

RESISTANCE AND ACCOMMODATION IN A RACIAL POLITY:
RESPONSES OF INDIAN SOUTH AFRICANS

by

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ABSTRACT

This thesis attempts to analyse the ways in which a minority responds to varying situations of oppression in a racially structured environment. In order to explicate what constitutes oppression, an historical survey of major legislation affecting Indians in South Africa is outlined. This reveals different techniques used by the dominant group to ward off challenges to its power by counter elites, from direct suppression to neutralisation and co-optation. The reactions of Indians to these changes, and the impact of these responses on their relationship with the dominant group as well as with other subordinate groups at the political, economic, educational and social level guides the focus of this investigation. More specifically, the political behaviour of Indians is examined, (a) in alliance and conflicts with other subordinate groups, particularly Africans, (b) in developing complementary interests with some members of the superordinate group, (c) in intra-communal class or status-group based divisions and factions, and (d) in political introversion and inactivity through cultural exclusivism and cultural immersion.

Research procedures used during three periods of field work in Natal included the recording of 86 informal interviews, the content analysis of various official and private documents on Indian affairs, and the collection of essays written by 65 Indian university students as so-called "future autobiographies". The major literature on race relations and minority behaviour in other societal contexts is critically reviewed regarding the applicability of its concepts and models to the South African case.

The political behaviour of Indians would seem to indicate how the dialectic of resistance and acquiescence operates in particular historical circumstances. Indeed, neither class consciousness nor ethnicity in themselves constitute satisfactory concepts for generalizations and predictions. Which bond is successfully activated would seem to depend on the specific historical context and perceptions of interest.

These proved to have undergone considerable changes, according to the emerging social stratification of the group, despite the common experience of racial discrimination. Predominant Indian political reactions under future majority rule in an African-dominated government would above all depend on the as yet unpredictable policies at that stage, the degree of animosity experienced, and the kind of security awarded to the vulnerable and, therefore, ambivalent, suspicious "strangers" in between.

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Preface

This thesis analyses the political responses of Indians in South Africa from the time of their arrival in Natal in 1860 as indentured labourers on the sugar plantations, to the present. Today, this community of 709,000 has progressed economically, but in common with the indigenous groups is legally excluded from any political power in a racially segregated society. Unlike previous studies of the group which focused on cultural persistence and changes in Indian traditions and perceptions, these are viewed here in their interrelationship with the wider structure of South African society which is considered of primary importance.

My interest in the topic stems from being born in South Africa, and having experienced my socialization till the end of undergraduate education as an Indian woman in the peculiar environment of colonial English Natal. This comprised attendance of schools run by Irish nuns and prim English ladies. Later, I was among the last generation of the few priveleged "non-white" students at an "open" university, which included exposure to some renowned liberal social scientists, among them Leo Kuper and Pierre van den Berghe. After returning home from two years of graduate studies in Michigan, I had the opportunity to compare the inside operation of "tribal academia" for two years as a faculty member of the newly founded all-Indian university, staffed mostly by paternalistic Afrikaner colleagues. Since my marriage in 1967 to a foreigner outside the prescribed racial group boundaries, living in South Africa as a family became a legal offence, punishable by imprisonment, though short visits to the country as tourists are

normally tolerated.

Living and travelling in other parts of the world where Indians have settled, increased my interest in the uniformities and differences in the responses of overseas Indians to the diverse countries of their adoption. Beyond this academic motivation in fascinating cross-national comparisons, it is the desire for political change in the country of my birth which is of deep concern to me. It is hoped that this study can contribute to this goal, not by offering simplistic solutions but by realistic analysis of a complex situation which would seem a prerequisite to the implementation of new policies.

It is with great gratitude that I should like to acknowledge the assistance and encouragement of my committee members, Professors Michael Ames, Tissa Fernando, Robert Jackson, Helga Jacobsen and Elvi Whittaker. The help extended by Professor Michael Ames goes beyond his supervision as Chairman of my committee, and only those who personally know his intellectual standards, endless patience and human concern can understand my great indebtedness to him. Several discussions with Professor Fernando proved most useful in clarifying questions on comparative ethnic conflict, and comments on thesis drafts by Professors Jackson, Jacobsen and Whittaker helped sharpen the focus of my study considerably.

Within South Africa, many individuals, too numerous to mention by name, gave generously of their time and hospitality to talk to me about their views. Special mention must be made of a long-time friend and colleague, Fatima Meer, who made available to me her vast knowledge of Indian history and experience as a political activist. Although

she would disagree with several of my conclusions, there are no doubt many more aspects which she would endorse. Unfortunately, however, she has been silenced for five years by a banning order served on her in August 1976. Similar restrictions for fifteen years were suffered by an old family friend, Dr. G.M. Naicker, the past president of the Natal Indian Congress, who recalled his numerous encounters with the Apartheid system. Dr. Gavin Maasdorp and Mr. Nesa Pillay of the Department of Economics, University of Natal, shared their valuable economic data on the community with me and kindly provided pleasant working space. Professor Lawrence Schlemmer of the Institute for Social Research at the University of Natal made available the results of current attitude surveys. However, for the opinions expressed and numerous deficiencies remaining, I alone take responsibility.

In the domestic sphere, two children born during the course of this work had to be taken care of beyond the bedtime story ritual. Whenever possible, my liberated husband, Heribert Adam, took over and, above all, acted as sounding board and hardest critic of my ideas. Finally, my parents through their inspiring examples and selfless sacrifices laid the basis for my education, despite the obstacles of the South African environment.

1-2

For Heribert

I PROFILE OF A COMMUNITY: INDIAN SOUTH AFRICANS

Indians of the diaspora, though motivated to leave their ancestral homeland by similar circumstances, were scattered in very different milieus. Their varying patterns of adjustment to new environments provide telling insights into social behaviour under different circumstances. In Africa alone, the major areas of Indian settlement in East Africa, Central Africa, and South Africa have attracted different types of immigrants as well as engendered varying reactions. East and Central African Indian communities comprised mostly trading groups, while their South African counterpart consisted initially of an indentured community with a very small portion of independent traders. To a greater extent than other Indian settlements in Africa, with the exception of Rhodesia, South African Indians found themselves in an increasingly white-dominated, race-stratified society to which they have evolved several unique political responses.

Indians in South Africa, together with Africans and Coloureds constitute the disenfranchised subordinate sector of that society. Together they are referred to as Non-Whites, although of late the term Black is preferred by politicised members of these groups.¹ In 1975 Indians numbered approximately

1. Group references have strong political connotations in South Africa and need to be explained. In this study, the name generally preferred by the politically aware members of the group is used rather than the official designation, often perceived as derogatory or associated with official policy. However, this is not done dogmatically and the official labels are not changed when describing policy. Africans, officially called Bantu (earlier: Kaffirs, Natives) are here referred to as Blacks, together with Indians and Coloureds, except when it is necessary to distinguish any one of these groups from one another. In such instances the terms African, Coloured and Indian are used. "Coloured" refers to an indigeneous group of "mixed" racial descent. Similarly, the term European is the official term used to refer to Whites, even though they may be American, Australian or of another nationality; "Non-European" is used synonymously with "Non-Whites". All three non-white groups are here referred to as the subordinate group or the dominated, and racial terms are used interchangeably with ethnic denominations according to the context. The category "Asians" or "Asiatics" is used officially to include the small Chinese population. Approximately 1.3 percent of the Asian population in 1970 was of Chinese origin (SABRA, 1975). The few hundred Japanese in S.A. are "honorary Whites", except for purposes of intermarriage. By using national or linguistic terms for the different population groups it should not be implied that they all are not "Africans" in the political sense by birthright or long residency.

709,000 and constitute roughly 3 percent of the population, as compared with 9 percent Coloureds, 17 percent Whites, and 71 percent Africans (Horrell, 1976:38).

Seventy-two percent of all Indians live in the predominantly "English" province of Natal, most of them in the Durban area, the rest are scattered in the Afrikaans-speaking Transvaal province, very few live in the Cape, none in the Orange Free State. Like the Coloureds and Whites, Indians have become an increasingly urbanised group. Eighty-one percent of all Indians live in urban areas, compared with 89 percent Whites, 86 percent Coloureds and 19 percent Africans (South Africa, Population Census, 1970).

Unlike the culturally more homogeneous Coloureds who do not differ from the ruling Afrikaner Whites culturally, Indians are a highly diversified group in terms of religion and mother-tongue. Sixty-eight percent are Hindus, 20 percent Moslems and the remainder comprise Christians of various denominations Zoroastrians, Buddhists and Agnostics (SABRA, 1975:21). Approximately 90 percent of all Hindus are Tamil, Hindi and Telugu speaking. Practically all Urdu-speaking Indians and 75 percent of those speaking Gujarati are Moslems (ibid.). With the exception of the older generation however, all speak English in Natal, and Afrikaans (or both official languages) in the Transvaal.

Economic diversification is equally characteristic of the "economically active" Indian population. 3.7 percent are engaged in agriculture, 0.3 percent in mining, 35.3 percent in manufacturing, 0.1 percent in electricity, 5.3 percent in construction, 28.4 percent in commerce, 4.2 percent in transport, 1.6 percent in financing and 12.9 percent

in services (South Africa, Indian Affairs, 1973:13-14).

While all three subordinate groups are alike in their disenfranchised status, customary discrimination in common facilities for all Non-Whites and shared exclusion from all white rights and privileges, the subordinates experience restrictive legislation and discriminatory treatment, nevertheless, to differing extents. Customarily, the Coloureds are at the higher end of the subordinate scale, followed by Indians, with Africans at the lowest extreme. This is reflected in freedom of movement within the country, settlement areas as well as differential salary scales. In recent years, however, Indian and Coloured salary scales in the public sector have been merged. Some restrictions which apply to Indians are not applicable to Coloureds and are surpassed only by the discrimination against Africans, whose regimentation in all spheres is far greater.

The legal and customary position of Coloureds and Indians in the racial hierarchy, however, is not similarly reflected in their respective economic placement. Asians have the larger middle class since 2.6 percent earn over R2,000 as compared with 1.2 percent Coloureds (South Africa, 1970), and a much smaller proportion of Africans would be estimated to fall into this category.¹ On the other hand, the majority of incomes among Indians is very low. The 1970 Census estimates that

1. African figures were unfortunately unavailable.

76 percent of all working Indians earned incomes of less than R100 per month (Financial Mail, 10 January, 1975), compared with 89 percent in the case of Coloureds and 26 percent in the white group. This means a considerable percentage of Indians live below the poverty datum line, estimated to be R110 per month for an Indian family (ibid.). Furthermore, 70.7 percent of the Indians were reported without any income in 1970, as compared with 53.7 percent Whites and 64.6 percent Coloureds (South Africa, 1970).

Thirty percent of the Indian population was "economically active" at the end of 1974 as compared with 41 percent of the white population, 35.5 percent of the Coloureds and 36.5 percent of the African population (Horrell, 1976:165). This has been attributed to the prejudices of employers towards Indians, as well as the selectivity of Indians in choosing employment in some areas only (McCrystal and Maasdorp, 1967:3).

The traditional definition of the role of women as being essentially confined to the private domestic sphere, would seem to account for the low numbers of women in employment in the public sphere.

Despite these disabilities, Indians of all three black groups have come closest to white incomes and have risen steadily, especially during the 1970-1975 period. In 1975, Indians earned approximately half of the average white household income, as compared with a third by Coloureds and one-eighth earned by the average African household (Financial Mail,

13 February 1976).¹ Such economic mobility has been accompanied by dramatic changes in the occupational structure of Indians, from an indentured community supplying predominantly agricultural labour, to a more diverse range of occupations, including commerce and manufacturing.

The mobility of Indians which supercedes the other subordinate groups is not unrelated to the high degree of group integration which is evidenced in comparatively high educational attainment, health standards, and low crime rates, divorce rates, as well as illegitimate birth rates. The close knit structure of family and community in an essentially hostile environment would seem to be of utmost importance in understanding the responses of Indians in the South African context.

The highest priority is placed on formal Western education. Despite their overall low income distribution, Indians, of all non-white groups, have the highest number of students enrolled at universities, though constituting only one-third of the coloured population and one-twenty-fourth of the Africans. Indian university students who are enrolled at South African universities number 4,863, in contrast with 3,142 Coloureds and 7,845 Africans (Horrell, 1975:369). Similarly, the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Natal reported that between 1957 and 1974 inclusive, 41 Coloureds, 308 Indians and 207 Africans had graduated as medical doctors (Horrell, 1976:272).

1. According to these figures by Market Research Africa as reported in the Financial Mail (ibid.), the average white household in 1975 received an income 1.9 (2.6) times as large as the average Asian, 2.9 (4.2) as large as that of the Coloured and 8.5 (11.1) times as large as the average African household. The figures in brackets are those for 1970.

Despite the changing urban milieu, considerable value would still seem to be attached to traditional institutions. The high degree of endogamy among Indians is noticeable. There are few Indian-Coloured marriages and even fewer Indian-African marriages. White-Indian unions are punishable by law, but it is noteworthy that of the offenders under the so-called "Immorality Act", Indians are least represented. Of those convicted under the Immorality Act in 1971, 262 were Whites, 90 Coloureds, 12 Indians and 201 Africans (Horrell, 1973:63). This is not surprising in light of the prevalent pre-industrial value that marriage outside the religious and linguistic group is undesirable. Similarly cases of divorce occur with least frequency among Indians as compared with other groups. In 1970 the divorce rates were 0.8 percent for Indians, 1.2 percent for Coloureds, and 3.1 percent for Whites (SABRA, 1975:21).¹

The same syndrome would seem to apply to rates of illegitimate births: 7 percent among Asians and a remarkable 43 percent among Coloureds who are in a similar intermediate position in South African society (ibid: 65.)² The impact of the extended family, slightly better economic conditions and importance attached to nurture of the young, would seem responsible for the relatively low infant mortality (Kark and Chesler, 1956) of Indians which is three times lower than among Coloureds, and

1. Equivalent statistics for Africans are not available, because of the application of customary laws.

2. African and white figures were not available.

even more so in the case of Africans¹ (Horrell, 1976:39).

The likelihood of Indians coming into conflict with the law is also much less frequent than that of the other groups. Convicted prisoners per 100,000 of each population group in 1974 were: Whites 79.7, Coloureds 653.9, Africans 318.7, and Asians 63.8 (Horrell, 1976:51). Similarly, there was no Indian among the 329 persons shot at and killed or wounded by the police in 1974 (ibid:56).

However, in terms of political persecution, Indians have a reverse record compared with the coloured group and rank relatively higher than the much more vulnerable Africans. Among the persons "banned"² since 1951, 8 percent are Indians, who constitute 3 percent of the total population. Among the persons imprisoned under the various Security Laws (General Law Amendment [sabotage] Act; Suppression of Communism Act; Unlawful Organisation Act; Terrorism Act) Indians are represented by 4 percent (Table 1).

One of the central questions of this investigation will be the reasons which motivated a comparatively high number of Indians to become

1. Since births and deaths are inadequately registered among Africans, no comparative figures are available.

2. A person served with a "banning" order is usually confined to his home at night and over weekends. He may not attend any "gatherings of more than two persons" as well as certain specified institutions (universities, factories); his movements are confined to the magisterial district of his residence, he must report to the police regularly, usually weekly, may not publish and may not be quoted by others. A banning order is normally issued for five years and frequently renewed. "Banning" amounts to social excommunication without cost to the state, but frequently imposes severe mental strain on the isolated victim.

Table 1

Political Persecution According to Race

	Race Group as percentage of population	Race Group as % of all persons imprisoned	Race Group as % of all persons banned
Whites	16.7% (4.160)	3% (9)	11% (139)
Coloureds	9.3 (2.306)	2 (6)	7 (84)
Asians	2.8 (.709)	4 (.13)	8 (104)
Africans	71.2 (17.745)	91 (292)	74 (913)
	<u>100% (24.920)</u>	<u>100% (320)</u>	<u>100% (1240)</u>

- (1) Percentages calculated according to figures in Horrell (1975:58).
 (2) Percentages calculated according to figures in Horrell (1974:67).
 Not all these banning orders were in force in 1974 since some were withdrawn or expired and several banned persons died. According to the most recent figures the list of banned persons gazetted in July 1975 contained the names of 147 persons (Horrell, 1975:45).

politically active and suffer for their convictions.

II. Focus of Investigation in Comparison with Other Studies on Overseas Indians

The widespread dispersal of Indians emigrating from India since the mid-19th century, mainly to former colonial territories, has been a subject of extensive research. (Arasaratnam 1970; Benedict, 1961; Calpin, 1949; Delf, 1963; Depres, 1967; Dotson, 1967; Ghai, 1970; Glasgow, 1970; Jayawardene, 1963; Klass, 1961; Kondapi, 1951; Kuper, 1960; Mangat, 1969; Mayer, 1961, 1963; Mahajani, 1960; Morris, 1968; Meer, 1969; Niehoff, 1960; Pachai, 1971; Palmer, 1959; van den Berghe, 1964.)

Three different, though overlapping emphases in the study of Indian minorities may be discerned in the literature: historical, cultural and political.

1. Historical accounts, concerned with the early entrée of the respective groups in the countries of their adoption, record the details of exchanges between the colonies and the motherland. Frequent focus is on conditions of employment, grievances, and forms of protest as essential parts of all settlements. Examples of such studies are: Arasaratnam, 1970; Calpin, 1959; Pachai, 1971; Palmer, 1959; Woods, 1954; Kondapi, 1951; Mayer, 1963; Benedict, 1961; and Mangat, 1969.

2. Cultural studies emphasize the cultural characteristics of the minorities and the plural nature of the society as having central significance. The preoccupation in such studies is with changes in cultural forms such as caste organisation, kinship structure, behaviour,

ritual, family organisation, changes in religion and religious sect formation. The extent of cultural persistence is a frequent focal point. In this category are studies by Klass, 1961; Benedict, 1961; Schwartz, 1967; Mayer, 1961; Niehoff, 1960; and Kuper, 1960.

3. Studies concerned essentially with the political behaviour of such minorities. This is approached through an examination of the various power constellations, the associational life of the groups concerned, identification of pressure groups and centres of economic power or inter-group relationships. Studies using this approach are: Delf, 1963; Dotson, 1967; Meer, 1970; Malik, 1971; Glasgow, 1970. Some of these studies, such as Dotson, cast minorities in the role of protagonist on the historical scene in much the way Wirth (1945) does. The Indian minorities are endowed with initiative in choosing a course that leads either to full assimilation in the host society or secession from it and the establishment of independent political power. Whether these goals are achieved or not, is dependent on the host society's response to the minority's own initiative and movement. Mahajani's examination of the role of the Indian minority in Burma and Malaya (1960) falls into this category as does Ghai's study of Indians in Kenya, although in a more limited way than the former. He recognises in his conclusion, however, that the onus for the future of Indians in that society is shifting from Indian behaviour to how the African majority acts. Concern with minorities in the process of decolonization has led to the similar perspective of racial bargaining. Ethnic minorities are treated as

states in the sense suggested by Geertz (1963). The techniques used by such "states", which maximise symbolic and substantive rewards to be had, range from persuasion, boycott, bargaining, threat and even force (Rothchild, 1973). Such a view is useful in a limited way for understanding Indian political behaviour, although the presumed "power" of the minority is not applicable in the South African situation.

Throughout the literature there is a tendency to presuppose homogeneity on the part of the minority. A unity of interest is assumed. A frequent analogy is drawn between Indians and Jews in the sense referred to by Hannah Arendt; namely, the position of pre-war German anti-semitism, when Jews had "lost their public functions, and their influence and were left with nothing but their wealth" (1951:4). Yet, the current range of situations in which Jewish communities are placed adds another dimension to the otherwise prototypical reference to the Jewish experience.

Similar to this are the terms "middleman minorities" (Bonacich, 1973), "pariah capitalists" (Weber, 1950; Hamilton, 1970) and "trading minorities", which overemphasize the mercantile role of such groups. In South Africa, for instance, less than a sixth of the Indians are traders, and the rest fill a diverse range of occupations, from market gardeners to professionals. As van den Berghe (1975) points out, such minorities are frequently regarded as structurally analogous to each other, vis-a-vis their host societies. Such a perspective overlooks the internal differentiations within these groups.

As Morris shows in the case of Ugandan Indians, the term "community" is an exaggerated one (1968). Indeed a sense of "community" has emerged in many overseas Indian communities out of the uniformly applied discrimination against the group, thereby eliciting unified action. As such it is essentially as Morris refers to it, a "moral" community (ibid.). While the term "community" is a useful working definition, as are the other variations mentioned earlier, it seems important to guard against the all too frequent tendency to impose a homogeneity which does not exist.

On the specific theme of South African Indians, two studies deal with Indians as a group from a social scientist's perspective. These are Hilda Kuper's Indians in Natal (1961) and Fatima Meer's Portrait of Indian South Africans (1970). Kuper, from an anthropological view, focuses on the social organisation and culture of that community. Unlike other studies which attempt to impose the Indian caste model on the new setting, Kuper's study recognizes that "a variegated and yet socially interlocking pattern which had been built through the ages on the Indian continent" (1961:20) could not be recreated to any great extent in the new Western society, nor imposed on the existing social structure by indentured labourers. On the other hand, rigid adherence to caste by the Gujarati-speaking trading community is described. The study is a perceptive exploration of the interplay of such contrasts, in an urbanized setting. Some attention is given to the new elites, and the associational life of Indians.

Fatima Meer's portrait of Indian community life is essentially descriptive rather than analytical. Her own statement of purpose in presenting such a work sums up her primary concern as a political one. "I write about Indian South Africans in the hope that through the writing they will reach out and make contact with fellow South Africans; in the hope too, that South Africans will recognize themselves in the lives of their fellows" (1969:preface). While such accounts provide much valuable information, the focus of the present study differs from them in several respects.

The central focus of this analysis is on the ways in which a minority responds to varying situations of oppression in a racially structured environment. What constitutes oppression will be explicated through an historical survey of the major legislation affecting Indians. This reveals different techniques used by the dominant group to ward off challenges to its power by counter-elites, from direct suppression to neutralisation and co-optation. How Indians in turn reacted to these changes and how these responses affected the relationship with the dominant group as well as with the other subordinate sections at the political, economic, educational and social level guides the focus of this investigation. More specifically the political behaviour of Indians will be examined (a) in alliance with other subordinate groups, particularly Africans, (b) in developing complementary interests with some members of the superordinate group, (c) in intra-communal class or status-group based divisions and factions, and (d) in political intro-

version and inactivity through cultural exclusivism and cultural immersion.

However, contrary to the predominant focus on changes in culture, ethnicity and identity, per se, this study investigates the extent to which class and status differences have replaced ethnic identity or coincide with it. The politicization of cultural differences will be studied by tracing the interplay between political discrimination and "identity-maintenance" (Barth, 1969:117). The degree to which the latter has been transformed seems crucial for understanding intra-group politics but above all the prospects of Indian-African alliances. It is hoped that such an analysis also sheds light on an old theoretical debate on the significance of the concepts of class or race for an analysis of plural societies. L. Kuper, who "question(s) the universality of the class struggle" (1975:203) has pointed to a crucial difference between race and class conflicts: "The upwardly mobile are not thereby lost to their original group, in contrast to the tendency in class mobility" (Kuper, 1975:234). Other observers, such as the political scientist Thomas Karis (1975:232) have conceded the opposite possibility: "....the regime may succeed in de-radicalizing Africans who might otherwise be leaders....a somewhat better-paid Black labour force may be even more reluctant than it is now to risk what it has." Is "em-bourgeoisement" possible under conditions of rigid racial separation?

The political behaviour of the Indian minority would seem to indicate how the dialectic of resistance and acquiescence operates in particular

historical circumstances. The contradictory answers by Kuper and Karis, it is hypothesized here, would seem both oversimplifications of a far more complex reality in which neither race nor class consciousness in their traditional meanings can fully explain group behaviour.

III. REVIEW OF GENERAL THEORIES OF RACE RELATIONS

Before focusing on the specific case of this investigation, it would seem useful to survey major trends and approaches in the general literature on race relations and pluralism, in order to place this study in the context of the discipline. Such an attempt could explore critically some central concepts employed in race relations theories and by doing so demonstrate their deficiencies for an analysis of the specific South African situation. This, hopefully, will lead to a more fruitful understanding of group behaviour under conditions of racial discrimination. Without being able to develop here all aspects of the most adequate approach, it might suffice to state that, ideally, it would have to be (a) interdisciplinary in the sense of utilizing explanations and concepts emerging from different disciplines, regardless of their label; (b) comparative by viewing South African Indians in relation to other minorities in similar conditions. A comparative perspective would try to strike a sensible balance between the unique and the general, the parts and the whole, by being aware of general socio-political tendencies within a global context. For this reason, such a perspective would have to incorporate (c) an historical dimension when assessing contemporary behaviour and likely future developments. The ideal approach would have to be (d) empirical, not in the narrow sense of confining analysis to the statistically verifiable but in the sense of

permanently being grounded in and corrected by all commonly identifiable aspects of given reality, in contrast to selective interpretation. While value-neutrality of the social scientist, it may be argued, is neither possible nor desirable, particularly in situations of racial discrimination, it would seem essential that there is awareness of these assumptions, in contrast to claiming false objectivity in the name of scientific inquiry.

With these criteria in mind, a critical review of the literature reveals an astonishing range of conceptualizations of similar phenomena.

Early approaches to the study of intergroup relations, especially race relations were characterised by: (1) the environmental explanations of the eighteenth century in which social behaviour was viewed as essentially related to climatic and geographic factors; (2) the Social Darwinist perspective which lent scientific rationale to racism and justified the harsh facts of social stratification in an attempt to reconcile them with the prevalent ideology of egalitarianism. The evolution of races based on their varying genetic capacities, were said to culminate in white European civilization. De Gobineau, a French aristocrat, and later Hitler, were among the protagonists of this view. The inherent differences among people were considered decisive in their inability to live together in harmony. Giddings' concept of "consciousness of kind" explained racial exclusiveness and accepted current notions about the instability of mixed races. (Giddings, 1908). Cooley argued that "two races of different temperament and capacity, distinct to the eye and

living side by side in the same community, tended strongly to become castes, no matter how equal the social systems may otherwise be" (Cooley, 1923:218). Stability was to be maintained only by keeping different groups separate from each other. (3) As a refutation of these . . . perspectives, there were a number of studies by social scientists, among them W.I. Thomas, R.E. Park, Margaret Mead, Ruth Benedict, Alport, Myrdal and Franklin Frazier, focusing on the social and cultural determinants of human behaviour.¹

Early theories of intergroup relations proverbially illustrate the fundamental features of the consensus model of society. In this perspective, norms and values are the basic binding forces of social life; from this commitment emerges; societies are necessarily cohesive and recognize legitimate authority; social life depends on solidarity; it is based on reciprocity and cooperation; social systems rest on consensus, are integrated and tend to persist (Cohen, 1966:166-167).

Apart from these writings in which ethnic relations are either not topical at all or in which ethnic antagonism is seen as a temporary disruption of the social order, due to insufficient integration and adjustment of newcomers, there now exists in the social sciences a much clearer focus on the origins and developments of ethnic conflict in different social settings. These explanations inevitably overlap, but it may be contended

1. For a more detailed discussion of these developments, refer P.L. van den Berghe (1974) and M. Banton (1967).

that six foci can be distinguished. Basic tenets of the six explanations may be characterised as: (1) theories of prejudice and discrimination, (2) assimilation theories, (3) stratification theories, (4) theories of plural societies, (5) minority group theories, (6) Marxist explanations, and (7) theories of realistic group conflict and resource competition in a split labour market.

1. Theories of Prejudice and Discrimination

This phase was characterised by a tendency to psychologize group relations into personality processes (Young, 1932; Simpson and Yinger, 1965; Van der Zanden, 1966 among others). The focus was on prejudice, which monopolised attention to the neglect of social and structural conditions. A tendency to start at the individual level and project attitudes of single persons into large scale social effects is evident, so that prejudice appears to be a prime mover in racial and ethnic problems. As has been demonstrated, if research has confirmed anything, it is that prejudice is a product of situations - historic, economic and political, "it is not a demon which emerges in people simply because they are deprived" (Schermerhorn, 1970:6). This is not to deny the importance of prejudice, but to show that it is not central to the explanation of race and ethnic relations. At best, it can perhaps be useful as a dependent or intervening variable (Raab and Lipset, 1959; Alport, 1954). The same applies to the focus on discrimination, "which although an advance from the subjective factor of 'prejudice' to a more objective level, has stronger undertones" (Simpson and Yinger, 1965:13-34). As a factor

in itself, discrimination is not very revealing, since it too bypasses the underlying structures which generate it.

While social psychological theories alone can hardly explain the rise of ethnic antagonism in situations determined by historical-structural conditions, these perspectives do give insights into the specific content of hostile attitudes and the varying degree of intensity with which they are held. Social psychological theories, particularly in the Freudian tradition, shed light as to why certain people are susceptible to hate and others in the same group resist such mobilization. Sumner's concept of ethnocentrism has been fruitfully utilized to analyze ingroup-outgroup relationships. Freud regarded ethnocentrism as narcissism at the group level. ~~For example~~ In his later "Civilization and its Discontents" Freud saw the social function of group narcissism as facilitating the displacement of aggression from ingroup to outgroup. Dollard (1939) assumed an innate potential of aggression due to the frustrations of constraining socialization in all human beings, the displacement of such aggressiveness away from the source onto some other object was seen as decisive (Dollard, 1939). The concept of projection, namely the attribution to others of unacceptable impulses within one's self, lends itself to convincing explanations of aversion, particularly when the outgroup is no real threat. The research on the "Authoritarian Personality" (Adorno, et al., 1950) revealed the background of the stereotypes in which the "strangers" are portrayed. By focusing on different child-rearing

practices and the severity of socialization, Adorno's work engendered a rich literature of cross-cultural studies of ethnic antagonism. While originally motivated by the virulent anti-Semitism which had become a gruesome state-doctrine but was also prevalent in anti-fascist Western countries, it soon became evident that the syndrome of scapegoating had little to do with Jewish behaviour or Jewish history. What emerges from Adorno's work is that the victims of collective aggression are interchangeable and can be redefined according to social needs and the historical constellation.

It is this socio-historical context which seems neglected in the prejudice studies. As Pettigrew (1958) has shown for the South African case, it is conformity pressure rather than mere authoritarian upbringing which accounts for the adherence to racial doctrines. Furthermore, the debate on the basic aggressiveness of all humans is far from being conclusive as yet. By assuming a potential aggressiveness as inevitable, only to be redirected into harmless channels, such as sport, many social scientists deny even the possibility of successful sublimation.

2. Assimilation Theories

Assimilation theories have held a very prominent position in American sociology. Very closely related to this was the use of the cyclical perspective. R.E. Park's "race relations cycle", contended that "In the relations of races there is a cycle of events which tends everywhere to repeat itself" (Park, 1950:150). It takes the form of "contact, competition, accommodation and eventual assimilation" (ibid.). Though the tempo may be slackened by the attitude of minority groups them-

selves, as well as by customs, regulations, immigration restrictions and racial barriers, its direction was considered unchangeable and irreversible (Park, 1950:150). In a similar vein, other attempts to construct cycles followed. E.S. Bogardus, based on his observation of Oriental and Mexican immigrants in California, proposed seven stages in the acculturation process: (1) curiosity, (2) economic welcome, (3) industrial and social antagonism, (4) legislative antagonism (5) fair play tendencies, (6) quiescence and (7) second generation difficulties (Bogardus, 1930:613). The same outcome seemed inevitable in W.O. Brown's cyclical view of race relations, which formulated a pattern in terms of (1) initial contact, (2) emergence of conflict, (3) temporary accommodation, (4) struggle for status, (5) mobilization and (6) solution (Brown, 1934:34-37; Kurokawa, 1970:6).

In elaborating the cyclical approach, Lieberman (1961:902-3) examines factors which could influence its inevitable path. The focus is on the power structure of migrant and indigenous groups, namely, "when a people migrating to a land is superior in technology and more tightly organised than the indigenous group, the migrant's political and economic institutions are usually imposed on the indigenous population." Furthermore, he argues that although conflict may be present in the initial stages, gradually the indigenous people participate in the institutions of the dominant group, as for example in the case of Europeans in South Africa, and Chinese in South East Asia. The converse is cited for situations where the migrant's political and economic institutions are in-

ferior to those of the indigenous people. If by the gradual participation of indigenous people in dominant institutions, Lieberman intended to convey the triumph of a form of consensus over conflict, this would be a facile explanation. The fact of the matter is, as Gluckman points out, it is money that keeps Africans in South Africa working (Gluckman, 1955); and as van den Berghe states more vividly, "The utter dependence (at a starvation or near starvation level) of the African masses on the 'white' economy in South Africa has been one of the main inhibiting factors...." (van den Berghe, 1965:82). The ingenious amount of repressive legislation in South Africa would bear testimony to the potentially seething conflict which exists.

To the list of influencing factors Schermerhorn adds the following variables: (1) the congruence of prior value systems of groups which come into contact with each other; (2) the relative power of the host group vis a vis the migrants' and (3) the legitimacy of this power relationship (Schermerhorn, 1964:238-246). These ideas are more specifically examined by Warner and Srole in their research on Northern and Southern Blacks, as well as Spanish and the Oriental Americans in Yankee City.

