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Slavery Or Wage Laborers

Mine Labor In South Africa



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South Africa

by Clyde Winters

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"LABOR IN THE MINES OF NAMIBIA
AND SOUTH AFRICA"

Since 1972, we have been made vividly aware of the importance of the African Miners of Namibia and South Africa. Not only as a result of the violence and strikes by black workers in South Africa's gold mines, which have led to shootings, stabbings and brawls between the African miners themselves which reached a toll of over sixty in just 1974 alone. But also, the importance of the mine-workers has grown due to rising inflation, which has made gold an intensely desirable commodity. This means that anymore major stoppages in the gold mines could cripple South Africa.

As a result of violence between African workers from different nations, many labor and production problems have arisen in South Africa Anglo-American Corporation (AAC) Gold Mines. By 23 February 1974 only 15,000 workers out of a total of 31,000 Lesotho and Xhosa workers from Ciskei and Transkei reserves. The lost in workers was 61% at Free State Geduld, 47% Welkom and 34% at Western Holding. Production was also severely affected. The Sunday Telegraph (4-21-74), said that the three AAC mines indicated that tonnage milled was down by 300,000 tons, a loss of about 4,500 kilograms of gold or a shortfall in revenue of some R14m. These disturbances also resulted in the return of about 2/3 of the 10,000 Basothos to their homes in Lesotho.

To discuss the labor policy in South Africa one must discuss the Afrikaaner, the creator of Apartheid, and the labor laws which were a result of this policy of a-part-ness, i.e., apartheid. People who are loyal to South Africa in that they believe South Africa, instead of Europe, to be their home land. This is mainly the result of the Afrikaaner or Boer (farmer) developing a distinct culture from that of other Europeans, due to 150 years of broken ties with Europe early in its development.

The early Afrikaaner came in 1657 and landed at the Cape of Storms (later to become known as the Cape of Good Hope) at a relief station for ships of the Dutch East Indies Company. This same year small

farms were situated next to the forts; in the early years of Europeans, coming to Africa forts were built to protect the settlers, and house food and supplies for ships rounding the Cape of Good Hope. In many areas the fort was also a staging area for sending slaves to the relief stations and then onto the markets of the America's. Increasingly the farmers began to move further into the interior, resulting changes in the dialect and behaviour of the early Dutch/Boers (farmers), due to their contact with the Hottentots and Bushman.

As other Europeans began to recognize the benefits of the Cape colony many Europeans left Europe for the Cape of Good Hope, coming from such countries as Holland, Belgium, Germany and France. The latter comprised mainly Huguenots who had just settled in Holland and in April 1688 sailed to the Cape of Good Hope, in the hope of finding religious freedom there.

This reality later accounts for the use of religion to support the cruelties inflicted upon the African population while supporting the Afrikaaner's as being a chosen people somewhat similar to the Jews, making them the Jews for the era, at least. As these early Europeans moved north and eastward into South Africa, they came into contact with not only the Hottentots and Bushman, but also the Bantu who had begun to move Southward into South Africa.

The migration of the Bantu linguistic group into South Africa is very important in the history of South Africa, due to the constant fighting between the Europeans and the Africans in South Africa, over the use of land as either pasture land for the cattle of the Bantu or as farm-land for the Afrikaaner. The Afrikaaner supported his claim to South Africa due to the right of discovery and habitation because of the so called fact that Bantu people did not live in the area until the 19th century. This claim has been proven to be a fallacy due to the many written accounts of Europeans-Bantu contact as early as the sixteenth century. Duarte Barbosa, says of South Africa that after "traveling along the coast after passing the Cape of Good Hope in the direction of India as far as that of Sam Sabaseiam (Cape of St. Sebastian) there are certain fair lands with many hills and open plains wherein are numerous herds of cows in abun-

hills and open plains wherein are numerous herds of cows in abundance, sheep and other wild cattle. The dwellers in this land are black folk..." This statement gives ample reason to except the thesis that Bantu people were already in South Africa before the coming of the Europeans.

But this claim to the land is believed an improtant truth to many Boers in that it maintained their right to domenate the African, and that South Africa was their to maintain by any means necessary. Afrikaaner nationalism had its greatest boster shot when they made the Great Trek into the Interior of South Africa. This was made necessary by the emerges of the British on the Cape, during the Napo-lionic Wars to secure the Cape as a supply station for their ships going to India and the Far East.

As more British subjects landed on the Cape, Boers in 1825-36 began: the Great Trek, and the establishment of ther states in the hinterland of South Africa. This stage in the history of the Afri-kaaner should be remembered, because at this time the Bible was translated into Afrikaans and a monthly journal called the die Afri-kaaner patriot was published and as a result the belief in the su-periority of the Afrikaaner was spread throughtout South Africa among the Boers.

