in a theory of discourse as a social institution, which makes it easier to understand discursive struggle as waged both in and over discourse.
- To expand on the relations between discourse and power, Section 3.2.5. examines how discourse may be ideological.
- Section 3.2.6. examines the phenomenon of creativity (resistance) more closely by discussing discourse as a social practice.
- This line of thinking is extended by drawing links between discourse and hegemony, by which discourse may be seen as a site of struggle (3.2.7.).
- As both a determined and creative practice, this discursive struggle is explained as a semiotic struggle over signification (3.2.8.).
- Section 3.2.9. presents a largely psychoanalytic explanation as to why individuals may resist determination in discourse.
- Section 3.3. concludes this chapter with a view towards discourse analysis.

3.2. Determinism and creativity in discursive struggle

Discursive struggle is basically a process whereby a contending social group endeavours to establish its own discourse as dominant, and to subordinate the discourses of other social groups. This process is both determined and creative in

the sense that the resources of discourse largely delimit the parameters of resistance.

In focusing on discourse as both a determined and a creative social practice, this chapter combines theories from both structuralism and culturalism in a unified theory of discourse. Structuralism asserts an ordered relation between the signifying practices of culture and the production and reproduction of meaning, and therefore seeks to discover the underlying system, or deep structures, by which meaning is manifested (determined) in the surface structures of text. Writing (*parole*) thus actualises an abstract language system (*langue*) (McQuail 1994: 244-45; Seiter 1992: 32).

Culturalism, on the other hand, posits a dialectical relation between social being and social consciousness (Hall 1981: 26-27), which may be expressed as a dialectic between ideology and culture. An ideology may be defined as any taken-for-granted 'system of logically coherent and widely applicable socio-political beliefs' social members use to classify and make sense of their social, economic and political experience (Berger 1991: 37, 49).³ But ideology is also the mechanism by which unequal social relations are made to appear natural (ideology is most effective when it is naturalised as common sense).⁴ Ideology is therefore 'meaning in the service of power,' by which people legitimate⁵ in taken-for-granted ways their social relations of dominance or subordination (Thompson 1990: 7). These meanings are not overtly imposed by a dominant group, but are the ways in which social members understand reality as a consequence of their conditions of existence.

³ This view corresponds to Stuart Hall's definition of ideology as 'the mental frameworks ... and the systems of representation ... which different classes and social groups display in order to make sense of, define, figure out and render intelligible the way society works' (1982: 59).

⁴ Naturalised ideology, or common sense, includes those ideas about social reality which appear obvious and natural to social members as the way things 'ought to be'. Ideology becomes common sense (taken for granted) through recurrent use, and therefore legitimate (Fairclough 1989: 77, 84; Hall 1982: 76-77). Norman Fairclough distinguishes between degrees of naturalisation. A concept that is 'most naturalised' would be held by 'all members of some community'. Limited naturalisations would be held 'only within increasingly narrow and embattled social circles' (1995: 31), such as among the *International* writers.

⁵ Delegitimation, on the other hand, is a process of denaturalising the ways in which a sign is used in an oppositional discourse.

Culture, on the other hand, comprises both the symbolic ways in which groups intuitively make sense of their conditions of existence, and the practices in which those meanings are embodied. Culture may be broadly defined as all practices (beliefs, values, norms, ideas) which occur at the social level. These practices evolve as the historical, political and social circumstances of groups change (determination), and by the ways social groups modify or oppose their social relations (creativity). That is, culture shows both determined and creative tendencies by being both the lived traditions and practices through which meaning is articulated, and the ground in which resistance and counter-meanings are articulated (Berger 1991: 49; Fiske 1990: 121).

The influence of structuralism has led culturalist thinkers along an anti-humanist path to focus on the problem of contradictory and competing ideologies in society, and to see the social production and reproduction of meaning as interwoven with the power of a dominant social group to propagate its representations as the only legitimate basis for social knowledge (Hall 1980a: 15-47; Hall 1980d: 117-18; Heck 1980: 123). But culturalism has not swallowed structuralism whole. It counters its more determinist views by maintaining that despite dominant power relations, members of subordinate social groups do create their own meanings, and often against those of a dominant social group. The culturalist approach thereby emphasises the relative autonomy of culture as a site of struggle, and an arena in which is waged a battle for ideological supremacy between those with and those without power (Fiske 1987: 259, 286; Hall 1980a: 36; McQuail 1994: 244-45).

While the determinism of structuralism accounts for uniformities of discourse (and properties of text), culturalism offers greater scope to account for resistance to a dominant ideology. It would seem, however, that choosing the best from both perspectives is more beneficial than choosing between them. Determinism, therefore, is used here as a delimitation on the creativity characteristic of the culturalist paradigm. This conceptualises the structuring and restructuring of language as limited to the discourse resources that social subjects⁶ have available to

⁶ A social subject is a combination of 'social identities', or 'subject positions' constructed for us in advance in language (symbolic system). Language, it is important to note, does not represent the world, but makes sense of it as representations. Any system of representation is inextricably linked to the social world in which it operates. These representations may include subjects such as

them. These are the 'centripetal' (determining or repetitive) and 'centrifugal' (creative) tendencies of signification, bearing in mind that texts seldom exclusively display one or the other tendency (Fairclough 1995: 7-8; Fiske 1987: 14). This view corresponds to the Bakhtin School's⁷ understanding that texts are 'social spaces' or 'sites of tension' in which both tendencies occur (Seldon & Widdowson 1992: 127).

Both structuralism and culturalism have come to consider signification processes within the discourse concept (Curren *et al* 1983: 23-24, 25; Jensen 1991b: 28). Discourse is the 'battleground' upon which ideological struggles for power are waged. It is also a systematic way of constructing reality through (cultural) practices which either reproduce or resist the representations which constitute social relations. Therefore, both paradigms will be linked here in discourse theory, acknowledging historian Richard Johnson's dictum that 'neither culturalism nor structuralism will do' (1979: 54), but that an adequate account of discourse should draw on both.⁸

3.2.1. Discourse as language use

The *International's* struggle against the way workers were represented in terms of craft, race and nationality can be understood as a struggle against a particular system of language use in which these meanings were common sense. This view is based on the assumption that language use (or discourse) is a communicative

gender, race, class, occupation, and so on. For instance, a text might represent for me as reader the subject positions of male, white and worker, organised together as a coherent unified social subject through ideology, making this combination common sense despite possible contradictions between these positions. 'A text is able to construct a subject position for us only because these social agencies have been working all our lives to construct our subjectivities in equivalent ways' (Fiske 1987: 51).

⁷ The Bakhtin School was the 'Moscow Linguistic Circle' with which Mikhail Bakhtin developed his literary theories. The close association between writings published under Bakhtin and those published under the name of Valentin Vološinov has left unclear who Bakhtin was. Linguist Roger Webster suggests 'it might be more profitable to see these writings as part of a common discursive practice rather than raise unnecessary and diversionary questions about authorship and the attendant issues of "authority" which Bakhtin/Vološinov were attempting to expose' (1992: 39).

⁸ This also acknowledges work done since the mid-1970's to correct the imbalances of what Abercrombie *et al* (1980: 21) have identified as excesses of the 'dominant ideology thesis' – according to which social order is sustained largely through the effects of dominant ideologies in winning the consent or acquiescence of the majority. Instead, theorists have sought to explain social practice as not only determined, but also displaying resistance to ideological reproduction.

practice (an interpretative process) by which social members establish, maintain and restructure social relations. This view opposes the misperception that social relations are transparently obvious in language.

A language is a particular socially constructed way of understanding phenomena, and structures our experience and knowledge of the world. This view is put forward in the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis,⁹ which suggests that to apprehend the world is to be immersed in language (Hawkes 1977: 31; Hudson 1980: 103-105). A Kantian¹⁰ view similarly shows a direct relation between the language and perception. Language does not reflect reality, but is a system of symbolic representation by which social reality is perceived (Fiske 1990: 121; Hartley 1982: 33-37; Seldon 1989: 31-32, 106-107). That is, words do not refer to 'things' in reality (even if they are used that way), but to representations (meanings) of things signified in the language system, constituted in culture, and mediated in text. Language always relates to concepts that are shared, and a society's language is an aspect of its culture (Van Dijk 1991a: 116).¹¹

The view that culture is fundamentally a structure of meanings by which social members make sense of their world is built on the premise that nature is available to individuals only by being appropriated, or 'known', in a sign system such as language (Hall 1982: 70-71). This close connection between language and knowledge suggests that culture may be more specifically defined as 'socially acquired knowledge' (or common-sense knowledge learned from other people), whether it is factually correct or not (Hudson: 1980: 73-75). 'To the extent that a

⁹ The celebrated hypothesis by American linguists Edward Sapir and Benjamin Whorf is best known in its extreme view, in which language is said to totally determine thought. If there is no thought without language, then by controlling language, people's thoughts are controlled. But Richard Hudson (1980: 103-105) suggests these linguists allowed for more independence of thought (and language use) than their critics have claimed.

¹⁰ Philosopher Immanuel Kant claimed in his *Critique of pure reason* (1781) that new information, concepts and ideas have meaning only in relation to something we already 'know'. Kant hereby rejects the idealist notion of the intellectual being the originator of new ideas. And it is this insight that structuralism revisits in its understanding of discourse, and which I use to map out a theory of discursive struggle.

¹¹ Reality is not transparent in language, but is represented in the signifying practices of a symbolic culture. For discourse analysis, this implies that meaning is not 'read off' text, but gleaned in an interpretative process which attends to the cultural 'traces of the productive process' embedded in the formal properties of text, and used as 'cues' for interpretation (Fairclough 1989: 24).

distinction can be made between cultural and non-cultural knowledge, if it means an approximation of the concepts or propositions in other people's minds, it is cultural' (*ibid.*: 76).¹²

It is through the process of acquiring language that individuals are socialised into culture. But a view of language as social practice should not conclude that reality is nothing but language, even though our understanding of the world is certainly mediated through the conceptual framework of linguistic concepts. In other words, language operates as discourse and text (a material product of a particular discourse) within social contexts.

3.2.2. Text, context and discourse

While the terms 'discourse', 'text' and 'context' are used closely, they are not interchangeable. A central principle in discourse analysis is that text and context are mediated in discourse (Fairclough 1989: 10; Seldon 1989: 74).¹³ Text is (in a limited sense)¹⁴ an inscription of discourse. It is the formal aspect of a message, while discourse is the social process of using language to produce text. Different discourses will produce different texts (Thompson 1984: 178).¹⁵ In another sense, a page becomes text by virtue of the ideological discourses readers bring to it (Fiske 1987: 14).

¹² The notions of concept and proposition play an important part in discourse analysis. Basically, a concept is a meaning stored in memory and used in thinking. A proposition is generally an object of inference from a set of concepts, and is roughly equivalent to a 'statement'. However, Foucault's uses the term 'statement' as 'concept' implies that a statement is an element of knowledge stored in memory (see Section 3.2.3.).

¹³ A permutation of this view is the field of 'pragmatics' (Van Dijk 1977: 189-91), which examines 'the rules for using linguistic items in context' (Hudson 1980: 220). Pragmatics posits an inextricable link between text and context in discourse (Brown & Yule 1983: 27; Van Dijk 1991b: 119). One problem with pragmatics, however, is its tendency to see individuals as operating independently of social and historical constraints, as well as particular ideological discourses, contrary to the structuralist position (Fairclough 1989: 9-10; Hall 1980c: 157).

¹⁴ Dave Morley (1980) suggests that a text is a social discourse, and that our experience is made up of a number of texts. Reading a text is defined as the moment the discourses of the reader meet the discourses of the text – a process of negotiation – and a text is always read in terms of discourses.

¹⁵ Apart from the immanent written object (referred to in Chapter four as the 'non-discursive text'), other meaning structures are also referred to as 'texts'. These are *extra-texts*, *cultural texts*, *previous literary texts*, and any other structures and *actions* which are coherent and meaningful (Morley 1980: 163ff; Van Zyl 1982: 76). To see action as text 'is to view it as meaningfully constituted behaviour which can be interpreted in various ways' (Thompson 1984: 174).

Context means in a non-discursive sense the socio-historical conditions which surround a communicative event (see Section 1.5.). In a discursive sense, context includes the culture (language system) in which a text is used, as well as other texts and discourses which constrain the production and interpretation of text (Van Dijk 1977: 191-93). The view here is that text is a phenomenon of context. To speak of one implies the other (Vološinov 1981: 147), and both intersect in discourse (Foucault 1986: 49). In this sense, discourse is an interface between text and context (Van Dijk 1991a: 119).

Discourse may be defined as the institutionalised use of language as social practice (Cameron 1993: 82-83; Fairclough 1995: 7). In this sense, discourse is defined here as *parole*, manifested as the surface forms of text. But a discourse is also a system of representation (*langue*, or deep structure) that has developed socially in order to communicate meaningfully about specific topics, and functions as a context of text production (Fiske 1992: 301). The *parole/langue* distinction is an analytical one, as they are combined in actual instances of language use. Their combination evokes the semiotic principle that beneath a text's surface forms lies a system of meanings which may generate an infinite number of different texts (Roelofse 1982: 26).

The distinction of text as a linguistic object and discourse as a communicative action (Van Dijk 1977: 3-7) is implied in linguist Emile Benviste's definition of discourse as 'every utterance assuming a speaker and a hearer, and in the speaker, the intention of influencing the other in some way' (Seiter 1992: 61). The communication aspect of this practice is important. It refers to 'something which readers are expected to recognise and confirm' (Seldon & Widdowson 1992: 128). That is, when a text is used to communicate, that message is derived from the interaction between its linguistic properties and the shared background knowledge it evokes. This knowledge is shared by both writer and reader in varying degrees and interpretations.¹⁶ Roland Barthes would say the writer is using the 'cultural

¹⁶ The question of whether the the structures of discourse or the reading of the text is more fundamental to meaning presents a significant methodological difficulty for discourse analysis. In so far as it is the reading, my interpretation of the *International* must necessarily be affected by my own biases, and must differ in respect of its writers and their readers. In this respect, the interpretation of discourse is always a 're-interpretation' because a text is always a pre-interpreted

code' found not in the text, but in 'the world which makes use of the text' (1981: 182). It may also be called the 'code of context', referring to something outside the text (Fiske 1990: 35-37; Hawkes 1977: 83).

3.2.3. Discourse, knowledge and power

Benviste's view that discourse includes the intention of influencing another (Seiter 1992: 61) is elaborated in the way French philosopher Michel Foucault links discourse and power. In his view, discourse is a systematic way of representing a topic in a particular way at a given point in history, limiting other ways in which it can be represented, and consequently shaping perceptions and social practice (Hall 1992: 291). Similarly, discourse is the production of knowledge through language. A discourse may be seen as a specific configuration of social knowledge used by a language (discursive) community within which the discourse originates (Feuer 1992: 143; Hall 1982: 78-79).

As a configuration of social knowledge, a discourse contains a particular repertoire of 'truths' produced as a regular, systematic, coherent and historically-specific set of 'statements' (concepts). These concepts are the molecular units of discourse, which Foucault understands as 'enunciations', or 'truth claims', and not merely as grammatical sentences or propositions (Barrett 1990: 127).¹⁷ These statements have meaning by virtue of the discourses in which they are used, with each statement implying a coherent relation (regularity) with other statements in the 'discursive formation' (Foucault 1986: 21-27, 38, 49).

By 'regular' is meant the conventional ways 'in which statements combine and coexist under determinate historical conditions' (Weedon *et al* 1981: 209-210). This combination of statements may be seen as a discursive field, characterised by a system of dispersion which forms the basis of a discursive regulation (Barrett 1991: 128). Foucault locates the phenomenon of regulation in the nature of the language

domain (Thompson 1990: 289-90). I address this problem in Chapter four, where I motivate for a rigorous textual analysis.

¹⁷ For example, where the concept 'natives' was used in the *International's* socialist discourse of race, it differed from the same linguistic form used in a white labour discourse. The difference was positive or negative. In general terms, a concept is 'known' from cultural knowledge, while a proposition is inferred and non-cultural. However, a proposition can have a conceptual quality where it is used in a taken-for-granted way as a truth claim.

system as 'a finite body of rules that authorises an infinite number of performances' (1986: 27). It is the rules of language which constitute the system of dispersions which characterise a discursive field. And these rules may be revealed by the 'pure description' of text (*ibid.*). 'Whenever one can describe, between a number of statements, such a system of dispersion ... we can say, for the sake of convenience, that we are dealing with a discursive formation' (*ibid.*: 38).¹⁸

'Historically-specific' refers to the linguistic and non-linguistic conditions which make possible the emergence of a specific type of discourse at a particular historical juncture (without invoking the spirit of historical materialism) (Foucault 1986: 47-48; Seiter 1992: 62). Historicity also means that a discourse does not emerge in a vacuum, but is 'produced within a real world of power struggles' (Seldon & Widdowson 1992: 160). For an analysis of discourse, this implies taking into account 'the social, political and historical conditions' which 'shape what it says, the way it develops, the status it enjoys, the people who use it, the uses to which it is put' (Hartley 1993: 6).

Central to Foucault's understanding of discourse is how it regulates the relation between knowledge and power. '(T)here is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute ... power relations' (Foucault 1980: 27). Power is exercised (as opposed to being possessed, in the Marxist sense) by using the concepts that circulate in a discourse, and using them within the constraints of that discourse. These constraints prescribe what statements may be used, in what circumstances, and from what subject positions (Foucault 1980: 51-52, 131; Seldon & Widdowson 1992: 129, 158). But these statements only have power within the discourses to which they belong (Foucault 1986: 94).

Using a discourse has consequences both for those who are subjected to it by virtue of using its statements, and those who are objects of it by virtue of being

¹⁸ This point has an important implication for discourse analysis: Foucault establishes a principle whereby a single text can be analysed as a 'window' to an entire discourse. The corpus of statements 'has value as a sample, rules that make it possible to construct other statements than these' (1986: 27). However, while this infinity is a characteristic of language (*langue*), a discursive field is 'always finite and limited at any moment to the linguistic sequences that have been formulated.... (N)evertheless they form a finite grouping' (*ibid.*). I pick up on this point in Chapter four.

'spoken about'. A subject of a discourse is one who deploys the position it requires in order to speak the 'truth' of its statements (Foucault 1986: 95-96). The 'truth', or knowledge, that a discourse produces is exercised as a power relation between those who are 'known' and those who use the discourse, and thereby appropriate the power to enforce its validity (Fairclough 1989: 29; Foucault 1980: 115, 201).

But this process is not equal among discourses. Different discourses function in alliance with or in opposition to each other, intertwined in an interdiscursive play of dependencies. Where there are competing orders of discourse,¹⁹ these are linked in a contest over the power to 'speak truth' (Seldon & Widdowson 1992: 159). And as they are not closed systems, each discourse 'draws on elements in other discourses, binding them into its own network of meanings', and thus translating these. In a similar way, 'traces of past discourses remain embedded in more recent discourses' (Hall 1992: 292).

While the power of discourse is exercised as the capacity to determine truth, it is a subjective illusion to claim any discourse as 'true'. There are 'only more or less powerful ones' (Seldon & Widdowson 1992: 161).²⁰ Each is imbricated in relation to a dominant discourse exerting power over it (Price 1994: 89; Sturrock 1979: 91; Webster 1990: 63-65). In Foucault, this relation constitutes a dominant social order, determining what may be said about a particular topic, and what may not (1981: 95).

Foucault implies this relation of power within a dominant discursive order when he says '(e)ach society has its regime of truth: that is the type of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true; the mechanisms and instances which enable one to distinguish true from false statements, the means by which each is sanctioned; the techniques and procedures accorded value in the acquisition of truth; the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true' (1980: 131). The 'regime of truth' he refers to is not necessarily vested in one discourse,

¹⁹ Distinctive types of discursive practices are given different values, and are thus 'ordered'. As a result, particular discourses are afforded the authority to define reality. This ordering of discourse is the result of a history of social and political struggles.

²⁰ Obviously drawing from Foucault's *Archaeology of Knowledge* (1986), Seldon & Widdowson say: 'We can never know our own era's archive because it is the Unconscious from which we speak. We can understand an earlier archive because we are utterly different and remote from it' (1992: 160).

but in a configuration of intersecting discourses, each with its different social knowledge.

3.2.4. Discourse as a social institution

Norman Fairclough points out that accounts of individual discourses ‘appear to be largely accounts of ideal types, for actual texts are generally to a greater or lesser degree constituted through mixing these types’ (1995: 189). The problem of how to assign a statement to one discourse rather than to another has important implications for an analysis of the *International*, where at least two separate discourses are found weaved into a single text (*ibid.*). Furthermore, statements may often be formulated in a ‘popular ideological discourse’, by which different discourses have been fused into one common sense structure, and may be used by more than one language community (Weedon *et al* 1981: 213).

John Fiske addresses this problem by proposing that a statement be attributed to a particular discourse on the basis of its ‘reference to the area of social experience that it makes sense of’ (1992: 301). However, wherever there is evidence of deconstructing and restructuring of orders of discourse, it may be more realistic to locate the statement in an interdiscursive dependency rather than within one discourse. These orders exist in hierarchical relations which are usually compatible or contradictory, and seldom neutral (Fairclough 1989: 29). In addition, these hierarchical relations (not least the dominant discourse) structure the discourses of all social institutions in the discursive realm. This implies that a topic is ‘spoken about’ in not one, but in a network of discourses, being ‘an area of political dialogue’ (Price 1994: 88).

Following Fiske’s view that an analysis of discourse ‘must include its topic area, its social origin, and its ideological work’ (1989: 15), a way forward lies in seeing a discursive institution as a mix of discourses. The institution (interdiscursive dependency) is extradiscursively positioned Janus-like as a pivot between the social formation (context) and the more concrete level of social actions (text production) (Fairclough 1995: 37). A discursive institution thus becomes the nexus at which struggles between contesting representations of a topic area mediate

the relation between the wider context of social relations, and the way those relations are symbolised in text.

For example, in the discourse of labour during the *International's* time, there were at least two opposing 'sides': the language of white labour and the language of international socialism. The relation between these sites of language use was intradiscursive within the institution. Its relation with the discourse of militarism, for instance, was interdiscursive. Their combined relation with the social formation and social actions was extradiscursive (see Figure 4).²¹ This model corresponds to Russian theorist Valentin Vološinov's critique of Saussure, whereby he posits in discourse a process that articulates an interdependence between language (*langue*) and writing (*parole*): where *langue* is both the instrument and product of *parole* (Vološinov 1980: 149). In other words, the concept of discourse combines different dimensions. One is *parole*, and the other is *langue* (which includes the language system, and discursive structures). Discourse is the 'missing', unifying concept in Saussure's *parole-langue* paradigm.²²

²¹ The effectiveness of resistance is not only ideological, but depends also on the concrete conditions between social forces in struggle, which delimits the effectiveness of struggles in and over language (Fairclough 1989: 30, 192-93). This means that while discourse is constrained by underlying conventions, and certainly parallels the concrete struggles it articulates, discourse is not a mere mechanical emanation of deep structural conventions (*ibid.*: 27-28). While determination does not preclude writers from creatively combining discourse resources in ways which challenge existing conventions, the scope of combination is limited to those resources available in the discursive field (Price 1994: 85).

²² Saussurean semiotics tends to ignore *parole* as an 'individual' act, on the basis that it lacks the systematic properties of *langue* (Bennett 1992: 212-13). This corresponds to the distinction made in semiotics between the synchronic (analytical and atemporal) and diachronic (historical) approaches to language study, favouring the synchronic, and hence using the particular manifestations of language (*parole*) only as an access to the language system (O'Sullivan *et al.* 1994: 281; Van Zyl 1982: 69). As a result, semiotics is generally criticised for failing to account for struggle in discourse, and becoming a 'pure mental activity divorced from the material world' (Seiter 1992: 49, 50, 63). For Vološinov, all texts are social phenomena, and can be studied in their wider social and historical contexts. Language should therefore be studied as a dialectical relationship between structures (*langue*) and text (*parole*), and not as a mere determination of *parole* (Vološinov 1981: 147; Van Zyl 1982: 73-74). Meaning depends not only on underlying structures, but also on contexts of use, and is forged in social relations which are always being renegotiated (Hall 1982: 77; Vološinov 1981: 148-49). Discourse, therefore, is both the social use of language (*parole*) and *langue*. Within *langue* 'language systems and social conditions meet' to the point where speaking of one implies the other (Feuer 1992: 143; Hall 1982: 78-79; Hartley 1993: 6; Sturrock 1979: 81).

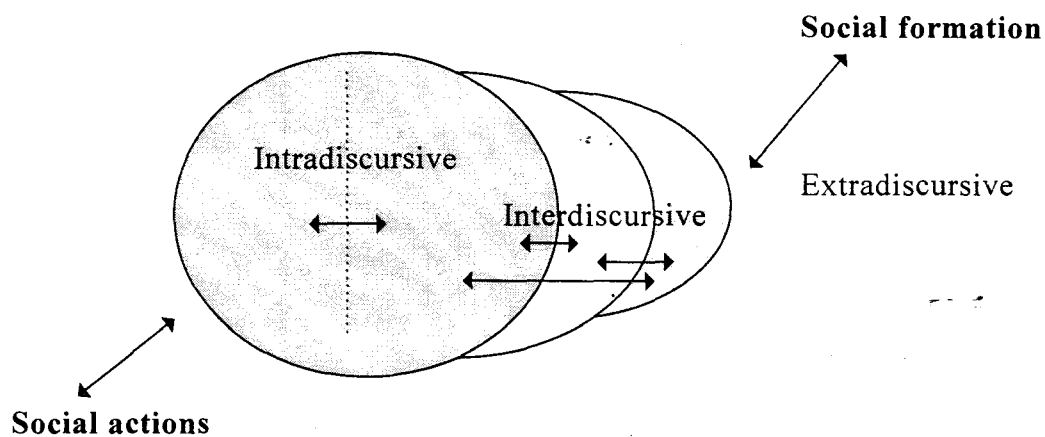


Figure 4

Social institutions are not monolithic entities, but have alternate sets of discursive norms ranged in compatible or antagonistic intradiscursive relations. ‘Opposition and struggle are built into the view of the orders of discourse of social institutions as pluralistic, each involving a configuration of potentially antagonistic ideological-discursive formations, which are ordered in dominance’ (Fairclough 1995: 24). Such diversity of ideological positions, Fairclough contends, will tend to be associated with different forces within the institution, and is found whenever ‘non-dominant classes are relatively powerful’. Such pluralism is a condition for struggles between different forces within an institution. On the other hand, an absence of pluralism, when the norms of a discourse are unchallenged, may indicate that a discourse has been naturalised (*ibid.*: 40-41).

3.2.5. Discourse and ideology

It is not uncommon for people to view their own discourses as true and other people’s as false or ideological (and from their perspective, vice versa), as the *International’s* writers were not slow to do. But herein lies an epistemological dilemma which led Foucault to reject the ideology concept along with the positivist distinction Marxism makes between true statements (science) and false statements (ideology); and for that matter, between true and false discourses.

This puts Foucault’s views in opposition to French structuralist Louis Althusser’s view of ideology (false consciousness), which suggests a split between

a social reality 'out there' and a subjective perception of reality reflected 'in here' (Barrett 1991: 160). But this view does make an important contribution towards discourse theory by suggesting that '(w)e are all subjects of ideology which operates by summoning us to take our places in the social structure' (Seldon & Widdowson 1992: 129).

By depicting ideology as 'the imaginary²³ relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence' (Althusser 1977: 153) – a 'lived relation between men and their world', which is real in so far as individuals experience it as such (*ibid.*: 233) – ideology then can be said to 'work' when individuals accept as natural the beliefs and identities which constitute the social practices to which they unconsciously subscribe (White 1992: 164-66). His theory holds that social subjects are interpellated (summoned, or called to recognise) to specific subject positions by various 'Ideological State Apparatuses' in civil society, which mutually subject (overdetermine)²⁴ the social subject to a common dominant ideology. While interpellation works through discourses, by translating discourse into ideology, 'Althusser gives a political charge to the theory by introducing a domination and subordination model' (Seldon & Widdowson 1992: 130).²⁵ But

²³ The term 'imaginary' refers to the illusory practices by which people's relations to the world are constituted in ideology. By being an image, ideology represses the real relations between individuals and their social world (Seldon & Widdowson 1992: 130). What ideology represents is not actual social relations, 'but the imaginary relation of these individuals to the real relations in which they live' (Althusser 1977: 153). The term imaginary (*imago*) was earlier used by French structuralist psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan to describe the process whereby the social subject attains an identity by virtue of its difference from 'the Other', which it sees itself as 'lacking'. 'Language, the system of difference which articulates identities, constructs positions for the subject – notably the subject position "I" – which allows differentiation from others, and identity for the self' (Althusser in Rice & Waugh 1992: 120). Althusser envisages a similar process in ideology where the social subject in language 'is subject to the positions that are predefined for it and beyond its control' (*ibid.*: 120, 121). Ideology thus serves to sustain unequal power relations (Thompson 1984: 6)

²⁴ By 'interpellation' the social subject is determined to accept subject positions through relatively autonomous 'Ideological State Apparatuses' (ISAs), such as the family, the media and educational institutions. All these ISAs exist at the superstructural level of society, and 'produce in people the tendency to behave and think in socially acceptable ways'. Each ISA exists congruently in 'an invisible network of interrelationships' to mutually determine (overdetermine) the social subject in a range of subject positions (Fiske 1992: 286-288). This process is ideological in so far as ISAs represent the dominant ideology as 'natural' and representative of the 'way things are' (White 1992: 168).

²⁵ The work of Michel Pêcheux provides a more elaborate account of the operation of ideological discourses in relation to subjectivity, discussed in Section 3.2.9.

Althusser's theory is static, and leaves little room to explain resistance to ideological domination (Thompson 1990: 91-95).²⁶

The ideology concept becomes particularly useful in showing how meaning intersects with relations of power between different communities using different discourses (discursive communities). The useful core of the concept is mystification, which means a process whereby a particular meaning is made to appear as natural through its widespread use (Barrett 1991: 167). When the concepts of a discourse become coterminous with a society's common sense, we can say that the discourse functions ideologically, and has been naturalised.

That is, particular significations are ideological when they serve to reproduce power relations between social groups. This way the discourse of a dominant group is legitimised and the unequal power relations between social groups are sustained (Cormack 1992: 9; Fairclough 1995: 17-18; Thompson 1990: 56, 67). This process of mystification includes 'discursive and signifiatory mechanisms that may occlude, legitimate, naturalise or universalise' discourse resources, thus legitimating dominant power relations by concealing a system of representation as natural (Barrett 1991: 166-67; Thompson 1990: 54). The analysis of ideology thus becomes an investigation of how 'symbolic forms intersect with relations of power' (Thompson 1990: 56).

Ideology functions primarily in and through language, which is the primary means by which power is 'carried' in discourse (Hall 1982: 69-70; Vološinov 1981: 145). In this view, the meanings found in a discourse serve the interests of the community within which that discourse originates, and work ideologically to naturalise those meanings as common sense (Fiske 1989: 15). By using a discourse, the ideology embedded in it is reproduced and the 'terrain on which different sectional ideologies can contend' is naturalised (Hartley 1982: 61-62). However, as discourse is constructed from various currents of ideology, discourse becomes a

²⁶ Fairclough points out that when ideological subjects are positioned in overlapping contradictory positions, this becomes a basis for awareness and reflexivity, leading to the problematisation of one's subjectivity, and possible rejection of it (1995: 82).

'battleground' upon which ideological struggles for power are waged in and over language (Edgar 1992: 112-14; Fairclough 1989: 77, 84-85; Hall 1982: 80-81).²⁷

3.2.6. Discourse as social practice

The linkage of ideology to the discourse concept explains how symbolic forms may serve to naturalise power relations. However, an explanation of resistance to domination is necessary to explain the *International's* discourse. A culturalist view of discourse as a social practice (discursive practice) is useful here. Discursive practices (and the texts they produce) are situated in social contexts which circumscribe the conditions for texts production. These contexts, in turn, may be altered by discursive practice.

Discourse as social practice links language with the social, and hence foregrounds the understanding of language as a system of meanings conditioned by the signifying practices of culture. All values, beliefs, assumptions and background knowledge people use to understand social phenomena are shaped by the social relations and struggles internal to culture. As language (a system of representations) is a signifying structure of culture, social struggles form an integral part of the linguistic patterns people use to represent their experience (Fairclough 1989: 22-24).

The language system includes the significations which characterise a discursive community, and which writers use (usually unconsciously)²⁸ as background knowledge in text production (Jensen 1991a: 2-7; Larson 1991: 124). This view closely identifies the conditions of a social group with its form of

²⁷ The point is that culture, ideology and language are linked in discourse. These links are apparent by seeing culture as inextricably tied to conflicts between social groups. These conflicts are often the attempts by some to dominate others, and the responses of the subordinated to these attempts. When members of a subordinate culture group come to accept the definitions of a dominant culture, these ideas form the basis of common sense (Hall 1982: 77, 79, 80).

²⁸ 'Unconscious' is used here more in terms of 'unconscious structure' (see Sturrock 1979: 34, 40). Two points concerning language are implied in this term. The first is that language is a *social capacity* and not an empirical object. The second is that social subjects are not the source of language, but are its *product*. This means subjects do not precede discourse, nor lie at the origin of meaning. Jacques Pêcheux reformulates this position by arguing that through already-languaged discursive formations, subjects are provided with a system of self-evident truths and significations (Thompson 1984: 236). In other words, the primary subject, constituted-for-language, pre-exists those subject positions to which it is further interpellated (Morley 1980: 164-65).

communication. The network of values, ideas and beliefs by which people communicate is manifested in the 'patterns of behaviour, and in the institutions peculiar to that society'. Society is, therefore, continual discourse which affects communicators as much as their communication and 'the values which feed these expressions' (Roelofse 1983: 7-8). Concurring with Vološinov, linguistic phenomena are not only an emanation of, but are also dialogically linked to, other social phenomena (1981: 149).

Discursive practice combines the linguistic, ideological and concrete (such as pass laws) aspects of social practice, and may be defined as a socially-determined signifying practice by which individuals 'systematically form the objects of which they speak' (Foucault 1986: 49). That is, while (discursive) objects exist anterior (the discourse precedes their existence) to the discourses which designate them, discourses also exist in an extra-discursive relation with a whole play of concrete social practices. This provides a way of understanding how power is structured in language, and of understanding how the relations between language and power are manifested in actual social practices.

3.2.7. Discourse and hegemony

When discourse as social practice is included in the hegemony concept,²⁹ resistance to domination is more clearly understood. That is, while ideology explains domination in discourse, hegemony serves more usefully to explain struggles in and over discourse. A combination of hegemony and discourse helps to explain how relations of power are reproduced in language (Hall 1992: 293-94; Lash 1990: 92).³⁰ And both concepts imply that struggles over power are waged on the same

²⁹ Where Althusser's structuralist Marxism is unable to explain resistance in popular culture without extensive revision, Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci's theory of hegemony offers greater promise. Others, such as Abercrombie *et al* (1980) see this theory as just a variant of the dominant ideology thesis exemplified in Althusser. However, Gramsci's concept does show both how power relations constrain and control creativity in discourse, and how a particular relatively stable configuration of discourse (or an 'order of discourse') constitutes a domain of power. Change within discursive practices are part of wider challenges to social power.

³⁰ While Foucault largely avoids use of the concept ideology, his position is that discourses are the way power circulates and is contested, and when effective produce a 'regime of truth' – when power operates in a discursive formation which is effective enough to enforce the 'truth' of its concepts (1980: 131, 201).

ideological terrain as that by which a dominant hegemonic bloc seeks to legitimate its power (Lash 1990: 91, 93-94).

Hegemony means the cultural and ideological means by which a 'ruling class' tries to win the consent of subordinate classes (or other social fractures) to a system of their own political, social and cultural subjection, whereby subordinates accept dominant class interests as their own. In other words, in hegemony people accept as common sense the way their social relations are structured in discourse, by which they 'live' their subordination (Femia 1975:31, 32-35, 42-43; Strinati 1995: 167).

Hegemony is a homogenising, centripetal power that denies conflicts of interest by attempting to mobilise a coherent set of meanings and social differences around a consensus that serves the *status quo*, denies conflicts of interest, and maintains semiotic power at the centre (Fiske 1989: 316). But hegemony is neither complete nor static. It is 'a contested and shifting set of ideas' used in the interests of power (Strinati 1995: 170-171). Resistance is then a centrifugal force mobilised against homogenisation, and is 'the exercise of the power to be different' (Fiske 1989: 317).

Every history of subjection also contains a history of resistance, and that resistance is not just a symptom of and justification for subjection but is the true mark of the ineradicable 'difference' which always prevents power from closing the door on change (Seldon & Widdowson 1992: 165).

The maintenance of hegemony may include concessions to the ideas and values of subordinate groups, incorporating these into the dominant paradigm. But even when such a 'truce' occurs, the social order remains fragile. Culture remains the arena in which a struggle for ideological supremacy between those with and those without power is waged in ongoing discursive processes of resistance, evasion or negotiation (Fiske 1992: 291-92; Hall 1980: 36).

The hegemony concept encapsulates and combines the concepts of ideology and culture. It includes ideology by assuming a system of common sense meanings that bind together a bloc of diverse social groups in an alliance of political domination (White 1992: 167). This 'practical consciousness' reciprocally confirms the lived experience of a 'specific economic, political and economic system seen to be simple experience and common sense' (Berger 1991: 49).

But power is never the permanent and undisputed reserve of any social group, but is always 'won, exercised, sustained, and lost in the course of social struggle' (Fairclough 1989: 172). That is, hegemony also implies the capacity to denaturalise discourse conventions in struggles to unbalance the equilibrium between discourses (Fairclough 1995: 76, 95). In other words, the power of a dominant discourse implies resistance, making the exercise of power necessary (Weedon *et al* 1981: 214). But resistance also shows that the subordinate are not without power of their own. Resistances are 'the social points at which the powers of the subordinate are most clearly expressed' (Fiske 1989: 316).

3.2.8. A struggle for the sign

Part of hegemony is the notion that resistance is central to a society where power is unequally distributed. A major aspect of that power is the capacity to construct meanings which serve hegemony (semiotic power). So the point at which resistance is mounted against that power is similarly semiotic. This section applies the theory discussed so far in an explanation of discursive struggle as, in large part, a semiotic endeavour to shift a sign from its common sense meaning in one discourse, and to rearticulate it in another.

Ideological struggle is waged between contesting groups as a bid to disarticulate a sign from one discourse and to rearticulate it in another – a struggle over which words and meanings are legitimate, and which are not (Hall 1982: 69). The principle here is that texts are always produced and circulated within discourses (and readings) from which they derive meaning. This implies that discursive struggle is waged principally at the level of the sign (Hall 1982: 60; Vološinov 1981: 149, 151). A necessary condition of this process is the basic polysemy of words. This means that while a word may have more than one possible meaning, and that which it comes to signify depends largely on the discourse in which it is used, and the reader's negotiation with this (Hall 1980b: 134; Thompson 1984: 235).

Words thereby become a site of struggle over which accent comes to prevail and to win credibility (Hall 1982: 77; Morley 1980: 167). Vološinov would put it that different ideological inflections intersect in the same sign, and in accordance

with the different discourses in which it is used (Hall 1982: 77-78, 80-81). Here the various intersecting meanings in a sign are contested between discursive communities in a struggle to appropriate the 'whole sign' to a legitimate place within one discourse only (Hall 1982: 79-80). At stake is the power to establish or maintain one set of ideological assumptions as common sense (Fairclough 1989: 172; Foucault 1986: 27). The principle here is that each discourse brings into existence a specific configuration of social knowledge, which either coheres with or contradicts the knowledge of other discourses independently of different readings (Thompson 1984: 235).

For example, this thesis shows that the *International's* discourse against racism emerged in a mix of semiotic struggles within the discourses of militarism and labour. Within the discourse of militarism, it was a struggle over the meaning of the sign 'workers', to disarticulate it from its institutionalised (common sense) meaning of 'national group' within the SALP discourse, and to rearticulate it with 'international solidarity' in the ISL's socialist discourse. A similar struggle ensued in the discourse of labour. This entailed a struggle to shift the sign from 'trade unity' to 'industrial unity'. But as discourses are not closed systems, how the sign was used in one intradiscursive dependency became a metaphor for its interdiscursive use in the other, as Figure 5 illustrates.

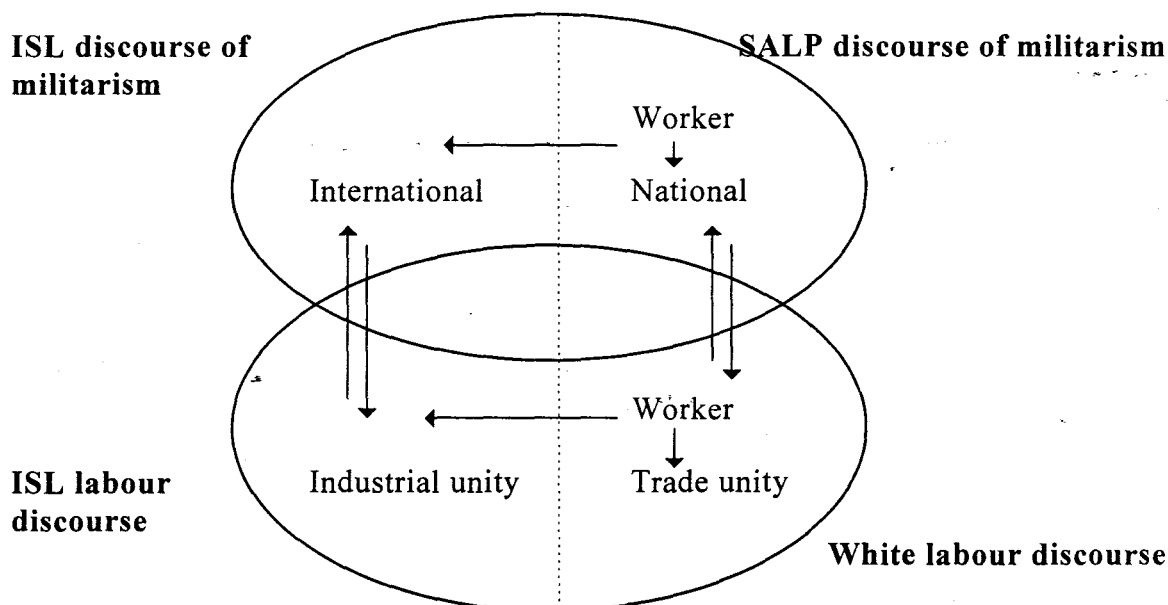


Figure 5

Hegemony shows the outcome of discursive struggle is never complete. Instead, contending forces tend to one side or the other in conflicting discourses, and always according to the compromises realised in a particular stage of struggle. The sign always remains 'multi-accentual', and hence an 'arena of struggle', where it is shifted across a range of positions in the language system, and always in favour of one or another contending party (Fiske 1992: 284-85, 305; Hall 1982: 77-78, 80-81; Morley 1980: 167).

Where a word does appear to have a 'given' common sense meaning, this 'uni-accentuality' is achieved by mastery in a struggle over meaning, where a dominant social group, by virtue of having mastered the discursive field, has effectively achieved the power to make its significations 'true' for all (Fairclough 1989: 91-92; Hall 1982: 77-78). By using this naturalised knowledge, discourse serves ideologically to reproduce common sense. This does not indicate an end to discursive struggle, but an intermediary form of conflict inherent in social relations (Fairclough 1989: 95, 105-106, 108).

3.2.9. Subjects and discursive struggle

For Foucault, wherever there is discourse there is 'a struggle between those groups who claim the "right" to discourse and those which are denied that right to their own discourse' (Sturrock 1979: 91). But this is a struggle without any active subjects, for discourse 'is not the majestically unfolding manifestation of a thinking, speaking subject' (Foucault 1986: 55). Foucault's view of social practice as independent of language users – 'history without actors' – has drawn much criticism (Barrett 1991: 153). In order to explain the roles of the *International's* writers without retreating into humanism, this section proposes an explanation of their roles founded on Michel Pecheux's theory of social subjects as constituted in different discourses.

While Foucault's subjects are also discursively constructed, unlike Lacan's who are formed in language (Barrett 1991: 149),³¹ they are as much the 'unresisting

³¹ In Jacques Lacan's revision of Freud, the subject is formed in the same unconscious process of being introduced into the web of significations inherent in symbolic culture (Sturrock 1979: 125). These significations are repressed 'when the subject takes on the predefined positions available in language', which constitute the subject's unconscious structure, 'structured like a language'

entities' that Althusser's subjects are, interpellated only in ideology (Weedon *et al* 1981: 214).³² And so Michele Barrett wonders whether Foucault's 'contentious and puzzling' theory of subjectivity offers a 'plausible alternative' (Barrett 1991: 154, 156).

Foucault's general lack of agency, Barrett notes, derives generally from his 'antipathy to psychoanalysis' (1991: 152). He replaces Lacan's construction in language of the unconscious subject with its conscious construction in-discourse, as an object anterior to discourse with all the systematic compatibility of the discourse in which it participates (Foucault 1986: 49). But while this move is concomitant with his rejection of ideology, along with the (unconscious) subjectivity it presupposes, his later work begins to consider 'that which is not brought to consciousness' (Barrett 1991: 146). Barrett attributes this change possibly 'to the charge that his earlier position left little room for resistance' (*ibid.*).

While Foucault's notion of subjectivity is inadequate, it does not follow that the Althusserian position is the alternative. A way forward lies in Jacques Pêcheux's notion of the social subject formed as a 'space' between discourses – an 'interdiscourse' – from which it is interpellated to further subject positions.

He combines Althusserian Marxism, modern linguistics and psychoanalysis in an attempt to develop a new theory of discourse and ideology. Althusser had described the process of interpellation by which subjects identify with the

(Seldon 1989: 79). In Freud, repression is the means by which the subject (unconscious) is formed in language, taking from it a subject position (I) situated within a system (Other) 'from which the individual acquires a sense of 'self'. This corresponds to Emile Benveniste's claim that language (as a semiotic system) provides the possibility of subjectivity by situating the 'speaker' in the subject position 'I' (the subject of a sentence), established in advance for us, and which the speaker must enter. However, if the relationship between the sign and the signifier is essentially unstable, so too is that between the primary social subject and interpellated subject positions. Each inheres in the same unstable structure of language. 'The relation between signifier (I) and signified (the whole psychological process at work in me) is never fixed or final' (Seldon 1983: 79-80). From this point, Lacan argues that language, as a (synchronic) system of differentiation, provides the subject with predefined identities, or subject positions, by which to differentiate itself from 'others'. In this way it is possible to see the speaking subject as a *parole*, and the unconscious subject as a *langue*. 'Thus when we speak, our conscious, intended meanings always bear the traces of what we have repressed' (Flitterman-Lewis 1992: 209).

³² In Althusser's theory, individuals are unitary categories interpellated to a single subject position, from which they are obliged to adopt a 'dominant ideology in the shape of a coherent set of principles meeting general acceptance and serving to legitimate existing power relations' (Fiske 1990: 173-178; McLellan 1986: 73; White 1992: 169). While texts do 'call out' to individuals to accept a particular subject position, this work of interpellation has to be done continually to be effective (Fiske 1989: 20-21; Morley 1980: 167; Hartley 1982: 142-143). Such a position negates the possibility of creativity and social struggle (Bozzoli 1983: 17-18).

discourses embedded in particular ideological state apparatuses. Pêcheux recognises the need to develop the theory in ways which allow for the subject's possible resistance to the discourse formations which transmit ideological positions (Seldon & Widdowson 1992: 166).

With the concept of an interdiscourse, coupled with the notion of discursive struggle being the semiotic disarticulation and rearticulation of signs within different paradigms of use, it is possible to locate discursive struggle within a view of the social subject as participating in not one, but across a range of discourses (Morley 1980: 163-166).³³ This poses the question of how an individual may be socially determined yet able to creatively transform discourse conventions. An answer is found by co-ordinating creativity with subjects being constrained to operate within a combination of subject positions experienced as contradictory (Fairclough 1989: 170-71).³⁴

In contrast to Althusser's view, Pêcheux explains the social subject as decentred (displaced) across a range of discourses, occupying a 'space' between these (Morley 1980: 163, 165-66). It is in this 'space', or as an 'interdiscourse', that the individual is formed 'for language' (as in Lacan) as a primary subject structured in the web of meanings ordered in a range of discourses which constitute its culture, and across which the subject is dispersed (Morley 1980: 164; Sturrock 1979: 134-37). This means the subject is formed as an intersection between compatible and contradictory discourses, and (as an interdiscourse) may find itself participating in a contradiction of subject positions (Morley 1980: 163-65, 171;

³³ In footnotes No. 6 and 24, the social subject is defined as a combination of subject positions unified (naturalised) in ideology. These positions are available to us in culture, and in language in particular. But each of these subject positions 'has its discourse through which much of its influence is exerted' (Fiske 1989: 52). The discourse (as a reading strategy) interpellates us with its subject definition of use, and if we recognise it as ourselves being textually addressed, 'we adopt the subject position proposed for us by the discourse' (*ibid.*: 53). A culturalist inflection adds the idea that the symbolic and 'the real' are culturally determined, and not natural, as any system of difference must be. The creation of subjectivity (and of the unconscious) will thus be seen to accommodate the role of social experience within the subjectivity, and its ability to change over time.

³⁴ From this position it is possible to argue how the *International's* writers could have engaged in discursive struggle in the absence of social struggles of any significance. The reason I find this necessary is that in the paucity of biographical material available, the way the *International's* writers rejected racial discrimination is attributed, in a somewhat episodic fashion, to their own insights alone. This idealist position fails to take into account the discourses in which these writers participated.

Thompson 1984: 235).³⁵ In addition, it is in this 'space' that the subject is pre-constituted in past discourses which provide it with a history of interpellations which influence its encounters with the discourses to which it is further recruited (Dahlgren 1992: 213-14; Morley 1980: 166). 'Some discourses will appear to work in parallel, producing mutually confirming meanings, whilst others will intersect and contradict them, making individuality itself a "site of struggle"' (Hartley 1982: 140-41).

This argument retains Lacan's notion of subjectivity as essentially unconscious structure (*langue*), manifested in taken-for-granted behaviour (*parole*). However, while ideological interpellation works as unconscious structure, resistance to discourses involves the denaturalisation of common sense foregrounded as ideology, where subjectivity is brought into consciousness and thus rejected (objectified). Lacan explains this process towards consciousness as the social subject coming to see itself as separate from, and 'lacking', those things it must signify. 'The result is a subject characterised by an insatiable desire ... to sabotage the ideologically enshrined modes of discourse out of which it was itself formed' (Van Zyl 1982: 86).³⁶ This model, seeing the social subject as a discursive subject, or an interdiscourse (*langue*), suggests the workings of common sense. What we are (repressed) is that of which we are unaware (unconscious). That which we can objectify (Other) is that of which we have become aware (conscious). In other words, an individual is unaware of the subjectivity which determines his or her view of reality. But if common sense is rejected (objectified) by being allowed into consciousness, so too is a subject position rejected (McLellan 1986: 38-39).

Fairclough sums up this point by saying the 'effectiveness of resistance and the realisation of change depend on people developing a critical consciousness of

³⁵ I do not wish to suggest that the subject is an 'empty vessel'. For instance, psychoanalysis points to the ego not as independent of social constructions, but as a driving force intrinsic to individuality, which is therefore not exclusively interdiscursive. In this sense, Pêcheux's theory should be understood in relation to Althusser's theory of subjectivity, and not be taken as a holistic explanation of individuality.

³⁶ Even from such a rudimentary rendition of Lacan's theory, such as that given above, perhaps explains why 'converts' so passionately oppose their former causes with a vehemence seldom found in others. This may help explain how Bunting, Ivon Jones and other ISL members who took up the cudgels against racism in the white labour movement, and come to reject that of which they had apparently been previously unaware with the intensity that they did. Bunting had himself made no small contribution to the preservation of white supremacy on the Rand.

domination' (1989: 4). Problematisation (as a necessary condition of discursive struggle) is a creative process whereby 'the (once) familiar ways of doing things are no longer straightforwardly available' (Fairclough 1989: 39 169-70. Brackets inserted). The individual, using the resources of available discourses, consciously reconstructs 'novel combinations' to replace the now-problematic old ways of 'doing things' (*ibid.*: 171). Resistance in discourse becomes possible when the contradictory discourses in which the individual is constituted as a discursive subject become problematic. The subject becomes conscious of, and may come to restructure or even reject some of the discourses in which it was structured (Morley 1980: 167).

3.3. Conclusion

This chapter has put forward a theory of discursive struggle as being both a determined and creative social practice. By determination is meant that resistance to a particular use of language is delimited by the parameters of meanings available to people in the specific discourses in which they participate, and to which they are subject.

The creativity of the subject is socially determined, in the sense that creativity flourishes in particular social circumstances, when social struggles are constantly deconstructing orders of discourse; and the creativity of the subject is socially constitutive, in the sense that individual creative acts cumulatively establish restructured orders of discourse. Thus the social and the individual, the determined and the creative, are facets of a dialectical process of social fixation and transformation (Fairclough 1989: 172).

A discourse emerges within the power struggles of particular historical eras. But they are not mere textual play. They have real effects in the ways people using them come to understand themselves, others, and their world. In short, discourses determine by a set of regulatory rules what may possibly be said (and done) about a particular topic to be 'true', and silence by exclusion those concepts that are 'untrue'. These rules, which govern writing and thinking in a particular field, differ from one era to the next.

Each discourse brings into existence a specific configuration of social knowledge which either coheres with or contradicts the knowledges of other discourses in the discursive field. And where a discourse is dominant, its configuration of knowledge ('truth') will generally be accepted as common sense by

other social groups whose discourse has been marginalised (although hegemony shows that this closure is never complete). This power to establish and maintain social dominance is the ideological function of discourse.

As the social order is discursively constructed, so too can it be discursively challenged and redefined, but only within the parameters of discourse. The creativity of resistance to a dominant discursive order is made possible by the arbitrariness of the sign, whereby a signifier can be shifted across a range of signifieds within a discursive field. Writing as a form of resistance may therefore be seen as a struggle over meanings extant in a particular discourse, or at the intersection of competing discourses.

One explanation as to why the *International's* writers rejected the dominant discourses of their era may be found in Pêcheux's view of social subjects as a space between the discourses (which precede them) in which they participate. We may then see resistance as emerging from a contradiction between different discourses, such as discourses of militarism and internationalism. The resolution of this conflict may be expressed as problematisation, where the subject tries to resolve the contradictions between these different configurations of social knowledge.

The theory of discursive struggle proposed above also shows that it is not enough to speak the truth, but one has to be 'in the truth' as well, occupying a subject position provided by the rules of the discourse in which one participates. Individuals working within particular discursive practices cannot think or speak without responding to the unspoken contradictions, rules and constraints in their discourses, or risk being condemned to a silence of being unheard, for as long as the conditions of discourse remain unfavourable. It is not difficult to see why the *International's* struggle against racism was unpopular.

Chapter four

Discourse analysis

4.1. Introduction

The previous chapter explained discursive struggle in text production as a creative process conducted within the conditions of discourse (context) from which text derives its sense. This dialectic indicates that a text is more than a sequence of words, and a context is more than the socio-spatial conditions surrounding the text. Both are also part of the discourse concept in which they are mediated.

Discourse analysis therefore focuses on the connections between text and context, seeking to show the relationship between the structural properties of a text fragment and the formation of discourse which constitutes its deep structure. But while structuralist analysis seeks to foreground this structure, it is not found without attention to the linguistic forms of text (Brown & Yule 1983: 20; Fairclough 1995: 27-28). Instead, the deep structural 'properties of text are realised in its linguistic features' (Fairclough 1995: 189).

Using the theoretical framework provided in Chapter three, this chapter explains the two-stage model of discourse analysis (textual analysis and contextual analysis) by which specific text fragments will be analysed in Chapters nine and ten. The object of these analyses is to adduce from text a description of the deep structures underlying the *International's* discourse against racism.

4.1.1. Chapter outline

- Section 4.2. discusses the objectives of discourse analysis, and explains the two-stage analytical model used in this thesis.
- Section 4.2.1. provides the principles by which a single text fragment may be analysed as a window on a formation of discourse.
- Section 4.3. introduces textual analysis.