The subordinate groups were ranked within the larger social hierarchy, in terms of the degree of subordination each would experience, the likelihood for the development of a racial or ethnic sub-system, and finally an attempt to predict the approximate time necessary for assimilation. They postulate that, "The greater the racial and cultural differences between the host and immigrant groups, the greater will be

the subordination, the greater the strength of the ethnic social system, the longer the period necessary for the assimilation" (Warner & Srole, 1945:289; Kurokawa, 1970). Overemphasis of racial and ethnic differences which seems so closely linked to the assimilation theories has been frequently questioned. Lemberg sees such "differences" as mere "signals" to which conflicting groups orient themselves. Since the actual cause of the conflict lies elsewhere, usually in a particular socio-economic situation, such "differences" are seen as interchangeable (Lemberg, 1974:43).

Preoccupation with "assimilation" as the inevitable and desirable outcome of intergroup contact is perhaps one of the best indices of the impact of the liberal, consensus orientation in sociological theory, especially in the North American context. With the exception of Louis Wirth (1945) who designated different types of minorities to be discussed later, few perceived of an end result other than a consensual assimilationism. Myrdal in "American Dilemma" similarly saw no impediments structural or otherwise to the assimilation of blacks into American society. The "logical imperatives" of industrialization, namely modernization, urbanization and literacy were considered to lead to elimination of racism (Myrdal, 1944). Even as late as 1963, Everett Hughes in referring to the fate of the Blacks in the U.S. said, "Negro Americans want to disappear as a defined group....They want to be seen neither as Negroes nor as if they were not; but as if it did not matter" (Hughes, 1963:883).

Theories of assimilation assume that migration and mobility for black and white immigrants are the same (Grove, 1974:4). Similarly it is assumed that the political and economic systems offer equal opportunities for structural assimilation¹ to black and white ethnics. Since cultural assimilation is hardly possible without structural assimilation, the concept has questionable value to start with. Furthermore, the fact that as early American studies show, even European immigrants who "appear" to have assimilated externally reveal patterns of resistance to total assimilation when their group structures are examined, undermines the concept even further (Whyte, 1943; Useem, 1945; Gans, 1962).

3. Stratification Theories

Another trend prevalent in the literature on intergroup relations is the use of stratification as a perspective for viewing such relations. This largely entailed group categorization on the basis of subjective and objective criteria. Warner's depiction of the impenetrable barrier between White and Black residents of Yankee City as class and caste is the classic example (Warner, 1963). More recently Mazrui (1970:23) talks of changes in the status of the Black on the national level in terms of a promotion from "the status of a lower caste to a lower class".

1. The term structural assimilation refers to the degree to which major societal institutions are open to subordinate groups, whereas cultural assimilation refers to the acculturation process, that is learning the norms of the majority culture (Gordon, 1964). As Hilda Kuper puts it, "cultural assimilation is largely a reciprocal of political dominance, and those who are supposed to assimilate the culture of others are in fact expected to subordinate the culture that was their own." (Kuper, 1971).

In elaborating, he acknowledges that, "The change in immediate comforts is negligible. But there is probably a major change in potential social and occupational mobility; and that is precisely what differentiates class status from caste status." (ibid). The aptness of this categorization has been contested by Cox who argues that the term "caste" implies a measure of acquiescence in the subordinate position which is inaccurate for the position of Blacks in the U.S. (Cox, 1959). Schermerhorn also distinguished "castes" and "classes" in terms of the former's frozen uncontested social hierarchy and the latter as always involved in active struggle for upward mobility (Schermerhorn, 1970). However, the extent to which castes are said to accept their position of subordination vis-a-vis higher castes in the Indian caste system may well be questioned in light of caste rebellion and demands for higher statuses by whole castes (Berreman, 1972:393-7).

Along much the same lines as Warner, Parsons (1954:424) points to the tendency for ethnicity to "preserve independent pyramids in the more general system" with their own distinctive set of norms and values, setting off an interactive relationship between both groups during which a process of mutual adaptation takes place.

Shibutani and Kwan in Ethnic Stratification, attempt to develop a comprehensive theory of inter-ethnic contacts and present generalizations in order "to explain diverse and apparently unrelated episodes as manifestations of the same recurrent processes" (1965:V). Their work

represents an interesting shift in emphasis in the literature on ethnic relations from discrimination and prejudice to analysis in processual, interactionist terms. Their explanatory framework draws heavily on R.E. Park's "race relations cycle", to afford theoretical and historical comparison. As such, it shares many of the shortcomings of Park's approach. Ethnic stratification is analysed in terms of four basic processes, and the volume, for the most part, is devoted to an elaboration of these differentiating, sustaining, disjunctive and integrative processes. "Differentiating" processes are concerned with differentiation of social systems along ethnic and economic lines and the development of group consciousness and legitimate authority. "Sustaining" processes relate to the value integrative dimensions of the social order, accommodative processes, sanctions and regulatory institutions. The distinction between "differentiating" and "sustaining" processes is, however, hardly clear. "Disjunctive" processes are those which develop when ethnic groups are opposed to one another on the basis of nationalism, conflict, or social change. One is left with the impression that the authors would like to wish away this aspect of intergroup relations, and offer their readership a more peaceful viewing: "Much of the current interest in race relations," they say, "arises from concern over tension and conflict. The extended periods during which people in different ethnic categories live together in peace and mutual respect tends to be overlooked...Because of their spectacular character, bombings, assassinations, riots, guerilla warfare, lynchings and pogroms attract a disproportionate share of attention, and even historians tend to focus upon

these outbreaks of violence which are episodic and ephemeral and constitute but a small part of what happens in the contact of peoples" (Shibutani, 1965:34). What is not considered is the possibility that these outbursts may be of great importance for transcending the superficial spectacular aspects and may be vital indices of how strongly people feel, as well as the underlying conditions generating such conflict. This is clearly the bias of the authors who define as their major concern in studying disjunctive processes the desire to establish "the characteristic patterns of individual and collective behaviour that develop when different ethnic groups are opposed to one another" (ibid.). The more fundamental issue of why they are opposed to each other and the sources of their opposition are neglected. Finally, the fourth process which is a result of the three foregoing, is the integrative process, with its inevitable and natural outcome of assimilation and acculturation. The authors focus on value differences as a central concern, thus: "conflict arises when people in different categories pursue incompatible values" (ibid.). They fail to see values as symptomatic of specific social conditions with their rootedness in social reality. They view conflict as a transitional phenomenon: "When the degree of institutionalization of stratification systems is low" (ibid.). This stems from a perspective stressing assimilation as inevitable: "Assimilation is a phenomenon found in all cases of inter-ethnic contacts in which one group does not exterminate the other, for example, Irish, Poles, Jews, Italians, Chinese, Mexicans" (ibid.). The exclusion (either

consciously or otherwise) from this list of Native Indians and Blacks, raises unanswered questions, and undermines the validity of such categorical statements.

The concept of "Ethnic Stratification", while encompassing a wide range of useful and informative data, nevertheless, have a number of shortcomings. (1) The wishful thinking of Park's "race relations cycle" with its faith in the assimilability of ethnic groups, stability and integration, is strongly perpetuated in this work. The inevitable sequence toward the finale of assimilation is over-simplified.¹ (2) The emphasis on order, integration, consensus, peaceful co-existence and compromise, as against conflict and active articulation of dissent as the desirable state, reveal a bias. Statements such as the following are revealing: "In stable societies minority people are either reasonably satisfied with their lot, or do not dare challenge the order" (Shibutani, 1965:342). In the case of Indians in stable South Africa neither reaction is evident. (3) In keeping with the rest of the work, the conclusions focus strongly on epiphenomena, such as "superstitious beliefs", "social distance" and "cultural differences" as being responsible for poor intergroup relations. For example: Intergroup problems will be overcome as "more accurate knowledge" overcomes "superstitious beliefs", (588), and "whenever social distance is reduced,

1. Many of the criticisms which O.C. Cox levelled at Park are also applicable to this work (Cox, 1959:462-74).

individuals recognise their resemblances. The basic differences between ethnic groups are cultural and conventional norms which serve as masks to cover the similarities" (589). The analysis fails to come to grips with the fundamental social and material reality which generates these "beliefs" and "social distance". Knowledge which is to change peoples attitudes does not arise in a vacuum.

A more fruitful approach on a closely related topic is that taken by Stavenhagen (1965) in analysing ethnic relations in Mexico and Guatemala, in which he adds more to the understanding of relations between economy and society. Ethnic stratification is seen as a result of historical evolution and interethnic relations are viewed as being backed by a social class structure. Without simplifying a highly complex problem, underlying labour relations are probed in situations of interethnic contact. In the final analysis, Stavenhagen isolates four elements: colonial relationships, class relationships, social stratification and the acculturation process, and treats them as interdependent variables.

As a perspective for viewing intergroup relations, in particular the differences between class, caste, ethnic and racial divisions, stratification theory has tended to be rather unyielding. At best studies tend to be descriptive, with no analysis of the rationale for such uniformities in subjective perception which are said to exist. Shibutani and Kwan, for instance, specify the different forms of ethnic identity,

yet fail to analyse the sociological implications of such differences. John Rex (1970), in rejecting the value of the stratification approach to race relations, points to the absence of "universal" societal standards. Instead he refers to the existence of internal standards of various ethnic groups. This is especially prevalent in colonial societies where the absence of shared values is most noticeable. Such consensually agreed value patterns appear to have significance solely within the constituent segments of society (Rex, 1970:18). Furthermore, the role of power in defining perceptions of differential status has been neglected.

4. Pluralist Theory

The theory of the plural society, with its focus on cultural and institutional variation as the major force determining social organisation and social change, has consequently gained some impetus. Initially proposed by J.S. Furnivall (1939), on the basis of his research in South East Asia, it has since been developed by M.G. Smith (1969), P. van den Berghe (1967) and Leo Kuper (1969), among others. Furnivall describes the characteristic features of plural society as follows: (1) a society comprising disparate ethnic categories which live side by side, though individuals of differing ethnicity meet only in the market place, (2) each ethnic category occupies a particular place in the economic structure and economic relations predominate over all other aspects of life; and (3) the component sections of the populations do not have a common "social will" or commonly agreed set of values for checking and guiding social action. The society is therefore held together only by external coercive power,

usually, though not necessarily, that of a foreign government (Furnivall, 1939:199-204). To Furnivall, pluralistic society derived from the disintegration of native cultures under the impact of capitalism, which he saw as being virtually synonymous with colonialism. One permanent form of the disruption of native life was the substitution of the capitalist physical structure of existence -- the introduction of the city as the centre of productive life -- for the system of villages serving largely self-sufficient agricultural communities. This strain toward centralization in colonialism is the basis of pluralism (Cox, 1971:389). Thus the critical characteristic of plural society is the distinct pattern of economic behaviour inherent to colonialists and natives, the political force in the situation being the colonial government. While the initial application of the idea of the plural society was specifically in relation to colonial societies, it was gradually extended to give it applicability to all culturally heterogeneous societies. The later view conceived of almost any cultural difference in social groups as a basis of pluralism.

These subsequent attempts by modern sociologists to develop this perspective, have largely been based on interpretations and misinterpretations of Furnivall. M.G. Smith, one of the leading protagonists of the idea of the plural society, begins by saying that Furnivall "saw clearly that...economic pluralism was simply an aspect of the social pluralism of these colonies" (Smith, 1965:75). As mentioned earlier, Furnivall said precisely the opposite: he saw social organisation as a direct con-

sequence of the economics of colonialism. Hence Smith takes the argument back one step, and attempts to conceptualise "cultural pluralism", as distinct from "social pluralism". This is done by examining the difference between society and culture, which he concludes are coterminous (Smith, 1960:768). According to this view, society is defined as a political unit rather than a socio-cultural one. As such it has its own territorial area and governmental institutions. The plural society distinguishes itself from non-plural societies in that it is a political unit of a specific type, namely, one that contains culturally distinct groups or sections.

To clarify this distinction, Smith focuses on different types of institutions in which various sectors participate. Institutions are considered important in that they represent "the core of culture", and constitute concrete isolates of organised behaviour. Each institution involves set forms of activity, grouping, rules, ideas and values. The total system of institutions thus embraces three interdependent systems of action, of idea, value and of social relations" (ibid:767). Three main types of institutions have been delineated, "compulsory", "alternative" and "exclusive". "Compulsory" institutions are those in which all members of a society must participate, such as kinship, education, religion, property economy and recreation. "Alternative" institutions are those in which the individual has some choice to participate, for example, associational or community membership. Finally, "exclusive" institutions are those in which one participates by belonging to a

socially recognised category, such as an occupational or professional group (ibid.).

On the basis of these institutions three different types of societies are distinguished: (1) Homogeneous societies, in which "compulsory" institutions are shared by all (preliterate societies). (2) Heterogeneous societies -- those in which culturally different groups within a single political unit, share the same "compulsory" institutions but participate in different systems of "alternate" and "exclusive" institutions, (modern societies such as the U.S.A.), and (3) Plural societies, as those in which groups living within a single political unit participate in very different systems of "compulsory" institutions. These groups are regarded as being "culturally" different and are referred to as "cultural sections". They are said to participate only minimally in the overall economic and political sector and are otherwise highly exclusive. These characteristics are particularly pronounced in colonial societies and newly independent states. Hence "cultural pluralism" is used to describe situations where several ethnic groups or distinguishable varieties of the same cultural tradition may be differentiated. "Social pluralism" is used when such differentiation obtains on a basis other than culture. It would seem, then, that social pluralism would be most likely in an heterogeneous society and cultural pluralism in a plural society. Although cultural pluralism is invariably accompanied by social pluralism, the latter can be found in the nearly total absence of cultural pluralism.

All three types of societies display some form of differentiation. Plural societies consist of distinct groups, which may or may not be cultural. Homogeneous societies may be divided into corporate groups such as unilineal descent groups, and heterogeneous societies into functionally specialized groups. However, homogeneous and heterogeneous societies differ from the plural type, insofar as the homogeneous society represents a unitary institutional structure, and heterogeneous society a complementary and interrelated structure. The plural society by contrast distinguishes itself from the foregoing types by a social structure which is compartmentalised into similar yet distinguishable sets of institutions.

This description throws little light on the real distinction between homogeneous, plural and heterogeneous societies. The delineation of "homogeneous" society is highly dubious. If looked at closely, a so-called homogeneous society can also be seen to display considerable distinctions among its members, on the basis of social class or status differences, as will be illustrated for the case of South African Indians. Smith attempts to clarify his societal types on the basis of the different types of institutional participation, but on the whole, little is elucidated by these. The problem would then shift to the question -- when is an institution compulsory? To any particular culture all its institutions can be said to be basic or compulsory. Even if one makes the distinction for analytical purposes, this does not explain the different types of "compulsory" institutions which must obtain for homogeneous, heterogeneous and plural societies. Hence the main short-

coming of this institutional approach for the investigation of Indian political behaviour is that it tends to be merely classificatory, and is based on external appearance instead of examining the interactive relationships that obtain between categories.

Furthermore, Smith points out that the plural society distinguishes itself by the specific arrangement of its cultural heterogeneity. All the cultural units, although autonomous, are bound together politically into a single polity. Such cultural diversity or pluralism is said to impose the structural necessity for domination by one of the cultural sections, usually a cultural minority. The integration of these various units is said to take place, not on a voluntary basis, but either by coercion or by force of economic circumstances. In the interests of the political unity of the whole, the former political institutions of the subordinate groups are inevitably repressed by the dominant minority. Given this situation, where there is hardly any value consensus, the social relations within the cultural groups become highly exclusive and introverted, while social relations between groups deteriorate into an impersonal secondary type of contact. Conflict is inevitable according to the plural model. The very independence of the cultural sections could spell the dissolution of the entire society and the struggle for power between cultural sections assumes new dimensions and varies with changes in the structure of their relationships.

In summary, the following features characterize the plural model and are present in varying degrees: (1) cultural heterogeneity, (2) absence

of value consensus, (3) autonomy of the cultural sections, (4) sectional domination, usually by a minority, (5) conflict, (6) economic interdependence and coercion as bases of social integration, and (7) primary ties within the groups and secondary ties between groups.

Several of these theoretical assumptions may be questioned:

(1) It is doubtful whether cultural diversity or pluralism inevitably impose the structural necessity for domination by a cultural minority. It could just as readily impose the necessity for equal representation of the various cultural sections. (2) The degree of autonomy of these cultural sections can be questioned, since they participate in common economic and political institutions and are subject to their dictates, particularly in industrialized, interdependent societies, such as South Africa. Inclusion of Blacks in the labour market with its own demands, makes the cultural autonomy of the pre-industrial sector a waning phenomena. However, there are also counter-trends. In an early formulation of his theory of cultural pluralism, M.G. Smith (1965:63,89) stressed the primacy of cultural differences for the development of racial stratification, which was assumed to diminish with greater cultural uniformity. However, as L. Kuper (1975:27) has noted and the South African case clearly demonstrates, the racial hierarchy may indeed, become more salient, the more acculturation takes place. Cultural differences are stressed by the ruling group because members of the subject race have increasingly acquired the dominant culture and based on these values, lay claim to its privileges. (3) The overemphasis on coercion and force of

economic circumstances as the only integrative forces underestimate the role of voluntary associations in linking people from different cultural sectors. Leo Kuper (1969:169-93), for instance, in exploring avenues for peaceful change in white settler societies refers to the role of "individuating processes" which arise from the creation of new interracial structures in the economic, political, educational, religious and recreational spheres in South Africa. (4) Throughout the literature on pluralism, there is an underlying trend that "cultural diversity" is the main source of societal instability, that the colonial powers had served the purpose of holding together societies wracked by very real cleavages, and that only an external power was capable of containing them. This argument fails to note the role of neo-colonialism, in also perpetuating various cleavages for its own interests. To a large extent, colonial powers were able to extend their influence in their former colonies by playing on ethnic susceptibilities (Geertz, 1969).

Furthermore, ethnic conflicts are hardly viewed as being related to questions of material equality, equal opportunities for all, justice and discrimination. In short, the economic sector, the changing mode of production, is largely excluded from the analysis, or at best added as another variable and not as a constituent of ethnic cleavages. Cultural differences, and more especially the importance attached to such differences, are seldom conceived of as a rationalizing ideology for colonialism, but as constituting a force in its own right.

To conclude this discussion of the pluralist model: it shares the limitations of the normative functionalist approach in the study of social phenomena. It tends to be static instead of dynamic, a descriptive categorization rather than an analysis of process. There is no discussion of how or why plural society comes into existence, how it is maintained, why it changes into heterogeneous society or by what steps. What is needed is a more dynamic, less abstract and more concrete conception of society.

5. Minority Group Theories

Another perspective is the set of theories focusing on differing situations of minorities. Apart from being wider in scope than other race relations studies, they include racial, colonial and plural situations and give priority to the notion of conquest, coercion and political domination (Rex, 1970:24). Sociological literature is laden with discussions of an infinite variety of subordinate or minority groups, distinguishable on the basis of ethnicity, race, sex and economic underprivilege, to mention only a few. Furthermore, the patterns are equally wide ranging if the historical contexts are considered. Underlying all this variety, however, are several basic criteria which make a distinction between a minority and a majority useful from a sociological point of view. Minorities are usually identifiable on the basis of some physical or cultural characteristics; they are treated as collectively inferior or defined as sufficiently different culturally to justify unequal treatment; they are objectively excluded from full participation in the society and are accorded differential access to the rewards of social

structure. Members of the minority regard themselves as objects of collective discrimination with negative implications for their own self-perception. Schermerhorn (1970) introduces group size as worthwhile to isolate. He distinguishes minority groups which are numerically small from those that are more numerous. Hence the distinction, minority group for the former, and mass subjects or mass ethnics for the latter. Above all, the dimension of "power" is crucial in minority-majority delineation (Gelfand, 1973:10), and has all too often been neglected.¹ It is this which makes the numerical factor of group size of secondary importance.

Early American studies of minority groups were generally considered little more than ephemeral and having little more than exotic value. Essentially, the study of minority groups was frowned upon as a temporary phenomenon whose only value lay perhaps in understanding how the process of acculturation was taking place in order to accelerate it. The underlying assumption was that in the course of time, alien minorities would be inevitably integrated. The tendency on the part of many classical social theorists was to emphasise the integrative nature of industrialization, which would thereby lead to the formation of a national society. The "logical imperatives" of industrialization were considered to automatically dissolve

1. As P.L. van den Berghe points out for related American literature, of all articles on intergroup relations in the *American Sociological Review* over three decades, between 1939-69, less than 5% addressed themselves to this aspect (P.L. van den Berghe, 1974:8).

elements of traditional culture and life style, in favour of the universalistic rationality of the host industrial society. Hence the preoccupation with the cyclical approaches discussed earlier.

A more differentiated perspective from the cyclical approach was that of Louis Wirth. He formulated a typology of the four minority responses to subordination: pluralist, secessionist, assimilationist and militant and saw these as being successive stages. While Wirth's contribution in categorizing different responses has been widely acclaimed -- hardly any textbook fails to refer to his contribution -- there have been several criticisms. (1) Wirth tends to cast minorities in the role of protagonist on the historical scene. They themselves are endowed with initiative in choosing a course that leads either to full assimilation in the host society or secession from it, and the establishment of independent political power. The achievement or non-achievement of these goals is viewed as being dependent on the host society's response to the minority's own initiative and movement. (2) If the four stages are systematically related to one another, they are likely to be more fruitful for analysis of problems of conflict and integration in ethnic relations (Schermerhorn, 1970:78). (3) Wirth's suggestion that the advance of science and the trend toward secularism would reduce intergroup prejudice has not materialised (Tobias and Woodhouse, 1969:2). (4) He limits his observations to the reactions of minority groups while neglecting those of the superordinates. Equal attention should be paid to the latter, since it is the interaction be-

tween subordinates and superordinate groups which should be the focus of a thorough study. In this respect, the following are seen as important questions: what do dominant groups prefer subordinates to attain? Does the view of the dominant group coincide with or contradict the aims of the subordinate group in the same society (Schermerhorn, 1970: 78-79)? (5) Wirth failed to make clear the distinction between culture and social structure. He seemed preoccupied with problems of acculturation such as borrowing cultural items and appropriating life styles. His categories of "assimilation" and "pluralism" focus on cultural differences rather than on social structure. Goals and aims are viewed as norms to be fulfilled and the whole analysis in these terms portrays a diffuse relationship between the individual and the social whole, with the behaviour patterns of the individual caught up by a process of social osmosis from the total society. No intermediaries such as associations or institutions receive adequate attention in this perspective. The other two categories, "secession" and "militancy", imply "very definite social structures and can hardly be conceived without explicit changes of groups and institutions in those structures." (Schermerhorn, 1970: 81). Difficulties therefore arise when applying these "cultural" categories to conditions where "structural" features are more relevant.¹

Attempts to understand the forces and conditions affecting ethnic re-

1. For further statement of inadequacies of the typological approach in general, see van den Berghe 1967:25.

lations and boundary maintenance of each group have been made by Kurt Lewin (Lewin, 1948). His concern with social boundaries led to the formulation of a typology of the centrifugal and centripetal forces operating in society; namely, the forces holding a member within his group through retention of his identification. Irwin Rinder extended the study of centripetal and centrifugal forces by taking into account the degree of acceptance or non-acceptance of the subordinate group by the superordinate group. He rejects as simplistic, previous theories correlating the incidence of a high or impermeable boundary with strong group identification, retained by the subordinate group (Rinder, 1965:5). Instead he sees centrifugal forces as being representative of the acceptance of the minority group by the dominant group and, conversely, where the level of discrimination by the superordinate group is high, members are not able to break through the boundary. The theme of centripetal and centrifugal forces in group relationships have also appeared in the work of Schermerhorn, Barth, Peter Rose, and Milton Yinger. They tend, however, to evolve from the more general cyclical approach to the more qualified typological approach, with greater concern about specific conditions affecting intergroup relations.

Although the study of minority groups has, over the past few decades, received considerable attention, there is relatively little knowledge of the subject that can be called theoretical in the fullest sense. Blalock and Schermerhorn specifically addressed themselves to this question.

In Toward a Theory of Minority Group Relations, Blalock (1967) attempts to integrate empirical studies of race and ethnic relations with concepts and theories drawn from general areas of sociology and social psychology. Ninety-seven propositions are presented to account for minority relations as a special class of social phenomena. The sources of these propositions are diverse, but for the most part rest on special theories constructed to account for limited classes of events, such as Frustration-Aggression theory, Nieboer's theory about socio-economic conditions that facilitate slavery, the coalition theories of Caplow and Gamson, Atkinson's approach to motivation theory, the notion of power and the concept of "status consciousness" which is developed as a sub-part of the broader notion of "status concern". From these, Blalock deduces single propositions grouped around what he considers areas of major significance such as Socio-Economic Factors and Discrimination, Competition and Discrimination, Power and Discrimination, and Minority Percentage and Discrimination. Deductions are made from a plurality of special theories and the deductions are organized around specific themes. Discrepancies which might develop from such an approach are largely resolved by a set of common assumptions about causal relations which would seem to stem from a unity of outlook in general theory which he does not fully articulate. However, Blalock's obvious preference for explanation based on conflict theory gives a coherence and internal consistency to his whole set of propositions that are noteworthy -- they are systematic, precise and most compelling articulators of power and conflict analysis, as applied to minority relations. This use of

empirical studies would appear to be guides to suggest the theory as in most instances evidence is too meagre to offer substantial support for the theory.

While not all major aspects of race and ethnic relations are covered by this propositional approach, his restatement of coalition-formation theory, his conceptualization of power and elaboration of social psychological mechanisms, make for wide applicability which extends beyond the area of race and ethnic relations. To imply that four power variables could provide the basic organisation around which a theoretical framework might be developed is, as Blalock himself acknowledges (1967:191), somewhat premature. While the systematic and precise enumeration and correlation of items is useful, it has limited usage in comprehending the totality of minority behaviour. In much the same way as a sound comprehension of individual behaviour or small group behaviour does not necessarily guarantee a grasp of societal behaviour, Blalock's somewhat reductionist approach has little broader value, apart from its obvious intrinsic value. What is lacking is an historical, interpretive and more dynamic approach. Only then could it be more useful for comparative work.

Schermerhorn (1965) in his **article** , "Toward a General Theory of Minority Groups", likewise attempts "to sketch the underlying features of the minority situation" in order to permit comparative cross cultural analysis (238). He analyses observations of certain "sub-forms of a

wider classification...termed cultural subordinates"(ibid), which are set off from the rest of the population by two dimensions: cultural distinctiveness and subjection. He sees these dimensions of diversity and power as being important to separate for analyses: (1) the pre-contact phase should be examined, to see whether the values of both groups are congruent or incongruent, since he sees this as directly related to the amount of potential conflict, constraint or submission. (2) The contact phase as independent variable -- in terms of power relationship between both groups in the resulting interaction. Intervening variable -- perceptions of groups in terms of legitimacy/illegitimacy give rise to ideologies. Dependent variable -- mode of action adopted and set of responses to power. In addition to deductive features of the intergroup arena, inductive elements must be obtained by inspection for which he suggests three foci: (a) types of domination or control, (b) forms of cumulative directionability, and (c) patterns of stratification.

In summary, Schermerhorn overstresses the importance of cultural values and differences between subordinate and superordinate groups. His central postulate of intergroup relations is: "To the extent that the relations between two groups with different cultural or life histories and of unequal power in any society display conflict, this conflict will tend to be greater to the extent that the values of the two groups are incongruent; conversely, the relations will be more harmonious to the extent that the values of the two groups are congruent " (ibid:245). To

focus on values as vital differences between groups and as the basis for cleavage is to by-pass more fundamental differences such as the economic position of the groups, and their varying interests. To point to cultural and life histories as underlying so-called value differences and use this as explanation for cleavages in society tends to neglect the structure in which ideologies have taken their specific shape. Hence any theory which attempts to understand minority group relations, by concerning itself only with differences in value to explain subordinate and superordinate relations, would seem to have a questionable point of departure.

In his subsequent more detailed work Comparative Ethnic Relations: A Framework for Theory and Research, Schermerhorn (1970) attempts to develop a series of conceptual tools for scientific exploration, as he describes it, "to facilitate more productive results in future research." He begins with a discussion of consensus and conflict theories, concluding that neither is adequate without some consideration of the other. Integration is then analysed in terms of (1) legitimation, (2) cultural congruence, and (3) common or discrepant goal definitions. As in his earlier article, the role of value congruence between subordinate and superordinate groups would appear central. His assumption seems simplistic: "When the ethos of the subordinates has values common to those in the ethos of the superordinates integration (co-ordination of objectives) will be facilitated; when the values are contrasting or contradictory, integration will be obstructed." (72)

The values Schermerhorn speaks of are frequently, as Dahrendorf has pointed out, "ruling values" and so-called value differences can always be seen to exist, even though there may be little basis in social reality, if it is in the interests of the ruling group. Five sequential patterns of ethnic relations, relating to racism and pluralism are discussed by Schermerhorn: (1) emergence of Pariahs, (2) emergence of indigenous isolates, (3) annexation, (4) migration, and (5) colonization. These are not very elucidative and tend to be categorical in nature however. Concluding inductive generalizations are for the most part poorly substantiated, for example, vertical racism...is always a product of coercive domination. The reverse is certainly not always true: the brutal conquests of Spanish America, for example, resulted in either mild or non-existent forms of racism, and the type of annexation practiced by Russia 'did not result in a colour line or racist ideology'(ibid:156).

On the whole, the indecisiveness of the author, his tendency to vacillate from a macro-sociological approach to a micro-sociological approach in order to arrive at middle range theories, is less elucidating than it might be. His dabbling with concepts of power and conflict, while at the same time overstressing the importance of value congruence makes for a general lack of clarity. If he had methodically addressed himself to the question he posed initially as the central question to which comparative research in ethnic relations should seek answers, viz: "What are the conditions that foster or prevent the integration of

ethnic groups into their environing societies?" this work would have been more useful.

The theories of minority groups outlined share the following similarities: (1) they emphasize the importance of cross-cultural comparative analysis, which represents a considerable improvement on earlier trends in sociology and anthropology, where the tendency has been to focus on homogeneous groups. (2) With the exception of Blalock, all studies have integrated a strong historical perspective. (3) Almost all the studies reject in one form or other the traditional consensus or equilibrium model for analysis.

5. Marxist Explanations

A general characteristic of Marxist writing on race and ethnicity is the lack of recognition of the problem. Marx had assumed that increasing class polarization would "solve" the national questions by cross-cutting the false consciousness of ethnic chauvinism. The few Marxists who deviated from this official doctrine based their explanations of the persistence of racial and ethnic antagonism on three assumptions. (1) The specific structural context, in particular the capitalist system and its social relations of production, is decisive for the presence of racialist practice. In less advanced capitalist countries problems of race relations are said to be insignificant or absent. (2) Social class which emerges from occupying a similar position in the production process is based on common interests and unity among workers against the oppressive bourgeoisie. The essential contradictions between both

classes provide the dynamic which gives rise to higher levels of class consciousness. (3) Race and ethnicity are said to wither away in the course of the class struggle because of their relative irrelevance as epiphenomena. What would emerge instead is an overriding class consciousness based on a unity of interests. One of the most prominent protagonists of this perspective is O.C. Cox (1959), who argued exactly this position for the situation of the black worker in the U.S.

Eugene Genovese (1968, 1974) writes along much the same lines. His study of the American South in which the system of production was based on race is reflective of a more undogmatic Marxist view however. He points to the differing accommodation of ethnic as opposed to racial minorities. Such factors had been hitherto underestimated, considering the European bias of Marxian theory. Furthermore, racial and ethnic antagonisms which stand in the way of working class solidarity despite their common class positions tend to be inadequately elucidated by simple economic explanations. How, for instance, could the absence of unity between black and white workers in South Africa be explained by such a model apart from the somewhat inane "false consciousness" explanation? The distinction between race and ethnicity had to be made, especially as colonial contexts were examined. Hence, Genovese argues strongly against the tendency to view Blacks simply "as an exploited class or...as one of a number of ethnic groups...which capitalism has oppressed in various ways" (1968:220). Instead he

stresses that the black question must be seen as one of class and nationalism, if one is not to "blur the unique and central quality of the black experience in the United States" (ibid.).

In order to fill the existing theoretical vacuum, Blauner (1969) presents the model of "internal colonialism". He rejects "class analysis" as an inadequate perspective for explaining race and racism in America, and acknowledges that his suggested model differs from the classical colonial model historically and socio-politically in four respects.

(1) Whereas classical colonialism referred to the establishment of political and economic domination over a geographically external political unit, inhabited by culturally and racially different people, this is not entirely the case in the United States. Geographical separation of the colony is absent in the extreme external sense.

(2) The usual pattern was for the colony to exist subordinate to and be dependent upon the mother country which exploits land, raw materials, labour and other resources of the colonized. Although Blacks continue to be exploited, this did not involve the permanent settlement of large numbers of Whites in any land unequivocally black. (3) In the classical colonial model, recognition is given to differences in power, autonomy and political status, and official agencies and political institutions are set up to maintain this subordination. This is clearly not so in the U.S. and never has been the case.¹ (4) Whereas the

1. This would seem however to ignore the presence of slavery in U.S. history.

ideal-type pattern of colonial reactions involved the control and exploitation of a majority by a minority of outsiders, the black oppressed, on the contrary, were themselves originally outsiders and a numerical minority (1969:139).