Since the policy of Apartheid as practiced in Namibia () has not changed since the Mandate was given to South Africa, by the league of Nations, predecessor of the United Nations (U.N.); migrant laborers for work in the mines has been the cornerstone of Namibia's apartheid policy complys with its objective of keeping urban areas white, and insuring a surplus supply of unskilled manula laborers, by building small Reserves were Africans are crowded into small areas that subject them to a subsistence economy depended on agriculture (for the woman) and migratory labor (for the men) for their survival which necessitates a cash wage. The Africans living on these reserves (in Namibia) are taxed heavily by the central government, which in-creases their impoverisment and makes it imperative for Africans on the reserve to pursue jobs away from the reserve in the urban areas, so they can pay their taxes.

Most of the Reserves in Namibia where the laborers for the mines come from such as Ovamboland and Okavangoland are characterized by a lack of water, very poor land and where agricultural production rarely rises above the subsistence level, and often does not even reach the level of subsistence. The Reserve land is communally held by the inhabitants of the Reserve, but they produce no marketable good, they are also forced to leave the Reserves for the mines because it provides not only work for the Miners, but also money to pay their taxes. The Namibian blacks are subject to excise, import, and export fees, and even taxes on their dogs and vehicles, so that no matter what their standard of living is, all will have to find outside employment, preferably in the mines, so as to pay their taxes.

In Namibia there are policy zones and unpolice zones. The police zones are inhabited by Europeans and the unpolice zones are areas where the majority of African live. If a black miner works in a police zone often he is restricted from seeing his family in an unpolice zone, to make sure the miners will not be away from their "jobs" for too long a period visiting their families. In these police areas, which incidentally comprised 56 percent of the land, there is a total of 18 Reserves, also in the police areas blacks live in Chetty's of urban areas or on a white farm. But if the laborer is a black miner he is usually housed in an hostel, so that he can be easily located and controlled. Also, black miners in Namibia cannot leave their place of employment without a pass or be out on the streets in a local urban area without a special permit.

Faye Carroll, notes that in Namibia the system of Reserves, special location, and passes often results in oppressive treatment of blacks because, "A man who is working in an area may be denied a pass to visit his family in a Reserve, or natives in one reserve may not be able to visit their families in other reserves. If a native is dismissed from a job, or if his employer has not been satisfied with his work, he might not be granted a pass back to his reserve or to another job and then would be subject to arrest for traveling without a pass." Because of this system many blacks hate to work in the mines but because they have to support their family

and also pay their taxes they are forced into seeking employment away from the reserves, where most African people have to depend mainly on subsistence agriculture and stockraising for their only means of survival. But even stockraising is not sufficient, the Southwest Africa Committee found that although there was much stockraising in the reserves, because of a lack of water 90 percent of the African's cattle has been lost to droughts. This has led to an even greater exodus of African from the reserves to urban areas to seek employment on the mines.

In Namibia as in South Africa the races are divided geographically. This is typified by the 'Red Line' stretching across a map of Namibia which shows the policy zones that divide the urban areas of the Europeans in the South, from the African who lived on the reserves in the North of Namibia. In the police zone there is a small minority of white voters who rule the area and are supported by the government of South Africa, so the whites will keep abreast of what's happening among the blacks.

The Europeans in Namibia make sure that there is only two Africans to each European living in the police zone: as an example, in 1961, there was a total of 245,000 people, racially they were divided into 173,000 Africans and 73,000 Europeans. This insures a complete loss of political power among the blacks, and it also diminishes the fear among whites of blacks ever politically dominating Namibia, anywhere except on the reserves. Twenty-four percent of the land in Namibia is listed as Bantu land, the rest is classified as 'white areas'. Although, African outnumber Europeans in Namibia, the entire area of all the reserves in Namibia are found in this twenty-four percent of the land.

To insure control over the African living on the reserves, the South African government recognize chiefs and headmen as the only legitimate spokesman for the Africans living there. Incidentally, all of the chiefs and headmen of the reserves of Namibia, as in South Africa are employed by the Southwest/South African government, not as

legitimate rulers but in reality as indirect rulers.

Eventhough the four reserves of Namibia: Caprivi, Kaokoveld, Ovamboland, and Okavago, by the South African Bantu Affairs Commissioners, and that sheifs and headmen are using their own customs and laws as a foundation of African home rule. The South African Administration also admits that the usage of laws and customs not in keeping with 'just rule', i.e., rule which insures continued white rule, ~~and which retard progress, by degrees are to be eliminated.~~

Headmen and Chiefs are paid a small wage for administering the reserves. Headmen in the police zone for example, are paid L24 a year. The use of African headmen saves the Southwest/South African government much money, because it provides it with a cheap means of administering the reserves. Also, this policy of using blacks as indirect rulers contributes to the whites of Namibia's game of divide and (rule) conquer. In that, as things on the reserves begins to go wrong the people rather than strike out at the whites, will instead attack the puppet chiefs, leaving the Europeans in the clear because of their "aloofness" from any situations or trouble which might occure on the reserves, or in the urban black ghettos of Namibia. The chiefs have other duties also. They are suppose to collect taxes, to insure orders from the Bantu Commissioners are relayed to the Africans, and to enforce all laws during times of trouble on the reserves. All of these duties done by the chiefs and headmen in Namibia are done so as to provide a cushion for the European master or 'base' from the demands and anger of the Africans living on the reserves.