- Section 4.3.1. discusses those aspects of text that constitute its textuality.
- Section 4.3.2. discusses the concept of topic structure, by which a text fragment is chosen for analysis.
- This is followed in 4.3.3. by a brief explanation of the conventions used to analyse a text's grammatical forms.
- Section 4.3.4. explains how these findings are used to adduce at the discursive level a text's deep structure.
- Section 4.3.5. provides a brief example of textual analysis.
- Section 4.4. discusses how the findings of textual analysis might be applied in contextual analysis.
- Section 4.5. concludes this chapter with an appraisal of the proposed two-stage discourse analytical model.

4.2. Discourse analysis

Due to discourse being a complex of text, discursive practice and social-historical context, discourse analysis is a multi-disciplinary process that attends to all of these aspects. These include the grammatical regularities of text, and the traces of cognitive, cultural and historical contexts that impinge on text production. Among the cognitive and cultural contexts are background knowledge writers imply in communication, references they make to other texts (intertextuality), and the formation of discourse by which text is produced and from which it derives its sense. These conditions are identified through an analysis of a text's deep structures, which are generated mainly from the inventory of significations found in the symbolic community in which the text is used (Fairclough 1989: 112-13; Fairclough 1995: 74; Hall 1992: 292).

Each of these aspects of discourse is given attention either in the textual or in the contextual analysis phase of the discourse analysis procedure used in this study. The basic principle by which these aspects are separated is that textual analysis entails a linguistic description of the surface forms of a text, while contextual analysis attends to the contexts of its production. In other

words, textual analysis finds in text ‘traces of the productive process’ which it then uses as ‘cues in the process of interpretation’ in contextual analysis (Fairclough 1989: 25). But each is not necessarily a discrete phase of a sequential method, but is a different dimension of a complex interpretative process (Fairclough 1989: 25-27, 109; Van Dijk 1991b: 110). Discourse analysis therefore fluctuates between attention to a text’s grammatical properties, the discursive processes embedded in its forms, and the social-historical conditions which constitute its wider context (Thompson 1984: 139, 251; Van Dijk 1991a: 45-46).

Norman Fairclough contends that, despite the fact that social life is built in and around language, many social scientists have been reluctant to use textual analysis as one of their methods; mainly because the ‘frameworks for text analysis have been forbiddingly technical and formalistic’ (1995: 185). He argues that a detailed and rigorous analysis of a text’s surface forms ‘will always strengthen discourse analysis’ (*ibid.*: 187), and justifies this claim on the grounds that social structures (discourses) exist in a dialectical relation with social action (text production) (*ibid.*: 208). He emphasises his point by attributing Foucault’s ‘failure to specify detailed mechanisms of change’ to a lack of textual analysis (*ibid.*: 209).

Let me put the point more forcefully: the signifier (form) and the signified (content) constitute a dialectical and hence inseparable unity in the sign, so that one-sided attention to the signified is blind to the essential material side of meaning, and one-sided attention to the signifier (as in much linguistics) is blind to the essential meaningfulness of forms (Fairclough 1995: 212)

Fairclough bases his argument on Teun van Dijk’s view that discourse analysis should ‘map systematic analyses of ... texts onto systematic analyses of social contexts’ (quoted in Fairclough 1995: 187). This amounts to explaining discourse as an interface between text and context, whereby various structures of context impinge on the linguistic forms of text within the rules of a formation of discourse (Van Dijk 1991a: 110-11; Van Dijk 1991b: 45-47).

But Chapter three has shown that the text-context relation is not simply one between the 'linguistic' and the 'non-linguistic' in discourse.¹ Context is discursive in so far as it includes the system of language use, topic structure, background knowledge and the ideological assumptions that underlie text production, and which are assumed and evoked in a communicative event. These elements are linguistic in so far as they are structured in language. A non-discursive context includes the concrete socio-historical conditions surrounding the communicative event, and is clearly non-linguistic. Text, on the other hand, is properly understood as always discursive, while its constituent grammatical forms (such as clause, phrase and sentence structures) are in themselves non-discursive. However, while the term 'non-discursive text' is used here to refer to a mere grammatically-acceptable sequence of words, the term is actually an oxymoron (see 4.3.1.).

The complexities of the text-context relation make it necessary to alternate between what is "there" in the text, and what is 'there' in the formation of discourse upon which the text draws its meaning (Fairclough 1989: 110; Fairclough 1995: 96-97). Beyond the 'words on the page' (non-discursive text), meaning is interpreted at the level of discourse, as well as other contexts that impinge on the interpretation of text (Foucault 1986: 49; Van Dijk 1977: 3; Van Dijk 1991a: 119).

Fairclough separates these complexities into a division of textual analysis into linguistic and intertextual phases. Under linguistic analysis he includes an 'analysis of textual organisation above the level of the sentence, including intersentential cohesion' (1995: 188). Intertextual analysis, on the other hand, shows how texts selectively draw upon discourses. Fairclough's linguistic analysis is therefore textual, whereas his intertextual analysis is contextual in emphasis by mediating 'the connection between language and social context,' which bridges the gap between text and context (*ibid.*: 189). His schema may be illustrated as in Figure 6.

¹ By 'linguistic' I do not refer exclusively to the purely grammatical (non-discursive) elements of text. Linguistics obviously includes intersentential and even intertextual cohesion, which is discursive.

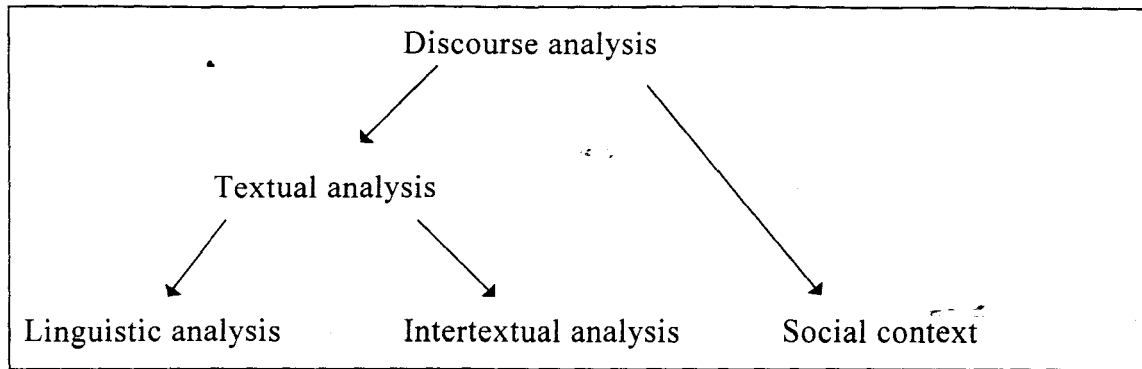


Figure 6

This schema shows characteristics similar to his an earlier discourse analytical proposal: ‘description of text, interpretation of the relationship between text and interaction, and explanation of the relationship between interaction and social context’ (1989: 109). He identifies text, interaction and social context as the three elements of discourse. Using his proposals, together with suggestions made by other writers in the field of discourse analysis, I propose a schema that separates the discursive from the non-discursive under the wider categories of text and context, as in Figure 7.²

² Linguist Teun van Dijk advocates a method divided between a ‘structural analysis’ and a ‘contextual analysis’, making ‘a distinction between different levels and dimensions of analysis’ (Van Dijk 1991b: 45-48). Michel Pêcheux’s similar method proposes first a ‘linguistic analysis to produce a syntactic representation of the linguistic surface of the discourse’, followed by an analysis of the various discursive processes at work beyond the linguistic surface of the text (Thompson 1984: 239). Roland Barthes adopts a similar approach, beginning with an analysis of the imminent meaning of a text, followed by an examination of the contextual factors relevant to an analysis of discourse (Barthes 1980, 77-79; 1981: 138-140). Tony Bennett’s advice is to leave the text as the last thing analysed, and only within an initial evaluation of the historical conditions of production in which the text is located (1992: 220). Each of these procedures to discourse analysis display an adherence to the Saussurean distinction between *parole* and *langue*. The principle is that behind the *parole* of text, being its ‘semantic elements or syntactic rules’, lies a *langue* of context, which includes the codes, grammar, background knowledge and ‘other texts’ the writer used in discourse, and by which the text is understood (Larson 1991b: 124).

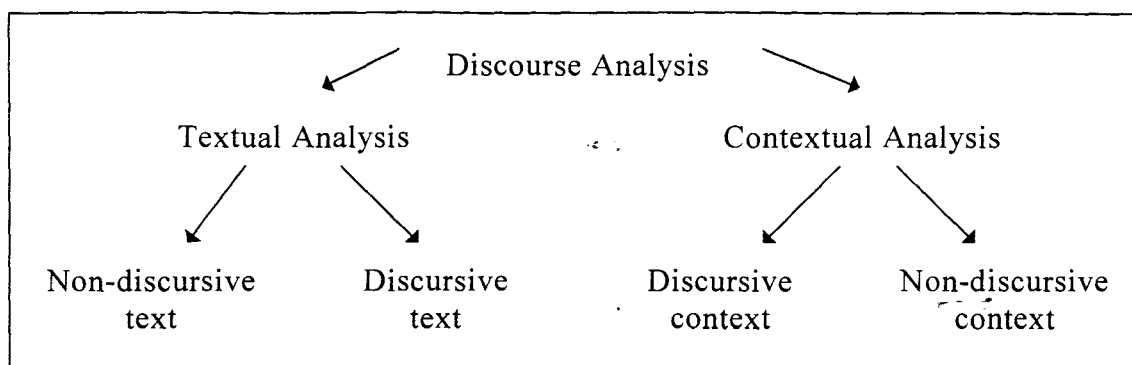


Figure 7

This schema implies that meaning is derived at one level from both the syntactic and discursive relations in text, and at another level from meaning relations which embody traces of both culture-specific cognitive processes and historical contexts embedded in text (Van Dijk 1991a: 116-17, 119; Van Zyl 1982: 75-76). So meaning is not ‘read off’ text, but is gleaned in an interpretative process that attends to the cultural ‘traces of the productive process’ embedded in the linguistic properties of text, and used as ‘cues’ for interpretation (Fairclough 1989: 24). Jonathan Culler puts this another way: ‘In all cases the analyst distinguishes *langue* from *parole*, tries to go behind the actions or objects themselves to the system of rules and relations which enables them to have meaning’ (1981: 139).

In my case, analysing the *International’s* discourse, meaning is clearly gleaned from my vantage point some 80 years after the event. Nonetheless, I have attempted to retain an awareness of the limitations entailed by this, and to develop a sensitivity to the cultural nuances of the argued period.

4.2.1. Text as a window on discourse

Each of the six discourse analyses conducted in Chapters nine and ten considers a different topic addressed within the same conditions underlying the *International’s* discourse. Using one fragment of text as representative of a discourse is justified by Foucault’s principle that, due to the systemic nature of discourse, any single text is a ‘window’ to an entire discursive formation. He portrays the production of texts as being ‘dispersed’ from a discursive source,

and it is the systematic nature of these dispersions that forms the basis of a discursive regularity.

Whenever one can describe, between a number of statements, such a system of dispersion, whenever, between objects, types of statement, concepts, or thematic choices, one can define a regularity (an order, correlations, positions and functionings, transformations), we can say, for the sake of convenience, that we are dealing with a discursive formation (Foucault 1986: 37-38).

For Foucault the building blocks of analysis are statements, being the most significant molecular units of discourse. A text, structured as statements, 'fits into a network that has its own history and conditions of existence' (Barrett 1990: 126). Accordingly, the analyst seeks through the 'pure description' of a text (a corpus of statements) to determine under 'what rules has a particular statement been made, and consequently according to what rules could other similar statements be made' (*ibid.*: 126-27). For Foucault, even if a discourse has long disappeared, 'and can be reconstructed on the basis of rare fragments, a language (*langue*) is still a system for possible statements, a finite body of rules that authenticates an infinite number of performances' (1986: 27).

4.3. Textual analysis

Fairclough argues in support of a detailed analysis of text on the grounds that 'texts constitute a major source of evidence for grounding claims about social structures, relations and processes', and 'provide evidence of ongoing processes such as the redefinition of social relationships ... or the reconstitution of knowledge and ideology' (1995: 209). He hereby acknowledges that the surface forms of texts are not only emanations of underlying discourses, but also provide evidence of a restructuring of those discourses by re-accentuating their linguistic resources (*ibid.*: 189). That is, texts also transform the resources out of which they are constructed. They display not only (determined) patterns of regularity, but also a (creative) disruption of that regularity. It is in seeking evidence of this disruption that textual analysis becomes particularly useful.

4.3.1. Text and textuality

Textual analysis pays particular attention to the texture of linguistic forms (by which a piece of writing ‘makes sense’) without which a corpus of writing would not be a text. The fundamental criteria of textuality are cohesive relations. The most basic of these are syntactic, or purely grammatical, and form the basis of ‘non-discursive’ textual analysis (see 4.3.3.). On the other hand, the object of discursive textual analysis is those cohesive relations (or meaning relations) such as synonymy, metonymy, antonymy and metaphor (see 4.3.4.), which are made evident through transformational rules by which ‘the relation between deep structure and surface structure is specified’ (O’Sullivan *et al.* 1994: 319). In all cases, however, and including intertextuality, these relations are set up ‘where the interpretation of some element in the discourse is dependent on that of another. The one presupposes the other in the sense that it cannot be effectively decoded except by recourse to it’ (Halliday & Hasan 1976: 4).

A more fundamental criteria for discursive textuality (and discursive struggle) is intention, which means that a writer must intend to achieve a specific goal in a communicative event.³ Accordingly, without intention a page is a meaningless (albeit grammatically acceptable) sequence of words (bar the structures readers might impose on it). Intention is therefore essentially discursive, and not an element of syntax (Renkema 1993: 36).

In French structuralist Paul Ricoeur’s theory, a writer’s intention within the constraints of symbolic culture constitutes a communicative event as a ‘work’. The writer ‘expresses the intention to say something about something to someone’, thus creatively manipulating by various meaning relations those significations extant in the discourses in which the writer participates (Edgar 1992: 116; Thompson 1984: 176). As a structure of meaning relations, a text is also a work by being a ‘structured totality’ irreducible to its composite sentences, and produced according to a literary genre (such as news writing)

³ It is important to note here that an ‘intention’ is not identical to a ‘signified’ – the mental concept in the sign conjured by the signifier.

which 'provides a generative framework which governs the production of discourse ... as a work of a certain kind'.⁴ It is a work furthermore by 'containing' the writer's personal response to a given situation, preserving that meaning at the 'instance of discourse', which can be 're-identified on future occasions' (Thompson 1984: 176-78; Thompson 1990: 141-42).

While it is important to note that an intention is not a signified, intention does not preclude (in semiotic struggle) the shifting of a signifier from one signified to another. This is usually accomplished through the predicative act,⁵ which endows a sentence with reference to other words and sentences in the text, or to other texts (Edgar 1992: 116-17). Intertextuality implies that a text is necessarily read in relation to other texts. In fact, all writing refers to other texts, and to a world reduced to structure of significations (Hawkes 1977: 144; Renkema 1993: 36-37; Van Zyl 1982: 75).⁶

4.3.2. Topics and topic structure

A discourse is a socially-determined system of language use by which a certain sense is made of a specific topic. But a topic is not a grammatical constituent of text. Writers have topics, not texts, even though these are found as 'traces' in text. A topic is a discursive element to do with what is being written about, or a text's information structure (Brown & Yule 1983: 68, 70-71, 82-83). A discourse has a topic area, and a text has a topic structure. The analyst decides according to topic structure where one chunk of text is 'about something', and another about 'something else' (Van Dijk 1991b: 50-52). The movement from one topic to another is a 'topic shift', which is usually formally partitioned by paragraph markers, but also by adverbial clauses (Brown & Yule 1983: 94, 99).

⁴ For example, the codes of journalism govern how discourse can be news writing.

⁵ A sentential structure in which a quality, a relation or some other aspect is predicated of a subject. The basic structure is subject-verb-object.

⁶ Michel Foucault, in his *Archaeology of Knowledge*, writes: 'The frontiers of a book are never clear-cut: beyond the title, the first line and the last full stop, beyond its internal configuration, its autonomous form, it is caught up in a system of references to other books, other texts, other sentences' (1986: 23).

A more flexible and inclusive concept is 'topic framework', which marks a group of possible topics that overlap in a discourse (Brown & Yule 1983: 73, 75, 78). A topic framework is an interpretative device that frames how the writer intends the text to be read. Once the elements of the topic framework and the interrelationships between these have been identified, the analyst has some basis to determine what the text is about (*ibid.*: 83). In news writing, this framework is further limited by a headline, which 'reduces the complex information of the text to its essential gist', thus instructing readers how to organise its constituent topics (Van Dijk 1991a: 72; Van Dijk 1991b: 50-51).

Topics and the way a discourse is staged contribute to creating texts that are 'open' or 'closed'. Open texts allow for viewpoints other than those intended by the writer. A closed text, on the other hand, attempts to reinforce one interpretation. This is generally the case with news reports interpretation. Denis McQuail points out that the larger the expected audience, the more closed the text. 'This suggests some form of ideological control ... with risks not being taken with a mass audience' (1994: 239-40). The *International* fits this description.

4.3.3. Analysing non-discursive texture

This section explains the conventions by which the mainly non-discursive elements of a text fragment will be analysed in textual analysis. For this, a structuralist approach to transformational-generative grammar is used to segment a text into its 'immediate constituents' (ICs), or phrase segments, 'to discover the relevant linguistic elements' (Palmer 1984: 121).⁷ These segments are 'bracketed' and labelled according to their grammatical functions.⁸ The

⁷ The principle by which IC analysis cuts sentences is binary: cutting into two, then continuing with each remaining segment until the smallest elements, or morphemes, are reached. Criticism that IC analysis does not identify one part of a sentence from other, nor the generative rules, need not be of concern here. These will be determined by phrase structure grammar. Structuralist analysis 'concentrates on sentences which have occurred, not on possible grammatical sentences in a language' (Palmer 1984: 121, 125-26).

⁸ Conventional bracket labels are: N = Noun; V = Verb; VP = Verb Phrase; P = Preposition; PP = Prepositional Phrase; S = Sentence/Clause; A = Adjective; AP = Adjectival Phrase; ADV = Adverb; ADVP = Adverbial Phrase; D = Determiner; M = Modal; DET = Determiner; Conjunction = CON; Infinitive = INF.

rule of expansion suggests an equivalence between a head and its expanded form. The above text, for example, can be expanded by the endocentric heads in each noun phrase to Socialism is anti-war, where NP₁ is found distributed metonymically across NP₂.

While substitution is designed to work out the relations between bracketed segments of text, this convention is less flexible where a constituent is distributed to different places in a text. One solution is to decipher those co-reference relations which provide a text's cohesion.¹¹ For instance, a noun phrase is often cataphorically distributed in a pronominal form (Brown & Yule 1983: 199).¹² Where this occurs, the pronoun is categorised as the noun phrase to which it refers. Bracketing conventions are more awkward in the case of recursion (or discontinuity), where elements belonging together are separated in a sequence. One solution is to restructure the text using the discursive rules of texture discussed in the next section, and illustrated in Section 5.3.5. Of course, these rules seldom apply independently of syntax.

4.3.4. Analysing discursive texture

This section discusses the analysis of those cohesive relations that are not syntactic. Those fundamental meaning relations that provide textuality

¹¹ A number of types of co-reference relations will be noted in discourse analysis in this study. These relations create cohesion in text. 'A text needs to reveal at least some features of cohesion to be identified as a text. Cohesion accounts for the essential semantic relations whereby any passage of speech or writing is enabled to function as a text' (Brown & Yule 1983: 195). Co-reference references may be exophoric, pointing to something outside the text. Endophoric relations may be anaphoric (referring back in the text), or cataphoric (referring forward to something in the text). Other relations are the repeated form (socialist theory ... socialist theory); partially repeated form (socialist theory ... theory); lexical replacement (socialist theory ... method and aim); pronominal form (socialist theory ... it); substituted form (socialist theory ... dogma); and the elided form, where the noun phrase is omitted but understood on the assumption of the earlier reference. Other cohesion relations within text can be provided by relations other than co-reference. These include the lexical relations of metonymy, antonymy, synonymy and metaphor, which are already discussed. These may at times be notes as part-whole (arm ... man); collocability (Monday, Tuesday...); clausal substitution, where a second clause or phrase makes the same claim as a former one; which is similar to closer syntactic repetition. Each of these forms are generally metonymic. The cohesion relation of comparison (socialist theory is better than militarism) accounts for metaphoric and antonymic relations (Brown & Yule 1983: 193-195, 199; Cook 1991: 20).

¹² Pronouns are expressions used by writers to refer co-referentially to given antecedent substantives. Where the text does not include these, the pronoun refers exophorically (outside the text) for its meaning (Brown & Yule 1983: 216).

generally perform one of three functions: equivalence, inclusion or opposition. Synonymy (symmetrical substitution) establishes an equivalence between two words, or segments of text. Similarly, a metaphor attributes meaning to one word by associating it with another. Antonymy places two elements of text in relations of opposition. Metonymy (asymmetrical substitution) includes the meaning of a word in that of another, where the part is made to stand for the whole, or vice versa. It is important to note that these relations apply also between phrases, sentences, and paragraphs (Berger 1991: 21-23; Fiske 1990: 92-95; Hawkes 1977: 77-79; Roelofse 1982: 50-51).

These relations function either on the paradigmatic (vertical) or the syntagmatic (horizontal) axes in the language system. This view is rooted in Saussurean semiotics, in which the fundamentals of a literary system are seen as the association of words on the paradigmatic axis, and the combination of words on the syntagmatic axis (Culler 1981: 139). On the paradigmatic axis, the meaning of a word is its relation of difference to other words in its paradigm of use. Those synonyms and antonyms not chosen define by association the word that is (Berger 1991: 13; Van Zyl 1982: 68). The syntagmatic axis concerns the narrative structure of text, where words are combined in a horizontal relation where each has a 'linear relationship with the words that precede and succeed it' (Hawkes 1977: 26).¹³

In other words, metaphor, synonymy and antonymy function by different forms of association on the paradigmatic axis, whereas metonymy functions by combination with other elements of text within a paradigm of use on the syntagmatic axis. Metaphor works by transposing qualities from one plane of reality (paradigm of use) to another. Metonyms work by associating meanings

¹³ This model corresponds to linguist Emile Benveniste's model of meaning relations as operating on a distributional (vertical) paradigmatic axis, and on an integrational (horizontal) syntagmatic axis. The predicative act, for instance, is distributional 'if the relations are situated on the same level'. Beyond its formal linguistic relations, its meaning is interpreted by integration with the 'higher' levels of context and discourse (Barthes 1981: 168-169). Barthes argues that whatever 'the horizontal concatenations of the narrative "thread" (that syntagmatic aspect of language which is its "diachronic" aspect due to its commitment to the passage of time' (Hawkes 1977: 27)) meaning relations work implicitly on the vertical axis (Barthes 1981: 169).

within the same plane when we construct from a part of the text that which is expected to follow from (shared) background knowledge. The metonym selected is crucial as by virtue of a metaphoric 'break' in the narrative thread it determines the rest of the event constructed. (Fiske 1990: 96-98; Hawkes 1977: 78; Roelofse 1982: 50-51) (I illustrate this process in 4.3.5.). On the syntagmatic axis is also found the function of reference – both to words and structures in the language system, and to 'extra-linguistic' reality, bearing in mind that this is mediated by culturally-specific significations in the language system (O'Sullivan *et al* 1994: 278).

4.3.4.1. Creativity

Ricoeur attributes the phenomenon of creativity principally to metaphor, which manipulates the 'intrinsic polysemy of words' (Thompson 1984: 176-77). The determination of this creative process lies in a writer drawing 'on topics, agendas, definitions of the situation from other sources and other discourses within the wider socio-cultural and political structure of which they are a differential part' (Hall 1980c: 129). In other words, determination generally works as the relation of signs within the same paradigm of use, whereas creativity entails relations between signs from different paradigms of use. Relations within the same paradigm are conventional in the language system, having become so through recurrent use. Using them is to state the obvious.

Fairclough suggests that 'overwording', or using 'many words which are near synonyms' (as in 'Socialism is the only uncompromising anti-war principle' (*International* 20/4/17)), indicates a 'focus of ideological struggle' (1989: 115). Furthermore, synonymic relations between these words indicate that these belong to 'either the ideology embedded in the discourse type, or the ideology being creatively generated in the text' (*ibid.*: 115-116).

4.3.5. Illustrating texture

This section provides a brief illustration of how textual analysis will be conducted in Chapters nine and ten. The three fundamental meaning relations discussed above are evident in the following text:

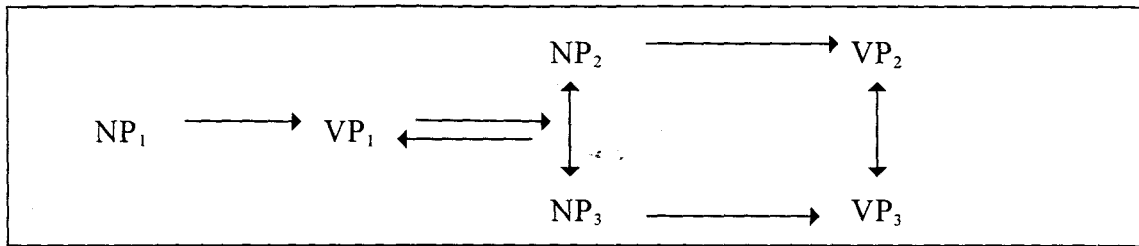


Figure 8

4.4. Context analysis

In contextual analysis the deep structure revealed in textual analysis is used as a mediating bridge by which to interpret the linguistic forms of the text in terms of its context of production.¹⁵ Apart from the socio-historical conditions which surround a communicative event, context includes the underlying formation of discourse in which a text is being used, as well as other texts and discourses upon which the text also draws its sense (Van Dijk 1977: 191-93, 228). It is in this sense that Fairclough points out, however, that accounts of individual discourse types 'appear to be largely accounts of ideal types, for actual texts are generally to a greater or lesser degree constituted through mixing these types' (Fairclough 1995: 189).

This contrasts with a common assumption in textual analysis that texts are (normally) linguistically homogeneous. In fact, real texts may be relatively homogeneous or relatively heterogeneous (*ibid.*).

Another aspects of discursive context is the hegemonic relations between contending groups in the social formation, and the ideologies they use in discourse. These relations form part of the taken-for-granted background knowledge writers use in communication to refer to 'something which readers are expected to recognise and confirm' (Seldon & Widdowson 1992: 128). This knowledge is not grounded in the text itself, but in 'the world which makes use of the text' (Barthes 1981: 182). The code used to make sense of text in this

¹⁵ Interpretation in this sense is more accurately a 're-interpretation', by which I mean that a text is always already an interpretation of social phenomena. Text is always a pre-interpreted domain (Thompson 1990: 289-90).

case is therefore accurately called the 'code of context' (Fairclough 1989: 22-24; Fiske 1990: 35-37; Hawkes 1977: 83). In terms of John Thompson's definition, background knowledge is used ideologically when writers use in taken-for-granted ways the (dominant) discourses in which that knowledge is embedded (1990: 54).¹⁶

But writers also produce texts to resolve problems they experience with the common sense ways their social world is represented. That is, problematisation occurs when a contradiction develops between the various discursive positions in which an individual is constituted as a social subject. Discourse conventions then become destabilised, resulting in a 'destructuring' and 'restructuring' of resources in text production. This is a semiotic process of disarticulation and rearticulation, whereby a writer engages in a social struggle to shift the sign from a common sense position in one discourse to a position in another, combining available linguistic resources in new relations of meaning which challenge the established discursive order (Fairclough 1989: 169, 171-72).

Chapters five to nine consider the various contextual conditions of the *International's* discourse, leaving to Chapters ten and eleven an application of the formal discourse analysis procedure discussed in this chapter.

4.5. Conclusion

This chapter has proposed a two-stage discourse analysis procedure based on the relations between text (*parole*) and context (*langue*) mediated in discourse, which is itself simultaneously a language text, a discursive practice, and a socio-cultural context.

Textual analysis amounts to drawing the links between a text and the traces of discursive practice embedded in its surface forms. This process entails a linguistic description of the text, leading by a process of substitution to a

¹⁶ Symbolic forms are ideological in so far as they serve to legitimate dominant power relations, possibly by concealing a system of representation as natural (Thompson 1990: 54). The analysis of ideology is therefore 'primarily concerned with the ways in which symbolic forms intersect with relations of power' (*ibid.*: 56).

description of the meaning relations embedded in its grammatical forms. This means that there are both discursive and non-discursive aspects of textuality. The non-discursive aspects are purely syntactic. The discursive aspects include the writer's intention, and meaning relations such as metaphor.

Contextual analysis entails interpreting the data revealed in textual analysis in terms of the conditions emanated in text. These are mainly the discursive contexts which include the formation(s) of discourse in which the text circulates, other texts it refers to, background knowledge the writer expects the reader to know, and the ideological structures carried in discourse. Non-discursive context includes the wider social formation which surrounds the communicative act.

Discourse analysis			
Textual analysis		Contextual analysis	
Non-discursive text <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grammatical textuality 	Discursive text <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topic • Intention • Metaphor • Metonymy • Synonymy • Antonymy 	Discursive context <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intertextuality • Discourses • Background knowledge • Hegemony • Ideology 	Non-discursive context <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Socio-historical conditions and events
Non-discursive level	Discursive level		Non-discursive level
	Creativity	Determination	

Figure 9

It is at the discursive level that the dialectic between text and context is most evident. It is also at this level that the division between textual and contextual analysis becomes blurred, indicating an interpenetration between text and context. This interpenetration, which is the focus of Fairclough's (1995) intertextual analysis, also shows that text production is simultaneously determined, in that it is delimited by the conditions of discourse; and creative in

so far as these resources are restructured in novel forms which challenge convention. At the discursive level, contextual analysis therefore focuses on determination in discourse, and textual analysis on creativity. In the extra-discursive realm are found the pure grammatical text and the non-discursive context. How each of these elements fits into a unified schema of discourse analysis is illustrated in Figure 9 above.

One problem encountered in this procedure is the disparity of rigour between textual and contextual analyses. While a rigorous analysis of text adds a more certain grounding to the results of discourse analysis, identifying configurations of discourse remains 'an interpretative exercise which depends upon the analyst's experience of and sensitivity to relevant orders of discourse, as well as the analyst's interpretative and strategic biases' (Fairclough 1995: 212).

This difficulty is not helped by the discursive heterogeneity of texts. Foucault's response to the problem, by suggesting that the characteristics of a discourse be derived by 'pure description' (1986: 27), eschews any suggestion that mapping out a formation of discourse is straight forward. Fairclough concedes that 'one really needs to engage in social and ethnographic research over significant periods of time in particular institutional settings' (1995: 212). However, these methods are clearly not available to me. All that remains as evidence of past discourses are textual fragments of the *International* and history scholarship concerning its period. This makes a rigorous textual analysis doubly imperative.

Chapter five

Class, race, nation

5.1. Introduction

The connections between class, race and nation have significantly framed debate on South African political history. Some writers explain race as the modality of class relations. Others closely identify race with class. But this thesis takes the view of class as fragmented in discourse, and articulated as race and nation.

These three concepts are bound up in the *International's* discourse. This chapter defines these terms for the purpose of finding suitable starting points from which to analyse and describe how the *International's* writers used them.

5.1.1. Outline

The chapter begins (5.2.) by indicating that the terms race, class and nation are understood in this thesis as socially-constructed concepts structured in discourse.

- Section 5.2.1. discusses the concept of race.
- Section 5.2.2. discusses the class concept.
- Section 5.2.3. discusses how these concepts might be related in the context of the *International's* period.
- The chapter shifts to the concept of nation and nationalism (5.2.4.). Further connections are made here between all three concepts and the context of the *International's* discourse.
- Section 5.3. concludes the chapter with a summary of how these definitions will apply in analysis.

5.2. Concepts fractured in discourse

Not only were white workers part of a hierarchy, but many believed in it as a just and correct form of social organisation; not only were black workers ultra-subordinated, but not a few came to think of themselves as 'only natives'; not only was capital British in origin, but a great number of people came to value 'British's' as a superior cultural attitude, while a great

number of others, Afrikaners in particular, came to feel the subordination to capital in terms of 'national' oppression for this reason (Bozzoli 1981: 105).

Historian Belinda Bozzoli's description of labour relations on the Witwatersrand at the turn of the twentieth century indicates some characteristics of discursive practice. Being a 'British', 'Afrikaner' or 'native' worker was as much a matter of signification subsisting in symbolic culture as it was a concrete manifestation of power relations. Discourse produces and reproduces the relations of power and systems of knowledge which characterise a social formation. While the discourses people use shape the way they understand their world, they also constitute social relations of power between social groups.

5.2.1. Race

It is generally true to say that in South Africa, to differing degrees and in differing periods, all aspects of individuality and social relations have been determined by race (Boonzaier 1988: 58; Wolpe 1988: 2). The view taken in this thesis is that race is a social construct by which 'other' social groups are represented according to 'physical and morphological characteristics', culture, descent, and the power relations between social groups (Bekker 1993: 18; Degenaar 1993: 11).¹

In accordance with the theoretical framework of this thesis, race is a social construct referring to knowledge of 'others' as it is represented in ideological discourse. Discourses, as ways of 'talking, thinking or representing a particular subject or topic', produce knowledge which influences social practice and relations of power (Hall 1992: 295). In the discursive sense, racism

¹ Both Simon Bekker (1993) and Johan Degenaar (1993) write within a discourse attempting to retrieve the language of group distinction (race) from its stigma earned in the language of apartheid. They therefore prefer using the concept of ethnicity to denote a homogeneous social group largely united by a common culture. Bekker lists as the characteristics of an ethnic community: a collective name, common myth of descent, shared history, distinctive shared culture, association with a specific territory, and a sense of solidarity (1993: 22). But while Bekker argues that the ethnicity concept can coexist with other social categories such as class (*ibid.*: 14), it does not seem bedevilled by the same difficulties found in anthropological discourse. However, I will continue to use the term race to denote a social fraction, as I am using the term principally as a concept in discourse.

is a social practice whereby specific values are attributed to groups of people in such a way as to perceive them as inferior, and treated as such (Leatt *et al.* 1986: 68, 77; Miles 1989: 77-84).

'Others' may be subordinated in discourse by this knowledge. This view is found in Stuart Hall's (1992) reference to the discourse of 'the West and the Rest', in which the world is divided into binary opposites of good-bad, civilised-uncivilised, white-black, noble-savage, and so on. But morphology has been often as important as colour as a criteria of 'race classification' (Callinicos 1993: 17), as was evident in hostile relations between English and Afrikaans-speaking miners during the early industrialisation of the Rand (see Appendix E).

Two theoretical approaches have dominated in explanations of racism. The liberal view has generally explained racism as a prejudicial attitude detrimental to capital's profit requirements (Lipton 1985). Marxist scholars, on the other hand, draw the opposite conclusion. In their class-based approaches, they see racism as 'part of a historically specific relationship of oppression in order to justify the existence of that relationship'. Racial discrimination is functional for capitalism (Callinicos 1993: 18, 38-39, 40). Harold Wolpe gives varied merit to both approaches, arguing that any viable approach to analysing labour relations in South Africa has to account for an interpenetration of class and race (1988: 48-49, 71-74).²

5.2.2. Class

Class is generally defined as the relationship social members have to the common economic system of their society. Members of the capitalist class, for instance, share a common ownership and control of the means of production, while the working class lacks ownership and control.³ If a class is defined as

² In his discussion of various approaches to race in South Africa, Simon Bekker concludes that these follow two basic categories. One concerns the 'statutory imposition of racial classification' understood against a background of its historical conditions of emergence. The other accounts for the effects of racial classification at the subjective level (1993: 19).

³ The *International's* writers used the class concept in an 'objective' economic sense, characteristic of basic Marxist thinking, where all those denied ownership of the means of

constituting all those who share a common relation to the means of production, then all workers belong to the same (abstract) class, irrespective of race (Callinicos 1993: 43-44, 67, 68).⁴

Of course, South Africa's social structure during the *International's* period of publication is barely explained by this definition alone, even though its writers stuck to it rigidly.⁵ On the subjective level, Bozzoli points out that what an individual worker might mean by 'class' is often a distillation of culture, ethnicity, and fragments of ideology, and therefore tends to differ considerably from the more 'analytical' use of the term given above (1987: 36-38). Wolpe factors this consideration into his understanding of class as a unitary entity differentiated by relations of exploitation, and 'fractured in discourse' (1988: 50-54). Class exists 'by definition' (*ibid.*: 13), an abstraction specified by a fundamental ownership of capital on the one side, and non-ownership on the other (*ibid.*: 50).

5.2.3. Class and race

Among the fractures in class structure are race, gender, control over labour power, and occupations. In considering the South African working class, by far the most attention has been given to race, which Wolpe gives as the 'major

production are members of the working class. Bunting makes specific reference to the *Communist Manifest* when writing about class, understanding society as divided between a capitalist class (bourgeoisie) and a working class (proletariat).

⁴ Historian Donald Denoon, writing about how capitalist relations on the Rand in 1907 were understood there at the time, defines capitalists as a class of owners of capital and machinery, employing non-owners who work for a wage below the value of the goods they produce (1980: 116).

⁵ As writers for a paper championing the cause of the 'working class', the class position of at least two of the *International's* writers appears problematic. Lawyer Bunting and bookkeeper Jones were not 'working class', but bourgeois with working class sympathies articulated in the socialist revolutionary language of the defunct Second International. Bill Andrews and others were an exception. Generally, 'middle class' was used in the *International* in a derogatory sense (7/1/16), where it usually denoted an alliance with the capitalist class. At best, Jones points out, this class has fought 'for political reforms for their own trade necessities only, and that whenever the workmen have proceeded to extend citizenship in the State to citizenship in Industry they have been left to fight alone' (25/2/16). However, as Jones explains: 'Men of property sometimes are proletarian in philosophy. The mouthpieces of capitalism are wage-earners.... Men derived from professional classes have been some of the best exponents of working class philosophy. To none of these are we more indebted than to the materially bourgeois but intellectually proletarian Marx and Engels' (*ibid.*).

means of the internal differentiation of classes' (*ibid.*: 15). For instance, white workers had far greater control over their labour power than did black workers, from whom whites were distinguished by their largely supervisory role in the production process (see Appendix B). White workers belonged to a category fractured from the black labouring majority, but remained nonetheless controlled by capital (Ticktin 1991: 18). Both Alex Callinicos (1993) and Hillel Ticktin (1991) factor this key point into their similar explanations, based on Marxist political economy, on how capitalism in South Africa used racial discrimination to its own benefit.

Wolpe rejects any autonomy of class and race, but favours a connection between the two without reducing one to the other. He thereby posits a contingent relationship between class, race and capitalist economy, where class is constituted by fractures of 'politics, culture, and ideology within that division of labour', differentiated by race in the absence of a common class discourse (1988: 15, 50-54).

It is true that a more or less extensive unity may be brought about politically through the articulation, within a common discourse, of specific interests which are linked to the common property which defines the class. But, and this is the fundamental point, that unity is not given by the concepts of labour-power and capital, it is constituted concretely through practices, discourse and organisations. One might say that class unity, when it occurs, is a conjectural phenomenon (*ibid.*: 51).

Callinicos, more emphatically than Wolpe, follows the line that racism has been an instrument of capital. This theme is central to (at least) Frederick Johnstone's (1979) study of black exploitation on the mines from the 1880s onward; to Bozzoli's (1981) study of how 'ruling class ideology' sought to justify unequal class and race relations in the mining industry during the same period; and Elaine Katz's (1976) research on the politics of white labour on the Rand up to 1913. Callinicos draws the point that white workers generally found in racist practice a means to maintain their status as an 'aristocracy of labour'. Furthermore, racism was functional for capital in keeping the work force internally fragmented in order to prevent it from uniting against a system which exploited white almost as much as black workers (1993: 35, 38-39, 44).

Rob Davies succinctly sums up this point in the context of labour relations in South Africa during the 1910s:

The struggle for the powers of possession in the South African mining industry was thus neither a struggle for the elimination of whites from the industry nor ... a struggle in which capital sought to establish a non-racial structure of relations of production. Rather it was a struggle in which capital took the offensive seeking to bring about a greater separation between the tasks of conception, co-ordination and control on the one hand and productive manual labour on the other, in order to restrict white employment to new petty bourgeois mental and supervisory places; principally the latter (1979: 67).

Callinicos explains this in terms which could have been penned by one of the *International's* writers:

(Racism arises) from the divisions that are fostered among different groups of workers whose competition on the job market is intensified by the fact that they often come from different parts of the world and are drawn together within the borders of the same state by capital's insatiable appetite for labour power. Racism therefore serves to set workers against each other, and to prevent them from effectively fighting the bosses who exploit them all, irrespective of their colour or national origin.... (R)acism operates against the interests of *all* classes, white and black alike. A divided working class harms even those workers who are not direct victims of racism. Therefore a central component of any anti-racist strategy must be to win white workers to identify their interests with those black people who suffer racial oppression (1993: 14-15. Insert in brackets).

5.2.4. Nation and nationalism

While racial identity is a common modality by which class interests are historically lived out, and thus become 'interiorised in class struggles' (Wolpe 1988: 52), the corresponding political appeal of nationalism⁶ indicates another form by which class struggles are expressed (Bozzoli 1983: 8). In South Africa this ideology has been expressed in the discourses of both African and Afrikaner political organisation, where nationalism has been the political expression of

⁶ Nationalism asserts the existence of natural divisions in the world's population. Nationalism asserts a division between social groups each with a distinct cultural profile, and therefore each with its own character and destiny. It asserts that members of racial groups realise their destiny as a common group separate from the destinies of other race groups. The parameters of race and nation overlap to determine the criteria of national membership.

politically subordinate groups seeking to address the conditions of their subordination through largely race-based political programmes.

The *International's* writers held this view, and therefore drew a connection between racism and nationalism. They understood both as assisting capitalist class interests, which militating against the formation of a united working class. They saw this despite significant differences between African and Afrikaner nationalism. Afrikaner nationalism was born largely out of resistance to a British colonial dispensation that threatened to extinguish Afrikaner national identity. It was therefore a policy of national exclusion. African nationalism, on the other hand, was a movement seeking to redress the exclusion of blacks from white civil and political society.⁷

Afrikaner nationalism was primarily a programme of 'ethnic mobilisation', concerned with maintaining a separate racial and cultural identity through the self-determination of those white South Africans whose mother-tongue was Afrikaans, and who shared a common history (Leatt *et al.* 1986: 67-68, 75). 'When group claims become cast in a set of principles which form the basis for legitimising and mobilising group activities – when claims and programmes become elements of an ideology – then group identities tend to become more salient' (Bekker 1993: 23).⁸

The South African Native National Congress (SANNC), founded in 1912, was more that of a multi-ethnic alliance seeking political co-operation, than a nationalist group seeking either political dominance or secession. The SANNC

⁷ This difference can be further explained by Bekker's distinction between the political claims of an 'ethnic' community, and those made by nationalist groups. Ethnic group claims generally concern such issues as resource allocation and opportunity in a common economy. Nationalist claims are generally for the sovereignty of an ethnic group (Bekker 1993: 22-23). However, Bekker also points out that this distinction is often blurred. 'Ethnic claims and programmes will often incorporate strong emergent nationalist tendencies which seek sovereignty for the ethnic community' (*ibid.*: 23).

⁸ When the National Party (NP) was formed in 1914, it became the institutional carrier of the Afrikaner nationalist ideology. The party's first official statement defined the link between Afrikaner nationalism and race this way: 'In our attitude towards the Natives the fundamental principle is the supremacy of the European population in a spirit of Christian trusteeship utterly rejecting every attempt to mix races. The party further aims at providing the Native with the opportunity to develop according to his natural talents and aptitudes' (Quoted in Leatt *et al.* 1986: 76, 77-78).

was founded as a response to discriminatory property laws being drafted at the time, to prevent Africans from occupying land outside the reserves. Land rights were soon negated by the 1913 Land Act, against SANNC appeals to the Crown (Karis & Carter 1987: 62-64).⁹ Continuing discriminatory measures kept the organisation's *raison d'être* alive.

This thesis will show that the antipathy the *International's* writers had towards Afrikaner and African nationalism was largely determined by their struggles in and over the discourses of militarism and labour. During the 1910s, socialists viewed nationalism as a political programme which prescribed allegiance to the nation above any other ties. Furthermore, and reinforced by the Leninist perspective of the war being an imperial capitalist squabble over colonies and markets, socialists saw nationalism as a 'process through which the European ruling classes sought to incorporate newly enfranchised and increasingly organised workers into the same community' (Callinicos 1993: 38).

Among explanations for the division of the working class into national patriotic groups, two reflect opinion voiced in the *International*. One is that workers were encouraged by 'their ruling classes' to identify with their nations against other nations, setting worker against worker (Callinicos 1993: 38). The other sees this trend as a development of trade unionism, where the 'defence of jobs, of industries and of countries ... provided the ideal division of the class, by craft, sector and country' (Ticktin 1991: 17).

⁹ The roots of African nationalism in South Africa can be traced to the early nineteenth century - to the impact of Christian missionaries and schools; the development in the Cape of a liberal non-racial constitution; and later to the exposure of an African elite to international currents, especially the American civil rights and the Pan Africanist movements. Before 1912 there were signs of black rejection of white domination. The organisation, Imbumba Yama Afrika (Union of Africans), was a political organisation cut across denominational lines and representing African interests in Transkei (Karis & Carter 1987: 4-8). Aware that Britain was not going to extend the Cape franchise to these areas, the South African Native Convention (SANC) met in Bloemfontein in 1909. The organisation resolved to plea for the extension of the Cape tradition to the all-white national convention, which was preparing a new constitution for a unified South Africa. The SANC's resolution was that all persons within the Union be entitled to full and equal rights and privileges subject only to the common law and applicable to all citizens. The SANC's bid failed. A delegation to London also failed, and the draft constitution became law of the Union in 1910 (*ibid.*: 8-12, 18-29).

5.3. Conclusion

In the review of the concepts of race, class and nation discussed above, Wolpe's views come closest to the theoretical framework of this thesis. He sees class as fractured in discourse into a racial modality. Similarly, Bozzoli sees nationalism as a modality of class experience. These views serve as useful points of reference in explaining the *International's* discourse. On the other hand, there is a remarkable similarity between the ways in which the *International's* writers used these terms, and the explanations put forward by Callinicos and Ticktin serve the second purpose. Their views serve as useful points of reference in describing the *International's* discourse.

Concerning explanation, Stuart Hall's (1992) description of how the concepts of (particularly) race and nation are used to differentiate one group from another is the most useful theory here. He shows that the terms by which 'others' are represented (as a binary opposite in the language system) are necessary for the formation of a self-image of the group (such as white workers) that uses the representation. As a system of knowledge, a discourse has consequences both for those who employ it and for those who are subject to it. Other 'races' and 'nations' are the points of reference by which those who use these terms in discourse represent themselves in relation to these 'others'.

Chapter six

Roots of the ISL's anti-militarism

6.1 Introduction

In Chapter one, the formation of the International Socialist League is attributed to a conflict in the South African Labour Party over whether to support war against Germany in 1914. The majority in the SALP were swept up in a tide of national patriotism. Those members who were to form the ISL continued to subscribe to the principles of international socialism, and therefore opposed any policy which threatened working class solidarity (see Chapter one, footnote No. 2, 3). Chapter one also indicated that the *International's* discourse against militarism (along with its anti-trade unionism) constituted the language in which the paper's non-racial stance was eventually fashioned.

The *International's* opposition to war was consistent with policy in the Second International. The Copenhagen, Stuttgart and Basle conferences paid particular attention to this question, and resolved that socialists and labour parties would stand in solidarity in the interests of international labour should the worst happen. Apart from Lenin and Polish socialist leader Rosa Luxemburg, a central opponent of militarism was German socialist leader Karl Liebknecht (regularly quoted in the *International*).

The salient points the *International's* writers adopted from Liebknecht were the international aspect of anti-militarism, in terms of which nationalist struggles were rejected, and the primary importance of anti-militarism as the foundation of class struggle.¹ Of course, when war did break out, most socialist

¹ Karl Liebknecht's *Militarism and Anti-Militarism* (1907) summarised much of the Second International's thinking on the war issue. Liebknecht held that militarism was a product of class societies. He summed up European history as a series of conflicts between states and nations; and the history of nations as a series of conflicts between classes within them. Militarism, therefore, was fundamentally against the interests of the working class because it forced workers of one nation to take up arms against workers of another in the interests of capitalism. He understood, however, that their taking up of arms seldom needed coercion. Bearing a contradictory consciousness, workers came to adopt the interests of their rulers as their own, and readily took to the battlefield in the national interest. Liebknecht set out in his book to explain how the anti-militarist struggle was to be waged. The phenomena of contradictory consciousness, and the growing gap between the armed might of militarist nations and the

parties in 1914 supported their national governments, and the Second International collapsed, leaving a minority of socialists to salvage the movement through the setting up of the Third International in 1919.

This chapter describes the events which led up to the ISL breaking away from the SALP. It was within exigencies of this struggle that the *International's* discourse against militarism was forged, and which constrained their later treatment of the topic.

6.1.1. Chapter outline

This chapter provides a chronological account of the formation of the ISL.

- It begins with an account of the earliest dissension in the SALP (6.2.).
- The first opposition to pro-war moves came from a small group of socialists who formed an anti-war organisation, the War on War League (6.2.1.).
- But the pro-war faction gained control of the SALP, and the organisation's left wing was marginalised (6.2.2.).
- The former War on War League members regathered as the ISL as a ginger group within the SALP (6.2.3.).
- But after two weeks they chose to leave the party (6.2.4.).
- The benefits of having taken this option are briefly assessed in the conclusion (6.3.).

unarmed masses, meant for him that special stress had to be placed on the conscious involvement of workers in the class struggle. Anti-militarism was an integral part of the class struggle because militarism was a pillar of the capitalist edifice. Anti-militarism, therefore, had to be linked to the general economic, social and political struggles of the working class. He warned that anti-militarism should not be subordinated to the general struggle, but should become the king-pin of the class struggle for its ability to invigorate the socialist movement. Liebnicht did not support nationalist struggles during the First World War. An anti-imperialist, an uncompromising opponent of militarism, and a critic of real politik, he implicitly criticised and repudiated Irish socialist-nationalist James Connolly's role in the Dublin Easter uprising (Young 1988: 72-73, 74, 76) (see Chapter 1 footnote No. 2).

6.2. Dissension over the war

The controversy that ensued in the SALP over whether or not to endorse the government's war effort was a microcosm of the dissension that emerged in socialist organisations world-wide at the time. The party was not alone in abandoning internationalist principles by choosing to support the war. But the result was a schism from which it never fully recovered (Forman & Odendaal 1992: 45).

The party had debated the militarism issue at each conference since its formation in 1910. In 1912, the mood in the party was that citizens had a duty to take up arms in defence of their country. But its leadership and minority left wing continued to urge international labour solidarity, as formulated in the Basle Anti-War Manifesto (Yudelman 1983: 126; Ticktin 1969: 3).²

The party's January 1913 conference voted to affiliate to the Second International, but remained ambivalent over the Basle resolution. Members proposed that the Defence Act of 1912 should be amended to prevent the citizens' force from being used against strikers, as it was in 1907. Creswell objected, saying an army was essential if thousands of black workers rioted on the Rand. The party's general secretary, HG Bernberg, replied that black workers had every right to strike, and the proposal was dropped. The Conference did eventually adopt a motion introduced at the International Socialist Conference in Copenhagen in 1910, attended by Andrews, that war should be prevented by prior arrangement with labour organisations in 'enemy' countries (Ticktin 1969: 62).

When war did break out in 1914, contradictions in the party came to a head. While the executive opposed the war effort, ordinary party members were swept up with patriotism. On August 2, days before Britain declared war, the

² The International Socialist Congress at Basle, in 1912, adopted its Anti-War Manifesto, of which Lenin and Rosa Luxemburg were the prime movers. The conference foresaw the type of war which broke out in 1914, and declared it reactionary, prepared in the interests of imperial capital. The congress declared that workers world-wide should consider it a crime to shoot each other down, and that the war would lead to a proletarian revolution (Simons 1983: 180-86).

executive chaired by Andrews denounced all militarism, and appealed to workers world-wide to organise and refrain from participating 'in this unjust war'. The South African Industrial Federation (SAIF), the Social Democratic Federation and the Social Democratic Party in Durban adopted similar resolutions.

But the SALP newspaper, the *Worker*, edited by Wilfred Wybergh, welcomed the war and urged party members to do the same. The excuse both Wybergh and Creswell gave was that the German workers had not kept to their promise of staging anti-war protests (Cope 1943: 162; Tickton 1969: 62-63; Roux 1944: 24). Within two months the SAIF and its affiliates had flocked to the colours. Most SALP branches followed suite, some even offering themselves as 'labour legions' (Cope 1943: 163; Forman & Odendaal 1992: 45; Tickton 1969: 64).

War fever gripped black organisations too. The Cape Town-based African Political Organisation (APO) undertook to raise a 'Coloured War Fund'. 'Today the Empire needs us. What nobler duty is there than to respond to the call of your king and country,' said the APO newspaper, *APO*.³ South African Native National Congress leaders adjourned a special conference on the 1913 Land Act to offer the government their assistance under the illusion that the Empire stood for equality and justice, and that patriotism would bring social and political rewards (Simons 1983: 176, 178-79; Walshe 1987: 52-53).

6.2.1. War on war

The first organised resistance to the SALP's pro-war lobby came on 19 September 1914, when a socialist Colin Wade issued a pamphlet calling for

³ The main policy of the African Political Organisation, founded in Cape Town in September 1902, was to offset the subordinate position of mainly educated and property-owning coloureds in the Cape Colony. The organisation also fought against the 'black' status of coloureds in the Orange River Colony (from 1907) and the Transvaal (1906), where they were denied the vote. While the APO showed little sympathy towards African issues, its most celebrated leader, Dr Abdullah Abdurahman, led moves towards co-operation with the SANNC in 1909. That year the APO and the newly formed Native National Convention protested against the exclusion of 'non-Europeans' from parliament. The organisation was renamed the African People's Organisation in 1919 (du Pré 1994: 47, 49, 51-52).

'war on war'. The pamphlet became a weekly newspaper, the *War on War Gazette*. A committee, the War on War League, was formed under the leadership of Wade, Bunting and other SALP socialists. The League aimed to win the SALP back to international socialist principles. Its constitution was pacifist. Opposition to war was the sole criterion for membership.

Andrews was caught in a predicament. His tendency to stick with the trend of a labour movement,⁴ and his being a Member of Parliament, pulled him in the opposite direction. Also, jingoism was an election winner. However, his personal sentiments were with the League, and he later declared in parliament how much he regretted having voted with the SALP and the government in favour of war (Cope 1943: 163, 164-65, 168; Forman & Odendaal 1992: 46; Lerumo 1980: 32; Simons 1983: 179-80; Tickton 1969: 64).

The *Gazette* drew new members to the League, many of whom were Afrikaners with little sentiment for the Empire. But the paper was thoroughly censored. Bunting was even refused permission to print the Sixth Commandment – 'Thou shalt not kill' – being told by the government censor, Hugh Wyndham, that the Bible was a 'dangerous book' (*International* 20/7/17). Ruthless censorship eventually forced the *Gazette* to close 28 November 1914 (Cope 1943: 166, 168; Forman & Odendaal 1992: 46; Ticktin 1969: 65).

6.2.2. SALP rejects internationalism

Creswell was away on the German South West Africa expedition when the SALP held its Annual Conference in East London in January 1915. The war was top of the agenda, but the best the conference managed was a 'Neutrality Resolution', leaving the question of enlistment to individual conscience.

⁴ 'Bill Andrews was not among the League's sponsors. It was one of Andrews's characteristics to hesitate long and ponder deeply before associating himself with any stand which would be unpopular in the trade union movement.... He was opposed to the war, and yet he knew that to stand out and fight against the current working-class opinion would shatter the great movement he had shared so largely to build. The whole weight of tradition and upbringing as a skilled British artisan were against him.... Strongest of all was his lifelong training in the working-class movement to work with the team, the union or the party, even when disagreeing with decisions' (Forman & Odendaal 1992: 46).