However, while acknowledging the differences between the classical colonial model and the "internal colonialism" of Blacks in the U.S., Blauner considers the existing similarities more important for meaningful comprehension of the situation. Four basic components of the colonization complex are seen as relevant to the position of Blacks: (1) Forced involuntary entry, which in the case of Blacks began with the occurrence of slavery. (2) The impact of colonial policy which constrains, confirms and destroys indigenous culture and social organisation of the colonized, which supercedes "natural" processes of contact and acculturation. (3) The administration of the colonized by representatives of the dominant group, which the colonized experience as manipulation and management,¹ and (4) racism, which has generally accompanied colonialism as a principle of social domination and bases its exploitation on alleged biological characteristics (140). While Blauner concedes that other ethnic groups have also lived in ghettos, he points to three special features distinguishing black ghettos as an expression of

1. This would appear to contradict Blauner's earlier point about the absence of official agencies and political institutions to maintain subordination, although he might argue that these are informal not official.

colonized status. (1) Generally speaking ethnic ghettos arose more from voluntary choice in the sense of migrating to America, and the decision to live among fellow ethnics. (2) Immigrant ghettos tend to be one and two generation phenomena, leading inevitably to acculturation and assimilation, and (3) European ethnic groups generally experience a brief period of relative poverty, often less than a generation. Blacks are distinct insofar as their segregated communities have remained controlled from the outside (397). An historical comparison of the forms which colonialism has taken and a description of the position of Blacks in the U.S. economy make "internal colonialism" an apt model to describe race and ethnic relations more fully. The economic relations of the ghetto to white America, closely parallel those between third world countries and the industrially advanced countries. It has been suggested that the distortion of the local economy caused by outside ownership, can be compared to the creation of underdevelopment in external colonies, through processes described by Gunder Frank (1967).

If, however, one were to draw logical conclusions from this perspective, freedom for blacks would be concomitant with independence of the black sector through black autonomy from white society. It is here that the model of "internal colonialism" displays its greatest shortcoming. Independence in the colonial sense, or in the case of the U.S., black autonomy from the white community, would be meaningful, only if it is within a context where it can enforce demands for the transfer of

significant resources. Alternatively Blacks, as implied in the Apartheid programme of geographical partition in S.A., would be in a situation of greater poverty, left with their labour power and little else. It is this reality which makes "class analysis", in particular the concept of "marginal working class", so much more meaningful since at this point the differences between Blacks and other minorities become minimal. Effectiveness in this area would be dependent on the ability to create alliances with other groups to pressure for common goals.

6. Theories of a Split Labour Market

In response to the need for a developed theory of ethnic antagonism, Bonacich (1972) presents a very carefully reasoned, widely applicable and most fruitful theory of ethnic antagonism. In contrast to earlier views on ethnic antagonism which sought explanation in diverse factors such as religion of dominant groups, norms, values and differences in skin colour, Bonacich sees economic processes as most fundamental. Central to her theoretical scheme is the idea of the split labour market which sees conflict developing between three key classes: business, higher paid labour and cheaper labour (553). Factors affecting the dynamics of such constellations are carefully scrutinised. Ethnic antagonism is said to first germinate in a labour market in which immigrant workers are introduced at a lower wage level. Two groups of workers are differentially remunerated for the same work. Factors which determine the price of immigrant labour are: (1) level of

living or economic resources, (2) information on which immigrants base their expectations -- the best example of this being the case of indentured labourers who accept conditions of employment in the home country before they have seen the host country, (3) political resources, namely the group's organisational skills and the extent to which they can bring pressure to bear from their home countries, (4) motives for working permanently or temporarily and their influence on likely labour disputes, and finally (5) differences in skill.

Ethnic antagonism is presented as taking two antithetical forms: exclusion movements such as the former policy adopted by Australia toward Asian immigrants, caste-like systems, such as South African Apartheid. "Caste is essentially an aristocracy of labour in which higher paid labour deals with the undercutting potential of cheaper labour by excluding them from certain types of work" (ibid:555).

This is illustrated in the South African case with special reference to the mining industry. In this instance, despite the availability of cheaper African labour, mine owners had to succumb to the collective strength of the white workers in defending their position (ibid:556).

Whereas exclusion movements serve the interests of higher paid labour and deprives the entrepreneurs of cheaper labour, caste arrangements are based on exclusiveness rather than exclusion. Both protect higher paid labour from being undercut.

Hopefully, this study can demonstrate how far the outlined major

concepts in the literature on intergroup relations are applicable to the study of Indians in South Africa. As the smallest of three disenfranchised minorities, they occupy a very special position of powerlessness. They have neither the numerical strength of the Africans nor the claim of the Coloureds to partial ancestry by the ruling group.

There is much colourful material to document formal and informal prejudices against Indians. At the official level, the amount of legislation restricting their political power, movement and general freedom amply documents the discrimination directed against Indians as part of the Non-Whites. However, theories of prejudice and discrimination cannot be considered very elucidating on the whole, since they do not venture beyond mere description to analysis. In running counter to the dominant political ideology of "separate development", assimilation-oriented theories are also of little value in such a context. Since the chances of integration are non-existent and above all sanctioned by a legal system, there is little accompanying cultural assimilation either.

The legal system which ranks individuals and groups on the basis of pigmentation diminishes the value of a general stratification theory. Even if the caste-class syndrome were applied it would at best be unproductive of insight into the dynamics of the total society. Such is the case of stratification-based studies conducted on individual groups, which tend to be merely descriptive.

Pluralist theory which explains the plural structure of societies in terms of the presence of cultural differences of groups, is highly questionable for the analysis of both Indians in South Africa, as well as for South African society as a whole. As pointed out earlier in criticizing plural society theory, the presence of cultural diversity does not automatically demand domination by one of the cultural sectors (in this case, the Whites), nor do cultural cleavages, per se, amount to increased frictions. What the pluralist concept does however, is to provide a rationale for maintaining the privileges of the dominant group, since non-white cultural attributes are equated with "under-development" by the ruling group. Furthermore, such a perspective tends to reify cultural differences as if they are immutable.

As stressed earlier, in analysing the political behaviour of Indians in South Africa, the focus has to take into account two levels of relations: firstly, intergroup relations, namely Indian relations with the other subordinate groups (Africans and Coloureds), and with the politically dominant group (Whites); secondly, intragroup differences, since they determine the group's political future as well as its role in influencing political change at the societal level.

Neither the protean concept of social class, which mostly refers to an aggregate of people sharing similar status based on income, occupation and wealth, nor the Marxist definition which sees class as defined through collaboration in the production process, are adequately descriptive of South African Indians. They constitute a class only

in terms of the status bestowed on them by an iniquitous regime.

Contrary to the assumption underlying almost all theories of minority groups, minorities are seldom monolithic or homogeneous in composition. Nor do they necessarily behave in unison out of a moral commitment to liberation based on the objective conditions of their powerlessness and their presumed unity of interests stemming from this. Differences in economic position within the Indian community, which historically emanate from their varied opportunities and motivation as immigrant traders or as indentured labourers, have created constellations which have relevance for their political behaviour. Hence a scrutiny of the internal composition of the community, and an understanding of its heterogeneity, is important for comprehending the dynamics of such group behavior. Only through a grasp of such underlying processes can any real assessment of present political behaviour be understood and future trends posited.

IV. RESEARCH PROCEDURES

Looking at South Africa from the outside, one is left with the impression that research must be impossible in that society. Its very authoritarian nature raises doubts about the possibility of free inquiry. Official intimidation and censorship is anticipated, as well as the self-censorship of informants and their reluctance to impart controversial information. Yet research is done in South Africa, and is possible to a certain extent. The challenge is how to devise ways of coping with the considerable obstacles.

Social science research in South Africa is not legally prohibited or dependent on a permit, as in many African states. Restrictions operate in terms of taboos, non-cooperation by government bureaucracies in politically sensitive areas and, above all, access by a member of one racial group, to other groups, regardless of race (Welsh, 1975). In the case of intra-group research as in this case, governmental sanctions in the form of interrogation by the Security Police can be avoided by establishing a "clear identity"¹ and at the same time keeping a low profile as far as the actual research is concerned. No major problems were encountered on both counts, especially since I had not been directly active in any political organization in the past and had a clean police record, including a much-valued South African passport for travel abroad. Unlike other authoritarian societies, no ideological commitment on the part of subordinates, only acquiescence, is demanded in South

1. "Clear identity" connotes that in the perception of authorities, expected race-specific roles have not been overstepped through association with members of other racial groups, or activity considered to be subversive or inflammatory has not been engaged in.

Africa. Police coercion is not arbitrarily directed against all members of the out-group, but against "subversive activists". As such, state action is to an extent calculable and predictable. As Heribert Adam (1971b:46-7) has stressed the difference: "Since all the Africans have to be considered a potential danger, the police can only cope with the authentic opponents, defined as offenders of various laws and petty regulations. By strictly abiding by these restrictions, however, the African can stay out of trouble in contrast to the Jews of German-occupied Europe, for whom no laws existed at all."

The greater difficulties with research in South Africa lie in the conformity pressure and resultant self-censorship as a consequence of widespread anxiety and powerlessness on the part of most Blacks. In this respect my clear identity was helpful. As a member of the Indian community who taught for two years at the Indian University, and comes from a well-known family still living in Durban, contacts were not difficult to arrange. My departure from Durban in 1968 and widely-publicised marriage with a foreign academic, clearly defined me as an "outside-insider", if such a reference is possible. There was no suspicion about my identity as a police informant since I myself had had my services at the Indian University terminated by the Minister of Indian Affairs, after a two-year probation period, on the grounds that I did not "identify with my community". Publicity about my interrogation by the Security Police in 1965 when I returned from the U.S., would seem to have also rendered me above suspicion. Above all the

political involvement of my family in the early Congress days, in passive resistance campaigns and in assisting African charitable trusts also lent definition to the way people perceived me. Unlike Western societies, among Indians the individual perception by others is always in the context of a family background, hence the relevance of outlining these details. Above all, the respect for the "educated", namely those with university degrees, more especially in the case of the relatively few females, is so high that support and participation in such academic endeavours as "research" is itself a status symbol. Many considered it a service to the community to write about "our problems". While these factors were very helpful, there were still severe difficulties which had to be overcome.

Three periods of research were conducted in the Durban area, during April 1972 to September 1972, February 1973 to September 1973, and June 1974 to August 1974. During this time four main sources and methods of gathering data were used: (1) informal interviews, (2) documentary evidence, (3) participant observations, and (4) student essays.

1. Informal Interviews

The established identity notwithstanding, the attitude of most Indians is such that a formal structured interview with preformulated questions, a tape recorder, or even notes written during a conversation will trigger barriers of caution and anxiety. Therefore, these approaches were soon discarded in favour of informal interviews, in which only mention of my

work in Canada on the situation of South African Indians was made. Subsequently, conversations were recorded as comprehensively as possible. During the talks, ranging from casual discussion at weddings to formal appointments, key topics of the investigation were introduced as the situation permitted. Questions such as "where did you live before this?" usually led to Group Areas discussions, and changes in life-style, as well as life in the new suburb. Similarly in the case of older respondents "where were you during the 1949 riots" was a useful way to talk about Indian-African relations. Many other similar leads were more spontaneously forthcoming in a situation where most respondents appeared to enjoy the opportunity to talk about themselves after overcoming initial inhibitions.

In this way 86 informal interviews were recorded. Persons selected for discussion were a cross-section of the community, but above all, so-called "opinion-leaders". These were people regularly quoted in the Indian press. They were distinguishable by the public roles they played as well as the way others perceived them. Included in this group were leading members of various interest groups, trade unions and organised political groups. These were also the persons with the least, though often discernable, inhibitions to speak freely about sensitive subjects. Approximately twelve persons formally approached, refused to talk to me at all, under various pretences.

In this study the informal interviews which do not lend themselves to

quantification or comparison, form a central source for many judgements of "official pronouncements" and the assessment of specific organisations and events discussed.

2. Documentary Evidence

A more comprehensive and systematic source of data were official and private documents on Indian affairs. Official publications by the Department of Indian Affairs and in the Natal Archives were reviewed. Back issues of the two Indian weeklies, "The Leader" and "The Graphic" from 1960 to the present were read, as well as the two Durban daily papers. A search of the University of Durban-Westville library for all relevant micro-level studies was conducted. The University of Natal Economics Department made available to me several small studies they had been commissioned to conduct for various organisations and trade unions. The minutes of the South African Indian Teachers Association, as well as the South African Soccer Federation, were perused. The Durban Child Welfare Organisation made it possible to look through their case books for an understanding of the type of community work they were handling, and Natal Tamil Vedic Society's records were also viewed.

3. Participatory Observation

Participatory observations included mass meetings of protesting residents at Chatsworth, various ratepayers meetings, 1973 strikes where Indian and African workers gathered outside their work place, 1972 and 1973

annual conferences of the South African Indian Teachers Association, Durban Indian Child Welfare meetings, student rallies at UDW, cultural gatherings such as the 1973 South African Tamil Federation's Eistedfod, and 1974 Annual General Meeting of Hindu Maha Sabha, multi-racial political cabarets, weddings, and private parties at a wide range of Indian homes. Whenever appropriate, such occasions were used for interviews as well and notes were made on the impressions of the event.

4. Future Autobiographies of Students

Perceptions of Indian students of themselves, their relationship with the other racial groups, and their visions of likely future developments were probed through so-called "future autobiographies". This technique was used by psychologist Kurt Danziger (1963a,b) with a sample of students from different racial groups at the University of Cape Town in the late 1950's, but has apparently not been repeated since. A regular class of 39 first year Arts students at the University of Durban-Westville and 26 students at the medical school of the University of Natal in 1973 were asked by their instructor to respond on a prepared page, handed out to them together with an envelope, to the following statement (see sample essay sheet in appendix):

"Please write a short essay in the space below of approximately one to two pages on the history of South Africa projected into the future. Imagine you are a historian writing in the 21st century and giving a brief outline history of South Africa from 1973 to 2000. Do not merely write a description of South Africa in 25 years time but write an actual history of the intervening period. This is not a test of imagination -- just describe what you really expect to happen. At the end, please add a short paragraph concerning your personal plans and expectations for

the future. (Write anonymously and frankly. Do not give your name, but please complete the statistics at the end)."

The handout was headed "sociological research project on comparative student aspirations", but did not mention the name of the investigator. This was done so that the instructor could claim this as part of his own work, if questioned by the university authorities. They had been approached informally several months previously by myself about their willingness to support and permit an as yet unspecified small project about student attitudes, but proved unco-operative. All research on campus, particularly by an outsider, is expected to be approved by the Rector, who usually prefers to take a personal hand in such exercises. This would of course have rendered any responses, if forthcoming at all, totally worthless. Such problems did not exist, however, at the non-white medical school at the University of Natal where the 26 essays were collected in a compulsory sociology course.

In the case of UDW, an instructor acquainted with me, and also known to be on good terms with his students, agreed to administer the essay as part of his own requirements. However, before writing the autobiography the students were told that the instructor requested the essays as part

1. This formulation differed somewhat from Danziger's version which also did not contain the last sentence and the statistical section. No comparison between the two surveys is possible or was aimed at. The statistics on sex, year at university, area of study, language and religious identification, which initially were envisaged for a bigger sample, were not utilized in this analysis because of the small sample and possible identification of authors.

of a vaguely referred to comparative project, in which Indian students too would have an opportunity to state frankly their real feelings. The instructor also mentioned that he personally would not see the essays, collected in a sealed envelope after half an hour. Encouraged in this way, there were apparently no questions and the students, reportedly, enjoyed the opportunity to express their feelings anonymously and even wanted to discuss their different views among themselves afterwards, with the instructor.

This somewhat surreptitious procedure without lying to anyone,¹ seemed to be the only possible way to collect some self-written and little pre-structured expressions of hopes and aspirations by the subjects under the given circumstances. While the possibility was considered to approach students individually, this soon proved infeasible when tried in the library. Another option would have been to have the student essays written by high-school pupils. However, teachers in these institutions are far more dependent, regulated and fearful than university

1. Many researchers in the South African situation deliberately deceive the authorities in order to overcome obstacles. van den Berghe (1970: 152) writes about his "experiences with tyranny" in South Africa: "From the outset, I decided that I should have no scruples in deceiving the government and that the paramount consideration in my dealings with the state would be to minimize obstacles to my research without compromising my principles." A different view is expressed by former AAA president Ralph Beals (1969:183): "If foreign research can be conducted only under crippling restrictions or abandonment of professional standards, the social scientist's only alternative may be to abandon his research." Beals fears that attempts by scholars to "attack or undermine governments of which they disapprove" may "have disastrous effects upon all future research" (181). But if such research is irrelevant by avoiding critical issues, why should there be concern about its future?

instructors while their students are less politicized. No other audience, than school and university attenders, on the other hand, would have lent itself to the request for a self-written statement, because it would not have been a "captive audience".

The distinct advantage of the essay type inquiry over a structured questionnaire lies in its very openness. The essay does not presuppose an opinion or concern where none might be, as in many attitude studies. What is not mentioned is as important as the topics considered worthwhile for perusal. Like a Rorschach Test or TAT the open-ended future autobiography amounts to a written articulation of hopes, frustrations and anxieties projected into the future.

The 65 essays were the optimal number possible to collect under the given circumstances, and also deemed sufficient for the purpose of the inquiry. No quantitative analysis apart from a frequency count was aimed at, and the responses are not representative for the outlooks of Indian students or any section of them. What they do demonstrate, however, are six crucial themes in the order of frequency mentioned: (1) visions of revolutionary change, (2) visions of evolutionary change, (3) feelings of powerlessness and low self-conception, (4) internalization of dominant ideologies, (5) wider awareness, and (6) dominant attitudes towards Africans. The interest of this analysis however lies in the type of argumentation, not its frequency, with which the six topics are articulated. The essays are considered important for the

illustration of typical syndromes or structures of thinking among Indians, as reflected in the language and images of the most educated sections.

V. THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF INDIAN DEVELOPMENT TILL 1971

1. Reactions to Indian Immigration

The Indian presence in South Africa dates back to 1860. The system of indentured labour by which most Indians were brought to South Africa followed closely in the wake of the abolition of slavery in the British empire in 1834. With the refusal of the freed slaves to continue working on many plantations, an opportunity was created for private recruiters, previously engaged in sending labourers to Ceylon, to now extend their supply of "coolies" to other islands in the Indian Ocean, especially Mauritius, then to the Carribean and to Guiana, where citizens of Indian descent today constitute more than half of the population (Kondapi, 1951, pp. 8-16, 29-40). A similar void of cane cutters in South Africa's sugar plantations led to a tri-partite agreement between the colonial administration of Natal and India (Pachai, 1971, p 1) to provide a steady supply of labour from India. Although there existed an indigeneous Zulu-speaking African population in Natal, as well as a sizeable English settlement which had preceded the arrival of Indians by some forty years, there was apparently still a demand for foreign labour.

An organized British settlement in South Africa did not start before 1820 when 5,000 selected English immigrants were settled in the frontier districts of the Eastern Cape. Britain had captured the Cape from the "Batavian Republic" first in 1795 and again in 1803 (Walker, 1964; Wilson and Thompson, 1969). By the strategic placement of settlers, Britain aimed at the control of crucial coastal and border areas against the expanding Dutch colonialists in the South and well-organized African kingdoms in the North. Here the Boers had defeated Zulu power in a major battle at Blood River in 1838, which led to a short-lived Boer republic of Natal (ibid). After Boer-British fighting and the departure of the Dutch "Trekks" into the interior areas,

Natal was annexed as a Crown colony in 1843. For the next half century British settlers supported by regular troops from the metropole completed the military subjugation of the African population in Natal (ibid).

This need for the import of foreign labour arose partly from the attitude of Europeans to manual labour which, in their view, amounted to work to be done by non-white people (Pachai, 1971). Given the semi-tropical conditions of Natal and the prevailing attitudes toward "natives" in South Africa, it was inconceivable that an estate be worked entirely by Whites, even when their numbers and geographical concentration made this possible (Palmer, 1957, pp. 3-13). However, the employment of "natives" apparently posed severe difficulties. In the historical literature the inappropriateness of African labour has been attributed to a range of reasons from deficient innate capacities of a Zulu to their forms of social organisation. There is reference to African "lack of industry"; "unreliability"; the self-sufficiency of the tribal economy and the unwillingness of Africans to be coerced into dependence on Europeans by economic pressure. (Burrows, 1943; Calpin, 1949; Ferguson-Davie, 1952; Kuper, 1969; Palmer, 1957; Marquard, 1969; Walker, 1962; Woods, 1954).

These assessments reflect a relationship between colonizer and colonized in which the indigeneous African population, though militarily weaker than the newcomers were not yet fully conquered, but above all remained culturally intact with sufficient material resources of land and cattle that immunized Africans against plantation work. Missionary penetration had just begun, and the head-tax with which Africans were later forced into the money economy by working in the mines, could not be imposed at that stage due to insufficient control. The remaining option was open coercion which however would have amounted to the resurrection of the just abolished slavery system.

In this situation the import of foreign labour seemed an ideal solution from the perspective of the sugar cane farmers. By contrast to the Zulus, Indians were to provide the planters and Natal authorities with "a cheap, continuous and reliable supply of docile labour" (Palmer, 1957, p. 27). to supplement the labour shortages.

For their part, Indians are said to have emigrated not to escape political or religious persecution. They were motivated mainly by incentives described as "poverty, ambition, domestic tensions, restlessness of spirit, the urge to escape an epidemic or other misfortune" (Kuper, 1969, p. 9). Despite their intended occupation few had actual expertise in agriculture. More numerous were potters, clerks, herdsmen, boatmen, policemen, laundrymen, oil pressers, traders, undertakers, barbers, jewellers, confectioners, warriors and priests. (Meer, 1969, p. 10) Of the more than 80 percent Hindus, among the newcomers roughly 60 percent were Sudra and scheduled castes, about 25-30 percent Vaishya and the remaining 10 to 15 percent mainly Kshatriya with a small percentage of Brahmins. (Kuper, 1960, p. 7)

These Indian labourers were contracted to serve a five year period of indenture after which they could reindenture themselves or take up any other type of employment. After ten years they were to be given the option either of returning to India by paid passage or of becoming permanent settlers in Natal with a grant of Crown land of equal value as the foregone passage fare (Kuper, 1960; Pachai, 1971; Palmer, 1957; Ferguson-Davie, 1952).

Several accounts point to the way in which immigrants were deluded by recruiting agents about South African working and living conditions. Their physical deprivation consisted of lack of basic living facilities, overworking, overcrowding in sub-human accomodation, lack of adequate medical treatment, poor

or non-existent sanitation facilities, inadequate rations of food, as well as a grossly disproportionate ratio of men to women: 40 women to 100 men (Calpin, 1949:9; also Meer, 1969; Palmer, 1957; Kuper, 1960; Woods, 1954). All these factors militated against the maintenance of what Indians considered respectable living standards. Palmer reports that on one prominent estate five suicides occurred in one day when Indian employees were confined and prevented by a police force from complaining to a magistrate (Palmer, 1957: 44).

Despite these conditions, relatively few Indians returned to India at the expiry of their contracts. The conditions under which most of them left India, violation of caste purity, development of newer ties with fellow immigrants as well as waning ties with the homeland, would all have contributed to this situation. Between 1883-1890, an average of 345 letters and approximately £600 per annum were sent to India. For a population of some 30,000 this would seem remarkably low. (Calculated from Schedules of Ships Records, Natal Archives, Pietermaritzburg by R. Watson, as quoted in Meer, 1969, p. 12.) Furthermore the prospect of a grant of Crown land in lieu of return passage, could have been an added incentive. Yet in many instances, the promise of land was not implemented (Burrows, 1943, p. 2). Nevertheless, repatriation figures dwindled from 2,975 in 1927 to 48 in 1940 (Palmer, 1957, p. 105).

At the end of their periods of indenture the early settlers engaged mainly in agricultural activity, and were soon supplying Durban's fruit and vegetable requirements. Other former indentured workers moved into the coal mines, railways, and general services (Palmer, 1957, p. 41-42).

Subsequently another wave of immigrants, the so-called free or passenger Indians, began to arrive in South Africa, mostly through Mauritius, to engage

in trade. Like the white settlers, they found a profitable existence in Natal's expanding economy, and in the opportunities for trade in the Transvaal, hence changing the image of the Indian from dependent laborer to potential competitor.

The antagonism that soon began to arise between the White settlers and Indians led to a series of discriminatory measures. In 1893 the parliamentary franchise was officially withdrawn from Indians in Natal, though only a few hundred were entitled to it. Then a poll tax of three pounds per annum was levied on males above sixteen and females above 12 years of age who refused to reindenture themselves or return to India. In 1913 the Indian Immigration Act prohibited the entry of new immigrants, apart from the wives or children of established settlers. In 1923 the insertion of anti-Asiatic clauses in title deeds was legalized; and in 1924 the municipal franchise was withdrawn in Durban. This struggle between politically dominant Whites and Indians trying to establish themselves generated considerable ill-feelings (Webb, 1944, p. 2). When Indians attempted to gain security through the purchase of land or businesses, anti-Asiatic clauses hampered them. When they tried to acquire the necessary skills to advance in industry, political and economic color bars were increasingly institutionalized. Despite various agreements between the colonial governments of India and Natal to the contrary, these trends continued until 1948 when the Afrikaner Nationalist party came into power. Initially it only reiterated the anti-Indian sentiments of the preceding era, and continued to favor repatriation as the solution to a problem that it defined as one of an "unassimilable minority," although it had long since become evident that the South African Indians' response to repeated discriminatory acts was not to repatriate themselves but to stay and contend with them.

However, in dealing with its "foreign" minorities the Nationalist government had to take into account the changed world situation, particularly the universal disgust with racial ideologies after the Nazi defeat and the emerging protest against continued colonial subjugation, accentuated by India's independence in 1947.¹ India was at the forefront of the struggle for decolonization and played a leading role at the United Nations. The case of South African Indians was frequently brought to the fore there (Calpin, 1949; Palmer, 1957). At the same time, the Nationalist government in South Africa, having experienced the failure of repatriation schemes, was in the predicament of finding a suitable justification for the differential treatment of South African Indians. Furthermore, the emerging ideology of apartheid needed elaboration and legitimation if it were to be credible. This legitimation, which stressed as the basis for a stable society, the persistence and maintenance of the very "unassimilability" for which Indians had been criticized over the preceding two decades, marked a new approach in the form of a policy of separate development. In May 1961 an official statement to the effect that Indians "must be accepted as the country's permanent responsibility...and that they be accordingly entitled to the benefits inherent in such citizenship", heralded this new policy (South Africa, Indian Affairs, 1971:2).

Consequently the government established the Department of Indian Affairs to cope with the specialized tasks of a race bureaucracy; a nominated Indian Council that the government regarded as being "representative" or at least

¹The legalistic approach of the Indian government to its former nationals abroad was noticed again recently when the Ugandan Indians were expelled. India was conspicuous by its silence on the matter.

"responsible" for Indians and therefore worth consulting; and Local Affairs Committees (LAC) to introduce a semblance of Indian electoral participation in local government, defined as essentially consultative in nature. Despite these seeming advances, the position of the Indian community has remained substantially unchanged to the present day. Indians continue to be restricted in the trading sphere; they are residentially segregated after having been moved from developed urban areas to developing periurban areas under the Group Areas Act; they are restricted in their interprovincial movement* and are entirely prohibited from living in the Orange Free State; and above all Indians are subject to inferior segregated facilities, like other subordinate groups, in regard to education, health, public transport, restaurants, theaters and other public and civic amenities, while being provided with only symbolic political machinery to redress grievances.

*Travel permits were issued to 21,003 Indians in 1972 (*Daily News*, 16 February 1973). On 20 June 1973 the Minister of Indian affairs gave Indians "greater freedom" to travel between provinces; i.e., they may now visit specified provinces for up to thirty days for bonafide reasons without a permit (*Rand Daily Mail*, 21 June 1973).

2. Changes in Occupational Structure

Indian economic activity in Natal has undergone major changes related to its three sources: (a) indentured labour, (b) free immigrant traders and (c) natural increase. Five phases of diversification may be distinguished.

Dwindling repatriation of the ex-indentured allowed for a diversified occupational activity, as stimulated by new opportunities. While in the first phase the sugar estates were still the main source of employment at the turn of the century, many previously indentured labourers found a living in mining, farming, fishing, and service sectors of an expanding economy (Burrows, 1943:6). In examining the material benefits accruing to European settlers from the continued importation of indentured labour, the Clayton Commission in 1909 firmly concluded that in view of the invaluable role of Indians in a variety of fields, immigration should continue (Calpin, 1949:20). The Commission recorded the existence of 2,429 White employers of Indian indentured labour spread over the following occupations: general farming, sugar estates, coal mines, Natal Government railways, domestic servants, brickyards, wattle plantations, landing and shipping agents (Calpin, 1949:9).

In 1880 the entry of so-called 'passenger Indians' who came to South Africa without an employment contract, and were attracted

by apparently better opportunities, marked the second phase with the beginning of the Indian presence in trade. The 'passengers' established themselves mainly as merchants, jewellers, owners of laundries, grocery stores and other related services. These occupations were for the most part in accordance with their caste backgrounds. (H. Kuper, 1960:6-17; Burrows, 1943; Maasdorp and Pillay, 1975) The steady influx thus provided facilitated Natal's joining in the evolving trade boom caused by the discovery of gold in the Transvaal in the 1860's and the development of the diamond fields in 1870. (Walker, 1964:327-54) The new industrial demand for cheap labour importuned the government to continue with the traditional immigration policy for Indians.

However, opposition by the white merchants eventually led to the prohibition of Indian immigration in 1911, and marked the third phase of occupational diversification. During this period the position of the Indian worker had changed from that of serf in a feudal setting, to an ordinary wage labourer in an industrializing economy. With the relative scarcity of Indian labour under restrictive immigration laws, salaries of the formerly indentured generally rose significantly. In the sugar industry raises of 50 percent are recorded (Burrows, 1943:6).

The Protector of Indian Immigrants cited increases in savings of each immigrant from an average of £8.5 . 3 in 1907 to £19.10 0

in 1916. (Report of Protector of Indian Immigrants, 1921, para. 13) At the same time, there seemed to be an increase in occupational choice, and a change to more skilled industrial occupations, commerce and services (Burrows, 1943:6). In 1921, for instance, there were about 20 Natal-born Indian interpreters, earning comparatively high salaries (£180-£240 per annum). Approximately 5,000 Indians alone were employed in clerical positions in Durban. (Report of Protector of Indian Immigrants, 1921, para. 13) This period coincided with the growth of educational opportunities under the Cape Town Agreement, as outlined earlier. In the absence of University facilities for Indians, admission of Indian students to the "Native College of Fort Hare" was allowed under the Cape Town Agreement (Palmer, 1957:98), and provided new horizons for the top stratum of upwardly-mobile.

A fourth phase in the changing occupational structure is marked by the end of World War II. In line with general trends, Indian involvement in secondary industry and the tertiary sector of an advanced economy, increased while the traditional agricultural occupations continued to decline, as reflected in Table 1.

Increasing opportunities as well as a wider range of employment now available to Indians, has been well documented (H.R. Burrows, 1952; J.R. Burrows, 1959; Maasdorp, 1968; McCrystal and Maasdorp, 1967; Palmer, 1957; Woods, 1954). The rapid economic growth in the post World War II period, with the need for more skilled man-

Table 1

Percentage Distribution of Indian Workers by Industry Division-
1936-1970.*

Industry Division	1936	1951	1960	1970
Agriculture	37.8	20.3	12.0	4.8
Mining	1.4	.8	.6	.4
Manufacturing	19.1	31.4	37.7	41.9
Construction	2.0	3.4	2.4	6.8
Commerce	16.1	18.1	18.1	24.0
Transport	3.1	3.6	4.7	5.1
Services	20.4	22.4	24.2	15.3
Other	----	---	.3	1.5
Total (=100%)	47.0	63.0	79.0	134.0

*Sources:

J.R. Burrows The Population and Labour Resources of Natal,
Pietermaritzburg: Natal Town and Regional
Planning Commission, 1959.

South Africa Bureau of Census and Statistics, 1960 Population
Census: Sample Tabulation No. 2.
Dept. of Statistics, 1970 Population Census
Report 02.01.06. (1946 statistics have been
excluded due to non-cooperation of Indians
with authorities in yielding census data as an
aftermath of the highly unpopular Asiatic Land
Tenure and Indian Representation Act (No. 26
of 1946.)

power, undermined the previously exclusive hold of Whites on many higher-status occupations. The presence of Whites in the armed forces of South Africa during the war, also afforded Blacks possibilities for expansion, particularly in manufacturing. Between 1944-45, Indian employment in this sector expanded by 37 percent. (Ibid.)