Also, because the Minister of Bantu Affairs hires and fires chiefs and headmen, the blacks in Namibia do not have the right of destoolment and other remedies for keeping a check on, the control of the chiefs and headmen, they must also: 1) inform the government of any strangers and fugitives who may enter the reserves; 2) report all unlawful gaterings; and 3) supply labor for the mines or any other purpose the government might see fit. Because fo the last duty of the chiefs, many Namibians blacks are frequently away from the reserves working in the mines.

The contract labor system is known to the Ovambo of Ovamboland (who serve as the majority of the workers of the mines) which is the largest and most publicized reserve in Namibia. To the people of Ovamboland, the miners are known as "omtete okangolo." Omtete means que or line of persons, and 'okangolo' is the word used to describe the disc which used to be hung around the neck of the recruit, before he went on his 'travels to work', but which has now been replaced by a bracelet worn on the wrist.

All reserves have a quota of laborers they must supply for work on various projects. For, example, if a reserve is labled as a bad reserve a message comes to the Welfare Officer from the Commissioner of Bantu Affairs, for more Ovambo laborers. The Welfare Officer in turn calls in the headmen and reserve board members and tells them he wants a specific number of African laborers sent to work on the farms, roads, mines on what ever. The Ovambo laborer is then sent on his way with a ticket knowing not where he must go but that he must leave. The name of the "master" to which he must work is written on a table that is and by Europeans, when he reaches the railroad station, from the railroad station the African laborer is then sent to where he must go. After reaching his destination he reports to the local police station and from there to his baass.

After he reaches the police station he is taken to a governmental medical station. There the recruits are examined by governmental medical officers and are classified as either "A" or "B" or "C" type laborers. "A" laborers are those person fit for underground work in the mines. A "B" laborer is classified for surface work on the mines, and those worker classified as "C" laborers are those laborers fit for either heavy or light work on the farms of Namibia. Furthermore every employer must pay a capitation fee of T13 per recruit. African laborers are also required to work for their "baass" for a "fair" fee determined by the "baass", and a resonable period of time, which is also determined by the "baass". This is due to the fact that no set hours for work are written in the African work contract.

The recruitment of labor not only insures a large labor force for the white farms and mines, but it also keeps 40,000 to 45,000 of the

people of the police zones out of the urban areas, which insures political domination of that area by Europeans. The African Laborer is paid according to the number of shifts he works. In 1961, Ruth first estimated the Namibian black miners yearly income as L30 a year, and that these were the highest wages to be paid to Africans in any sector of the economy in Namibia.

The strikes by miners in South Africa in the last 3 years have reached an unprecedented total, when compared to the earlier period of black miners working in South African mines. On September 12, 1973, for example, eleven miners were shot and killed at the Carletonville Mine (while striking for higher wages) and 60 were injured. As a result of 5 of the dead being Lesotho nationals, Prime Minister Lebrua Jonathan, called for a UN inquiry, and has since stopped recruiting for this time.

Most of the troubles in the mines resulted from the bad condition the mine workers encounter in the mines. One of the major problems is the fact that black miners earn one twentieth of what a white miner earns and the gap is increasing. Whereas the Poverty Datum Lines in South Africa has been established at \$110 a month for an African family to survive--with some degree of malnutrition. The average cash wage income for Africans working in the mines is now around \$57.50 a month, an increase of 33 percent. Yet, real wages have scarcely risen since 1911, when records just began to be kept. This is in sharp comparison to the white miners monthly income of \$550 a month.

As a result of living in generally modern hotels, which the black miners cannot leave for the duration of their contracts e.g., of 9 to 18 months; and not being able to bring in their wives and families, has led to sexual frustration which often erupts into violence and perversion. Ellen Kuzwayo, the regional secretary of the Transvaal Young Women's Christian Association, says, "The migrant labor system is a curse on the black man in South Africa and eventually leads to widespread homosexuality." (The Christian Science Monitor, 3 December 1974, p. 31). This state of affairs has led to 58 people dying in feuds, as of October 1974.