Andrews was re-elected to the chair, and David Ivon Jones as secretary (Cope 1943: 166, 169; Ticktin 1969: 66).⁵

Creswell returned in July and at once issued his 'See it Through' manifesto, in which he spoke of his 'duty to the country of which I am a citizen'. The pro-war section of the SALP demanded the 'Neutrality Resolution' be revoked. 'Jack' Cope says the 'capitalist press' lectured Creswell 'as though he were a school prefect who had allowed the boys to get out of hand' (1943: 165). The executive continued to denounce Smuts and the war effort. Andrews, Wade, Jones, Gideon Botha, James Forrester-Brown, George Mason, Bunting and 12 others drew up a reply to Creswell's manifesto in a document, 'The Labour Party's duty in the war', which warned that war would bring disaster on the working class. 'We have natural relationships beyond South Africa, not only with the British, but with the whole international working-class movement ... We stand by international socialism.' It repeated the Basle position that the war had been caused by the scramble for markets and imperial ambitions. Creswell replied that '(i)t leaves me quite cold to be told that this or that course is made imperative by the principles of international socialism' (Cope 1943: 165, 169-70, 171; Forman & Odendaal 1992: 47; Ticktin 1969: 59, 65; Lerumo 1980: 33).

With the approach of the general election, pressure grew to define the party's policy towards the war. A special conference was held on 22 and 23 August. Creswell introduced a pro-war motion from the party's Bezuidenhout Valley branch. Other branches replied with anti-war motions. The ensuing discussion was cut short by a debate on the definition of party membership proposed by Creswell the previous year: 'Membership of the party shall be open to all persons of either sex of the age of 18 and upwards who endorse the objects

⁵ Andrews later wrote that this resolution was an honest but mistaken attempt to keep the party together, even though the vote 'would probably have been anti-war' as the majority, he said, were internationalists (*International* 1/9/16). He writes a year earlier: 'Not, let us admit, that that majority represented the exact feeling of the rank and file on the war; but the passions of war and the electioneering virus had not yet clouded the sense of the branches on the value of the internationalists to the party' (10/9/15). Andrews seems to indicate in these passages that the attitude of the majority was initially in line with that of the party leadership, but had been swayed by pro-war propaganda.

of the party and are accepted by the branch of the party which they choose to join. It is undesirable to admit Coloured persons to membership who have not given practical guarantees that they agree to the party's policy of upholding and advancing white standards' (Cope 1943: 172; Roux 1944: 25).

Andrews objected, saying the working class in South Africa included black workers. The Creswell faction also demanded candidates support the war. Having to stand for election on a war and racism ticket was too much for Andrews. He, three leading officials and seven executive members resigned their positions. 'Drum beating Dan Dingwall' tore up their party pledges (*International* 1/9/16).

6.2.3. Founding of the International Socialist League

The International Socialist League of the SALP was formed after the conference, and took up the former War on War League's mandate to uphold international socialism within the SALP. A weekly newspaper, the *International*, was launched on 10 September, 1915, and drew away from the *Worker* its best writers. The *Worker* folded before the year was out, leaving the SALP without a mouthpiece (Simons 1983: 184).

Like the *Gazette*, the *International* was launched primarily as a voice against militarism. 'Here we are to plant the flag of the New International in South Africa,' wrote editor Jones. The paper was to propagate international socialism 'in its manifold phases', by conserving the socialist principles contained in the constitution of the SALP: to promote 'international socialist unity and activity' (Cope 1943: 174; Ticktin 1969: 71). Its writers saw anti-militarism as an essential movement towards international working class solidarity. Only by this route could 'mankind hope for a release from the toils of the brute, and rise to that higher plane when men shall scorn all conflict other than the conflict of mind with mind in the realm of intellect'. Patriotism was the route to 'interminable despair' (*International* 10/9/15).

Andrews believed the ISL's stand against militarism would not be in vain, and that a new organisation based on the international solidarity of labour

would rise from the ruins of the Second International, 'purged we hope of its many errors' (*ibid.*). They learnt in December, through the American weekly, *People*, that a socialist conference in Zimmerwald, Switzerland, in September 1915,⁶ was actually the inception of the 'new International ... the coming of which we felt inevitable sooner or later' (*ibid.*: 17/12/15).⁷

Bunting said the *International* was more than the *Gazette* under a new name, and was even more than the voice of the ISL. It was an outpost of the world-wide anti-militarist movement (24/9/15).

The Internationalists in each country are but branches of the one Party that unites the human race: they not only can but from their nature must co-operate, for all pursue one aim; indeed one of the principal objects of each is to secure the support of the rest (*ibid.*).

6.2.4. Parting of the ways

The ISL remained as the left wing of the SALP with the vain hope that the party might rescind its decision. But at a General Meeting held at 8.00pm in the Trades Hall on Wednesday, 15 September, 1915, League members voted overwhelmingly to quit the party, and to go it alone as the International Socialist League of South Africa (Cope 1943: 175-76).⁸

The new organisation set up offices at 6 Trades Hall, Rissik Street. Eight SALP branches defected.⁹ The Socialist Labour Party – 'socialist comrades hitherto unattached' (*International* 1/9/16) – whose members had stood aloof from the SALP for its trust in parliamentary reforms, joined the new

⁶ 'In September 1915, a conference of socialist opponents of the war was held at Zimmerwald, Switzerland, attended by different delegates of parties from Italy, Russia, Poland, Lithuania and Bulgaria, with minority groups from several other countries. The Zimmerwald conference adopted a general manifesto proclaiming international working class solidarity against imperialism and established a permanent International Socialist Commission which prepared the way for the Third International.' (Bunting 1981: 14).

⁷ The time it took the paper to learn of the conference was due to censorship in place because of the war. It is to the credit of these writers, however, that despite these handicaps they were able to keep abreast with the slow emergence of the Third International.

⁸ Andrews was elected chairman. Other members of the Management Committee were: SP Bunting, W Light, Andrew Dunbar, Robert Barnet, Alf Crisp, J Clark, G Weinstock (vice-chairman) and Jones (secretary-editor).

⁹ Those SALP branches that defected to the ISL were Commissioner Street, Jeppe, Vrededorp, Georgetown, Bezuidenhout Valley Central, Belgravia, Mayfair and Benoni.

organisation. They would steer the ISL towards industrial unionism (Lerumo 1980: 33; Roux 1944: 129; Simons 1983: 184).

Andrews wrote that 'this parting of the ways was taken by most not without a pang at the severing of old associations' (*International* 3/11/16). But to have remained in the SALP would have required an intolerable compromise. He said earlier the SALP, as far as socialism was concerned, was 'dead anyway'. Its pro-war stance was only a symptom of its 'abject subserviency to the dictates of a capitalist press riding on the wave of a public stampede of its own creating' (24/9/15).

During the Troyeville municipal elections in January 1917, he warned voters not to be fooled by SALP claims to represent the working class. Since the party had 'expelled all revolutionary elements', and 'allied itself with the exploiter against the oppressed', it had relinquished all claims to be a working class party (19/1/17).

6.3. Conclusion

The one benefit of the ISL having left the SALP was to jettison the craft union baggage characteristic of the white labour movement. Bunting said the new movement would break the bounds of craft and race, and would be founded more firmly on the proletariat. 'It will be wide as humanity. It will recognise no bounds of craft, no exclusions of colour. The old order and the old leaders have been tested and found wanting' (24/9/15; 3/12/15).

After its first year of publication (50 editions), the *International's* writers had occasion to reflect upon the accomplishments of both party and newspaper. For Andrews, the League was the only true working class organisation in South Africa 'that the capitalists hate and fear', and the *International* the only paper. Both had 'welded the fighting elements of the working class' into one organisation. 'A rallying point has been maintained while the majority of the workers have been stampeded' to war (1/9/16).

Chapter seven

Struggles within the ISL

7.1. Introduction

The International Socialist League did not have a ready-made policy towards black workers, and that which emerged was not without resistance from party members. Bunting's petition at the party's 1916 Annual Conference had to be amended to accommodate the reservations of these members. Apart from those who still wondered about the 'biology of the native', there were those syndicalists who denied there was a 'native problem' at all. There was only a 'worker problem'. But their emphasis on industrial unionism did pave the way for a view of worker unity outside the narrow confines of the trade union movement. Essentially, the issue was whether black worker interests were accommodated in white worker struggles, or the road to socialism in South Africa lay with the liberation of black workers. Jones and Bunting appeared to hold the latter view.

7.1.1. Chapter outline

This chapter describes important struggles within the ISL in defining its option for black workers.

- Section 7.2. outlines the immediate theoretical roots of the *International's* editorial policy. These strains of thought led to a co-ordination of international socialism and industrial unionism.
- The bottom line of this policy was the question of black workers in the labour movement (7.3.). This required a shift from a position which saw 'no native problem, only a worker problem' (*International* 14/7/16), to one which considered the 'native question' as the key to socialism in South Africa.

- The growing attention the *International* gave to black workers did not meet with the overwhelming support of individual ISL members (7.4.), who voiced reservations that blacks were not 'ripe for socialism' (16/8/18).
- Such objections lay at the root of an amendment to Bunting's petition of rights for black workers (7.5.).
- Attitudes towards black workers remained ambivalent. Equality in industry did not necessarily mean social equality (7.6.).
- Some ISL members continued to believe that blacks were innately inferior on the grounds of theories derived from Social Darwinism (7.7.).

7.2. A revolutionary posture

The *International's* handful of writers clung as guardians to the international socialist remains salvaged from the SALP in 1915, and kept abreast of developments which led up to the formation in 1919 of the Third Communist International (Comintern).¹ They were also influenced by the heritage of those who joined their party.

For instance, John Campbell, Andrew Dunbar and their other former Socialist Labour Party² colleagues, who had joined the ISL from its inception,

¹ The Bolsheviks were by 1917 to gain extraordinary hegemony in moves to restore international socialism, but not in its Second International form. The *International* welcomed the reorganisation of world socialism at a conference in Berne, in March, 1919, when the Russian Bolsheviks felt the conditions of the Second International could not be resuscitated even now that the war was over. Now was the opportunity to bury the reformist craft union traditions of the Second International. The sectionalism and reformism of European labour bodies, along the lines of which the South African labour movement was largely modelled, were impediments to a socialist revolution. Lenin had observed that an 'aristocracy of labour in the West was the final bulwark against international socialist revolution', and had to be compelled to serve the general interest of the proletariat by the creation of a stable mass organisation embracing the majority of the working class (Young 1988: 26-28).

² Those members who had possibly influenced ISL policy more than any others were from the former Socialist Labour Party (SLP), founded on the Rand in 1902. The party 'turned its back on all elections and distributed the works of Karl Kautsky, Daniel de Leon and his fellow syndicalists' (Simons 1983: 106). While there is little doubt from book titles advertised in the *International* that Kautsky's views held sway in the ISL, not all Kautsky's views seem to have agreed with the SLP's anti-election policy. And the ongoing debate over whether the ISL should continue contesting elections was fuelled by the former SLP members (see 8.2.1.). The German socialist leader's revolutionary strategy advocated the parliamentary road to socialism. The two dominant themes in his theory were:

had brought with them the views of American syndicalist Daniel de Leon, whose emphasis on industrial unionism implied a rejection of craft unions as a basis for revolutionary organisation.³ De Leon's unmitigated contempt for the bourgeoisie in the revolutionary movement possibly strengthened the *International's* strictly binary view of society – divided between workers and capitalists, with a void between. Within this paradigm, the socialist revolution was an entirely working class concern pursued through industrial unionism.

Recognising industrial unionism as the central principle of socialism, the former Socialist Labour Party members pressed the League's 1916 Annual Conference to swallow De Leon's doctrine whole by adopting the constitution of the Socialist Labour Party of America. This would have entailed a rejection of political action in favour of industrial action only (21/1/16).

The conference ruled this motion out of order. The *International* explained that a balance between political and industrial action was necessary. But showing a concession to Kautsky's thinking (see footnote No. 2), the Conference did support the view that to gain a parliamentary majority while the

-
- The need to infuse a proper consciousness into the collective mind of the proletariat. This stands in violation of Marx's thought that being determines consciousness, not the other way round.
 - The role of parliamentary intervention as the key to the conquest of power. This idea, which proposes parliamentary conquest for power when this is plausible, has very limited sanction in Marx's writing.

In many ways, Kautsky's view were influenced by his interest in keeping the German Social Democratic Party together. While he countenanced the parliamentary road to socialism, the only socialist mandate was opposition to the bourgeoisie, and the transformation of parliament. Also, parliament was the way of testing the level of development in competition with the bourgeoisie. In a sense, this corresponds to general agreement in the Second International on the need to consummate the bourgeois revolution and to promote capitalism to a level from which socialism could take over. When Lenin short-circuited this 'normal' development of capitalism, Kautsky embarked on a crusade against Bolshevism that was to last to the end of his days. He maintained that Russia had not attained the necessary level of capitalist development (Young 1988: 18-19, 22, 37, 50, 119, 126, 145).

³ Daniel de Leon rejected working within existing trade unions, which he called 'labour fakirs', and set up in 1895 socialist unions in opposition to them. Agreeing with Karl Kautsky, De Leon taught that a socialist revolution was neither predetermined nor inevitable. While it depended on an evolution of material conditions, it also required a clearness of vision to assist that evolutionary process. He sought through the party press to enlighten American workers on issues in which they were already, albeit unconsciously, involved. In his view, the working class was not a dumb driven herd trailing unwittingly behind a party claiming to act in its interests. The socialist movement was the movement of the workers by the workers. (Johns 1976: 372-73; Young 1988: 40-41, 51-52, 54-56).

workers were unprepared to control industry would leave them with no more than the South African Labour Party's policy had to offer (21/1/16, 14/7/16).

A report given in the paper credits the 'SLP men' with having led the campaign for industrial unionism (19/5/16). At the Second Annual Conference in 1917, a motion by the ISL's Western Districts branch to have industrial unionism included in the objects of the League was carried. The constitution now read: 'To propagate the principles of international Socialism, Industrial Unionism and anti-militarism' (19/1/17).

7.3. The 'natives'

The first significant reference the *International* made to black workers came on page 1 of its 3 December 1915 issue.⁴ The article attacks the *rapprochement* between Prime Minister General Jan Smuts and the trade unions in the mining industry, declaring a moratorium on strike action in the interests of the war effort. 'This utter collapse makes it necessary to look forward and prepare for the inevitable recoil which such a cold-blooded bartering away of the cause of the workers must have upon the men and organisations responsible' (3/12/15). Four paragraphs later, in the penultimate paragraph, the writer (probably Jones) shifts his topic:

Slaves to a higher oligarchy, the white workers of South Africa themselves in turn batten on a lower slave class, the native races. Himself kicked by his capitalist masters the "correct" and accepted attitude towards the nigger is to kick him, to teach him his place, and to stand no impudence (meaning "independence"). Gingerly attempts to show him that in the extension of freedom for the natives lies the only salvation of the white worker invariably aroused [sic] storms of execration. And thus has the South African Labour movement grown up, more intolerant towards the native than any working class in the world, and consequently more parasitical than any other (3/12/15).

⁴ There were three previous references. The first was a 4 col/cm note on page 4 concerning an election issue: 'We shall never be on bedrock until we can command the attention of the dark skinned proletariat of South Africa' (1/10/15). In the next issue, also on page 4, came a brief innuendo concerning the SALP's election manifesto (8/10/15). In a front page article concerning the war, the writer warns white workers wanting to enlist that they were quite expendable in industry. 'Not coloured labour only, but the labour of women will be exploited to fill up the jobs and help find the quarter pay for those at the front' (26/11/15).

This text does not necessarily reflect the feeling in the ISL. The voices of Bunting and Jones in the cause of black workers were virtually alone in both the columns of the *International*, and in the ISL (Roux 1944: 46). For Bunting the ‘native problem’ was ‘the great and only question deserving the attention of the white labour movement in South Africa today’. He attributed the commonly-held belief among socialists of there being ‘no native problem, only a worker problem’ to the paucity of literature on the subject in the socialist pamphlets available through the ISL office (14/7/16).⁵

7.3.1. Organisation irrespective of race

Despite the League initially paying little attention to the position of black workers in the labour movement, their January 1916 Conference did resolve that workers should organise on industrial and class lines, ‘irrespective of race, colour or creed, as the most effective means of providing the necessary force for the emancipation of the workers’ (14/1/16).

The Conference also resolved that black be elevated to the ‘status of the white’ by the removal of colour bars, pass laws, and other discriminatory labour practices (14/1/16). In other words, if black and white workers must be organised together at the level of industry, other forms of racial discrimination would be addressed as a result. The *International* proposed that industrial unionism would treat blacks as fellow wage-earners, and not as a disadvantaged group within the working class (*ibid.*).

However, this new attention given to black workers, particularly in Bunting’s (amended) petition (see 7.5.), was possibly spurred by a strike by some 3000 black workers at the Van Ryn mine on 21 December 1915. ‘The spectacle of the white workers being locked out by their black slaves is an

⁵ This edition advertised subscriptions to the American socialist periodical, *The Weekly People*, and the UK periodicals *Glasgow Socialist*, *Labour Leader* and *Forward*.. The ‘Tickey Pamphlets’ were the *Communist Manifesto*, Daniel de Leon’s *Socialism vs. Anarchism*, *Industrial Unionism* by fellow American syndicalist, Eugene Debs, and *Socialism and Revolution* by a ‘Dr Aley’. In the previous advertisement of ISL pamphlets appeared works by Kautsky and De Leon (21/1/16). And of the Manifesto: ‘When you have the blues, a dip into the tremendous self evidences of the “manifesto” will cure you’ (*ibid.*). The only other titles carried in previous adverts concerned anti-militarism and industrial unionism (22/10/15, 5/11/15, 19/11/15, 26/11/15, 3/12/15).

unparalleled phenomena [sic],’ the *International* reported on the front page (7/1/16). It also suggested that ‘in the interests of their safety’, white workers should consider giving black workers a ‘lift up to (their) own status’ (*ibid.* Insert in brackets).

7.3.2. Based on class struggle

The *International* taught that industrial unionism was revolutionary because it was based on the class struggle and aimed to bring about a social revolution by transferring the control of production from capitalists to workers. The paper declared that socialist practice in South Africa meant overthrowing capitalism through the unity of all workers, seizing the product and tools of production, and bringing down the capitalist class (14/1/16). By grouping workers into local, national, and international industrial unions, all welded into one big union, the paper declared that workers would seize industries from the capitalist class and continue running them on a basis beneficial to those who work in them (14/7/16, 1/6/17, 30/8/18).

Translated into practical terms, these writers saw the increasing proletarianisation of Africans as contributing to the advance of the socialist revolution in South Africa (9/2/17). What was needed was a ‘live issue’ to concentrate the minds of black workers on the facts of their working and living conditions, suggested SG Rich, a teacher and socialist in Amanzimtoti, Natal, in an article titled, ‘Get the Natives!’ (25/8/16). He said the SALP’s slogan, equal pay for equal work (which the SALP had phrased to keep white workers in their positions as aristocrats of labour) seemed appropriate enough (read within socialist discourse) to bring black workers into the labour movement. ‘Let us turn to the natives and make them insist on the same pay as Europeans for the same work’ (*ibid.*). A Pietermaritzburg socialist, Laurie Greene, had said earlier that the slogan would induce black and white workers to combine without ‘even a suspicion of compromise’ (14/7/16).

7.3.3. Proletarianisation

Jones spoke about the ‘black kraal-dweller’ rapidly changing to ‘typical proletarian stagnation, with no hope of emancipation in his lifetime from the

chains of wavery'. The 'raw noble savage' was becoming a rarity. The conditions of pass laws and 'recruiter's bribes' were all contributing to the arrival of the day of liberation (1/12/16). Furthermore, by turning blacks into an industrial proletariat, capitalism was using them to depress the higher wages of white workers. Jones said that this 'education', and the 'recent and clear memories' of free access to land and 'plenty of tribal communism' made black workers ready for the message of industrial socialism (25/8/16).⁶ For black workers, 'political, civil, social as well as economic liberation, is all replete in the watchword of international socialism, and nowhere else,' he declared (4/1/18).

The *International's* position was that without combining with black workers at the level of industry, the trade union movement could do no more than beg for meagre concessions from the employers. Without aiming to end the class struggle, they would only tinker with the conditions of their employment, and barter 'for bits of the product instead of claiming and struggling for the whole' (1/6/17). 'A labour movement that does not make it a policy or organise and educate the unskilled is by that fact a movement of only a part of labour, and is sure to sacrifice the rest' (25/8/16).

7.4. Dissenting voices

Although socialists of the Second International era decried the treatment of 'natives' in the colonies, they also saw colonialism as a progressive 'civilising' force (Young 1988, 14, 23-24, 41, 51). But the civilising effects the *International* condoned were not 'aping of the white man' (*International* 1/12/16, 13/12/18), but the process by which pre-capitalist indigenes were driven from their agrarian subsistence and into the capitalist economy, by which they were proletarianised and made 'ripe for socialism' (16/8/18, 5/6/18).

⁶ This seemed to have been the issue which finally led Jones to abandon Tolstoy's ideas. Tolstoy had objected to the socialist doctrine that the road to emancipation lay through the proletarianising effects of industry; that peasants first had to be reduced to landless wage-earners before they could attain economic freedom. 'If it were merely a doctrine, his protest would have been good. Our own eyes prove it a daily fact,' Jones said (*International* 1/12/16).

But ISL members also regarded themselves as white socialists, and as the vanguard by which revolution was going to come to South Africa. This reflected a tendency even among socialists to see a division between 'backward' and 'advanced' races. The League, according Jack and Ray Simons, 'was still paternalistic, a group of missionary socialists intent on bringing enlightenment to the darker brethren' (1983: 193).⁷ The position held in the ISL was that socialism could be attained by whites alone; and the alternative favoured by the *International's* writers was that the interests of whites were bound up with those of blacks. These juxtaposed positions indicate what Michael Harmel calls 'the ISL's inconsistent Marxist and revolutionary attitude towards black workers' (Lerumo 1980: 38-39).⁸ The Simons say attention was focused more on soliciting votes and preaching international socialism against militarism – a symptom of the class struggle. But the extent of the African's participation in that struggle remained problematic (Simons 1983: 194; *International* 12/5/16, 16/3/17).

7.5. Petition for black workers

At the ISL's 1916 Conference, Bunting proposed a petition of rights for black workers: 'That this League affirm that the emancipation of the working class

⁷ An unhelpful consequence of this 'missionary' outlook was that socialists of this era, influenced by nineteenth century eugenics, did little to encourage grassroots movements in the colonies. The prevalent idea was that blacks required a lot of 'catching up' to do before they could stand equal with their European counterparts in the labour movement. This view significantly influenced ISL members' initial perceptions of black workers (Young 1988: 14, 41, 51; Simons 1983: 193).

⁸ Jones claimed in October 1915 that there could be no hope of freeing white workers from capitalist relations until blacks too were freed. By this he meant the conflict between workers and capitalists could not be solved for whites only, while blacks remained battered under capitalist relations. Jones also implied that black worker emancipation was a white responsibility. The possibility that blacks could free themselves did not occur to him at the time. That blacks could lead whites towards a socialist revolution was unthinkable (*International* 1/10/15). Nonetheless, Jones' and Bunting's stance towards black workers was radical enough for its time, and did not enjoy the unanimous support of ISL members, never mind those outside the organisation. Although their position was endorsed at Annual Conferences, the overwhelming majority of members appear to have given little more than their endorsement (Hirson & Williams 1995: 149). Bunting and Jones sought to actuate this endorsement by educating black and white workers, principally through their journalism, towards industrial unionism. The effect was to further distance the ISL from the white labour movement. Also, many who had joined the League from the SALP drifted away (Johns 1976: 367).

requires the abolition of all forms of native indenture, compound and passport systems; and the lifting of the native worker to the political and industrial status of the white.’ Support for the petition was mild. The conference moved that a committee be appointed to report ‘on the proper policy on native affairs’. Opposition was voiced from the floor. A socialist of long standing, Andrew Dunbar, who had come to the ISL from the syndicalist Industrial Workers of the World, said there was no ‘native problem, only a worker problem’. African workers deserved attention only as workers (Johns 1976: 376; Cope 1943: 179-80; *International* 14/1/16).

The last sentence of Bunting’s petition was changed to read: ‘And the lifting of the native wage worker to the political and industrial status of the white; meanwhile endeavouring to prevent the increase of the native wage workers, and to assist the existing native wage workers to free themselves from the wage system’ (*International* 14/1/16). By ‘status’, the League did not mean ‘social equality’, which at the time was often a euphemism for miscegenation (Dubow 1990: 76). The amendment also meant that the number of black workers in the towns should be limited to the minimum labour needs of industry, thus posing no threat to white workers. The excess who were used to keep wages depressed were to be encouraged to return to the reserves. The amended petition was only a slight improvement on SALP policy (Johns 1976: 374n; Roux 1944: 30, 32; Cope 1943: 179-180). Jones said the misgivings about the debate on the ‘native question – Bunting’s achievement’ (*International* 14/1/16), arose from the inclusion of ‘political rights’ for black workers. ‘However, the motion was carried by an unmistakable majority’ (*ibid.*).

7.6. Continued ambivalence over the ‘native question’

After the 1916 Conference, Jones and Bunting pursued their mission against segregation in the labour movement, convinced white workers would never be freed from capitalism while Africans remained unorganised, and socialism as a consequence remained a sham (Walshe 1987: 94-95). Article after article

dealing with Africans and the labour movement appeared in the *International*. The 'native field' became particularly Bunting's chief concern (Roux 1944: 30).

The League's Johannesburg Central branch, of which Bunting was a member, added 'native affairs' to its lecture syllabus, and invited Africans to its meetings. A few SANNC members attended, for which the *International* hailed their first attendance as 'the first labour or socialist meeting with natives in the audience' (Simons 1983: 193; *International* 18/2/16).

7.6.1. Segregation

This inspired one writer (possibly Jones) to say that 'since leaving the Labour Party, we proletarians have left many other utopias besides. Now we are presumptuous enough to perform the funeral obsequies of our dear departed plank, segregation' (*International* 17/3/16). He attributed the expected demise of segregation to capitalism having broken down the 'ethnological tendency to a natural social apartness of white and black' (*ibid.*). This, he said, would compel white workers to recognise blacks as their equals.

He added that with capitalism having done the honours, socialists were now obliged 'to deal with the native question, not by removing it, but by recognising the native as perforce a permanent fellow worker. Capitalism, even more than our socialism, compels us to seek for the application of the internationalist principle to the native, or confess internationalism bankrupt' (*International* 17/3/16; Simons 1983: 193).

7.6.2. Prejudice

But the convictions of Jones and Bunting were not entirely shared by ISL members. However, they denied they were racially prejudiced, but claimed instead that they wanted merely to protect 'docile, ignorant' black workers from being exploited (Simons 1983: 194-195). League members continued to argue that Africans should be excluded from government, even under socialism, until they 'reached maturity' and were ready to join the ranks of white labour (*International* 2/6/16, 25/8/16). One correspondent (signed 'Socialist') to the *International* said, in Simons's words, he would 'repudiate socialism if it

required him to have tea with Charlie, Jim or Sixpence' (1983: 194; *International* 19/5/16). 'Socialist' complained:

It appears to me that the view of the Socialist who favours segregation has never been fairly given, and all the articles in the *International* have been written round a wrong conception of that view (19/5/16)

In a covering article on the front page, Jones replied to one the correspondent's objections that said socialism did not mean 'mixed marriages As to the evils of this both whites and natives largely agree' (19/5/16). In other words, segregation outside the workplace was acceptable, even under socialism. On the industrial level, the opposite obtained. The way to 'healthy' segregation, Jones said, was through industrial co-operation. It alone would 'civilise the Kaffir wage earner and purify the atmosphere' by removing the oppressive purpose of segregation, and allowing 'natural segregation' free rein (*ibid.*).⁹

ISL member JM Gibson was less ambivalent. He said white prejudice was fatal and irrational, and 'nothing more than the mental kinks created by an environment that has given the white workers an inflated idea of their own value in society' (19/10/17). It was fatal in that despite white prejudice and moves to reinforce the job colour bars, black workers were replacing whites in industry anyway. It was irrational because it reinforced the very structures which made 'white' jobs insecure – capital's requirement for abundant cheap labour (*ibid.*).

7.7. The biology of the native

The ISL was not without its share of white prejudice. Africans, not least for their being semi-proletarianised, and the prevailing racist ideology of the time, were seen by many in the ISL as not yet ready for industrial organisation, never mind socialism (2/11/17). The idea was that whites were more 'advanced' than blacks, and suffered an evolutionary lag in reaching the 'intellectual capacity' of

⁹ Historian Saul Dubow quotes the liberal philosopher, Alfred Hornle, who pointed out that 'the fear of race mixture is at the root of the "anti-native" attitude of many white South Africans. This indicates a fear that miscegenation would contribute to the degeneration of 'white civilisation', particularly among the working classes (Dubow 1990: 76-77).

whites (14/4/16, 25/8/16, 16/3/17, 23/3/17, 20/4/17, 10/5/18, 2/8/18) (see Appendix H).

Colin Wade, betraying the influences of eugenics, said the problem with Africans was their lack of intellectual development, and produced 'biological evidence' to support his claim.¹⁰ On 20 August 1916, he delivered a lecture at the Trades Hall on the 'native question'. He warned that 'too much racial equality' would retard the labour movement (meaning white labour). 'Biological factors had to be considered,' he said. 'The native had a long history to go through to deserve equality. Besides he was too contented, and from the contented no movement could be built.' Wade insisted he did not favour segregation, but wanted a way of offsetting the numerical advantage black workers had over whites (25/8/16). Jones objected even to reporting the event. 'Our socialist fountain pen goes on strike here, except to say that the discussion that followed was mainly critical of Wade's views' (*ibid.*). Jones later wrote that biological 'facts' were put forward to declare that black workers were beyond hope, and only good as 'cattle for the sjambok' (9/2/17). The debate within the ISL drew criticism from one correspondent. SG Rich wrote:

Among the careless assumptions of those who want to limit the labour movement to Europeans is the following: "The Native has a different skull from the European; hence he cannot be industrially his equal." Wherein this alleged difference in skull prevents the natives from doing the same work as Europeans, we are not told. The facts of industrial life go far to disprove this so-called "fact".... Let us not invent "biological facts" to excuse our remissness in reaching the natives (16/3/17).

7.7.1. Stale nonsense

ISL member George Mason, who in 1913 had shown little sympathy for black workers who failed to support the white workers' strike, urged an audience of League members and black guests in the Johannesburg Trades Hall to 'rid

¹⁰ Saul Dubow points out that 'the problem of genetic inheritance provoked three major problems with respect to Africans: their innate as opposed to their potential mental capacities; whether their intellect was originative as well as 'imitative'; and whether their mental development was 'arrested' after adolescence. (Dubow 1990: 77).

themselves of the stale nonsense purveyed in the movement about the African's mental capacity'.¹¹

The *International* gave Mason's talk a lot more coverage than it gave to Wade's (buried in the League Notes on the back page). Mason said any worker good enough for capitalist production was 'doubly' so for labour organisation. 'Since white workers were bribed to keep the African down, it was a waste of time to argue against their prejudices.' He added that the League should concentrate instead on 'helping intelligent Africans to organise their people' (7/4/16).¹² The occasion of Mason's address was 'unique'. Jones reported that 'the usual monotone of white faces in the audience was broken by the presence of about a dozen dusky ones, representatives, more or less, of an awakening million who may not be ignored in the capitalist scheme, far less in the socialist one' (*ibid.*).¹³

John Campbell, in an address delivered a week after Wade's, said the much vaunted mental capacity of whites was 'overlapped at many points by corresponding advantages in the natives' makeup, if not of an intellectual, at least of a temperamental kind'. He said little to contradict Wade's assertions. He said black workers had a physical endurance and a 'joy of life unsurpassed by any race'. In a further patronising fashion, he assured his audience that blacks were fast catching up with whites as far as 'intelligence' was concerned. He drew attention to 'a certain game of stones ... which non-plussed an ordinary white, and was as intricate as chess' (14/4/16).

¹¹ Mason spoke of black workers 'as one who had discovered him in turmoil of Labour agitation'. In reviewing how prior to the 1913 strike, the Federation had initiated an agitation, at his own instigation, against the coloured artisans in Johannesburg and 'had succeeded in ousting many from the trades here'. Mason repented of his outlook then, explaining they could not have stopped New Kleinfontein Mine without 'native co-operation', and had therefore appealed to them, 'and they responded almost to a man, and the mine was stopped'. (*International* 9/4/16).

¹² Mason appears to have had an image of a hierarchy of equality where all white workers were equal to 'intelligent Africans', with the remaining Africans having no equals but among themselves.

¹³ What Jones meant by 'unique' is unclear. There had been a mixed audience at a Johannesburg Central Branch meeting two months earlier.

Reflecting nature-nurture arguments rife on the ISL lecture circuit, Gibson wrote that there was no fundamental intellectual difference between races. The apparent differences in behaviour were reflections of different environments, 'a difference that is no more marked than between the thoughts and actions of individuals of the same race who may have experienced varying shades of the environment of civilisation' (31/5/18).¹⁴

7.7.2. Disease of civilisation

An earlier article of Gibson's bears out this point. He said '(m)any of us look upon our present civilisation as a disease inflicted upon humanity, as a result of the breaking up of that social unity that prevailed amongst our primitive ancestors, under the tribal form of society We socialists ... recognise forces in society today ... that must destroy civilisation' (1/6/17).¹⁵

Gibson pointed out later that biological theories became common currency for their ability to back up capitalist interests. These, he said, taught that biology was the only factor raising man from the brute, and therefore justified 'the enslaving of sections of humanity on the grounds of inferiority, with never a thought of the economic causes which make it possible to have a subject class' (2/8/18).

Jones shared Gibson's view. Ten months earlier, he pointed out the obstacle to black labour organisation was not biology, but that Africans were not fully divorced from the land, or fully proletarianised. Their spending periods in the reserves kept 'alive in the native worker the lingering psychology of the land peasant' (2/11/17). The only differences between black and white workers were degrees of proletarianisation.

¹⁴ Gibson's contention about civilisation does not suggest a throwback to Victorian thinking concerning its 'civilising mission', which had sought to promote 'civilisation by mingling' – turning Africans into black Europeans (see Dubow 1990: 74).

¹⁵ Gibson here is referring to Marx's thoughts on primitive communism, characterised by community of property, and where land is held and tilled in common by the members of the tribe, and the yield is divided equally. In his Critique of Political Economy, Marx states that this stage dominated 'at the dawn of history of all civilised races'. The appearance of private property and civilisation occurred together (Bober 1965: 46-50).

7.8. Conclusion

This chapter examines how the *International's* discourse against racism was framed, within the language of labour, in struggles over the 'native problem' in the context of the ISL's internal politics. While the paper's discourse was produced within an internationalist paradigm, the characteristics of its struggle indicate areas of intersection with other formations of discourse. The question of the 'biology' of 'the native', for instance, indicates this to some extent. However, this thinking was not unknown in socialist thinking at the time (see Appendices C and H).

The arguments the *International's* writers used against racism in the labour movement resemble those put forward by Alex Callinicos (1992) and Hillel Ticktin (1991) (see Chapter five). That is, white worker prejudices served the interests of the capitalist class by ensuring the division of the working class into racial fractions. This modality of class fractured as race in discourse was essentially ideological in that its arbitrariness was naturalised, and it served to establish and maintain unequal relations of domination and subordination within the labour movement, and between labour and capital. Jones seems to have had this image in mind when he said that the relation of white workers to the 'lower slave class' was a microcosm of the relation between labour and the 'higher oligarchy' of 'capitalist masters' (*International* 3/12/15) (see 7.3.).

But as emphatic and uncompromising as this first position statement in the *International* on the position of was, Jones also showed a degree of ambivalence towards the liberation of black workers. In a preview of the ISL's 1916 Annual Conference, he put forward the *International's* viewpoint as a punchline:

Organisation of the workers must start from the lowest fool of a poor Kaffir who works for a baas, and has to crawl to his master more or less like any member of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers. The first demand of the movement must be for the freedom of the Kaffir. Abolition of the indentured and compound system, and the gradual but systematic abolition of the Pass (10/12/15)

Apart from the statement in the grammatically incomplete last sentence, at least two other features are significant. His use of the noun Kaffir in relation to baas is intended to foreground his readers' background knowledge of discriminatory race relations. Similarly, the phrase lowest fool of a poor Kaffir refers to a common premise in white labour discourse, which the writer thereby intends to evoke. The synonymic relation he establishes between the phrases works for a baas and crawl to his master is shifted metaphorically by the function word like across the noun member (of a trade union).¹⁶ The relation between Kaffir and member is synonymous. One is a metaphor of the other. However, while the writer's second use of the noun Kaffir appears to refer to a different (neutral) meaning within his own discourse, his advice that the abolition of the Pass should be gradual but systematic indicates a degree of ambivalence towards black workers.

The material considered in this chapter shows that the ideology which emerged in the *International* was creatively generated in a discursive struggle between the discourses in which its writers participated. In terms of Jacques Pêcheux's theory (see 3.2.9.), ISL members appear to have been caught in a contradiction between the various discourses in which they were structured. However, the fact that labour practices in their wider social context displayed a racist homogeneity, as men of their time the achievement of these writers was all the more remarkable.

¹⁶ I do suspect that it was the Amalgamated Society of Engineers that met with General Smuts in Cape Town to sign the moratorium agreement (see 7.3.). With this intertextual relation, the text may be read slightly differently.

Chapter eight

Struggles outside the ISL

8.1. Introduction

The previous two chapters examine some of the contextual elements which constituted the *International's* discourse against trade unionism and militarism. While the previous chapter focuses on struggles against racism within the ISL, this chapter shifts the focus to contexts of the *International's* struggle outside the ISL.

The combination of discursive and non-discursive contexts rests on the principle that the interpretative rules writers use in discourse embody the ideological assumptions of the discourses in which they participate. However, while in struggle different groups contest the meanings of words in different discourses, the successful repositioning of signs in an alternative discourse depends not only on the politics of signification, but also on the relative strengths of the contesting forces in struggle. Like the main thrust of Chapters six and seven, the material covered in this chapter serves as a contextual backdrop for the discourse analyses conducted in the next two chapters.

8.1.1. Chapter outline

This chapter examines the main events which occupied the ISL from 1915 to 1919. A common denominator to each of these events was the ISL's (albeit gingerly) option for black workers in the labour movement. The events examined are:

- ISL candidates were regularly defeated at the polls. This was an accurate barometer of white working class opinion (8.2.).
- The organisation was evicted from its offices at the Trades Hall because it began to attract black workers to its meetings (8.3.).
- The ISL happily received SANNC leaders at its protest meetings against the proposed Native Affairs Administration Bill of 1917. But The ISL's view of Congress was never positive (8.4.).

- The ISL's most significant work among black workers was in the Industrial Workers of Africa (IWA), which emerged out of an ISL literacy school (8.5.).
- The IWA was blamed for the concessionary stores boycott in 1917 (8.6.).
- The ISL and IWA were alleged to have instigated the 'bucket strike' and the miners' strike on July 1 that year (8.7.)
- Bunting and two other ISL members were tried and acquitted on a charge of public violence (8.8.).

8.2. Hammered at the polls

The ISL's option for black workers was not without its troubles. Its candidates were hammered at the polls less for their anti-militarism than for their alleged 'pro-black' policies. For the same reason, the organisation was evicted from its offices. A few South African Native National Congress (SANNC) leaders had briefly attended ISL protest meetings at the hall. The ISL's initiative with the Industrial Workers of Africa may have begun there too.

The question of whether to contest elections was brought up at each ISL Annual Conference. Opinion was divided between those former SALP members, who tended to support a measure of political action, and those former Socialist Labour Party members who opposed the principle of elections altogether, in favour of industrial action (see 7.2.). The consensus was that when the class struggle was expressed politically, this was only as a barometer of class consciousness, and not a revolutionary tool (Johns 1976: 376).

8.2.1. Race policy unpopular

The ISL attracted few votes because of its favourable policy towards black workers. During the January 1917 parliamentary elections, Jones urged the *International's* readers to vote for Colin Wade, the ISL candidate for Troyeville. While campaigning for Wade, he complained that the *Rand Daily Mail* was 'giving hints' to the electorate to return Creswell 'as a reward for his great service in side-tracking the labour movement from its true aim' (*International* 19/1/17, 26/1/17).

The war issue loomed large on Wade's agenda. In Jones's words, he called for the working class 'to take the leadership of the people ... to unite in their various industries, irrespective of race, colour or creed ... to capture political and economic power from the hands of the small privileged class' (19/1/17).¹

Wade polled 32 votes against Creswell's 800-odd – the lowest received by any ISL candidate. But Jones pointed out in the next issue of the *International* that the result was not a true indication of the ISL's support, which he said lay with disenfranchised black workers. However, as a barometer of consciousness among white workers, the result showed they were far from coming around to the ISL's point of view. 'The next election too will undoubtedly be a test of how far the (white) workers are awakening,' Jones wrote (*International* 11/5/17. Insert in brackets).

Encouraged by events in Russia, Andrews and Bunting stood for the Benoni and Commissioner Street constituencies respectively in the Provincial Council elections in June 1917. They voiced confidence that events in Russia would hasten the day of revolution in South Africa, and called on workers to emulate 'their Russian compatriots' and to 'claim domination of all the countries of the earth' (1/6/17).²

Both candidates proclaimed that the final struggle for socialism had begun. They and promised that, if elected, they would strive 'for the downfall of capitalism and for industrial democracy' (*International* 1/6/17; 8/6/17; Simons 1983: 201). The *International* initially gave opposition to the war – 'the natural expression of the capitalist system, and its last defence' – as the main reason to vote for the ISL. They shunted the unpopular race issue into the background (Cope 1943: 180-181; *International* 11/5/17, 18/5/17).

¹ It is ironic that Colin Wade was to cause controversy in the ISL ten months later when he gave a speech about the 'biology of the native' (see 7.7.).

² The *International* connected its campaign against racism in South Africa with its hope in the Russian revolution. Sympathy for the revolution implied 'the solidarity of labour irrespective of race or colour The Russian revolution in South Africa means the welcome hand to the native working man into the fullest social and economic equality he is capable of attaining with the white workingman' (8/6/17).

8.2.2. Bringing up the 'native question'

The SALP's candidate, I Kuper,³ evidently feared Andrews had a good chance of drawing Afrikaner votes because of the ISL's anti-war stance. Kuper therefore drew attention to the ISL's position on the 'native question'. He accused Andrews of advocating equal rights with blacks. He said a vote for Andrews was a vote for the downfall of white workers, and warned that the international socialists would allow 'their coloured brethren to compete in trades done by whites'. Andrews responded with an election manifesto in pamphlet form which claimed there was no such thing as a 'native problem', only a 'worker problem' *International* 4/5/17, 18/5/17; Simons 1983: 199; Cope 1943: 180).⁴

Jones charged in the *International* that '(t)he trump card of the Labourite is one that they need not be proud of; the native policy of the *International* is trotted out to raise the prejudice of the workers against colour and to scare them off... But we are not ashamed of our native policy, and Andrews has lucidly expounded it at his meetings' (15/6/17).⁵

³ Both the Simons (1983) and Cowley (1968) agree against Cope's naming Bob Waterson and WB Madely as Andrew's opponents in 1917. These three did, however, contest the 1920 parliamentary elections. Also, according to Cowley, 'another factor changed by the war (in Benoni) was the Afrikaner vote. Support for the war effort had alienated part of this vote from the Labour Party' (1968: 162, 186. Insert in brackets).

⁴ The ISL distributed a pamphlet, published in Afrikaans (or 'Dutch', as the *International* called it) explaining its race policy. The pamphlet was published three weeks later in the *International* in an article titled 'The Position of the Native and Coloured Workers' (20/7/17). However it is curious (or tactical) that nothing was said in the *International* prior to voting day about Andrews' manifesto. Also, the *International* published almost nothing about Bunting's campaign. However, to be fair, their manifesto was an expression of the objects of the League: 'To propagate the principles of international socialism, industrial unionism and anti-militarism, and to maintain and strengthen international working-class organisation' (1/6/17). This was probably what they had set out to test among the electorate, and not the thornier issue of the black workers.

⁵ In trying to allay white workers' race fears, Andrews and Bunting trotted out the well-versed argument that attempts to reserve skilled jobs for white workers would eventually lead to their displacement by black workers anyway. The only alternative was to ignore colour and to include workers of all races in one industrial union. All other worker issues were subsidiary, and would be settled through industrial organisation (Simons 1983: 199-200). Inter-racial marriages, Andrews promised, would decline as poor whites and blacks attained a higher standard of living and education under socialism (*International* 20/7/17).

Both ISL candidates lost the election.⁶ The *International*'s appeals had made no impression on voters. Buried in the League notes on the back page of the next issue of the *International* was a note denouncing Benoni as 'no home of any considerable body of class conscious socialists', and Commissioner Street as having 'allowed itself to be bought away from its true convictions' (29/6/17).

Jones, who had been seconded to organise Andrews' campaign, was sent away on leave, exhausted. Bunting, who had taken over as acting editor, wrote that 'the native question loomed large' in Andrews' campaign, 'especially in the form of isolated goggas designed to scare the Dutch elector'. Of his own campaign, he said his opponents had endeavoured to prejudice the electorate against him on the 'native question ... spreading around the catchphrase alarum that I want to give the vote to the Kaffir' (29/6/17).

He said the ISL's position was for the industrial solidarity of Labour 'irrespective of race or colour', and that as a candidate of the ISL he had to stand or fall by that principle. 'The native is a worker. We are all workers To the workers the world will belong if they stand solidly together.... We must either lift the native up to our standard, or sink down to his' (*ibid.*).

8.2.3. Rethink on elections

By mid-1917 the De Leonite tendencies in the ISL seemed vindicated. To elect workers to office was futile unless they were backed by economic power (1/6/17). Making a greater effort to organise workers for industrial unity appeared to be the proper alternative to fruitless electioneering and campaigning against the war.

A year earlier, the Executive Committee had declared that the organisation of all workers for industrial unity and action was the 'great revolutionary fruit of an otherwise pointless agitation' (7/1/16). A joint meeting of all ISL branches on the Rand in October 1917 decided the League would not nominate candidates for the coming municipal elections. The League was faced

⁶ The *International* provides no figures for the election. Cowley (1968: 186) says Andrews polled 355 votes against Kuper's 1391.

with the option to either contest for power against the Labour Party, or to acquire a mass base among disenfranchised workers (*International* 5/10/17; Bozzoli 1987: 168).

The ISL opted to shift further away from white politics in a bid to identify more with blacks in extra-constitutional politics (Simons 1983: 191-92).⁷ However, the question of elections still came up periodically. At the ISL's 1919 conference 'this vexed question' was brought up on a motion to delete 'participation in elections for public bodies' from among the League's methods. 'Politics is an unsocialistic absurdity, as witness the SALP, or the British elections, and contrast the Russian revolution; and it breeds crooks,' the *International* reported one member to have said. But the clause was retained with a 22 to five majority. Bunting, among the majority, said '(i)f workers won't vote for the revolution, they won't fight for it' (10/1/19).

8.3. Eviction from the Trades Hall

The ISL's interest in black workers made the organisation a pariah in the white labour movement, and led to the organisation being evicted from its Trades-Hall offices on 30 November 1917. The Trades Hall Society resolved that the building was not to be used by the ISL because it admitted blacks to its meetings. As the Society's secretary, Bunting promptly resigned (Roux 1944: 31, 34). He pointed out that there were other unions with premises in the building which had (at least nominally) racially inclusive membership clauses. If the ISL was expelled for being non-racial, then so too should these (*International* 9/11/17).⁸ He added that, 'through the socialists', the hall had been becoming 'a beacon of hope to the masses of the native workers' (*ibid.*).

When the ISL first learnt of the Trades Hall resolution in September 1917, Bunting wrote (addressing black readers) that the whole labour movement

⁷ What Jones had written months before now bore greater weight. In order that the League not be utopian, it would have to base itself among the disenfranchised and propertyless classes. International socialism 'is nothing if not a virile propaganda to awaken the native wage earner, and with the native his white prototype' (*International* 2/2/17).

⁸ The South African Typographical Union protested too, as did the Amalgamated Society of Engineers. Neither union had colour bars in their constitutions. The extent to which these unions applied this principle in their constitutions was another matter.

in South Africa, was based on 'the absurdity that although you non-Europeans constitute 90 per cent of the wage earners, and do more than 90 per cent of the work, yet the whites, not you, are "the workers", and entitled to a monopoly of the "working class movement" This Trades Hall resolution goes to the heart of the matter It strikes clean at the heart of labour unity' (21/9/17).

Soon after the League was evicted, a Transvaal leader of the African Political Organisation, Talbot Williams, was ironically invited to address the South African Industrial Federation's December 1917 annual conference on the race question (see JM Gibson's comments in 10.2.2.3.). But Cape coloured delegates were turned away from the conference, which even debated on whether to hear Williams because of his race. Instead, he addressed a black audience in Johannesburg's Pilkington Hall on 9 January 1918, saying the true worker in South Africa was 'the brown and the black man' (Simons 1983: 204-205).⁹

8.4. Native Affairs Administration Bill

The first issue which brought the ISL and the SANNC together at an organisational level was the Native Affairs Administration Bill of 1917, about to be tabled at the next parliamentary session (Simons 1983: 197; *International* 15/12/16).¹⁰ That the Bill failed to become law can be attributed to some degree to the dissent which erupted from middle class blacks and a minority of white socialists.

⁹ Williams had said that the 'whole commercial and mining industry' rested on black labour. He said the white trade union would only be brought to their senses 'when we are thoroughly organised ... to paralyse the industry of South Africa. Should the time come when the black man goes on strike we will be able to dictate terms to the employers, and the white trade unionist won't be in the picture' (*International* 11/1/18).

¹⁰ The 1913 Land Act was seen as an interim arrangement and provided for a commission to undertake a definite delimitation and extension of 'black areas'. The Beaumont Commission, appointed to find more land to add to the reserves, which arose out of the Act, submitted a report in 1916 which resulted in the tabling of the Native Affairs Administration Bill of 1917. The Bill provoked so much opposition from blacks and whites that various commissions were appointed to review the delimitation. The matter was eventually abandoned when new recommendations evoked similar protests (Davenport 1987: 259-60; Walshe 1987: 56-61).

The League held a protest meeting against the Bill at the Trades Hall on 11 March 1917 (they had not yet been expelled).¹¹ The *International* advertised that the SANNC president, John Dube, would address the meeting. Instead, Horatio Bud-'Mbele and Saul Msane attended. The paper hailed the meeting as historic. White socialists had demonstrated for the first time on the Rand against racial legislation. Bud-M'bele said in a statement that Africans now knew that even in Johannesburg 'there were white men brave enough to assail in public the detested colour bar' (Simons 1983: 198-99; *International* 9/3/17, 16/3/17).¹²

8.4.1. First links with Congress

Trade union historian Vic Allen says that for the first time Africans heard white socialists arguing their case, even if they had not yet come to advocate racial equality as a matter of practice. However, it did set a course which led whites to predominantly black neighbourhoods where blacks and whites agitated together for a united opposition to capitalism advocated by the *International* – putting its words into practice (1992: 273-274).

After saluting his audience 'as the conquerors of colour prejudice', Dube went on to compare the 'equality before the law' tradition introduced into native administration by the 'liberal England' of the early days, with the 'narrow shareholding notions of the Dutch Voortrekker and his Church' since 1910

¹¹ Despite antagonism between the League and the Congress, some links between the two organisations were being forged, and served to widened the gulf between the ISL and the white labour movement (Simons 1983: 199). Put into context, the ISL's protests against the Bill coincided with its expulsion from the Trades Hall, with the emergence of the Industrial Workers of Africa, and black protests at around 1918. One of the first Africans to join the ISL was TW Thibedi, who later became secretary of the African Mine Workers' Union (Allen 1992: 273-274).

¹² While some blacks were attending ISL meetings, it is doubtful that this indicated an increase in black membership. The *Sunday Times* (4/10/17) reported that there was a 'large increase' in the 'membership' of the ISL, but that this increase was made up largely of Africans, Chinese and Indians. It would appear the *Sunday Times* had mistaken the increased attendance of blacks at ISL meetings at this time as an indication of increased membership. The background assumption of the *Sunday Times*' report was that the increase was not significant because it was not white, and therefore of no importance or threat to other white political factions. Jones, however, took this 'sneer' as a back-handed compliment. 'To the extent that it is true we are proud of it, only wishing it were truer,' he wrote (*International* 9/10/17). From the *International's* point of view, any indication that blacks were joining the ISL was a vindication of its claim to represent the entire working class.

(16/3/17). The *International's* criticism of these comments was veiled in respect for their guest (*ibid.*).

Bunting wrote that the Bill was meant to complete the work of the 1913 Land Act, 'to drive the natives of South Africa as natives more completely than ever into the labour market' (*International* 20/4/17). The SANNC also objected to the Bill, and appealed to the King George as they had done before over the Land Act. And as before, the British government believed in the goodwill of the Union government. Smuts, in London at the time, declared at London's Savoy Hotel in May 1917 that it was impossible for blacks and whites to be governed together, and gave the British public the impression that segregation would enable different sections of the population to develop along their own lines (Karis & Carter 1987: 88; Davenport 1987: 159-60; Simons 1983: 197).¹³

Bunting added that the Bill had nothing to do with justice to Africans as Smuts had claimed. Africans would have to choose between starving in the reserves or working under whites (*International* 20/4/17). Bunting denounced as futile the SANNC's continued hope in British justice. 'The "British Public's" mind has been poisoned in advance with inspired laudations of (Prime Minister Louis) Botha as the natives' benefactor, and no doubt the British Government, as in 1913, has promised not to veto the Bill' (9/3/17. Insert in brackets). Bunting reflected Andrews' earlier comments that Africans may well have to go through the industrial mill before they may be of use to the labour movement when he conceded that perhaps 'the aims of capital ... might have to be attained before the power of all workers could deliver black workers from wage slavery' (15/12/16, 9/3/17).

8.4.2. Initial rumblings

In a later article, dealing with an SANNC meeting in Bloemfontein over the Bill, Bunting argued against the tendency to seek redress through the vehicle of

¹³ 'It was useless,' Smuts told his audience, 'to attempt to govern blacks and whites in the same way. South African policy was therefore directed to keeping the Native population "apart as much as possible in their own institutions, in land ownership, in forms of government, and in many ways"' (Walshe 1987: 58).

nationalism, which he saw as intrinsically racist. 'Sol Plaatjies' outburst of indignation ... had good manly spirit in it, although to us the hitting was a bit wild.' His denunciation of segregation and the Bill was, Bunting said sarcastically, 'mainly an attack on the Dutch people, as against "that wonderful sense of British justice"' (*International* 8/6/17; Walshe 1987: 95).

Bunting interpreted that these 'initial rumblings' as a sign of awakening among black workers generally, and added that Congress leaders should bear in mind that blacks were exploited and oppressed, not as a race, but as workers. 'Not the Dutch, nor the English, nor the whites, but ... the capitalist system of wage slavery ... the oppressor. The remedy is for the workers, leaving out accidents of colour, to organise industrially for their common emancipation' (*International* 8/6/17).

8.4.3. Unwanted attention

The League's activists were also beginning to draw the government's attention to themselves. The Congress had 'decided at Pokeng' to call a strike if the Administration Bill became law. The *International* published a few paragraphs from *Abanto Batho* concerning a Transvaal Native Congress deputation to Louis Botha over the Bill. Botha said: 'It appears you are being deceived by some Europeans of Johannesburg known as the socialists to organise a strike' (30/11/17). The *International* neither confirmed nor denied this charge.

While the gap between the ISL and the Congress had narrowed by 1918, the *International* still considered these organisations, 'keeping friends with the government and battenning on its advertising support,' as unrepresentative of black working class interests (*International* 21/6/18; Bonner 1982: 272-277). Nor were they out to get blacks admitted to white unions, and they were certainly not about to teach equality under capitalism, as the Congress appeared to be doing. 'Equality would come only under socialism, when there would be room and plenty for all' (Walshe 1987: 71, 95; Simons 1983: 210; *International* 7/12/17, 15/2/18, 22/2/18).