These data reveal one of the most powerful factors working for the "upliftment" of subordinates in an industrializing racially stratified society with a relatively small ruling group. The mere ratio of the superordinates makes their continuing monopoly of higher economic positions difficult, unless economic growth is artificially retarded in the interest of racial dominance. This option, however, though frequently advocated by ideological purists, has little appeal in a reality which is characterized, above all, by the goal of profit maximisation. Its prerequisites, economic stability, and investors confidence, is dependent on a minimal fulfilment of worker's aspirations. If these were to be permanently discarded by an artificial, racially inspired economic recession, the purpose and foundation of the racial system itself would be undermined. Contrary to Herbert Blumer's assertion (Blumer, 1965), capitalism and racialism are not compatible in the long run, though there might well be adaptations of a "colour-blind" mode of production and consumption to existing racial prejudices in the short term. This is not to say that

democracy and equality will automatically and inevitably accompany industrialization, as the often criticized Oppenheimer thesis asserts. (On this drawn out debate see Johnstone, 1970; Trapido, 1971; Legassick, 1972; Leftwich, 1974; O'Dowd, 1974; Bromberger, 1974.) But manpower shortages and particularly the severe bottleneck of skilled labour at an advanced stage of technological development force the South African system to train formerly excluded subordinates and allow them under much conflict within the heterogeneous ruling group into previously reserved positions without necessarily replacing the low-class members of the superordinate group. It is irrelevant whether this situation is officially admitted or, as in South Africa, hidden behind job reclassifications. What would seem decisive would be the newly acquired economic-strategic power by the subordinate groups both as producers and consumers. Unlike unskilled migrants, trained workers can no longer be easily replaced or ignored without high costs and loss of profit opportunities. This factor gives them potential power in a strike situation, and it is this threat to which a racial system has to somehow adjust in its own interest of survival. Adjustment, however, can only mean gradual de-racialisation in the sense of greater opportunities for the subordinates, though initially encompassing only a few bare visible privileged and not necessarily closing the overall income gap. Industrial and political action in the form of strikes at enforced non-

racial legislation would seem the only realistic way to achieve real equality, and the newly acquired economic positions pave the way for the subordinate's greater potential power in this continuing struggle.

The system of white racial dominance indeed attempts to recruit its needed manpower from its own group members abroad. However, there are limits to the number of white immigrants South Africa can attract, despite assisted passages. Not only is she now competing with Australia and Canada in this respect, but missed the post-war immigration wave from Europe, by not allowing any immigration until the early sixties for fear of the Afrikaner Nationalist party's being swamped and outnumbered by English-speaking rivals. The approximately 50,000 annual immigrants in recent years (60% of whom came from Britain), especially those originating from Catholic Southern Europe, are still viewed with suspicion and disdain by many right-wing Afrikaners.* Even a net gain of 30-40,000 immigrants annually is insufficient to fill increasing openings for qualified personnel (H. Adam, 1971). Harry Oppenheimer, the chairman of Anglo-American, estimated that at least half of the approximately 80,000 annual new openings for skilled, clerical and professional occupations will have to be

*The irony of the Afrikaner attitudes towards British immigrants, was shown in a recent empirical study, which revealed that the majority of British immigrants soon overconform to what they perceive as the dominant values of their new host society, and frequently become more racist than the South-African born Whites (Stone, 1973). A similar phenomena was reported from Israel with regard to the attitudes of Sephardic Jews towards Israeli Arabs (Smootha, 1974).

filled by locally trained Blacks (*The Star*, WE, 11 May 1975).

It is from this situation that Indian and coloured blue and white-collar workers benefitted most, since they were being increasingly hired for supervisory and middle-management positions in preference to Africans. Reverse role relationships seem non-existent. According to the authors' personal observations and reports from various informants, instances where Africans would give orders to Indians in Natal enterprises, are virtually unknown. While in the early stages of the South African economic development Indians mainly worked in isolation from the indigeneous African population, the subsequent process of industrial integration and interdependence has thrust Indians into a middle-man position, whose serious implications for race relations, must not be overlooked. In short, broader political-economic changes after World War II have significantly altered the occupational structure of Indians by (a) diversification of economic activity and (b) resultant status-changes vis-a-vis the other ethnic groups, despite continuing discriminatory legislation. However, it should be added that while there is much to show for extension of job opportunities, there have also been major setbacks to which Indians have been subjected, especially in the field of commerce through the Group Areas Act of 1954 which will be discussed later.

The outlined processes are accelerated now by what might be

adequately classified as a fifth phase of bureaucratic diversification, associated with the government's implementation of its "Separate Development Programme", since the early sixties. The proclaimed need for self-administration, including self-policing of the various ethnic groups in South Africa opened additional avenues for a professional elite in a hitherto closed public sector. A sizeable bureaucratic apparatus created for Indians by the Department of Indian Affairs offered new positions. In 1961, 28 out of a total of 102 posts (27.5 percent of the total) were held by Indians (South Africa, Indian Affairs, 1971:12).

By 1974, 481 authorized posts out of a total of 798 were occupied by Indians (Horrell, 1975:197). Cited as a "breakthrough" for Indians is the post of Educational Planner, so far the most senior administrative position. Similarly, the extension of local government to Indian townships and suburbs has created a range of previously non-existent openings. There are now town clerks, health inspectors (9 obtained National diplomas in 1974, Horrell, 1976:256), Civil Engineers (9 Civil Engineering technicians graduated with National Certificates in 1974, *ibid.*), 840 Asians are employed in postal services (Horrell, 1976:202), and 796 Indians are in the police force (*ibid.*:196). One police station in Chatsworth is administered entirely by Indians (*ibid.*). Two openings for Indian prosecutors have been

created and filled by Indians, one of them a woman. Furthermore, as a novelty 200 Indians have been recruited for Army, Navy and Airforce training (*Fiat Lux*, August, 1974:16). At the international level, the government's appointment of an Indian envoy at an overseas embassy (*Star*, WE 21 February, 1976) and of an Indian representative with observer status at the United Nations, despite their political limitations, are regarded as notable "firsts" by many Indians and criticized as window-dressing by the more politicised.

Related developments are the establishment of the New Republic Bank in 1971, which offered outlets for bankers, chartered accountants and clerical workers (*SABRA*, 1975:27). In the professional and technical fields there has been a shift from an earlier emphasis on medicine, law and teaching to a greater variety of professions. This was due partly to the fact that in the past, the so-called 'open' University of Natal did not open its science faculty to Indians, who were therefore forced to leave the province to study at either Fort Hare or at the University of Cape Town or Witwatersrand. The expense of living away from home, limited the number of students who could study science full-time. Only in 1951, was the Medical Faculty for non-Europeans added to the University of Natal (Palmer, 1957:168). Prior to that time most doctors qualified

abroad. Today a range of degrees have been awarded in architecture, engineering and pharmacy, and diplomas in medical laboratory technology, electronic data processing, chemical technology, architectural draftsmanship and radio technology, among others (Horrell, 1976:256). In 1974, M.L. Sultan College of Advanced Technical Education in Durban had an enrolment of 1,293 fulltime students and 6,285 part-time students (ibid.:257).

The outlined upward economic mobility of sizeable portions of the Indian population was not without costs with which these achievements were accomplished. Many of these changes were forced upon a powerless community by legislation, which arbitrarily disrupted established businesses, and created a new kind of poverty through the dislocation of extended families, an increased social stratification within the group, and new dependencies on discriminatory state bureaucracies. Any balanced assessment of Indian progress has to take into account this other side of the coin, as symbolized in the large-scale resettlement schemes. The fate of the established traders, for instance, needs additional attention in the context of the changing occupational structure. The over-all effects of the "Group Areas Act" on Indian life styles will be analyzed in more detail elsewhere.

Despite the considerable structural and visible changes in the economic activities of the former "coolies", early white attitudes of antagonism to Indian trade and commercial activity have undergone only slow transformation. An official statement by the Deputy Minister of the Interior in 1960 is indicative of this attitude: "Indians have arrogated to themselves the right to be the only businessmen. Why cannot some of them also do some work? Why should white people have to use their hands and not they?" (House of Assembly, 11 April 1960, Hansard 13, Col 5285). Similar sentiments are evident in many informal comments by Whites to the author. This view of Indian commercial competition as parasitic and non-productive, was used to justify legislation against the successful businessman in the name of residential segregation

to avoid friction. The Group Areas Act in 1954, gradually succeeded in the drastic reduction of Indian commercial activity. In 1963, the Minister of Indian Affairs stated that only 340 out of a total of 3,191 traders in Durban would be unaffected by the proclamation. The remaining 2,057 cases would be held in abeyance, unable to engage in any further development in the meantime. Of these 794 had to quit their premises at the time (Hansard 19, Cols 7000-1 as cited in Horrell, 1963:222). In 1973, however, 4,363 traders are on official record as yet to be resettled (SABRA, 1975:16). To

counteract this situation, the government has made paternalistic declarations that other fields of employment are being created to alleviate the overemphasis on commerce (W.A. Maree, 1962:2). The Industrial Development Corporation, a state agency, is cited as having assisted three Indians in the Transvaal through loans of R178,000 to establish clothing, textile and vegetable oil factories (Horrell, 1976:74). Similarly, the IDC is reported to have embarked on a R3 million programme to develop fifteen industrial sites for Indians in Durban, Stanger and Tongaat (Horrell, 1976:74-75). However, as Meer points out, only a small proportion of grossly undercompensated traders can hope to extend themselves in this direction (Meer, 1971: 24). While figures representing an increase in Indian manufacturers from 142 in 1962 to 350 in 1967, together with total investment in industry between 1966 and 1968, totalling R20,000,000, appear impressive, Meer argues that they are in fact insignificant when compared with a loss in one area alone, of R20,000,000 in business turnover to 310 businesses and R13,700,000 in stocks, goodwill and facilities (ibid.).

On the other hand, it should be pointed out that this very insecurity would appear to have generated diversification of their interests. 1,650 Indian entrepreneurs now operate manufacturing concerns (South Africa, 1970)

and 41.9 percent of employed Indian workers, that is approx-

imately 56,280, are engaged in manufacturing (South Africa, Population Census 1970). This contrasts sharply with 19.1 percent in 1936, 31.4 percent in 1951 and 37.7 percent in 1960 as shown in Table 1.

In the main, there has been a change from small-scale family based enterprises, reminiscent of cottage industries, and to a large extent caste based (such as jewellers, laundry owners, brassware makers, printing-firms), to larger manufacturing and retail enterprise. Such manufacturers tend to be more frequently descendants of indentured labourers, in contrast to earlier wealthy merchants who were invariably of passenger-Indian origin.

The majority of Indian manufacturers are now concentrated in the clothing industry. Out of a total of 1,650 Indian manufacturing employers, 1,050 are in the clothing industry, 130 in furniture, 90 in printing and publishing, and smaller numbers in textiles, leather and footwear, metal products, transport equipment and professional and scientific instruments

(South Africa, Indian Affairs, 1973: 31-2). Due to the inadequacy of industrial census figures however, it is not possible to quantify the relationship of Indian-owned industries to total manufacturing employment.

While changes in Indian occupational structure would appear to indicate upwardly mobile trends (Bromberger, 1974), there still

exists considerable poverty in the community. Maasdorp and Pillay refer to 1963 figures showing that 64 percent of Durban Indian households live below the poverty datum line. It may be estimated, however, that this has changed somewhat since then, especially with the increasing participation of women in the labour force. Furthermore, a considerable proportion of Indian workers are said to be engaged in private undertakings to supplement income. In 1970, 88 percent of all Indian workers, compared with 72 percent Coloureds and 28 percent Whites, were thus involved (SABRA, 1975:25).

While there has been a narrowing of the White-Indian per capita income gap between 1960-1970 (McGrath, 1974), there still exists discrimination in salary scales, not only in the private sector but also in public service. It has been calculated that in provincial medical service and educational institutions in 1972, Indian salaries were only 70-80 percent of those of Whites with identical training and responsibilities (Fourie, 1973). This was at the skilled end of the spectrum. In the case of semi-skilled and unskilled workers the gap was much greater.

Despite the continuing intergroup inequalities the outlined changes in the occupational structure have led to new class-

like intragroup divisions, based on greater income inequality. This internal stratification of what the proponents of cultural pluralism (Kuper and Smith, 1969) often view as homogeneous communities will have to be the focus of analysis elsewhere.

VI. EARLY POLITICAL RESPONSES

1. The Politics of Pleading

Indian political responses to a situation generating increasingly repressive measures took various forms. Beginning with a relatively individualistic, legalistic, and non-confrontational approach, Indians gradually turned from exclusivism to more universal, collective actions. In so doing, the demands of all underprivileged groups were for a while linked, until politico-legal conditions generated increasingly greater obstacles to black unity, reducing it to theoretical levels only.

Before any organized political action, individual Indian laborers had protested against work conditions when they became intolerable. There were instances of small-scale strikes on estates (Huttenback, 1971:31). Individual traders resorted to the law courts to protest cases of illegal discrimination. One such lawsuit of a wealthy Indian trader brought to South Africa Mohandas Gandhi, a young Indian, English-trained barrister on a year's contract. This was the beginning of organized Indian political expression in South Africa, later to have its impact on the independence movement in India itself. A year after his arrival Gandhi was instrumental in forming the Natal Indian Congress (NIC), initially as a reaction to a bill threatening disenfranchisement of Indians there (Pachai, 1971:22). A petition with 10,000 signatures was submitted, the basis

for protest being essentially legalistic. Gandhi believed strongly that equality was a fundamental human right, and that treaty obligations were sufficient to bind South Africa to extend equal citizenship rights to all Indians. As a Gujarati-speaking Indian of respectable caste background with an overseas education, Gandhi was highly respected among the traders. The sobriety of his approach to authority appealed to them and he rapidly became a spokesman for Indian interests, at that stage especially the traders' interests (Calpin, 1949; Huttenback, 1971; Pachai, 1971; Palmer, 1957) .

South Africa provided the context within which Gandhi's ideas of nonviolence were to develop into a political instrument. The first passive resistance campaign in 1907 was directed against the Transvaal Immigrants Restriction Act, which required residents to submit to educational tests and restricted their movement to the Transvaal from Natal. In resisting this measure, Transvaal Indians refused to take out registration certificates and licenses for hawking. The success of community leaders in organising "practically the whole Indian population" was reported by the Colonial Secretary of the Transvaal at the time (Pachai, 1971:38). Though applicable to all Indians, the initial impact of this law was felt mostly by traders, who supported Gandhi's campaign solidly (Huttenback, 1971). Subsequent compromise solutions were sought by Gandhi through voluntary registration, at the

suggestion of General Smuts, the Transvaal Colonial Secretary at the time. It was hoped that in co-operating, Indians would show good faith in the government and the Act would be repealed. This was however, a futile attempt since the pledge was not honored by the Transvaal government (Palmer, 1957). This led to a demonstrative burning by Indians of 1,300 registration certificates and 500 trading licenses (Pachai, 1971:42).

The second passive resistance campaign, which ended in 1913, was motivated by broader issues, though still related exclusively to the position of the Indian. It focused on the excessive poll tax demanded of the indentured, who decided to remain in South Africa after termination of their initial contracts, and laws that made illegal those marriages solemnized under traditional Indian rites. Since these concerns cut across the interests of both the indentured and the traders, a temporary unity developed between them. Women from the Transvaal, mostly Tamil-speaking, crossed into Natal and went from mine to mine in Northern Natal asking Indian laborers and their families to cease work. The arrest of such women created greater awareness both at home and abroad among Indians as well as their black and white liberal sympathizers. During the "Great March of October 1913", Gandhi accompanied by over 2,000 strikers and their families, marched deliberately into the Transvaal to contravene the Immigrants

Regulation Act 22/1913 (Pachai, 1971:62). Gandhi was arrested and imprisoned for nine months with hard labor (Pachai, 1971:62). Other confrontations took place on the North Coast of Natal, where some 1,200 laborers went on strike. On the South Coast near Mt. Edgecombe a clash between police and laborers occurred at the same time. These were accompanied by smaller scale strikes in the major towns in Natal (Pachai, 1971:63). The campaign was successful insofar as it led to the Smuts-Gandhi agreement and the passing of the Indian Relief Act. The poll tax was abolished and Indian marriages according to traditional rites were formally recognized.

The former indentured had previously distanced themselves from Gandhi's approach, disagreeing with his compromising approach to authority, his persistent respect for the so-called standards of the British Empire,¹ and his tendency to appeal to a "change of heart" by involving them in the Anglo-Boer War². He was considered as a colonial with a

1. When the Queen's Diamond Jubilee approached, Gandhi was still sufficiently enamored of the British Empire to write a warm message of felicitation: "We are proud to think that we are your subjects, the more so as we know that the peace that we enjoy in India, and the confidence of security of life, and prosperity which enables us to venture abroad, are due to that position", (Huttenback, 1971:82).

2. Despite his disappointments, Gandhi urged Indians to join the army and fight for Britain during World War I. He organized an Indian ambulance corps comprising 800 free and 300 indentured members, who placed their services at the disposal of the Natal government (Ibid., pp. 82 and 123).

British education that he continued to take seriously. By contrast, the former indentured had been radicalized by harsh experience of discriminatory conditions and knew the extent of British exploitation.

In 1914 Gandhi returned to India, having initiated a new technique of political response he called *satyagraha*. His gradually widening circles of concern never quite succeeded in including the plight of the African (Gandhi, 1958:245), although he had worked with white liberals. However, the political strategy he formulated was to be meaningful in the early years of organized African resistance (Meer, 1969).

The post-World War I trade depression, which led to increased White unemployment, accentuated the hostility of Whites toward Indians. Among the complaints of Whites against Indian traders voiced in the Lange Commission of 1920¹ (Huttenback, 1971:334), which enquired into the position of Indians in the Union, were:

'(1) They send their money out of the country instead of spending it where they earn it.

1. The Asiatic Inquiry Commission appointed in 1920 under the chairmanship of Sir John Lange, recommended a program of voluntary repatriation to India. While it condemned existing locations as inadequate, the Commission urged the establishment of exclusive segregated areas of town for both living and working. (Huttenback, 1971:334)

- (2) They are a source of danger to the public health owing to their unclean habits, and require constant supervision to make them conform to sanitary and other by-laws.
- (3) They depreciate the value of property in their neighborhood, as well as the premises which they occupy.
- (4) Their standard of living is inferior to that of Europeans.
- (5) Their standard of trading and methods of business are different to those of Europeans in the following respects:
 - (a) They use inferior buildings as shop premises and pay less rent for them.
 - (b) The owner of the business and his shop-assistants all usually reside on the premises.
 - (c) They defraud their creditors by fraudulent insolvency more frequently than Europeans.
 - (d) They pay lower wages to their assistants than Europeans.
 - (e) They evade the laws regulating hours of trading.
 - (f) They habitually give short weight and adulterate food-stuffs.
 - (g) They thus succeed in underselling European traders.
- (6) They carry on business which should be carried on by Europeans, and close avenues of employment which should be open to Europeans.
- (7) They produce nothing in the Transvaal, and do not consume the produce of the country, but import their requirements from India.

- (8) They form "rings" to keep out European competitors.
- (9) Their presence has a bad influence on the natives, who are jealous of the rights and privileges enjoyed by them as colored people.
- (10) Their religion, language, colour, mode of thought, ideals, manners, and customs are entirely different to those of Europeans; they cannot be assimilated and their presence is a menace to European supremacy.
- (11) They are generally immoral and debauch the natives by inciting them to theft, and by readily receiving the stolen property.
- (12) They become too familiar with Europeans, especially females in the conduct of their business, and thus destroy the respect of natives for Europeans" (Calpin, 1949:42-3).

Expressions of white animosity often resemble in detail, the accusations against trading minorities in other parts of the world. If one carefully examines the charges against the foreign intruders one is struck by their interchangeability with regard to Jews in pre-Nazi Germany, Syrians and Lebanese in West Africa or even Orientals in contemporary North America. The expressions of antagonism reveal a pattern which on the one hand indicates a real conflict with more successful competitors, due to their different social organization, and on the other hand the role of the foreigners as scapegoats

for both individual repressions and as pseudo-explanations for broader underlying socio-economic changes. The foreign middle-man, lodged between a deprived native population or indigeneous proletariat and a privileged superordinate group, can be construed by both antagonists as the source of all evil. His weak position, extreme vulnerability for discrimination, visibility as a "stranger", and strategic placement easily satisfy the demands for decisive action to remedy the ills. The naivete of the accused victims lies in the fallacious belief that their behaviour can influence the actions of their prosecutors, when they as foreign middlemen are merely the pawns in a wider conflict.

Indians in South Africa opposed these accusations strenuously. They considered it unfair to blame them for sending money out of the country to support their families who were not allowed to join them in the country. The Transvaal Indians were prohibited from investing freely in land. There were obstacles placed on the free expenditure of their money, they were excluded from much public entertainment and theatres. Their inferior mode of living resulted from the municipal authorities deliberately neglecting Indian areas but at the same time referring to their low sanitary standards. Furthermore, Indians were willing to penetrate outlying districts where European farmers, they argued, were reluctant to establish

themselves. It was doubtful whether Indian shopkeepers were as exploitative of their customers as White traders, since they catered to the poor Whites, sold necessities of life in smaller quantities and offered unparalleled credit facilities.

Following the recommendations of the Lange Commission increased restrictions against Indians were suggested in the Areas Reservation Bill of 1925, whose main object was to implement residential segregation.

To quiet the tide of white antagonism, Indians, in their pathetic powerlessness, began to accede to various white maneuvers. For instance, while at this stage no law existed to prevent Indians from acquiring or occupying property anywhere in the province of Natal, leaders of the NIC, at the instigation of European authorities, began voluntarily to dissuade Indians from acquiring property in, and thereby "penetrating" White areas.¹ Compliance was virtually forced on the grounds that otherwise compulsory segregation, which Indian leaders hoped to forestall, would result (Calpin, 1949:128-30). The psychological impact of a situation forcing such actions must have been profound and widespread indeed, if Indians felt that they should voluntarily withdraw from exercising their legal rights and virtually make themselves inconspicuous so as to be left in peace.

1. The extent of "penetration" had in fact been exaggerated out of all proportion as evidenced in a memorandum of the Natal Indian Congress to the Durban City Council. It was pointed out that the value of property held by Indians in the old Borough was 4 million pounds, as compared with an European holding of 35 million pounds, Indians owned 1,783 sites as against 12,782 owned by Europeans. (Pachai, 1971:167)

Previously, Indians had constituted themselves into various provincial associations; the Cape British Indian Council, the Transvaal British Indian Association, and the Natal Indian Congress. Accelerated restrictions had the effect of temporarily unifying these bodies in 1920 into the South African Indian Congress (SAIC) (Palmer, 1957:81). This enabled the community to express its demands in the international forum with one voice. The outcome was a meeting between representatives of India and South Africa that produced the Cape Town Agreement of 1927, containing many promises of change. The South African government agreed not to proceed with the Areas Reservation Bill, and the Indian government offered to assist with repatriation of those who so desired.

This era of Indian dissension was dominated by a particular approach, motivated by what can be described as a "trader mentality." Despite the fact that the traders constituted a small percentage of the Indian population, they had the resources to draw attention to their plight, and in so doing also incorporated from time to time the problems of the indentured laborers. Their self-confidence and ambitiousness made them noticeable, despite their numerical weakness (Huttenback, 1971:41). Meer maintains that "they provided malleable material for the organisation of a political movement and presented the necessary middle class background for the effective leader " (Meer, 1969:27). Their approach was based

on a minimal awareness of rights and a maximal focus on methods of gaining and maintaining the goodwill of those in power. Characterized by negotiations, deputations, petitions, conferences, and discussions, the underlying strategy was one of gradualism, bargaining, and compromise. These methods were to be abruptly confronted by the next generation of Indian leaders with a very different political maneuvering, which was to have implications for the community's increased self-confidence.

2. Confrontation Instead of Persuasion

The Cape Town Agreement of 1927 raised some hopes among Indians. It accelerated the availability of educational opportunities, which were fully utilized.

The number of schools increased from 52 in 1928 to 78 in 1931, teachers salaries were raised, and a teacher training college established (Palmer, 1957:108). At the same time Indians began to finance their own schools and to form welfare, cultural, and religious organizations to fulfill their needs in a society where few if any such facilities were provided for them. The demands of Indians of this time differed considerably from those of the preceding generation. They were keen users of any possible educational opportunity, and almost every young person aspired to complete secondary education. Many parents scrounged together what money they could to send

their children to Britain for professional education, since they saw in it the only security for the future. It was from among those who studied abroad and experienced more equalitarian treatment in a different society, that the future political leaders were to emerge. Even those who had studied within the country had experienced more egalitarian contact with English schoolmasters, white missionaries, and other philanthropic figures than had the former generation. The impact of these contracts was an overall politicization of the younger middle-class generation. Simultaneously, many young workers with different needs and expectations found the ideas of trade unionism and socialism to have increasing relevance to their situation.

The new leadership, comprising young Indian professionals and the intelligentsia, pursued a more radical political course than the old commercial and entrepreneurial elite, seeking common cause with workers of all deprived groups. Numerous small strikes, though not always successful in realizing their aims, helped to consolidate morale among workers against discrimination on the basis of color. In no other context was the meaning of worker exploitation so abundantly clear as in South Africa. The constant coincidence of race and deprivation was more vivid and visible than class struggle could ever be in a racially homogeneous society. Hence Indian workers felt the justness of their cause spoke for itself.

Furthermore, the inequity within the Indian community itself became increasingly evident, exposing the link between the policies of Indian organizations and the class background and interests of their leadership. The nonconfrontational approaches, which had never produced effective results, were gradually replaced with candid views for direct resistance to authority. Open, clear demands based on what were considered to be fundamental human rights, were seen as preferable to humiliating and vague pleas for mercy.

The dialectical impact of colonial education was further evident in the perspectives of the young radicals. Instead of becoming "adjusted" Indian Englishmen, they returned more self-confident in their Indian background. Consequently, they tended to be more nationalistic with regard to their Indianness than the compromising older commercial elite had been (Calpin, 1949).

Evidence of these divergent viewpoints emerged during World War II. The South African Indian Congress (SAIC), in its customary pursuit of expediency, passed a resolution pledging loyalty to the British cause. By contrast, the young nationalists refused to associate themselves with a war they considered to be in the interests of British imperialism. Subsequently, they constituted themselves as an opposition group, called the Anti-Segregation Council, within the NIC. They increasingly viewed their local struggle in international

terms, identifying with the independence movement in India. The Anti-Segregation Council also introduced to the political arena worker support, which previously had been ignored. More significantly, for the first time in South African Indian political history the aspirations of Africans were incorporated into programs, and Africans shared the same platform. Their joint demands were universal suffrage on a common non-racial roll, equality in employment and status, freedom of movement, and removal of all existing restrictive and discriminatory legislation.

This strategy contrasted too strongly with the bargaining tactics and gradualism of the older activists, who split in 1947 and formed the Natal Indian Organization (NIO).

They criticized the NIC for unnecessarily alienating white support, for being Communist-inspired, and for heading on a collision course damaging to existing Indian economic prospects. For the first time the impact of a long-existing under-current of differing interests, never before articulated within the seemingly homogeneous community, became clearly expressed in public policy and strategies. The NIO was comprised of a majority of Gujarati-speaking Muslims, originally of passenger status with substantial commercial interests.¹

At the 1948 Conference of the Natal Indian Organization, of 189 members 148 were Gujarati Muslims. (Meer, 1972:441).

The NIC appealed for the most part to workers, with its leadership composed of sympathetic professionals. Articulation of different interest groups in organizational terms also served as a more active rallying point, thereby increasing public participation.

In March 1946 the NIC organized the third passive resistance campaign, which was directed against the Ghetto Act of 1946. Without achieving many demands, the NIC succeeded in mobilizing thousands of Indians for a political and cultural revival period. Indian morale was exceptionally high at this time, being linked with optimism about India's impending independence. The Indian diaspora had identified itself fully with the struggle in India. It was also a high period of cultural renaissance among South African Indians. Independence songs in various vernacular languages appeared. The Tamil community was especially active as packed audiences attended the concerts of the Tamil Agam. Scenes of the early pioneers working on the sugar cane fields were re-enacted, and the beauty and virtues of the Tamil language were extolled. A predominant influence was that of the communist-poet from Tamilnad, Amarakavi Bharathiar, who strongly confronted British imperialism in India. Rather than feelings of powerlessness or deprivation, a strong sense of moral strength and optimism prevailed. Many Congress officials, being Tamil speaking,

associated with and addressed these gatherings (Records of Tamil Agam 1946-9). The same crowds appeared at political rallies at "Red Square" in Durban. Formal membership was by now approximately 35,000 with many more sympathizers. (Meer, 1969).

Despite the impressive community mobilization of the passive resistance campaigns, Indians recognized their powerlessness as a minority. Greater linkages with the recently formed African National Congress (ANC) became the crucial issue, if change was to be effectively coerced.

While the fourth passive resistance campaign (1952) gained motive power from the specific discrimination of the Group Areas Act of 1950, it aimed at unjust legislation in general; its theme was "Defiance of Unjust Laws."¹ The protest was multiracial in character, the result of a formal alliance with the ANC. Indeed, solidarity between Africans and Indians was evidenced two years later when 8,557 people were arrested for participating in the campaign; they were mostly Africans (Pachai, 1971:242).

The 1952 campaign aroused much international comment and once again drew attention to the plight of the subordinate peoples of South Africa, though the focus still tended to be on the

¹For detailed discussion of the 1952 campaign, see L. Kuper, (1960).

position of Indians. These developments lent some strength to the domestic struggle. In 1955 the Congress of the People, held in Johannesburg and attended by a multiracial gathering of 2,884 delegates, adopted the Freedom Charter (Ibid., p. 252).

A number of arrests followed, terminating in the trial of a multiracial group for high treason in 1956. In 1960 the ANC was banned, and subsequently the entire NIC executive, though not the organization, shared this fate.

This virtually marked the temporary end of unified Black political activity. While it must be conceded that the NIC at the end of the forties and in the early fifties made strides from its traditional, exclusivist predecessors, the need for two separate congresses on racial lines has never been clear. At that stage, it would seem to have still been possible for both racial groups to work together, especially since their political aim was an integrated South African society.

VII. The Impact of Nationalist Legislation

Since the beginning of Nationalist rule in 1948, Indian life has been altered by several changes in the nature of the socio-political environment. The Group Areas Act of 1950 was the most severe piece of legislation to affect Indians as they were the only subordinate group with substantial property holdings¹ at the time. The Act made it legally possible to define most of the land in South Africa, particularly in the urban areas, for the exclusive use and ownership of one of the four racial groups by re-allocating all land accordingly and aiming at the resettlement of people who happened to live in an area otherwise "declared".²

Three reasons were given by the government in introducing the Group Areas Bill, namely: a) That the various racial groups within the Union always have been and still are at widely differing and conflicting stages of cultural and political development, which make it impossible to treat them alike. b) That it is in the interest of both Europeans and non-Europeans that "Western Civilization" should be maintained in South Africa through non-integration. c) That racial conflict and tension are inevitable when different races live in close proximity. The Durban riots of January 1949³ were used as obvious rationale for this

1. Meer estimates that Indians owned over a third of all properties they occupied which is the highest ratio of all racial groups in South Africa (Meer, 1975:131).

2. It was estimated that up to 1,763 Indians were dispossessed of 6,638 acres of their original landholdings of 10,323 acres of rateable land in the Durban municipality. Figures reported by J.N. Singh, in an affidavit in Supreme Court of South Africa, Transvaal Provincial Division, in the matter between P.N. Bhoola and the State, 1963.

3. The Durban riots are described and analysed in the Section on Indian African Relations.

legislation to be put on statute in the form of the "Group Areas Act" (Bridgemohan, 1959:16).

Among the social and economic consequences cited by the opponents of the scheme, were the drop in property values of existing homes together with the artificial shortage of limited land available in new areas. For the subordinates these new locations were generally more remote from the work places and consequently incurred extra transport costs. Above all, there were emotional and communal bonds which were being threatened. Established areas with temples, mosques, schools¹ were to be forfeited for new ghettos and slums with minimal in some cases no civic amenities (Bridgemohan, 1959:31). Furthermore, there was no actual evidence of inter-racial hostility in areas where the various groups had lived in close proximity with each other as revealed for instance in a thorough study of an interracial neighbourhood in Durban (Russell, 1960).

Considerable financial loss was incurred by Indian property owners in developed areas. By the end of 1974, 39,501 Indian families throughout the country had become disqualified to remain in their homes. Of these only 29,969 had been resettled. A total of 5,058 Indian traders were declared disqualified occupants, of whom 984 had been resettled (Horrell, 1976:69, 73). To make matters worse expropriation took place on government-dictated terms, resulting in compensation far below market value. As an interested party the all-White Group Areas Board

1. In Cato Manor, a poorer suburb of 3,300 Indian families there were 16 temples, church and mosques, 11 Indian schools, 15 factories and 115 businesses owned by Indians (Singh, 1963).

had a free hand to declare property for any group, value it, force sales, retain preemptive rights to purchase, to collect 50 percent of the surplus on basic value, and subsequently resell such property on the open market (Bridgemohan, 1959)¹. In some instances, where Indians have had the resources and patience to contest such valuations, the impartiality of the arbitration court set up by the Board have been contested. On November 20th, 1966, a judge of the Natal Supreme Court asked two members of the three member arbitration court to recuse themselves (Meer, 1971:25).