Although these things are taking place in South Africa today, many people in the West are unaware of the lifestyle of the African Miner. To give people more information about the black miner, this paper will attempt to give a Sociology of the South African Mine Worker. This paper will illustrate and study the life style of the miners of Southern Africa. Among other things it will discuss are: 1) the development and recruitment of Labor for work in the Mines; 2) their housing conditions; and 3) the wages they earn.

Section 1 - Labor Recruitment

"The example of South Africa illustrates in extreme form the breakdown of the traditional African economies, the reorganization of a society on industrial lines, and the relegation of Africans to cogs in an economic machine."
(Ioan Davies, African Trade Unions, 1966, p. 23)

In the early part of the 20th century Africans did not like to work in the mines of South Africa. This resulted in "the monthly desertions and departures in normal times nearly equal the arrivals and very often exceed the number...Also many who left the gold mine after a few months service never had the desire to return...to the mines." For in all honesty Africans, as most workers generally do not like to work in the mines, but because the mines often provide the only means of employment, they work there today.

Once the South African mine owners began to see the distaste among African for work in the mines they began to have those who did seek work sign a labor contract. Black workers who are contracted to work in the mines are recruited today by either the Witwatersrand Native Labour Association (WNLA) or the Native Recruiting Corporation. But although the African mine worker is said to be "legally contracted" to work he still does not have the right to determine the terms, or write his own labor contract.

The African miners, 85 percent of who are illiterate, when they sign a labor contract there is usually a document numbering 2,000 legalistic words. On all of these contract there is a signed affidavit which states that:

"The contract of Employment of the reverse hereof was read aloud, interpreted and fully explained to the above named employee who acknowledged that he understood the same voluntarily offered his signature (or mark) thereto in my presence..."

But in reality as quickly as miners were processed for work in the mines it would have been impossible for the South African Labour Officials to have read each contracting party his rights, and as a result the labor contracts are not as legal as the South African government would have us believe. Furthermore the International Labour Organization (ILO), Ad Hoc Committee on Forced Labour, found that the migratory laborers in South Africa, though they were under contract and theoretically free laborers, were really forced laborers. Because although the African miner had the right to 'make' contract he was not permitted to break the contract without serious penalties, plus with some of the African miners often being locked in the compounds (where they lived for months) the I.L.O. found that labor in South Africa was really forced labor and not free labor:

"359. The Committee notes, in the first place, that at least the recruitment of natives for work in mines or works is not compulsory. The Native enters voluntarily into the agreement: Penal sanctions are applied only in the event of a breach of contract or some violations of the law."

"360. There can, however, be no doubt in the Committee view, that the fact it is impossible for the worker to terminate his contract unilaterally before the expiration of its terms, without running the risk of heavy penalties, constitutes a serious restriction of his personal liberty. Since the total number of African working under such contracts of employment is very large, legislation of this kind, if abused or vigorously implemented, might lead to a system of forced labour for economic purposes."

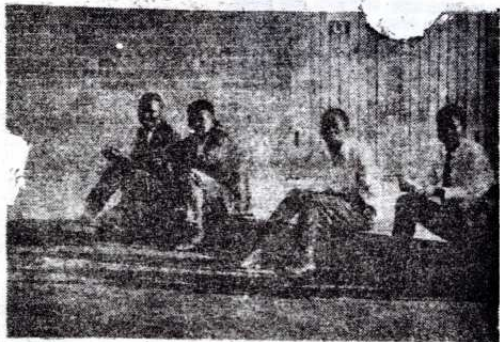
Migratory labor is the basis for the survival of both the Bantustan economy and also the greater economy of South Africa because a large number of African who leave the South African Bantustans, Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique and Swaziland, work in the industries, farms and mines of South Africa. These African make up 77.6 percent of the laborers working in the mines, and for this reason they are very necessary if the economy of South Africa is to stand.

"In 1955, the Tomlinson Commission on separate development found that 'practically every able-bodied African man in the reserves goes out to work in the industrial areas' and that some 2,140,000 men spend their lives circulating between industrial employment and their tribal subsistence economy."

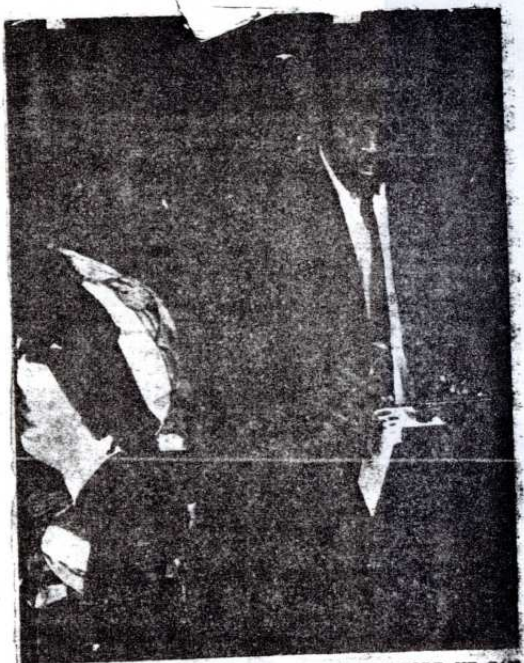
The importance of the black miner in the economics of Southern Africa is evident from even a glance at the economics of Lesotho,