8.5. The Industrial Workers of Africa

By 1917 the ISL had come to realise that the proletarianisation of Africans was an irreversible fact, and was more likely to accelerate. Andrews conceded that in order to become a true proletarian, the African had to 'go through the industrial machine before anything can be done with him' (*International* 15/12/16).¹⁴ In an article dealing with the planned Native Urban Areas Act,¹⁵ Bunting said 'the one hope of revolution in South Africa was the growth of industrialisation, which would 'enable the native workers to acquire the stability and co-operative psychology of a revolutionary proletariat' (8/2/18).

In the same issue, however, Jones said that 'no Marxist would waste his time' preaching the class struggle to a backward peasantry 'until the industrial proletariat is in such an advanced stage that a base is afforded from which to enlist the peasants to the proletarian revolution'. Jones held up the Russian urban proletariat as an example of how the peasants there were led along a revolutionary path they could 'never have hoped to tread alone' (*ibid.*).

The ISL's first efforts at working among black workers came in 1917 with the formation of the Industrial Workers of Africa (IWA).¹⁶ This was the achievement of a few ISL members putting into practice the League's policy of 'educate and organise'. However, while the organisation was the first attempt in

¹⁴ Bunting remarked caustically that it was not clear if Andrews said this 'as a Marxist or as a farmer seeking labour' (*International* 15/12/16).

¹⁵ This was eventually promulgated as the 1923 Natives (Urban Areas) Act.

¹⁶ The fact that the IWA was exclusively black was not an indication of the ISL's having shifted its attention away from whites. Bunting and others instructing IWA members stressed that any successful industrial action had to be undertaken in conjunction with white workers. Frederick Johnstone's (1979) study of police records is the only access to what was said at IWA meetings. His findings provide a useful backdrop against which to examine what the *International* did eventually say about the IWA. While the *International* made no secret of the ISL's attempts to include more black members, or that it was teaching Africans Marxist analysis, they were forced by *Abanto Batho* to admit to the existence of the IWA. The SANNC journal published the existence of the IWA first, with approval, unlike the policy of commercial dailies such as the *Rand Daily Mail* (see 8.6.1). The IWA lasted into 1919, and appeared to have disbanded after the formation of the Industrial and Commercial Workers Union which was founded that year (Roux 1978: 132, 154-155). The proportions of the ICU far exceeded those of the IWA. But the influence of the IWA, especially on the *Rand*, was out of all proportion to its membership. The issues raised at IWA meetings (wages, colour bars, pass laws) showed how central these issues were to African worker grievances (Johnstone 1979: 264).

South Africa to form an industrial union inclusive of black workers, it appears the ISL's intentions were a lot more modest (Webster 1978: 111; Simons 1983: 204).

The task of educating black workers was unpopular among League members generally, and was left to Bunting and a few others. Their work was to become the ISL's most enduring contribution to the South African labour movement. Bunting's intention of bringing Africans into the League caused consternation among League members and, as already shown, served to further ostracise the league from the white labour movement in which members such as Andrews were actively involved (Roux 1944: 31).¹⁷

8.5.1. Literacy classes

The IWA emerged from socialist 'literacy' classes¹⁸ conducted by the ISL for black workers, which began in July 1917. The classes started at Neppe's Buildings on the corner of Fox and MacLaren Streets, Johannesburg, at 8.00pm on Thursday July 19. Ten white League members came together with a group of 20 African workers (Johnstone 1979: 248). The meetings attracted moderate interest from Africans. Although the lessons were primarily theoretical, focusing on principles of industrial organisation and simple Marxist analysis, they also referred to contextual issues such as the Pass Laws, and may have helped to sow the seeds of the 1919 Defiance Campaign (Walshe 1987: 95).

During that and further weekly meetings until August 16, these students were told that only by organising industrially (admitting whites) as workers

¹⁷ Here I am indebted to Frederick Johnstone's (1979) research on police records of the organisation, as the *International* gives no clues to the formation or activities of the IWA. This does not mean the IWA was insignificant to the league's overall programme. It would appear the IWA's purpose was a lot more serious than its being a 'little body of native students of socialism', as the *International* insisted it was (1/3/18, 5/7/18). However, the fact that the *International* played down the role of the ISL and the IWA in the protests on the Rand, must be understood against the background of the incitement to violence charges laid against ISL members. What is of interest here is how the *International* was used to defend the accused. The charges were eventually withdrawn.

¹⁸ Roux says Jones actually started the classes as literacy classes, teaching those in attendance how to write on their slates slogans such as 'Workers of the world unite! You have nothing to lose but your chains and a world to win'. But Johnstone's evidence suggests that the effect of these classes went significantly beyond teaching literacy (Roux 1944: 32, 39).

would they be able to liberate themselves as a class. But their tutors stressed that the League was not going to be the instrument of their emancipation. Its function was only to 'educate and organise' workers. And possibly betraying their Eurocentric biases, they gave struggles in Britain were given as examples of industrial organisation.¹⁹

8.5.2. Criticising Congress

During that meeting, a member of the class mentioned a meeting the SANNC was having. Bunting asked what they thought of the 'Native National Congress' and its leaders. The class replied: 'exempted natives, shareholders, and a couple of lawyers.' Bunting was satisfied with their reply, and asked if the Congress 'had good motives'. The class said it did not. To what degree the answer was primed is difficult to tell. Bunting continued: 'So they organise themselves so as not to have their lands and exemption certificates taken away from them. They don't want to get their race free from slavery.' He then argued that the organisation was middle class, and therefore not committed to the class struggle (Johnstone 1979: 251).

'Organise and educate' produced better results when applied to Africans than to whites, observed Charles Done, a miner and member of the League's management committee. On August 23 he asked the class what they wanted. 'Sifuna zonke (We want everything),' they replied (Simons 1983: 203-204).

¹⁹ The police informer in the class (Constable Jali in this case, there were others) reported 'it (British struggles) is the same with the natives. If only they can organise themselves and strike for what they want, it can be done as soon as possible'. Bunting was reported to have urged that 'all 250 000 natives on the Rand' to strike. This statement is out of character with the *International's* teaching on strike action. If Jali's report was accurate, then it can only be attributed to the syndicalist Andrew Dunbar. Bunting's correction was more in keeping with the *International's* teaching when he said strike action would only succeed if preceded by sufficient organisation (Johnstone 1979: 248-251. insert in brackets). At a meeting held on 26 July 1917, attended by eight ISL members and 15 Africans, Dunbar gave a 'fiery speech', followed by an hour and a half of questions and discussion. He 'drew a large diagram on the blackboard, representing the capitalist class and the working class and the distribution of wealth between them'. His lesson spelled out the simple binary model of the *International's* discourse, that the working class of all races produced the wealth, while the capitalist class appropriated it without having worked for it. Dunbar's instruction was that black workers should unite with whites in industrial organisation aimed at a socialist revolution. Furthermore, he said Africans should organise and strike for the abolition of the Pass Laws. He suggested a passive resistance campaign against the pass system by refusing to register at the pass office (Johnstone 1979: 250).

Bunting was impressed. 'What white union ever aimed so high or so true?' he wrote, in what was the first indication in the *International* of the class's existence. 'As for "education", the blacks without it have a better chance of gripping essentials than the whites with it. To understand the servile position of your class shows more real education than all the classics and mathematics' (*International* 3/8/17).

8.5.3. A new group

At the August 16 meeting, the group suggested an Africans-only meeting be held the following week to elect an executive committee for a new group separate from the night classes. It was decided on August 30 that the new group's meetings should be held on alternate weeks to deal with pass problems. Bunting advised them not to hold their own meetings yet, until they had gained a better understanding of socialist teaching. Dunbar again urged them to get others to join the night classes. 'We want to see everyone treated fairly no matter what the colour of his skin,' he said (Johnstone 1979: 252).

Bunting still held reservations that the group was ready to form a socialist society of their own. But the group decided to go ahead. So, on September 27 the class in the presence of 'four white socialists' formed the 'Industrial Workers of the World' (showing Dunbar's influence).²⁰ The 'secret socialist' group, as police informer Jali called it – initially 16 Africans assisted by four whites, including Bunting, Dunbar and JM Gibson – came together for their first meeting on September 27. The group decided that their group would be (as they had been taught) an industrial and not a political organisation (Johnstone 1979: 253-254).

At the October 11 meeting the society was renamed the IWA. Dunbar urged them to organise and strike, promising them they would achieve their ends 'in two days', and the 'government would come in motor cars and give them what they wanted' (*ibid.*: 255). The society remained small, with only 69

²⁰ The Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) was an American syndicalist movement which spread the idea of industrial unionism. Andrew Dunbar had been a member of its South African branch before joining the ISL (Simons 1983: 147-148).

members in January 1918. However, it had a wide audience and linked up with the Congresses in joint action. Their joint meetings in mid-1918 were attended by as many as 1000 Africans. The SANNC urged its own members to join the IWA as a means to fight for higher wages (Allen 1992: 275; Simons 1983: 204).

8.5.4. IWA Pamphlet

At the August 16 meeting, one class member suggested pamphlets in African languages be produced for distribution 'to all natives in the Transvaal so they will know what was being done'. The suggestion was accepted. Dunbar said the pamphlets could play a major role in industrial organisation (Johnstone 1979: 252).

At a meeting on October 4, attended by 30 Africans and six whites, Bunting suggested two from the 10-man IWA committee, elected that day, join two ISL members to organise and produce a pamphlet intended for distribution among black workers (Johnstone 1979: 255). On October 18, Herbert Msane and Benjamin Phooko, of City Deep Mine, were elected to join Jones and another ISL member Johnstone's police record sources call 'Barron Wright' (*ibid.*).²¹

At a meeting held on November 1, and attended by 30 Africans and 10 whites, a one-page pamphlet (in Zulu on one side and Sesuto on the other)²² was shown to the group. Johnstone calls it 'a blunt and forceful socialist attack against forced labour and exploitation, against the type of capitalism operating over black workers in South Africa, and a call for united action with white workers' (*ibid.*: 256).²³

²¹ Bonner says Msane was an ISL member. Johnstone identifies him as an IWA member, which seems more likely (Johnstone 1979: 258). There is no record of a 'Barron Wright' in any of my sources. He was probably a mishearing of founder ISL member H Barendregt, who eventually stood trial for IWA activities.

²² Bonner does not identify this pamphlet, and so I am not certain if it was in fact the IWA pamphlet. However, Johnstone's description of 'united action with white workers' (1979: 256) seems to indicate that it was this pamphlet.

²³ The pamphlet was also reprinted in *International* (15/2/18) after the *Rand Daily Mail* published what Jones said was a poor translation of the Zulu and Sesuto.

WORKERS OF THE BANTU RACE! Who do you live in slavery. Why are you not free as other men are free? Why are you kicked and spat upon by your masters? Why must you carry a pass before you can move anywhere. WHY? Because you are the toilers of the

At the next meeting, on November 15, Bunting said 10 000 copies of the pamphlet had been printed, and paid for with a five pound grant from the ISL, which it hoped would be recovered from voluntary contributions made to the IWA. The League initially recovered two pounds, and attempted to raise the balance by holding a concert in March 1918 (Johnstone 1979: 257; *International* 15/3/18). The remainder was 'advanced in driblets,' Jones said in defence of accusations in the press that the ISL was financed by 10 000 pounds in 'German gold', 'placed at the disposal of the League especially for leaflets to cause disaffection among the natives' (5/7/18).

The pamphlets were handed out on November 22, with instructions to distribute them in the compounds (Johnstone 1979: 257). Jones advised caution. Dunbar said '(w)hites could get into trouble for doing all these things,' but added that they 'did not care' (*ibid.*).

8.5.5. The IWA goes public

Until this time the *International* had given only one vague indication of the IWA's existence (30/11/17). But it was the SANNC's newspaper *Abanto Batho* that in late November 1917 broke the news. The *International* reproduced the relevant paragraph: 'Perhaps the people outside Johannesburg are not aware that there is an organisation of workers ... In this organisation ways will be found of making the capitalists learn when the workers want higher wages' (30/11/17).

earth. because the masters want you to labour for their profit. Because they pay the Government and the Police to keep you as slaves to toil for them. But mark! You are the mainstay of the country. You do all the work, you are the means of their living. That is why you are robbed of the fruits of your labour and robbed of your liberty as well. There is only one way of deliverance for you, Bantu workers. Unite as workers, unite! Let there be no longer any talk of Basuto, Zulu, or Shangaan. You are all labourers. Let Labour be your common bond. Wake up! And open your ears. The sun has arisen, the day is breaking. For a long time you were asleep when the great mill of the rich man was grinding and breaking the sweat from your work to nothing. You are strongly urged to come to the meeting of the workers and fight for your rights. Come and listen to the good news and deliver yourself from the chains of the capitalists. Unity is strength. The fight is great against the many pass laws that persecute you, and the low wages and misery of existence. Workers of the world Unite. You have nothing to lose but your chains. You have a world to win.

After a string of increasingly defensive references to the IWA,²⁴ the *International* declared (somewhat disingenuously) that it was just a 'little body of native students of socialism which has from time to time, at its own request, been addressed by members of the League on the elementary principles of the working-class movement' (*International* 5/7/18).²⁵

8.5.6. The IWA reaches out

Bunting suggested on November 22 that public meetings be held on Sunday afternoons at a hall owned by the African Political Organisation (APO) on the corner of Commissioner and End Streets, and announced the first meeting would be held on November 25. But it was cancelled after the APO heard it was to be used by Africans (Johnstone 1979: 257).

At the next IWA meeting, on November 29, attended by the APO's Talbot Williams, members of the IWA executive called for more agitation and organisation with a view to eventual strike action. More leaflets were given out. At the invitation of Williams, nine IWA members were elected to speak to an APO meeting to be held at a future date (*ibid.*: 257-258).

Twenty IWA members attended a joint meeting with the APO and the Transvaal Native Congress at St Mary's Hall, in Polly Street, Marshallstown, on December 21. Bunting had earlier advised the IWA delegation that both the Congress and the APO were not working class organisations. Williams, in the APO delegation, told the meeting he had refused to address the SAIF a few days earlier because the ISL had been expelled from the Trades Hall for its race policy. He said the object of the joint meeting was to discuss ways of uniting in industrial action (Johnstone 1979: 259). He added:

²⁴ (*International* 4/1/18, 18/1/18, 25/1/18, 15/2/18, 1/3/18, 15/3/18, 3/5/18, 28/6/18).

²⁵ The *International*, the following week, also challenged the Minister of Mines, FS Malan, to a public debate for saying at a meeting held at the Town Hall that 'there were men who were going about amongst the native population fomenting unrest ... holding meetings with the natives ... the government had detectives on their track ... these people were playing with fire' (*International* 7/12/17). It was also around this time that Malan made threats to anyone inciting Africans to strike, and that Louis Botha warned the Congresses to have nothing to do with the League (Simons 1983: 204).

We have asked the white people, who are the ruling class,²⁶ again and again to grant us our rights as human beings, but our prayers have fallen upon deaf ears. We have tried several ways to get out of our present condition but without success. The only weapon we still possess is the working power in our hands' (*ibid.*: 259).

Williams' speech set the tone for the following joint meeting, on December 28, at the same venue. About 60 Africans and coloureds and a few ISL members attended. Bunting described the meeting in terms of disparities between the workers (IWA) and the 'respectables'. 'The whole of the one side of the hall was taken up by the horny-handed Industrial Workers of Africa. On the other side were members of the Transvaal Native Council, [sic] more sedate and middle-class looking, coloured workers, two or three members of the ISL, and some more industrial workers' (*International* 4/1/18). He said the IWA put 'good class war points to the meeting.... In spite of all temptations to fume at white workers ... the young recruits of the industrial workers ... kept the principle of the class struggle – irrespective of colour – clear before the meeting' (*ibid.*).

The meeting decided to form a joint committee to co-ordinate the activities of the three groups. The IWA delegation queried the commitment of Congress to the working class. Congress member DS Letanka said his organisation would remain independent of the labour movement, since their business was 'to unite the native chiefs'. He added, however, that the Congress was willing to help the workers wherever possible (Johnstone 1979: 260).

The next IWA meeting, on 3 January 1918, elected three members for the joint committee despite their indifference to the Congress. One IWA member said 'we must not talk about Congress anymore, as they are men who organise rich and high people who are the men who suck our blood and sell us'. Bunting cautioned them to 'do away with members of the Congress as they were the people who are misleading the natives just because they are educated, and they are trying to extinguish our organisation' (Johnstone 1979: 260).

²⁶ Bunting and other ISL members must have grimaced at this sweeping statement.

8.5.7. Trouble ahead

By January 1918, evidence was emerging of the IWA's activity in the mines. On 4 March 1918 a black constable was sent to the No 3 Compound on Consolidated Main Reef mine. There he found 'a strange well dressed native' called Kapen Reuben, from Troyeville, explaining to 25 miners the IWA leaflet, and the concepts of industrial unity and strike action. Reuben was a founding member of the IWA. According to the constable, Reuben had been involved in the concessionary stores boycott on the mines, and travelled around the compounds propagating IWA ideas. At the IWA meeting on March 15, one member urged that more leaflets be printed, claiming that they had helped to cause the concessionary stores boycott (Johnstone 1976: 173-174; Johnstone 1979: 261).²⁷

8.6. Concessionary stores boycott

Despite antagonism between the Congress and the IWA, they did share leadership roles during the June/July 1918 protests. The IWA also succeeded in pushing Congress more towards working class concerns (Johnstone 1979: 263). The IWA had been in existence for about six months when African mineworkers began boycotting concessionary trading stores on the Van Ryn Estates mine in February. The boycott spread to the Kleinfontein, Modderfontein, Modder Deep, Geduld, and other mines.²⁸ The Chamber of Mines blamed the boycott on outside agitation – the League or the IWA. Trade unionists petitioned the government to suppress the boycott with force.

²⁷ From now on, Johnstone finds in his material many references to the Bolshevik Revolution, although the main topic of discussion continues to be the Pass Laws (Johnstone 1979: 262). Against an over-emphasis on looking to Russia for guidance, Bunting wrote that 'a slavish imitation of Russia, or any other imported methods, would fail, and particularly in Africa, where whites are in the main hostile to non-whites. For some time to come, the only organisation the mass of the workers need worry about here is the organisation of education in the unity of labour, irrespective of colour, skill or craft. When that has spread sufficiently, then – we'll see' (*International* 18/1/18).

²⁸ At one mine the workers threatened to strike unless prices were reduced to pre-war levels. Prices had doubled since 1914, while their black wage rates had remained much the same. The stores were not controlled by the Chamber, however, but by private traders. The government appointed the chief magistrate of the Transkei, JB Moffat, to chair a commission to investigate the causes of the unrest. The commission found the stores were not charging excessive prices, but that wages had not kept up with the rising cost of living (Allen 1992: 276; Bonner 1982: 270-271; Johnstone 1976: 174-80; Simons 1983: 210-14).

The *International* disapproved of the action while agreeing with the grievances, and denied any ISL involvement despite allegations Jones said were made in the commercial press (*International* 15/2/18). He said that the 'native labourer's untutored mind sees in the storekeeper' the cause of his hardships. Nonetheless, Jones called the action 'marvellously unanimous', despite being directed at a symptom rather than at the source of black grievances: the Chamber, capitalism and the state (*International* 15/2/18, 1/3/18). He urged the mineworkers instead to seek wage increases as an immediate measure, but not to forget that they were 'robbed not as a consumer but at the point of production. This is what the socialist has been urging on the white workers for many years' (15/2/18). He added that the solidarity shown by the boycotters 'ought to make white Trade Unionists pause in admiration, and consider their relations towards this mass of unskilled labour which they today spurn as beneath the place of working class solidarity' (*ibid.*).

8.6.1. ISL blamed for pamphlet

The *Rand Daily Mail* had got hold of a copy of the IWA pamphlet, believed to have been a factor in the boycott. The *Mail* accused the ISL of having published it. In a leader article, it called for the 'incarceration' of these 'Bolshevik propagandists ... ill-balanced and fanatical socialists of the baser sort' (*Rand Daily Mail* 14/2/18). Jones said the *Mail* had revealed the leaflet being circulated in the compounds 'by these wicked Internationals' to a 'shocked shopocracy' (*Mail's* readers), but did not directly mention the ISL's role in the affair (*International* 15/2/18).²⁹

But following a 'flesh-creeping diatribe' (1/3/18) published in the *Natal Mercury* ten days later, Jones admitted the ISL was doing 'what little we can to further' the IWA, and explained that it was only a 'few natives' meeting together 'to learn, carry out, and organise upon, the principles of the labour movement' (*International* 1/3/18).

²⁹ The *Natal Mercury's* leader said 'once they permeate the natives with the pernicious doctrine that they are slaves, and so on, there will be trouble In a crisis like the present, the British principle of fair play and justice should not be stretched too far' (*Natal Mercury* 25/2/18).

Meanwhile CID men go round enquiring of printers whether they printed the leaflet It is just as well to state what we know on the matter. The Socialists of the ISL had nothing to do with the boycott, which they consider ... a piece of misguided tactics, an attack on the branch rather than the root (*ibid.*).

8.6.2. *International* denies secrecy

Concerning the *Mercury's* insinuations of secrecy, Jones pointed out that both the SANNC's *Abanto Batho* and the *International* had published the existence of the IWA 'a month or so back' (1/3/18). Before that he had said '(f)or years we have preached the solidarity of labour irrespective of race, colour or grade – preached it on the Town Hall steps till the audience got tired of it' (15/2/18). At that time Jones had mentioned tongue in cheek that the ISL 'had seen the leaflet referred to', but added the *Mail* had misquoted it (Simons 1983: 206-207; *International* 15/2/18). 'He then printed (in that edition) the original copy as written by himself' (Hirson & Williams 1995: 175. Insert in brackets).

Defending the ISL over the pamphlet issue had 'exhausted' Jones, and 'he was released as editor only after he had completed the edition of 1 March 1918' (Hirson & Williams 1995: 180). That evening he left 'Johannesburg for an indefinite stay at the coast' (*International* 1/3/18). Bunting took over as editor.

He said the commercial press was on 'a slimy campaign ... to excite public feeling', being in this case a black peril scare (15/3/18). He also denied blacks were being exhorted to rise against whites. 'We have always preached ... that workers, white, black, coloured and Indian, should co-operate in their common interests' (*ibid.*). And of white workers, he wrote a month later:

The governing class must almost be called the governing race for the white workers, the poorest and blindly as the rest mostly identify themselves with their top exploiters in this black peril scare (12/4/18).

8.7. The 'Bucket strike'

The protests against the high cost of living, dormant for a few months, were reactivated in May 1918, when about 50 of Johannesburg's municipal sanitary workers, or 'bucket boys', went on strike for higher wages. The white

municipal workers had waged a successful strike on May 11, and won a 23 per cent wage increase to eight pounds and two shillings a week. Their black counterparts now wanted a more modest sixpence a day increase, raising their daily wage to two shillings and sixpence (Allen 1992: 277-278; Davenport 1986: 263).

They were arrested and convicted by Magistrate TG Macfie for breach of contract under the Master and Servants Laws. Another 152 black municipal workers went on strike for having to do their work as well as their own. More arrests followed, and these were convicted on June 12 to two months' hard labour (Roux 1987: 130-131; Simons 1983: 207; *International* 17/5/18, 7/6/18, 5/7/18).

Bunting condemned the discrepancy of treatment meted out to white and black workers (*International* 17/5/18, 5/7/18). 'While the Town Council surrenders to white workers, the 'bucket boys' are marched to the lock-out like dumb creatures, and police boys and other scabs are called in to do their work. Yes, these are the workers of whom the ruling class are in real fear' (7/6/18).

8.7.1. IWA influences in Congress

The outcome of the strike had shown Congress leaders, particularly its president-general, SM Makgatho,³⁰ that the Pass Laws were the prime obstacle to obtaining wage increases (Bonner 1982: 279-282). Whether he was influenced by the IWA is uncertain. Some IWA members were also members of Congress (*ibid.*: 291-292, which complained about the partiality shown to the strikers (*ibid.*: 288).

The Congress launched a campaign to have the strikers released. A mass meeting was held on 10 June 1918, attended by about 2000 Africans from across the Rand. SANNC secretary-general Horatio Bud-M'Belle proposed an appeal be made to the governor-general, asking for remission of sentences for the

³⁰ Sefako Mupogo Makgatho was president general of the SANNC from 1917 to 1924, and the undisputed leader of the Transvaal Native Congress, a constituent body of the SANNC. He replaced John Dube as president general over disputes on how to approach the government on land policies (Gerhart 1987: 68-69).

'misguided' strikers (*International* 14/6/18). Makgatho warned that 'striking was dangerous', and even socialists (being white) would resort to arms against black strikers (Bonner 1982: 293). CS Mabaso,³¹ to the left of Makgatho, said '(t)here is a section of the white people called the International Socialist League. These men appear to sympathise with black people.... Whether these men are honest or not ... in my opinion they are friends of the black people'. But Makgatho continued to disagree on the grounds of the ISL's white membership (*ibid.*).

A man known as 'Mtota', whom Bonner assumes was an IWA member (1982: 291), suggested a general strike be called if the strikers were not released. Bud-M'Belle pointed out that the SANNC congress held in Bloemfontein earlier had decided against a strike. But pressure was mounting and the radical wing of Congress was gaining influence (*ibid.*: 291-292). On June 13 Bud-M'Belle sent a telegram pleading with the government to do something to 'calm the natives' (*ibid.*). He said meetings held at the Pilkington Hall were well attended, but now there were moves to hold 'counter meetings ... under socialist auspices next Sunday and Wednesday' (*ibid.*).

At this time the *International* reported that several protest meetings had taken place, 'mainly under the auspices (and in aid of the funds) of the Transvaal District Council of the SANNC' (14/6/18). Bunting noted the proposal to plead for the 'misguided' strikers. 'The meeting was overwhelmingly against this apologetic attitude and adopted an amendment pointing to the danger of a general strike,' he said (*ibid.*). He advised against a general strike as black workers had not yet learned the principles of the class struggle, and were not sufficiently organised. He said, however, that it was 'remarkable that such influences should have asserted themselves so early in the movement' (14/6/18).³²

³¹ CS Mabaso was the secretary and bookkeeper of *Abanto Batho*. He was a member of the Transvaal Native Organisation before the founding of the SANNC in 1912. He was the ANC's financial secretary in the 1930s (Gerhart 1987: 63).

³² Whatever influences other ISL members may have had on the Congress position against strike action is speculative beyond ISL member TP Tinker having told the June 13 meeting that blacks were too disorganised to strike successfully. Tinker said that passing resolutions was

On the other hand, Bunting also said the ISL could have no part in the 'more reactionary, middle-class and religious-cum-racial tendencies of Congress' appealing to the government and seeking reforms instead of revolution.³³ He did add, however, that the 'close coincidence of native and working class interests' might yet force it to 'play a useful role' in the class struggle (21/6/18). However, his objections had less to do with the anti-strike position of Congress leaders, than their appeals to the government. He said the purpose of the ISL was not to instigate strikes, but to educate workers. For any strike action to succeed, it had to include white workers, and not only black. Besides, even if whites had struck successfully on their own, Bunting still believed blacks were not sufficiently organised to strike successfully on their own (28/6/18).

SANNC member LT Mvabaza, seconded by Selope Thema, moved a resolution at a strike meeting that black wages be increased by a shilling a day as from July 1, failing which a general strike would be called. He said white workers struck and got their increases without having to appeal to the governor-general (Bonner 1982: 291, 294; *International* 21/6/18).³⁴ Bonner says

not enough, that a much more comprehensive industrial organisation was necessary before a strike could succeed (Bonner 1982: 295; Simons 1983: 207-208; *International* 21/6/18).

³³ Bunting's invective can be interpreted as an attack on submission to authority. Bonner says the 'popular appeals to the land our chiefs and the God who brought us our customs' were being reintegrated into a new populist discourse. (Bonner 1982: 293; *International* 21/6/18). One League member emerged strongly during 1918: T William Thibedi, who was one of the ISL's few black members (Gerhart 1987: 157). Thibedi urged all blacks present at a May Day celebration outside Pilkington Hall in 1918 to join the IWA. He said it was his duty to say a few words in opposition to the churches, 'which were endeavouring to satisfy the natives with their inferior lot in this world and promising them freedom beyond the sky. The missionaries were leading the blacks away from the truth in this world by a form of trickery which he despised' (*International* 3/5/18). It was under Thibedi's leadership that the IWA continued as an active group for at least another year. Echoing Thibedi's May Day speech, founding SANNC members LT Mvabaza and Selope Thema attacked the teaching of missionaries who called for submission to suffering in the hope of a reward in heaven. Bonner says this shows the ideological tide was turning, and attributes this change to influences outside of the Congress (1982: 294). The proximity of IWA figures suggests this ideological influence was coming from IWA quarters; also the numerous articles in the *International* (distributed at IWA meetings) attacking submissive Christian principles must have had a bearing on this conscientisation of certain Congress members (24/9/15, 21/7/16, 20/10/16, 1/12/16, 15/9/17, 21/9/17).

³⁴ The degree to which Mvabaza's opinions can be attributed to the ISL needs qualification. Both the ISL and the SANNC leaders opposed the call for a strike. The *International* said a strike would only give the state an excuse for violence. 'The ISL's general teaching to the few natives who have listened to them has been ... (this has been dinned into them until they are

Mvabaza's remark that 'capitalists and workers are at war everywhere and in every country' showed the ISL's influence. He had attended ISL meetings since late 1917 (Bonner 1982: 294; Allen 1992: 279).

8.7.2. Wage strike

Disagreement existed between younger and older Congress members as to what action to take if the employers rejected the wage demand. The older members remained hopeful the employers would 'see reason'. Violence was unnecessary, Makgatho argued. He said Congress was loyal to the government. Why should the government not redress their grievances? (Allen 1992: 279-80; Bonner 1982: 293). Bud-M'Belle opposed strike action, effectively agreeing with the *International* that it would give the state an excuse for violence. The SANNC's Saul Msane³⁵ issued a pamphlet denouncing strike action.

While the general impression was that a strike would take place if the wage increase was not granted, Bonner says it was uncertain if a decision to strike had actually been made (1982: 296, 297). But with or without a decision, unrest appeared inevitable (Simons 1983: 210). ISL member Herbert Msane proposed a secret committee comprising five Congress and five ISL members to devise a strike strategy. According to Bonner, ISL member TP Tinker was among those who insisted the decision to strike had in fact been made. Evidently, matters were beyond the control of the Congress (Bonner 1982: 294; Johnstone 1979: 260; Walshe 1987: 95).

Bunting now appealed to white trade unions a week before the strike to 'break their conspiracy of silence and show if there is any class consciousness about them. They complain that native wages undercut theirs; well, here's a chance to begin leysing up. It's all very well to say that they will not cooperate with the negrophiles There are many moments where capitalism and

tired of hearing it) to urge that on no account should they give the government any excuse for meeting them with force' (*International* 16/8/18, reference to article published on 5/6/18).

³⁵ Saul Msane was for many years a compound manager for the Jubilee and Salisbury gold mining company. He was secretary general of the SANNC from 1917-1924, and was an editor of *Abanto Batho* (Gerhart 1987: 104).

socialism involuntarily march together, and this is one of them' (*International* 21/6/18).

Tensions were high on the Rand, and trade unionists were certainly not prepared to remain silent. A black workers' strike was expected, and caused much alarm. The SAIF, led by James Forrester Brown, by now a nominal League member and leader of the South African Mine Workers' Union, offered to mobilise whites into workers' battalions 'to protect white women and children' (Simons 1983: 208, 211). The SAIF move drew strong criticism from Bunting:

We have criticised the federation till we were sick of it; but in our most bitter dreams we never imagined it could sink to so disgraceful a depth of treachery to the proletariat as this Such is the corrupting influence of ... colour pride and prejudice (*International* 5/7/18).

To diffuse tensions, the government released the 'bucket boys' on June 26, and the threatened strike was called off (Bonner 1982: 295). But 15000 black workers at three mines refused to work on July 1. Police and troops rushed to the compounds and drove the strikers down the shafts at bayonet point (Simons 1983: 208; Allen 1992: 279-80).

8.8. ISL activists on trial

The issues of both the 'bucket' and the miners' strikes did not end there for the ISL. On June 28 Bunting was tipped off that he was to be arrested (*International* 4/10/18). He spent much ink refuting the incitement to violence charges yet to be brought against him and other ISL members. The *International* went on the defence.

Their position was made more difficult after the *Rand Daily Mail* published allegations of an insurrection movement led by 'mostly dissatisfied international socialists thrown out of labour circles since the war' (*Rand Daily Mail* 26/6/18). Bunting complained that if the *Mail's* reporters had read the *International*, 'evidently a difficult matter for capitalist scribes,' they would stop blaming the ISL for the bucket strike (*International* 28/6/18). 'These are

lies which have been over and over again refuted in this paper' (*ibid.*).³⁶ He repeated Jones's earlier (1/3/18) claim that the IWA was a 'little body of native students of socialism which has from time to time, at its own request, been addressed by members of the League on the elementary principles of the working-class movement' (5/7/18). He also denied the ISL had issued the IWA leaflet (*ibid.*).

Bunting cited Bud-M'Belle as having said the IWA and the Congress had not been consulted by those still adamant on strike action. Nor had they a hand in the 'bucket strike' (2/8/18), which Bunting had earlier insisted the ISL had first learnt of through the press (5/7/18). Concerning the presence of ISL members at strike meetings: 'The congress officials invited members ... to this meeting, [sic] and some went, and ridiculed the idea of attempting a strike when they were unorganised' (*ibid.*). That the July 1 strike occurred at all was due, Bunting said, to the compounds being sealed off. The workers had heard nothing of the strike being called off (*ibid.*).

8.8.1. Violence condemned

Bunting said the *International* had condemned the use of violence as a means of labour organisation, 'especially in the case of the black proletariat; not out of tenderness for the bosses' skin, but because it would not pay, and because it is a capitalist method' (16/8/18).

He also rejected allegations made in the press that strike meetings had threatened to use violence. The most 'truculent' move by Congress, he said, was to compose a circular to employers 'begging ... for a one shilling rise' (30/8/18). He said that at the compounds on July 1 the most violent action the strikers took was simply to sit down and refuse to work (*ibid.*). However, the

³⁶ Press claims of socialist intrigue continued well into July. Bunting pointed out these claims assumed white worker strikes left no impression on black workers. He pointed out that blacks had already struck in 1913, and since then. A threat of strike action had been behind the withdrawal of the Native Affairs Administration Bill of 1917. 'One would suppose that the sanitary sentence caused only feelings of servile submission, and none of protest and indignation, among the fellow workers of the sentenced "boys"; and that to feel the pinch of extortionate living costs a sentiment to which the white breast might legitimately respond, but to which the black mind was impervious but for the sinister suggestions' of international socialists (*International* 5/7/18).

Simons say the strikers actually ‘fought back with pickhandles, jumpers, axes and iron pipes’ (1983: 208).

‘Of course we are not apologising,’ Bunting retorted. ‘A great “forward movement” of the native and white proletariat is inevitable in the near future, and we have done and are doing all we know to help it on’ (2/8/18). ‘Perhaps, after all, it is a pity that a general strike was not allowed to mature,’ he had mused a month earlier (5/7/18).

It will come anyhow some day Solidarity is natural to natives and their position as bottom dogs needs little teaching to bring home. The movement is coming quickly, in time to participate in the coming general overthrow of capitalism ... Note finally that it needed a strike, abortive as this one was, to convince the public that even the natives are entitled to more pay and intend to get it (5/7/18).

8.8.2. ISL members on trial

On Saturday 6 July 1918, ISL members Bunting, Tinker (acting secretary in the absence of Jones) and HC Hanscombe³⁷ were arrested and charged with public violence, read with the Riotous Assemblies Act of 1914 (*International* 12/7/18).³⁸ The three spent 12 days in custody. The police confiscated ‘practically everything of importance from the ISL head office’ (*ibid.*).³⁹

³⁷ I have been unable to determine Hanscombe’s background, apart from his being a member of the ISL’s Johannesburg Central branch at the time. His initials also appear under two articles in my sample of the *International*.

³⁸ The actual charge was ‘that the accused did act or conduct themselves in such a manner or did speak or publish such words that it might reasonably be expected that the natural and probable consequences of their acts, conduct, speech or publication would, under the circumstances, be the commission of public violence by members of the public generally in whose presence the act or conduct took place or to whom the speech or publication was addressed.’ When the crown concluded its case, the charges against the accused were changed to: ‘That on diverse dates during 1917 and 1918 at Johannesburg the accused one or each or all of them did wrongfully and unlawfully incite or instigate a number of natives whose names are to the Prosecutor unknown by words to commit acts of public violence as a result of which the said natives (a) armed themselves on 1 July 1918, at the Ferreira Gold Mine with sticks, assegais, stones and other missiles and did commit a riot and affray and disturbed the public peace and the authority of the person placed in authority over them, to wit George Weaver the Compound manager; (b) did on June 30th, 1918, at Johannesburg assault a member of the SA Police, to wit, Sergeant Mitchell, and did throw missiles, to wit, stones at and toward certain trams in bodily fear; (c) and did on July 1st, 1918, aforesaid create a riot and an affray at the Robinson Deep GM by refusing to work and arming themselves with missiles against the authority placed over them, to wit one George Devenish the Compound manager being there.’ (*International* 30/8/18).

³⁹ The state prosecuted the three ISL members along with the vice-president of the TNC, DS Letanka, LT Mvabaza, and three IWA members, J Ngojo, H Kraai and A Cetyiwe. Exhibits of

In his statement before the court, Bunting emphatically denied that the strike showed common cause between the ISL and those who instigated the strikes. He said the ISL preached socialism and industrial unionism, and approved of strikes only when preceded by sound industrial organisation. 'If any public organisation called the strike, it was not the ISL but the Native Congress, with which the socialists are at arm's length,' Bunting wrote (6/9/18). As before, he said the ISL was not trying to set blacks against whites, as white trade unions often alleged. Instead, through the ISL's night classes, the organisation was trying to teach Africans socialism (Simons 1983: 209; Roux 1978: 130-131).

The grievances commissioner and chief justice of the Transkei, JB Moffat, replied that teaching Africans socialism was like 'teaching children to play with matches round an open barrel of gunpowder' (Simons 1983: 209-210). 'By the way, what does the metaphor mean?' Bunting asked in the *International*. 'The "teachers" it seems are the socialists; the "children" are the natives (although if "we" treated our natives as we treat our children, and vice versa, they would not know themselves) but who or what are the "matches" and the "gunpowder"?' (13/9/18).

A police informer in the IWA, Luke Messina, proved to be the undoing of the state's case. He told the court an Inspector LE Dawe had employed him to 'spy on some Europeans who were misleading the natives'. However, he denied much of the evidence he had supposedly gleaned from these meetings. Dawe was looking for 'evidence' to frame the League (26/7/18). In fact, the prosecution did not arise out of the July 1 strike at all, but was planned some time before that. Bunting's being told on June 28 to expect arrest (before the July 1 strike, and the violence for which he was charged) indicates this fact.

the *International* were submitted as evidence at the trial (16/11/17, 1/3/18, 10/5/18). Bunting pointed out that '(n)one of the natives mentioned (in court) as committing acts of violence were stated to have belonged to the IWA or attended its meetings' (*International* 2/8/18. Insert in brackets). Those mentioned were not Ngojo, Kraai or Cetyiwe.

With his case won, Bunting impenitently wrote: 'And now, forward the ISL! Agitate, educate and organise the workers, irrespective of colour' (4/10/18).⁴⁰

8.8.3. ISL achievement

By 1919 the ISL said the only 'problem' of the 'natives' was their 'lack of industrial organisation' (4/1/19).⁴¹ The ISL's 1919 Annual Conference claimed the honour that black workers, since the strike, had begun discussing their grievances the first time from a 'proletarian point of view' (10/1/19). The conference declared that Bunting, Tinker and Hanscombe had 'borne the brunt of capitalist hatred for challenging its right ruthlessly to exploit the black man'. More important, the League felt it had made progress towards getting black workers to see their oppression in class terms (*ibid.*).

⁴⁰The Moffat Commission, investigating the bucket strike, was published in September 1918, and was received differently by various sections of the African population. Some were appeased, particularly by the Johannesburg Chamber of Commerce agreeing to a 25 per cent pay increase over pre-war wage rates. Government concessions, recommended by Moffat, were announced at the same time. However, Moffat claimed African grievances were largely unfounded, except when it came to the increased cost of clothing needed by mine workers, and which were to be bought from concessionary stores. He said the cost of living was the basis of the boycott (Bonner 1982: 274, 276, 299).

On the basis of the report, the Minister for Native Affairs recommended wage increases for those permanently resident in towns at their own expense. Black soldiers and policemen received wage increases, and conciliation boards for Africans were proposed, but were to operate under restricted circumstances. The 1s a day fee for a travelling pass was removed, as were the night passes required by African women. Black education was to be improved. But the main cause of oppression - the pass laws and colour bars - were to remain in place. The majority of Africans were not satisfied with this, and the cost of living continued to rise (Allen 1992: 280).

Moffat also pointed out that the Mines and Works Act of 1911 did not authorise the job colour bars prohibiting Africans from taking up skilled and semi-skilled jobs. He advised the government to scrap the job colour bars, claiming they were illegal. The white workers, and not the Act, stood between African workers and their demands for better employment. While the mine owners acclaimed this point, they were also involved with getting the Status Quo Agreement ratified at the same time. Concerning the exploitation bars, the Chamber kept very quiet (Simons 1983: 234-35).

The *International* took Moffat to task on two points: his view of the black worker, and his warnings against socialists. The paper heaped criticism on Moffat's claim black workers were as 'asset' to industry, and therefore had to be looked after, as sanction for their continued exploitation by whites. Moffat also blamed the ISL's propaganda for the 'atmosphere of unrest and discontent'. Yet from the very next line to the end of his long report, Bunting pointed out, Moffat enumerated the many obvious causes of unrest and discontent. Socialism was not mentioned among them (*International* 13/9/18).

⁴¹ This date appears to have been a misprint, as the Friday was the 3rd. This error probably arose following the date of the previous issue (21/12/18), which was actually the 20th. If Bunting had celebrated Christmas and New Year at all, he may have done so a day early.

Even though the Conference carried a motion to add the words 'special attention being paid to native workers' to the League's objectives, the movement still had a long way to go. In the debate that led up to the motion being carried, some members argued that work among white trade unionists seemed 'the more hopeful material', particularly 'Dutch workers'. In comparison, 'little could be done with semi-savages who at best must be their own propagandists' (10/1/19). Others argued that the 'native and coloured workers that man the industries ... should ... be organised rather than left passive under the guardianship of a semi-hostile white working class' (*ibid.*). Bunting's comment on the debate was that to neglect 'native propaganda will be a drag on the wheel of the white revolution' (*ibid.*). But 'white revolution' did not equate to the trade union movement.

As a matter of fact the recent Native Congress and white trade union congress revealed both as equally steeped in capitalist ideology or mis-education and manipulated in the interest of the ruling class (*ibid.*).

8.9. Conclusion

This chapter has covered the main events which occupied the *International* (and the ISL) in its struggle against racial segregation in the labour movement in South Africa from 1915 to 1919.

These events included the regular defeats ISL candidates suffered at the polls. This showed that if political action was a barometer of (white) working class consciousness, then this level was very low in terms of socialist thinking. The ISL was also evicted from its offices in the Trades Hall six months after SANNC president John Dube addressed an ISL protest meeting there. But having Dube on the ISL platform did not indicate a *rapprochement* between the two organisations. The ISL continued to keep its distance from Congress, which the *International* branded as unrepresentative of black workers. In fact, an IWA speaker at the ISL's 1919 Conference called Congress a 'capitalist gang, which feared the work the ISL had done' (*International* 10/1/19).

The IWA was possibly the ISL's highest achievement in the field of black labour. But events surrounding the July 1 strike showed that the ISL was a long way from achieving its aim of industrial unity across the racial divide.

And while, according to Bonner (1979: 294), the IWA played a role in shifting Congress to the left, claims made in the *International* (10/1/19) that black workers were beginning to adopt a class view of their conditions was possibly true only with a small number of their leaders. Although this too could be considered an achievement.

The ISL's shift in emphasis towards black workers was qualified by its dilemma of whether its policy 'to educate, agitate and organise the workers for the great task ... of affecting the revolution in our land' (4/1/19) lay primarily with white labour or black. It was Bunting's view that white workers would be the 'engine of revolution ... just as the comparatively small industrial proletariat steered the big mass of the Russian people (peasants) into the Soviet Republic' (11/4/19). It is very feasible that the term 'Russian people' (peasants) was used here as a metaphor for, what Jones called, the 'large mass of unlettered native population, [sic] newly emerging from primitive manhood' (4/1/19).

Perhaps the most significant policy statement made in the *International* after the ISL's 1919 Conference was Bunting's comment on a 'native manifesto' its writers (possibly Congress) hoped the ISL would support in their plea to the Crown. The text's immediate context may have been the 'native meeting held on the previous Wednesday at the Pilkington Hall' (*International* 31/1/19), which Bunting referred to higher up in his copy. Bunting quoted from the 'manifesto':

There never was and never will be found in all creation a more corrupt, unjust, cruel, oppressive and murderous system of scientific and refined practice of slavery under the cloak of Christianity than that obtaining under the British flag in South Africa [sic] Our prayer is for an independent South African 'kingdom' in which there shall be no baases and classes (*ibid.*).

According to Bunting's response, the writers could expect no support from the ISL. They contradicted the *International's* fundamental opposition to nationalism:

The ISL ... does not traffic in nationalism of any kind. Nor does it believe in "restoring the land" (or property) "to its rightful (**private**) [sic] owners." But it is entirely with the prayer for "no baases and classes," and not least for the disenfranchised and disinherited masses of Africa, who if they unite

and organise themselves will one day realise, together with their white fellow workers in this country, the “dictatorship of the proletariat,” the only weapon wherewith to gain freedom for all (ibid.).

At the discursive level of the text (in conjunction with its syntax), Bunting places the noun phrase The ISL, by the negative verb does not, in an antonymic relation to the phrases nationalism and “restoring the land ... to its rightful ... owners”, which he seems to have quoted from elsewhere in the manifesto. And by inserting the words property and private in the quote, he establishes a synonymic relation between the verb phrase restoring the land and the substituted noun phrase ‘private property’. The former phrase appears to refer exophorically (and intertextually) to the land issues which (particularly since 1913) dominated African nationalist discourse. The latter constituent in Bunting’s text refers to significations used in a Marxist critique of capitalism.

Bunting’s use of the conjunction But places the noun ISL in a metonymic relation with “no baases and classes”, which coheres with the *International’s* fundamental opposition to race and class divisions, and not least for (blacks), repeated in the pronoun who. The verb phrase unite and organise modifies the endocentric head masses in the noun phrase it substitutes. Together, the whole construction is related metonymically to the noun phrase “dictatorship of the proletariat”. Bunting synonymically (and metonymically) includes the noun phrase white fellow workers in this construction.

From an analysis of both the non-discursive and discursive surface aspects of the text’s surface forms, it becomes apparent that its deep structure entails an antonymic relation between ISL and nationalism/‘capitalism’, and a metonymic relation between ISL and unite and organise on internationalist (non-racial, working class) lines. This structure can be depicted as in Figure 10.

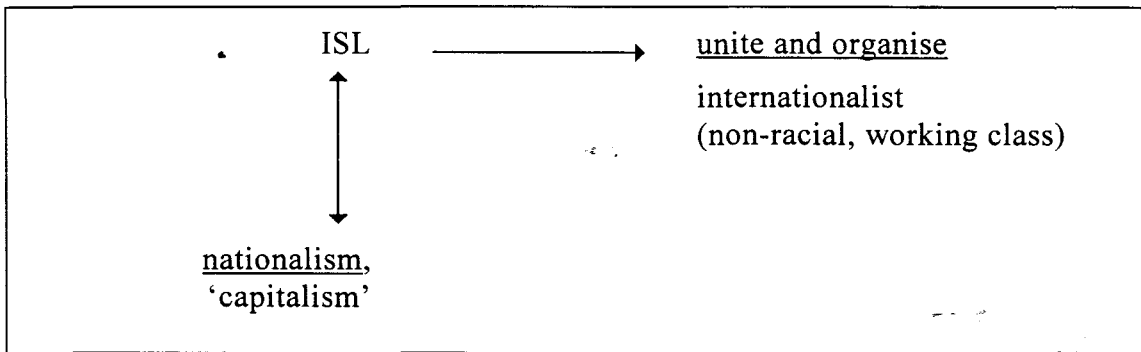


Figure 10

This structure can be interpreted in terms of Michel Foucault's view of a discourse as a 'finite body of rules that authorises an infinite number of' different texts (1986: 27), each of which (as a structure of statements) 'fits into a network that has its own history and conditions of existence' (Barrett 1990: 126). Accordingly, it would seem that if further analyses of additional text fragments from the *International* generate similar structures (as in Figure 10), then these can be taken as the rules of the underlying discursive conditions which determined how the *International's* writers engaged in a discursive struggle against racism in the labour movement. By using the material covered in this and the previous two chapters as context in discourse analysis, the next two chapters aim to prove whether (or to what extent) Figure 10 is an accurate representation of the rules that underpinned the *International's* discourse.

Chapter nine

Discourse analysis: anti-militarism

9.1. Introduction

The International Socialist League was founded in a context of dissension in the South African Labour Party's rank and file of whether to abide by or reject the anti-militarist principles of the Second International. The world socialist body had decreed that should war break out, socialists world-wide would stand in solidarity with international labour. Following the eventual outcome, the ISL from its inception saw itself as a lonely outpost of internationalism assailed all round by the mightier forces of jingoism.

Although the *International* carried reports of wartime atrocities, its views were not pacifist. For much the same reason as it rejected violence during the protests on the Rand in around 1918, it opposed militarism because it was a 'capitalist method' (*International* 16/8/18). In this respect, its views of militarism were drawn mainly from German social democrat Karl Liebknecht, who saw militarism principally as a method of national rivalry in world trade. Militarism was also used to suppress the working class (at home). Therefore, to oppose capitalist militarism was to oppose capitalist power. This also entailed an opposition to nationalism, and at the international level, an opposition to imperialism. In short, Liebknecht saw anti-militarism as the foundation of the class struggle (see 1.1. and Chapter six).

When the *International's* writers began to articulate a position against racism in the white labour movement (and Congress), their thinking was framed in the language of anti-militarism (and anti-trade unionism, considered in the next chapter). In terms of the systemic nature of discourse, the combination of these sites of language use had to be compatible if it was not to be problematic.¹

¹ As before, I do not wish to suggest that the systematicity of the interdiscursive realm is neatly mechanical. While one section of the ISL saw 'no native problem, only a worker problem,' others such as Bunting and Jones began to see an incompatibility between this statement and their experience of the actual labour context. In this sense, and as Chapter seven indicates, we may understand their discourse against racism as an intra-discursive struggle within the international socialist language of the ISL.

That is, their struggle against racism was not an option for blacks as a race, but as a class. Accordingly, the African (and Afrikaner) nationalist movement could find no sympathy in the *International*.

9.1.1. Discourse analysis

This chapter shows through discourse analysis how the *International's* struggle against racism was framed in terms of the anti-militarist discourse in which its writers participated. Also, this chapter aims to reveal the deep structures of this discourse.

By a two-phase model of discourse analysis (discussed in Chapter four), three texts each dealing with the topic class, nation or race (briefly discussed in Chapter five) will be analysed in order to arrive at the deep structures which informed the *International's* discourse against militarism. The process entails an initial linguistic analysis of the text's surface forms (similar to that used in the conclusion to the previous chapter). These data are then used to decipher the text's discursive cohesive relations (metaphor, and so on), bearing in mind that their coherence is not derived independently of the more fundamental (non-discursive) syntax. Nor is this coherence independent of the discursive contexts (conditions of discourse) it articulates. It is in terms of both these discursive and non-discursive contexts of text production that the data derived in textual analysis are analysed in contextual analysis. The findings of these analyses are correlated in the conclusion of this chapter.

A thorough (albeit technical and formalistic) linguistic analysis of text is made necessary (as I argue in Chapter four) on the general grounds that social structures (contexts and discourses) exist in a dialectical relation with social action (texts and text production) (Fairclough 1995: 208). Text and context are mediated within discourse. For this reason, Norman Fairclough argues that a detailed textual analysis 'will always strengthen discourse analysis' (*ibid.*: 187).

Furthermore (as I argue in Chapters three and four), the discursive aspects of text and context are the creative and determined 'sides' of discursive struggle, which is a creative process framed within the determinate resources of discourses. That is, texts (and text production) are sites of struggle in that the

restructuring of language is a centrifugal (creative) process delimited by the centripetal (determined) discourse resources social subjects have available to them. Texts usually display both these tendencies (Fairclough 1995: 7-8; Fiske 1987: 14; Seldon & Widdowson 1992: 127).

The centripetal forces are contextual, and include the culture (language system) in which a text is used, as well as other texts and discourses which constrain the production and interpretation of text (Van Dijk 1977: 191-193, 228). The centrifugal forces, on the other hand, are textual in that discursive struggle is waged principally at the level of the sign (Hall 1982: 60; Vološinov 1981: 149, 151). The view here is that text is a phenomenon of context, intersecting and mediated in discourse (Foucault 1986: 49; Van Dijk 1991a: 119). This corresponds to Valentin Vološinov's view of an interdependence between language (*langue*) and writing (*parole*): where *langue* is both the instrument and product of *parole* (Vološinov 1980: 147, 149). Linguistic phenomena are not only an emanation of discursive contexts, but are also the evidence of how those discourse resources are combined in ways which challenge existing conventions.

9.1.2. Chapter outline

This chapter is structured around the concepts of class, nation and race, showing how these concepts intersected in the *International's* discourse against militarism. Their discourse had its genesis in the context of the Second International and the formation of the ISL. Basically, these writers rejected race and nation as irrelevant to the class struggle.

- Section 9.2. examines the class basis for the *International's* opposition to militarism. This shows how these writers understood the fundamental unity of labour across all national barriers as a metaphor of class unity of labour in South Africa.
- Internationalism formed the basis for their opposition to nationalism (9.3.). They understood nationalism as a capitalist tool to keep the working class racially fragmented.

- Section 9.4. examines how the concept of ‘nation’ fits into the *International’s* pro-worker discourse.
- The similarities in the findings of each of these areas of analysis are discussed in the conclusion (9.5).

9.2. Class unity, not division

The following text is part of a manifesto which the ISL’s Management Committee published against ‘economic conscription’. (A copy of the whole article is provided as Appendix I.) The immediate context is the opposition the ISL received from recruiting bodies, following allegations that the ISL was hampering their recruiting drive. The ISL also opposed what it called ‘economic conscription’, whereby workers were pressured by their employers to volunteer for military service.

TO THE WORKERS OF THE RAND AND SOUTH AFRICA

The International Socialist League of SA. (whose sole concern is the welfare of the working class movement,) has hitherto studiously refrained from interfering with men who have sincerely and freely volunteered for military service. We have respected their courage though regarding it misplaced. We have instead endeavoured, in spite of manifold suppressions, to proclaim the international unity of the working class across all frontiers of race and country (*International* 14/4/16).

9.2.1. Textual analysis

Main clause	The International Socialist League of SA. has hitherto studiously refrained from interfering with men
	[_S ₁ [_{NP} ₁ ISL] [_{VP} ₁ has [_{ADV} ₁ hitherto studiously] refrained]
	[_{ADVP} ₁ from interfering with [_N ₁ men]]]

NP₁: Noun phrase and subject of the verb phrase has refrained, which forms a finite main verb. ADV₁: hitherto is an adverb of time modifying the verb has refrained. The adverb of manner studiously modifies the verb has refrained. ADVP₁: adverbial phrase modifying has refrained.