The discrepancy between municipal valuation and actual compensation as a result of the Group Areas Board's valuation is illustrated in the following examples. In 1964, an Indian owned property with a municipal valuation of R11,200 was compensated with R5,000; another with a rateable valuation of R960 was compensated with R50 (Horrell, 1969:223). Two Indian properties in Durban, bought by the Board for R20,000 and R11,000 resold within fifteen months for R47,000 and R67,000 respectively (Sprocas, 1972:82). In Rustenburg, the Group Areas Board retained R16,000 on the sale of an Indian property which sold to whites at R70,000, presumably as appreciation. Less than two years later the property sold for R453,000. In Ladysmith a property bought at R6,630 by the Board was resold to a white at R9,500 (Horrell, 1969:107). Chatsworth which was developed on fruit farming land was expropriated from Indian farmers at an average price of R250 per acre. "Economic"

1. Various criticisms of the Act have been treated elsewhere: Horrell, 1956; Paton, n.d.; Pather, 1950.

houses which cost not more than R1,000 to build, and occupy roughly an eighth of an acre, have been sold to Indians by the Department of Community Development for R4,000 per unit, and since the Department is exempt from all housing regulations, homes are of a very poor quality (Meer, 1975).

Dispossessed homeowners had to pay inflated prices for accommodations in newly proclaimed Indian areas, which were far too small for the demand. This caused inflation of land prices¹ by as much as "R2,000 over the price whites would pay for a 900 square metre plot" (*Sunday Tribune*, July 14, 1974).² The quality of land is also generally lower than that for Whites. The artificial land shortage for Indian home development continues to be a major complaint of a rising Indian middle class. The available land fetches extraordinarily high prices by members of an insecure group seeking to find security in home ownership.³ As one property agent remarked, "People have become so desperate that when they even hear about the possibility of a new township being opened up they practically force money on us to secure a site." (Interview 48)

1. Four half acre lots in one suburb, Isipingo, realised R106,500 in 1968. Neighbouring white suburbs advertise land of the same size for roughly a third of that price.

2. The Department of Community Development has sold residential plots of 5,000 and 10,000 sq. ft. for R5,000 and more. Private township dwellers offer smaller plots of land from R3,000-R12,000 in relatively undeveloped areas and for as much as R25,000 in 'choice' Indian areas.

3. In 1965, home ownership among Indians was estimated to be as high as 60 percent (Meer, 1975).

On the basis of this artificially created demand, Indian property has been recently reevaluated according to a Natal Ordinance which designated that valuations had to be based on market value, namely "what a willing buyer would pay a willing seller if the property to be valued was put up for sale" (*Sunday Times*, January 25, 1976). Consequently rate rises of 200 to 300 percent have been reported (ibid).

Tenants who have had to be evicted and were unable to gain accommodation in large new monotonous housing complexes such as Chatsworth, were forced to become dwellers of transit camps, often of sub-economic¹ standards. The officially estimated shortage of housing for Indians in Natal at the beginning of 1975 was 13,000 dwellings (Horrell, 1976: 69). In addition, there exists severe overcrowding. For instance, more than half the homes in the Springfield sub-economic housing scheme at Asherville, are reported to be overcrowded by the Durban City Treasurer, Mr. O.D. Gorven. "Of the 695 houses in the scheme, 403 were overcrowded,...three families each live in 129 homes, two families each in 250 houses and one family each in 316 houses." (*Daily News*, 28 May, 1974). 79 percent of those leasing homes were earning less than R80 a month (ibid).

1. "Sub-economic" standards refer to households earning not more than R100 a month in 1975 (Horrell, 1976:72).

Contrary to a Natal Supreme Court decision of July 4th, 1960, stipulating that the Board should consider the provision of alternate, suitable and equitable replacement before proclaiming an area (Horrell, 1960:145), most newly declared areas are noted for their poor amenities. Insufficient numbers of schools, no hospitals, no public telephones, inadequate recreational facilities and shopping facilities, and "not even a police station" are among the frequent complaints.¹ Chatsworth's 15,000 residents have been without a cemetery for 14 years after resettlement. Only in May, 1974 did the City Council approve land for use as a cemetery (*Daily News*, 5 July, 1974).

However, more than the material deprivation and comparative discrimination against Indians by the Group Areas Act, it was the social consequences of uprooting a settled community which had a lasting impact. From the perspective of "community development" these changes ironically enough seem to have been more efficient at community destruction, eroding the traditional South African Indian way of life. The members of the extended family generally had lived either together in a single household or within convenient commuting distance from one another. Frequent visits to relatives were part of daily life. As the most self-sufficient of the subordinate groups, Indians

1. The few essential facilities which are beginning to appear after fifteen years residence in some of these townships, such as the R.K. Khan hospital in Chatsworth and the Shifa hospital in Asherville have been built at the community's own initiative, and with heavy subsidisation. The R.K. Khan trust partly financed and raised from the community R400,000 for building the R.K. Khan hospital for Indians in Chatsworth.

have in the past financed, either totally or partly, over 80 percent of their own schools and organized a proliferation of associations, usually in the city's central area, to cope with their needs. Being an essentially urban people, their homes were within reach of shops and places of entertainment. These living arrangements had made material deprivation somewhat bearable: transport costs were relatively low; the nuclear family could rely on the extended family for child care; and the paucity of public conveniences in the city for Indians was alleviated by central settlement patterns. Furthermore, telephones were usually available and a car was not a necessity. In this way poorer groups were compensated by geographical proximity and better public amenities for the private advantages of wealthier sections in suburbia. With the passage of the Group Areas Act, for the first time in the history of the Indian community extended families had to split and resettle according to individual financial means. Thereby, class differences became greatly accentuated; kinship bonds could no longer hide individual poverty as well as accumulated wealth in the same family. This haphazard resettlement resulted in large-scale social disorganization, hitherto unknown in the Indian community. Though still considerably lower than other racial groups, the common indicators for degrees of social anomie, such as rates of divorce, illegitimate births, and crime showed a marked increase within the community itself.¹

1. For detailed discussions of community disorganisation see Ramasar 1967, Meer 1971, Schlemmer 1967.

Although there are no crime statistics for Chatsworth or the newer suburbs, and official group statistics do not reflect a significant increase in crime, social workers tell of an overload of cases dealing with social disruption. Residents complain of living in fear of gang assaults, theft, sexual attacks, and physical injury. For instance, residents in the Montford area relate incidents of attacks by the "Fisherman's Gang" which enters any home, slashes people with knives, smashes windows, and takes anything it pleases. (Interviews, also: Leader, 27 December, 1974). Men, women and children were said to have been indiscriminately attacked, assaulted, and their cars stoned in the Road 702 area of Chatsworth. The police seemed unable to do anything, and residents say that whenever they called they were told the only patrol van in use was out on duty and therefore they were unable to do anything immediately. (Interviews, also: Leader 11 October, 1974).

Such intra-group violence may well be indicative of the anger of a frustrated, opportunityless youth who have never seen the faces of the group responsible for their fate. As Ramasar points out (Ramasar, 1967), they turn their frustration into aggression toward members of their own group, since they are most vulnerable, afraid, defenceless and unlikely to take retaliatory action. In this respect, the new Indian way of life seems to reflect, though with a time lag, the pattern of the urban African and coloured township dweller, for whom the fear of physical violence by their own group members ranks highest

among everyday concerns (Edelstein 1972, Mayer 1974). The overall system benefits from this absorption by daily survival fears which in addition demonstrate the need for tougher law and order policies, now often demanded by the victims of the total structure themselves. This picture stands sharply in contrast to the situation in older areas of Indian settlement, with their heterogeneous composition of residents from various economic and racial groups, with their temples, mosques, and other integrating communal facilities.¹

In the South African context, Africans, Coloreds, and Indians economic groups should be living within convenience distance from the city's center, instead of the contrary arrangement envisioned by residential segregation. Unlike the American trend of ghettoization of poor minorities in the inner city (Blauner, 1972), in South Africa the opposite pattern has been designed for strategic reasons as far as the Africans were concerned and mainly for quick enrichment of white commercial interests as far as the Coloured and Indian choice properties were concerned. Instead of "block busting" in a legally non-discriminatory society, South Africa's absolute control over the disenfranchised, allowed her to rule the undesirable majority.

Though Whites are not forbidden to enter Coloured or Indian areas (but need a permit to visit

1. The extent of the impact of this single piece of legislation is illustrated in a public wedding invitation, a form very seldom used by Indians: "Mrs. and Mrs... of ... wish to extend a cordial invitation to friends and relatives with whom they have lost contact due to displacement under the Group Areas Act, on the occasion of the marriage of ..." (*The Leader*, 20 July 1973). Indians traditionally deliver wedding invitations personally from home to home, not relying on an impersonal postal service, to ensure a good turn-out at the wedding.

African townships), few have reason to seek normal contact with what government propaganda now euphemistically calls "your non-white fellow neighbor". The impact of residential segregation, though achieved by different means and patterns in the United States and South Africa, is quite similar in heightening social distance between the racial groups and furthering the anomie of the underprivileged in their struggle for equal opportunities.

The Group Areas Act also stimulated a high period of black political organization. For a while the political concerns of all black people were merged together. On May 1st, 1950, the Natal Indian Congress called for a "Hartal Day" as a day of protest and mourning. Over 30,000 Africans, Coloureds and Indians gathered together to express their dissatisfaction with the government's proposed measures. (Leader, 6 May, 1950). In July, 1951 both the African National Congress (ANC) and the South African Indian Congress (SAIC) agreed to resort to mass action if the government would not repeal the Group Areas Act, the Pass Laws¹ affecting Africans, Stock Limitation Regulations² and Separate Representation of Voters' Act,³ Suppression of Communism

1. This Act requires Africans to carry at all times a pass or reference book. Failure to produce this document results in a fine not exceeding £50 and imprisonment of up to 6 months. (United Nations Commission on the Racial Situation in the Union of South Africa, 1953:66-8). This measure to control the influx of Africans into cities is now handled more liberally.

2. Stock Limitation Regulations restrict the number of cattle which may be kept to prevent overgrazing (ibid, p. 88).

3. This Act was designed to remove Coloured voters from the normal electoral rolls in the Cape Province and place them on a separate roll, and to allow them to vote for four special white representatives (Walker, 1964:817-8, 835).

Act⁴ and the Bantu Authorities Act.⁵ (South African Indian Congress, Twenty-first Conference Records, 1954, Report of the Secretary:7).

In April, 1952 mass demonstrations began in all major centres jointly organised by Indians and Africans. Within the next two years, 8,557 individuals were arrested for participating in these strikes. (SAIC records 1954:9). The June 1958 mass meeting at Curries Fountain, Durban, to protest against the then imminent Group Areas proclamations attracted an estimated 25,000 of all ethnic groups. (*The Leader*,

1958). A year later, at the "Freedom Day" rally even greater crowds of over 40,000 Africans, Indians, Coloured and a few White sympathizers gathered. (*The Leader*, 3 July, 1959). Despite numerous deputations by Indian political leaders and their sympathizers international repercussions such as the cancellation of the Round Table Conference to have taken place between the Union government, India and Pakistan in May, 1950 (*The Leader*, 6 May 1950), and declarations of numerous sessions at the United Nations since 1946, the all-white political power remained unperturbed in the implementation of its ideological blueprints.

The treason trial of 1958 when a multiracial group of 92 persons were arrested and charged with high treason marked the peak of non-racial

4. The Suppression of Communism Act of 1950 was intended "to declare the Communist Party of South African to be an unlawful organisation, to make provision for declaring other organisations promoting communistic activity to be unlawful". (United Nations Commission, 1953:70). The Act had wide-ranging effects in its all-encompassing definition of "communistic" activity as being anything advocating social change.

5. The Bantu Authorities Act created tribal councils for Africans under government control. (United Nations Commission, 1953:130).

unity and non-violent resistance. By 1961 the ANC was driven underground, and although the NIC was not banned as an organization its entire executive was. This thwarted most efforts at black unity, since the subsequent implementation of separate development increasingly differentiated the concerns of each group and particularized their problems, thereby militating against the perception of a common black united front at the grass-roots level.

VIII. POST-1961 GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS

1. The Department of Indian Affairs

As late as 1961, a year after Indians had celebrated the centenary of their arrival in South Africa, the newly-appointed Minister of Indian Affairs made some revealing statements about Indians at a Nationalist party rally. In summary, he said: (1) that the Nationalist Party's original repatriation idea was impractical and they had no other choice but to accept that the Indians had become a permanent part of the population. (2) It had to be acknowledged that the relationship between Indians as a group and Whites as a group was in no way good, and the same applied to the relationship between Indians and Africans.

(3) He would rather have chosen a portfolio that had to do with his own people, but unpopular tasks have to be undertaken in the interests of the white man in South Africa. (4) The reason for the creation of the Department was the necessity to be sober and realistic about the Indian question. (5) If Indians were given equal rights it would eventually mean that the Whites would be overwhelmed, not by the Indians, but by the Blacks. The only solution was the "parallel-stream policy of separate development", which was the correct pattern for future racial friendship. The cry for equal rights could only lead to strife. (6) Indians with their own municipal councils in their own areas would find these to have greater lasting value than the vote. (7) Nothing could be done without Indian co-operation and he expected there would be "great opposition". (8) He appealed to "those not

already blinded by agitators" to use this opportunity to create a channel for better relationships. (The Leader, 11 August, 1961).

With these notions of lasting paternalistic tutelage and qualified, limited political participation, the Department of Indian Affairs was established in 1961 to serve as a central channel through which the Indian community could express its needs. It took over the functions originally performed by the Directorate of Immigration and Asiatic Affairs and subsequently by the Department of the Interior's Asiatic Division.¹ The minister at the head of the Department of Indian Affairs works in consultation with the South African Indian Council, which the government established in March, 1968.

Exploiting the existence of more than one political party among Indians, (N.I.O. and N.I.C.) and the impotence of one of them, namely the Natal Indian Congress though the banning of its leadership (Meer, 1971:16), the government articulated its intended centralizing function as follows: "We do not know whom we could approach to speak on behalf of the Indians. The Indian Organization has on occasion claimed that it is the mouth-piece of the Indians and the Congress alleges that it is..." With respect to the Indian Congress the Minister pointed out, "that in the ranks of the Indian Community there was growing resistance to the

1. This includes control of welfare services, granting and payment of pensions, issuing of identity cards, travel documents, educational services, and other related matters. It specifically excludes, however, issues of landholding and job reservation, though it serves as a link with those departments. (South Africa, Indian Affairs, 1971:13)

reign of terror of the Congress organization " (South Africa, Indian Affairs, 1962:7).

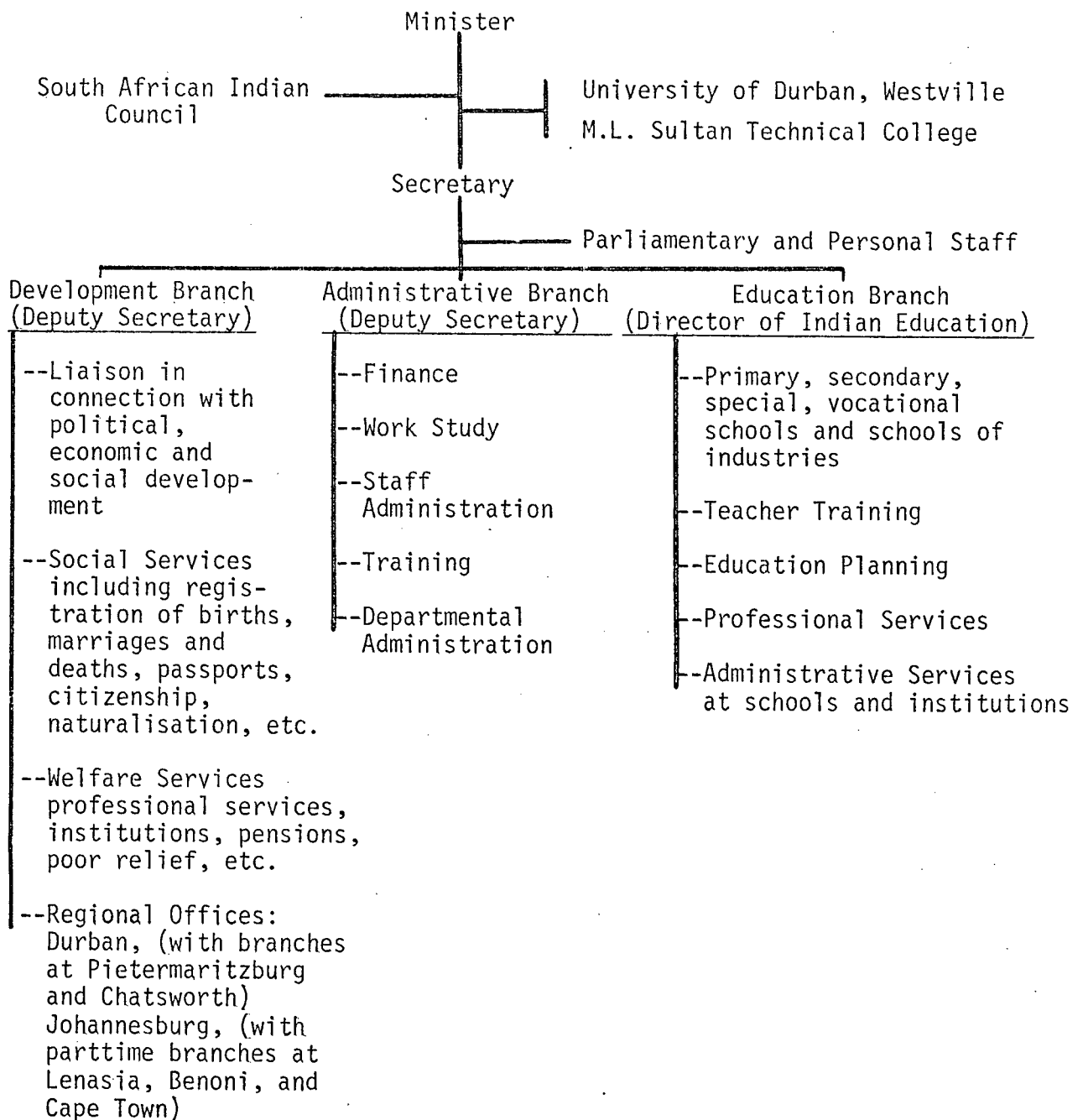
Characteristic of such racist perception is the notion that because of the physical likeness of Indians, they ought to have unified opinions as a group. Indeed, the relative complexity of dealing with various opinions contrasts sharply with the administrative ease with which an appointed, hand-picked council can be reliably expected to adhere to a particular line. The all-encompassing bureaucracy of the Department of Indian Affairs is depicted in table 2.

The primary functions of the Development Branch are defined as promoting political, economic and social development of the Indian Community, through mutual contact with the community and other Government and private bodies (South Africa, Indian Affairs, 1971:8). The Education Branch is responsible for the administration and control of primary and secondary education which were prior to 1966 under the provincial administration, as well as higher education which was taken over from the central government.

There was widespread criticism of the newly established Department of Indian Affairs. Dr. G.M. Naicker, president of the South African Indian Congress, in categorically rejecting the move, said that "ethnic, linguistic and racial divisions were part of the South African milieu" and "under multi-racialism...there would be one department, non-racial in character, dealing with all internal problems and avoiding financial

Table 2

Organization of
Department of Indian Affairs



Source: (South Africa,
Indian Affairs,
1971:7)

wastage " (The Natal Daily News, 3 August, 1961). Mr. A.M. Moolla, president of the South African Indian Organisation, commented: "It is most unfortunate that in these times of great changes in Africa our Government must continue to think and act in terms of sectional interests ...it seems a pure waste of time and energy to continue planning on these lines " (ibid.). Similarly, Mr. A.S. Kajee of the Natal Indian Organisation maintained, "We are all South Africans, and as South Africans there should not be different channels for the different racial groups. There should be one Minister for us all " (ibid.). Mr. P.R. Pather, president of the Natal Indian Organisation, expressed disbelief in the "parallel stream" policy. "It can only lead to racial strife and chaos, for the poorer section will always be submerged as each section will be looking after its own racial interest and not the interest of South Africa as a whole" (The Leader, 11 August, 1961).

Within a decade of the Department's existence, however, Indian opinion appears to have changed considerably, if one takes into account earlier published statements of public reaction. Of those interviewed, 62 percent spoke favorably about the department, 20 percent had no strong feelings about it, and 18 percent still rejected it on principle. Those in favour pointed to the achievements since the Department's establishment, such as the university facilities, schools, greater diversification of employment, and group status. One interviewee mentioned that "half a loaf is better than none. The Nationalists understand us, they appreciate our culture and civilization, we have only to look around to see what they have done in the time for our people " (Interview 33). Another

respondent compared how much the Nationalists had accomplished with how little the English-speaking provincial authorities contributed to Indian well-being before them. Yet another interviewee (51) talked of the newly acquired dignity which Indians have achieved, and felt there was more to gain by collaboration than opposition. The newly acquired status of the group and definite channels of communication with authorities was a prevalent theme in the responses.

The dictates of an industrial society with its expanding opportunities and the imperative of incorporating Blacks into previously White-dominated positions is perceived by many as indicative of the Government's goodwill. "You just have to look around you to see how much of our people are now taking over White jobs. These fellows (Nationalists) mean well, if only our chaps will work with them," remarked one interviewee (9).

Indeed, the success of the Department seems to lie essentially in its all-encompassing role, not unlike that of the Hindu trinity. Shiva-like it destroyed the established community structures; Brahma-like it created new lesser opportunities in its own image to replace a vacuum it was responsible for creating in the first place; and after the fashion of Vishnu it is the pious preserver of all that is Indian in the hope that its own beneficent role may not atrophy. In actual terms, the dependence of the Indian on the Department for all bureaucratic services ensures its indispensability. In the absence of viable alternatives in a politically restrictive milieu the Department with its resources to

provide previously non-existent facilities has a great advantage.

Above all, as Fatima Meer points out (1971:19), "the platteland informality of the Afrikaner bureaucrat makes him more approachable, and the Indian, with his peasant roots, finds himself closer to him than he did to the English bureaucrat who preceded him."

The minority who rejected such institutional segregation did so along much the same lines as the early opposition to the Department's initiation. The very principle underlying separate facilities was unacceptable and discriminatory. They also expressed a sense of powerlessness in light of the immense resources of such government departments to realise their will.

2. The South African Indian Council

These reactions to the white Department of Indian Affairs became more meaningful when compared with attitudes towards the Indian liaison vehicle. A key collaborating body is the South African Indian Council, a kind of symbolic cabinet without the executive powers of a government.

Unlike the Coloured Representative Council, which is partly elected and partly nominated, or the various Bantustan authorities, which have some executive powers as well, the South African Indian Council was to be fully appointed and to have no authority to make decisions independently. Twenty-five members were nominated by the minister for a period of three years on a provincial basis. A chairman was elected from among the members. The executive committee comprised five members

of the council, four of whom were elected by council members and a fifth, the chairman, was appointed by the minister (South Africa, Indian Affairs, 1971:18).

The council's specific function had been outlined at its first meeting in Cape Town in March 1964. It was to serve as a consultative body to assist the relevant government bodies, in preparation for the day when it would be an elected body to cope with such Indian affairs as might then be delegated to it. The promise of graduation to elected status, at first as a partially elected body and only subsequently to be fully elected, could however only be fulfilled when Indian resettlement had reached a more advanced stage, making it possible to establish electoral districts and a voters' roll. Accordingly, local affairs and consultative committees have been established on a partially elected basis and are the responsibility of the various provinces.

In 1974 the council was reconstituted to consist of thirty members, half of whom would be nominated and half elected by persons who on the election day were elected members of Indian local authorities, local affairs committees, or management or consultative committees. The government considered it not yet feasible to compile a general voters' roll (Horrell, 1976:22).

The first election was held in November 1974 and the remainder of the council was nominated shortly afterwards. An elected member Mr. J.N. Reddy was appointed Chairman of the Council's Executive, while the

other members were appointed, as was the Chairman of the Council (Horrell, 1976:22). Legislative and executive powers were to be delegated to the Council with respect to matters dealt with by the Minister of Indian Affairs, such as Education and Community Welfare (ibid.). The present Council comprises a representation of all the linguistic and religious groups in the Community. They are for the most part articulate individuals with little formal higher education -- only two have university education -- and with few exceptions represent business interests.

The powerless nature of the contact which the Council has with the white authorities may best be illustrated by the official description of the Council's preoccupations. Of the 168 "matters dealt with" during July 1971 - June 1972, the following areas were considered most important; and the limited power of "recommendation" is graphically portrayed in the empty, formalized terminology which mainly conveys ritualistic activism without specific content:

The Future of the Council..."is constantly under discussion..."
Local Government Administration..."the committee on different occasions had fruitful discussions..."
Group Areas..."the Council regularly made representations..."
Housing..."the Council is in constant contact with the authorities..."
Amenities in Indian Residential Areas..."apart from making certain proposals...the Council has had discussions with officials...the matter is still being pursued..."
Zoning of Beaches..."the Council is pressing for beaches..."
Restrictions on the Interprovincial Movement of Indians..."the Council has 'renewed its representations'..."
Wage gap..."the matter was again discussed..."
Resettlement of Indian traders..."is constantly receiving attention and has been discussed..."

Industrial sites..."the Council has recommended..."
Education..."the Council had various discussions..."
Indian agriculture..."fruitful contact has been established..."
Seaside Resort for Underprivileged Children..."the Council 'is negotiating'..."

(South Africa, Indian Affairs, 1973: 4-5).

Such powerlessness is underlined when Council members readily acquiesce in official decisions to exclude them from full participation in political life. At a meeting between the Prime Minister and the Executive Committee of the SAIC on 24 January 1975, Mr. Vorster rejected the Council's request for direct representation in the central Parliament. Instead he proposed an inter-Cabinet Council on which Indian, Coloured and White Cabinet ministers would meet together. In place of the SAIC's request for 45 members on an elected basis, the Prime Minister maintained that the future Indian Council should contain "a minority of nominated members to be fully representative also of minority groups and other interests in the Indian community" (Fiat Lux, March 1975:6).

The difference in approach between the Indian Council and the Coloured Council to their respective communities is noticeable. In the Coloured Council's meeting with the Minister of Coloured Affairs, a representative of the Coloured delegation in replying to the government's proposal of a Cabinet council, said that the CRC could not at this stage associate itself with the proposed Cabinet council. It would first have to report back to the coloured community, as it would not be right to decide on the future of 2.5 million people without a mandate (The Star, WE,

January 17, 1976). By contrast, the elected SAIC executive Chairman, Mr. J.N. Reddy with no qualms about the lack of consultation with the community, announced: "The SAIC has already taken its decision to go along with the inter-Cabinet council proposals following its discussions with the Prime Minister" (ibid.).¹

In opposing the inter-Cabinet proposals the coloured Council took an outspoken clear stand. Sonny Leon, a member of the CRC who had been previously dismissed by the government in his capacity as Leader of the Council's executive committee, argued, "If we are to meet, let us meet together with the other racial groups to work out a common destiny for all. This separate package deal cannot be accepted because it is another subtle method of getting us all tied up....The only consideration that can be accepted is the total political integration of all people in a common society regardless of race, colour or creed" (ibid.). The Chairman of the coloured Council, Rev. Alan Henrickse responded along similar lines.

On the other hand, the Indian Council cooperates with the government in working out a formula for transferring what the government considers "greater powers", and described the talks as "frank, honest and fruitful"

1. A comparison of the responses of the SAIC with that of the CRC to essentially the same government overtures of extended consultative powers raises theoretical questions for the behaviour of minorities, and yields insight into the dominant group's tactic of 'divide et impera'. These will be examined in greater detail in the section on Indian-Coloured relations.

(Fiat Lux, March 1974:6). Hence, whereas coloured leaders press for full citizenship rights and representation in parliament, the Indian Council indicates a willingness to accept such limited rights of political expression at the expense of a black alliance.

In so doing, Indians who have in the past followed in the wake of Coloured political rights and still have fewer powers than the Coloureds, threaten to overtake the latter. Indeed there is the possibility that such constitutional advancement on the part of Indians could prove a powerful weapon in the hands of the government in breaking the impasse between the government and the coloured Council.

Indian Council leaders however vehemently deny being "lackies of the government", a charge levelled against the community by Maurice Lewis the chairman of a branch of the Coloured Labour party. (Star, WE, 24 January, 1976). Mr. Lewis argued that "Indians should rally around the oppressed and not become tools of the government" (ibid.). Mr. A.M. Moola, nominated member and chairman of the SAIC in denying these charges differentiated the policy of the Indian Council from those of other groups as being based on removing discrimination "by negotiation and not by confrontation. Negotiation and consultation will get us somewhere, but confrontation will breed enmity and discord" (ibid.).

Members of the SAIC are not always expected to approve government policy. Indeed they are frequently critical of the government. This has been visible in several widely publicized instances such as the following

three issues, (1) when the Minister of Transport acceded to the request of the South African Railways to ban private bus operators from Chatsworth to central Durban, in the hope that Government-owned trains would be better patronised (Graphic, 13 October, 1972); (2) in the case of the impact of the Group Areas Act on the Cato Manor area from which some 40,000 Indians had been displaced. It has a few revered religious landmarks of the Indian community and has as yet remained unoccupied by any other group, and (3) in the case of the long-threatened sword of Damocles to eliminate Indian trading from the central Durban Grey Street Complex. On all these issues members of the SAIC joined vehemently with their Indian political opponents in decrying the unfairness of the proposed moves. Mr. A.M. Rajab, then Chairman of the SAIC executive, strongly argued that the government had put the people of Chatsworth where they were, and the bus operators helped in the resettlement. It would therefore be unfair to deprive the bus operators of their living as well as the Chatsworth residents of their vital transportation linkages (Graphic, 13 October, 1972). Similarly Mr. J.N. Reddy urged Indians to keep alive their worship at the old shrines of Cato Manor to preserve their traditions and rights. The inequity of taking over the Grey Street area was also well articulated by Mr. Reddy and Mr. Rajab on behalf of the Indian trading community (Post, 25 February, 1973).

Such criticism apart from displaying the outspokenness of the SAIC members, or the possibilities for "free expression" offered by such

government institutions would seem to legitimate both. Through criticism of the government on "safe" issues where governmental agreement is likely, the SAIC members gain credibility in the eyes of their own group. Their acceptance by the group, in turn, is interpreted by the government as a sign of the Council members' "effectiveness" in their own community and enhances their potential value as instruments of future policy propagation. On the other hand the Council uses community opposition as a weapon to elicit minor concessions from the government, such as the declaration of Grey Street as an Indian business district, in order to legitimate its status in the eyes of the community.

When a member of the Council exposed the contradictions of Apartheid, however, and pointed to the reluctance of authorities to implement policies to their logical conclusions, other Council members have been known to self-police themselves. Referring to the university's hiring practices, for instance, Dr. M.B. Naidoo, an executive member in charge of Education and Culture, proposed a motion that the council should "deplore the fact that this university is not fulfilling the aspirations of Indian academics" (Daily News, 16 February, 1973). In elaborating, he explained how an internationally renowned and highly qualified Indian academic from the University of Ceylon had applied for a post at the Indian University, but the application was ignored and the vacancy filled by a White. After an appeal from the Chairman of the Executive, Mr. Rajab, the motion was withdrawn. The threshold of

minimal articulation had been overstepped. The role of one of the "elders" was therefore to save the face of authority by not pursuing the subject further.

Members of the SAIC also engage in pseudo diplomatic roles. They are introduced to visiting foreign dignitaries and can be depended on by the government to behave appropriately. During 1971-72 they are on record as having met eleven foreign politicians, twelve authors and journalists and three foreign academics (South Africa, Indian Affairs, 1973:6).

In having "respectable" Indians available to display to foreigners, the government adheres to the visitor's credibility need of "having met a cross-section of the South African population" and at the same time demonstrates amiable, democratic race relations. Furthermore, on the few occasions when white South Africans are barred from entering India, council members outdo themselves in attempting to ensure justice to the individuals concerned by making approaches to the Government of India on their behalf. One such case was that of Professor Ahrens of the University of Cape Town who was prevented from attending a science conference in India on the grounds of being a white South African. Mr. M.B. Naidoo, an executive Council member, appealed to the Indian government to be fair and "transcend emotionalism aroused by political enmities" in barring such an eminent scholar from entry (The Natal Mercury, 20 February, 1973). Similar appeals have been made with

respect to international sport when India refused to play against South Africa. Such instances give council members a sense of power in that it is one of the rare occasions when they can show their own "generosity" to Whites, and their colour places them in a superior position vis-a-vis their dominators. It also creates the impression of themselves as "reasonable" men in the eyes of the Whites and gains for them the approval of their masters. It is in such instances that the depth of oppression and internalised tutelage may be delved.

The responses of Indians to the SAIC are varied and on the whole much more critical than towards the Indian Affairs Department. Among those interviewed, 70 percent expressed total opposition to the Council. They were described as "stooges", "a useless body", "self-centred", "making money out of others suffering", "exploiters", "lackies of the government", "a despicable bunch", "worse than Whites", "lacking virility", "incompetent", "uneducated", and "having lost touch with their own people". Twenty percent said it did not make much difference whether there was a council or not. They expressed a sense of futility and powerlessness. Others differentiated between some members being "useful", "hitting at the Whites" and having "some impact", while 10 percent did not know what the Council was.¹

1. These findings correspond quite closely with a more recent random survey conducted by the Sunday Times in February 1976. Two-thirds of those interviewed felt the SAIC did not represent them. The remainder considered the SAIC to be meaningful. (Sunday Times, 15 February, 1976).