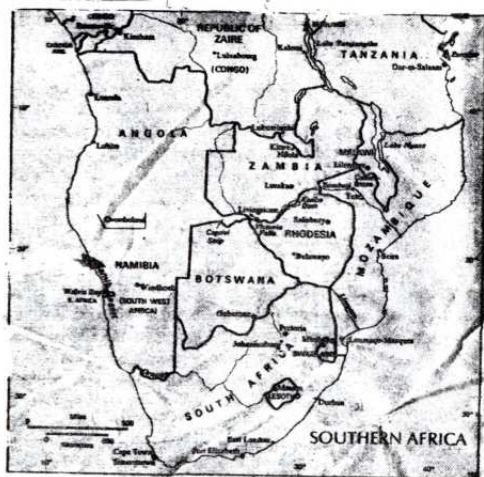
CONTRACT IN HAND AND READY TO GO, NEWLY RECRUITED Black workers in Southern Africa prepare to leave home for the job. Families must often stay behind for places of employment are in area set as "for whites only" - in the Africans' homeland.



BROTHERS EITHER GET WORKED TO DEATH IN THE MINES or find no work at all above - which is worst?



FINGERPRINTING AN AFRICAN WORKER BEFORE HE CAN work is the rule of thumb in apartheid South Africa. This presently shown system has been modernized with the introduction of Polaroid cameras and IBM computers. Tested in South Africa, they have now been brought home for use on Black people in America. (Ernest Cole/LNS photo)



MINERS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA ARE IN MOST PARADOXICAL SITUATION, being the labor for obtaining minerals drawing some of the highest prices on the world market, yet the receive lowest wages and sub-human treatment. Before strikes like recent ones in Namibia and Zimbabwe, white slave masters thought all was well on the plantation.

Botswana, Mozambique and Swaziland. In Mozambique, a major part of the economy is dominated by invisible earnings, 7-10 percent of the economy is gained from the remittance of the mine workers. The black miners from Mozambique accounted for 100,000 workers, or 23 percent of 378,000 black miners working in South Africa. Their wages are important to the government of Mozambique, at least the old colonial regime because they were paid in gold to the government. Besides Mozambique other economics gain from their migrant workers being in South Africa. For example, an estimated 150,000 miners from Lesotho sent home over \$12 million in 1974.

Furthermore, because of the South African black population's disdain for working in the mines, in 1973, only 89,901 South African miners were from the Unions, it is clear that South Africa's mining economy is dependent on migrate laborers for it maintenance and survival.

This reality is especially distrubing to the South African government now the Mozambique will gain its independence by the Summer of 1975, and the Frelims Programme says it will unequivocally "abolish existing immigration agreements of Mozambique workers to South Africa and other colonial countries," means that a cut off of the annual 100,000 miners to South Africa from Mozambique would cripple South Africa. Furthermore, since the crash of a Wenera plane in which 77 Malawians were killed in April 1974, Malawi has stopped recruiting miners for work in South Africa, and Lesotho recruitment has fallen off considerably since the Carletonville shootings.

To counteract the increasing Labor shortage in the Mines, the South African Government has already make arrangements with Rhodesia to recruit 20,000, black miners a year. The recruiting of miners from Rhodesia can only be made in the "tribal areas" of the North where urban unemployment is a factor (The Christian Science Monitor, 14 Feb. 1975, p. 5B). The deepening manpower shortage in the mines is a result of the halt in recruitment of Malawis miners by President Banda, and the possible loss of between 80,000 and 100,000 from Mo-

zambique on 25 June 1975, if the Frelimo administration decides to do so. Also, many of Lesotho's 76,000 miners were repatriated in 1974-75, due to strikes and unrest over pay provisions.

Although, the mines account only for 12.2 percent of the South African G.D.P. in 1968, the gold mines in South Africa paid the cost of running the government.

If not for gold South Africa's economy would be under greater difficulty and stress than at present. The UN's report on Industrialization Foreign Capital and Forced Labour in South Africa, gives a detailed discussion of the importance of gold mining, in stabilizing the South African economy:

"26. The pressure on the country's current account is therefore substantial. The one factor which makes it even remotely possible for South Africa to continue running such large deficits is the production of gold. This increased from R.576 million (806 million) in 1961 to R.847 million (\$1.186 million) in 1969. But even this expanding output could only partially relieve the pressure on the current account. In 1961, gold output financed more than 50 percent of imports, in 1969, gold was financing no more than 40 percent of imports."