Subordinate adjectival clause qualifying noun <u>League</u> .	whose sole concern is the welfare of the working class movement $* [s_2 [N_2 \text{ whose}][NP_2 \text{ sole concern}][VP_1 \text{ is }]$ $[NP_3 \text{ the } [N_3 \text{ welfare}][AP_1 \text{ of the working class movement }]]$
---	--

N_2 : relative pronoun acting as a conjunction for clauses. NP_2 is the subject of the verb phrase (finite linking verb) is. NP_3 : a noun phrase complimenting the verb is. AP_1 : adjectival phrase modifying the noun welfare.

Subordinate adjectival clause qualifying noun <u>men</u> .	who have sincerely and freely volunteered for military service $[s_3 [N_4 \text{ who }][VP_3 \text{ have } [ADV_2] \text{ volunteered}][ADVP_2 \text{ military service }]]$
--	---

N_2 : relative pronoun acting as a conjunction for clauses. VP_3 (have volunteered) is a verb phrase finite verb. ADV_2 : both sincerely and freely (with the conjunction and) are adverbs of manner, modifying the verb have volunteered.

Only clause in simple sentence (one main verb).	We have respected their courage though regarding it misplaced $[s_4 [NP_2 \text{ we }][VP_4 \text{ have respected}][NP_3 \text{ their courage}][ADVP_3]]$
---	--

NP_2 is a noun phrase pronoun, and subject of the verb have respected, a verb phrase finite verb. NP_3 is the object of the same verb, further modified by the adverbial phrase of concession, though regarding it misplaced.

Only clause in simple sentence (one main verb).	We have instead endeavoured, in spite of manifold suppressions, to proclaim the international unity of the working class across all frontiers of race and country. $[s_5 [NP_4 \text{ we}][VP_5 [have [ADV_3] \text{ endeavoured}]]$ $[ADVP_4 \text{ in spite of manifold suppressions}]$ $[V_1 \text{ to proclaim}][NP_5 \text{ the international unity}][AP_2 \text{ of the working class}]$ $[ADVP_5 \text{ across all frontiers}][AP_3 \text{ of race and country}]]$
---	---

NP_4 is a noun phrase pronoun, and subject of the verb phrase finite verb, have endeavoured, which is modified by the adverb, instead. VP_5 is also modified by the adverbial phrase of concession ($ADVP_4$), in spite of manifold suppressions. NP_5 : the international unity is the object of the infinitive verb to proclaim,

which is governed by the verb have endeavoured. The adjectival phrase of the working class qualifies the noun unity. The adverbial phrase of place across all frontiers modifies the verb proclaim. The adjectival phrase race and country qualifies the noun frontiers.

In S₁, NP₁ is distributed metonymically through the relative pronoun whose in S₂, to the noun phrase welfare of the working class movement (NP₁ → NP₃). By a process of substitution, NP₃ may be reduced to its endocentric head working class. The head ISL thereby becomes a metonym of working class. The reference relation between these is extended by NP₁ repeated in its pronominal form we in S₄, and its repeated form in S₅. The verb phrases in each clause refer anaphorically to the previous verb phrases, VP₁ and VP₂ respectively. Within these relations the head of NP₂ is metonymically related to its substituted form (class unity) in NP₅. The text following the infinitive verb to proclaim may be substituted with its exocentric head, 'internationalism', being an attribute of working class, which is qualified by the adverbial phrase ADVP₅ and adjectival phrase AP₃. Each phrase in S₅ (with the exception of have endeavoured) is a metonym of the others.

Considered with the metonymic relations discussed above, the combined metonymic relations are NP₁ → NP₃ → VP₅, where ISL is a metonym of working class, which is a metonym of 'internationalism'. The meanings of the substituted forms 'across race frontiers' and 'across national frontiers' are linked within the meanings of both working class and ISL. By implication, antonymic relations exist between these co-ordinates and the noun men in the main clause. This relation is not made grammatically (but discursively), except by the pronoun their in S₄, referring anaphorically to men, and the verb misplaced in AVDP₃. Men and military service are metonymically linked. The deep structure of the text can be depicted as in Figure 11.

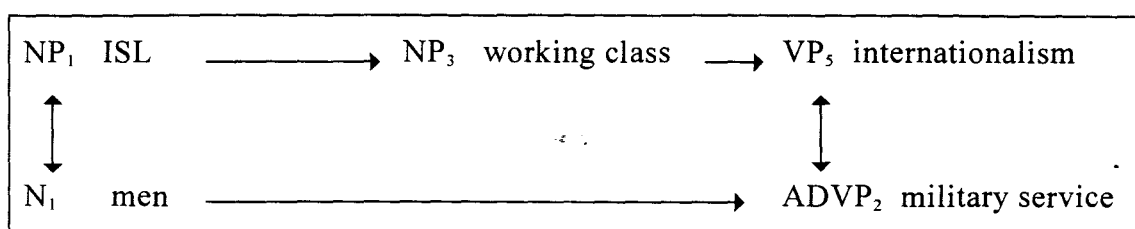


Figure 11

Relational² values in the text are found in ADVP₂ and S₂, where the writer contrasts the ISL's anti-militarism with the misplaced courage of those who volunteered for military service. Presuming these people to be workers, to whom the text is addressed in the headline, and by the features of relational modalities hitherto studiously, have respected, have instead, the writer declares (sympathetic) opposition to the route taken by these servicemen. This is an indication of a divergence of values with readers, and an opposition of subject positions located in the two discourse types the text is drawing on: international socialism and militarism.

9.2.2.1. Context analysis

The *International's* opposition to war was consistent with the anti-militarism of socialists in Europe, to whom was left the task of setting up of the Third International in 1919. A leader in this movement was the German socialist leader Karl Liebknecht, for whom anti-militarism was the foundation of class struggle. As Jones wrote:

We are not merely anti-war: International Socialism will stop the war. We are not pro-German: We back up Liebknecht because he fights German militarism with the only weapon that can fight it, – Socialism. Is Liebknecht right? Then we are also right. (*International* 10/9/15)

Jones is named as the first local socialist to have predicted the Third International (Bunting 1981: 48).³ But he is echoed in the same first edition of

² Relational values focus on the relationship between writer and reader. This is found in how a text's choice of words depends on, and helps create, social relationships, and how these are problematised. Relational modality concerns the forms by which the authority of the writer in relation to readers are indicated.

³ Michael Harmel quotes Jones as having said that 'out of the nationalistic ruins of the Second International will arise a third International' (29/9/16), using this as evidence of the ISL's being abreast

the paper by Andrews, who recalled how the First International had collapsed, 'submerged by the more immense upheaval of national hate'. He said 'it will rise again purged we hope of some of its errors' (*International* 10/9/15).

Bunting also voiced hope in a new International. '(O)n it alone the hope of the working class is fixed' (24/9/15). And attacking the SALP for their option for the war, one writer said governments fomented national prejudices 'so that the workers of the world may be divided That is why they so eagerly pat the Labour Party on the back for "seeing it through"' (15/10/15).

The campaign against the war occupied more column space in the *International* than any other issue (see Graph 1 in Chapter one), and was the primary focus of the paper until the ISL's 1917 Second Annual Conference – a watershed in ISL policy, when the campaign against racism began to take prior place. The ISL's Press Committee⁴ declared that the stand on principles of international socialism encompassed more than anti-militarism.⁵ Its internationalist logic was the paradigm in which the *International* articulated non-racism. The idea of British workers fighting against German translated easily into the fragmentation of the working class at home: whites against blacks, and English against Afrikaner. Both militarism and racism (including nationalism) promoted the interests of the capitalist class against working class interests (29/9/16).

9.2.2.2. Against pacifism

The *International's* anti-militarism was not guided by pacifism.⁶ Instead, its writers berated conscientious objectors 'who pleaded before tribunals' for exemption from military service, particularly on religious grounds

of socialist developments in Europe (Lerumo 1980: 33-34). Actually, Harmel is mistaken. The quote is by a Robert Holder, writing in an American journal, *The Plebs Magazine*, which Jones quotes (*International* 29/9/16). Lenin had made the same claim in November 1914 when, unknown to the South Africans, whose knowledge of overseas developments was obscured by heavy censorship, he wrote: 'The Second International is dead, overcome by opportunism. Down with opportunism, and long live the Third International' (Lerumo 1980: 34).

⁴ JM Gibson, CB Tyler, SP Bunting, D Ivon Jones.

⁵ Jones wrote in October 1915: 'An internationalism which does not concede the fullest rights which the native working class is capable of claiming will be a sham. Not till we free the natives can we hope to free the whites' (*International* 1/10/15).

⁶ These writers were not the 'puerile pacifists' the *Sunday Times* called them (5/8/17).

(*International* 30/3/17). These objectors acknowledged the authority of the state, but wanted nothing to do with its war, on grounds of ‘conscience’ (*ibid.*). There was only one war: the class war. Capitalist and working class interests were diametrically opposed. A squabble between capitalist states had nothing to do with the working class, who for that reason had no interest in their war. One writer, using the *nom de plume* ‘Beronia’, said conscience was ‘a metaphysical abstraction’ having nothing to do with the imperative of common cause with the rest of the working class. He said that unlike conscientious objectors, socialists refused allegiance to the authority of the capitalist state (10/3/16).⁷

Jones shored up this point: the working class, having no property to lose and therefore no country to defend, had no stake in a war which was a quarrel between the ‘bosses’ of the ‘belligerent nations’. The war was waged over markets and colonial interests. It was a ploy ‘to capture greater power over the wage-earning class’ (19/1/17). The *International’s* writers reacted to press reports promising white workers that labour conditions would improve once the war was over. But what about the ‘class war’? This war was on and would continue until, ‘through intelligent, industrial organisation’, it destroyed the conditions that produce war – ‘military, economic, social’ (3/11/16; 14/4/16).

Jones pointed out that war on war had become a ‘more real socialist international movement than anything that has gone before it’. The war had unveiled the international nature of capitalism, and showed that capitalists were the same in every country. Despite the hostility between nations, capital was international by nature, as was the working class, which was its only true enemy. ‘Capital knows no country. Capital in Europe rushes to the defence of capital in South Africa against the attacks of labour’ (24/9/15).

9.2.2.3. Pamphlet campaign

Jones attributed the jingoism among white workers largely to the ‘enormous power’ of the media – a field in which ‘the capitalist press holds undisputed sway’ and a ‘strategic monopoly of public enlightenment’ (12/5/16). The ISL’s

⁷ I have been unable to determine who Beronia was.

Printed Word Committee thereafter decided to counteract this monopoly with two anti-war pamphlets (*ibid.*).

The first pamphlets, 'The Women Badgers' and 'We are all one today,' were reproduced from the edition of the *International* published the previous week (21/7/16).⁸ 'That women should lend themselves to the raucous and futile schemes of the Recruiting Committee is a smudge on Women's character,' says the writer of 'The Women Badgers' (*ibid.*).

Apart from recruiting stations, the leaflets were also distributed on the weekend of 23 July 1916 at the Johannesburg Zoo, on the city's trams, slipped under shop doors and at the Town Hall square. For their trouble, '(o)ne woman comrade was hustled by hired woman recruiters and deprived of her bundle of leaflets,' but was left unscathed, according to the *International* (28/7/16). The *Star* reported that the women was indeed assaulted, and accused the ISL of fomenting 'class warfare' by attempting to disrupt recruiting meetings (*Star* 24/7/16). The *International* admitted that the League's anti-militarist campaign was part of the class struggle, but dismissed accusations that it was responsible for all disturbances at recruiting meetings (28/7/16).⁹

⁸ Following the leaflet campaign, the ISL's office was raided by the police on 14 August 1916. Jones and Bunting were arrested for contravening Section 2(2) of the Public Welfare Act, read with regulation 4 issued under the same Act, which made it an offence to 'communicate to any person any matter calculated to create alarm or to incite public feeling'. The premises of the Transvaal Printing Works in Harrison Street, where the *International* was printed at the time, was also searched. No evidence was found. Bail was set for each at £25. As a result of the prosecutions, the *International* claimed, the pamphlet was much in demand (18/8/16).

A month later the *International* also appealed to the police on a matter of inciting public feeling. The *Rand Daily Mail* described the conditions under which invalid soldiers, having arrived back from Delville Wood, were being kept at the Congella base camp in Durban. Many of these soldiers were suffering from shell shock, and had lost limbs. Being soldiers, they could not be treated at local civilian hospitals, but at military facilities. The *Mail* report considered this to be outrageous and inhumane treatment for patients in need of the best medical treatment (*Rand Daily Mail* 15/9/16). The *International* agreed, but also saw this as further evidence of the atrocities and horrors of war against which it had appealed in its anti-militarist campaign. The *Mail* article was, in the opinion of the *International's* writer, calculated to incite public feeling, to which he wished to 'draw the attention of the police ... A clearer instance of exciting (sic) public feeling could not be imagined' (22/9/16).

⁹ The pamphlets were also distributed in other centres. The *East London Dispatch* (19/8/16) reported that the leaflets were found being distributed on the trams in East London. 'It is of the blatant scurrilous type so characteristic of the ... international socialists, and after reading it we are not surprised that the authorities on the Rand should have taken action.' The *Dispatch's* writer thought his report 'may be of interest to the local police' (*ibid.*).

The next pamphlet was also reproduced from an article published earlier in the *International* (4/8/16). It concerned a hymn, 'Let Saints on Earth in Concert Sing' (being the article's headline), due to be sung at an upcoming occasion to mark the second anniversary of the outbreak of the war, and which was called by the governor-general (*ibid.*). The writer declared that the simple choice before the public was 'either capitalism and war or Socialism and humanity' (4/8/16). He went on to criticise the church for its role in the proposed event: of having 'succumbed to the worship of Moloch ... gone helter skelter to the side of the capitalist prostitutes of humanity' (*ibid.*).¹⁰

9.3. Internationalist, not nationalist

The previous section teases out the position the *International's* writers took on the question of militarism, which they opposed on grounds of working class unity. From there they came to understand that class unity applied as much to South Africa's particular ethnic divisions as it did to Europe's national divisions. The principles of international socialism applied to both, and the one was a metaphor of the other.

The previous section examines the relations between militarism and class. In this section the same deep structures are seen, with the concept of nation, where national sentiment in Europe was equated with similar sentiments in South Africa. And both were antagonistic to international socialism. The following text the *International* quotes from *The Plebs Magazine*, which it quoted regularly. The text fragment follows on a passage concerning racial antagonism towards black workers in South Africa (copy as Appendix J).

Just as the craft barriers must be abolished between the workers within a nation in order to get a national class unity to fight and defeat the national state power, so must the national barriers that divide the workers of the various nations be broken down in order to get an international class unity capable of withstanding the international power of capital (*International* 29/9/16).

¹⁰ The god Moloch was a Canaanite idol to whom children were sacrificed as burnt offerings (Lev 18:21). The metaphor is not hard to see.

9.3.1. Textual analysis

Main clause	so must the national barriers be broken down in order to get an international class unity capable of withstanding the international power of capital
	[_{S₁} [_{ADV₁} so][_{VP₁} must [_{NP₁} the ... barriers]... down][_{ADVP₁} ... get]
	[_{NP₂} an international ... withstanding]
	[_{NP₃} the ... power][_{AP₁} of capital]]

ADV₁ so modifies the verb must be broken down. NP₁ is the subject of that verb. ADVP₁ in order to get is an adverbial phrase of purpose. NP₂ is the object of the infinitive verb to get. NP₃ is the object of withstanding. The adjectival phrase of capital qualifies the noun power.

Subordinate adjectival clause qualifying the noun <u>barriers</u>	that divide the workers of the various nations
	[_{S₂} [_N that][_{VP₂} divide][_{NP₄} the workers][_{AP₂} various nations]]

The relative pronoun that is used as a conjunction, and is the subject of VP₂, the finite verb divide. NP₄ is the object of VP₂. AP₂ qualifies the noun workers.

Subordinate adverbial clause of comparison modifying the verb <u>must be broken down</u> .	Just as the craft barriers must be abolished between the workers within a nation in order to get a national class unity to fight and defeat the national state power
	[_{S₃} [_{CON} just as][_{NP₅} the craft barriers][_{VP₃} must be abolished]
	[_{ADVP₂} between the workers][_{ADVP₃} nation][_{INF} in order to get]
	[_{NP₆} a national class unity][_{INF} to fight and defeat][_{NP₇} power]]

The conjunction just as hones the clauses in the entire text. NP₅ is the subject of VP₃. ADVP₂ is an adverbial phrase of place modifying the verb must be abolished, as does ADVP₃. This immediate constituent could also be an adjectival phrase modifying the noun the workers. The IC in order to get is an infinitive clause of purpose modifying the verb must be abolished. NP₆ is the object of the infinitive verb to get. This structure is repeated, where NP₇ is the object of the verb defeat in the infinitive clause to fight and defeat.

The conjunction just as in S_1 and $(ADV_1)VP_1$ so must in S_3 , establish the kind of restructuring typical of the way the *International* articulated its discourse against nationalism in terms of both trade unionism and militarism. Relations of synonymy exist between the two constituents S_1 and S_3 . But the writer places S_3 in metaphoric relations with S_1 ; indicating that the division between craft unions is a metaphor of the division between the nations.¹¹

That the noun phrase the workers in $ADVP_2$ is not used to refer to 'white workers' is indicated in the previous paragraph (not considered here), where the writer says 'how much more wrong to split them up into castes within the national groups ... how much more wrong for the white worker to spurn the native labourer moiling and toiling at his side' (*International* 29/9/16). The opposite metaphor is evident here, where 'trade unionism' is a metaphor for 'international division'. In any respect, however, the deep structure is a relation of synonymy between national divisions and international divisions in the working class.

Through the findings of analysis through phrase structure grammar, we see that the main clause contains the fundamental meaning relation, where the subordinate adverbial clause of comparison S_3 modifies the verb phrase in S_1 (national barriers) be broken down, S_3 is a metaphor of S_1 . In a substituted form, this relation can be illustrated as in Figure 12 below:

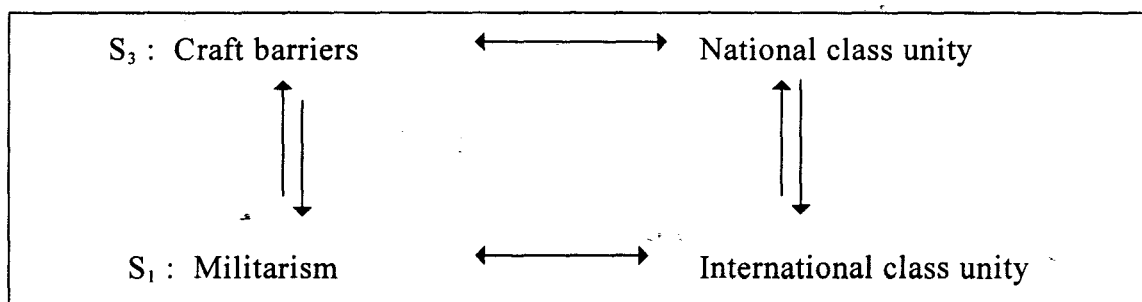


Figure 12

¹¹ The trend in most texts in the *International* is to have the opposite relations, where conflict between nations is a metaphor for conflict within the nation.

Here we see an ideology being generated in the *International's* discourse, where its writer establishes synonymic relations between 'craft barriers' in the language of trade unionism, on the one hand, are international barriers of the militarism in that discourse, on the other. Similarly, 'international class unity' becomes a metaphor for 'national class unity'.

9.3.2.1. Contextual analysis

The *International* understood national struggles as conflicts between sections of the capitalist class, and harmful to working class unity (5/10/17). Explaining why the ISL broke away from the SALP, Andrews said national sentiment was 'chosen and used as a means of inducing the people to accept militarism and imperialism as their salvation' against the true interests of the working class (1/9/16). He pointed out that nationalism, while in some respects antagonistic to imperialism, was not in fundamental opposition to it. 'Nationalism is inconvenient and harassing to capitalist expansion, not to the capitalist system. When the capitalist system is imperilled by the proletariat, petty nationalism is then capitalism's Old Guard' (28/2/19).

9.3.2.2. National struggles

ISL member James Clark¹² made this point earlier when he delivered a lecture at the Trades Hall in August 1916, on why socialists opposed war. He said the significance of national divisions had given way to that of class divisions through the 'international' class struggle. The workers, therefore, had no part in the 'quarrels of capitalists. The workers are not in this war' (11/8/16). The general outlook of the *International* was that if it was wrong to divide the workers into national groups, how much more wrong was it to split them up into sections within the national groups (29/9/16).

¹² James Clark, a boilermaker, began his activities in the South African labour movement in 1902. He was the first president of the Independent Labour Party in 1906-07, was on the committee of the Trades and Labour Council, and was vice-president of the SALP until it split with the ISL. He was in 1915 also on the Johannesburg Town Council and Transvaal Provincial Council for Langlaagte. He was made organising secretary of the Boilermakers' Society in October 1915, but was under notice to quit that society for the cause of international socialism (*International* 15/10/15).

9.3.2.3. African nationalism

The *International's* opposition to Afrikaner and African nationalism as a means of addressing these groups' civil and political disabilities, was voiced with a logic similar to its opposition to militarism and craft unionism. These movements also served bourgeois interests, no less for seeking to address the grievances of a particular ethnic group against another. 'When the cry of the whites is "A white South Africa" the reply of the blacks is "Africa for the blacks". The former is the shout of blind prejudice, the latter is the wail of hopeless suicide' (30/8/18).

For these writers, Afrikaner nationalism was the yearning for a lost arcadia. And against the emotions of an incipient land hunger: 'We contend that land and other property belongs to society, by whom its value is created, and we recognise the exclusive right of no individual to the gifts of nature, or to the divorce of the worker from the tools with which he must labour' (19/4/18). African nationalism was, in the *International's* view, a bourgeois movement whose programme would only serve to maintain a fragmented working class, and so to reinforce capitalist interests.

However, the *International* admit that the nationalism of the SANNC was engendered by a struggle against race oppression, but maintained Congress was seeking emancipation by the wrong means – especially by appealing to 'British justice' abroad against domination at home (Bonner 1982: 271-72; Karis & Carter 1987: 45-46, 54-55, 67, 86-88, 125-32; Simons 1983: 196; Walshe 1987: 50-52, 62-66). National struggles would only find emancipation through the class struggle (1/12/16). Against the lawyers, teachers and parsons of the SANNC, Bunting asked: 'Can they not see that exploitation and oppression of native races is the work, not of Boers in particular, but of capitalists everywhere' (18/1/18).

9.3.2.4. Poor whites

One other reason why Afrikaner nationalism annoyed Bunting in particular,¹³ was that he especially was trying to attract both Afrikaner and black workers into the ISL. To have to choose between the two groups would have been an unthinkable compromise of international socialist principles. In addressing the 'poor white problem', one writer (initials SW) argued against the nationalist notion of Afrikaners seeking to cut away 'the British portion of the cancer'. The answer was 'to cut away the whole cancer of capitalism' since it exploited workers of all races. 'In proportion as capital is developed, in the same proportion is developed the proletariat, the class of modern workers who live only so long as they find work' (19/4/18).

Bunting showed particular sympathy for poor whites, who had become a *cause celebre* for the National Party. Bunting saw these unfortunates, mostly poor tenant farmers driven off the land, as 'ripe for socialism' by having been proletarianised in the towns. Indeed, many ISL members were Afrikaans-speaking (20/4/17, 19/4/18, 18/1/18). 'Each year thousands upon thousands of poor but skilled farmers and agriculturists are squeezed out of the lands and gravitate in increasing numbers to the already crowded urban ghettos,' Bunting said. He resented the fact that this issue provided much of the political capital of the NP (19/4/18). The political link between poor whites and the NP was, in his discourse, founded on their failure to appreciate their impoverishment as a class, and not as a nation (28/2/19).

9.3.2.5. Afrikaner nationalism

Afrikaner nationalism generally received harsher treatment in the *International* than did African nationalism. The paper saw the National Party as a caucus of agrarian-capitalists in competition with industrial-capitalists over the same cheap black labour pool. The reactionary nature of Afrikaner nationalism was no more transparent than when Lloyd George declared that the war was being

¹³ In early 1914, Bunting had been learning 'Dutch' while living with 'the Rev Brandt's family'. At the time he had voiced the need for the SALP to attract Afrikaners to 'become a really effective popular party' (Roux 1944: 21-22).

fought on the principle of the self determination of nationalities (Walshe 1987: 62-64).

In Bunting's words, Afrikaner nationalists 'were jubilant, and wanted the principle applied to South Africa at the peace conference, and became outspoken, rabid republicans'. But when the principle, towards the end of the war, was being suggested for the rest of Africa as well, Afrikaner nationalists complained the principle would become a virus to upset the racial status quo in South Africa. 'And the nationalists are raising Cain about it. They are painting lurid resolutions with black perils galore,' and that it would 'dangerously disturb the minds of the native population of the Union. They might demand similar rights (Lord ha' mercy) and consequently disturb the peace and rest to the detriment of the European population' (*International* 18/1/18).

Just as socialist theory led to socialist practice, nationalist theory would lead to nationalist practice. One writer warned that the National Party would 'sacrifice' other nationalities in order to elevate its own supporters. Farmers, lawyers and small landowners who formed the NP leadership were bourgeois, and would aim to 'crush the revolutionists and slaughter the native workers' in a 'nationalist republic whose chief mark to prosperity will be its firm conviction that the "Kaffirs" have no souls and are created in the devil's image to be slaves of the whites' (*International* 28/2/19).

Bunting said Afrikaner nationalist self-determination only meant freedom to exploit black workers, 'to sjambok the native in his own sweet way as in the days of long ago.' The nationalists' only complaint, Bunting argued, was freedom against the Chamber of Mines drawing off too much black labour. He said the prospect of the NP ever getting into power was cause for great concern. 'If they get into power and the natives adopt the imbecile methods of 19(06), it would be the signal for the greatest massacre of the natives known in the history of South Africa' (18/1/18).¹⁴

¹⁴ Bunting gives 1916 as the date. This appears to be a misprint. It seems he was referring instead to the 1906 Bambatha rebellion.

9.3.2.6. Accommodating the nations

Andrews, while on an anti-war lecture tour in England in 1918, summed up the ISL's views on the national question. He said Africans and Indians (possibly included with his audience in mind) had found in the ISL their cause as 'workers clearly and honestly stated' for the first time in South African history. He also said an organisation had been formed to 'which they can attach themselves pledged to fight for political and economic equality for all' (10/5/18). He does not name the organisation, which does not seem to have been the ISL, and which I have not been able to identify.

The Dutch workers will see their true position as the glamour of nationalism is dissipated by the results of the war. The more thoughtful and educated already understand, and the spurious white labour party, with its petty bourgeois supporters, must break up into its constituent elements or go over to the capitalist side, leaving the proletarian struggle to those who do not make the Bantu races of Africa, with their brothers from India and elsewhere, an underdog to kick (*ibid.*).

Jones showed an inexplicable tolerance towards Indian nationalism in South Africa, justifying it in terms of it having a 'heritage of thousands of years'. This was possibly a hangover of British fascination with that jewel among her colonies. But he does point out that Indian nationalism would not succeed by trying to recover the past, but rather by embracing the international class struggle (30/11/17).

Inexplicably, he did not show the same tolerance towards African nationalism, which in his view was 'almost wholly a disguised class struggle'. And possibly imagining a lower stratum on a cultural scale, he said 'the coloured worker has no nationalism, no family traditions, no ancient national heroes the sound of whose names are potent to summon the proletarian into solidarity' (22/3/18).

As for Indian traders, however, theirs was not a struggle for national identity, 'but the battle on the commercial plane with the white shopocracy. Except ye become as little children, that is, take the standpoint of the modern propertyless proletarian, verily your nationalism cannot be born again,' Jones said, using Biblical language (30/11/17).

9.3.2.7. Nations in full flower

While the *International's* objection to nationalism was pronounced, it declared its main fight was against imperial capitalism. It only wished Afrikaner and African nationalism would 'clear out of the ring, with its whining to those above and its bullying of those below' (18/1/18).

Bunting confidently predicted that Afrikaner nationalists were not going to stop the advance of black workers in industrial unity, by which they were going to 'get their rights and stand level with the white workers' (*ibid.*). However, he also predicted that with a nationalist government, Afrikaner workers would become ripe for socialism (28/2/19). It was for the paper to educate Afrikaner workers to see nationalism as a dead end. Unlike the NP, the SANNC might prove useful as an organising mechanism. Beyond that, Bunting said the SANNC's hankering after bourgeois ambitions and acceptance within a white-dominated political framework offered no hope to black workers (1/9/16, 19/4/18).

Jones came to reconsider at the height of black worker unrest on the Rand in 1918 that the 'tendency in socialist circles to denounce nationalism as wholly bad' possibly required a measure of correction. He said socialism did not aim to smother national sentiment, but to harness it for the class struggle. 'Differences of custom, of language, and of human nature even ... barriers which the socialist movement has to break down' were not obstacles to the understanding of socialism (22/3/18). That Finland and Ukraine were granted local autonomy following the October Revolution was a case in point. In a small note on the back page: 'Nationality will never find its full flower except in the triumph of the international proletariat' (30/11/17).

9.4. Pro-worker, not pro-colour

The previous analysis indicates some links between the *International's* opposition to nationalism and its opposition to workers being represented as national fractions. This section addresses the *International's* negative approach towards the SANNC, and particularly towards its newspaper, *Abanto Batho*.

This approach was part of the *International's* emergent policy that the basis of every economic and political issue in South Africa was the question of black labour as a class. And because the *International* regularly called for the unity of all workers, black and white, in industry, it earned a reputation of being biased towards black workers. Evidently, black correspondents also gained this impression, and sent in pieces addressing black grievances as a race issue.

A black correspondent called 'Moffy', writing from what is currently known as the University of Fort Hare, sent in what Bunting called a list of 'demands for native labour' (15/2/18). In his list he demands that 'natives be classed under two categories: the educated native and the uneducated native' (*ibid.*). It is in a context of opposition to the SANNC, particularly its leadership of its middle class parsons, lawyers and chiefs (1/12/16, 15/12/16, 22/2/18), that Bunting sets his reply. He included among his readers those black middle class native shirkers¹⁵ who, like 'Moffy', failed to 'realise that Labour not frock coats is the hall mark of honour' (15/2/18).¹⁶ Bunting addressed black correspondents, particularly 'educated natives', as follows (copy in Appendix K):

Let us say here once for all to all "educated" natives that the *International* is not a negrophile sheet. It is not pro-native, it is pro-proletarian, whether it be the native worker in Africa just awakening or the Russian worker already with his heel on the neck of capitalism.

We are not out to get the native admitted into the White Labour Unions. We are out to get the white workers to recognise the native workers as brother proletarians, and to get the native workers, not the native shirkers, to organise as a working-class with their fellow workers for the overthrow of the capitalist system (15/2/18)

¹⁵ The word 'shirkers' seems to be derived from its use as in: to shirk one's duty (do no work).

¹⁶ It is clear from a reading of the entire text (see Appendix K), that the topic structure indicates that that the writer is not drawing a distinction between proletarians and peasants, or employed and unemployed, and the noun shirkers might suggest. A link should be made with synonyms in the text such as cuff and collar natives, and brother natives of the educated ilk, in relation to which illiterate hammer boy is an antonym (*International* 15/2/18). The trade unionist discourse is most evident in the noun phrase White Labour Unions, where the writer opposes 'Moffy's' contention that 'it is high time the native and coloured workers are recognised by the Labour associations, and admitted into their societies'. I show in Chapter eleven that the *International* opposed the admission of blacks into existing white trade unions on the grounds that all workers should organise irrespective of race in an industrial union. Trade unions would simply have continued the division of craft (*ibid.*).

9.4.1. Textual analysis

Main clause	Let us say here once for all “educated” natives
	[_{S₁} [_{VP₁} let [_{NP₁} us] say][_{ADV₁} here][_{ADV₂} once ... all][_{PP₁} to ... natives]]

VP₁ is a finite verb, including us, a NP pronoun, and object of VP₁. ADV₁ is an adverb of place modifying VP₁. ADV₂ is an adverb of time modifying the same verb. The prepositional phrase is the indirect object of say in VP₁.

Subordinate noun clause, object of the verb <u>say</u> .	that the <i>International</i> is not a negrophile sheet
	[_{S₂} [_{CON₁} that][_{NP₂}]][_{VP₂} is][_{ADV} not][_{NP₃}]]

The conjunction joins S₁. NP₂ is the subject of the VP₂ finite linking verb is, which is modified by the adverb not. NP₃ is the compliment of is.

Main clause	It is not pro-native
	[_{S₃} [_{NP₄} It][_{VP₃} is][_{ADV} not][_{A₁} pro-native]]

It is a noun phrase and subject of the verb phrase finite linking verb is in VP₃, modified by the adverb not. The adjective is is a compliment of the linking verb.

Subordinate main clause	it is pro-proletarian
	[_{S₄} [_{NP₅} it][_{VP₄} is][_{A₂} pro-proletarian]]

NP₅ is a pronoun and subject of VP₄, the finite linking verb is, is complimented by the adjective pro-proletarian.

Subordinate adverbial clause of condition modifying the verb is in S ₄	whether it be the native worker in Africa just awakening or the Russian worker already with his heel on the neck of capitalism
	[_{S₅} [_{CON₂} whether][_{NP₆} it][_{VP₅} be][_{NP₇}][_{ADV_{P1}} in Africa][_{AP}][_{CON₃} or] [_{NP₈}][_{ADV} already][_{AP} his heel][_{ADV_P} on the neck][_{AP} capitalism]]

The conjunction whether joins this clause with the one preceding it. NP₆ is a pronoun and the subject linking the verb phrase finite linking verb be. NP₇ is the noun phrase the native worker linking the verb be. Depending on whether

the ICs link as (NP₇)ADVP₁ or (ADVP₁)AP₁, ADVP₁ is an adverbial phrase of place or an adjectival phrase qualifying the noun worker. The conjunction or joins NP₇ and NP₈, the Russian worker, being a compliment of the linking verb be. Already is an adverb of time modifying AP₂, which qualifies the noun worker in NP₈. ADVP₂ on the neck is an adverbial phrase of place modifying AP₂, which qualifies the noun neck.

Only clause in a simple sentence	We are not out to get the native admitted into the White Labour Unions
	[S ₆ [NP ₉ we][VP ₆ are [ADV not] out][INF to get][NP ₁₀ native] [v admitted][ADVP ₈]]

NP₉ is a pronoun and subject of the verb phrase finite linking verb are and its adjectival compliment out. Not is an adverb modifying are, and also acts as the negator of the compliment. To get is an infinitive governed by out. NP₁₀ is the object of get. Admitted is a past participle agreeing with native. ADVP₃ is an adverbial phrase of place modifying admitted.

Only clause in a simple sentence	We are out to get the white workers to recognise the native workers as brother proletarians, and to get the native workers, not the native shirkers, to organise as a working-class with their fellow workers for the overthrow of the capitalist system
	[S ₇ [NP ₁₁ we][VP ₇ are][A out][INF to get][NP ₁₂][INF to recognise] [NP ₁₃ the native workers][NP ₁₄ as brother proletarians][CON ₄ and] [INF to get][NP ₁₅ the native workers][CON ₅ (and)][ADV not][NP ₁₆ the native shirkers] [INF to organise][PP ₂ as a working class][ADVP ₄ with their fellow workers] [ADVP ₅ for the overthrow][AP ₄ of the capitalist system]]

NP₁₁ we is a pronoun and the subject of the finite linking verb phrase are. The adjective out is a compliment of are. The infinitive to get is governed by out. NP₁₂ the white workers is the object of get. The infinitive to recognise is governed by get, while NP₁₃ the native workers is the object of recognise. So too is the noun phrase compliment NP₁₄. The first conjunction CON₄ joins the infinitives to recognise and to get. The elliptical second conjunction CON₅ joins NP₁₅ (object of get) and the negated (not) NP₁₆ (object of get). The

infinitive to organise is governed by get. The prepositional phrase as a working class is placed in apposition to workers in NP₁₅. The adverbial phrase with their fellow workers modifies the verb organise, as does ADVP₃. The adjectival phrase of the capitalist system qualifies the noun overthrow.

With S₂ being the object of VP₁, this sentence could read as, 'Let us say that the *International* is not a negrophile sheet'. The second main clause establishes symmetrical relations between the two adjectives negrophile and pro-native. The subordinate main clause S₄ establishes by the negator and verb not antonymic relations between pro-native and pro-proletarian. These two adjectives can be substituted exocentrically with the terms 'race' and 'class'. By the pronouns NP₄ and NP₅, these qualities are attributed to the *International*. The basic meaning relations underlying the text may be depicted as in Figure 13:

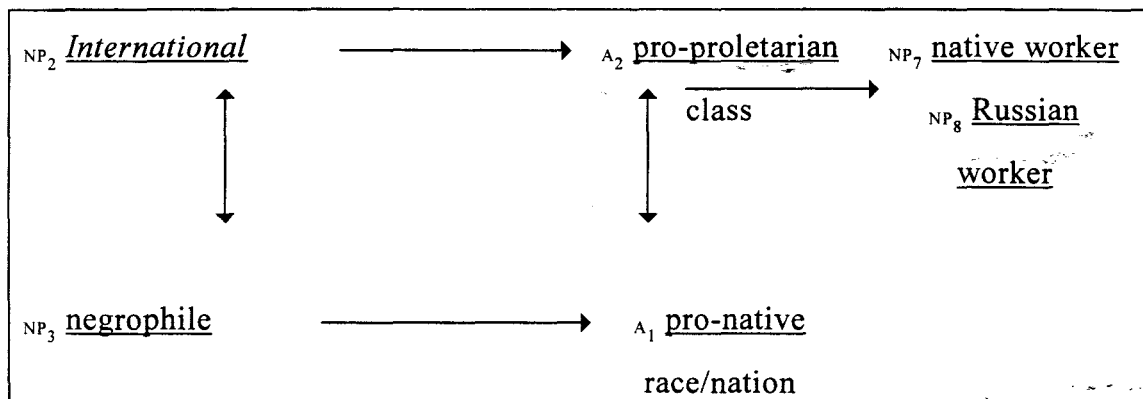


Figure 13

Further meaning relations are seen by closely examining the how the subordinate adverbial clause S₅ modifies the verb in S₄, which is complimented by the adjective A₂ pro-proletarian. Metonymic relations are established between A₂ → ADVP₁ ≡ NP₈, where the values of the just awakening native worker and the Russian worker are included in the value of the adjective proletarian.

On the syntagmatic plane these relations are shifted in S₆ and S₇ onto a set of binary opposites, native and white. In S₇ the writer combines these opposites in proletarians in the noun phrase NP₁₄. The combination (NP₁₃)NP₁₄ is lexically replaces in the form the native workers NP₁₅ with their fellow workers NP₁₄ by

the conjunction and. The negator and elided conjunction establishes antonymic relations between this form and native shirkers, which refers anaphorically to educated natives, its synonym and the binary opposite of native workers. Furthermore, there is a connotative appeal to class through overthrow of the capitalist system. On both the denotative and connotative levels, the text's deep structure and a set of opposite and metonymic relations between class and race/nation can be summarised as in Figure 14:

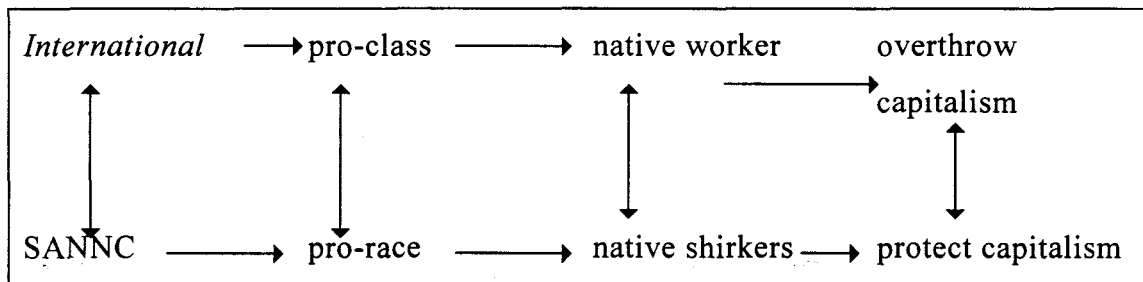


Figure 14

9.4.2.1. Contextual analysis

Bunting evidently felt the last word had not been said. In the next issue of the *International* he returned to the question of the paper being pro-worker, not pro-black.

Cursory readers, because of our weekly attention to the native proletariat, harshly conclude that the *International* is a pro-native or a pro-colour paper. It is nothing of the kind. We give increasing attention to the native workers not because they are natives but because they are workers. Correspondents who send us notes on coloured or native grievances solely because they are grievances of native or coloured men should note this (22/2/18).

9.4.2.2. Setting the record straight

The *International's* pro-worker and anti-trade union approach spurred Bunting into at least one hasty judgement. The National Union of Railway and Harbour Services launched a monthly journal in 1918, the *SA Railway Review*, edited by the union's organising secretary, W Moore. In what seemed a sincere gesture, he sent copies of the first issue to the ISL's offices, and requested his name be put on the ISL's free issue mailing list. Bunting obliged, but not without launching an apparently unprovoked broadside.

So long as co-operation with the ruling class is your ideal, we cannot whole-heartedly welcome your union as a true workers' revolutionary industrial organisation And if you will listen to what we have to say from time to time, you will also become convinced that your union is no real labour union until it includes the humblest railway or harbour labourers, black as well as white We urge you to see the point of ... colour-prejudice-free solidarity in your union (*International* 12/4/18).

Moore replied in the following issue of the Review that the railway union accepted all classes and races. Bunting replied with 'congratulations ... to the extent that it actually includes' these. He withdrew the charge that the union 'was not colour-prejudice-free' (31/5/18). He made good his apology by referring to an article published in the Review concerning the hours for coloured workers. Under the headline 'Coloured Railway Slaves', he complained that low pay 'was driving the white man into conditions of squalor and slumdom. The awful condition of the coloured man (not the raw native) ... is even more appalling.... Can you imagine the life of even a coloured railway servant, who often has a wife and children, receiving at the end of a week of six days of twelve hours, 12s or 14s? How he exists is a mystery. The mine kaffir, with his food, quarters and pay is absolutely on velvet in comparison' (25/10/18).

9.4.2.3. Opposition to *Abanto Batho*

Two years earlier, the *International* published part of an article from the SANNC's journal, *Abanto Batho*, but not without comment on the article itself: '*Abanto Batho*, the Johannesburg native paper, edited (consciously or unconsciously) under the aegis of the Native Affairs Department and Capitalist class, has nevertheless ventured in its issue of last week on a mild, still somewhat cringing, yet perhaps epoch-making outburst entitled "Native Drudgery"' (*International* 1/12/16). After publishing 21 centimetres of copy in one and a half columns, Bunting said: 'We have omitted some more racial passages from our quotations because, though they are excused by the equally racial attitude of white men, racialism is fundamentally irrelevant to the working class movement' (*ibid.*).

The *International* accused *Abanto Batho*'s black middle class outlook of propagating support for capitalist relations, and looking for a better deal for

Africans under capitalism. Bunting said in 1918 that the ISL was 'not concerned with the civil disabilities of Indian storekeepers or native lawyers or coloured middlemen. For us they all belong to the parasitic class' (22/2/18). He criticised *Abanto Batho* for being a voice for pro-black and middle class concerns.

Abanto Batho was as racist, therefore, as the commercial press. 'Like the capitalist press of which it is itself a humble henchman, the paper's final appeal is to colour prejudice' (19/10/17). He complained at how an article in *Abanto Batho* warned black workers to keep away from the ISL. He warned black workers against the 'enemies of their own colour'. 'Just as the *Rand Daily Mail* is no friend of the white workers because it happens to be in English, so *Abanto Batho* is not necessarily a friend of the native workers because it happens to print in Zulu or Sesuto' (*ibid.*).

Abanto Batho, though the best of the native newspapers, is Babu in the sense that it often merely translates the white man's commonplace fallacies into a native setting. It longs to bring back the days of Queen Victoria and President Kruger, not seeing that the increased proletarianisation of the native is not the fault of Kings Edward and George, or Generals Botha and Hertzog, but, like the similar process in the case of the poor whites ... is the normal result of the increased development of capitalism in this country. Again, the paper is all for the native nationalist movement, but all against the Dutch nationalist movement... The *Abanto Batho* editorial staff ... won't see, to the glaring class division cutting in two all nationalities alike, yes, natives and all (10/5/18).

The *International* accused *Abanto Batho* of leading black workers along a 'false trail of collaboration with the government and the capitalist class' (1/12/16). The *International*, in comparison, advocated no compromise with capitalism, but that it be overthrown in favour of a socialist egalitarian society. *Abanto Batho's* reformist policy, the *International's* writers maintained, was to seek social recognition by whites within a capitalist dispensation. 'It can hardly be said to represent native aspirations,' Bunting wrote (*ibid.*), presuming that these aspirations did in fact coincide with the ISL's socialist outlook.

The *International* compared *Abanto Batho's* outlook, begging that the bread and butter issues affecting Africans be rectified by the authorities, with the similar approaches made by white unions – appealing to the state to attend to

their grievances for their own ends as a race and national group. *Abanto Batho* was, therefore, in the opinion of the *International*, no less racist than the white unions; and therefore irrelevant to the class struggle. White workers under capitalism were exploited essentially the same way as black workers. What the *International's* writers did not recognise, however, was that *Abanto Batho* was not advocating dominance over whites, but equality with them (Simons 1983: 196, 213; Tomaselli 1991: 38-41; *International* 1/12/16; 15/12/16; 5/4/18; 10/5/18; 13/12/18; 21/12/18).

9.4.2.4. 'Being educated'

The missionary school values among Congress members of 'being educated' grated particularly against the working class values of ISL leaders such as Bill Andrews. Education was a key element in the aspirations of the black petty bourgeoisie, and was seen by them as a principal platform from which to demand a share of white privilege (Bonner 1982: 271-272; Karis & Carter 1987: 45-46, 67, 86-88; Simons 1983: 195-196).

Not that Congress did much to inspire confidence from the international socialists. The chief of the Baralongs in the Eastern Free State (whom the *International* does not name) addressed about 600 black miners at a black Wesleyan Church in Krugersdorp in mid-May 1916. He spoke of allegiance to the British Empire, and explained that the war was just. He also appealed to his audience to show respect to their chiefs (*International* 26/5/16). Jones commented:

Without continued reverence from their helots how can they get fief for them from native labour associations?... The Empire, the Church, and the tribe ... three holy witnesses ... to guard the native from the labour agitators, keeping him-a willing slave by lingering his gaze back to the Eden of his tribe (*ibid.*).

On another occasion, the secretary of the Natal Native Congress and an SANNC delegate to England in 1919, Joshua Gumede,¹⁷ told a commission of

¹⁷ The Congress felt the purpose of an earlier delegation, in 1914, had been thwarted by the outbreak of war. But with Lloyd George's speeches, which gave the impression that broad issues of colonial policy were about to be examined at an international level, the Congresses thought appeals to the British government would reap benefits for black people in South Africa. (Walshe 1987: 61-66).

inquiry into a socialist pamphlet, 'The Bolsheviks are Coming', distributed in Pietermaritzberg in 1919 by Laurie Greene and Jones,¹⁸ that the contents were 'dangerous'. He said he had heard what the Bolsheviks had done to the Tsar and nobles of Russia, and suggested they would do the same to the chiefs. '(W)e natives would be made slaves' if they ever came to power in South Africa' (*International* 16/5/19; Walshe 1979: 63; Simons 1983: 217).

On 16 and 17 December 1918, Andrews and other League members were sent by the ISL's Management Committee to address an SANNC meeting at the Village Deep Wesleyan Hall in Eloff Street. Andrews came away convinced the organisation was a black aristocracy among African workers – a flip side of white racism (Simons 1983: 213; *International* 13/12/18). To hear appeals made by, what Bunting called 'capitalist speakers' (probably the mayor of Johannesburg, also invited to speak) to be thrifty and not waste their money on riotous living convinced Bunting that Congress members had no place in the future envisaged by the ISL. He said the ISL wanted 'actual workers, white or black, who feel the pinch of the system in their own lives' (*International* 21/12/18).

Bunting wrote that the meeting 'proved yet another instance of the intimate connection between form of organisation and class consciousness' (*ibid.*). The meeting was not a proletarian gathering, but a 'nationalist group of chiefs' facing an audience of mainly proletarians 'drawn away from the realisation of their economic status into the whirl of rudderless opportunism inseparable from racial or patriotic movements' (*ibid.*).

Andrews said the SANNC was not a 'satisfactorily representative' organisation for black workers because it was built from above, and tended to 'foster racialism of black against white' (13/12/18). It also placed too much stress on 'social equality with, if not aping of Europeans' (*ibid.*). The SANNC formed a buffer 'enabling the ruling class to stave off the real emancipation of the natives'. Nevertheless, he conceded there were no other organisations

¹⁸ What seemed to annoy the authorities most about the pamphlet was its being addressed 'to the Workers of South Africa - black as well as white' (Roux 1944: 45).

through whom to assist in the organisation of black workers (*ibid.*). Bunting suggested the SANNC be replaced by 'native councils, embracing the whole working or agricultural population' (14/3/19).

9.5. Conclusion

The *International* was launched with the prior purpose of advocating international socialism against a wave of defections towards militarism both at home and abroad. The fundamental structures which informed the thinking of its writers were the primacy of international labour solidarity; that workers in South Africa had a common bond with workers abroad, united by a common enemy of capitalism.

In terms of socialist thinking at the time, these writers saw the division of the working class as capitalist policy: divide and rule. And so they understood the war as serving capitalist interests for fragmenting the working class into national fragments. Nationalism served this end. The *International's* writers therefore denounced both African and Afrikaner nationalism.

The connection these writers made between the international and national divisions was not difficult to make. One was a metaphor of the other. And the most obvious examples at home were those divisions along the lines of craft and race. The *International's* call therefore was for the unity of all workers irrespective of craft or race. But such a policy in an overtly racist environment made them appear 'pro-native', which they adamantly denied.

This may not have been such an issue had the only emerging black political voice in South Africa been a nationalist one. And it did not matter that the SANNC was seeking political inclusion in comparison to the National Party's policy of cultural and political exclusion from (or dominance over) 'English' hegemony. The fact was that the Congress was not a proletarian organisation, and was steeped in bourgeois ambitions. Accordingly, the *International's* attitude towards *Abanto Batho* was hostile.

This close connection in the *International's* discourse between race, class and nation is evident in the findings of the three discourse analyses conducted in this chapter. In the first, the noun phrase ISL is shown in an antonymic relation

to what the writer sympathetically refers to as the men who enlisted for the war. The ISL is represented metonymically as 'working class', which in turn is represented as 'internationalist'. This meaning is opposed to that of 'enlistment'. The second text showed a fundamental antonymic relation between the internationalist position and the nationalist situation where workers were divided both within and between nations. Both Afrikaner and African nationalism were cast in this light. The third analysis showed a similar set of binary opposites. These were, as illustrated in Figure 15:

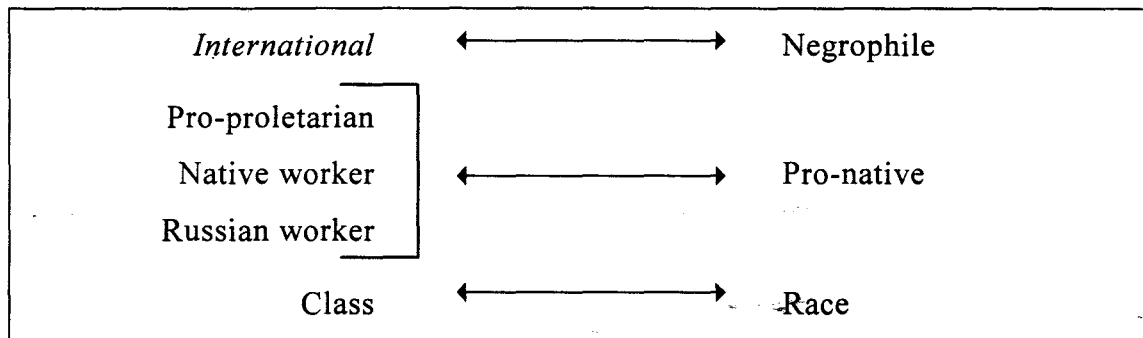


Figure 15

This evidence of binary opposites in the discourse of the *International* is indicative of Jonathan Culler's description of the structuralist approach to discourse as taking 'the binary opposites as the fundamental operation of the human mind basic to the production of meaning' (Quoted in Berger 1991: 18). And according to the theoretical framework teased out in Chapter three, this system is composed as a structure of discourses. I also pointed out that within this structure lies a dominant discursive agenda which corresponds with relations of power found in the social formation. I have not attempted to assess this agenda in any systematic way, except by implying that the *International's* writers were not subject to it, but opposed it in a struggle in and over discourse. A central part of that struggle was over meaning and knowledge.

However, a fair statement of the dominant discourse of militarism could be put this way: workers were members of a national group, whose loyalty was to defend their country's interests, and which had its material manifestations in practice such as enlisting in the army, saluting the national colours, and

engaging in patriotic duties. Essentially, this statement is composed out of the opposites to the signs and the meanings to which they referred in the language system.

Another point, following an observation made by Fairclough (1989: 112), is that the large number of modifiers in the *International's* text is evidence of deconstructing and restructuring in discourse, drawing on the inherent multi-acculturality of the sign. This is evidence that the meanings these writers drew on were not as naturalised as those found in the discourses they opposed.

Chapter ten

Discourse analysis: trade unions

10.1. Introduction

The main lesson the war taught the ISL was that international socialism had to embrace the working class across all national and racial boundaries.

Nationalism and trade unionism had no place in international socialism. Both served to fragment the working class to the benefit of capitalism. The issues which most occupied the minds of the *International's* handful of writers were the war and workers, or as the ISL constitution had it, anti-militarism and industrial unionism. These two issues were connected in international socialism.

The previous chapter showed how the *International's* writers intervened in the discourse of militarism. The purpose of this chapter is to show by using the same two-phase method discourse analysis the deep structures which informed the *International's* discourse against trade unionism. Against, the grammatical analysis is useful because it is by an analysis of a text's surface forms that the creativity of discursive struggle becomes evident. Three texts will be analysed, each concerning the topics trade unionism, industrial unionism or political action.

10.1.1. Chapter outline

Three texts are analysed in the following order:

- Section 10.2. deals with the topic of trade unionism in the *International's* discourse.
- Section 10.3. discusses the topic of industrial unionism.
- Section 10.4. discusses the topic of political action.

10.2. Trade unionism

The way the *International's* writers creatively combined resources from the discourses of anti-militarism and labour (especially as anti-trade unionism), and

came to a position on the place of 'the native worker' in the labour movement, provides the deep structure of the following text (copy in Appendix L).

Internationalism begins at home

For some time past we have been trying to preach the gospel that internationalism begins at home. We cannot get the workers united internationally while they are divided within the nation into warring craft unions. If we are sincere in our Socialism, right here at home it must begin. (*International* 29/9/16)

10.2.1. Textual analysis

Main clause	For some time past we have been trying to preach the gospel
	[S ₁ [ADVP ₁ For some time past][NP ₁ we][VP ₁ have been trying]
	[INF to preach][N the gospel]]

For some time past is an adverbial phrase modifying the verb phrase and finite verb have been trying. The noun phrase (pronoun) we is the subject of the same verb, which governs the infinitive to preach. The noun the gospel is the object of to preach.

Subordinate noun clause in apposition to the noun <u>gospel</u> .	that internationalism begins at home
	[S ₂ [CON ₁ that][NP ₂ internationalism][VP ₂ begins][ADVP ₂ at home]]

The conjunction that joins S₂ and S₁. The noun phrase internationalism is the subject of the verb phrase and finite verb begins. The adverbial phrase of place at home modifies the verb begins.

Main clause	We cannot get the workers united internationally
	[S ₂ [NP ₂ We][VP ₂ can [ADV not] get][NP ₄ the workers]
	[A united][ADV internationally]]

The pronoun we is a noun phrase and subject of the finite verb can get, which is a verb phrase modified by the adverb not. The workers is a noun phrase and object of can get, and second object of the factitive verb get the workers. The adverb of place internationally modifies the adjective united.

Subordinate adverbial clause of time modifying the verb <u>can</u> <u>get</u> .	while they are divided within the nation into warring craft unions
	[S ₄ [CON ₂ while][NP ₅ they][VP ₄ are divided][ADVP ₃ within the nation] [ADVP ₄ into warring craft unions]]

The conjunction while joins S₄ and S₅. The noun phrase (pronoun) they is the subject of the verb are divided, modified by both the adverbial phrase of place within the nation, and the adverbial phrase of manner into warring craft unions.