The following comments are indicative of the range of responses:

"The SAIC is only there for the good of the rich, and it is therefore worthwhile for those people who own shops in Grey Street." (Interview, 22).

"The SAIC has achieved a lot for the people, but we must not be granted special concessions if Africans are excluded." (Interview, 26).

"The SAIC does not represent us, and I don't think we should accept concessions." (Interview 31).

"...by its very composition the SAIC is not South African in character. Its rejection by Indians and its inexperience denies its status. It is purely an advisory body with conspicuously limited powers, and therefore incapable of playing any significant role in satisfying the hopes and aspirations of the Indian people." (Interview 32).

"The SAIC can be of benefit to our people only if it challenges the compartmentalization and fragmentation of our land and its people, and works towards attainment of a non-racial South Africa with equality of opportunity for all." (Interview 37).

"The SAIC creates an erroneous impression in the minds of the people that they have a representative body when, in fact, they have none. This conclusion is supported by the fact that they have not initiated anything for the community and their venture into the inter-Cabinet Committee has tarnished their image." (Interview 25).

"Popular elections will rid the council of immature politicians and replace them with true leaders who will strive for goodwill and harmony for all. Housing is an important issue and the council has failed to get more housing." (Interview 49).

"If the SAIC thinks they have the support of most Indians then that support must be from the rich merchant class whose vested interest the council seems to be guarding so well. As for the ordinary man, they are a non-existent body full of individuals, blundering as they go along." (Interview 51).

"As long as the Indian Council are the media between the people and the government, they will always serve in an advisory capacity. Therefore, they cannot achieve anything for the people. The Indian individual has not got the vote. The Council should

be elected on the basis of one-man, one-vote and have direct representation in Parliament. This however cannot be done overnight, but the present Council can evolve itself to be elected to Parliament." (Interview 61).

Typical examples for more favourable attitudes are:

"The SAIC are the spokesmen for the Indian people, and as such they must be recognized as the leaders. They cannot achieve much because they serve in an advisory capacity, but can become more effective and will prove their worth if given a chance and if they can get more powers to enable them to bring about effective changes." (Interview 82).

"I think the SAIC do represent the majority views of the Indian people. They can't show much by way of achievement, but they seem to be trying hard. I don't envy their position." (Interview 2).

"The Council needs the support of the Indian people, and not all their efforts are in vain. It is the system that is to blame. They may have a bad image in the eyes of some, but there are many who appreciate their work. They are our leaders and we should stand by them. Indians always look down upon anything Indian-oriented, and look down upon these people serving on these bodies as 'stooges' and 'sellouts'. This attitude is most unfair. Its about time we took pride in the people who serve us and, in spite of differences, let us work together toward a better community. Must there always be bickering in anything we do?" (Interview 4).

Greatest animosity to the Council would seem to come from Indian workers.

At a memorial service for two SAIC members, Mr. A.M. Rajab a wealthy businessman and Louis Nelson a trade Union leader were present and a crowd including 400 hotel employees stormed the stage and took over the public address system. They shouted, "Rajab was not concerned with workers" and "Nelson was never a true representative of the hotel workers" (Graphic, 19 October, 1973). When another Cape Town trade unionist and SAIC member attempted to restore order, the crowd shouted that he too belonged to the same class, lived in white hotels when he travelled to

Durban and would certainly sell them out insofar as their wages were concerned (ibid.). Similarly, the Natal Liquor and Catering Trade Employees' Union ended in uproar after angry members clashed with SAIC member Mr. Munsook, who was secretary of the Union. The employees wanted a present union rate of R47.50 a month increased by 150 percent, which they considered would bring their wage "close to the poverty datum line of R120 a month". When the secretary expressed doubts, he became the immediate target of the crowd's wrath (The Graphic, 7 December, 1973).

Although SAIC members are not held in high esteem in the community, they are feared. There is an uneasy quiet at social gatherings where members of the Council are present. Political topics are avoided and one is left with the impression that there is a fifth column present. However there is a noticeable difference between the relative freedom with which independent professionals, especially medical doctors and lawyers do in fact attack such council members for collaborating, and the withdrawal tendencies of teachers, university lecturers and other dependent employees of the Department of Indian Affairs. In the latter case there is almost a pathetic deference for fear of retribution. Indeed it is not uncommon for highly qualified individuals seeking faculty positions at the Indian university to "work through" Council members and ask them "to put in a good word" with the authorities, even though the Council member may have no high school or university background himself, and can obviously only recommend along political lines.

It is such power that members of the SAIC would like to capitalise upon, in order to force the respect of their own group members. Hence, they have been demanding "a meaningful say" in the planning of education for Indian children, as Mr. J.N. Reddy, Chairman of the SAIC executive and formerly salesman at a wholesale warehouse, put it (The Natal Mercury, 25 July, 1973). When Mr. Reddy together with Mr. Rajbansi who jointly hold the portfolio for education on the council, were unsuccessful in obtaining "executive powers" from the Minister of Indian Affairs, Indian teachers are recorded to have "heaved a sigh of relief" for having been saved from the "terror of the possible antics of an SAIC boss" (Graphic, 23 January, 1976). Informants in the South African Indian Teachers Association (SAITA) comment in private, but have not dared to publicise their views:

"Any suggestion that the SAIC should have any say in the appointment or dismissal of teachers, principals or school inspectors is absolutely dangerous. That will open the way for disastrous interference on sectional, linguistic and religious lines and even to nepotism and undue favoritism." (Private correspondence, 29, February 4, 1976).

"It is no secret that several threats were made against certain school principals by certain Indian politicians who also held out promises of promotion to others. The day that politicians are given a say in appointments will ruin Indian education." (Private correspondence, 30, February 8, 1976).

An editorial comment in one of the Indian weeklies points to the fear of publicising private matters: "Already there have been 'leaks' from confidential SAIC executive discussions. Just imagine what talk will go on at dinner parties and at weddings if Indian politicians have

access to the personal files of teachers and principals! These must never leave the hands of the fulltime officials" (The Graphic, 23 January, 1976).

Such responses lead to interesting speculation about the dynamics of minority-majority relations. It might have been expected that given the discriminatory treatment of the Indian minority by the Whites, whenever a chance arose for Indians to wrest power or decision-making from the dominant group, they would seize such opportunities in order to manage their own affairs more equitably. From the outlined responses thus far, there would seem to be much opposition to the imminent take-over of the Education portfolio by the Council. Several reasons may be assumed to account for this surprising outlook: (a) There is fear that particularistic criteria such as religion, linguistic group, and political perspectives may assume importance in professional decision-making, as opposed to universalistic criteria such as professional competence and qualification. (b) The community is perceived as being too intimate to maintain individual privacy and anonymity. There is anxiety about the influence of informal communication, gossip, feuds and "inside" information which could enter into decision-making in the public sphere. The virtue of "distance" and the "impersonal" aspects of Weberian type bureaucracy-models would seem to be lacking where "in-group" members make decisions about each other. Individuals are known to each other as "total persons" with all their virtues and failings, unlike the partial glimpse of the bureaucrat especially one

belonging to the ruling group.¹ (c) Deeply internalised notions of the group's own inferiority and the supposed "superior judgement" of spokesmen of the dominant group could also explain such articulation.

(d) The most obvious reasons, namely the professionally inadequate training² of both members appointed to the shadow education portfolio and the principle of entrenching segregation seems not to have been important in available criticism.

Council members have argued in defense of their positions, that although they do not entirely accept their admittedly limited roles, they participate in such a body in the interest of the community for want of better alternatives. One council member expressed his view thus: given the failure of earlier militant measures there is one way of establishing dialogue through the use of a strategy, which can be considered a far more effective way of persuasion. Face to face contact or even polite confrontation with authorities is felt more likely to remove mistrust and suspicion among Whites. Above all, it is said, only such an approach can be considered realistic in view of the fact that the White man is in power, and Indians are a voteless people (The Graphic, 16 July, 1971. Letter to editor by M.B. Naidoo).

1. A similar situation existed up to the fifties when Indians, especially middle and upper income groups, would seldom go to an Indian doctor. They considered visits to a White doctor, despite segregated waiting rooms in many instances, more prestigious and were convinced of their greater competence. This still applied to a very small sector of the elite today.

2. Neither have a university degree or professional qualification.

The late chairman of the executive council, A.M. Rajab, argued, on the other hand, that though he believed in a democratically elected council such a council was not necessarily better than or as effective as a "carefully selected hand-picked one". He considered his council to be a more effective, responsible, forceful, and objective body than any previous organization. Furthermore, in defense of the government, he stressed the need for patience, since "the area of race relations is usually slow of improvement" and it was "not the government per se, but the white electorate that resists change."¹ Along these lines, unlike the Coloured Representative Council, its Indian equivalent condoned and justified the government's policy in crisis situations. While for instance Colored students received the support of the Coloured Representative Council in their strike against their university administration, a year earlier in the summer of 1973 in a similar situation the Indian Council virtually acknowledged White generosity in providing Indians with a university (Joosub, 1973:433).

This syndrome of behavior, which distinguishes the style and calibre of the Indian Council from that of Buthelezi, or the Colored Representative Council, may perhaps only be explained in terms of the Indian community's position as the most powerless of all the subordinate South African groups, with neither the numerical basis and historical heritage of African strength, nor the claim to partial Afrikaner ancestry

1. Public address in Lenasia, 26 March 1972 by A.M. Rajab.

of the Coloreds. The Indian Council is highly unlikely to abolish itself or openly to challenge the basic tenets of government policy, as the Colored Representative Council did so spectacularly in 1974 and 1976.

3. Local Affairs Committees

Supplementing the SAIC are Local Affairs Committees (LAC), designed to satisfy Indian aspirations for local government. They have been officially described as "the first stage of local government", and have been established in 19 Indian residential areas in Natal. Of these, ten are fully elected committees, four are partly elected, and five are nominated (South Africa, Indian Affairs, 1973: 9-10). In the Transvaal three so-called Management Committees have been set up. (One with elected members, and the other two nominated.) In addition, there are 27 nominated Consultative Committees. In the Cape Province six nominated Management Committees are in operation (Horrell, 1976:79). The LAC's owe their origin to the Provincial Ordinance of 1963 and ultimately to the Group Areas Act (South Africa, Indian Affairs, 1973:8). The Ordinance give no powers of any kind to these Committees which are expected to "promote the interests and welfare of the inhabitants" (ibid.), and to bring any matter relating to Indians to the notice of the "Supreme" White local authority.

Opposition to LAC's has been widely expressed. Mr. D.K. Singh, Chairman of the Federation of Civic Associations, described them as "toothless

and powerless and possessing the character of separation" (The Leader, 23 March, 1973). The Chairman of a prestige suburb association, The Reservoir Hills Ratepayers' Association, described LAC's as "Committees whose main activities were to get potholes repaired and gutters fitted. We have bigger things to worry about," he said, adding that what Indians should do was make a concerted effort to bring pressure on the Durban City Council to do away with petty Apartheid (The Natal Mercury, 20 July, 1974). The Reservoir Hills Ratepayers' Association passed a resolution the LAC's were "not in the best interests 'of the Indian people'" (ibid.). The President of the Southern Durban Civic Federation who had served on the local Ratepayers' association for over 35 years, described LAC's as "having no executive power, being unable to have coercive force and providing a mere debating chamber" (Interview. also The Ratepayer, 5 June 1971).

Even those who agreed to use the LAC's as a platform on the grounds of expediency, such as S. Pillay Poovalingham, Vice Chairman of the Southern Durban Indian LAC, appear to have changed their perspectives. In March 1973, Poovalingham defended LAC's as potentially expedient institutions (The Leader, 30 March, 1973). Within six months of serving on such a Committee he called for "the scrapping of LAC's because they served no useful purpose....at no time were our recommendations to the council accepted and acted upon....All we do here is debate and pass resolutions"(Daily News, 5 November, 1973).

From the inception, public apathy to these institutions was noticeable. In the 1973 elections in Merebank, a largely working class suburb, only 8,062 out of 23,068 voters who had registered, went to the polls¹ (Graphic, 19 October, 1973).

Similarly the Ratepayers' Association of Asherville, a community with a heavy concentration of professional as well as working-class people, boycotted the Northern Durban Indian LAC elections, condemning such committees as "meaningless bodies" having "no real power". Others objected to them because they were for Indians only. "We want direct representation....and want to vote as residents, not as Indians" (The Graphic, 26 January, 1973).

Between 1973 and the present time there have been regular confrontations

1. It should be mentioned that this was also an area in which there was a concerted drive by a local organized group to discourage voters. Placards bearing slogans denounced the LAC system as a fraud and called for direct representations for all on the exclusively white City Council. Leaflets distributed throughout Merebank, pleaded with voters to consider before voting, the role of the LAC; what it had achieved for Indians to-date, and the chances of it ever succeeding in fighting on behalf of the people for improvements:

"The Local Affairs Committees, the South African Indian Council and Bantustan governments and the Coloured Representative Council are all part of the government's master Apartheid plan. They have been created not to protect your interests but to soften and divert your opposition."

"It is clear as crystal that the LAC is not fighting for us....these bodies are at the mercy of the government, and they rely on handouts from the Durban Corporation and the government. It is clear that these bodies are being used as tools."

(The Graphic, 19 October, 1973)

between LAC members, both elected and nominated, and the Durban City Council. Various walk-outs were staged in disgust, by both the Northern Durban Indian LAC as well as the Southern Durban Indian LAC, over the refusal of the City Council to increase the amount to be spent on Indian areas in the Council's 1974 draft estimates. The white Mayor typically retaliated by referring to the LAC members as "still immature" (The Graphic, 14 September 1973).

Indeed there is blatant discrimination at the municipal level by local authorities, elected by and responsible to a white constituency, in spite of the equal if not higher taxation of non-Whites. In Durban in 1976 the City Council had allocated R73-million for the development of municipal facilities. Of this amount only R8-million was set aside for the Coloured and Indian areas, in spite of the fact that they outnumber Whites two to one (according to Senator Eric Winchester, PRP, The Star, WE, 3 March 1976:6).

In a typical incident more than 500 angry residents from Port Shepstone and Marburg protested against the "appalling neglect" of Indian housing by White local authorities in the area. The frustration of residents expressed itself, as is frequent in South Africa, not on the real targets but on group members. Hence LAC members and Indian landlords became the objects of wrath. One resident deplored "The inhuman and avaricious behavior of some landlords in the area who exploited tenants, many of whom earned less than R100 a month" (Sunday Times, 7 July 1974). Another resident said "exploitation by landlords had reached 'shameless

depths'. It was not uncommon to find a man earning R60 a month, paying R30 to R40 for rent for one room and a kitchen" (ibid.). A prominent doctor and resident in the area said "We have had enough of people who purport to be working in our interests and yet are exploiting us as landlords" (ibid.). In defence of the LAC's Mr. J.N. Reddy, Chairman of the SAIC executive, said it was no use blaming the LAC's "because they were only advisory bodies with no executive power" (ibid.). In response to criticism of the White local authorities' failure to concern themselves with the accommodation needs of Indian residents, the Mayor denied that this was so, and switched the focus of the crowd onto the fact that he was aware of the exploitative behaviour of Indian landlords, and commended all efforts to control them. The existence of an iniquitous situation which allowed room for exploitation was entirely bypassed, as was the privileged position of the white residents in the town.

Table 3 shows extracts from the Durban City Council's estimates for 1975-76 in expenditure according to racial group.

As a result of the all-white City Council's failure to heed 75 percent of LAC recommendations, the Southern Durban LAC declared a boycott on any further meetings with the white body until a meeting was held with the Mayor (The Natal Mercury, 28 January, 1976). Quite typically the Durban City Council attempted to deflate the impasse through further bureaucratisation. It suggested that the Southern Durban LAC work through a super-liaison committee comprising representatives from all

Table 3

Durban City Council Expenditure (Estimates)
for 1975-76
According to Racial Group in Rand

	<u>White Areas</u>	<u>North Indian</u>	<u>South Indian</u>	<u>Coloured Areas</u>
Grants	368,850	19,000	19,000	8,000
Music	541,170	-	-	-
Pools	373,630	56,560	62,100	43,100
Sports	2,837,420	-	-	-
Roads	3,418,590	386,980	352,150	48,350

Source: The Graphic, 14 February, 1976.

Note: The Indian and small coloured population living under the jurisdiction of the Durban City Council number approximately 30 percent more than the Whites and their respective designated areas comprise approximately 35 percent of the municipality. (See map.) Indians and Coloureds are not allowed to use the central white recreational facilities (Pools, Sport) except parks and to a limited extent now City Hall. They do have their own beach on the outskirts of the White district, and of course make use of other municipally maintained services in the White area such as roads.

the Indian LAC's including the Coloured LAC and the City Council (The Sunday Times, 8 February, 1976). Contrary to expectation that, in view of a discriminatory budget against the group, all Indian LAC's would gather together in opposition to the City Council, the Northern Durban LAC and the Coloured LAC have acquiesced in the suggestion of the super-liaison committee (ibid.). This is further evidence of the role of differential privileges and facilities in differentiating the interests of a wealthier central suburb from a poorer outlying ill-developed one, despite the identical political inequalities directed against both. The Northern Durban LAC has probably much more to gain from the City Council through collaboration.

In an apparently progressive move, the Durban City Council announced that it intended to obtain permission from the Provincial Council to offer full local authority and autonomy to Indians in Chatsworth (Horrell, 1976:79). Indeed as the newest, most poorly developed area in need of essential facilities, this would release the City Council of considerable expenditure, while it could benefit from the disproportionate increases in taxes of wealthier developed Indian suburbs in need of less maintenance. Furthermore, the City Council is unlikely to provide Chatsworth local government with a substantial portion of the accumulated revenue from the central municipal treasury to which Indians contribute considerable amounts. A similar offer tentatively made to the Indians of Lenasia in Johannesburg was rejected by the (elected) management committee, whose spokesman maintained that suburban

autonomy was impossible without industrial autonomy. Indian and Coloured leaders have called, instead, for direct representation on the city council (ibid.:80).

4. Autonomous Indian Town Boards

In stark contrast to the LACs the three towns of Verulam, Isipingo and Umzinto with autonomous all-Indian Town Boards have gained very positive support from their respective communities. The most established of these is Verulam on the North Coast of Natal, which has a fully elected uniracial Town Board of ten members and has all the effective powers vested in white local governments. It is responsible for its own rate collection, has its licensing board, Indian medical officers of Health, traffic and other related areas. There is a highly efficient Town Clerk accountable to the most civic conscious voters in the province.¹ Whereas prior to 1924 Indian women had been excluded from exercising the vote, Verulam created a precedent by including women (Interviews, also Views and News, November, 1972).

Though a predominantly Indian town, Verulam has been dominated for a century by a white local authority. When the first Indian town board came into existence in 1967, the white local authority had left an overdraft of R10,000 and an annual income of R23,000.² Throughout the period of

1. 76 percent in one ward went to the polls recently, compared to Durban's white poll of between 26 to 46 percent (Views and News, November, 1972).

2. Six months before the Indian local authorities assumed control, salaries of its already well-paid white employees had been raised by 100 percent (Interviews, also Views and News, November, 1972).

White domination not a single municipally owned house had been erected for either Indians or Africans, although R110,000 had been accumulated in profits from the African beer hall (Interviews).

In a short period, the Verulam Town Board eliminated the initial overdraft, and achieved a present annual income of R150,000. Facilities previously neglected by a white council have been given priority. Among these are roads, water-borne sewage disposal, a housing scheme for Indians and the allocation of R25,000 for the resettlement of Africans in Dalmenie.

It is economic viability that distinguishes the achievements of autonomous Town Boards, such as Verulam, from the impotence of the LAC's which are entirely dependent on the all-white City Council.

The latter instance has aptly been likened to the colonial situation, where imperial power is concentrated in white hands. LAC members are in much the same position as Nawabs and Maharajas in India under British rule, although they enjoy neither the limited power nor the prestige of such feudal figures (Views and News, 1972:31).

In the case of Isipingo, Indians were trained in the neighboring white Town Council of Amanzimtoti and appointed to posts of Town Clerk and Town Treasurer when it became autonomous on August 1, 1972 (South Africa, Indian Affairs, 1972:9). Newly emancipated officials such as the Indian Chairman of the Isipingo Town Board frequently serve as apologists for the previous white parent body by acknowledging the problems which

Whites must have had in dealing with Indian demands in the past, now that they are in a similar position.¹

Contrary to the impression created by official accounts of new-found channels in local government for Indians, their participation in this sphere prior to this time is often overlooked. The nominated Tongaat Town Board has had three Indian members on it since 1944 but was dominated both numerically and otherwise by whites. This was one of the few "integrated" local governments in South Africa. The move to establish LAC's was to end such mixed gatherings.

Another North Coast Natal town, called Stanger, has also had an interesting history of Indian involvement in local government. In 1944 twenty years after Natal had deprived Indians of municipal franchise, E.M. Moola, who had been on the voters' roll before 1924, was elected to the municipality by a predominantly white electorate. He was the first Indian in Natal to hold such a post until his death. After that Stanger once again became a White local authority. A nominated all-Indian LAC was replaced in October 1972 by an elected one. The campaign which was effectively organised heavily defeated, with a 70 percent poll, the formerly nominated LAC chairman. The disillusionment

1. This occurs regularly at Ratepayers meetings when such newly appointed Chairmen of Indian Town Boards are invited as guest speakers and choose to educate the Indian public on the intricacies of local government. One such instance was at the Parlock Ratepayers Meeting in August 1973, when Mr. Keerath, of the Isipingo Town Board outlined to Parlock ratepayers in the most paternalistic manner, that the function of local autonomy to Indians was to prove to the local authorities that we Indians were "capable" and "responsible". He called for a "mature" approach and for "constructive" instead of "destructive" criticism.

of these elected bodies and their representatives, however, is that their new members are just as powerless as the previous nominated officials (Views and News, November, 1972). This was also reflected in the apathy of voters in the 1974 Stanger elections, where less than half the number of registered voters (45.4 percent of 3,000) went to the polls (Leader, 11 October, 1974).

In summary, it can be concluded that Indian participation in political decision-making, whether by nominated or elected representatives, has not been the crucial issue in the eyes of the community. Whether community representatives have real power to affect changes in the daily life or whether they serve merely as symbolic outlets for grievances and aspirations, would seem to distinguish their recognition from their rejection.

In the total South African context four distinct positions have emerged among Indians towards the post-1961 government policy of limited self-government. At the one extreme is that of total acceptance, as epitomized by the South African Indian Council, which not only accepts but collaborates with the government, believing in the sincerity of its intentions and the values of its programs of separate and equal development. Many representatives of this attitude fear an African takeover, which they consider as totally detrimental to Indian interests. They prefer to view themselves as allies of the Whites in a common struggle to keep "unpredictable" African demands under control. Second, there are those who accept government policy and government-

appointed bodies on the basis of expediency and use these channels discriminately. They argue that such policy contains the seeds of its own destruction and should be exploited for this potential. Third, there is a sizable group who have little faith in either the government or its Indian collaborators. They see themselves as being powerless and don't want to "become involved in politics". They point to the infiltration of the Security Police in all aspects of organizational life and are intimidated to the extent of apathy by the government's police machinery. Finally, there are those who feel considerable antagonism toward the South African Indian Council as an exploitative body, accomplishing nothing and having no authority from the community to act as its representative. Any changes that do occur they attribute to the government, not its stooges in the Council. They reject on principle ethnically exclusive political activity in government-created institutions aimed at splitting a potentially united Black front. This is the position of the Indian members of the South African Students Organization (SASO) and the Black Peoples Convention (BPC) as well as of a substantial section of former political activists now forced into the role of reluctant spectators.

In brief, while government-appointed bodies such as the South African Indian Council and Local Affairs Committees are tolerated by some, they are neither respected nor supported by most Indians. In fact they are more hated than the government and frequently are scapegoats for it.

IX ETHNIC HIGHER EDUCATION

1. The Indian University

A vital point of contact between members of the superordinate group and the Indian community is the University of Durban-Westville. As the newest, most modern university in Durban, built at an estimated cost of R17-million (Fiat Lux, Vol.7, No.5:30), overlooking the city from one of the most exclusive Indian suburbs, it is the showpiece of Apartheid in terms of facilities and conspicuous public relations value. The Indian university has now been in existence for fifteen years. It would seem an appropriate time to review the original fears of the community about segregated universities, and examine the extent to which these have been reinforced or eliminated.

The Nationalist Party government made clear its intention of applying the principle of racial separation to tertiary education in 1957 through the Separate University Education Bill. Despite much opposition from various sectors¹, it was passed in 1959 as the Extension of University Act 45 of 1959.² Prior to that time, the Universities of Natal, Cape Town and Witwatersrand had admitted students of all racial groups, even though the University of Natal had always operated a separate "Non-

1. For a detailed account of the criticism of this Bill, see: Academic Freedom Committees, 1974.

2. An account of the provisions of this Bill and reactions to it is to be found in Horrell, 1956-57:196ff.

European Section".¹ Antagonism to integrated university education had been articulated as early as 1948 when the newly elected National Party Prime Minister made the following statement:

"An intolerable state of affairs has arisen here in the past few years in our university institutions, a state of affairs which gives rise to friction to an unpleasant relationship between European and non-European....we do not want to withhold higher education from the non-European and we will take every possible step to give both the natives and the coloured peoples university training as soon as we can, but in their own sphere, in other words in separate institutions." (House of Assembly Debates, Hansard 64, 1948, col 219.)

Along similar lines, the next Nationalist Prime Minister Verwoerd stressed the importance of recognising the impact of higher education in heightening frustrations of the subordinate groups through increasing expectations. It was therefore essential, he contended, to devise an educational program which would focus on adjustment and narrow the gap between expectations and reality.²

With these aims, the provision of University facilities for all Black students proceeded with considerable momentum. Since the so-called "open" universities had previously restricted certain social activities and sporting events to white students, the government saw itself ironically as the provider of facilities for formerly deprived students,

1. At the time of the passing of the Extension of University Education Act in 1959, there were 633 Coloured, Indian and African students at the so-called "open" English-language University of Cape Town, and 297 at the University of Witwatersrand. The respective white enrolment figures for both institutions were 4,471 and 4,813. (Academic Freedom Committees, 1974:13)

2. For more extensive treatment of this subject see K. Adam, 1971.

who it argued had been denied a full education on the basis of their policy of academic integration and social separation (Academic Freedom Committees, 1974:15).

In 1961, the University College for Indians was established in temporary quarters in former military barracks. There was much initial objection by the Indian community to such segregated facilities in the hitherto sacrosanct sphere of university education. More than the actual segregation, the Indian community's opinion leaders expressed fears about: (1) the isolation of various ethnic groups from one another which would lead to ignorance of other groups. Despite its segregated facilities, they argued, the University of Natal had provided a milieu for black alliances, where the future African, Indian and Coloured leaders, together with a minority of sympathetic Whites could nurture greater understanding of one another. (2) The possible lowering of educational standards and their non-recognition elsewhere. Even the promise of fine buildings, gleaming laboratory equipment and libraries were considered inadequate, if the principle of "racial membership" and government control was to be entrenched. (3) Objections were raised to "Indianization", and courses in Indian languages, Eastern religions and Oriental Studies. These emphases, they felt, would not only exclude Indians from the mainstream of South African and Western competition, but would heighten intra-communal differences along religious and linguistic lines.

When probed deeper, part of the rejection of separate universities lay in the lack of confidence which Indians had of members of their own group as "university lecturers", as well as the internalised Natal English prejudices towards "Afrikaners" as ill-educated and rural folk not endemic to "university culture" as colonized Indians had come to know of it.¹ (4) The new universities, it was argued, would not enjoy the autonomy that the open universities did. The Minister of Indian Affairs retained extensive powers, and appointed both the Rector as well as the Vice Chancellor. All appointments, promotions, salary scales and conditions of service would be subject to the Minister's approval. In addition, in cases where the all-White Council (together with its purely advisory Indian counterpart) had failed to take appropriate actions against a staff member, the Minister was empowered to do so. The Council was to consist of not less than eight persons appointed by the State President, two members of the Senate elected by the Senate, and an Advisory Council consisting of not less than eight Indians, appointed by the State President (Academic Freedom Committees, 1974:20-1). Such administrative segregation and control, many Indians felt, was a serious danger to critical thought and in general to academic freedom.

Widespread opposition to the University College for Indians was re-

1. These feelings were exacerbated by numerous articulations of anti-Indianism by Afrikaans-speaking politicians, including the first Minister of Indian Affairs.

flected in the terms used at that time to refer to it: "tribal college", "bush college", "concentration camp", "no-choice university". In 1961 the student enrolment was only 114, and of the forty faculty members only six were Indians (Horrell, 1962) who were heavily ostracised by the community. Many Indians who could afford it, sent their children abroad or influenced their choice of courses to be among those not yet offered by the University College therefore making their children still eligible for enrolment at the open universities. During 1960-1973 4,618 Indians were admitted to the "open" universities by comparison with 81 Africans and 1,077 Coloureds (Academic Freedom Committees, 1974:44). In addition, various attempts to establish alternative private university facilities through the University of London and World University Service were made. Liberal white faculty members at the "open" universities who were opposed to separate education gave their services in supervising correspondence students. However, the isolation of such students from each other and the lack of viability of such qualifications for obtaining future employment in South Africa, led to the reluctant and gradual acceptance of the segregated facilities that were offered.

In 1971 the University College which had up to then been affiliated to the University of South Africa was granted full university status. The University of Durban-Westville (UDW) came into being, again not without fear from some Indian educationalists who saw the break with the reputable University of South Africa as the final death knell for standards

of the community's university education. UDW by 1974 had five faculties,¹ over fifty departments, and a student enrolment of 2,342 (Horrell, 1976:369). Its new campus and higher per capita expenditure on Indian students² than on white counterparts makes for incongruity in the South African context, but is a noteworthy stopping point for the official foreign guest to note the efforts of the government in educating its subordinate people "along their own lines".

Indeed, much of the earlier opposition to the institution by the community would seem to have disappeared. The scene has changed from non-participation and withdrawal to one of a high degree of involvement on the part of the older generation but not the students. Most Indian educators and community leaders see the University of Durban-Westville not only as an educational centre, but as a cultural centre for the community, and the paternalistic Rector ensures that "unique opportunities will be provided for Oriental Studies and research as well as original Indian contributions to Culture, Art and Philosophy" (Ireland, 1975:15).

1. Arts, Science, Commerce, Administration and Law Faculties. In November 1974, it was announced that the Government had decided in principle to establish a medical faculty as well (Horrell, 1976:262).

2. R644 per Indian student, R577 per White, R976 per Coloured and at one African College, R1,490 per African student (Horrell, 1969:211). The duplication of facilities explains these incongruities. Indeed the 1971-2 figures for Indians is even higher, (R1,064) and was caused mainly by the transfer of the University to its new campus (South Africa, Indian Affairs, 1973:107).

From empty halls and boycotted graduation ceremonies of the early sixties, UDW is now for the most part well patronized. Indeed it affords one of the closest contact points between the White ruling group and Indians, and is in some ways a microcosm of South African society, albeit one in which Africans do not exist.¹

The central importance of this institution for present day Indian aspirations justifies close scrutiny of the earlier apprehensions in light of the experience of the last decade.

(1) Contrary to the initial assurance that this institution would eventually be staffed by Indians themselves, the evidence is that it has become an expedient channel for launching not Indians but Afrikaner graduates into the academic realm. A sizeable number of these appointments constitute promotions for former civil servants. Only 30 percent of the faculty positions, mostly at the junior level, are held by Indians, although there are more than enough qualified Indians² who can fill most of these positions.

1. All levels of work on campus including janitorial services are performed by Indians, contrary to the usual South African style in which Africans retain the prerogative of "dirty work".

2. Four such instances of highly qualified Indians who applied for positions and were rejected are known to the writer. Two educationalists, one of whom is now public prosecutor, and the other Head of the Department of Educational Psychology at a Teacher Training College. A highly reputed Professor of Geo-physics from the University of Sri Lanka was not even given the courtesy of a reply, which is incidentally the usual way in which "unpleasant" matters are dealt with by the university authorities. The fourth instance was that of a historian with six books to his credit, two of them on South African history and a considerable amount of teaching and administrative experience at other African universities. This application was turned down on the grounds of "insufficient enrolment", while a lesser qualified White continued to hold the position (Correspondence 5).

The idea of "Indianization", once reputable in ruling eyes, for distinguishing those in favour of separate education from those who insisted on racially integrated education has been redefined. Indianization is now virtually synonymous with "agitation", since it threatens the positions presently held by Whites, and is symptomatic of the anti-White antipathies of the more politicized. An indication of the "correct line" was articulated by a well entrenched Indian professor and Head of the Department of Psychology at UDW, Professor Ramfol, who called for Indianization to take its normal course on merit (Graduation Ceremony, May 1974). It was obviously in accordance with official policy since Professor Ramfol was appointed Acting Deputy Rector shortly afterwards. On the other hand, the Council of UDW is now an integrated body, with four Indians and eleven Whites; and the Senate, a previously all-White body, now has 44 Whites and four Indians serving on it (Mbanjwa, 1975:168).

(2) The question of whether standards of education have dropped as feared by Indians, is more difficult to answer precisely.