Granted, gold's importance is slightly declining, but still, the fact remains that gold production by South Africa is still financing a larger proportion of its imports than any other single industry, and as a result is still very important to the South African economy as are the miners who mine the gold.

Gold productions will probably gain even more importance as South Africa tries to pay for its petroleum consumption. Moreover, how long will it be before the South Africans will revalue their gold reserves from \$42 an ounce to the free market price of \$170 as France and Italy has already done. For example in the past 12 months the cost of living has risen 15.2 percent, with food prices climbing up by almost 21 percent.

The necessity of African workers for South Africa's economy is supported by E.G. Mulherbe, who estimates that 2 million "Bantu workers spend their time circulating between industrial employment and their tribal environment." He further adds that is the case of the long established Bantustans such as the Transkei, 85 percent of

the wage earners sought employment outside their "homeland" in the white areas. South Africa could also expect a regular 65,000 men from Mozambique annually before the Portuguese coup of 1974 as a result of the Portuguese-South African Convention of 1928, revised 1934, 1936 and 1940. In 1971, for example, 95,898 workers were in South Africa from Mozambique working in the mines. Marvin Harris says that over 40 percent of the active Thonga males from Mozambique work in South Africa annually. Though there is a greater use of migratory laborers in South Africa as compared to most other areas of Africa, in South Africa families are not permitted to accompany the African miners. The I.L.O. in 1966 found that in South Africa "the migratory pattern of African labour is also evidenced by the increasing extent to which workers are unaccompanied by their families. Thus, in seven cities and towns the ratio of the African population to registered worker is 2 to 1, while the African family unit is officially considered to consist of five to seven persons a similar situation has been stated to exist in numerous places." And although in other parts of Southern Africa, such as in Zaire, Zambia, etc., proper housing and other facilities have been built to accomodate miners and their families to make their labor more efficient, South Africa, following governmental policy has not.

In the early 1950's the mining companies themselves decided to establish married quarters for Africans in the developing Free State gold fields, hoping ultimately to bring a permanent African mining force into existence and so improve the output of the mines and the productivity of African labor. The experiment was killed by order of the government, which permitted the mines to provide married quarters for only 3 percent of their total labor force.

The African laborer in the mines is considered to be a commodity and not as a human being. And as a result the miner is only necessary so long as his labor is needed. Moreover, because their existence as human beings are not recognized by the Afrikaaners, the African miner is paid the lowest wages and is provided the lowest benefits, as well. This lack of respect for the rights of the African miner is clearly illustrated by the South African, House of Assembly Debates of 1965 (No. 14, colum 5571) which states that: "The

Bantu who come to work here accept employment here on the basis of migratory labour; they come to sell their labour here. All we are doing is to import labour into South Africa, and when those labourers have completed their work here, they return to their homeland, where they have their roots, where their future lies, where they can realise their ideals and where they are getting their rights. They only come here to supply labour. They are only supplying a commodity the commodity of labour; just as someone overseas who sells machinery to us is supplying a commodity, so the Bantu (African) labourer is supplying a commodity to us, but that does not mean that we are integrating them into our economy as individuals...As far as the principle is concerned it makes no difference whether one or 5,000 or 5 million Bantu come here to supply labour and then return to their homeland again."

Because the miners of African descent are considered as commodities and not human beings they do not even have the right to be considered as being employees. In South Africa blacks are excluded from the definition of 'employee' as a result of the Industrial Conciliation Act in 1955, therefore they are barred from memberships of registration in a trade union so as to put even higher barriers in front of the African miner to prevent him from carrying out any skilled mining jobs, or settling permanently in the white areas of South Africa. In other words, many of the laws of South Africa as they relate to black (people) miners are primarily intended to restrict blacks from settling in the urban areas and breaking the present pattern of using cheap migratory labor in the mines. D.H. Houghton, in The South African Economy said that the system of migratory labor "tends to condemn the workers to being in perpetuity undifferentiated units of unskilled labour. The intermittent character of their employment means that just when they are becoming proficient at a particular job and of real value to their employer they leave to return home...Moreover, if they feel themselves to be merely birds of passage, they have little incentive to excel, to acquire skill or to make a permanent career for themselves with a particular firm."

Professor Houghton, estimates that during the working life of the average Black worker in the mines over a period of thirty-one years,

i.e., from age sixteen to forty-seven, spends 36 percent of his time on the reserve or village and 64 percent commuting to employment or at work away from his home, in other words the African worker spends eleven years at home and twenty years away from home at work. During his twenty years of employment away from his home the African would have thirty-four different jobs, with an average length of forty-seven weeks on each job.