Main clause	right here at home it must begin
	[S ₅ [ADVP ₅ right here][ADVP ₆ at home][NP ₆ it][VP ₅ must begin]]

This main clause begins with two adjectival phrases placed in relations of apposition to each other. The noun phrase (pronoun) it is the subject of the verb phrase and finite verb must begin.

Subordinate adverbial clause of condition modifying the verb <u>must begin</u> .	If we are sincere in our Socialism
	[S ₆ [CON ₃ If][NP ₇ we][VP ₆ are][A sincere][ADVP ₇ in our socialism]]

The conjunction if joins S₆ and S₅. The noun phrase (pronoun) we is the subject of the verb phrase and finite verb are. The adjective sincere is the compliment of are. The adverbial phrase in our socialism modifies sincere.

On the basis of the non-discursive data above, the writer stages the text with the adverbial clause for some time past, by which he refers exophorically to previous discourses, or 'extra-texts', concerning internationalism which is thematised in the headline and complemented with the predicate begins at home. As the three lexemes in the headline are repeated twice in the text, it is fair to assume that internationalism to be topicalised in the text.

In S₁ the writer attributes to the exophoric pronoun we (referring to the *International*) the verb phrase preach the gospel.¹ The use of the infinitive verb phrase in S₁ to preach the gospel metonymically transfers meanings from a religious paradigm of use across the noun internationalism in S₂. On the associative plane, the meaning of gospel, distributed symmetrically through the conjunction that, is a metaphor of internationalism, to which is ascribed significations such as 'good news' and 'salvation', as these signifieds are used in a religious paradigm.

S₄ modifies the verb phrase cannot get in S₃.² Using the rule concerning this combination, the form indicates antonymic relations between the noun phrase we and NP₄ the workers³ on condition that S₄ is true; where the anaphoric pronoun of NP₄ (NP₅ they) satisfies the conditions of VP₄ are divide, which may substitute as the head of divided within the nation into warring craft unions.

Metaphoric relations exist between the adverbial phrases (ADVP₃)ADVP₄. If VP₄ and ADVP₃ are considered as one immediate constituent, into warring craft unions would be a prepositional phrase. In this case, the connective properties of the preposition attribute a correspondence between the transitive verb divided and the adjective (or, alternatively, the intransitive verb) warring. This last verb uses the sign craft unions within the discourse of militarism. From this point, we can see (beyond intuition) the kind of discursive restructuring I have maintained was at the root of the *International's* discourse, where the resources of militarism and trade unionism were combined within one restructured internationalist paradigm. The militarist values of the words nation

¹ The point to note here is the irregular use of the pronoun without an anaphoric noun. This indicates that the pronoun refers to an exophoric lexeme for its meaning, which the writer assumes the reader to be able to infer 'via pre-existing knowledge representations' (Brown & Yule 1983: 260), which may be 'situationally evoked' within the salience of the discourse context (*ibid.*: 183). There is no reason to doubt the writer is referring either to the ISL or the newspaper itself. Precisely which one is not indicated, but it would seem to be the *International*, as the writer is referring to other-texts.

² The verb 'can get' is actually combined with the negator and adverb not, to read cannot get. The full form of the contraction has not modifying the modal verb can (Radford 1988: 67-69).

³ Brown and Yule point out that the definite article (as in the workers) is regularly used to indicate *given* information, indicating what the writer expects his reader to know. This knowledge is available either in the text or, as the writer may consider, recoverable from a previous discourse (1983: 154, 169, 180, 189).

and warring are articulated within the discourse of trade unionism, where warring becomes a metonym of craft unions, with the implied signifier of ‘opposing armies’ as its metaphor. This restructuring of different discourses indicates creativity in discourse.

By virtue of the binary opposites united-divided in the two clauses S₃ and S₄, the writer uses internationally and within the nation as metaphors. (Not) united and divided show that the working class divided internationally is a metaphor of the workers divided within the nation, where craft unions in South Africa are compared synonymously to British and German workers fighting for their national governments in the trenches of Europe. Ending the paragraph from which the text was taken: ‘If it is wrong for a British worker to hound a German worker who is across the sea, how much more wrong for the white workers to spurn the native labourer toiling and moiling at his side’ (*International* 29/9/16). The deep structure of the text may therefore be depicted as in Figure 16:

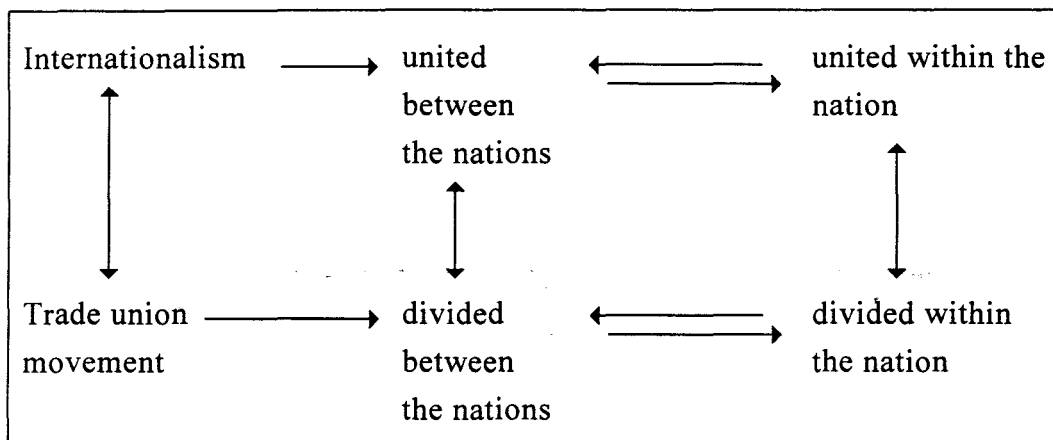


Figure 16

The writer distributes this construction (Figure 16) metonymically into the next main clause right here at home it must begin. While home could be a synonym of nation, it is also a moot point that the writer is using the saying ‘charity begins at home’ in constructing this sentence, and thus distributing its particular meaning to the text. In their struggle against militarism, the *International’s* writers began to reconsider the implications of internationalism in the local labour context.

The modal verbs cannot and must indicate the writer's attitude towards trade unions. Relational and expressive values in the text are indicated by the thematised adverbial phrase for some time past, referring to previous discourses which constrain the present one. There is further evidence of divergence between the writer (we) and the workers, negativised by the phrase divided within the nation, a condition anathema to the internationalist gospel the writer says we have been trying to preach.

10.2.2.1. Contextual analysis

The *International's* writers blamed trade unionism for all the weaknesses they identified in the labour movement, and not least for propping up segregation between workers. Trade unionism was unsuited to the class struggle for splitting up the working class into fractions of craft interest, where one union could scab against another in disputes with management. Trade unionism was a spent force belonging to a past when craftsmen rightfully sought to protect their skills against the advance of the industrial revolution, which threatened to make them redundant (21/7/16).

10.2.2.2. Trade unions harmless

The paper pointed out that capitalists patronised trade unions because they were harmless. They knew that 'so long as the workers are organised by craft the organisation has lost its sting' (15/3/18). 'Not in one industry are the workers able to present a united front to the masters' (24/8/17). Trades unions were obsolete, 'powerless to free the workers from the tyranny of a system responsible for all the brutalising condition of poverty, slums, drunkenness, war, and crimes of the vilest nature' (9/2/19).

The *International* viewed trade unions as seeking concessions for themselves, scabbing on other unions, conserving their own interests in opposition to those of the whole class, and equating the interests of capital with those of labour. Their most glaring fault was to ignore the class struggle (9/2/19). Gibson said that 'to think of winning under such a mutilated organisation, in the fight against capitalism is the dream of imbecility' (11/1/18). Against such industrial anarchy, industrial unity on a class basis was

the only alternative, even if this meant individual unions were retained and subordinated to organisation at the level of industry (22/2/18).

In an earlier text, the *International* made the astonishing claim that there were 'over eleven hundred trade unions, and above fifty of them are connected with the mining industry,' representing about fifteen industries, and opposed by a mere 40-odd employers' associations, all 'based on class interest' (25/8/16).⁴ But the *International* also made the point that even though it opposed craft unions, industrial unity did not necessarily mean they would be abolished. Instead, these would be subordinate to a higher-level organisation along industrial lines (21/1/16). But the *International's* vision was not of a federation such as the South African Industrial Federation (SAIF).⁵ This was merely a summary of the sectarian interests of its trade union affiliates, which tended only to their limited interests, and largely ignored other units of the SAIF (17/5/18). As Gibson said:

The history of the SAIF since its inception is a record of incompetence and failure from the working class standpoint. With a membership on paper greater than any previous organisation in the country, we have only to look at it fairly and squarely to discover, by the very nature of its structure, the germ of its dissolution being generated by the antagonistic nature of the craft self interests at its basis (13/9/18).

10.2.2.3. Colour bars

Furthermore, a federation of small white unions would represent 'not even a tenth of the available proletariat' (1/6/17). Instead of being a web embracing the whole working class, existing unions were only 'streaks of privilege' running through that class (14/7/16), and amounted to 'semi-Masonic lodges of artisans' banded together chiefly to maintain wage rates (9/2/17). Bunting warned these 'white mechanics and mine workers' not to forget that there was 'a

⁴ The point the writer makes is that capitalists, despite themselves being organised in different employers' organisations, were united along class lines. Compared, the many more workers' organisations were divided along lines of skill. Capitalist organisations served to unite their class, while workers organisations served to divide and weaken the working class.

⁵ The umbrella body in the mining industry, the Transvaal Federation of Trades (founded in 1911), became in 1914 the South African Industrial Federation (SAIF) (Katz 1976: 183-84; Yudelman 1984: 132-33).

vast army behind them of dark, dumb, silent workers, gaining more and more cohesion in the web of industry' (14/7/16, 11/8/16).

The *International's* writers regularly criticised craft union attempts to protect white skilled workers against black encroachment through the colour bars, epitomised by the Status Quo Agreement (27/4/17, 11/5/17, 25/5/17, 7/9/17, 14/9/17).⁶ These colour bars effectively left the bulk of labour unorganised, to be used as a cheap labour pool, leaving the structural insecurity of white workers intact. The only way to combat black encroachment was to organise industrially with them (2/2/17, 14/7/16, 21/1/16, 21/7/16).

After attending the South African Trade Union Congress in late December 1917, Gibson came away with the conviction that trade unionism 'was dead'. Gibson had impressed on his audience the 'menace cheap coloured labour was to the white standard of living' (11/1/18). On that score he would have evoked little dissent. But he added that the solution lay with organising black workers. 'The employing class wants cheap labour, combined with efficiency, irrespective of colour' (*ibid.*).

The *International* had declared in its previous edition that 'the few class war delegates felt it hopeless to breast the Craft Union flood' (4/1/18). Now Gibson wrote that 'racial prejudice of the rankest kind was the outstanding feature, and resulted in' his resolution concerning black workers 'being turned down' (11/1/18). The black workers were as good as told 'that in socialism alone was their hope. And we are grateful to the congress for giving them this push away from the craft unions ... into the arms of international socialism' (*ibid.*). He declared that trade unionism was 'no menace to the employing class. It is only held together by the fossilised idea of sentiment, hugging the past ... with a miser's love' (*ibid.*).

⁶ The Status Quo Agreement between the Chamber of Mines and various mining unions in 1917 declared 19 new jobs for whites, and fixed existing job bars (Yudelman 1984: 144-145, 149; Allen 1992: 202-203). The unions ratified the agreement in September 1918. The Chamber seemed to have consented to these measures on the grounds that phasing out the colour bars was not politically expedient, and black workers had recently gone on strike. An alliance of some sort with white labour seemed expedient (Johnstone 1976: 111; Yudelman 1984: 149) (see Appendix A).

10.2.2.4. Appeal to white workers

The *International* appealed to white workers to realise that the only division warranted in industrial organisation was division along industrial lines, and not craft or colour. Craft unions going single-handedly to management to beg special favours would only lead to those same unions being 'sold and sold again'. Bunting said they should go rather as 'carpenter, miner, fitter, reduction man, handyman, yes, even hammer boy, as one working class body, not with cap in hand, but in firm industrial unity', and present their demands as one united union (15/9/16).

'Not until they throw in their lot with the great mass of unorganised workers will the working class movement get under way,' Jones warned (25/8/16). After all, the employing class was united in class solidarity. 'To them it is profits all the time,' Bunting wrote. 'Profits are their god, and to get profits they exploit all nationalities and colours.' Therefore, class solidarity had to be the working class reply to organised capital, 'one big union of all workers, skilled and unskilled' (17/5/18).

Let the white workers divest themselves of their senseless prejudice. They are not called upon to love the coloured workers as themselves, but are asked to recognise the fundamental fact that while they ignore the coloured workers and neglect to organise them in the struggle against capitalism, the capitalists are using them today, and they are gradually growing more efficient workmen in the various crafts, and in the very near future the white workers will awaken to the fact that to exist, they will have to accept wages based on the lower standard of living of these coloured workers (19/10/17).

10.3. Industrial unionism

This section takes up the theme of industrial unity. The context of the following article was the upcoming Johannesburg municipal elections in November 1916, for which nine ISL candidates, including Jones and Bunting, were to stand in three wards. None was successful (*International* 27/10/16). In the following segment of text (copy in Appendix M), Bunting explains why ISL candidates should be elected, and calls on workers to organise at the level of industry, irrespective of skill and race, rather than on a sectional basis in trade unions, ignoring the unskilled and black workers.

Once the necessity of being ‘saved’ from the capitalist system has, through education and propaganda, come home to the workers, the question ‘What are we going to do to be saved?’ is unhesitatingly answered by the ISL as follows: Organise, not in Trade Unions, each fighting for its own little group alone in competition with others, and indeed ignoring the ‘unskilled’ and lower paid (especially the blacks) altogether, but in Unions co-extensive with the respective industries, businesses, enterprises or concerns in which their members are employed, – Unions prepared, not merely to hold up the work of each industry, but, in the fullness of time, to carry it on, to administer it, to work its plant and machinery and output, in the interest of the whole community (*International* 20/10/16).

10.3.1. Textual analysis

Main clause	the question is unhesitatingly answered by the ISL
	[s, [NP, the question]][VP, is [ADV unhesitatingly] answered]
	[PP, by the ISL]]

The noun phrase is the subject of the verb is answered, which is modified by the adverb unhesitatingly. The prepositional phrase shows agency.

Subordinate adverbial clause of time modifying the verb <u>is answered</u> .	Once the necessity of being ‘saved’ from the capitalist system has, through education and propaganda, come home to the workers
	[s, [ADV once]][NP, the necessity]
	[AP, of being saved][ADVP, from ... system]
	[VP, has [ADVP, through ... propaganda] come home]
	[ADVP, to the workers]]

The adverb of time once modifies the verb phrase and finite verb has come home, the subject of which is the noun phrase the necessity. The adjectival phrase of being saved qualifies the noun necessity. The adverbial phrase of place from the capitalist system modifies the verb saved. The adverbial phrase of place to the workers modifies VP₂, as does ADVP₃.

Subordinate noun clause in apposition to the noun <u>question</u> .	What are we going to do to be saved?
	[s, [What]][VP ₃ are [NP ₃ we] going to do][ADVP ₄ to be saved]]

What is an interrogative pronoun (used to form questions). The pronoun we is the subject of the verb phrase are going to do. The adverbial phrase of purpose to be saved modifies the infinitive verb to do.

Adverbial clause of manner
modifying the verb is answered. as follows:

[s₄ [con₁ as][vp₄ (it) follows]]

The conjunction as joins clauses S₁ and S₅. Follows is a verb phrase.

Subordinate noun clause in apposition to the adverb as follows.

Organise, not in Trade Unions, each fighting for its own little group alone in competition with others, and indeed ignoring the 'unskilled' and lower paid (especially the blacks) altogether, but in Unions co-extensive with the respective industries, businesses, enterprises or concerns – Unions prepared, not merely to hold up the work of each industry, but, in the fullness of time, to carry it on, to administer it, to work its plant and machinery and output, in the interest of the whole community

[s₅ [vp₅ organise]

.....

[adv not][advp₅ in trade unions][a each fighting][np₄ for its ... alone]
 [advp₆ in competition][ap₂ with others][con₂ and][adv indeed][a ignoring]
 [np₅ the unskilled][con₃ and][np₆ lower paid]
 [adv especially][np₇ the blacks][adv altogether]
 [con₄ but][advp₇ in Unions (1) co-extensive][pp₂ with the respective industries]

.....

[np₈ Unions (2) prepared][adv not][adv merely]
 [inf₁ to hold up the work]
 [pp₃ of each industry, businesses, enterprises or concerns –]
 [con₅ but][advp₈ in the fullness of time][inf₂ to carry][np₉ it][adv on]
 [inf₃ to administer][np₁₀ it][inf₄ to work][np₁₁ its plant and machinery and output]
 [advp₉ in the interests][pp₄ of the whole community]]

The chunk above is a single noun phrase because it has only one full verb organise. The other two 'verbs' each fighting and ignoring are participial phrases, or non-finite verb which function as adjectives. The verb phrase and finite verb in the imperative mood organise is modified by the adverbial phrase of manner in trade unions, which is in turn modified by the adverb not. The

participial phrase each fighting agrees with trade unions. NP₄ is the indirect object of fighting, which is modified by ADVP₆. The adjectival phrase with others qualifies the noun competition.

CON₂ and joins the participial phrases each fighting and ignoring. The adverb indeed intensifies ignoring, which agrees with the subject 'you' understood in (you) ignoring. The unskilled is a noun phrase and object of ignoring. CON₃ joins the noun phrases NP₅ and NP₆. Especially is an adverb of degree modifying paid. NP₇ is in apposition to the noun paid. The adverb of degree altogether modifies ignoring. The conjunction CON₄ but joins the adverbial phrases of manner ADVP₆ in competition and ADVP₇ in Unions co-extensive, thus indicating contrasting modes of operation. The prepositional phrase with the respective industries is governed by the adverb co-extensive.

NP₈ Unions prepared is a noun phrase in opposition to the noun Unions in ADVP₇. The adverb not modifies the finite verb prepared. The adverb merely modifies the infinitive to hold up, which is modified by the prepositional phrase of each industry, business, enterprise or concerns. PP₄, in turn, is governed by prepared. CON₅ but joins the infinitives INF₁ and INF₂, thus showing contrasting actions. ADVP₈ in the fullness of time is an adverbial phrase of time modifying the infinitive to carry. The infinitive to carry is governed by the adjective prepared in NP₈. The noun phrase (pronoun) it is the object of carry. The infinitive to administer is governed by prepared. NP₁₀ is the object of administer. The infinitive to work is governed by prepared. NP₁₁ is the object of work. The adverbial phrase of manner in the interests modifies work. The prepositional phrase of the whole community qualifies the noun interests.

Subordinate adjectival clause qualifying the noun <u>concerns.</u>	in which their members are employed [S ₆ [CON ₆ in which][NP ₁₂ their members][VP ₆ are employed]]
---	---

The relative pronoun in which is used as a conjunction, joining S₆ and S₅. NP₁₂ their members is the subject of the verb phrase and finite verb are employed.

From the syntactic data above, the first clause, by a process of adjunction, may read as: The ISL unhesitatingly answers the question. The adverb

unhesitatingly has modal qualities which indicate the writer's attitude towards the question to which the text refers. The adverb attributes to ISL a quality of conviction and authority distributed to the verb answers. The second clause is also in the passive voice. By extraposition (and substitution), the clause in the active voice, and excluding the agency of the adverbial phrase, may read as: 'once the workers realise (come home) the necessity of ending capitalism'.

S₃, synonymous with question in NP₁, displays a similar use of metaphor found in the previous text analysed. Like Jones, Bunting uses a Biblical quotation to ascribe to accepting the message of socialism a sense of 'salvation'.⁷ Whether Bunting had this connotation in mind is speculative. But he seems to have been referring to voters outside of the ISL 'fold'.

The 77-word clause in S₅ may be broken down into two basic antonymic phrase structures, stemming from the verb phrase organise. Antonymic meaning relations are attributed, through the adverb and negator not, between organise and the chunk of text which follows (marked off with the dotted line). Similarly, CON₄ but establishes metonymic relations between organise and the following chunk, where the meaning of organise is distributed to this chunk through the imperative mood of VP₅. These two chunks may be reduced to the endocentric heads, trade unions and Unions (industrial unions). The characteristics Bunting attributes to trade unions are that they are in competition with other unions, and ignore mainly black workers. Industrial unions, in comparison, organise all workers at the level of industry. The purpose of industrial unity, he says, is not to hamper industry but to gain control over it (the pronoun NP₁₀ referring to the four nouns in the preceding prepositional phrase, PP₃).

The deep structure of the text appears to subsist in the antonymic relations between organise and trade unions, which is in turn a metonym of competition and ignoring the unskilled. Metonymic relations exist between organise and

⁷ The quote concerns a 'rich young man' who asks Jesus for the road to salvation. The reply was to sell all his possessions 'and come, follow me' (Luke 18: 18-23). The quote coheres with the earlier beatitudes, 'Blessed are the poor' (*ibid.*: 6:20) and 'alas for you who are rich' (*ibid.*: 6:24).

(industrial) Unions, distributed into community and industry. These combined meaning relations may be depicted as in Figure 17 below:

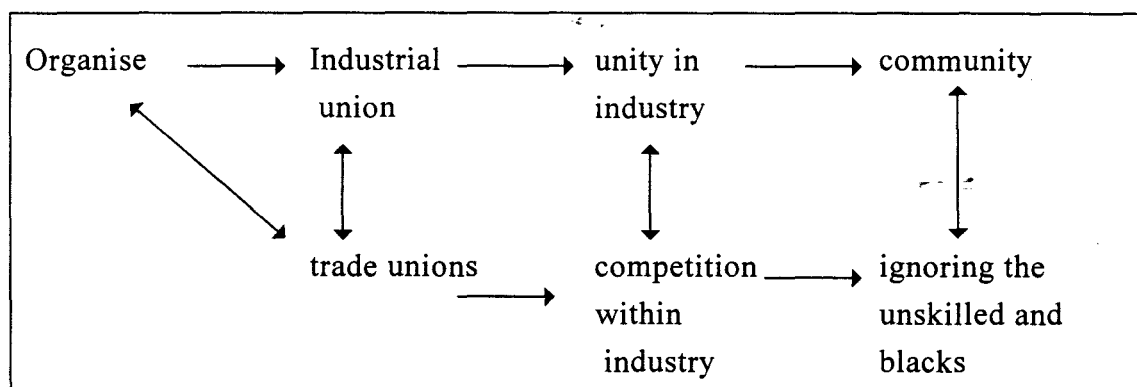


Figure 17

10.3.2.1. Contextual analysis

By industrial action, the *International* did not necessarily mean strike action. Its writers most often repudiated individual strikes which occurred from time to time as futile for not being preceded by sufficient labour organisation. Without the necessary industrial organisation, strike action would end in defeat irrespective of the concessions gained from employers (30/9/18). But there was no harm in getting concessions. ‘By all means, get whatever you can,’ Bunting said. But he pointed out that sectional strike actions by individual unions (such as the engineers, while the miners were at work) would not lead to the ultimate goal of overthrowing the cause of workers’ grievances – the capitalist system (8/9/16).

In the *International’s* view, apart from the racial basis of each strike action, they were all guided by a false understanding of the cause of the strikers’ grievances. Both white and black workers sought to alleviate the symptoms rather than to eliminate capitalism, the cause. Here the *International* adopted Daniel de Leon’s thinking that worker consciousness had to be raised by education – which the *International* took as its role in furthering the class struggle (2/2/17).

The *International’s* writers advocated industrial unionism, not only to give workers greater bargaining power, but ultimately to take control of industry,

'eliminating that section in society of useless parasites who toil not nor spin' (9/2/17, 15/3/18). But occasional strikes which affected an entire plant were only 'glimpses' of industrial organisation, and would not give the labour movement a revolutionary aim. For Bunting, only the industrial unity which placed artisans 'side by side with the poor white labourer, and eventually the native,' would give the labour movement the necessary power to seize control of industry. And black workers were a necessary part of that unity, without whom the labour movement could do little more than 'mark time' (3/3/16, 8/9/16, 12/1/17).⁸

10.3.2.2. Manifesto

In an address in the Trades Hall on 4 January 1917, Bunting took up a recent proposal made by the Management Committee at the ISL's Annual Conference to call a conference of industrial workers and trade unions to explore ways of bringing the labour movement 'up to date on class struggle lines' (9/2/17). Trade union conferences were nothing new, but had never included black worker representatives, and usually included the threat of black worker encroachment on their agendas. For Bunting the proposed conference had to explore ways of bringing black workers into labour organisation, not merely 'as auxiliaries in the white man's fights,' but as constituting the working class in whose cause white workers should rather consider themselves the auxiliaries (2/2/17, 9/2/17).

He warned that the capitalist class, just 'as they have set Allies against Centrals and vice versa all over the world,' were using the 'Black or Yellow Peril bogey' to set white worker against black, 'deluding the whites into the

⁸ Nor was a non-racial clause in a union's constitution enough. Bunting pointed out that such clauses, where they existed, were usually a dead letter. The Amalgamated Society of Engineers constitution admitting mechanics' labourers. But convention ruled otherwise. Changes had to be made in white workers' attitudes, not in their constitutions (6/10/16). The *International* regularly warned white workers that by countenancing the caste system they were in danger of being overwhelmed by black workers. White workers had the choice of either 'becoming police boys of the capitalists or of standing shoulder to shoulder with the native proletariat in its forward march' (24/8/17). It was for white workers 'to stretch out the hand of industrial unity to the native workers, and enlist the enormous economic power they can wield from the side of the capitalist to the side of the working class' (6/10/16, 16/8/18).

belief that the way to weather the competition of coloured labour is to fight the coloured labourer instead of joining with him against the common enemy' (9/2/17). The way forward was for all workers to combine, to include all workers irrespective of race or craft along the 'natural boundaries of the various industries, making one great self-disciplined body of the working class' (*ibid.*).

Bunting said the aim of the conference, and industrial unionism generally, was not a matter of 'teaching the nigger socialism,' but to help black workers appreciate the implications of their own actual economic position. 'The time will come when, instead of the white unions opening their doors to their black fellow workers, they will be asking the blacks to open their doors to whites' (*ibid.*). The conference was eventually held at the Trades Hall on 2 September 1917. Forty-five workers attended. 'A notable feature of the gathering was the presence of three native workers,' said one writer, who signed himself 'wage-earner'. The conference endorsed the creation of a general industrial union, and elected a committee to draw up a 'Manifesto of Working Men' (7/9/17).

The manifesto, explaining the principles of industrial unionism, was to be circulated among trade unions, calling for a convention of all those who endorsed it. The manifesto declared trade unions to be 'an unmitigated evil, a bulwark of capitalism, and demands industrial unions, to cover all large industries, admitting irrespective of colour or craft' (4/1/18). The idea was that all unions would combine under an umbrella industrial union at the level of industry. These industrial unions would link up into one national union. 'The working class is one, and the workers union must be one and indivisible. An injury to one worker, be he white or black, is an injury to all' (*ibid.*).

'All workers interested in the reconstruction of the working class movement on industrial union lines' were invited to attend a meeting in the Trades Hall on 17 September 1917, to discuss the draft manifesto. Meetings, which a few black workers attended, took place on three consecutive Sundays. It was after the first that the ISL received its eviction notice (28/9/17). When a conference was held on 31 March 1918, to do with the manifesto, those present were 'nearly all members of the ISL with the exception of a score of native

workers who have so far not become members'. There were very likely Industrial Workers of Africa members (5/4/18).

10.4. Political action

The *International* contended that, because the capitalist class used its political power to maintain economic power, the working class had to contest for political power as well as economic power. This was not aimed at any coalitions and compromise with other political parties, but at the destruction of capitalist class power.

Concerning the elections for the Johannesburg municipal election in 1916, one writer (possibly Jones) commented on that fact that no candidates were nominated by trade unions when the SAIF asked them to do so. The writer noted that this apparent disunity in the political sphere was a reflection of disunity on the industrial plane. The following (see copy in Appendix N) is the fourth paragraph of a six-paragraph article:

Labour can never be politically united so long as the industrial movement is sectioned into craft unions. How absurd to expect a class conscious party of the working class while that same working class cares more for its craft vanities, its "amalgamated" emblems, its superior skill over fellow wage-labourers, than for solidarity with all workers of whatever craft or colour. The idea is topsy-turvy, a chimera (*International* 22/9/16).

10.4.1. Textual analysis

Main clause	Labour can never be politically united
	[s ₁ [NP ₁ Labour] [VP ₁ can [ADV never] be [ADV politically] united]]

The noun phrase Labour is the subject of the verb phrase and finite verb can be united, which is modified by the adverb never.

Subordinate adverbial clause of condition, modifying the verb <u>can be united</u> .	so long as the industrial movement is sectioned into craft unions
	[s, [CON ₁ so long as] [NP ₁ the industrial movement] [VP ₁ is sectioned] [ADV ₁ into craft unions]]

CON₁ joins the clauses S₁ and S₂. NP₂ is the subject of the verb phrase and finite verb is sectioned, which is modified by the adverbial phrase of manner into craft unions.

Main clause	How absurd (it is) to expect a class conscious party of the working class
	[S ₃ [ADV How] [A absurd] [VP ₃ (it is)] [NP ₃ to expect] [NP ₄ a class conscious party] [AP ₁ of the working class]]

The adverb of degree how modifies the verb phrase and finite linking verb is. The noun phrase infinitive to expect is used as the subject of the verb is. NP₄ is the object of the verb expect. The adjectival phrase of the working class qualifies the noun party.

Subordinate adverbial clause of concession, modifying <u>expect</u> .	while that same working class cares more for its craft vanities, its "amalgamated" emblems, its superior skill over fellow wage-labourers, than for solidarity with all workers of whatever craft or colour
	[S ₄ [CON, While] [NP ₄ that same working class] [VP ₄ cares [ADV more] for] [NP ₆ its craft vanities] [NP ₇ its amalgamated emblems] [NP ₈ its superior skills] [AP ₂ over fellow wage labourers] [PP ₁ than solidarity with ... or colour]]

CON₂ joins clauses S₃ and S₄. NP₅ is the subject of the verb phrase and finite verb cares for, which is modified by the adverb more. NP₆, NP₇ and NP₈ are objects of cares for. The adjectival phrase over fellow wage labourers qualifies the noun skills. The prepositional phrase is the object of the verb cares for.

Only clause in simple sentence (one main verb).	The idea is topsy-turvy, a chimera
	[S ₅ [NP ₁₀ The idea] [VP ₅ is] [AP ₃ topsy-turvy] [NP ₁₁ a chimera]]

NP₁₀ is the subject of the verb phrase and finite linking verb is, which is complimented by AP₃, and complimented by the noun phrase a chimera.

At the discursive level, the first two clauses may be considered as a unit by virtue of S₂ modifying the verb can be united in S₁. If synonymic relations exist

between NP₁ labour and NP₂ industrial movement, where NP₂ is the lexical replacement of NP₁, then antonymic relations exist between NP₁ and (ADV')VP₁ for so long as (NP₂)(VP₂)ADVP₁ is true. By removing the negator in S₁, and replacing the verb phrase with its binary opposite 'politically fractured', S₁ becomes a metonym of S₂ where the meaning of the endocentric head craft unions is included in the substituted phrase 'political fraction'.

A similar relation occurs between S₃ and S₄, where the adverbial phrase how absurd behaves as a negator of the infinitive to expect, thus distributing the binary opposite of craft unions through its absent pronominal form VP₃ metonymically along the syntagmatic axis to (NP₄)AP₁. CON₂ while coordinates the negativised class-conscious organisation (craft unions) with the conditions NP₆, NP₇ and NP₈, provided in S₄. These are used in a derogatory sense, where vanities, emblems and superior connote bourgeois, whereas fellow wage labourers, placed in opposition to skills, connotes a proletarian value. Within this clause, however, the writer contrasts two sets of qualities coordinated by the preposition than. The writer thereby establishes antonymic relations between NP₄ class conscious party and NP₆, NP₇ and NP₈.

A way is now open to decipher the underlying discourse structures embedded in the text. The primary meaning structure is a synonymic relation between 'labour solidarity' and 'political efficacy'. Out of that relation the writer attributes to class conscious party of the working class the characteristics in PP₁, being solidarity with all workers of whatever craft or colour. By contrast, the current condition of the industrial movement is characterised by elitist 'labour aristocracy' notions of craft vanities, emblems and superior skills. The fundamental division in the working class is represented as a delineation of skills (craft), which more or less corresponds with the race (colour) division. The underlying meaning of the text may be depicted as in Figure 18:

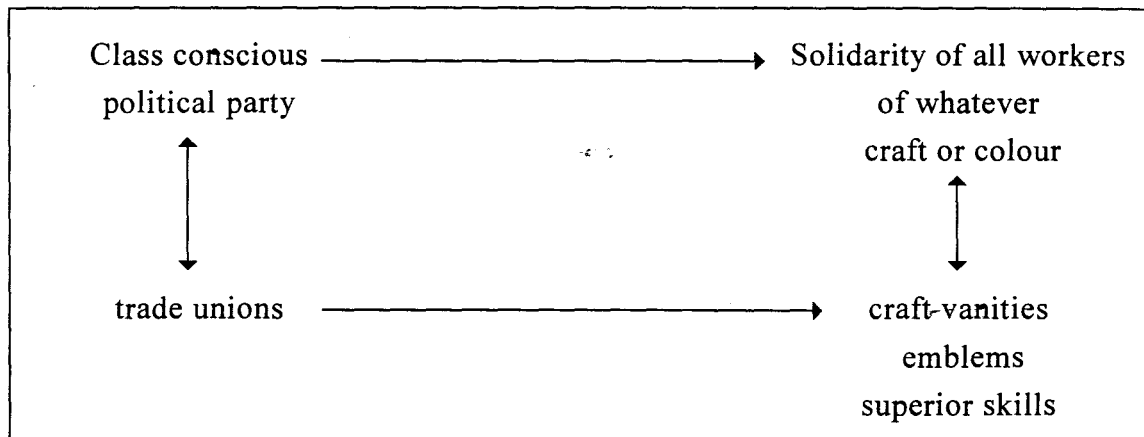


Figure 18

10.4.2.1. Contextual analysis

The *International* defined the word ‘political’ as a call to wage earners to combine in class conscious unity, not only in a political party, but also in industrial organisation. The political aim of the class struggle was for the working class to demand the unconditional surrender of industry, which would then be administered by workers’ committees (13/10/16, 19/1/17, 20/9/18).

Jones explained that in putting forward its candidates for the 1917 Provincial Council elections, the League was not implying that getting socialists into office would end the class struggle. He emphasised that political representation was futile without the backing of strong industrial organisation. ‘Economic organisation is the power of our class,’ and political emancipation would only evolve if the electorate were already organised industrially (1/6/17). This view squared with American socialist Eugene Debs,⁹ for whom industrial organisation was the foundation of the revolutionary movement, ‘without which political action would remain a dream’ (8/9/16).

Concerning this dialectical relationship between political and industrial action, Jones accused the SALP for the ‘ragged tangle’ of the industrial wing. ‘The point to note is that political disunity of labour arises from industrial

⁹ Eugene Debs (1855-1926) was a contemporary of De Leon and was a founder of the Socialist Party of America in 1897. He was a persistent critic of craft unionism).

disunity' (22/9/16). Labour would continue to be politically disunited for so long as its industrial foundation was fractured along the lines of skill and race (*ibid.*). And the political issue of the day in South Africa, Jones said, was not the goings-on in parliament but the practical absence of industrial organisation, without which any working class political activity would be in vain (8/9/16).

While the *International* (including the ISL) gave less emphasis to political action than did the SALP, it did not go as far as rejecting it altogether. Instead, the ISL followed De Leon's policy that capitalism would remain invulnerable if not faced by a proletariat organised in a class-conscious union, which itself could not recruit its forces without the political agitation of a socialist party. Only in the measure that each imparted strength to the other could both progress (28/7/16, 11/8/16).

10.4.2.2. Elections

The apparent disinterest of the ISL in furthering its profile among political parties in office was consistent with its purpose. The ISL had rejected a motion to change its name from 'League' to 'party'. Parties sought reforms through parliamentary action. But the 'business of the working class with the political state was to capture it and smash it' through industrial unity, of which the ballot box was an index of class consciousness among the electorate (3/10/16).

The *International's* writers understood political action as the class struggle expressed at the ballot box, and not the means by which capitalism would be overthrown (13/10/16). They emphasised that a socialist political party must give priority to organising workers on the industrial field (25/2/16, 20/9/18). For a socialist party to thrive, the 'industrial root' of the labour movement had to 'be watered' (11/8/16), so that the working class movement would be functioning 'now industrially, now politically' (25/2/16).

For Jones, the political action entailed in electioneering was certainly not the 'voice of the mob panicked once every five years' (5/5/16). Political action was the direct voice of industrial unity, and it was the duty of a political party representing such unity to educate white workers towards class conscious industrial solidarity with black workers. Jones admitted that for some time the

ISL would gain few votes. But political action was not simply a matter of garnering votes, but also of educating voters (5/5/16, 11/8/16).

Jones said ISL candidates were not asking for support because they hankered after political careers. They asked for support 'both as a method of propaganda and as a means of getting an indication of the number of voters who so far have grasped the far reaching significance of the problem of modern society'. To vote for an ISL candidate was, therefore, to 'contribute your mite [sic] to the power of the oncoming working class movement of the world' (3/10/16, 20/10/16).

10.4.2.3. Political and economic power

Gibson disagreed with the narrow interpretation of political action made by some 'quite respectable spokesmen of the working class', that for a political party to turn away from parliamentary measures towards the industrial movement would somehow deprive it of the name 'political', and become 'industrial'. 'The capitalist class wielded political power, because it had economic power and used the political to consolidate and increase the economic,' he wrote (11/8/16).

The paper pointed out that the economic-political correlation found in capitalist organisation was just as relevant to workers engaged in the class struggle. Noting the secession of the South African Mineworkers Union from the SALP in February 1916, Jones interpreted the Chamber's 'timely cry' of no political action within the union as evidence of the importance of political action. He added that political action made workers realise that the whole of society, not only immediate worker grievances and their industries, was the concern of industrial organisation (25/2/16).

Every class struggle was a political struggle. To repudiate the political struggle would mean to repudiate the whole class struggle (*ibid.*). But political solidarity mean the affiliation of unions to a political party, as had been the case with the SALP. Jones said the ISL would gain its first success not when trade unions decided to affiliate to it, but when the ISL was able to affiliate to the political party of the organised working class (*ibid.*).

10.4.2.4. Education

The task of the *International* was to educate workers into understanding their condition as a dispossessed, dependent class; and to counteract any notions of mutual interests across class lines (30/8/18). And working class interest meant more than higher wages and better working conditions. It meant the abolition of the private ownership of industry behind those demands, 'thus doing away with the class rule distinctions that must necessarily exist in any society based upon individual ownership' (*ibid.*).

To act successfully we must think clearly. To overcome the enemy, we must understand the ground of battle, the position of the field on which the struggle has to be fought out.... We must therefore develop our own knowledge, organise our own intelligence-department. We must think as independently as we act on the industrial and political fields (20/10/16).

10.4.2.5. Black workers

When the *International* shifted its emphasis from white to black workers in January 1918, it also warned against neglecting its propaganda among white workers. During the period following the black industrial unrest on the Rand, the paper called on white workers to accept black workers as fellow proletarians. To black workers, the import of the *International's* teaching was the need to organise in class conscious unions, and preferably with white workers.

For this purpose, Bunting believed a message addressed specifically to black workers was not necessary, and that the message to both black and white workers was essentially the same. 'Appeals to the white worker to recognise the native fellow-worker inevitably find their way to the native worker also, and thus answer a double purpose' (4/1/18).

However, he added that the paper should direct its attention to the time 'when the native proletariat openly flings its challenge at capitalism', hoping that blacks would 'find the majority of the white workers ready to co-operate and stand shoulder to shoulder; so that the class struggle may not degenerate into a bloody race struggle of white versus black' (*ibid.*).

10.5. Conclusion

Each of the three analyses conducted in this chapter reveal similar deep structures, illustrated in Figures 16, 17 and 18. A correlation of these figures shows a common deep structure. If the substitutions ‘internationalism’ (16) ‘organise’ (17), ‘class conscious political party’ (18) and ‘industrial union’ (17) share mutual metonymic relations within the *International’s* discourse, the three figures virtually overlap.

Substituting this part of the construction with a noun phrase ‘internationalism’, this is related antonymically to ‘trade unions’, common to all three figures. On the other hand, ‘internationalism’ is also related metonymically to ‘unity between nations’ (16) and ‘unity in industry’ (17); the relations between which are synonymous and metaphoric. These in turn exist in metonymic relations with the synonymous ‘united within the nation’ (16) and ‘community’ (17). These are also related antonymically to ‘competition within industry’ (17) and ‘division between nations’ (16). The metonymic relations continue where the significations in the *International’s* discourse include ‘unity within nations’ (16) and ‘class solidarity’ (18). On the other hand, ‘trade unions’ relates metonymically to both ‘competition within industry’ (17) and ‘divided between the nations’ (16); the relations between which are synonymous and metaphoric. Collectively, these statements exist in metonymic relations to ‘division within nations’ (16) and ‘ignoring the unskilled and blacks’ (17), which are synonymous within the *International’s* discourse. These in turn exist in antonymic relations with ‘united within the nation’ (16) and ‘community’ (17). These relations may be illustrated (using the notation above) as in Figure 19.

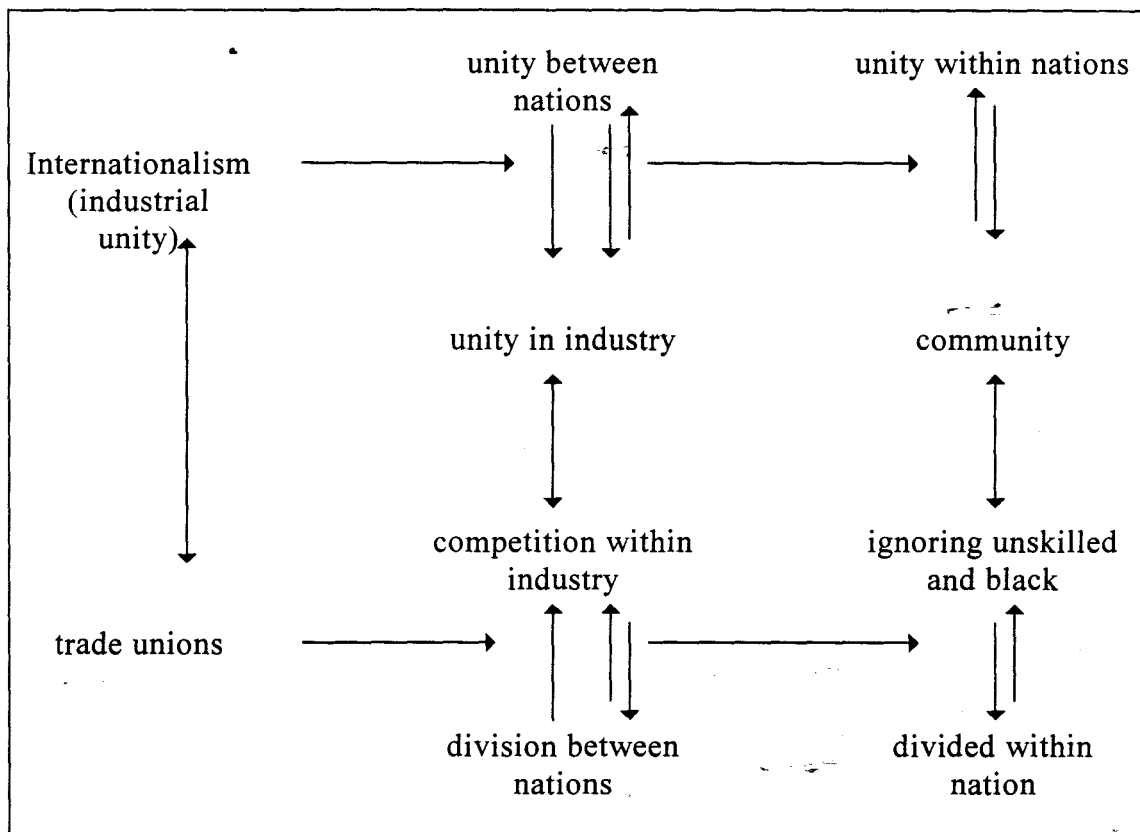


Figure 19

According to the *International's* writers, the choice facing white workers was simple: either an alliance with management or with the 'bottom dogs of wage-labour' (22/9/16). For so long as white workers looked upon black workers 'as an object to be kicked, instead of a work-mate to be linked up industrially to help fight his industrial battles, so long will the white worker be the fool of imperialist notions and alarms. The one follows the other' (*ibid.*).

In this context the paper saw the fight against capitalism in South Africa as a fight against the prejudices of mainly white workers. 'Conquer these and capitalism will be conquered. While these remain, it is useless whining about the disunity of Labour. The job is to create among workers that feeling of unity with all those who labour for wages, irrespective of what pigment may have been injected by nature into the labourer's skin' (*ibid.*). And in opposing segregation of any sort, these writers proposed industrial organisation.

This is the great message of socialism, a call to the workers to unite in their various industries, irrespective of race, colour or creed, the whole world over, to capture political and economic power from the hands of the small

privileged class that at present controls the machinery of production, and to lead humanity out of the chaos into which the morally bankrupt class has plunged it (19/1/17).

Bunting said the *International's* fight against racism in the working class was of a magnitude 'unexampled in any other section of the socialist international' (12/1/17). He added that the ISL's campaign was 'fraught with wonderful possibilities for the native, and the movement which he must inevitably dominate' (*ibid.*). It was these possibilities – the emancipation of black workers inherent in the struggle for international working class solidarity – that 'made socialism worth fighting for in South Africa' (9/11/17).

Political action revolved around these same issues. It was a programme working in tandem with industrial organisation, which together constituted the class struggle. While voting was a test of class consciousness, electioneering was an education drive to foster class consciousness. The aim was industrial organisation, without which political office would be a powerless token.

Chapter eleven

Conclusion

11.1. Discursive struggle of the *International*

The two issues which constrained the *International's* discourse against racism were anti-militarism and anti-trade unionism in the discourse of labour. The *International's* writers used a combination of resources found within each of these sites of language use to arrive at a position on the 'native worker' based entirely on the socialist principle of class struggle. This entailed a rejection of nationalism as a vehicle of social struggle which, one writer said, created 'false lines of division on the industrial field' (28/9/17). Industrial unionism, the *International* taught, was the only viable vehicle in class struggle.

The findings of each of the six textual analyses around the topics of militarism and trade unionism showed a common deep structure, seen as a set of binary opposites such as international-national, worker-bourgeois, and class-race. These binary opposites generally fitted into the categories of socialism and capitalism, as used in the *International's* time, and subsisting in the language system at the level of culture.

Using the resources of the language system available to them in the discourse of militarism, the *International's* writers saw the meaning of labour divided between the nations as a metaphor of labour fractured along craft and racial lines in the South African context. Using the similar resources available in the discourse of labour, these writers saw the division of labour along lines of craft as a metaphor for the division along race lines. Similarly, the division along craft lines was a metaphor for the division between nations. In short, the development of this line of thinking followed a path of 'nation' being a metaphor for craft, and vice versa, and these relations being a metaphor for racial divisions, as shown in Figure 20.



Figure 20

The remarkable similarity found between the deep structures of each text analysed, despite each concerning a different topic, confirms the structuralist principle that the system of significations which characterises a discursive community (*langue*), and which writers use as resources for communication, may generate an infinite number of texts (*parole*) (Fiske 1990: 123-125, 133; Jensen 1991: 2-7; Larson 1991b: 124; Roelofse 1982: 26). This view is based on the notion of a correlation between a type of society and the texts which it produces. The beliefs and values inherent in the discursive community are manifested in its forms of communication, which is embedded in its texts (Foucault 1986: 49; Roelofse 1983: 7-8).

A correlation of the deep structures evident in the meaning relations of each of the analysed texts in Chapters ten and eleven may be illustrated in Figure 21:

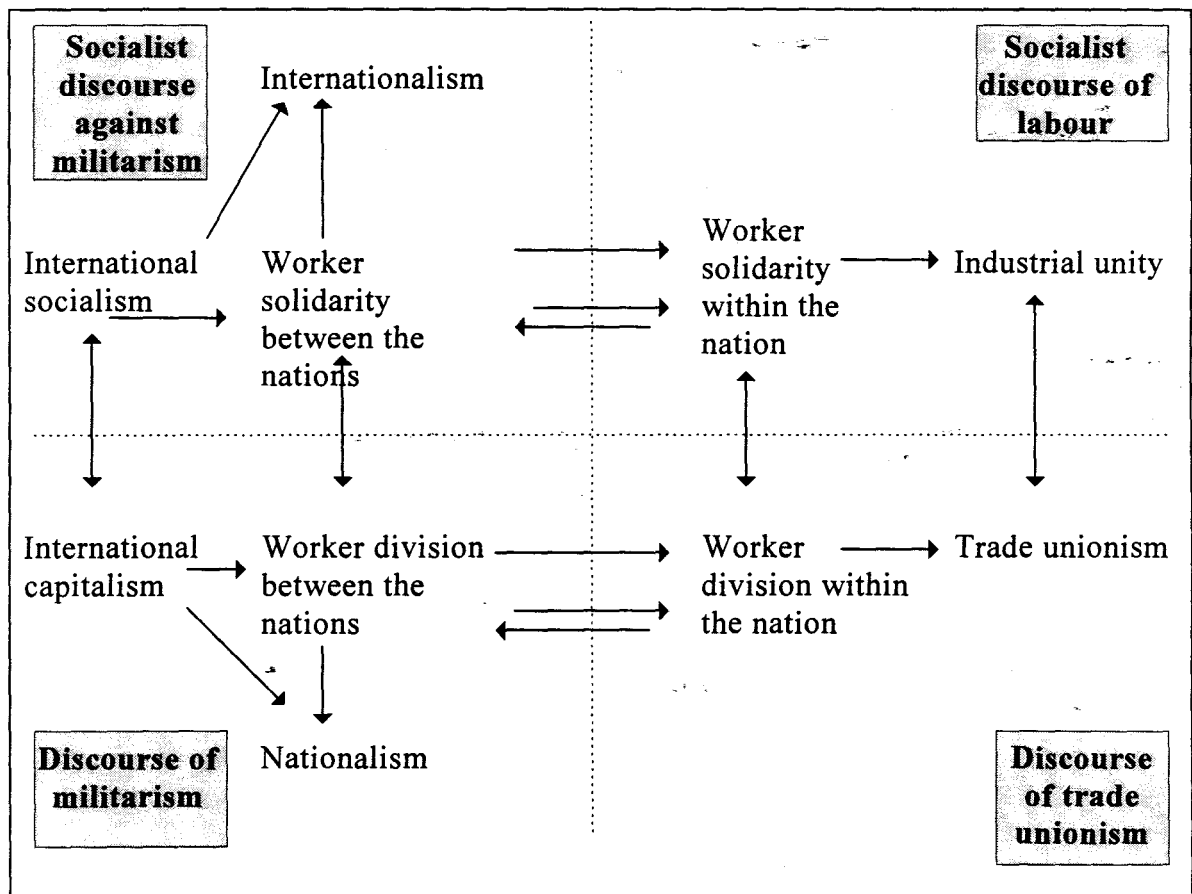


Figure 21

11.2. Semiotic struggle

Writing from a point of view of international socialism, the *International's* writers came to oppose a set of white labour discursive practices in which black workers were treated as non-workers, and hence were seen not to belong to the working class or to labour movement. The *International's* struggle against this line of thinking was fundamentally semiotic. In the white labour discourse, the sign of 'black worker' was given a meaning which cohered with the way other signs were used as concepts to register subordination and inferiority in that system. Similarly, within the internationalist discourse, the sign had a meaning which cohered with the other meanings which registered equality and dignity of labour in that discourse. At the intersection of these sites of language use, the sign 'black workers' was an object for intervention which entailed a struggle over meaning to shift the sign to a legitimate place in their socialist discourse only (Hall 1982: 79-80). This process is illustrated in Figure 22.

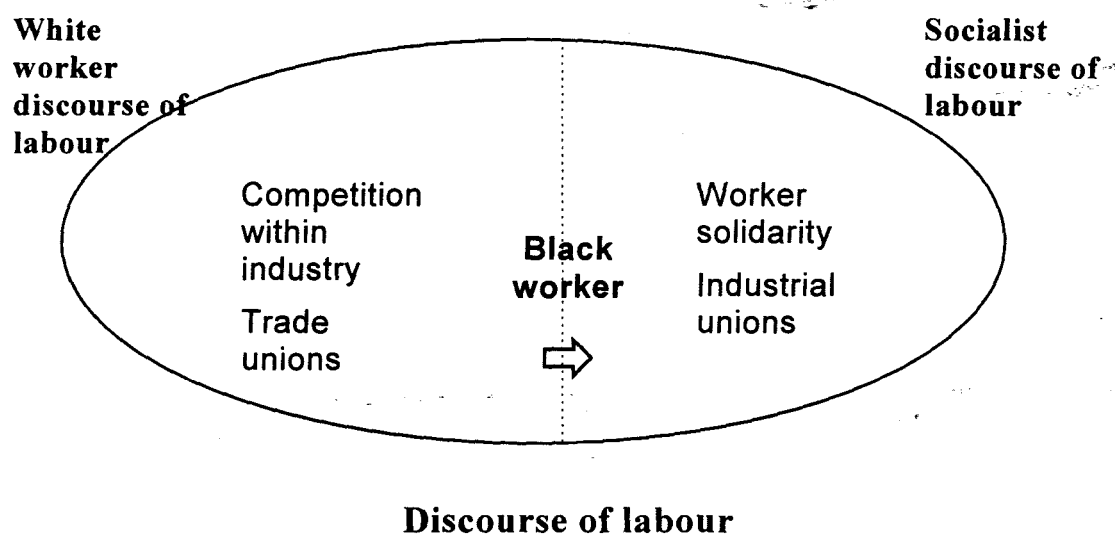


Figure 22

By seeing this ideological struggle as waged between opposing paradigms within a formation of discourse goes some way towards avoiding a humanist interpretation of discursive struggle. The aim of this bid is to achieve in the use of that sign a uni-accentuality in internationalist discourse. All social groups would (were the bid successful) accept as the dominant meaning the accent given to the sign within the socialist discourse (Hall 1982: 69, 77-78; Thompson 1984: 235).

The following text, written by Bunting, sums up how the *International* combined the resources of both anti-militarism and industrial unionism in a creative generation of new meaning:

So little in common has international socialism with mere pacifism, and Industrial Unionism with mere negrophilism, that we get significant praise for the *International* from friends of the aborigines who regret our anti-militarism, or from opponents of patriotism who, however, cannot abide what they call our Kaffir policy. We want the applause of neither; neither that which boos "you're a War-on-Warite." Nor of that which can sneer "You're friends of the niggers." But once realise that the fundamental tyranny of the modern world is not Prussianism nor racial dominance, but economic slavery, and the rest follows. You must become a "War-on-Warite" and "friend of niggers," and a good deal more too, all together; and if you are a pacifist, it is not for the sake of peace at any price; if a negrophile, it is not for slobbering over Jim Sixpence – you are both, because your gospel in each case is Workers of the World unite! (28/9/17).

11.3. Reflections on combining creativity and determinism

Much historical work on the period covered by this thesis is revisionist. By this I mean that as human societies perceive themselves to move into a new era, so it is that they tend to revise their opinions of earlier historical events and their significance.

A critical view of language shows us that fact is always interpreted by opinion, or point of view. The point of view of looking at history usually falls into one of two categories. Humanists tend to see things as emerging as a series of creative acts, putting emphasis on individuals or discoveries as being the drivers of history. The structuralist approach is primarily concerned not with the acts of individual creativity so much as with the emergence of new ideas and attitudes from a struggle against the old.