In terms of actual content of course material, standards of examinations written, and actual expertise gained, it is widely felt by Indian faculty members in all disciplines in which they are represented that the standards

1. The writer's perception of standards is based on two years on the faculty at the then University College, subsequent careful observation, informal interviews with White and Indian faculty, and many students, as well as a sample of future autobiographies written by students.

compare very favorably with the so-called "open" universities. Yet, it is difficult to draw the boundary between course content and the broader aspects of university education. The segregated university, the lack of choice by contrast to White students,

the internalised subordinate-super-ordinate nature of student-faculty contact especially in the case of white faculty, the fear of thinking critically and of articulating acceptable thoughts, all strongly influence the attitudes students develop in such situations. The fear of security police "informants" is inhibiting to students¹ as well as to faculty. Indeed the passivity of students in lecture halls is poorly explained away by several White faculty as being based on "the Indian nature" or "the passive temperament of Indians". Nor is such "passivity" alleviated by the humiliation which students feel when the type of dress² they should wear is dictated to them, especially when rumour has it that some White administrative staff are supposed to have said "Indians smell, and must therefore keep jackets on at all times!" Even Indian faculty have been humiliated in similar ways. On one such occasion, the writer was called into an office by a white secretary and told to keep out of a specific toilet as it was for "Whites only".

1. When this was discussed informally with Professor Olivier, the Rector, he commented cursorily that it was like education in totalitarian societies.

2. In 1967 men were required to wear jackets at all times and women were not allowed to wear mini-skirts or fancy stockings. While it is recognized that these standards prevail in some private schools in other countries, the informal rationale for these rules, together with the societal context adds to the humiliation.

On the whole, teaching is very formal, and students complain about uninspiring lecturers who, probably due to difficulties with English as a second language, dictate lecture notes from the prepared University of South Africa correspondence lectures. Indeed formal structures are the only protection in an otherwise uncertain situation. Even Indian lecturers seldom transcend the well-trodden traditional explanations, for fear of being labelled disruptive or revolutionary. For instance, it is impossible for a course such as "Women's Liberation" or "Revolutionary Ideologies" to be given in that context. This is protected by a formal syllabus with topics that have to be covered and the sources or textbooks to be used are officially prescribed.

As pointed out elsewhere theoretical exploration and social criticism are rejected in favour of "doing something for the community". Though these are by no means mutually exclusive, the focus on micro-level projects, important and immediate though they may be, divert attention from pertinent questions relating to fundamental conditions of existence in that society and hamper a perspective which can see alternatives to the one-dimensionality of community concerns.

Paternalism is another effective means of maintaining control in such situations, and has the effect of splitting alliances in the subordinate group, since there are always subordinates who are convinced of the "well-meant intentions" of the white paternal figures. Exploiting traditional parent-child relationships in the Indian community

is one way this is done. Selected parents from the traditional elite are frequently called upon to serve in a consultative capacity and, for the most part, never having had the opportunity for higher education themselves, they consider the present generation fortunate for the facilities they have. Hence they tend to be less critical of the establishment. The following statement by the Rector is illustrative of this point: "Many parents have expressed their pleasure that we look after the academic interests of students and do not allow them to get involved in politics" (The Leader, 13 June, 1969).

The official perspective on student participation was articulated by Professor van der Walt, who was appointed by the State President as the first Chairman of the University College Council in 1961:

"I am convinced that to transfer a political concept of "democracy" to a university is nonsensical and a 'contradictio in terminis' apart from when it might be applied to students electing fellow students for student affairs only:-and even then not where a spirit of antagonism might prevail by sheer intimidation, and where the desire is not to participate in erecting a humane institution but a revolutionary one. Student Councils are, under such circumstances, completely ineffective, and counter-productive." (Fiat Lux, May, 1972:4).

That students reject this type of control would seem evident in their virtually non-existent organisational life. Even the solitary Debating Society decided to disband "on principle" in 1969, after it had been denied permission to invite representatives of the Liberal and Progressive Party to address students. The reason given by the Acting Rector in support of the decision was, 'At this stage we don't feel it is appropriate for students to be subjected to these influences'....

'It is the policy of the College not to allow people who take an active part in politics to address students on the campus.' (The Leader, 13 June, 1969). They were told to either let the university authorities suggest speakers or to select some faculty members to address them instead (ibid.). Similarly, students have constantly resisted the formation of Student Representative Councils, since the University authorities insisted on participation in drafting its constitution, as well as having faculty representation. Furthermore, like their African fellow students at the University College of Fort Hare, they felt that they would lay themselves open to police interference (K. Adam, 1971:202).

In 1972 the students at UDW organized a boycott of food and a partial boycott of lectures on 7th and 8th May (Post, 7 May, 1972; Natal Mercury, 8 May, 1972; both cited in Horrell, 1973:389). Student attempts to draft an SRC constitution were rejected by the University Council, which arbitrarily substituted its own version. The "revised" document barred affiliation with SASO,¹ and NUSAS² and prohibited student publications and press statements (ibid.). This was followed by a two day boycott of lectures which the Rector in his Graduation Ceremony speech attributed to "the Marxist and Maoist forces of negative and disruptive

1. SASO, the South African Students Organisation, is an all-Black militant student organisation, espousing Black unity, and the concept of "Black Consciousness". It is discussed at greater length later.

2. NUSAS, the National Union of South African Students, is the anti-Apartheid official student organisation at English-language universities.

ideology" which were at work in influencing Indian students (Interview with Secretary of Ad Hoc Committee, also Leader, 12 May, 1972; Post, 14 May, 1972). In a subsequent student charter, the grievances listed were that there was a vast discrepancy in standards between ethnic universities and the "open" universities, due to security police activity, informers, the powers of white staff, "dehumanizing" regulations, the terms of bursary contracts and restrictions on student publications and organization" (Natal Mercury, 31 May, 1972; as quoted in Horrell, 1973:390).

These complaints were reiterated in March 1974 when resident students at UDW under certainty of anonymity publicised charges that their hostel was "more like a concentration camp than a university residence" (Sunday Tribune, 31 March, 1974). They said there were unnecessarily stringent rules governing their lives in the hostel. Several students said that they were personally interrogated by the academic registrar¹ about protest meetings in the residence. They were required to sign a document confirming that they recognized the authority of the house committee and would not engage in contentious matters. Of the 150 students eligible to vote for the house committee, 109 placed blank sheets in the ballot box, but nevertheless the house committee was elected (ibid.). In 1975, students renewed their stance to press for an acceptable SRC constitution. They threatened a boycott of

1. The academic registrar is also known to have interrogated Indian faculty members about "undesirable" contacts they might have.

all facilities unless these demands were met (Sunday Tribune, 2 February, 1975). As in the past the rector renewed his offer to meet with students to form an SRC. In response to this a white law professor, subsequently dismissed, is reported to have said, "Self-respecting students at Durban-Westville University would regard a Student's Representative Council whose constitution was drawn up by the university authorities as puppet representation" (Mbanjwa, 1975:181).

In such situations, unlike the African universities where African faculty ally with their students against white authorities¹ Indian faculty have responded by either being non-committal or by privately supporting the authorities through self-policing.² At no time has there been outspoken support for the student cause. Indeed, as in the case of the March 1974 hostel incident referred to earlier, a student who criticised the presence at the meeting, of the Indian warden, Professor Ranchod, was subsequently expelled from residence (Mbanjwa, 1975:182).

Such a behaviour syndrome is only partially explained by the prevalent white stereotypes of Indians in South Africa, as being "opportunistic"

1. As evidenced in the report of a Senior Lecturer from the University of the North at Turfloop (Rand Daily Mail, March, 1975) and a statement by the principal of the University of the North, Professor Boshoff to the press, in which he said, "the anti-White sentiments of students were encouraged by some members of the Black academic staff". (Horrell, 1975:373)

2. The writer is personally aware of a situation where two Indian faculty questioned an invitation to a prominent and outspoken Indian doctor to address students, on the grounds that the guest had made derogatory statements about the University. Furthermore, students say that the Rector maintains control over who the "agitators" are through certain known Indian faculty, who they describe as having a "direct line to the Rector." Indeed, in an address to the students at the beginning of the academic year, the Rector is reported in the Indian press to have publicly offered "protection" to "any student who furnished information about those students who were opposed to extra-curricular activities at the University". (Leader, 20 February, 1976).

and "lacking backbone". Two factors seem central for such a phenomenon, (a) the structural context which makes "opportunism" and "non-committal" behaviour worthwhile. Simply put, passivity and non-interference are positively reinforced by the establishment and well rewarded by the rulers. (b) The cohesiveness of the subordinate group and the pressures created on its group members to "achieve". Failure to achieve and be upwardly mobile are considered to be the shortcoming of the individual, and not due to the situation.¹ In such instances, instead of welding together group members in the face of a common ruling group, they are atomised through the demand to be successful at all costs. The prestige and recognition awarded success is extremely high in the Indian community. (c) The relatively privileged position of Indian faculty vis-a-vis other members of their group separates their interests from that of students. In the case of African lecturers at the geographically isolated institutions both faculty and students together live outside their traditional community, and the status difference between faculty and student is therefore much lower and not permanently reinforced by the larger group.

In order to answer the question about whether standards have declined at the ethnic universities all these factors have to be considered in

1. This is corroborated by the way "banned" political leaders claim they are shunned by most Indians, as well as random comments by many about such leaders having underestimated the ruthlessness of the Whites.

relation to each other.

(3) A third major concern of those opposed to separate universities was the isolation of the group, especially from other subordinates. In 1971, the writer suggested that, "despite the divergent cultural lines on which segregated education is being conducted, a newer convergence will emerge among people who have shared a common exposure to this colonial type educational experience, and more fundamentally, share in its rejection" (K. Adam, 1971:212). This prediction would certainly seem to have materialized if the impact of crucial events at all the African Universities since the riots in Soweto, is considered.

At the graduation ceremony of the University College of the North in April 1972, Mr. O.R. Tiro, an ex-mine worker and past president of the Turfloop Student Representative Council, whom students elected to represent them, strongly criticised the predominantly white control of black universities, discrimination against black people by the authorities, and the system of Bantu Education in general. He was subsequently expelled by the University's disciplinary committee on May 2, 1972, and when a student petition for his reinstatement was refused, a mass sit-in followed. The Student Representative Council was suspended, all meetings banned, and the police occupied the campus (Horrell, 1973:387, see also South African Outlook, June/July 1972, and Black Community Programmes, 1972:174 - 180).

These events were followed by demonstrations of solidarity by students throughout the country. A meeting of forty Black student leaders on 13 May led to a call by SASO for a national boycott by Black students on June 1 (World, 14 May, Sunday Express, 14 May cited:Horrell, 1973: 388). On May 9, coloured students at the University of the Western Cape began a boycott of lectures in support of the students at Turfloop (Cape Times, 9 May, 1972), followed by a two-week boycott by Indian students. Feelings of solidarity were expressed by Indian student leaders who had only shortly prior to this been in confrontation with their own authorities over similar issues. A speaker proposed the boycott motion to a meeting of 1,000 students: "We are not voting as Indians but as Blacks. We need solidarity to eradicate this repugnant system" (Daily Dispatch, 29 May, cited: Horrell, 1973:390). Similar boycotts of lectures by Indian students took place at the Springfield Teachers' Training College¹ and the M.L. Sultan Technical College² and on other African campuses in support of the Turfloop students.

Whereas some 2,000 residents of Soweto, the African township of Johannesburg, appointed a delegation to negotiate on behalf of the expelled students, and fifty parents in Pretoria expressed condemnation of the

1. All students on strike were suspended and 13 of them prevented from writing mid-year examinations (Leader, 23 June, 1972).

2. 300 students were suspended (Leader, 9 June,1972). 120 of them had their bursaries withdraw, and written apologies were elicited from all of them (Natal Mercury, 22 June, 1972).

student expulsions, the approach of the Indian parents at UDW was seen quite differently by the students. Student leaders complain that the parent body "sold them out" by making counter-deals with the Rector. "Some members of the parent body who had been politically active in the past, tried to infantilize us by flaunting their 'experience' at us" (Interview 29). "While they told some of us to go on with the strike, they encouraged their own children to return to lectures" (Interview 26). Finally, the Rector promised the parents' body that no disciplinary action would be taken if the strike ended, but a month later four students were suspended for the rest of the year, among them the President of the newly formed council of Presidents of Black SRC's (Horrell, 1973:390).

Similarly, the pro-Frelimo gathering celebrating Mozambique's independence, which was held at the University of the North, was dispersed by armed police with dogs under the Riotous Assemblies Act. According to the information obtained from students the following account emerged:

"As the men went past the police, the latter baton-charged them and the students retaliated by throwing small available stones at the police. The women then came back and angrily shouted at the police to stop molesting the men. The police then turned on the women and one was knocked down with a baton blow. The men came to the women's rescue and the police set the dogs on the men, some of whom were now in physical scuffles with the police." (Mbanjwa, 1974-5:78-9).

In the aftermath of the Frelimo episode at Turfloop a racial flare up "led to open declaration of sides between some white faculty and students, with some black staff members indicating remote support". This led to

student stoning of cars owned by white faculty (ibid:170). Such instances politicise students on all the university campuses in South Africa, and Indian students are no exception.

2. STUDENT PERCEPTIONS¹ (1973)

An indication of student perceptions of themselves, their relationships with the superordinate group and other subordinate sections, as well as the future of South Africa were probed more extensively through future autobiographies of 65 Indian students at both UDW (n=39) and the University of Natal (n=26). The impact of ethnically exclusive education at UDW might, it was thought, reveal contrasts with Indian students educated in racially integrated classes, together with African and Coloured students at the Medical School of Natal University.²

As discussed earlier, it was thought that the range and structure of opinions rather than their distribution would shed further light on the officially expressed attitudes. The scrutiny of the essays probes unofficial opinions, which students are frequently too afraid to express under conditions of extreme conformity pressure. In this respect the following six clusters of overlapping themes are authentic, though not necessarily representative expressions of aspirations and anxieties.

1. For a discussion of the methodology see the chapter on "Research Procedures."

2. This is the only place in the country, apart from a few small theological institutions with a selected membership, where several hundred African, Indian and Coloured students are trained and housed together.

1. Visions of Revolutionary Change

More than half of the sixty-five essays refer to what can be described as 'visions of revolutionary change'.

"If race relations go on the way they do, there are likely to be open clashes and internal warfare." (14)

"There will be violent reactions, and the Whites are to blame if they don't take Black demands into account." (59)

"The masses will revolt to feed their stomachs and will be easy prey to outside influence." (32)

State counter-action is always taken into account, but revolution is seen as an historical necessity, which is the "only alternative left".

"The government will curb any efforts Blacks make to take over power....But, the seeds of revolution have been planted...." (19)

"Annihilation of Whites by Blacks is a very distinct possibility. South Africa will crumble at the onslaught of Black power....the eventual unification of all Bantustans will overthrow this domineering unjust government." (17)

"The suppression of fellow South Africans, the sons and daughters of South Africa will not last long. Although force and bloodshed are not the only proper means to achieve ends, in our 'unique' South Africa, it seems the only possible way." (28)

In reversal of the derogatively perceived term non-White, some black power advocates refer to the ruling minority as non-Black:

"Within the next five to ten years there will be a war against the non-Blacks. The National Party will lose ground due to outside influence and the rise of Black power which has had a small but conscious following.... The Black man remained silent for years but the time has come and he is going to prepare for revolts....the steam which is building up within him is going to explode." (12)

However, there is a conspicuous vagueness as to how the holocaust will occur. The analogies of accumulating steam in an overboiling pot reveal uncertainty as to how the anger can be translated into fire.

Rising frustrations alone are considered sufficient to "turn the clock around" in much the same way as Blacks have asserted for the past half century since the founding of the African National Congress in 1912 (Walshe, 1974). The few students who attempt to be more concrete in their expression refer mostly to Third Party interference from outside and stagnating economic conditions inside South Africa.

"To establish peace and harmony for the future, I see violent revolution as a means to attain peaceful ends. I can foresee bloodshed in the future. There may be disaster which will ultimately force major powers to South Africa and possibly spark off another World War." (48)

"Blacks will not be as tolerant as they have been in the past. If their earning capacity, housing and general treatment does not improve within the next ten years South Africa will be in a dangerous situation of revolution." (8)

"The first 10 years saw tensioned, suppressive, pseudo-democracy with freedom fighters, labelled then as terrorists, battling the odds against the white rulers labelled then as 'protectors of the indigeneous people'....These freedom fighters were given recognition at the UNO and South Africa was expelled, thus becoming an unlawful government suffering complete isolation from the outside world." (2)

In light of the 1973 labor unrest in South Africa it is surprising that strikes are only mentioned by very few as the presently most effective weapon to force concessions. Strikes are always associated with riots and violence, though very few instances of confrontation with the police did in fact occur during the year and no injuries were reported to justify the association with bloodshed. Because of the illegality of strikes and past experience, an industrial conflict in South Africa is automatically viewed as a political confrontation in which the rulers will use force.

"History has shown us that discontent by workers against poor living conditions and subsistence levels is the first weakness in the chain. Increased incidence of strikes occurred, and violence erupted." (41)

"...one can expect a few outbursts on the part of Blacks --riots, strikes, etc., since we are now learning to demand what is rightfully ours. If, however, the government does not continue slackening and abolishing all petty apartheid, we can expect a major outburst with a lot of bloodshed." (63)

Some rather wild predictions in 1973 are vivid reminders of how quickly dreams can turn into reality.

"By 1991 Portugal withdrew from Southern Africa. Freedom fighters from African Black states with Chinese and Russian aid, gained the friendship of Angola and Mozambique. Fierce fighting broke out in Rhodesia in which South African and Rhodesian troops and aircraft were engaged against the foreigners. This was a crucial moment. Many attempts were made to relax their oppressive attitudes but the Afrikaners were pigheaded. Eventually on 26th July 1993, Black South Africans rose semi-armed against the Whites. Since the Blacks were well separated from the Whites the latter were bombed with ease. However, a larger number of Blacks were also wiped out. With the help of the foreign Russian, Chinese, Indian and African troops the White regime was overthrown." (15)

While there are hardly any differences between the responses of both sets of students, a few from the "open" university students are distinguishable in their reference to "freedom fighters" and the awareness of their counter reference as "terrorists". While this was the common term used by UDW students another such feature is the open alliance of Indians with Africans by referring to "what is rightfully ours", and similar expressions. Furthermore, unlike the perceptions of the ethnic university students of whites as a homogeneous group, more students at the "open" university seem to reveal awareness of splits within the white group.

2. Visions of Gradual Evolutionary Change

Some viewpoints, envisaging gradual change, represented more optimistic perspectives of the groups position as well as for the future of the country. In general a more positive approach was taken toward government institutions. Roughly a third of the UDW students hold these views by comparison with very few students in the sample from the medical school. However, there is also considerable overlap and inconsistency in the predictions offered.

"The racial policies of the government will change for the better. Already there are indications in this respect, such as the scrapping of job reservation, indicating that the Black man would come to gain more recognition. Kwazulu is an important factor in recognition for Blacks." (16)

"It is encouraging to note that some power is now being vested in the non-Whites. Separate Development is a training ground for our future. The SAIC and LAC's have been able to change certain long standing ideas in white minds." (24)

"Local government offers practice in self-government. With good incomes and settled jobs workers live in well-established residential suburbs and urban fringes. The standards of living as compared with other states of Africa are superior." (51)

Real or imagined achievements are asserted as proof of progress and equality. These students probably reflect to a large extent opinions expressed in their homes, and can be assumed to come from families of successful businessmen and professions, for the most part sympathetic to, or associated with, the apartheid institutions of limited communal self-administration.

"The general standard of education is of a higher level. The non-White community is able to provide its own professional and skilled workers and are on a par with their white counterparts." (24)

"The appointment of LAC's and granting of local government to Indians is a clear indication that the government of today has come to realise that the only way to control its multi-national populace is to recognise the identity of the different race groups. There would be multi-minor governments, and one large overlord government. The government apart from serving its own race would act as an overseer, controlling all foreign affairs and ports. This will be a precautionary measure to safeguard South Africa as a whole." (6)

On the other hand, there were those who while recognizing there would be gradual change, were pessimistic about how much or when this would take place.

"There will be a general change in government policy, such as the rate for the job on merit, not colour, but not enough...." (15)

"Gradual changes are possible -- each group will however be separate but never equal." (3)

"It is true there are increases in centres of learning, but greater facilities must be provided for Indians. Will job reservation ever be removed?" (23)

Most medical students were far more pessimistic about gradual improvement and cynical about the proclaimed achievement. A pessimism permeates these answers in which history is portrayed as almost having come to a standstill.

"In twenty-five years time a few changes will occur. There will be complete multi-racial sport. There could be an improvement in the educational system for non-Whites, but I doubt that there will be multi-racial education." (64)

"There may be gradual change, but the areas set aside for different race groups will still not be fully developed....there will not be a single area where mixed groups will be living together. There will be complete segregation in South Africa. I suppose the Orange Free State will still not be open to Indians. The reference book system for Africans will still continue. I doubt very much whether non-Whites will be allowed, by then, the right to vote." (17)

"For many years the black man has been trying to make the white man think of them as human beings like themselves. The success however is extremely small. As a result of this the Black man has taken to black consciousness and Black power and this is definitely going to affect the future of South Africa if not immediately, slowly. Within the next 30 years more people like Mrs. Suzman will get into the white parliament where their voices will be heard. I also foresee more student demonstrations and strikes although, with the present system of government, this does not hold much water." (53)

Unlike the UDW responses, most medical students reflect a wider concern with political inequalities experienced by Africans, and a stated preference for multi-racial education, with the implication that improvements in black education are not enough. Furthermore there seems to be a

wider familiarity with broader political issues on the part of the University of Natal students than their counterparts.

3. Feelings of Powerlessness and Low Self-Conceptions

Contrary to earlier years in the history of the Indian community when, as Fatima Meer expresses it, "Indians have never at any point in their South African history considered themselves untrained or unprepared to handle the affairs of government at all levels" (1971:18), the responses of the UDW students reveal a substantial number of those with very low confidence about themselves. Africans in particular, and Blacks in general, are portrayed as inexperienced and in need of further education.

"It is doubtful whether Black men will have the know-how to run the country. They have no experience in parliamentary organisation and will therefore need outside aid." (44)

"South Africa will have a happier future if free social intercourse is permitted, for example, in mixed sport. The Black man will find himself playing side by side with the White and this sort of raises his spirit, gives him a feeling of equality and hence greater confidence in himself." (34)

The essential need for the unifying and stabilising force of the Whites is also referred to. Typical of this view are the following examples:

"If all the races are given equal political power then there may result a chaotic condition and internal strife within the country." (6)

"This is the only country in the world that is able to preserve the purity of its races and unify them politically in the face of a world wide and internal dissatisfaction. The White leaders being foreigners themselves shall always be revered and respected for their success." (17)

Similarly, the deep sense of powerlessness of minority group members is frequently implicit:

"It is difficult for one million voiceless people to give their views against a few influential Whites; any change for good or better is beyond the control of the masses." (31)

There is often a considerable ambiguity and inconsistency in the same essay, when on the one hand the certainty of revolutionary change is asserted, and at the same time the inferiority and powerlessness of the subordinates is admitted. Such ambivalence indicates a high degree of internalization of ruling group definitions of reality and the rebellion against the impossible.

4. Internalization of Ideologies of Domination

Several students predicting outbursts and bloodbaths, especially from the UDW sample, celebrated South Africa's power and achievements, and the sound economic basis of the country. Contrary to expectation, they seemed to gain strength from the power of the colonizers. It is symptomatic of their low self-estimation reinforced by so many institutions, not least, separate education.

"South Africa is a highly industrialised major exporting country." (45)

"The government is as 'solid as granite' and will stay for a long time to come." (27)

"The discovery of oil will increase South Africa's ability to withstand outside pressure." (17)

One student even offers apartheid as a solution to the race problem in the world which unanimously condemns it as the most heinous device:

"Truly speaking, South Africa is doing a tremendous job of finding a place in the sun for all its races. The entire world is looking toward South Africa to find a race policy. For example, the U.S. and England could borrow the race principles and modify them to suit their countries." (64)

"Poverty is today virtually unknown, mixture of race groups is something unheard of and the high standard of living cannot be matched by any other country in the world." (31)

These types of responses however were seldom in the University of Natal student sample. More than any statistics could perhaps reveal, such outlooks indicate the success of Apartheid education. "Identification with the aggressor" as psychoanalysts have termed this syndrome, has been left as the only option for self-assertion under conditions of utter powerlessness. It is against this possibility that "Black consciousness" redefines symbols and strengthens morale by providing hope, even if it may be a false one.

5. Indications of Wider Awareness

Despite the potential for absorption of the ruling ideologies there is also the possibility for a critical awareness to be heightened despite and through isolation. Almost half of the essays reveal traces of this type of consciousness, which attempts to interpret the microcosm in the larger context. These students reveal a high degree of information about the politics of other groups in South Africa as well as the global scene. Above all, they reveal a sense of considered priorities, refuting the official propaganda.

"The 'Communist threat' is less of a problem with Blacks than economic and political instability. Satisfaction of the latter would alleviate the problem." (15)

"Recently one heard of the many students from Pretoria University joining the United Party's 'Young Turks'. This points to a change of heart and ideals of young Afrikaners. They have realised that they would have to bring about reforms to save South Africa from being dominated." (35)

Many stress, in the liberal tradition, the continuities of structure and culture by pointing to economic interdependence and the existant "goodwill".

"Looking at the present day situation the policy of Separate Development is not working. Any race cannot be kept in watertight compartments because one is dependent on the other. The government cannot do without non-White labour....Thus non-Whites are an asset in the White areas." (2)

"People will become more enlightened....There will be regard for one another between races. More avenues will be opened for the non-Whites. A person will be chosen on merit irrespective of which race he or she belongs to." (1)

Reflecting on their personal humiliation in the process of education, many respondents reveal realistic insights into special consequences of South African conditions:

"There is a breakdown of civilized standards -- even education is no guarantee of recognition. There are no outlets for opposition." (18)

"The psychological implications that continued denial has on the whole personality of people has been ignored by the establishment." (9)

6. Attitudes Toward Africans

This is an area which reflects most the effects of group isolation and the formation of stereotypes of the "out-group". About half of the UDW students and far fewer of the other group made explicit and implicit anti-African statements ranging in variety from paternalism to outright racism, with various aspects of realism intertwined:

"I would not like to live in a South Africa ruled by Blacks. Let the Whites rule, but give us equal rights as laid down by the U.N. declaration of Human Rights."
(12)

"In the event of a Black takeover, Indians will have the same fate as Kenya and Uganda. My plans are to leave South Africa." (13)

"I am sure Indians will suffer most because unlike our ancestors we are very passive and will not retaliate physically. Our areas also act as buffer zones between Whites and Africans." (62)

Even those celebrating Black power, and citing Chief Buthelezi as a backbone to Blacks in their demands for higher salaries, made statements such as:

"But it will be a 'Uganda' for Indians 'inbetween'." (40)
and

"White rule is safer." (24)

Reminiscent of early anti-African propaganda by rural Afrikaners are the strongest anti-African sentiments:

"South Africa will change for the worse in the event of an African takeover."

"....the conditions may be the same as that in other African countries such as Tanzania or Kenya. There may be broad daylight murders, other races being thrown out of the country and the African doing just as he pleases. He would not hesitate to get rid of his opponents." (5)

"Our morals would be corrupt. We would have to adapt ourselves to the African way of life. Probably South Africa will go back to the days before the white man discovered it and again tribal warfare will take place." (55)

Only a minority of the respondents from UDW mentioned: "The rising solidarity of all Blacks." (11)

These surprising anti-African sentiments implied in almost half of the essays, caution against an exaggerated interpretation of the widely publicized boycotts and protest marches in support of the Turfloop students, and other conspicuous signals of Black solidarity. It could well be that the Turfloop events served as a convenient vehicle to express frustrations at home, rather than the stated purpose. While the expulsion of Asians from Uganda has been exploited to the fullest by the S.A. government and undoubtedly has had its impact on Indian South Africans at the time of the survey there is, at the same time, the shared experience of subordinate status, particularly when heightened in daily close contacts. It is this difference between the isolated UDW students and the medical students at Natal University which would seem a decisive factor in their different perceptions of Africans. Many of the latter had developed personal collegial bonds, revealed different concerns about Africans, aspired to work as doctors among them, and for the most part allied themselves politically. Hence the following responses:

"The economic position of Black South Africans, especially the Africans, is so bad that the young Africans just cannot afford to educate themselves....the cost of White,

African and Indian to attend school is remarkable.... the White South African paid the least in relation to the Indian or African." (19)

"I would like to work among Africans and do my bit, but I doubt whether the government will allow it." (22)

Expressive of hope in Black government, some responses are:

"Contrary to the expectations of many historians who believed that Black power would lead to another Apartheid filled South Africa, today we have complete equality." (53)

"Black South Africans should be given tremendous praise for being so humane in their actions when they were rightfully given their share of authority. Despite the oppression placed on their heads, and the frustrations they underwent, the expected 'revenge' did not take place. We should be proud of this." (30)

So great is the identification of a small minority that they are even openly self-critical of their own group members:

"All the Indian leaders are interested in is business and agreeing to what the White government says, so that they retain their position in the limelight." (46)

What emerges from this comparison is the distinct impression of difference between the perceptions of those educated exclusively with their own group members, and those in an integrated educational setting. In the former's view of fellow subordinate group members a surprisingly high number had internalised ruling perspectives. By contrast Indian students who had studied in integrated classes with Africans perceived them more frequently on equal terms and were sympathetic to the problems of

Africans.¹ Ethnocentrism seemed much more prevalent in the UDW students in contrast to greater self-criticism by the University of Natal students.

If these hypotheses about the impact of separate and integrated higher education are correct, then the government is only consequential with its recent decision (Horrell, 1976:261-2) to phase out the non-White medical school at Natal University and establish instead, at considerable extra cost, medical training facilities at the respective ethnic universities.

Expressions of African nationalism at the three African universities have at the same time led to an official review of the situation of ethnic higher education as evinced in the report of the Snyman Commission (The Star, WE, 14 February, 1976). Among the recommendations made by the Snyman Commission were (1) as long as the university was not accepted by its people it could not play a fruitful role in the community. Therefore, it was suggested that control of the university be transferred to Blacks as soon as possible without waiting for Africanisation of the staff. (2) If the White population in general would adopt a more

1. These findings are reiterated by an active African organiser of SASO, S. Biko, who contrasts his experiences with Indian and Coloured students at the University of Natal's Medical School, the only place where Africans, Indians and Coloureds are trained and housed together. He found that there were many non-African students who shared his political perspectives. By contrast, his experiences at Turfloop and Ngoye, two African ethnic universities, made him aware of a great deal of anti-Indian biases, which he was able to counteract on the basis of his experiences at the Medical School. (Gerhart, 1975).

conciliatory attitude toward the Blacks, especially the sophisticated Blacks, a much better spirit and a greater co-operation would result. (ibid.)

Shortly after the publication of the Snyman Report, the Rector of UDW acknowledged that the observations of the Commission apply with equal force to UDW (Graphic, 20 February, 1976). Unlike the impact of nationalistic attitudes among African students, however, equivalent attitudes among Indian students are likely to have much more limited political impact. Furthermore, the extent of humiliation which Indians experience in their daily lives is not quite as severe as that of Africans. Political effectiveness on the part of Indian students would seem to depend on the point at which their ethnocentrism, as fostered by the ethnic universities, can be converted into a wider all-Black consciousness.

X. REVIVAL OF POLITICAL ORGANISATIONS

1. The New Natal Indian Congress

After the successive bannings of its entire executive in 1960 and a decade of resigned adjustment to stronger forces, the Natal Indian Congress (NIC) emerged publicly again in October 1971. Its first meeting was well attended by students and young professionals of divergent viewpoints, seeking to devise an alternative forum of political expression to that of government-appointed bodies. A new generation was prepared to give it another try by testing the government's ideology. In addition, changed political constellations of the previous decade called for a rethinking of accepted policy. Among these three main issues came to the fore: the attitude to Black Consciousness; open membership of the NIC to all racial groups; and the NIC's policy on the Indian council.

Black Consciousness was summed up by the NIC as being "a reaction to White oppression" seeking "to redefine the Black man in fresh terms" and rejecting "all established White values". The NIC rejected Black education in favor of a "broad, universal, enlightened and objective education". After an intense debate a slight majority perceived in Black Consciousness a genuine danger of potential black racism. Furthermore, it was considered insufficient as a political program (Meer, 1972:5). With regard to membership, the majority in the NIC maintained its position of 1894, viz., to keep membership exclusively Indian on

the grounds that there were too many legal and tactical obstacles to the creation of a multiracial body. The exclusive group appeal would allow for more effective mobilizing of Indians toward the goal of a common society. Fear of being unsuccessful in achieving multiracial membership and of losing Indian support seemed to dictate the NIC's "temporary" racial character. On the question of collaboration with the Indian council, it was argued that a decision endorsing collaboration should be postponed until 1974, when council elections were due; in the meantime as a creation of apartheid for the entrenchment of economic and political power of the ruling class it should be rejected in principle (ibid:6).