Because of the length of the contract and life in the compounds many Africans from South Africa will not work in the mines. To illustrate the lack of interest in mine work among South Africa's blacks, statistics show that between 1960-1966 there was a decrease of African laborers working in the mines from the Transkei of 26.8 percent. This decline in the popularity of work among South Africa's blacks has promoted the government to declare that the choosiness of work-seekers regarding certain types of employment made the government very unhappy. In 1959, of a labor force of 432,234 African workers recruited by the Chamber of Mines, only 182,561 came from South Africa. Of all African employees in 1959, only one-third of them were believed to have come from South Africa.

The miners of Namibia (Southwest Africa) usually recruit few laborers from other countries (except for a few workers from Angola), for as early as the 1920's, most of the laborers in Namibia have usually come from Ovamboland, a reserve in northern Namibia. Though there are no accurate figures on the number of Africans from Namibia working in South African mines, because South Africa treats Namibia as a fifth province, we do know that the number of Namibians working in South Africa is more than the 1974 quota of 3,000 men. And after the settling of the border problems between Namibia and Angola many more laborers were recruited from Angola for work in the mines of Namibia.

Section II - Housing For The African Miners

When the mining industry first began in South Africa, Africans were housed in 'shanty towns.' Because at this time employers provided their employees with building material to build their homes. But soon, to maintain a hold over their employees, many mine owners

began to build compounds or barracks to house them. Because the mines are privately owned, the mine owners have the right and do employ special guards at the compounds where Africans who work on the mines are forced to live. In the mining areas the rules are made by the mine owners themselves, because the mining areas are considered as independent areas. And as a result, African miners have virtually no rights, of bargaining or what have you, while they are under contract. Some mines, such as the diamond mines have specially trained dogs to guard the mining area, and often these same dogs have been known to attack passers-by.

Originally the compound system was just for the diamond mines where employers feared the theft of their merchandise. Later, because of the fact that African migratory laborers were not permitted to bring their families the compound system became very popular. So popular that by the 1890's it had been adopted in all the large-scale mining operations from diamond and gold mining to coal mining. Life in the compounds at the various mines is entirely alike, except for life at the diamond mines, where workers have to pay for their own food and cook it and are often forced to live in the compounds for four months at a time.

Some years ago some coal miners working in a mine recognized a severe rock fall in the mine, but were not given permission to evacuate the mine. Three weeks later another rock fall occurred in the mine, the workers fearing their lives were in danger made their way along the slopes to the cages. Upon reaching the surface, armed mine police were waiting for them and they were forced back into the mines. Two of the miners refused to return to the mine were arrested. Three hours later the roof of the mine collapsed leaving 436 workers dead. During an investigation a judge found the Mine Management guilty of breaches of the Mines and Works Acts, so "He imposed nominal fines and expressed his sympathy with those on trial and with the mine owners for the 'loss of a valuable mine and many thousands of pounds.' That the 436 men had died was incidental."

Today the "falls of ground" are not as frequent in the coal mines as they once were, but still they are very high. In 1971, out of a total of 94 deaths on the South African mines, 41 persons were

killed by "falls of ground." The highest ratio of deaths resulting from nine cave-ins are found in the gold mines, which in 1971, employed 386,625 Africans out of a total of 425,163 laborers. The gold mines are situated on the Witwatersrand and its extension, including the Evandu field, Klerksdrop and the Orange Free State reported a total of 546 persons killed in 1971, of these 293 persons or 53.6 percent were killed by cave-ins or 'falls of ground', and 5,884 were injured. The figures for 1970 were 291 killed and 5,953 injured in cave-ins or 'falls of ground.' In 1968, 27,000 workers were seriously injured and 2,000 contracted lung diseases the same year.

The conditions in the mines of Namibia are much the same as those in South Africa. The only difference between the two is that whereas South Africa is dependent on external migrant labor for its laborers, in Namibia the mines depend on internal migrant laborers from Ovamboland mainly, and a few from Angola.

Section - Wages

"The low gold content of the ore and the fixity in the price of gold would render exploitation unprofitable if wages were substantially raised, and migrant labour has proved the cheapest and most docile. The extractive industries, along with employers of domestic and agricultural workers, pay the lowest African wages, and it is in mining that the wage discrepancy between whites and Africans is the widest. While the average yearly wage of a White miner in 1962 was L1281, the corresponding figure for African workers was L77." Pierre van den Berghe, South Africa A Study In Conflict, (1970) pp. 193-3.

Due to the relatively low wages for work in the mines blacks living in South Africa will not work in the mines. This is typified by the wages of the African as compared to the wages of the whites, whose wages may be as high as 15 percent more than that of the blacks. In 1969 the average wage for the black miner was only R17 a month, whereas his white counterpart had an average wage of R297 a month. In 1967, the monthly salaries and wages of all the miners in South Africa illustrate a great disparity between the wages of the black and white miners; the results show that the white miners received 282.1 percent and the African only received 17.11 percent of the wages, plus "free" food and certain items of clothing.