What I have found in explaining what the *International* was all about is that one must look at creativity and the personal experience of individuals, which certainly has a driving effect insofar as individual experience so often leads people to a position where they feel driven to share their vision with society. Yet this individual contribution is determined by the parameters of existing discourse. It is this socially-derived way of speaking about a particular

topic that sets the limits within which the emergence of new thinking seems to develop. Historians cannot afford to sit with both feet in one camp only. The tools available to historians have certainly emerged from the major opposing ideologies of this century, but they remain tools for all to use.

11.4. Discourse analysis

One benefit in using a critical approach to discourse analysis is that it helps to avoid replicating an ideology embedded in text. A humanist approach such as that proposed by Brown and Yule (1983) does place the analyst in the danger of analysing a text either in terms of the discourses the analyst brings to the text, or fails to say any more than the text under analysis. Most episodic accounts of history suffer this flaw.

By using the two-phase procedure of discourse analysis proposed in this thesis, it was much easier to avoid some of the problems mentioned above. The first phase of analysis entailed a grammatical description of the text. The benefit of starting with a grammatical analysis of text was that its discursive aspects became evident in the next stage with a certainty which would have been missing from a more intuitive approach. And with contextual analysis, by making a distinction between a discursive context (which I called linguistic context) and a non-discursive context helped make clear the complex relations between text and context. Furthermore, this distinction made available to analysis an application of this relation.

By segmenting discourse analysis into two phases of textual and contextual analysis, and then segmenting these into its discursive and non-discursive aspects, made clear the distinction in discourse between its creative and determined aspects. This highlighted the meaning relations made in text as the site of creativity. The conditions of discourse in which text production takes place becomes the site of determination.

While the textual analysis provided the rigour I needed to analyse the *International*, I found this rigour missing somewhat in the contextual analytical part of the whole method. Drawing the links between the analysed text and particularly the non-discursive context, appeared more open to manipulation

than I would have liked it to be. This analytical method needs to be developed towards a more rigorous application of context.

11.5. Further research

This study makes a contribution to the literature on the struggle against racism in South Africa by giving the first comprehensive account of how this struggle was systematically worked out in the media of the left wing in South Africa. In short, it is the only work (as far as I know) dedicated to the *International*.

This thesis also highlights some areas for further research in the field. The most obvious areas for further research are contained in Chapter two, which was used as a background of the whole study. Apart from Bunting and Jones (and Bill Andrews), who were the others who contributed to the *International*?

A valuable area of research would be to write a history of the International Socialist league. As far as I know, one is yet to be written. Another area of research is: what were the links between the *International* and general Marxist theory? And how did the ISL's discourse change during the period leading up to the formation of the Communist Party of South Africa in 1921? In the light of Martin Legassick's (1973) comment below, the party possibly did not change all that much.

The Communist Party of South Africa, formed in July 1921, began its life as the left-wing of the white South African labour movement. Like the splinter groups it sprang from, it regarded racialism, nationalism, jingoism, reformism, as "false ideologies" ... inter-racial solidarity would grow automatically with developing class consciousness in the course of the only struggle to be fought, that of labour against capitalism (1973: 3).

Was the *International* a unique phenomenon in Africa? Were there similar newspapers in other British colonies, such as Rhodesia and Kenya?

Finally, what were the links between the ISL's antipathy to nationalism during the period considered in this thesis, and the 'Black Republic' controversy in the Communist Party from 1928 to 1934? Bunting was a member of the party at the time. Martin Legassick's (1973) study of this controversy shows a party wrapped up in a thinking very reminiscent of its ISL era.

Appendices

Early trade unions organisation in South Africa

Initially, trade unions in South Africa were branches of British unions, and were controlled by immigrants until as late as 1913, when locally-born labour leaders became more common. Many of these were proletarianised Afrikaners, who increasingly joined unions from about 1907 onwards, and may possibly have reinforced racism in the movement (Bozzoli 1981: 31-32; Davies 1979: 33, 52-53; Johnstone 1976: 51; Katz 1976: 13, 16-18, 483-484).

These unions were formed along craft lines.¹ One of these, the Transvaal Miners' Association, was founded in 1902. It initially included only artisans, but by 1913 became more of an industrial union, but for white workers only. That year it was renamed the South African Mine Workers' Union, with a membership of about 6000.² Its umbrella body, the Transvaal Federation of Trades (founded in 1911), became in 1914 the South African Industrial Federation (SAIF) (Katz 1976: 183-184; Yudelman 1984: 132-133).

Trade unionism was illegal for Africans, but the first signs of industrial organisation were in the secret formation of the Industrial Workers of Africa in 1917, under the guidance of the International Socialist League. The fledgling 'socialist school for natives' was at its most visible during 1918 'bucket strike', followed by the mine concessionary stores boycott the same year (Webster 1978: 111).

The trade union movement had as one of its goals the protection of whites against having their jobs taken over by poorer-paid black workers. Even before 1900, union leaders noticed how cheap black labour was increasingly being used to replace skilled white artisans. From then onward, the division between white and black workers increasingly became the point of contention as white artisans

¹ Early unions in existence on the Rand were the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners, formed in Kimberley in 1881, the Amalgamated Engineering Union (1886), the Witwatersrand Mine Employees and Mechanics Union (1892), the Iron Moulders' Society (1896), and the Engine Drivers' Association (1898). The first two were branches of British unions.

² This development was made necessary by the deskilling of miners, and by the willingness of Afrikaners more than their English-speaking counterparts to be mere supervisors. However, the union still only included white workers.

acted to protect their jobs, and pushed for the informal colour bars to be given statutory power (Bozzoli 1981: 61; Katz 1976: 23-25, 175-182).³

During the 1899-1902 war, a few black mine workers were permitted to operate some machinery for which certificates of competency were required by law (which excluded blacks).⁴ After the war, more black workers appeared to be ready for this 'advancement'.⁵ But in 1902 the mine union demanded blacks be barred from all skilled jobs, claiming that this was management's ploy to depress 'white' wages. During a visit to South Africa that year, the secretary of the British Independent Labour Party, James Ramsey MacDonald, said he supported the 'Dutch method of treating Kaffirs', whom he said 'should not be taught the work of white men' (Katz 1976: 59-60).⁶

While World War One caused considerable upheaval in the socialist movement world-wide, the response of the SAIF was to declare a moratorium on all strike action. In exchange for this patriotic gesture, the unions secured gains such as improved employment conditions, and extensions to the job colour bars. Other gains were reduced working hours, paid holidays, increased compensation rates. But all these measures increased the cost of white labour, with

³ For example, at the request of the Engine Drivers' Association, a statutory colour bar was introduced in the Transvaal Republic in 1896, declaring that all winding engine drivers who hauled men had to be white and in possession of certificates awarded by an examining board. No certificates were issued to black workers. But that did not deter management from attempting to move black workers into jobs not requiring competency certificates.

⁴ The racial division of labour first received legislative force in 1893 when blasting work was restricted to whites. A number of amendments were made and were consolidated in 1898 (Law 3 of 1893). The British administration under Lord Alfred Milner promulgated the Mines, Works and Machinery Regulations of 1903 which, framed in terms of earlier legislation that confined the occupation of engine-drivers to whites, reserved the driving of locomotive engines and of winding engines used for the purpose of hauling men to white workers in possession of certificates of competency. The Transvaal Chamber of Mines (TCM) was not perturbed by this, even though it was opposed to the job bars, because there were very few blacks employed in these occupations in 1903 (Katz 1976: 140, 146-47).

⁵ The mine owners stood to cut costs significantly by allowing blacks to do skilled jobs. But it paid them to ensure a relatively loyal and stable workforce. This could be achieved without conceding jobs already done by blacks. The mine owners colluded in this form of racial differentiation for as long as the proportion of white workers remained relatively low. Furthermore, concessions concerning job security, facilitated through the colour bars, helped constitute white labour as an 'aristocracy' and a means of controlling all labour.

⁶ MacDonald was later in 1909 to support a deputation to Britain led by the former Prime Minister of the Cape Colony, William Schreiner, protesting against terms of the Union constitution which excluded the growing black middle class in South Africa.

management prevented from redressing this situation by using more black labour (Johnstone 1976: 97-98, 100-101; Yudelman 1984: 146).

Skilled labour was also in short supply due to a large number of miners having enlisted for military service. This strengthened the bargaining position of the remaining whites. Their wages rose by 60 per cent between 1914 and 1920. But the average earnings of black workers remained virtually unchanged. This and the sharp increase in consumer prices at the provision stores fuelled the black worker militancy during the war, which was met with repression (Allen 1992: 274-275).

During this time, the rate of gold output (and its market price) fell and production costs increased, causing the mining industry a profitability crisis. This put a strain on the relationship between the mining houses and the unions. By 1918 the industry was also short of 40 000 black workers, due partly to the growing labour demands of the growing manufacturing sector, the continued demands of farmers, together with the opening of new gold mines on the East Rand (Johnstone 1976: 93-94, 96-97; Yudelman 1984: 146).

In September 1916 the unions brought up the question of extending the job colour bars. At first the Chamber refused, but the mine union persisted. It met with the Chamber in February 1917 to discuss the colour bars. The Chamber denied allegations of replacing white workers with coloureds in some semi-skilled jobs, despite top-level instructions to hire more 'Cape boys' (Yudelman 1984: 147).

But it was when nine coloured waste packers were employed at the Van Ryn Deep Mine in January 1917 that whites went on strike. The action posed a dilemma for the Chamber. It needed to cut costs, but also needed an alliance against an increasingly dissatisfied black labour force. To co-opt white workers rather than to have them ranged against the Chamber alongside black labour became imperative even at the expense of profits. The Chamber compromised, offering to leave things as they were, to stall its policy of black encroachment on white jobs (Yudelman 1984: 148; Johnstone 1976: 100-101, 103).

The Status Quo Agreement between the TCM and various mining unions in 1917 declared 19 new jobs for whites, and fixed existing job bars (Yudelman 1984: 144-145, 149; Allen 1992: 202-203). Although the unions did not ratify the agreement until September 1918, they complained whenever management appeared to infringe any of its measures. In May 1917 white workers threatened to strike on Randfontein Estates Mine over whether the agreement protected unskilled and semi-skilled whites. Management backed down. After increasing black worker protest, they told the Low Grade Mines Commission that phasing out the colour bars was not politically expedient (Yudelman 1984: 149; Johnstone 1976: 111).

Black and white workers in the South African labour movement

The position of black workers in the labour hierarchy differed considerably from that of white workers. The political freedom whites enjoyed, and their skills monopoly, enabled them to bargain for higher wages and organise in trade unions.

With government assistance, labour recruiting agencies co-opted traders in the reserves with a capitation fee to advance credit to Africans, which induced debts which had to be paid with wages earned on the mines. The recruiting network extended to tribal chiefs, family elders, traders (who needed a stronger cash economy in the reserves) and British administrations in neighbouring territories, anxious to increase their revenues (Jeeves 1985: 4-5, 17-18, 87-120). Otherwise, poll taxes, squatting laws and eventually the 1913 Land Act were used to coerce black labour from the reserves, where black subsistence farmers had no need to immolate themselves as wage-earners.¹

Once at the mines, the migrants were subordinated to the needs of the industry through a barrage of restrictive legislation and the compound system (Bozzoli 1981: 31-32; Davies 1979: 32-33; Johnstone 1976: 50; Simons 1983: 42-45).² Accommodated this way, black workers (management reasoned) did

¹ Extra-economic compulsion through taxes and squatting laws exerted upon blacks forced them to seek employment to pay their taxes (Cape: Act 25, 1894. OFS: Ordinance 2, 1871). Laws were instituted to prohibit independent squatting by Africans, and to regulate and limit the number of squatters per white land-owner, so as to equalise the distribution of labour to employers (Cape: Act 6, 1876; Act 8, 1878; Act 37, 1884; Act 33, 1892; Act 30, 1884; Act 32, 1909. Transvaal: Law 11, 1887; Law 21, 1895. OFS: Law 4, 1895. Union: Act 27, 1913). These laws were encapsulated in the 1913 Native Land Act, which defined the great bulk of the territory of South Africa as 'white areas' (Act 27, 1913, Section 1). Between 1910 and 1913, certain areas were reserved for black tenure. Before 1910, blacks could buy land anywhere outside the Orange Free State. White farmers, however, were unhappy with this as it exposed their breeding stock to 'inferior' rams and bulls. Pressure was brought to bear on the government to evict black tenant farmers, squatters and share-croppers, and to allow only black wage-earners on white farms (Davenport 1987: 259-62).

² Blacks could not own property or trade in mining areas. They could not acquire mining licences (Transvaal: Law 15, 1898, Articles 59, 133; Law 32, 1908, article 130), or trade in minerals (Law 15, 1898, arts 148, 149. Law 32, 1908, arts 113, 114). Blacks could not live (Law 32, 1908, article 131) or establish shops on proclaimed ground (Law 15, 1898, article 92). The Gold Law of the Transvaal prescribed that 'no coloured person may be a licence holder, or

not need the wages of white workers, who had the 'burden' of having to provide their own accommodation for themselves and their families (Bozzoli 1981: 51, 60).³ The compounds also provided a form of influx control, reinforced by Pass Laws, which limited the time they had to find a job (Johnstone 1976: 50, 56-57; Yudelman 1984: 33-34).⁴

While the contract labour system⁵ helped depress black wages, the colour bars in the workplace closed access to skilled and certain semi-skilled jobs, reserved for whites. Furthermore, the Masters and Servants laws placed blacks in a position of extreme exploitability in relation to their employers by subjugating them to measures such as criminal penalties for breach of contract.

While the working class on the Rand was divided along the colour line, white workers too were differentiated. Skilled whites feared having their status

in any way be connected with the working of the gold mines, except as a working man in the service of whites' (Law 15, 1898, article 133).

³ Based on the customary sovereign a day for skilled white workers, trade unionists in 1902 claimed that 16s 8d and 10s should be the minimum basic daily wage of semi-skilled and unskilled industrial workers, although the 10s a day, they complained, was unfair for a white married man. The average maximum wage for black contract workers from the reserves was fixed in 1903 at 2s 3d a day. The justification given for this discrepancy was that whites were totally proletarianised while blacks had a base in the reserves (Katz 1974: 144; Davies 1979: 57-58).

⁴ The Pass Laws served to check any breach of contract and desertion by black workers. A pass was required in order to leave one place of residence to seek employment elsewhere. The passes contained details of the past employment as well as any information about criminal offences committed by the pass-holder. This provided a means of inhibiting desertion even though by the time of Union in 1910, the annual desertion rate was about 15 per cent. As the law forced Africans entering urban areas to get a pass within 24 hours, and to find employment within six days, or face imprisonment, the pass served to weaken their bargaining position. This enabled employers to offer negligible wages. Africans living in urban areas were subject to a night curfew, prohibiting them from being in any public place between 9.00pm and 4.00am without a written pass from their employer (Section 23, Act 15, 1911). As with the Master and Servant laws, infringement of the pass laws was a criminal offence on pain of imprisonment (Johnstone 1976: 34-38).

⁵ With a centralised recruiting system, wage rates were fixed across the board at 2s per shift - a day's work. The Native Recruiting Corporation introduced a system known as the maximum average system to restrict the earnings of African workers engaged in piece work, including in its schedule of rates of pay that piece work not exceed 2s 3d per shift. This system was made more flexible by 1918, when a sliding scale maximum average was introduced, in which the permissible maximum average fluctuated between 2s 3d and 2s 9d per shift according to the percentage of Africans employed in piece work. White trade unions in 1913 criticised the contract system because of the competition such large numbers of black workers posed to all white jobs (Johnstone 1976: 42, 60; Katz 1976: 351-52).

undermined by semi-skilled and unskilled whites, should they show themselves capable of doing skilled jobs at lower rates of pay.⁶ These, in turn, had similar fears about black workers. The *International's* writers were to hammer the point that this hierarchy of antagonism hid the fact of their common class position.

The aversion Afrikaners felt to doing 'kaffir work' did not improve their prospects in the mining industry, particularly as unskilled workers.⁷ Their attitudes to work did help advance the process by which the mining occupation was fragmented into its constituent parts which could be done by unskilled workers under supervision. White miners at around 1907, therefore, increasingly became supervisors of black workers (Bozzoli 1981: 102-103; Davies 1979: 33; Johnstone 1976: 2-3).

These distinctions were compounded by an ideology which saw mining as British. English was the language of mining, and English-speaking workers were encouraged by management during the Milner era (1902-1907) to distance themselves not only from black workers, but also to see themselves as an 'aristocracy' encapsulated in an industry in which all others were foreigners (Johnstone 1976: 2-3; Katz 1976: 67-69, 76; Lipton 1985: 186). Lord Alfred Milner, an imperialist and a social reformer, was an advocate of the doctrine of

⁶ For instance, when two groups of Italian contract workers were assigned to the City and Suburban Mine and the Ferreira Gold Mining Company in 1903, skilled British miners refused to go down with them. They insisted their objections were 'not racial', but out of fear that the Italians might prove themselves capable of doing skilled work. Being contract workers, they did not have the bargaining power of 'free' skilled whites, and could be used to depress all 'white wages' (Katz 1976: 67-69, 76).

⁷ Many Afrikaners found themselves better suited as transport riders or as brickmakers, or found jobs particularly after 1907 on state employment schemes such as the railways. A worrying number joined the swelling ranks of urban poor whites (Bozzoli 1981: 36-39, 89, 97-98; Van Onselen 1982: 111-61; Johnstone 1976: 54, 59; Davies 1979: 53-54). The Transvaal indigency commission reported in 1908 that a most important cause of the poor white problem was the attitude of whites towards performing manual labour in the employment of someone else. The employment prospects of unskilled whites were restricted by the prevailing attitude of unskilled labour being 'kaffir's work', and beneath the dignity of a white man. Its real effect was to prevent whites from doing unskilled work, and so remaining unemployed (Johnstone 1979: 61).

the 'civilising mission' of Europeans. It was his conviction that the 'British race' were torchbearers of empire 'distinctive and priceless in the onward march of humanity'. The 'British race' included for him 'all the peoples of the United Kingdom and their descendants in other countries under the British flag' (Semmel 1959: 179, 180-81, 183).⁸

⁸ Social imperialism, which may be defined as an imperialism in which the working class is wooed by means of 'social welfare concessions which appear to depend on the success of export monopolism'. 'Social-imperialism, which had the ideological justification of Social Darwinism, was designed to draw all classes together in defence of the nation and empire and aimed to prove to the least well-to-do class that its interests were inseparable from those of the nation. It aimed at undermining the argument of the socialists and demonstrating that, contrary to Marxist allegation, the workers had more to lose than their chains.' There were socialists such as the Fabians, who shared much of the outlook and goals of social-imperialists. These goals emphasised the 'necessity for breeding an imperial race in Great Britain if the Empire were to remain both British and strong' (Semmel 1959: 24, 27-28).

The South African Labour Party's race policy

The development of trade unionism in South Africa was accompanied, as in other countries, by the formation of working class political parties. The South African Labour Party (SALP), following the principles of the white labour movement, pursued the same protectionist policies in the political field (Ticktin 1969: 60-61). But this was not the first time labour organised politically.¹

The SALP developed out of the Labour Representative Committee, which in 1907 represented trade unions in the political field, winning seven seats out of 13 in the Transvaal. This electoral success and the anticipated Act of Union of 1910 led, through a series of conferences, to the formation of the SALP (Ticktin 1969: 60-61). The affiliation of trade unions confirmed the party's outlook as a white-interest body. Furthermore, the dominance of Transvaal trade unionists in the party became a decisive factor in determining the party's policy towards black workers (Katz 1976: 226, 228-229).²

¹The SALP was not the first working class political organisation in South Africa. The Witwatersrand Trades and Labour Council, founded in 1902, put up candidates for political elections. Other socialist-leaning parties at the time were the Cape Town branch of the British Social Democratic Federation, Socialist Society, Independent Labour Party, Socialist Labour Party. Other socialist parties on the Rand paid barely more attention to the place of blacks in the working class than the SALP. The Industrial Workers of the World (South African section) had as one of its declared aims to fight the class war with the aid of all workers, skilled and unskilled, white and black. However, no attempts were made to organise black workers or to encourage them to attend IWW meetings. Nor did black workers appear, on their own accord, to have attended their gatherings held on Market Square each Sunday night. Deploring police efforts to break up meetings held during the 1911 tramwaymen's strike, the IWW's main objection was that black policemen were used against white strikers. The IWW was better known for their militant tactics, as in the strike, than for their doctrines of revolutionary socialism. While the syndicalist IWW scorned political action, the prospect of non-labour politicians getting into power evoked a militant response from them. In the 1911 municipal elections and the 1912 parliamentary by-election at Georgetown, using the tactics of 'direct action', the 'Pickhandle Brigade' was responsible for breaking up numerous meetings of aspirant town councillors - particularly members of the former tramway committee against whom the 1911 strike was aimed. The IWW claimed a certain amount of credit when the Labour Party increased its representation from five to eleven in the municipal elections. Again in 1912 the brigade attributed Andrews' election success to its tactics. The Labour Party, however, did not welcome association with the brigade, and publicly repudiated the band in October 1911, no less for the IWW's brand of revolutionary socialism and its demand that unions be organised along the lines of the revolutionary industrial unions and syndicates. These views had little appeal to white workers in the Transvaal in any event, and were therefore of little benefit to an SALP election platform (Katz 1976: 309-310, 312-313; Simons 1983: 152).

² The SALP tailored a separate policy for the Cape, where Coloureds had the vote. However, in 1910 they refused to vote for the party because of its white labour policy. It did not follow that once Coloureds were admitted into the SALP they would be admitted into its affiliated unions. In 1913, the SALP followed with its 'open door policy' allowing Coloureds (not Indians and

A long-standing labour leader, Bill Andrews, was elected the party's first chairman. While essentially English, the party sought to attract Afrikaner support, and gained considerably from this quarter in the working class suburbs on the Rand. But this support was lost to the National Party after the 1914 strike and the Afrikaner nationalist rebellion soon afterward (Ticktin 1969: 60-61).

In 1909 the SALP's draft constitution was amended to advocate the employment in industry of whites only. A resolution was also adopted to appoint a sub-committee to draft a 'native policy', which advanced the party's segregation aims. With the backing of the trade unions, the draft informed the party's 1910 'betterment for whites only' election manifesto (Katz 1976: 230-231, 268-274). After the elections, the SALP's voice was among the loudest in debates in parliament for legislation to protect white workers. Creswell said the SALP advocated 'equal pay for equal work' against the mine owners wanting to hire labour at the lowest possible rate to undercut white wage rates. For this reason he opposed the passing of the 1911 Native Labour Registration Act. He also opposed any reliance on the colour bars for their impotence against black encroachment on 'white jobs' (Simons 1983: 174-175; Webster 1974: 86-88).

Against this background, the SALP sub-committee's 'native policy' was passed at the party's 1912 Annual Conference. The policy embraced the political, social, industrial, economic and educational spheres. The party's constitution now advocated that Africans be separated from whites through measures such as the prohibition of squatting, 'kaffir farming' and of 'native ownership' of land in areas occupied by whites. Instead, suitable reserves with agricultural training facilities should be provided for blacks. The party also wanted any form of cohabitation between blacks and whites prohibited in the Union. And it wanted all Indians repatriated (Katz 1976: 232, 239-41; Simons 1983: 161-62, 175-176).

The policy's main thrust was to have black workers in industry replaced as far as possible by whites. Creswell told parliament during the debate on the

Africans) into the party so long as they agreed to upholding the 'white standard of living'. Again, the response was not positive. Abdula Abdurahman's African People's Organisation

1913 Land Act that the SALP approved of segregation, and wanted most blacks returned to the reserves (Simons 1983: 174-175, 162; Lerumo 1980: 31).³

Bill Andrews, who claimed he was a socialist, still believed at this time that it was undesirable to admit blacks into white unions, and attributed the drunkenness of white workers to their having to spend long hours underground with blacks, 'enough to break down the moral fibre of the average man'. He abandoned this view only after the ISL broke away from the SALP five years later (Cope 1943: 93, 99, 110 177; Katz 1976: 270-272; Simons 1983: 89, 129, 149).

Socialists in the labour movement

It was not uncommon for SALP members to call themselves socialists, even if only on the grounds of their opposition to employers.⁴ But as for class consciousness, this meant little more than white workers recognising their particular interests and the possibility of obtaining reforms through industrial and political action (Katz 1976: 310; Ticktin 1969: 61).

Trade unionists on the Rand were generally hostile to left-wing tendencies. In 1909, before the SALP was finally named, most trade unionists objected to a motion by Independent Labour Party (founded on the Rand in

(APO) was more popular (Forman & Oodendaal 1992: 44; Katz 1976: 233-234, 238).

³It must be borne in mind that segregation was a compromise policy rejecting overt racial repression, but avoiding the option of assimilating blacks into white society. The keenly-felt need throughout the white political spectrum for a 'native policy' common to all four South African colonies was a central consideration behind moves for South African Union. The basic problems legislators faced were land tenure, rural and urban blacks, and the question of political rights. Much pressure came from white farmers anxious that blacks be prohibited from buying land near their farms. Politically, there were only two options: to include blacks in the white political system, or to exclude them by creating a separate political dispensation. The first option was unthinkable. So the SALP's policy was in line with political thinking at the time, and can be reasonably argued to have reflected the dominant discourse. The party claimed Africans should advance within their own communities first before being allowed to enter white society, when it was hoped there would be no fear of their undermining the 'white standard of living' (Katz 1976: 25, 233; Dubow 1990: 74; Bozzoli 1981: 61; Simons 1983: 115, 128).

⁴One leading SALP member, J Berman, said he was a socialist because he belonged to the Labour Party, as though the two were synonymous. In this respect one can hardly describe these trade unionists as committed socialists let alone syndicalists. Also, in an labour environment of white protectionism, socialist appeals to black-white unity at the level of industry was anathema to white workers, who knew full well what such a policy meant in real terms. The 'black man' was seen as the chief cause of their grievances. Abstract socialist notions offered slim comfort in alleviating fears of the 'black peril' (Katz 1976: 264-266, 267- 269).

1906) leader, Archie Crawford for the party to be called the South African Socialist Party. They said the average worker would not identify with a party of such a name, and it would repel Afrikaner voters. However, small band of international socialists did manage to get squeezed into the constitution the objectives of 'a gradual socialisation of the means of production, distribution and exchange to be controlled by a democratic state'. But this was a dead letter. They also managed by 17 votes to 13 to have the party affiliated to the already moribund Second International (Katz 1976: 264-266; Simons 1983: 153).

Apart from dabbling in provincial and municipal politics, ILP leader Crawford founded, published and edited the *Voice of Labour*, a 'weekly Journal of Socialism, Trade Unionism and Politics', which he called a 'barometer of working class consciousness'. The paper ran from October 1908 to December 1912, when it folded for lack of funds (Simons 1983: 141).⁵

As a founding member of the SALP, he stood for election on its ticket in the June 1910. When challenged on his policies towards the colour bar, he replied in the *Voice of Labour* that race was irrelevant to the working class, and that there was no race problem, only a worker problem. He added that the ILP's purpose was to teach blacks not to scab against whites, and promised that white workers would only befriend them if they abstained from degrading the status of white workers. He and a fellow ILP candidate, Jim Davidson, lost the election. The *Voice of Labour* claimed, however, that they 'were the only two candidates in the Transvaal who had refused to draw the colour line, and were the first to stand for revolutionary principles' (Simons 1983: 141, 144-45, 146, 149).

Socialists faced the dilemma of all radicals who contested elections based on an all-white franchise. They could denounce racism and suffer an abysmal defeat; or make a bid for success by trading radical principles for

⁵ According to the Simons, the *Voice of Labour* was the 'first systematic attempt to spread doctrines of revolutionary socialism' in South Africa (1983: 141). It had a circulation of less than 10 000, and at the end of 1912 was losing 20 pounds a week and often could not afford to pay the printers. Crawford often mourned that it appeared socialists did not want a paper to represent their interests (*ibid*: 141, 152) Through the *Voice*, Crawford claimed the dividing line in the South African labour movement was class, not colour, and berated white workers for being co-opted by capital to maintain the subordinate position of black workers. He warned that when black labour was crushed, whites too would sink for capital, being essentially colour-blind, would have no need for an alliance with white labour (*ibid*: 153).

votes. Left-wing politicians were tempted to compromise. They concentrated their propaganda on the class war, evaded the colour issue, and when challenged rejected white labour policies as a betrayal of the white workers' interests. The white labour policy, according to Crawford's band of militant socialists, was a 'white Kaffir policy' which would reduce all workers to the African's living standards (Simons 1983: 141).

While the *Voice's* outlook espoused equality between all workers 'irrespective of race, colour or creed', it declared that socialism did not mean 'having tea' with 'Jim Sixpence', and left the impression that segregation and socialism were compatible. The paper declared socialism would keep whites afloat by doing away with racial competition, when black workers would no longer be a cheap labour resource. If capitalism endured, white workers would be overwhelmed by blacks, the *Voice* declared. Crawford suggested blacks free themselves in their own separate parties, and went further to suggest they be segregated in the reserves, 'for their own good', rather than being ruined by city life (*ibid.*: 155).

Another socialist faction, the Socialist Society, objected to the SALP's white labour policy. In 1910 the society criticised the British labour leader, Tom Mann, for not repeating calls made by an earlier visitor, Keir Hardie, who in 1908 called for blacks to be admitted into white unions.⁶

⁶ When Keir Hardie, a leading British trade unionist and socialist, visited the Transvaal in 1908 he received a hostile reception from white workers. They hurled rotten eggs and tomatoes at him for saying unions should recognise 'equal pay for equal work regardless of colour or creed' - surprising, as this exhortation was an SALP demand against cheap contract black labour. In an obituary to Hardie, Andrews wrote in 1915 that on his way from India, he had been wisened to the position of Indian workers in that British colony. Hardie applied the same outlook to blacks in South Africa. Andrews criticised the treatment Hardie and other socialists received from white workers and the press over the race issue. 'Then and now the press vilified him because he dared to demand a measure of justice for all workers irrespective of race or colour. His views on India and the native question were wilfully distorted weeks before his arrival, and the mob incited to ill-treat him' (*International* 1/10/15).

Database of the *International* – 10/9/15 to 5/9/15

A = Number of issue

B = Date of issue

C = Issues concerning anti-militarism.

D = Issues concerning race, black workers and black organisations.

E = Generally negative reportage on trade unions and strike action.

F = Industrial unions and generally positive reports on strike actions.

G = Issues concerning nationalism in general, particularly the National Party,

H = Election issues.

I = Bolshevism and the Russian revolution.

J = Advertisements for the ISL.

K = Advertisements for non-ISL purposes.

L = News and notices concerning ISL branches.

The total copy space in the *International* is 396 col/cm. The figures provided for each edition will not necessarily add up to this figure, as there were empty spaces and items such as poems which were not added into this count. Volume 1 of the *International* is held by the Cory Library, Rhodes University. The State Library holds microfilm copies of Volumes 2, 3 and 4. The Rhodes University library reproduced these for me as A3 hard copies. By comparing the measurements of these with the original (Vol. 1), I was able to make my calculations of Volumes 3 to 4.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	
1	10.09.15	252	0	0	0	0	7	0	15	0	82	
2	17.09.15	246	0	0	0	0	47	0	15	0	3	
3	24.09.15	296	6	0	0	9	4	0	0	0	59	
4	01.10.15	157	24	0	3	0	0	0	14	0	68	
5	08.10.15	248	0	5	0	0	22	0	12	0	32	
6	15.10.15	0	0	0	0	0	286	0	9	0	18	
7	22.10.15	151	0	0	0	0	51	0	28	0	89	
8	29.10.15	127	0	0	0	0	122	0	24	0	65	
9	05.11.15	65	0	0	0	0	12	0	35	6	16	
10	12.11.15	161	0	0	0	0	8	0	0	0	0	Page 4 missing
11	19.11.15	102	2	0	0	0	33	0	44	0	35	
12	26.11.15	93	0	0	0	0	27	0	0	0	45	
13	10.12.15	133	10	0	6	0	16	0	7	0	82	
14	10.12.15	133	10	0	6	0	16	0	7	0	82	
15	17.12.15	85	13	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	79	
16	07.01.16	65	10	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	41	
17	14.01.16	1	18	6	7	0	0	0	47	17	19	
18	21.01.16	84	0	22	77	0	0	0	0	20	19	
19	28.01.16	182	0	0	0	37	0	0	0	21	20	
20	04.02.16	49	0	35	52	0	0	0	0	21	12	

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	
21	11.02.16	87	0	192	0	0	0	0	0	13	10	
22	18.02.16	233	86	0	0	0	0	0	2	5	35	
23	25.02.16	85	5	70	0	0	0	0	2	4	31	
24	03.03.16	172	0	152	27	0	0	0	6	25	17	
25	10.03.16	105	0	31	0	8	0	0	4	12	15	
26	17.03.16	98	22	14	83	0	0	0	2	22	23	
27	24.03.16	120	0	27	0	64	0	0	2	4	38	
28	31.03.16	53	0	49	0	0	0	0	2	4	51	
29	07.04.16	104	88	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	27	
30	14.04.16	220	14	0	26	0	0	0	0	4	53	
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32	28.04.16	89	0	13	0	0	0	0	0	3	51	Page 2 missing
33	05.05.16	0	0	0	0	113	0	0	10	0	50	
34	12.05.16	235	15	30	0	0	0	0	0	3	28	
35	19.05.16	74	42	0	8	0	0	0	0	4	55	
36	26.05.16	133	20	33	0	0	0	0	0	8	56	
37	02.06.16	74	45	41	43	0	0	0	0	0	0	Page 4 missing
38	09.06.16											Missing
39	16.06.16											Missing
40	23.06.16											Missing
41	30.06.16											Missing
42	07.07.16											Missing
43	14.07.16	99	7	0	72	0	0	0	0	15	39	
44	21.07.16	53	54	20	23	0	0	0	14	0	54	
45	28.07.16	99	10	0	8	0	0	0	15	14	41	
46	04.08.16	195	0	45	0	13	0	0	7	11	39	
47	11.08.16	32	0	0	122	0	0	0	7	10	27	
48	18.08.16	174	4	19	0	0	0	0	0	20	80	
49	25.08.16	173	27	0	33	0	0	0	7	3	49	
50	01.09.16	12	3	36	5	0	0	0	0	4	40	
51	08.09.16	63	0	64	97	0	0	0	8	0	50	
52	15.09.16	224	0	41	0	0	0	0	8	0	56	
53	22.09.16	167	9	12	4	0	0	0	0	4	55	
54	29.09.16	30	25	0	24	0	0	0	8	0	35	
55	06.10.16	59	0	0	37	0	0	0	8	0	35	Page 2 missing
56	13.10.16	55	8	8	0	0	0	0	8	3	35	Page 1 missing
57	20.10.16	45	3	3	77	0	37	0	8	8	0	
58	27.10.16	174	0	0	0	0	70	0	0	0	11	
59	03.11.16	89	0	14	0	0	0	0	8	0	35	
60	10.11.16	19	4	0	76	0	31	0	0	0	25	

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	
61	17.11.16	21	0	54	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
62	24.11.16	32	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	7	30	
63	01.12.16	35	87	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	37	
64	08.12.16	146	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	0	37	
65	15.12.16	136	105	0	0	0	0	0	8	8	44	
66	22.12.16	134	0	0	28	0	0	0	0	8	32	
67	12.01.17	12	20	0	0	0	0	0	35	0	37	
68	19.01.17	0	9	48	4	0	126	0	0	12	0	
69	26.01.17	13	70	24	0	0	45	0	0	19	0	
70	02.02.17	0	70	63	5	0	47	0	6	0	35	
71	09.02.17	0	105	0	104	0	0	0	0	11	30	
72	16.02.17	31	20	119	0	0	0	0	0	4	29	
73	23.02.17	107	70	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	31	
74	23.02.17	107	70	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	31	
75	09.03.17	0	77	0	52	0	0	29	0	0	42	
76	16.03.17	0	93	52	39	0	0	0	0	0	65	
77	23.03.17	22	96	81	19	0	0	122	0	3	41	
78	30.03.17	140	0	40	0	0	0	0	19	0	25	
79	06.04.17	0	0	0	70	0	0	35	17	10	35	
80	13.04.17	21	0	66	0	35	0	0	21	0	31	
81	20.04.17	117	46	47	0	0	0	0	15	6	11	
82	27.04.17	270	0	35	70	0	0	0	20	9	12	
83	04.05.17	23	62	0	16	0	26	11	11	9	23	
84	11.05.17	23	62	0	16	0	26	11	11	9	23	
85	18.05.17	64	21	0	17	0	53	55	15	12	51	
86	25.05.17	0	13	60	0	0	0	83	15	5	0	
87	01.06.17	9	0	28	52	0	104	0	27	6	14	
88	08.06.17	117	23	0	0	0	51	0	8	6	0	
89	15.06.17	73	4	0	0	0	34	94	20	6	0	
90	29.06.17	0	104	0	0	0	35	6	16	8	0	1 week non-appearance
91	06.07.17	84	53	9	0	0	0	15	7	22	30	
92	13.07.17	78	0	28	0	100	0	50	0	8	41	
93	20.07.17	28	110	65	0	0	0	0	0	8	0	
94	27.07.17	79	63	48	0	0	0	62	9	8	11	
95	03.08.17	101	43	92	27	0	0	82	9	8	0	
96	10.08.17	152	14	20	11	0	0	0	0	8	19	
97	17.08.17	92	0	0	27	0	0	0	8	8	0	
98	24.08.17	115	46	0	42	0	0	0	13	0	41	
99	31.08.17	90	27	33	0	0	0	86	16	8	0	
100	07.09.17	66	0	165	21	0	0	46	16	8	0	

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L
141	05.07.18	0	167	107	0	0	0	0	0	0	48
142	12.07.18	160	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
143	19.07.18	48	0	79	0	0	0	0	0	0	14
144	26.07.18	0	192	42	0	0	0	0	0	0	20
145	02.08.18	0	188	44	0	0	0	28	0	0	0
146	09.08.18	0	49	214	0	0	0	29	0	0	41
147	16.08.18	0	108	0	0	0	0	18	0	9	24
148	23.08.18	58	0	13	0	0	0	29	0	0	30
149	30.08.18	10	117	0	133	0	0	15	0	0	18
150	06.09.18	0	164	62	118	0	0	48	0	0	0
151	13.09.18	0	127	64	0	0	0	115	0	0	20
152	20.09.18	34	96	37	24	0	0	103	0	0	29
153	04.10.18	34	96	37	24	0	0	103	0	0	29
154	04.10.18	8	137	0	0	0	0	35	0	3	65
155	11.11.18	23	0	9	77	44	0	55	0	3	0
156	18.10.18	111	0	0	36	0	0	151	0	3	14
157	25.10.18	10	50	52	0	0	0	136	0	0	32
158	01.11.18	0	0	27	0	0	59	145	0	0	34
159	08.11.18	0	25	21	0	0	0	156	0	0	32
160	15.11.18	0	86	6	62	9	0	153	7	0	19
161	22.11.18	58	0	0	31	0	0	70	0	0	35
162	29.11.18	222	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	0	53
163	06.12.18	0	4	0	0	0	0	180	0	0	35
164	13.12.18	0	34	23	0	0	0	270	0	5	19
165	21.12.18	0	22	0	0	32	0	128	0	0	22
165a	04.01.19	0	69	16	0	0	15	28	0	0	0
166	10.01.19	0	47	0	0	0	0	38	0	15	20
167	17.01.19	43	8	33	0	0	0	192	0	0	27
168	24.01.19	50	0	0	29	0	0	135	0	0	62
169	31.01.19	47	13	26	0	0	0	155	0	0	28
170	07.02.19	27	34	24	5	0	0	101	0	0	65
171	14.02.19	0	28	35	0	0	0	105	0	0	45
172	21.02.19	0	0	11	13	0	0	156	0	0	33
173	28.02.19	0	9	0	0	37	0	145	0	0	33
174	07.03.19	0	118	0	0	0	0	142	0	0	61
175	14.03.19	0	116	0	0	0	0	52	0	0	29
176	21.03.19	19	24	38	0	0	0	255	0	0	46
177	28.03.19	49	28	7	0	0	0	182	0	4	24
178	04.04.19	8	153	33	0	0	0	55	0	3	29
179	11.04.19	0	59	0	0	0	0	177	0	7	31
180	18.08.19	0	0	0	0	0	0	234	0	0	32

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	
181	25.04.19	73	125	8	19	0	0	236	0	0	44	Special 8-page issue
182	02.05.19	0	124	71	3	0	0	28	0	0	30	
183	09.05.19	38	28	0	0	0	0	33	0	0	23	
184	16.05.19	0	120	86	0	0	0	30	0	0	24	
185	23.05.19	16	0	0	0	0	0	131	0	0	55	
186	30.05.19	31	80	0	0	0	0	97	0	5	22	
187	06.06.19	27	22	19	7	0	0	282	0	3	26	
188	13.06.19	0	98	26	0	0	0	19	0	7	20	
189	20.06.19	9	25	67	0	0	0	33	0	0	23	
190	27.06.19	45	55	6	49	0	0	106	0	0	61	
191	04.07.19	0	45	84	0	0	0	100	0	0	9	
192	11.07.19	9	0	34	0	0	0	54	0	0	34	
193	18.07.19	0	4	0	38	0	0	149	0	0	21	
194	25.07.19	0	68	0	0	0	0	127	0	2	15	
195	01.08.19	53	3	60	0	0	0	173	0	2	26	
196	08.08.19	0	64	0	0	0	0	103	0	2	44	
197	15.08.19	55	0	0	0	0	0	134	0	0	32	
198	22.08.19	0	3	0	0	0	0	155	0	0	67	
199	29.08.19	0	0	33	0	0	0	141	0	0	28	
200	05.09.19	0	4	51	16	0	0	80	0	0	28	
TOTALS		11626	7410	5556	655	739	1410	8862	891	655	5524	

THE INTERNATIONAL

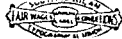
THE ORGAN OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALIST LEAGUE (S.A.)

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No. 177



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PRICE 1d. WEEKLY.

Bolshevik Johannesburg.

WONDERFUL DEMONSTRATION AT THE TOWN HALL.

In two matters our editorial foresight last week was at fault; first in contemplating a Building Strike Settlement, secondly, in anticipating that Wednesday's lecture by Messrs. Lapitzky and Sosnovik on the "Russian Revolution" would contain "something to please and displease everybody." It did indeed only please everybody who got into the densely packed great hall, and so displeased the capitalist class that next morning the "Mail" was quite mûm and the "Star" sulkily brief—completely bewraying the partiality, servility and mendacity of the Yellow Press—in reporting the most remarkable and up-to-date meeting and the greatest Revolutionary Socialist demonstration ever held in Johannesburg; so much so that bleats are now heard for the deportation of these "Bolshevik" lecturers. The occasion was taken at the end to pass with acclamation the following resolution:

That this meeting of citizens of Johannesburg expresses its emphatic disapproval of the action of the British and Allied Capitalist governments in their attempt to crush by military intervention and economic strangulation the working class revolution in Russia, Germany, Austria and elsewhere.

After which the "Red Flag" was sung for the first time, we believe, in that building. Altogether the spontaneous enthusiasm of the vast throng of all classes of hearers—for the audience was in no way gerrymandered or organised, and there had been nothing to indicate whether or not it was to be a pro-Revolution lecture—was an eye-opener to those who alk of an "obscure clique of faddists"; it taught the British workmen present something of what the working-class movement really means, and warned the townspeople at large that the cynure of Johannesburg to-day is not the Capitalist League of Nations but the Socialist Commonwealth.

Of the lecture itself, which held the audience till near midnight, space forbids a detailed report. It gave the impression that the lecturers too had been unstrained by the force of events to abandon an earlier aloofness and acknowledge the grandeur of the task undertaken by the Soviet Government. The ground covered was more or less familiar to many. The horrors of Tsarism, the 1905 Revolution, the war period, the March 1917 revolution, the later Bolshevik revolution which would not be denied, were graphically described; and how Kerensky, having ordered Potzky's arrest, was himself found, the officers sent for the job, in Trotzky's company; how, when the "German old" stories went round, even the Bri-

tish military "Bagdad Times" described Lenin and Co. as "fanatical idealists who even if they took German gold would only use it to supply the German revolutionaries"; how the Allies had refused Russia's appeal even for naval and military instructors to help repudiate Brest-Litovsk—as also Japan's demand for Hamburg as the price of sending troops to Europe—and even Litvinoff's bribe of war debts to be paid and concessions to be granted if they would make peace—thus rallying all parties except the monarchists to the defence of an insulted Fatherland; how one of the secret treaties, between Russia and Japan, bound those two countries to make war in this year 1919 against Great Britain; and so on. The land and housing decrees, published in the "International" of 31st January last; Lenin's "Communist exploitation," published a week earlier; some outlines of the Constitution, as detailed in the recent I.S.L. pamphlet; and many other items known to readers of this paper, were all taken in review; and once the facts had thus been recited, everyone knew that the finale of the lecture must be, as it was, an eloquent benediction of Soviet rule, representing, as even the capitalist press now admits, the aspirations of the masses of Russia's people—even if some "anarchists" and others call it reactionary and bourgeois! "The Revolution is the only salvation of the world from physical, intellectual and moral bankruptcy, it is creating a new world and giving to human life a nobler interpretation, it is the dawn of a new era for all humanity."

Almost every industrial dispute brings with it an attempt on the part of some Union officials to divide the movement.

A "striking" example of this is seen in the Belfast dispute, where the General Secretary of the Municipal Employees' Association proceeded to Belfast to "order" his members back to work. Under the heading, "The Mission that Failed," the "Daily News" of January 29th reports that a number of the strikers, hearing of his mission, met him, locked him up in the Engineers' Hall, and packed him off to England by that night's boat.

Never during Kerensky's regime did the Government feel strong enough to deal firmly with the supporters of the black flag—the "Anarchists." It required the revolutionary, self-discipline methods of the Soviet Government to do that. And it required latter day capitalism to regret it, as Mr. Bruce Lockhart, ex-British Consul at Moscow, did in a recent lecture in London, when he complained that the Bolsheviks had suppressed the Anarchists—evidently the latter are Britain's fancy! (Mr. Lockhart is stated to have made a hurried exit at question time after his lecture.)

The new International.

The Congress of the Russian Communist (Bolshevik) Party has decided to call a first congress of the New International. It is suggested that its underlying principles shall be:—

(1) The present epoch is one of dissolution and of the break-up of the whole capitalist system of the world.

(2) The task of the working-class to-day is immediately to gain government power for the purpose of replacing it by the apparatus of the power of the workers.

(3) This new government apparatus must embody the dictatorship of the working class and in some parts also that of the small peasants and agricultural workers; that is, it must be the instrument for the systematic overthrow of the exploiting classes.

(4) The dictatorship of the proletariat should apply itself to the immediate expropriation of capitalism and the suppression of all private property in the means of production . . . these being transferred to the proletarian State under the Socialist administration of the working class. It should also abolish capitalist agricultural production and assume control over the great commercial establishments.

(5) For the purpose of safeguarding the Socialist revolution it is necessary to proceed with the disarmament of the capitalist class and its agents and with the general arming of the workers.

(6) The fundamental conditions of the struggle are mass action by the workers, including, when necessary, open armed battle against the governmental powers of capitalism. . . .

(8) Against the Socialist patriots who in the most critical moments took sides against the revolution we must carry on a merciless struggle. From the "Centre" we must try to win the revolutionary elements and divide its supporters by a vigorous criticism of its leaders. At a certain phase of development such a policy is absolutely essential.

(9) On the other hand, it is necessary to proceed with a movement en bloc with those elements of the revolutionary proletariat who, though previously not belonging to the Party, now and on the whole adopt the point of view of the dictatorship of the proletariat under the form of the Soviet power. . . .

(10) It is necessary to rally all those proletarian groups and organisations which, whilst they have not actually joined the revolutionary current of the Left, have yet manifested a tendency in that direction.

It is proposed that the congress shall be a permanent organ for the direction of the world revolution.

[The "Journal du Peuple," from which the above is taken, states that the context as received is imperfect, containing many blank spaces. We are, therefore, not responsible for any deficiencies in the text.—Ed.]

Karl Liebknecht.

In August, 1871, Karl Liebknecht was born at Leipzig, the scene of Bebel's activity as a Liberal working-class leader, the place of his conversion by W. Liebknecht, and the cradle of Marxian Socialism in Germany.

Leaving the University of Berlin with the degree of doctor of laws, Karl Liebknecht combined the practice of law with the propaganda of Socialism. International prominence became his when, in October, 1907, he was prosecuted by the Imperial Government for the publication of his now famous "Militarism and Anti-Militarism." He was convicted of treason and sentenced to three years' military imprisonment. In his address to the court he avowed that the aim of his life was the overthrow of the monarchy and the emancipation of the working class from political and economic bondage. "As my father," said he, "who appeared before this court exactly 35 years ago to defend himself against the charge of treason, was ultimately pronounced victor, so I believe the day not far distant when the principles which I represent will be recognised as patriotic, as honourable, and as true."

In justifying the heaviness of the sentence, the court pointed out that Liebknecht advocated the abolition of the standing army. This, said the court, is an integral part of the German Constitution. An attack upon the institution of the army, said the Court, is treason. Furthermore, Liebknecht had declared that he hoped that the troops would aid the workers in the coming revolution. This, said the court, is an attack upon the morale of the army.

"The New Voice of Freedom."

"The new voice of freedom will now be heard in the Reichstag," cried a young worker amid the rejoicing crowd as "Vorwaerts" placarded Karl's return for Potsdam-Spandau in 1912. This prophecy was verified. Invested with the member's immunity from legal proceedings, Liebknecht proceeded to attack armament profiteers, military bribe-eaters, and even the sacrosanct monarchy.

In December, 1914, Liebknecht declared that the war was a war of Imperialist aggression. He voted against the war credits—and was censured by his party. He at once became the hero of the capitalist press in Allied countries, who little knew that he carried his opposition to Imperialism so far as to demand that all waterways should be neutralised, and that Gibraltar, in particular, should be abandoned by England. A military attempt was made to arrest Liebknecht; but, as a member of the Reichstag, he was held to be immune from military arrest. In May, 1916, however, he was arrested at a peace demonstration in Berlin.

"We Prussians," he said there, "have three rights—the right to be soldiers, the right to pay taxes, the right to keep our tongues still."

"The whole world, this belauded civilisation of Europe, is falling in ruins amid the anarchy caused by the world war. Consider well this fact: as long as the Germans do not rise and enforce their will, this murder will go on. Let thousands of voices shout, 'Down with the shameless extermination of the peoples! Down with the authors of these crimes!'"

Trial and Conviction.

The Reichstag, by a two-to-one majority, deprived him of his immunity, all Socialists voting in the minority.

Liebknecht was put on trial. While awaiting it, he had written to the court a letter, a quotation from which will make clear his attitude. "I also oppose the war in the belief that it is the duty of every representative of the working class to take part in the international-class struggle for the purpose of putting an end to it."

He was sentenced to two and a half years' imprisonment. An appeal against the sentence resulted only in an increase of the term to four years. The sentence deprived him of his seat and of his licence to practise law. In gaol he remained (making shoes, "in which," his friends said, "the Prussian Government may learn to stand"), until his release on October, 23, 1918.

The Liberation of Liebknecht.

On that day a vast crowd received him with cheers for the International and the singing of the "Workers' Marseillaise"—an old Socialist song full of memories of the Bismarckist persecution. On October 28 he addressed a meeting of Minority Socialists, declaring that: "The slogan is now 'World revolution or world destruction.' The reply to the appeal for national defence must be a dictatorship of the proletariat, the overthrow of capitalist rule and the establishment of a Socialist republic."—From an article by Maurice Blackburn in the Melbourne "Labour Call."

"Indians and the Red Flag."

"The reaction against authority which manifested itself in many parts of the civilised world was not likely to leave India entirely untouched."

These were the words uttered by the Viceroy at the opening of the Legislative Council at Delhi. There is, no doubt, from the capitalistic point of view, the industrial upheaval in all parts of the world is wantonly interpreted by the capitalists as reaction against authority. It suits them to so designate it, but, to speak the truth, it is war to the knife against the tyranny of capitalism which is a thousand times worse than the atrocities of war. The workers no longer will tolerate conditions that existed during pre-war days, and hence it is the desire to sweep away all that stands in their way to attain that Socialistic State. Call it Bolshevism, call it Anarchism, call it sedition, call it whatever you like; the name, after all, does not count; but what counts is that it is a movement of workers to break loose the fetters of capitalism. Let the workers remember the words of Karl Marx—"The workers have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win." What is this significant warning of the Viceroy? Does he see the great movement flowing out to India? Does he see the millions of oppressed workers marching under the Red Flag on to victory? Yes! he sees signs in India; he can see the servile Indian workers joining hands with the Russian comrades, German comrades, Irish comrades, English comrades, Native comrades and Dutch

comrades, marching joyfully to their goal. That is the fear, the pang of which are greater than the losses in war, goading him on to suppress this movement in India. Can he stop it? No! he may shoot a few, gaol them, but can he confine their ideas to the dungeons? Once the flame is set in India, then the seething masses will have the scales removed from their eyes and the Red Flag will be planted. Why did Japan withdraw her army in feverish haste from Russia? Were they afraid of the Russians as warriors? No! That was not the reason; it was because Bolshevism was making headway by leaps and bounds amongst her troops. Can India stand out of the great drama? No; she has her role to play, and she will play it when her time comes. Whether it is a warning from the Viceroy or a Rajah, they can never stop the tide from coming in.

Indian workers in South Africa, will you join the Great World Movement? That is the question which, though it may be delayed in answering, must, sooner or later, be answered in the affirmative.—"Indian Worker" in "Indian Opinion" (Durban), 7th March, 1919.

All Roads lead to Revolution.

Capitalism has come to the cross where all roads lead to revolution.

Allied capitalism continued the war as long as it could because war had become the world market, and it kept out an important competitor from the world's unexploited areas.

The war however ended by an accident unforeseen by the Allies—the "accident" of the German revolution; and the double danger menaced "us" of losing our chief market, war, as well as of allowing Germany to enter the already attenuated world market.

Nothing for it then but to keep up the blockade of Germany and throttle her industries by famine and a ring fence against raw materials.

Result: The rise of Bolshevism, menacing the very next door of the Allies. All appeals by the German bourgeoisie to dish the Soviet movement by allowing in food and encouraging employment were met by their Allied brothers with a knowing wink. Being sharpers themselves they weren't going to be taken in by any confidence tricks. It was the cry of "wolf" heard many times before.

But now the "wolf" of Bolshevism has really come, and the Allies are hastening to lift the blockade to give German bourgeoisdom a chance to restore industry and combat Bolshevism.

That means allowing the hated competitor into the market again, with a wry face. We have talked a lot about capital being international, but the revolution is hastened by the fact that the various national bourgeoisies are not conscious of their identity of interest until it is too late. Their internecine wrangle is socialism's opportunity, and now the only alternatives left to them are to hang together or hang separately.

D.I.J.

New World Terror.

The National Civil Liberties Bureau of New York has had reports of some 753 cases under federal, state and local laws (anti-sedition, etc.), and estimates that more than 1,500 people are now in gaol, or under sentence, or awaiting trial under these laws.

One case, characteristic of many, is that of a school teacher, Mrs. Flora I. Foreman, of Amarillo, Texas. A soldier was interested in a girl who failed to return his interest, saying that she was "no militarist." He wanted to know who had given her such ideas, and when he found that Mrs. Foreman had talked with her about militarism he had the teacher arrested. She was charged with refusing to contribute to the Red Cross, and with referring to President Wilson as "the school teacher in the White House." She was sentenced to five years in prison.

Another case which illustrates the uses to which the war-time legislation easily lends itself is the arrest, ten days before the election, of Frank B. Hamilton, the Socialist mayor of Piqua, O., together with a city official, a councilman and three others, all Socialists. The charge, "obstructing the Liberty Loan," was based on statements made by spies in the pay of the "old gang" in the city council. The defendants are held under 10,000 dollars bond, awaiting trial.

The armistice has not served to soften the execution of the Espionage Act. Within the last few weeks, in Auburn, N.Y., John Summerfield Randolph, a lineal descendant of one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, was sentenced to ten years in prison for "cursing the government," and being a member of the I.W.W.

The Chicago I.W.W. trial has been only one of a number of persecutions in which the Espionage Act is being used in the attempt to stamp out this organisation. In Wichita, Kan., thirty-four I.W.W. men who tried to organise the workers in the Kansas oil-fields were gaolled at instigation of Oil Trust officials in November, 1917, not indicted until last March, reindicted in September, and were not to be tried until this March. In the meantime, one has died as a result of conditions in the gaol, another has become insane, and two more are dying. The cells are unheated, unventilated, in total darkness except for a few seconds twice a day when food is shoved in.

In Sacramento, four out of sixty-seven imprisoned I.W.W. men have died in gaol. They stand accused of conspiring against all the war measures passed by Congress from the declaration of war on. Among the overt acts charged are included telegrams to public officials protesting against gaol conditions, and the receipt of letters from I.W.W. prisoners in the Cook county gaol; also circulating an article reprinted from the "Public" in other parts of the country some hundred and fifty I.W.W. members are being held awaiting trial.

But, even if it were true that the I.W.W. ideal of society constituted a hindrance to war-operations; even if it were true that the hundred I.W.W.'s who were tried in Chicago had opposed the draft; now that the war is over, must they remain in prison until 1928?

And Kate Richards O'Hare, who said that militarism turned women into breeding animals—is she to go to prison for five years? Is Rose Pastor Stokes to serve ten years for criticising the government in a letter to a newspaper? And Kraft in New Jersey and Bentall in Wisconsin, Socialists who made speeches on conscription—are they to serve out their five years? And what of all those others of whom we have barely heard—the Vermont preacher who got fifteen years for saying that a Christian ought not to fight; the man in Iowa who got twenty years for calling this a capitalist war; and the other man in the same state who got the same sentence for circulating a petition opposing the re-election of a congressman because he had voted for the draft; the girl in Seattle who got ten years for a letter criticising the draft; the man in Vermont who got fifteen years for "disloyal remarks" made in private conversation; all those hundreds whose sentences total some 120,000 years, and those other hundreds still to be sentenced?

In the United States a capitalistic government is making the working-class behave and we call that "Maintaining Law and Order." In Russia a working-class government is making the capitalists behave and we call that a "Reign of Terror." That is the truth for those who have the will to know it. In America Tom Mooney has been sent to gaol for life after a commission of impartial investigators appointed by the President declared that he was unjustly condemned. And on almost the same day the murderers and kidnappers of the copper trust, who shot up and deported 1,500 working men from Bisbee, Arizona, and dumped them into the desert, have been set free for life, after an impartial commission appointed by the President practically declared that they were guilty.

In Russia the agents of the Com. Trust who are guilty but capitalists would be punished, and Tom Mooney who is innocent but a working man would go free.—The "Liberator."

Revolution and Evolution.

The apologists for the present system of society are more active at present than at any previous period. All the machinery at the disposal of the possessing class is working at full pressure in order still further to dope the workers with the many good things in store for them if they will only be reasonable and not listen to agitators, more especially of the International Socialist type.

These apologists, ably assisted by Labour leaders, are telling the workers in all industrial centres, South Africa included, to "play the game"—"to be sports"—that "the employers have placed all their cards on the table"—the war "has developed a new type of employer"—"we have entered upon a new phase of evolution," etc. By way of joint boards, we are to infer, the workers will become partners in the industries and eventually control them when the capitalists become incapable owing to dotage. A step by step process, based upon either ignorance of the fundamentals at the basis of society, or deliberate distortion on the part of these apologists and their henchmen, the labour leaders.

These weird schemes for making a better world for the workers take no stock of the basis of economic evolution, the ever-changing and improved tools of production to meet the material needs. The tools and methods of production were at the beginning of a given phase of social life in harmony, but as the tools evolved the social life, the superstructure became obsolete, out of harmony with the new economic basis, the new method of production, further progress thus becoming impossible. The old social order had to be overthrown and a new social order more in accordance with the new method of production had to be installed. A revolution was necessary, a revolution took place and harmonised the social superstructure with the economic basis.

Such is the lesson we get from the past; one social system overthrown by revolution and giving place to another. Tribal communism gave place to the slave state, which again gave place to feudalism and serfdom, to be followed by our present capitalism and wage slavery.

The historic mission of capitalism has been accomplished. It has perfected machine production, herded the workers into large centres, opened the world's markets, and created the contradiction of social production versus private ownership.

To prate of harmonising the interests of capital and labour by such claptrap as is used by these reformers is to ignore all the lessons of the past. It is to ignore the economic basis of society, and to be blind to the futility of such misleading tactics: as is evidenced by the upheavals in all industrial centres, where the workers' demands are met with the retort "thus far and no further." We cannot grant any wage concession. We have reached the economic limit.

This economic limit being admitted there is nothing for the worker to do but to organise to take control. Both politically and industrially the capitalist class is the ruling class. The working class have reached the cross roads. Either they must be content to allow their status to be still further reduced to allow the present system to continue, or they must organise industrially with the avowed object of taking over the industries, capturing the political State and harmonising the contradiction of social production for private ownership by inaugurating the Socialist Commonwealth.

J.M.G.

SILVERTON.

The interview with Mr. C. Maggs, the owner of Silvertown tannery and boot works, resulted in an absolute refusal by him to consider the advance of wages asked by the employees. He at once locked out the boot workers in order to intimidate the other workers and smash the infant union. Unfortunately the local Federation officials decline to support a strike on the ground we understand that they have enough to do to keep the men in the building trade strike going; also they have more than even the Johannesburg white workers' horror of associating with coloured people. The pity of it all! Whilst the workers quibble over questions of colour and craft the capitalist laughs and waxes fat.

An Appeal to the World.

By MAXIM GORKY.

The war is finished, German imperialism is vanquished, and is forced to submit to the heavy punishment of its policy of brigandage. The German proletariat, tortured by war, exhausted by hunger, is obliged to pay dear for having submitted to the policy of its governing class. The victors, who but yesterday declared to the world that they caused the ruin of millions of human beings to gain a victory for universal right and happiness, now force the German people to submit to an armistice ten times more harsh than the treaty of Brest-Litovsk—an armistice which menaces Germany with inevitable famine. Each day that passes the cynicism of the imperialists' inhuman policy becomes more evident, and increasingly threatens the people of Europe with new wars and new massacres. President Wilson, but yesterday the eloquent defender of the liberty of peoples and the rights of democracy, equips a powerful army "for the restoration of order" in revolutionary Russia, where the people already enjoy sovereign rights, where they have taken power into their own hands, and where they are endeavouring, as far as they can, to lay the foundation of a new State edifice. I have no wish to deny that this constructive work has often been accompanied by useless destruction. But the creative cultural work of the popular Russian Government, working under most difficult conditions, and at the price of heroic effort, is assuming a scope and form hitherto unknown in the history of humanity. Lately I was an adversary of the Government, and I still disagree with it regarding its methods of work. But I know that future historians, when estimating the value of the work accomplished by the Russian workers in the course of one year, will not fail to admire the magnificence of their creative work in the domain of culture.

Yes, it is true that side by side with this work, which is of world importance, great faults were committed, some unnecessary hardships were caused, but of what importance are these mistakes and hardships when compared with the frightful crime of the war, provoked by the clash of German and English Imperialism? Was it not just this war which aroused "the animal" in all European countries and in the hearts of nations? Was it not this war which killed the conscience of men—as yet so feebly developed—and the slowly growing knowledge of the worth of life and true respect for work?

Is it in the name of a deficiency of culture in revolutionary Russia, is it in the name of the offences committed by the Russian revolution against humanity, is it in the name of a want of generosity by the Russian workers towards their class enemies—is it in the name of all this that the Imperialists of Europe and America are going to attack Revolutionary Russia? No, the position is not so complex, it is not as idealistic as the writers of the Imperialist journals of England, France, America and Japan would have us believe. It is much more simple. The Imperialists of the three continents are trying to create and to consolidate conditions and political institutions that will assure to them power over the will of the peoples. Thanks to the conditions whereby an insignificant minority can decide, without control, on the life and death of the majority, it is the minority which has

led this insensate and bloody butchery. It would seem that all feeling and honest men throughout the world should now comprehend with perfect clarity the depth of gloom, the cruelties, the egoisms, hypocrisy and stupidity which rivet the foundations of the capitalist structure of the world. It would seem time that all thinking and honest men should take cognisance of the fact that capitalism has lost its creative faculty, is an ugly relic of the past and an obstacle to the development of the world's culture, that it incites enmity and hatred between individuals, families, classes, and nations, and that the noble dream of fraternity amongst peoples cannot achieve reality. I do not deny the services rendered by capital to the labouring part of humanity, or that within the skin and blood of this social system it has created the preliminary conditions for a transition to new forms, a more complete, more just life of the community—for the transition to Socialism. But now sentence of death on capitalism is pronounced because this war has thrown the light of day on the incapacity, the want of humanity, the cruelties of the old system, the stupidity and rottenness of which has been demonstrated to all.

We Russians are a people quite justly considered as backward; a people without traditions, and on that account more daring and rebellious, not chained to the past; we are the first resolutely to clear for ourselves the path leading to the destruction of the capitalist State. We are convinced that in this memorable work we can appeal for the sympathy and active support of the labouring classes of the world, and to all who before the war severely and justly criticised the social conditions under which the peoples lived. If these criticisms had a real meaning, then all honest men in Europe and America must recognise our right to direct our lives in our own way. If any part of the intellectual working class is really interested in the solution of the great social question, they must set themselves boldly against those who try to re-establish the old order of things, against those who wish to drown the Russian Revolution in streams of Russian blood, and who hope to subjugate and pillage Russia just as, before the war, they pillaged Turkey and China, and as they now prepare to pillage Germany. This is the real desire of Imperialism—this, its sacred mission. The leader of the campaign against Russia is Woodrow Wilson. Vladimir Lenin holds the torch of the Russian Revolution firmly in his hands, and it sheds its light over all the world. The proletariat and the intellectual workers must choose and decide between the defenders of the old order, the representatives of the system of government by the minority over the majority, the old system without a future and the destroyer of all culture, and the foremost initiator of the new ideals and social sentiments who personifies for all workers the ideas of happiness, of free work, and the fraternity of peoples.

Come and march forward with us towards a new life for the birth of which we work without a thought for ourselves, sparing neither men nor things. In our wanderings and our sufferings, in the great joy of our labour, and in the passionate hope of our progress, we leave all our acts to the honest judgment of history. Come with us in our fight against the old order, in our work for the creation of a new order. Forward for liberty and the splendour of life!

League Notes.

The May Day General Committee will meet this Sunday, the 30th, at the Palmerston Hall, at 10.30 a.m. Business: Reports of sub-committees and other important matters. All comrades are invited to attend and lend a hand.

BENONI BRANCH.

Comrade I. Kessler will speak in Yiddish at the Balcony Tea-rooms on Sunday next.

JOHANNESBURG BRANCH.

Open air meetings, all at 7.30 p.m. To-morrow: Fordsburg Market Sq.—Speakers: L. A. Shoul, E. J. Stewart, T. P. Tinker.

To-morrow: Cr. Maddison and Marshall Sts., Jeppes.—Speakers: H. Barendregt, C. Dones and I. Kessler.

This Sunday, March 30th: Town Hall (West End).—E. H. Becker, R. Rodger, W. H. Andrews.

Saturday, April 5: Fordsburg: W. J. C. Gibson, H. Barendregt, I. Kessler.

Saturday, April 5: Jeppes: W. Reid, T. P. Tinker, S. Ward.

Sunday, April 6: Town Hall: T. P. Tinker, C. Dones, C. B. Tyler.

Study Class: Friday evenings at Palmerston Hall.

JEWISH-SPEAKING BRANCH.

Open air meeting this Sunday, the 30th, at 9.30 a.m., corner Commissioner and Ferreira Sts. Speakers (in Yiddish): I. Kessler, I. Jaffe, I. Israelstam and J. J. Hornstein.

A lecture will be given by Mr. Pinus on April 7, at 8 p.m., at the Palmerston Hall on "Socialism as a cure for human ambition." All comrades and friends invited.

On April 9th, a Social will be held in Professor West's Hall, Pritchard St. (not at Palmerston Hall as advertised last week). Tickets can be obtained at the hall, of Comrade I. Kessler and at Neppes's Buildings, 54, Fox St.

PRETORIA BRANCH.

March 30th, open air meeting at 8 p.m. on Church Square.

"Liberty will not condescend to a people; a people must raise themselves to liberty."—Colton.

NOTICE.

To whom it may concern, that the undersigned, having disposed of his interest in the firm of SKINNER and WRIGHT, Cycle and Motor Engineers, is no longer connected with that firm as from the 13th March.

(Signed) R. SKINNER.

3-2.

This paper will be posted for four weeks only (a) to subscribers whose subscriptions have expired, from date of expiry; (b) to persons recommended as likely subscribers.

To ensure receipt of paper thereafter, Postal Order for 6s., being one year's subscription post free, must be sent during the four weeks to the "International," Box 4179, Johannesburg.

The white labour policy

The local significations which constituted racial prejudice evolved in the slavery practices of the pre-industrial Cape Colony. After emancipation, the signification of 'blacks' continued to denote 'slave-kind', and hence inferiority. The binary oppositions of white/black, landowner/labourer, free/slave came to correspond with a skilled/unskilled division in the industrial labour force.¹ The influx of immigrant artisans did not weaken this distinction, in terms of which the higher wages white workers earned in relation to blacks.

These relations were not improved by the influx of foreign artisans, whose skills were needed for deep-level mining.² A distinction emerged whereby the higher wages white workers earned compared to black workers' rates of pay was seen as entirely natural, and in accordance with their status.³ The

¹ The classification system racialism in South Africa drew on was essentially somatic, but corresponded with a feudal distinction between land owners and their labourers, or slaves (Freund 1976: 62). Giliomee traces the genesis of this system to the period of the Dutch East India Company when slaves were imported to the Cape, and social stratification was determined by racial slavery. Calvinist religious attitudes on the frontier differentiated between Christian and heathen (kaffir). Being white became synonymous with being Christian, while being heathen was identified with being black (Giliomee 1983: 18-29). Due to their heathen status, only blacks could be enslaved. The divide between the free and the enslaved corresponded with being white or black. After the colonial government abolished slavery through Ordinance 50 in 1828, the status of emancipated slaves reverted to racial status, 'when possession of a black skin had become identified with servitude' (Bradlow 1985: 56).

The post-emancipation Cape was a poor pre-industrial colony where the division between propertied and unpropertied classes generally corresponded with race. While the labour supply before emancipation could be controlled through the mechanism of ownership of slaves, after emancipation farmers had to compete among themselves for labourers, who generally refused to work for farmers who had treated them inhumanely. So antagonism existed between a land-owning (capitalist) class needing labour, and a class of labourers who were able to bargain with their labour power (*ibid*: 49, 56).

Employers saw the quality of their workforce in terms of purported racial characteristics. Consequently, low productivity on the farms was attributed not to inefficient farming methods, but to the poor quality of particular races. Khoi or coloured workers, the 'lower ranks of life', were 'addicted to lazy indolence', drank too much and were insolent. 'Keep brandy from a Hottentot and he is an obedient man, give it to him and he becomes saucy and worthless' (Bradlow 1985: 57-58; Bradlow 1986: 66).

² Until 1913, Australian immigrants in particular played a dominant role in the trade unions, which fought against the black encroachment on white jobs, and pushed for protective measures for white workers.

³ The ratio of white to African labour in the 1890's was 1:7, and 1:9 just after the Anglo-Boer War. In 1886 skilled mechanics and engine drivers were paid six pounds to eight pounds per week, while white mine overseers received four pounds to five pounds per week. African unskilled workers in 1886 earned 8s 6d per week with food and 12s 6d to 15s without (Katz 1976: 14; Johnstone 1976: 51, 56).

International's writers often pointed out that this status was an illusion as both shared a common class position.

The combination of local custom, capital's need for cheap exploitable labour, and the status of immigrant (and local) white workers was manifested in a range of discriminatory labour practices. And the existence of similar racial discriminatory legislation in Australia, particularly after the Australian Labour Party's resolved at its Third Inter-State Congress in Melbourne in 1905, to 'keep Australia white'.⁴ This spurred on a growing local concern for South Africa to be kept a 'white man's country' (Bozzoli 1981: 52-54, 288; Katz 1976: 1-4, 18-20; Roe 1971: 656-678; Welsh 1976: 226, 336, 376; Yudelman 1984: 14, 34).

In South Africa after the Boer War, when large numbers of unemployed and unskilled whites migrated to the Rand, the Australian policy appeared suitably applicable (Katz 1976: 17-18).⁵ An unofficial white labour policy whereby all jobs in the mining industry were to be filled by white workers was actively pursued by a mine manager, Frederick Creswell.⁶

⁴ The policy was inspired by the programme of the parliamentary committees of the trades and labour councils of the states of Australia between 1890 and 1900, to restrict mostly Asian labour from emigrating to Australia. At a Sunday night meeting held by the ISL after May Day in 1916, a visitor spoke about the 'labour question' in Australia. Tracing the progress of the political movement there, he dealt 'in a masterly manner with the failure and mistakes of the official party and showed in a most interesting and analytical manner how that party was bound to be jingoistic and sycophantic. One could see the similarity to our own 'Labour Party' (*International* 5/5/16).

⁵ While in Australia, unskilled mineworkers unsuited for deep level mining could turn to farm labour, few similar opportunities existed in South Africa. Nor did the costly programme of reconstructing the Transvaal after 1902 provide for returning tenant farmers to the land. White job-seekers also found very few employment opportunities in the fledgling manufacturing industries on the Rand (Doxey 1961: 13, 36, 65-68, 72-78; Katz 1976: 5; Davies 1979: 53).

⁶ Creswell was instrumental in causing the split in 1915 between the International Socialist League and the Labour Party. As a mining engineer, he had had wide experience in mining in Europe and Australia before coming to South Africa. He was appointed as manager of Durban Deep Mine in 1893. In 1898 he first employed unskilled whites to do shovelling work - previously done only by black workers. In 1902 he was appointed general manager of the larger Village Reef Mine where, with the cautious approval of his superiors, he continued to employ unskilled white labour in unskilled jobs, at higher rates of pay. This scheme was entertained by the TCM and the Milner administration for a while owing to the threat of social unrest caused by the growing number of unemployed whites on the Rand from 1902 onwards. Also, the disruptions caused by the war put black labour in short supply. From the point of view of white labour, the move appeared to solve the problem of job security posed by black labour. But the TCM eventually rejected the scheme in February 1903 as uneconomical and unnecessary since the supply of black labour was improving (Davies 1979: 62-63; Johnstone 1976: 83-84; Simons 1983: 87; Bozzoli 1981: 99-100; Katz 1976: 17-20, 22-27, 79-81, 84; Walker & Weinbren 1961: 509-510; Davenport 1987: 357; Yudelman 1984: 63-64).

His intentions were not only to employ more whites, but to alter the employment ratio more in favour of white labour. However, he took his plans further than even skilled white workers could tolerate by allowing unskilled whites to do skilled work with little or no training. On 25 September 1902, skilled miners went on strike. As a result, the unskilled whites were returned to unskilled work, but were not permitted to work side by side with black workers. Creswell said this would 'demoralise' them (Johnstone 1976: 62-63, 82-84; Simons 1983: 87).

When Creswell headed the government-appointed Transvaal Mining Industry Commission in 1908,⁷ to investigate ways of employing more whites on the mines, he recommended his 1902 white labour experiments. This was turned down, but was later to form the basis of the South African Labour Party's segregation policy (Yudelman 1984: 64-65, 71).

⁷ Mine managers testified before the Mining Industry Commission that there was nothing inherent in black workers that disabled them from performing jobs seen as 'white man's work'. Even so, artisans urged both this commission and the Mining Regulations Commission in 1907-10, which strongly favoured racial discrimination in the mining industry, to extend the colour bar to prevent black workers from operating any kind of machinery, and the extension of compulsory certification to operators of all engines and machinery, on the distinct understanding that the recipients of such certificates should be white workers only. The commission's insistence that only whites be permitted to obtain blasting certificates, and that certain jobs be restricted to whites only, was taken into account in the 1911 Mining Regulations (Katz 1976: 141, 144-145; Simons 1980: 78, 89; Allen 1992: 201-02). The Amalgamated Society of Engineers chairman, Bill Andrews, suggested to the Mining Regulations Commission in 1910 that black workers develop in agricultural skills, or remain in very menial unskilled jobs only. Management often made great capital out of the fact that the job colour bars were unjust and a great grievance among black workers. But any philanthropic sentiments expressed by management hid the fact that by eliminating the bars, the companies stood to make greater profits, even if this meant paying marginally higher wages to an already exploited black labour force and eliminating the costly white labour force altogether. Relaxing the job colour bars from about 1910 onwards appeared expedient to contain unrest among black workers. However, profitability was always of more concern to the companies than striking an equitable and just relationship with its work force. The companies only favoured colour bars of any sort when they favoured their profit motive. They therefore decried the job colour bars but did nothing about the exploitation colour bars which posed a far greater injustice to black workers, and threatened, by securing a cheap and exploitable labour force, to undercut the higher wage rates of white workers (Johnstone 1976: 77-79, 80, 86, 93).

Strike action

The government and the mine owners considered white workers' strikes a catalyst for black unrest (Allen 1992: 272). Whenever police and troops were occupied with white strikes, black protests come to the fore. 'In this sense, every white miners' strike was favourable for black protests, whenever the white strike concerned issues which also affected black workers' (*ibid.*: 269).

The 1907 white miners' strike was sparked by the recurring theme of job insecurity.¹ The significant political event that year was the granting of responsible government, when Smuts' Het Volk party came to power.² The party, thought by mining management to be well disposed towards white labour (Yudelman 1984: 71), voiced concerns about the high unemployment rate among urbanis Afrikaners, and considered the option of replacing immigrants with them (*ibid.*: 66-69). The Transvaal Chamber of Mines' (TCM) Lionel Phillips thought Afrikaners might be less militant than the immigrants, and their unskilled status would weaken their bargaining power.³

Ironically, it was a white miner's strike a month later that effected the replacement of immigrants. On 30 April 1907, the *Rand Daily Mail* announced an imminent cut in wages for white supervised rock-drillers on Knights Deep

¹ Management had its own suggestions on how white workers could maintain their position. After the 1907 strike, the *South African Mining Journal* of 11 May 1907 said 'to remain an overseer, drawing the higher wages of an overseer, he must forego the reactionary socialistic bar-room theories of the labourer who thinks that his mission is to obstruct industry, not to aid it' (Quoted in Katz 1976: 145-146).

² The victory in Britain of the Liberal Party in 1906 made Responsible Government possible. The Liberal government also demanded the repatriation of indentured Chinese labourers on the mines, heightening the Transvaal Chamber of Mines' concerns about the wage costs of replacement labour.

³ A more feasible way of employing more white Afrikaners at a lower wage was by creating an intermediate class, a step Phillips suggested, saying that most whites underground had not served a proper apprenticeship and would more rightly belong to such a class. Phillips hoped the semi-skilled whites would work for half the wages of the skilled class and be comprised of Afrikaners, backed by the government. In May 1907, Smuts considered expatriating Cornish miners and substituting them with Afrikaners. Prime Minister Louis Botha had even mooted the idea of expatriating all unemployed British from the Transvaal. On 4 May 1908 Phillips rejected this idea (Yudelman 1984: 66-69).

mine. Also, white miners would supervise three instead of two machines.⁴ On 1 May white miners downed tools.⁵ Open appeals were made to unemployed Afrikaners to come forward as strike breakers. Regulations were bent to allow them to do certified work.⁶ On 22 May strikers attacked these scabs. The British Second Dragoon Guards was sent in against the strikers the next day (Yudelman 1984: 70, 73-74; Walker & Weinbren 1961: 24).

As the strikers drifted back to work, a lockout was declared and they were dismissed. On 6 June a deputation asked Prime Minister Louis Botha for a court of arbitration, which he refused.⁷ The mining houses continued to take on strikebreakers, and refused to negotiate. The strike was called off on 28 July. Management followed by cutting wages and the numbers of white workers by 10 per cent. The average working costs per ton milled fell by 25 per cent. The percentage of South African-born whites on the mines increased from 17.5 per cent to 24.6 per cent (an increase of 1250 men). However, the numbers soon declined, with Afrikaners blaming the 'clannishness' of the British miners (Walker & Weinbren 1961: 24; Yudelman 1984: 75).⁸

The strike politicised white labour, and the Transvaal Miner's Association grew from 300 members in May to 4000 in September 1907 (Yudelman 1984:

⁴ When a similar move was attempted at Village Main Reef Mine in 1903 it caused a strike.

⁵ 'As the strike continued to grow, Phillips turned his efforts increasingly to recruiting the repressive power of the state to squash it.' The strike was to be broken by force, not negotiation. The Transvaal Miners' Association had only 300 members at the time of the strike. Government mining figures claimed 4171 men were on strike on 25 May 1907.

⁶ The TMA in 1907 set about making blasting certificate for whites a little more difficult to earn. The law already barred blacks from earning the certificates. But by 1913 several mining engineers explained white miner inefficiency to the fact that they had no competition from blacks. 'Safeguarded by the colour bar, the TMA was prepared to lower its standards, and contrary to past requests, asked that a white miner be permitted to receive his blasting certificate after a mere nine months' training (Katz 1974: 151).

⁷ The miners complained more about the increased supervision than the wage cuts in their deputation to the Minister of Mines, J. de Villiers, who promised to invoke a commission of inquiry into mining regulations. The TCM refused offers of mediation in the strike, believing that, as in other strikes in Britain where the state squashed them, the same would happen in the Transvaal. Conditions were not right for arbitration, it was said. And when Smuts took the point, he was lauded by Phillips to have 'a particularly incisive mind, and catches hold of a point in a second' (Quoted in Yudelman 1984: 73).

⁸ To improve the calibre of locally-trained miners, the government established a mining school on the Wolhuter Mine in 1908, but many left the school because of their aversion to doing 'Kaffir work'. Others were rightfully afraid of contracting phthisis (Katz 1976: 349).

76, 102). Faced with growing white militancy, the government realised that structures were needed to deal with organised white labour administratively, rather than by coercion (*ibid.*: 84). The period from 1907 to 1913, therefore, saw a marked increase in state intervention in the economy. The 1909 Transvaal Industrial Disputes Prevention Act, in response to the 1907 strike, made striking illegal until an appointed board had reported on the dispute in question. But the Act did not recognise trade unions (*ibid.*: 84, 87, 93-94). Nor did the Mines and Works Act of 1911 (a response to white workers' demands), which enabled the governor-general to promulgate mining regulations, including which jobs required certificates of competency (Allen 1992: 201-02; Yudelman 1984: 144).⁹

While the Act itself did not legislate colour bars, the 1911 Regulations, attached to the Act, reserved 22 more jobs for whites only in the Transvaal and Free State. The Chamber resented this extension of the colour bars, and made no secret of its wish to have the regulations revoked.¹⁰ It wanted competency and not colour to determine who did what jobs (Johnstone 1979: 98-103, 136, 448; Katz 1976: 150, 348; Yudelman 1984: 88-89).

Separate legislation applied to black mine workers. The 1911 Native Labour Regulation Act consolidated regulations in force since the formation of the Government Native Labour Bureau in 1907, making black workers cheaper to recruit. The Act also made the negotiation of African labour grievances the responsibility of labour inspectors. The mine owners approved of this Act as it made black labour easier to exploit (Yudelman 1984: 87; Davenport 1987: 263). The only significant objection to the Bill came from Labour Party MPs, who

⁹ Other acts addressing the grievances of white workers were the Workmen's Compensation Act of 1914, the Miners' Phthisis Act of 1911, and the Workmens' Wages Protection Act of 1914.

¹⁰ Before the 1913 strike the TCM was advised to have the regulations applying to banksmen and onsetters tested in court, as there was a strong possibility they would be declared ultra vires. In 1913 the TCM declared white labour was inefficient, and that its standard was deteriorating rapidly, and was anxious to employ more blacks in semi- skilled jobs (Katz 1976: 348).

pointed out that a more exploitable black contract labour force would threaten the bargaining power of white workers.¹¹

The 1907 strike was caused partly by an attempt to get white miners to supervise more than two drilling machines. By 1913 they were supervising up to ten, and job fragmentation had proceeded apace. Poorly-trained Afrikaners in particular were satisfied to be mere supervisors, but trade unionists continued to wrangle with management over job certification (Katz 1974: 146, 151; Walker & Weinbren 1961: 22-23, 32-33). Nevertheless, the main grievance in 1913 was over trade union recognition (Yudelman 1984: 93). A wave of opposition to the provisions of the Act spread, and miners believed that unless the Act was revised they had no alternative but to strike.¹²

¹¹ SALP MP Frederick Creswell opposed the passing of the Native Labour Regulation Act of 1911 because it entrenched the 'slave-status' of black workers, who could therefore be used more readily to undermine white labour (Webster 1974: 86-88). In debates on the Mines and Works Act Creswell said the SALP advocated 'equal pay for equal work' against the mine owners' policy of hiring labour at the lowest possible rates. But the party made no attempt to organise black and coloured workers behind their slogan. Instead they acted to keep them out of 'white jobs' wherever possible. Creswell said Coloureds were only being given work on the mines to replace whites (Simons 1980: 174-175). During the same debates he said he was against the colour bars because they instilled a false sense of security in white workers. The colour bars did little to protect white skilled jobs against black encroachment, and left whites barely protected in unskilled and semi-skilled work. In these categories the Labour Party called for workers of any race to compete at the same 'white' rate of pay, rather than to have cheap contract labour employed in these jobs. He was confident that given the choice between a black and white worker at equal rates of pay, convention would favour the white applicant. This way all whites would be employed, with the remaining jobs going to blacks. But no equality was envisaged between blacks and whites. The SALP's 1912 conference adopted a segregation policy for Africans, first proposed in 1910. Calling for no franchise and no leasing or owning of land in white areas, black workers in towns were to be replaced by whites. Creswell told parliament in 1913, during the debate on the Land Act, that the SALP was at the forefront in advocating segregation, and wanted blacks catered for by parallel institutions in the reserves (*ibid*: 174-75, 162).

¹² The Minister of Mines, FS Malan, was aware of the shortcomings of the Act, but let them be during the 1913 parliamentary session (Yudelman 1984: 94). Mine owners were also under pressure to keep costs down and productivity up. The better grade ore became progressively mined out on the central Witwatersrand. To fight the cost crisis, the employers pushed for increased productivity, which improved partly through the accelerated fragmentation of skilled jobs (Katz 1976: 93, 347). During 1912 and at the beginning of 1913 unemployment of white workers had become a rule rather than an exception, and was attributed in October 1912 to a steady retrenchment policy of employers. By 1913 the fragile job security of whites was strongly challenged by the steady advancement of blacks in semi-skilled and even skilled jobs. Retrenchment, unemployment and fear of all-round wage reductions fomented discontent and hostility directed to all employers on a scale unknown on the Reef before (Katz 1976: 356, 358; Yudelman 1984: 53-54, 71).

The breaking point came in May 1913, when the New Kleinfontein Mine manager instructed five mechanics to work an extra three hours on Saturdays. They refused, downed tools, and were dismissed and replaced with black workers. This led to a strike for the recognition of the Transvaal Federation of Trades, for an eight hour working day, and the reinstatement of the dismissed mechanics (Simons 1980: 156; Davenport 1987: 268). By the end of June 18 000 miners on 63 mines were on strike. On 4 July, the same day the Federation of Trades called a general strike, Smuts declared martial law. In two days more than 100 strikers and onlookers were shot dead by troops, causing a public outcry. Rioting followed, and the *Star's* offices were burned down on 5 July for allegedly having given the strikers a bad press (the TCM was a major shareholder). Under pressure from the mining companies, Smuts capitulated and negotiated a settlement with strike leaders. At the settlement, the Transvaal Federation of Trade Unions presented its demands in a document, *The Workers' Charter*, which concerned mainly trade union recognition (Katz 1974: 127).¹³ After the settlement, the black miners struck for a wage increase from two shillings and three pence to five shillings a day. Troops assisted by white miners drove them down the mine at bayonet point. There was no public outcry (Cope 1943: 142).

The government had agreed in the settlement to attend to white worker grievances. On 6 September 1913 Malan announced that legislation would be prepared on various aspects of industrial legislation. Six industrial Bills were drafted for the 1914 parliamentary session (Katz 1974: 143).¹⁴ Malan also

¹³ (Allen 1992: 269, 272; Cope 1943: 135; Davenport 1987: 268; Simons 1980: 157-58; Walker & Weinbren 1961: 36-37). The settlement was not easily accepted by Socialists in worker ranks. Many believed Smuts had bluffed them as the TCM was not a party to the agreement. The Federation even put the case of organising African miners, who appeared willing to strike in sympathy with whites, and wanted to be unionised along the lines of white unions. Years later, communists claimed that the 1913 strike opened the eyes of militants to the potential of Africans in the labour movement. From then onwards, the Simons claim, a growing minority of white workers realised the emancipation of whites depended on solidarity with the black workers (1980: 159).

¹⁴ Some of the other demands were considered to be controversial and it was for this reason that the Economic Commission was appointed in the latter half of 1913. Trade unionists were initially opposed to yet another commission, because numerous commissions which had sat from 1907 to 1913 had made recommendations to alleviate the lot of the white workers, but the

pressed for trade union recognition by employers. Phillips agreed, so long as federated unions were not included, closed shop agreements remained illegal, and that the unions were made liable for the acts of their members.¹⁵ The Industrial Disputes and Trade Unions Bill passed the House of Assembly, but failed to pass the Senate due to lack of time. Also, the outbreak of war posed new imperatives.¹⁶

government had ignored their findings. However the evidence which did come out of the commission was of great benefit, and the commission made a concerted attempt to survey living costs throughout South Africa to assess the adequacy of wages.

¹⁵ The secretary for Mines and Industries, Warrington Smythe, 'clearly recognised the need to incorporate the unions, to formally co-opt them into the state apparatus, and was contemptuous of his mining inspectors who objected to the recognition of trade unions because their power posed a threat to the state'. He 'also attacked the contract system by which white miners received no guaranteed wage but were paid according to their results. This sometimes resulted in high wages'. At other times in no wages at all or even debt to the contractor. 'It was one of the major concerns of the chronic instability and mobility of the white mine labour force. ' In May 1915 the TCM declared it was abolishing the 'flat contract' system and replacing it with a system of a definite daily wage plus incentives. Apart from union recognition, Smythe also prepared legislation to provide for industrial conciliation based on the 1909 Transvaal Industrial Disputes Act, proposing a Department of Industries and Labour and an Inspector of White Labour through which the government had power to investigate employer- employee relations (Yudelman 1984: 104-105).

¹⁶ World War One played a part in this delay, and not least the upsurge of patriotism among the English- speaking workers, which relieved the government of having to attend to labour issues. Nine years passed before similar legislation went before Parliament.

Social Darwinism

The idea of racial superiority had the ideological support of nineteenth century pseudo-scientific theories which 'explained' (to Europeans) their dominant position over their colonial subjects. These theories held that biological differences determine the natural capacities of different racial groups.

Known as Social Darwinism,¹ these theories explained that certain races were colonised because they were biologically inferior, 'lacking' in 'mental capacity', and were therefore unable to 'make history'. Nineteenth century social anthropology set about the task of classifying groups of people according to somatic criteria such as skin colour, shape of nose, lips, cranium, face, and the texture of hair – where 'the body betrays its history of secret shame' (Coetzee 1988: 136-144, 157; Paul 1984: 568-590).

Being European meant belonging to a superior racial group capable of performing tasks of conception and co-ordination, due to their assumed superior 'mental capacity' (Davies 1979: 66-67). The differentiation between 'inferior' groups was seen only in terms of their value as workers. For example, the Mozambican 'East African natives' were considered harder workers than the

¹ The main thrust of Social Darwinism, from the 1850s to as late as the 1930s, was the social welfare of 'superior British blood stock' at the expense of 'inferior' races. British imperialists were genuinely concerned that without the necessary action, British society would suffer national or race degeneration, and the nation would fall 'to the Irish and the Jews'. Social Darwinism called for the improvement of the condition of the lower classes for the subordination of individual goals to those of the entire society. Two dominant theorists who had a bearing on British social thought were Benjamin Kidd and Professor Karl Pearson. Building on Darwin's ideas on natural selection and the 'survival of the fittest', Kidd postulated a 'rivalry of nationalities', a struggle between different races out of which he imagined the victors to be Anglo-Saxon - 'carrying humanitarian principles into its dealings with inferior peoples' (Semmel 1959, Chapter 2.).

'local natives', and valued accordingly (Bozzoli 1981: 53-54; Legassick 1974: 10). The Shangaans were allegedly hard working due to their 'racial purity', while coloureds were lazy because their original 'purity' was lost by the 'mixing of blood' (Coetzee 1988: 144-148; Johnstone 1976: 25).

Translated into policy, whites were seen (by themselves) as having a right to dominate blacks, who had centuries of 'catching up' to do before they could reach the assumed advanced state of the European races, which translated into being made fit for labour (Bozzoli 1981: 30, 52, 61; Legassick 1974: 259; Yudelman 1984: 14). In its more benign guise, such theories served to justify colonial paternalism, where Africans were seen as 'part of the land' and 'as children' who needed to be protected from the corruption of the city.²

²(Dubow 1990: 72-76, 80; Freedan 1979: 645-671; Paul 1984: 568-590). The *South African Mining Journal* in 1894 advised compound managers: 'Placed as he is, in charge of a number of grown-up children, it is obvious that if the duties of the compound manager are to be properly and effectively carried out, some latitude must be allowed him, and some authority must be delegated to him ... With a good manager in charge of the compound the work of the mine will always run smoothly and satisfactorily. A white man accustomed to the habits, usages and languages of natives will exercise that quiet authority which long command of inferiors gives, being firm without being harsh, and just without being unnecessarily severe. At the same time he must be granted sufficient authority to punish for minor offences, for with natives the punishment must follow swiftly on the commission of the offence, otherwise all discipline is soon lost, and the labourers become quarrelsome and discontented' (Quoted in Bozzoli 1980: 72-73).

Appendix I

FRIDAY 14 APRIL 1916.

League Manifesto.

Against Economic Conscription.

Issued by the Management Committee of the I.S.L.

TO THE WORKERS OF THE RAND AND SOUTH AFRICA.

The International Socialist League of S.A. (whose sole concern is the welfare of the working class movement,) has hitherto studiously refrained from interfering with men who have sincerely and freely volunteered for military service. We have respected their courage though regarding it misplaced. We have instead endeavoured, in spite of manifold suppressions, to proclaim the international unity of the working class across all frontiers of race and country.

← Fragment analysed

But the time has now come to record a most emphatic protest against the methods adopted by the self-elected Recruiting Committee which, with the connivance of the authorities, is conspiring with employers to force men to enlist against their will, by a system little removed from blackmail.

According to the orders of this inquisitorial committee, employers are "to bring such pressure to bear upon their employees as will be best calculated to ensure their immediate enlistment," and to "refuse to employ single eligible men of military age after 30th April, 1916." In other words (words evaded in the buccaneer politeness of this Committee) employers are to SACK THEM.

As a result of this Committee's activities hundreds of young men are today faced with the alternative of either walking the streets hungry or enlisting.

Enlisting for what? For an expedition that cannot by any stretch of imagination be regarded as a measure of defence.

What did the expenditure of £15,000,000 and considerable blood and tears in German South West bring to the people of South Africa? Are mothers and widows of fallen soldiers to be consoled by the reflection that De Beers have gained control of German West diamond fields?

And now economic conscription, brutal and unashamed, is being brought to bear on young men to compel them to take part in another business of butchery for the expansion of the interests of the Corner House in German East Africa, at an expenditure of human life that is scandalous to contemplate.

The workers are told of the freedom they enjoy in their immunity from legal conscription. Legal conscription on the continental system falls on the rich as well as the poor. But the conscription now in vogue in South Africa enables the employers and the well-to-do to go scot free, while effectively compelling wage earners to enlist or to starve. This is the free choice that the workers enjoy.

Kaffirs and Indians are fighting in this war "for liberty and justice," (which the masters, sub rosa, pronounce "markets and dividends"); What do these men get for it? Are they really honoured for their sacrifices? They are subjected to the same indignities, the same restrictions, the same exploitation as before. So it will be with the white workers who have sacrificed themselves in this conflict.

The workers are contributing everything to the present war. While their masters are waxing fat in war profits, the workers give their life-blood on the field, and are forced to sustain the relief funds at home.

Furthermore, under the cloak of patriotism, employers are everywhere imposing extra burdens, in longer hours and more distracting labour, burdens which are becoming hard to bear, and are sapping the life of the people. Postmen, Railwaymen, shop assistants, office men and girls are compelled to take on increased work, and get scant attention when incapacitated by overwork. In all spheres the war and patriotism are made the excuse for levying an increased toll on the life and labour of the unorganised workers, in order that greater profits may be reaped by their patriotic masters.

Not only are the workers sacrificing while employers wax fat, but their rights are meanwhile being filched from them one by one. "The outbreak of peace" will find them domineered by police rule. Freedom of speech is being suppressed; and all publication of views distasteful to the Government throttled. Detectives swarm the swell recruiting meetings to nip in the bud and arrest men who express dissent from the speakers of the Recruiting Committee. The high-flowing language of recruiting speakers only hide the stage management of deceptions and shams by which the mailed fist of conscription is covered.

Your children are enrolled in Boy-Scout regiments, so that in early youth they may be impregnated with the virus of militarism. They are marshalled in recruiting meetings to initiate the clapping, the applause, and "the spontaneous enthusiasm," at arranged signals from their scout-masters. These meetings do not bring recruits. They only gather the harvest of young men that economic conscription throws into the street.

We therefore protest against the swindle perpetrated on the wage-earners. We protest no less because the generous impulses of the workers are being exploited to their own undoing; misled and deceived by a Press whose sole function is the hoodwinking of the people and the clothing of capitalist schemes in patriotic terms.

We protest against the Christian Church bathing her hands in the blood of the peoples.

We protest against the Federation of Trades and the Labour Party, called to lead in the great movement of the liberation of humanity, abusing their position of trust to betray the workers at this time, acting as unholy procuresses for the enemies of the workers; and taking sides with the employers in this conspiracy of wholesale victimization.

We would urge the workers to organise themselves in store, workshop and mine against this latest attempt to treat them as helots to be driven to the trenches by intimidation and the sack.

To all those who look for deliverance from the present evils we have a message. We again declare that it is the mission of the international working class, acting on its own authority, to free the world from the crimes of war and capitalism.

We proclaim the new Socialism, rising fresh and strong. We stand side by side with the great Italian Socialist Party, with the brilliant anti-war minority of the Social Democrats under the heroic Liebknecht; with the Independent Labour Party of Great Britain, with the Socialist Labour Party of America, with the Socialists of Scandinavia and Holland who have so far been strong enough to thwart the militarist designs of their governments, with the militant Trade Unions of France and New Zealand,—with the great International Socialist movement we declare uncompromising hostility towards this unjust world of violence, on capitalism and the warmongers who degrade the life of the people.

The Capitalist press may laugh the forced laugh of men who are afraid; but we declare that it is the mission of the organised working class to accomplish the work of human freedom. The earth is bountiful. There is enough and to spare for all without arduous toil. Yet the nations are tearing one another to pieces over the disposal of the surplus wealth created by labour, which, though many starve in the midst of plenty, the workers are not allowed to touch.

But the forces are ripening which will abolish the slavery of our times if the workers will but assert themselves in combination. This is the message of Socialism, based not alone on sentiment but on science, to the heavy-laden and the toilers today.

“Workers of the world unite, you have nothing to lose but your chains. You have a world to win.”

The above Manifesto is being reprinted in leaflet form. For quantities apply to the Secretary I.S.L. 6 Trades Hall, Johannesburg.

Appendix J

September 29, 1916

Internationalism Begins at Home.

For some time past we have been trying to preach the gospel that Internationalism begins at Home. We cannot get the workers united internationally while they are divided within the nation into warring craft sections. If we are sincere in our Socialism, right here at home it must begin. We find growing testimony to the justness of our contention everywhere. We are only repeating unconsciously what is getting to be insisted upon by working-class teachers and the young bloods of the Labour movement all over the world. If it is wrong to divide the workers into national groups, how much more wrong to split them up into *castes* within the national groups. If it is wrong for a British worker to hound a German worker who is across the sea, how much more wrong for the white workers to spurn the native labourer toiling and moiling by his side.

Here is what Robert Holder says in the August number of *The Plebs Magazine* (what refreshing reading in *The Plebs!*):—

“Out of the nationalistic ruins of the second International will arise a third International of Labour whose members will be conscious of the fact that

just as the craft barriers must be abolished between the workers within a nation in order to get a national class unity to fight and defeat the national State power, so must the national barriers that divide the workers of the various nations be broken down in order to get an international class unity capable of withstanding the international power of capital.

The immediate task of the modern workingclass movement the world over is first to bring about an industrial unity of the workers within the various national groups and to educate them as to their true relationship to the State. Once this understanding has been attained by the workers of the various national

groups, an International class unity would logically follow of itself. Up to the present the various Socialist bodies have sought to obtain an International unity whilst the working class within the various nations have remained divided among themselves. They have been making the common mistake of building the roof before laying the foundations. The great fight of the future will be between Labour and the State. No doubt it will be a long and bitter struggle, but that Labour will be victorious is as certain as that night follows day. In the words of John A. Symonds:—

These things shall be. A loftier race
Than e'er the world hath known, shall rise
With flame of freedom in their face,
And light of science in their eyes.

Nation with nation, land with land,
Unarmed shall live as comrades free;
In every heart and brain shall throb
The pulse of one fraternity.”



Fragment
analysed

Appendix K

Feb. 15, 1918

Things Native Labourers Don't Want.

"MOFFY," a native correspondent from the Cape, sends us an article on "Native Labour" which betrays the obsessions of all educated and middle class natives when they deal with the emancipation of Labour. He says:—

1. It is high time the native and coloured workers are recognised by the Labour associations, and admitted into their societies as bona fide members with a well considered scale of pay, etc.

2. The amount of pay should be proportional to the Native's cost of living.

3. For this natives will have to be classed under two categories: The educated native and the uneducated native.

4. "Moffy" congratulates the Government for its sympathetic attitude towards the S.A. Native College at Fort Harte.

These are "Moffy's" suggestions in brief.

Let us say here once for all to all "educated" natives that the "International" is not a negro's sheet. It is not pro-native, it is pro-proletarian, whether it be the native worker in Africa just awakening or the Russian worker already with his heel on the neck of Capitalism.

We are not out to get the native admitted into the White Labour Unions. We are out to get the white workers to recognise the native workers as brother proletarians, and to get the native workers, not the native shirkers, to organise as a working-class with their white fellow workers for the overthrow of the Capitalist system.

For this the native workers will emphatically not have to be classed into two categories, educated and uneducated. The illiterate hammer boy is imbibing the sort of education that will put the cuff and collar native outside the picture. Labour knows nothing of Capitalist "education" or higher and lower grades. That is the craft and grade snobbery of the white unions over again.

Certainly the Government will be sympathetic towards this or that native college. They want to produce educated spoofers, misleaders, mystifiers, for the native workers just as they have to produce these hirelings for the white workers. It will be a bad day when compulsory Government education is introduced for all native workers. The hope of the native worker is that he will educate himself, just as the Russian worker, denied State education, did the job for himself, and did it well.

Let "Moffy" and his brother natives of the "educated" ilk get out of this snob conception that the emancipation of the native consists in la-di-dahing it with top hats in Parktown. In the day when the South African Lenin announces, in the name of Labour irrespective of colour, that the proletariat shall take control, and demands the keys of Capitalism in South Africa, who can tell that he will not be a Bantu worker with no shirt on his back?

Once "Moffy" realises that Labour not frock coats is the hall mark of honour, he may be of service to the proletarian movement in South Africa.

← Fragment analysed

Appendix L

September 29, 1916

Internationalism Begins at Home.

For some time past we have been trying to preach the gospel that Internationalism begins at Home. We cannot get the workers united internationally while they are divided within the nation into warring craft sections. If we are sincere in our Socialism, right here at home it must begin.

We find growing testimony to the justness of our contention everywhere. We are only repeating unconsciously what is getting to be insisted upon by working-class teachers and the young bloods of the Labour movement all over the world. If it is wrong to divide the workers into national groups, how much more wrong to split them up into *castes* within the national groups. If it is wrong for a British worker to hound a German worker who is across the sea, how much more wrong for the white workers to spurn the native labourer toiling and moiling by his side.

Here is what Robert Holder says in the August number of *The Plebs Magazine* (what refreshing reading in *The Plebs*!):—

“Out of the nationalistic ruins of the second International will arise a third International of Labour whose members will be conscious of the fact that just as the craft barriers must be abolished between the workers within a nation in order to get a national class unity to fight and defeat the national State power, so must the national barriers that divide the workers of the various nations be broken down in order to get an international class unity capable of withstanding the international power of capital. The immediate task of the modern workingclass movement the world over is first to bring about an industrial unity of the workers within the various national groups and to educate them as to their true relationship to the State.



Fragment analysed

Once this understanding has been attained by the workers of the various national groups, an International class unity would logically follow of itself. Up to the present the various Socialist bodies have sought to obtain an International unity whilst the working-class within the various nations have remained divided among themselves. They have been making the common mistake of building the roof before laying the foundations. The great fight of the future will be between Labour and the State. No doubt it will be a long and bitter struggle, but that Labour will be victorious is as certain as that night follows day. In the words of John A. Symonds:—

These things shall be. A loftier race
Than e'er the world hath known, shall rise
With flame of freedom in their face,
And light of science in their eyes.
Nation with nation, land with land,
Unarmed shall live as comrades free;
In every heart and brain shall throb
The pulse of one fraternity.”

Appendix M

No. 57

FRIDAY 20 OCTOBER 1916.

Municipal Politics and the Revolution.

While our Empire fights for its life in Flanders, our recruiters have been shouting for theirs from trolleys in front of the Town Hall, Johannesburg, and lately, singularly enough in times so critical, the burden of their speeches seems to have been the preservation, not of England from the Hun, but of the Horse Shoe from the War on Warite. Thus Bumble and Graft in spite of all will hold their revelry amid the carnage. Thus too, in spite of all protestations to the contrary, High Politics are introduced into the Johannesburg Town Council Election.

The I.S.L., into which the "War on Warites" (blessed word, rolling all sufficient for execration over the tongue) have long since merged, has picked up the gage thus thrown, and put forward its High Politics, and its candidates representing the same, for the consideration of the electors. Indeed, it welcomed this constitutional opportunity of so doing at a time when police and roughs in concert have been endeavouring to curtail its other lawful avenues of expression.

But the I.S.L., candidates have not attempted, least of all while the Great World seems in the melting pot, to compete in the hurly-burly bidding for parish place with the usual futile promises of reforms. Excepting fidelity to their principles if returned, they have promised no benefits to the electors; rather have they appealed to the electors to benefit themselves and to rely no more on the wearisome repetitions of pledges, identical from every party at every election—showing that they are not really the issue.

War or no war, the League aspires to stand solely for the Working Class Movement, undistorted, uncompromising, incorruptible. Which means, not the claim that a few "working class representatives" should help the others to run (or ruin) the Town; that can be as efficiently done by the capitalist nominees alone—and in practice the Labour Leaven has hardly made any difference.

There is a great danger lest even a "Socialist" majority on a Town Council, pitted against all the counter-attacking power of capitalism around it, and fettered by all the capitalist machinery, personnel and tradition of the Town Hall system nominally 'taken-over,' may be compelled after all to surrender to its Tammany environment, so that the last state of that Municipal house would be worse than the first,—and lest the sincerity, staunchness, and cohesion of working class members of those bodies may melt away before our eyes, so long as the working class itself remains unorganised, or even as defectively organised as it still is to-day; and in South Africa, owing especially to the ostracism of non-white workers by whites, more defectively than in any other industrial community.

Once the necessity of being 'saved' from the capitalistic system has, through education and propaganda, come home to the workers, the question 'What are we going to do to be saved?' is unhesitatingly answered by the I.S.L. as follows: Organise, not in Trade Unions, each fighting for its own little group alone in competition with others, and indeed ignoring the 'unskilled' and lower paid (especially the blacks) altogether, but in Unions co-extensive with the respective industries, businesses, enterprises or concerns in which their members are employed,—Unions prepared, not merely to hold up the work of each industry, but, in the fullness of time, to carry it on, to administer it, to work its plant and machinery and output, in the interest of the whole community.

← Fragment analysed

An I note by the way that the Johannesburg Municipality is one such concern, employing thousands of workers: as a small part of the combined Labour movement of the world, the organisation of the whole of these workers, irrespective of craft, scale of pay, or colour, but rather, if subdivision is necessary, according to Department, will be a step forward, and will encourage similar effort in other concerns. Such a proposal seems modest, of small weight against the colossal forces of modern capitalism, supported as it is by troops, the Press, the Church, and most of the better 'educated' members of Society. But it is infinitely more to the point, if our philosophy of modern society is sound, than the proposals, modest indeed to utter futility, of the ordinary candidate, whether S.A.L.P., Citizens' Ticket, Social Service League, or what not; and it would be absurd indeed for an elector to whom this our election policy might seem like a drop in the ocean to reject it in favour of platforms so infinitely more ineffective still that they only distract attention altogether from the great issue.

The I.S.L. candidates are not asking for support because they hanker after the sweets of office. They ask for support both as a method of propaganda and as a means of getting an indication of the number of voters who so far have grasped the far reaching significance of the problem of Modern Society, with its incurable injustices, its poverty, its tyrannies, its wars; and who are coming to understand the Socialist solution of it, and to see the hollowness of the tinkering programmes which have hitherto absorbed their attention. To vote for the I.S.L. candidates is thus to contribute your mite to the power of the Oncoming Working Class Movement of the World.

S.P.B.

Appendix N

FRIDAY 22 SEPTEMBER 1916.

Disunity of Labour.

How should the power of the working class be organised? The Federation is nominating candidates for the Johannesburg Municipal Election. In an "interview" with the *Evening Chronicle*, the Federation Secretary talks in a large manner of the intentions of that body, and of the severance of the constituent unions from the Labour Party. The fact is that all these constituent unions have refused to nominate candidates for the Municipal Elections when requested by the Federation, and that the quartette put forward as candidates are themselves the ruling clique of the Federation Executive. The Federation Secretary poses in the paper as the arbiter of some great mass movements, whereas the fact is that he and a few other politicians are able to do these things because the working-class is attending just now to the quarrels of the bosses in preference to its own business.

The point to note is that the political disunity of Labour arises from its industrial disunity. Labour will continue politically disunited so long as its foundation, the industrial movement, is torn asunder by factitious lines of demarcation. The choice to-day is not between unity and disunity, but between being disunited on the cross roads, or all being united on the road to destruction.

A mob is united. But a mob labelled Labour united at the ballot box does not prove that Labour is united. Labour is nothing if not a united class conscious *industrial* movement of the workers projecting its influence into the political sphere. The paramount duty of all true lovers of the workingclass cause to-day is to create that class conscious industrial unity.

Labour can never be politically united so long as the industrial movement is sectioned into craft unions. How absurd to expect a class conscious party of the workingclass while that same workingclass cares more for its craft vanities, its "amalgamated" emblems, its superior skill over fellow wage-labourers, than for solidarity with all workers of whatever craft or colour. The idea is topsy-turvy, a chimera.

The question at bottom is an industrial, not a political one. The choice is either to seek alliance with the middle class or with the bottom dogs of wage-labour. So long as the white worker looks upon his fellow wage-slave, the native worker, as an object to be kicked, instead of a work-mate to be linked up industrially to help fight his industrial battles, so long will the white worker be the fool of imperialist notions and alarms. The one follows the other.

The whole of the fight against capitalism is a fight with the prejudices and capitalist-engendered aversions of the workers. Conquer these and capitalism is conquered. While these remain, it is useless whining about the disunity of Labour. The job is to create among workers that feeling of unity with all those who labour for wages, irrespective of what pigment may have been injected by Nature into the labourer's skin, or what tools he may or may not have learnt to use. That is the only unity.



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