After violent clashes between gold security forces and 1,000 striking miners from Mozambique in 1974, the starting minimum wage for black miners will go up from 1.20 rand to 1.60 rand or \$57.50 a month for new recruits.

By 1969, the monthly wages of the African miner was R17 (\$24), Malherbe says that from his total yearly earning of 1969 of R194, R10-R15 was/is deducted from each black miner's wages a year for his return trip home. Granted, the black miner's wages have increased over the years, these increases have usually been a response to international pressure and these changes can and will probably never be equal to the wages of the white miners. The World Federation of Trade Unions (WETU) found in the early 60's that while the white miners wages, and gold profits have been rising the black miners wages have been frozen over the years until recently at L70

| Country | 1969 | | 1973 | |
|------------|-------------|-------|-------------|-------|
| | No.employed | % | No.employed | % |
| Lesotho | 64,925 | 17.5 | 76,280 | 20.18 |
| Botswana | 14,840 | 4.0 | 17,803 | 4.71 |
| Swaziland | 5,194 | 1.4 | 4,573 | 1.21 |
| Malawi | 69,748 | 18.8 | 106,860 | 28.27 |
| Mozambique | 99,799 | 26.9 | 87,129 | 23.05 |
| SA | 116,494 | 31.4 | 85,050 | 22.50 |
| Total | 371,000 | 100.0 | 377,695 | 99.92 |

The main companies employing foreign mine-workers are the following:

| Group | Black miners | Country of origin | | | |
|----------------------|--------------|-------------------|--------|----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| | | SA % | BLS %* | Tropical % (mainly Malawi) | East Coast % (mainly Mozambique) |
| Anglo American | 111,000 | 26 | 40 | 18 | 16 |
| Rand Mines | 68,000 | 20 | 20 | 35 | 25 |
| Gold Fields | 57,000 | 17 | 14 | 43 | 26 |
| General Mining Union | 43,000 | 19 | 23 | 39 | 19 |
| Corporation | 39,000 | 19 | 28 | 31 | 21 |
| Anglovaal | 28,000 | 13 | 16 | 48 | 24 |
| JCI | 20,000 | 17 | 19 | 28 | 35 |

* Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland

a year, mining profits from gold and uranium, separately reached a record high of L156 million in 1963, rising at a rate of 7 percent a year over the past nineteen years. Another example of the stagnation of the wages of the black miners can be found in a comparison of African wages in 1896 and 1913.

In 1894 about 40,000 Africans at an average wage of 61s per month (plus the cost of compound feeding of about 10s per month), and about the wages of the black miner is not the fact that they were lower than they were in 1896.

Conclusion

In conclusion, although the Ford foundation, in early 1972 announced it would try to up grade many African miners in South Africa at the Rustenburg Platinum mine near the Tswana homeland; this project as other projects before it, to up grade black miners will probably eventually fail unless Verster is serious about detente economic and social changes in the condition of blacks in South Africa. Although the white miners may be willing to give in to some of the black miner's demands for increased job opportunities and higher wages, the South African government will not. Because for the Government of South Africa to admit that, the Bantu is equal to the European in South Africa in the mines, is to deny the Boer feeling of his god given right to rule the black "Kaffirs." Moreover, if black miners were given the enumerated benefits afforded white miners, the governmental policy of South Africa--Apartheid--would be weakened and probably have to be abandoned. A move such as this would probably lead to a rapid Africanization of the mining industry, because if blacks are given equal access to all jobs as whites in South Africa, the more numerous Africans would naturally gain from such a turn over in South African Labour policy.

Yet there is still some mine officials trying to change the existing conditions of African miners in South Africa. Anglo-American's deputy Chairman, W. D. Wilson, said, "One assessment of the labour situation is that our attitudes and practices towards black employees require a major overhaul that this is a potential trouble-spot and that there are trends that call for a change of directions,

following the labor strikes in the early part of January in Namibia" And only recently Sir Harry Oppenheimer, who control 250,000 miners, announced he will allow African miners to form trade unions, but the South African Minister of Labour, Marais Viljoen, has come out against any plans to benefit Africans. As a result, if changes are to arrive in South Africa, sentiment in government and Nationalist Party circles must change.

Because of this reality it can be expected that although there will be increases in the wages of black miners, they will never become equal to those of his white counterpart. This makes it perfectly clear that if the same methods of keeping the "African in his place" in the mines of Namibia and South Africa, that have existed for almost a hundred years, will probably exist until the end of white rule in Southern Africa or at least a radical evaluation of South African labour policy toward Africa. Because of this it can remain the same for along time to come.