The NIC annual conference of 1973, by contrast with the 1971 revival gathering, was poorly attended. A strong minority still favored abandoning the organization's exclusive character in favor of a common association of apartheid opponents. A second controversy concerned a proposal to encourage members to seek positions on the Local Affairs Committees and in the Indian council to subvert these bodies from within. Subsequent discussion left the former issue in abeyance and accepted the latter perspective as a potentially effective political move. The noticeable differences in enthusiasm between the 1971 and 1973 conferences may well be explained in terms of the political crossroads at which Indians found themselves, and the ensuing indecision of organizations faced with the choice between pragmatism and principle, or an innovative combination of both.

At the 1974 conference of the NIC, its policy toward the SAIC was more clearly stated. The president communicated the decision of the executive to participate in SAIC elections, when the whole Indian electorate was eligible to vote. This decision was not meant to indicate that Congress accepted the SAIC but that the SAIC was "in the acceptable stage in the evolution of political rights for the people" (Presidential Address).

Typical of the deadlock in which the NIC finds itself were the contradictory statements about the SAIC, denouncing it as a useless body on the one hand, and admitting its capacity to relay demands to the government on the other. Hence, the following statements from the president: "The Grey Street compromise is a monument to the utter uselessness of the Council as a negotiating instrument with any prospects of achievement" (ibid.). And later, at the same conference, the president said, "Congress needs to, and will have to use, the South African Indian Council as a protected platform to make its demands for full democratic rights. It needs the platform to reach the people on the one hand and to make the Government hear its demands on the other. If it were not for the protected platform the SAIC would have nothing to offer us" (ibid.). Criticism of the SAIC stressed (1) its powerlessness to do anything but placate a small section of the Indian people; (2) its divisiveness as a body fragmenting Indians into those who were in favour of it and those opposed to it, and (3) its highly qualified nature. "Elections" meant that fifteen members would be elected by an electoral college consisting only of Local Affairs Committees and Town Boards. This would amount to

an electoral college of 100 people who would vote into office the 15 "elected" members (Mbanjwa:115).

One of the most revealing aspects of the 1974 NIC conference was the extent to which political activity was introverted. Instead of an attack on the white superordinates who were responsible for this iniquitous situation, collaborating elites within the group were made the prime targets for castigation.

Critical of the NIC position, Chief Gatsha Buthelezi, head of the Zulu "homeland" Kwazulu, said: "This business of spending all energies and time showing to what extent one's hands have been kept 'clean' by not doing anything in an attempt to advance the cause of our people, because one cannot operate in the muck of separate development tactics, has its advantages of course, the greatest of them being self-gratification and self-edification" (The Graphic, 27 September 1974). Instead he called for a programme of joint action. Hinting at Indian opportunism in political activity he called for "decisions born out of conviction, than out of convenience" (ibid.). In a similar vein, a White law professor, Barend van Niekerk, accused Indians of being politically the most inactive group (ibid.).

In dramatic contrast to the earlier racially exclusive definition of the organisation, the 1974 conference decided to open its membership to all groups and to remove the word "Indian" from its constitution. This marks the first initiative for a new non-racial party, the effec-

tiveness of which will depend not on the character of its membership, but on its ability to introduce workable policy to differentially incorporated groups.

2. Black Consciousness

A body that appears to be gaining increasing though not substantial support among Indian students and young professionals in the South African Students Organization. It was the prime mover in introducing the term "Black" to replace "non-White" to refer to Africans, Coloreds, and Indians in South Africa. "Non-White" is now used by SASO sympathizers as a derogatory label for Blacks who align themselves with Whites socially and politically. Black people are defined as "those who are by law or tradition, politically, economically and socially discriminated against as a group in South African society, identifying themselves as a unit in the struggle toward the realization of their aspirations".¹ Central to this thinking is the idea of Black Consciousness, an American import, which is described as a way of life through which a self-definition of essentially black values takes place. It is viewed as a sign of awareness on the part of Blacks of their potential economic and political power, giving rise to group solidarity. This involves the exclusion of Whites, as the SASO believes that "a truly open society can only be achieved by Blacks" (Khoapa, 1973:41-2).

1. Policy Manifesto of SASO 2nd General Students Council, Durban, July 1971.

Although Indians are prohibited by official university regulations from being members of the SASO, some work informally in conjunction with it;¹ others are the prominent members in the leadership of the SASO and the subsequent Black Peoples Convention. Such Indian members represent for the first time a fundamental effort to eliminate barriers of culture between themselves and Africans and forge a black identity based on mutual interest. One example of this is the use of African instead of Indian names for their children. Another example is the participation of Indians in black educational advancement programmes, to promote the self-reliance of Blacks through home education schemes, loan bursary funds, and an attempt to counteract malnutrition through the establishment of a health and preventative medicine project (The Leader, 30 March, 1973). The involvement of young Indians with Africans at this level is new in the history of Indians, and differs from co-operation of the Indian and African bourgeoisie prior to this. It contrasts radically with the hurried attempts at fund-raising by opportunistic Indian businessmen and other leaders for the building of schools for Africans in Kwazulu. The token support of the latter group contrasts with what many Africans perceive of as patronizing behaviour on the part of the Indian "Nkosan" (boss).

Nevertheless, the SASO's failure to attract much Indian support so far

1. The role of SASO in the student rally at Turfloop was strongly condemned in the Snyman Commission's report. Of the 12 people brought to trial for organising the Curries Fountain rally, 4 were Indians. (Mbanjwa, 1975:81).

has been attributed to various factors, typically highlighting Indian indecision: (a) The militant rhetoric of SASO exponents is said to undermine confidence in the organization as a vehicle to fight for a nonracist society. (b) An overemphasis on black domination at the expense of Black Consciousness raises Indian fears of being dominated by a new set of masters. Most Indians, therefore, see their ultimate security in a racially integrated, liberal-bourgeois South Africa (Meer, 1972:455). (c) Whereas in the United States, Black Consciousness created among Blacks a search for their history and a return to their cultural roots, in South Africa, given the diversity of the subordinated groups, an African-dominated cultural and political unity could easily amount to a denial of specific Indian history and tradition. While this may be temporarily necessary to close the ranks of subordinates, and to counteract the white policy of fragmentation by creating Black Consciousness, its shortcoming lies in its tendency to glaze over instead of to accept essentially different politico-historical identities.

These factors, coupled with the traditional Indian exclusiveness, not only vis-a-vis non-Indians but within the group itself, do not make the ideas of Black Consciousness very appealing to most Indians.

3. Fringe Groups

Marginal attempts at forming political parties were launched by several individuals. It is worthwhile briefly to investigate these splinter groups of a political subculture not because of their impact or success,

which is negligible, but because they signal dissatisfaction with existing constitutions. Like sects splitting off from religious denominations, marginal political expressions could indicate potentially significant trends and, at the least, highlight nonconformist ideological perceptions, often too rapidly dismissed as pathological.

In October 1971 G.M. Singh announced interest in forming a party for the working man, which, not to antagonize white employers, would be less militant than the Congress. It was to have an exclusively Indian membership and would neither integrate with Coloreds and Africans nor work with them, since the government would be intolerant of a militant and integrated body. The "Peoples Democratic party" as it was called, would be nonviolent and would put up candidates when the Indian council became an elected body. However, three months later the plan was shelved until the council's future became known (The Graphic, 15 September, 1971).

Similarly, preparing for the promised future elections of the council, and working within the government framework, a Chatsworth resident and member of the Southern Durban Indian Local Affairs Committee named Rajbansi initiated the People's Party. It endorsed the council and separate development as the only workable policy for South Africa, called for "Indostans" (Separate geographical areas under Indian control, equivalent to Bantustans), and an equitable application of government policy. While cooperation with leaders of other races was

avored, racial integration was rejected. Cooperation with the government was to be on a totally equalitarian basis. It was intended to be a workers' party, fighting for improved conditions, opposing group areas, the mass removal of people, and petty apartheid (The Graphic, 4 February, 1972).

A year later, in July 1973, these ideas reemerged in a very different form. The Indian press revealed that an underground group based on the concept of the Afrikaner Broederbond had been formed, that aimed at taking control of Indian political and civic affairs and controlling the seats in the council if elections were held. The organization was said to have a closely knit membership of twenty-seven, including businessmen, a former trade unionist, factory workers, an attorney, and a doctor; its financial strength was described as "close to a quarter million rand". The motivation for its formation seemed to be that certain Indian organizations were under the control of a few, who had "vested interests" and "had to be replaced by others who had the man-in-the-street at heart" (The Graphic, 27 July, 1973).

Though many of these statements were based on rumors and probably resulted from the imagination of journalists, they were discussed seriously and raised considerable concern. A member of the council reported that the Indobond "excluded Moslems and Gujerati-Hindus from its secret order....we feel it is a highly dangerous state of affairs and will ask the government to crush it" (Rand Daily Mail, 31 July, 1973). The leader of the Bond however denied sectarianism but retorted that

"the only people afraid of the Bond are the Indian exploiters, who we are determined to destroy" (The Graphic, 10 August, 1973).

At the end of 1974, still in anticipation of a full scale SAIC election, Mr. Y.S. Chinsamy a member of the SAIC announced his intention to launch a party early in 1975, but sought public approval before such efforts were made. Indicative of the lack of confidence which Indians have come to have in their own abilities and of the internalisation of the situation of tutelage, he said he had approached the Nationalists, the United Party, the Progressive Party and the Coloured Labour party for copies of their constitutions. These would form a basis to work out the proposed party's constitution. Paradoxically, the party would be "completely opposed to apartheid and all forms of discrimination" (Graphic, 13 December, 1974). "The Party would also work toward eradicating the dangerous cancer of sectionalism which is slowly creeping into the affairs of our community" (ibid.). The formation of organisations along political lines was viewed as an effective means to "stop people fighting each other on sectional lines, and will also help to ensure that future SAIC members are chosen on merit" (ibid.). Although there are no overt instances of conflict based explicitly on linguistic or religious criteria, such utterances reveal the perceptions of political behaviour by public figures. In this respect it indicates the effectiveness of government policy in lending relevance to ethnic criteria in the nomination of a "fully representative" council. Ethnic criteria are brought to the fore, superceding merit and "retribalising"

Indian political behaviour. As a radical opponent to such party formation said, "It will only lead to us fighting among ourselves instead of fighting against the real enemy" (ibid.).

Away from ethnic lines was the emphasis of another manoeuvre to form yet another party by Dr. M.H.G. Mayet in June 1975. Its appeal was intended to be mainly to a "middle class", consisting essentially of professionals. The NIC president however said that all NIC officials dissociated themselves from this proposed party (The Graphic, 7 June, 1975).

These splinter groups as well as the major Indian political organizations of the seventies reveal increasingly the widening class differences among Indians. The closing of the chasm between the council and the NIC as reflected in the most recent NIC policy statement is symptomatic of this. On the other hand, the formation of a workers' party and demonstrated identification of the enemy as Indian exploiters suggest a high degree of political introversion.

4. Voluntary Associations

The role of various voluntary associations stands in contrast to the approach of the political organizations. Though established on the basis of specific homogeneous interests, voluntary organisations have changed from their previous socializing role to a more direct, confrontational, and instrumental activity, in the pursuit of their members' interests. No longer is aid for adjustment in a strange or hostile

environment the prime purpose of these associations, but representation and struggle for specific interests. In this sense voluntary associations form an integral part of Indian political behaviour, although members do not consider them to be political organizations. However, in the extremely regulated and politicized South African context even the most apolitical organizations, such as sport clubs, are bound to encounter political conflicts in which they have to take a stand, often against their explicit intentions.

Sporting associations have assumed some political importance in South Africa. The role of Indians in the administration of multi-racial sports associations has been noticeable. Hassan Howa, the president of the multiracial South African Cricket Board of Control, for instance, has been instrumental in exposing and exploiting the discrepancy between the legal situation and government policy on the question of multiracial sports. Despite warnings by the minister of sport that the government would not tolerate a flouting of its policies through the establishment of a multiracial cricket club, the Aurora Cricket Club in Pietermaritzburg went ahead with the election of an Indian captain and chairman and a White vice captain, thereby forcing upon the government a confrontation that it would have preferred to avoid (The Natal Mercury, 30 June 1973). Similarly, the South African Soccer Federation was successful in influencing the Federation of International Football Associations to withdraw its previous special dispensation to stage international soccer tournaments in South Africa

(Sunday Times, 11 February, 1973). These instances have demonstrated the power of subordinate groups to influence the participation of the dominant group in international sports. That many black sports administrators, among them Hassan Howa and Morgan Naidoo, have been refused passports to attend sporting events abroad is a measure of the impact of their policies.

A voluntary organization with a substantial backing is the Southern Durban Civic Federation, which represents the various ratepayers' associations in the city's southern sector -- an area housing the Indian lower economic strata. The first conference of this organization, in 1971, used as its major theme the relationship between politics and Indian civic life. It was a marked change in approach from previous ratepayers' associations, which viewed politics as being somehow outside their realm. The conference stressed that ratepayers could no longer function in isolation if their complaints were to be heard and their interests were to be met. It pointed out that the quality of their lives -- where and how they lived and their political rights -- were dependent on the political pressure they as a group could exercise (The Ratepayer, 5 June, 1971).

Despite the iniquitous experience of discrimination and unsatisfactory facilities, there is little public involvement of residents in any form of political articulation of grievances, which seems to end with their expression by the leaders. In view of the fact that Indians generally have a tradition of participation in voluntary associations,

this relatively low involvement might seem astonishing. It can, however, be explained thus: (a) The haphazard resettlement of people with no regard for livable heterogeneous groupings and no amenities to bring them together atomized and alienated former community members from each other. Suspicion of one another, non-involvement in community affairs, and general withdrawal behavior resulted from the destruction of established settlement patterns. (b) Abstract alternative possibilities have little credibility in a situation without expectations that life can become progressively better. (c) Fear of police reprisals and repercussions on family and job security are very real indeed, despite assurances by the Ratepayers Association that political involvement is "our right.... our duty....and it is legal" (ibid.).

The resettlement of communities along religious, ethnic and economically homogeneous lines have been eschewed as productive of tension and hostility. Instead, some well known urban planners extol the merits of incorporating a cross-section of heterogeneous age, sex, religious, ethnic and economic groups. Such heterogeneity is said to enrich the quality of life through, above all, a variety of choices to enable leadership from within (Gans, 1961). Critics of apartheid raise similar objections to the government's large scale uprooting of the Indian community, and its attempts to resettle them along de facto economic lines. Commenting on the relocation of Indians in Chatsworth and the failure of such communities to develop a significant associational life, Fatima Meer (1975:370) maintains: "Probably the largest factor inhibiting

the growth of associations in Chatsworth is the factor of poverty and time. Associations require leadership and leadership in all societies is usually provided by the upper and middle classes".

Little attention, however, has been accorded the utter futility for working classes of associational life as it is commonly maintained in middle class communities.

A rejection of such ritualised forms of association with its social paraphernalia would seem to belie a dissociation of interests between the more affluent sections and the working class Indians living under sub-economic standards. It would seem inaccurate to explain away such withdrawal tendencies as an indication of apathy alone. Chatsworth and Merebank Indians have presented themselves 'en masse' to protest against specific issues affecting them.

On one such occasion disgruntled bus commuters, who were unsuccessful in their negotiations with Indian bus owners for a reduction in fares, planned a non-profit making community transport service to challenge the monopoly of the bus owners.

Another such ad hoc meeting of Chatsworth residents was in opposition to the authorities' proposal to stop bus services to the area in favour of making train services more economically viable for the South African Railways. At the September 1972 meeting, attended by some 12,000-13,000 Chatsworth residents, some hostility to Indians from the wealthier sections of the community was expressed.

A member of the NIC (whom most Chatsworth residents interviewed, described as the "Llanis" or rich people) attempted to speak, saying, "We are all Black." The crowd countered him by shouting out, "We are Black, not you. We don't want to hear you. Go home. You have large cars, we don't." Similarly, when a Coloured Representative Council member attempted to speak, an articulate spokesman from the crowd grabbed the public address system, saying, "You are white and we are black. You are from Johannesburg, don't come here to Chatsworth and tell us what to do. You are the problem. White man, go home!" (Interviews).

Indeed, the above examples are somewhat sporadic in nature, and only limited significance may be attached to such outbursts. Yet, in the absence of alternative articulation from other residents, they serve to indicate the prevailing mood of a community.

Other noticeable forms of informal community organisations which have emerged from this underprivileged sector of the community in response to the government's total failure to provide amenities are distinctive.

Several attempts have been made to militate against the prevalent tendency for expensive weddings which have been part of the Indian way of life. The organisation of mass weddings by a cultural leader, Mr. Manikkum Moodley, who heads the cultural and religious organisation "Thamizah Isai Kazhagam", which operates mainly in Merebank and Chatsworth, is one such effort. He maintains that spiralling costs and competition among people to organise elaborate weddings invariably

meant economic and social stress, especially for the lower income groups, as almost all the weddings were performed on a 'hire purchase' and 'easy payment' basis. Mass weddings were therefore seen to cut costs considerably (Interview. also: Leader, 6 July, 1973). Moodley claims considerable support for the idea, which he had learned from his stay in India.

Another even more "revolutionary" informal yet widely known group in this area is that organised by Tamil-speaking, Mrs. K. Dixon, who challenged the traditional prerogative of men to perform wedding ceremonies. She was also responsible for "systematising" low-cost weddings which would be totally catered for and conducted by members of her group, originally called the "Clairwood MatharSangham" (Women's Club), before they were moved by the Group Areas Act. The same group organises on a non-profit basis, low cost trips to India. They reduce travel costs by renting several houses in major centres, especially in Madras, provide their own meals and use cheap local transportation to see the country. Such arrangements make possible visits abroad for low-income groups, which were the previous prerogative of the wealthy only.

Furthermore, there are numerous non-profit thrift clubs in the area which operate on a communal basis, with a given number of contributors. Each contributor makes a fixed payment per week or month, and each in turn collects the total contributions for that week or month, in rotation. Despite the fact that no interest accrues in such a system

as it might in a commercial bank, such informal collectives serve to raise morale and unify people.

Whereas in the past, prior to implementation of the Group Areas Act, vernacular languages and culture were essentially fostered under the patronage of merchant class Indians, the trend over the past decade has been a shift toward vernacular language revival and cultural renaissance by the lower-income groups. Higher-income groups focus on a professional education for their children, adopt essentially Western life styles and standards, and at the most engage in extolling the virtues of their ancient culture as parlour conversation. Skilled and amateur Indian musicians are often invited to give recitals in elite Indian homes, and are at times sponsored by the elite to further their musical studies in India.

An organisation which has been instrumental in reviving interest in culture maintenance, independently of the government's policy, is the South African Tamil Federation. It is responsible for the organisation of vernacular schools in the Southern Durban area, and has taken over the position of the once elite-dominated Natal Tamil Vedic Society in the centre of Durban.

These attempts at cultural revival are not entirely apolitical in nature. Tamil theatre, for instance, focuses on more political themes in contrast to earlier re-enactments of cultural epics. The "Tamil Advancement Society", a drama group affiliated to the South African Tamil Federation,

presented in 1974, a play called "The Gallows". This play depicted the struggle of a militant South Indian political party, the Dravida Munetra Kazhagam (DMK), to pave the way for the Tamil language to take its rightful place in the arena of world languages, from where it was almost ousted by the infiltration of foreign languages and culture into Tamil Nad.

These attempts at organisation, even though they lack the disciplined persistence implicit in the formation of associations, as are known to the entrepreneurial and professional-dominated sectors of the Indian community, nevertheless, serve the interests of working class Indian communities in many ways far more adequately than the previously upper and middle class dominated groups. The informal organisations are issue-oriented, instrumental, as well as expressive of the needs of under-privileged groups. Moreover, given the fact that a leadership emerges from the ranks of people who experience the misery of unplanned regimentation in these areas, they are much better able to articulate their specific needs. By contrast, a non-working class leadership has frequently tended to act as an intermediary between "the people" and "the government". Hence the supposed virtues of heterogeneous composition may indeed be overstated. It may well be argued that the more homogeneous the group, the more effectively it can organise for political action. As Abner Cohen (1969) suggests, economic homogeneity may constitute an informal interest group, which has the advantage of possessing some of the most essential requirements of political

organisation in much the same way as ethnic homogeneity.

5. Covert Collective Organisation

While the previously discussed collective activity in voluntary associations took place within the framework of public organisations, either as explicit political groupings or with implicit political implications, a third form of organised collective behaviour must be added. This category encompasses the organised non-public or covert defence of group interests. Covert collective organisation does not mean illegal, underground activity -- which is not considered here because of lack of evidence and its confinement to more individual defiance so far -- but legal or at least semi-legal, unpublicized, exclusively Indian collective action. Ethnic appeal is used to defend or expand ethnically defined interests on the basis of a common identity. Covert collective organisation differs from its overt expression by its usual ad hoc character and the clear consensus about specific methods and goals. These purposes would be defeated by the institutionalized publicity of overt associations. Some examples can best illustrate this method.

In the aftermath of the Group Areas Act, various municipalities have from time to time offered to Indians a few plots of land for sale by public auction. Given the artificial land shortage for Indians, disproportionately high prices are usually paid for such plots. There have been instances, however, when spontaneous organisation among a heterogeneous crowd of prospective buyers have thwarted this. At one such

public auction in Natal it was decided among the prospective buyers present that they should allow only three low offers and the third bidder was to secure the land from the municipality. Subsequently they would go off and offer the land just purchased, again at an auction to be conducted by themselves, at which the real bidding would take place. The discrepancy between the low price paid to the white controlled municipality and the price offered by the highest bidder at the private sale would then be donated to a non-sectional charitable Indian organisation instead of going into the municipal budget.

Another less dramatic show of community solidarity continues to take place in the Durban Grey Street area. Given the value and importance of this area as the major Indian business center in the heart of Durban it was always considered essential to keep it Indian. Whenever a property in the area comes up for sale syndicates of Indian businessmen therefore rally together to ensure that the property remains in the hands of Indians, instead of going to Whites. This was done mostly by persuasion of the seller to keep the price reasonable in the future interests of the community. Where this failed, the money would be raised somehow by influential Indian business, almost as an insurance against white "penetration".

Indian businessmen have also been known to collectively invite white leaders to special banquets in an attempt to develop a "working relationship" between both groups and engage in "heart to heart" discussions. Though this strategy is by no means confined to Indians, it

is frequently viewed by outsiders as another devious Indian ploy to seek favours. On the other hand, leading Nationalist politicians have been known to welcome such a platform to try out secret deals and for having the opportunity of "getting to know" Indians. One well-known venue is the Orient club, a conservative all-male, exclusively Muslim hideaway. It was recently the meeting point where the former Minister of Interior, Theo Gerdener, proposed his "two-stream policy",¹ and planned to raise money for it from Indian coffers.

It has been argued earlier that the concept "community" is no longer entirely appropriate to describe the social organisation of the Indians, in view of their ethnic diversity, numerical size and increasingly secondary character of their social relationships, all of which have been accelerated by disrupted settlement patterns.

The examples of covert collective organisation, nevertheless, show evidence of community survival in specific situations. When confronted by the discriminatory treatment of a superordinate group, middle groups are rendered a community, in terms of the strong unifying interests they come to share. Although these interests may vary within the group and are divided on the basis of economic differentiation, these divisions do become less dominant when faced by the superordinate power structure.

T. The plan involved a "gradual extension" of all basic rights at present enjoyed by Whites to the Indian and Coloured people. This in effect meant that they would form one state in which all citizens would enjoy equal rights. Though a few Indians offered some financial support, the scheme was for the most part rejected on the grounds that it could have cataclysmic effects, in view of its exclusion of the urban African.

XI. INDIAN-AFRICAN RELATIONS

1. Cultural Discontinuities

Indians are generally more disliked than Whites by Africans because of their "isolationist arrogance".¹ Evidence for the exclusivism, that is generally attributed to the group, for whatever reason, be it the impact of segregatory legislation enforcing separate development, or not, is indeed ample. There is little inclusion of Africans at equal status level at Indian celebrations, weddings and the like, beyond the token appearance of African leaders such as the late Chief Luthuli and more recently Chief Gatsha Buthelezi. Indeed, the same may be said of White-Indian contact, although it is certainly more frequent and considered more prestigious than contact with Africans. Furthermore, in nine out of ten cases where Whites are invited, regardless of their achieved status they would be ushered into the front row of the hall, ostensibly because "they are outsiders and are interested in our customs". Yet the same criteria do not automatically apply to all African guests. To achieve "front row status", Africans have to be especially well qualified and be either a Buthelezi or a Luthuli, or have professional status.

In the 50's and early 60's the influence of the Indian Congress elite was noticeable in incorporating Africans, Coloureds and Whites as

1. A term D. Rothchild (1973:173) uses to describe African-Non-African relations in Kenya.

fashionable inclusions at Indian celebrations. Since then, the tendency especially among the elite is for greater exclusivism. In the case of the more conservative elite, exclusivism had a long tradition, since the focus was on the sacredness of the rituals being performed and only group members were relevant. The more politicised elite, however, tends to use exclusivism now as a way of expressing group pride and of retaliating against white non-reciprocation. At a symbolic level it is a form of rejecting white political domination, and all contact with Whites, regardless of whether they may be government supporters or opponents, is viewed as contaminating.

Levels of exclusivism among the politicised elite seem to have undergone considerable refinement and redefinition. Whereas in the 50's and 60's, concomitant with greater inter-group contacts -- albeit at the formal level -- there was a tendency toward all-Indian inclusiveness, cutting across intragroup religious and linguistic differences, there now seems to be a greater intragroup differentiation along linguistic and religious lines. Ethnic origins are delved into and their revival sought. It is indeed revealing that a formerly banned leader of the Natal Indian Congress divulged in passing the importance of giving his grandchildren "Tamil" names as distinctive from North Indian names. (Interview). A marked contrast is represented by the younger Indian members of the Black Peoples Congress. They underplay and even debunk cultural origins, engage in a wider range of contact with other Blacks, and embrace aspects of African culture as

evidence of their bona fide intentions of becoming one with the majority of the oppressed who are African. Grass root contact with Africans and other Blacks differs sharply from the elite based contact of the Indian Congress, which was more formal and did not include the embracing of African cultural symbols.¹

Among the older generation and the vast majority of the unpoliticized, however, the obsession with maintaining the "purity" of the group is noticeable. Hence all types of intermarriage, ranging from intra-linguistic, inter-religious to inter-racial are considered undesirable. The degree of deviation differs respectively. The strongest taboo would seem to be on Indian-African marriages which hardly occur.² Hence the following story is frequently told with varying emphases and has virtually become part of the folklore.

A wealthy merchant in E. Africa answered his door one evening to find two young Africans. Upon enquiring the purpose of their visit, it turned out that one of them had come to ask for the hand of the merchant's daughter in marriage. With due decorum, and considered coolness, the merchant called the visitors into the livingroom, offered them a drink, and called in his daughter. The proposition was then put to her. Respectfully she replied that she had nothing against it if the gentleman would take care of her and if she were to have her parents' permission. The merchant then told the young men that, in accordance with tradition, it would only be correct for them to bring their parents to formally approach him. That night, after the guests had left, the family packed its belongings and fled the country for India.

1. Even when Indian Congress leaders did come into contact with rank and file Africans to whom they frequently gave free medical or legal services, there was still the status gap, which makes for qualitatively different relationships from those which BPC seems to foster.

2. Only intermarriages between Whites and Non-Whites, not among the three Non-White groups, are illegal.

This story, in its numerous variations, is used to underline the need for "presence of mind" and "tact" in dealing with such situations, as well as to emphasize the chances that this could occur closer to home. The supposed desire of Africans to marry Indian women is, as in the white racist folklore, a prevalent theme which recurs when discussing prospects for the future. In subjective importance it supercedes concern for the other prospects of the group's economic well-being and political freedom. "Will we be able to maintain our identity?" becomes the crucial focus.

2. Encounters of Conflict: The Durban Riots

Underlying Indian-African relations, especially among the older generation of Indians, is the trauma of the 1949 Durban communal riot. The Durban riots, began on Jan. 13, 1949, near a crowded bus depot frequented by Indians and Africans. The Commission that reported on the happenings described it as follows in the terminology of the time:

"The spark which caused this tragic explosion was almost ludicrous in its insignificance. If one sifts the obviously perjured evidence, the probable facts appear to be these. A Native boy, 14 years of age, had words with an Indian shop assistant, 16 years of age, and slapped the latter's face. The Indian youth lodged a complaint with his employer, also an Indian, who came out of the Indian Market into Victoria Street and assaulted the Native boy. In the tussle the Native's head accidentally crashed through the glass of a shop window, and in withdrawing it the boy received cuts behind the ears, which caused the blood to flow. Unfortunately this happened at a time when.....a mass of Natives and Indians had congregated in quest of conveyance to their homes. The Natives saw an adult Indian assaulting a Native child and they saw blood. That was enough. They went berserk and attacked every Indian within sight." (Webb and Kirkwood, 1949:2).

On the other hand, the reputed historian Eric Walker refers to retaliatory action from another perspective:

"...some of the wealthier Indians....whose arrogance had offended many of their humbler co-religionists fired at Zulus from the windows of their swiftly moving cars." (Walker, 1964:783).

In reporting the occurrence the next morning, the newspapers devoted less space to the riot than to a storm at Mossel Bay. But the racial tension flared up again in violence and over the next two days there were widespread attacks in the Durban area on Indians and their property.

The District Commandant of Police reported to the Commission:

"Houses were now being burned by the score, all in the vicinity of Booth Road. Almost all the Indians not evacuated from this area were either killed, burned to death or left dying. While the men were clubbed to death, Indian women and young girls were raped by the infuriated Natives. This state of arson and looting continued throughout the night and when further military and naval reinforcements arrived many instances occurred where the forces had to resort to the use of firearms to protect life and property." (Webb and Kirkwood, 1949:3).

It should be pointed out that the poorest sectors of the Indian Community whose economic position was not much better than most Africans were worst hit by the upheaval, due to their greater vulnerability in outlying slum areas, that are more accessible and less protected than the city core. This suggests that looting figured lower in the motivation of many participants than the outlet of long accumulated animosity against Indians. No analysis of the role of rumor in sparking and preceding the disturbances has been made.

Nevertheless, in spite of what still figures in the contemporary mythology of Indians as proof of the African "savage character", it was never a clear-cut racial conflict. The writer's own memory of the riot brings to the fore the assistance many Africans, at risk to themselves, gave to Indians by shielding them from activists.

Official estimates of the destruction were 142 deaths (1 European, 50 Indians, 87 Africans, caused mainly by police action, and 4 of undetermined racial origin). Those injured numbered 1,087 (32 Whites, 11 Coloureds, 541 Africans and 503 Indians). One factory, 58 stores, and 247 dwellings owned by Indians were destroyed and 2 factories, 652 stores, and 1,285 dwellings were damaged. Thousands of Indians became refugees overnight. Eight months after the riots, 770 refugees were still in camps (ibid:4).

The attitudes of the public to the events differed according to racial groups. Indians complained about the behaviour of the police, alleging that stronger and prompter action would have minimized and arrested the riot. Many considered the official estimates as being too low. Little regret was expressed by African public spokesmen. Whites are reported to have commonly reacted with statements such as: "Indians had it coming to them" or "The trouble was that they got the wrong Indians" (ibid:5). Kirkwood and Webb comment on the noticeable absence of any rallying together of all groups to the defence of law and order, for whatever group, in the interest of upholding the Rule of Law (ibid.).

Although the riot was spontaneous, it may be argued that it was clearly structurally predetermined by the nature of South African society. The differential incorporation of the various racial groups, enjoying different levels of rewards, set the stage for a scapegoat and revenge for long suffered misery. Indians were perceived by Africans as most obviously benefitting from this situation precisely because they occupied in the common perception a "middleman" role. These stereotypes acted as a focal point for quick mobilization of Africans.

The significance for contemporary race relations of the Durban riots some 30 years ago, particularly for Indian attitudes towards Africans, results from the cultivated imagery of Africans as brutal barbarians. By the exaggerated transferral of the stories of rape and looting, common in the folk history of Indians and endowed with the legendary authenticity of personal experience, the dominant view of Africans creates a climate for fear and apprehension. This is almost weekly endorsed by factual and widely reported break-ins of Africans, usually former servants, into Indian homes, and by stories of terrorization of the wealthier Indians by the extremely poor Africans. This situation, however, has not led to a reduction of African servants in Indian middle-class homes, but rather to a shift from male servants to females and younger boys, who are considered more controllable. Since most of these servants work illegally in the Indian households¹ and are subject to frequent police raids, their dependency and consequent exploitation has also increased. On the other hand, many Indian households function as private

1. Africans are not allowed to live in Indian areas, unless they are registered with the Bantu Affairs Department. Furthermore, only one servant per household is legally permissible. Since the registration procedure is a time-consuming and tedious one, and some Indian households use more than one servant, it is not uncommon to succumb to the temptation to hire those who offer themselves for employment without the necessary papers.

social welfare stations and minimal shelter for border cases (orphans, unemployed, handicapped, alcoholics) who would otherwise face even greater misery in their own areas.

That Indian-African relations in 1974 still display considerable mistrust is evidenced by an impending race riot which threatened the predominantly Indian North Coast town of Stanger in 1974, after a twelve year old African employee in an Indian green-grocery store died suddenly. Although post-mortem results revealed that he had died of "natural causes", the Africans present interpreted the situation in racial terms. The stereotype of the Indian exploiter who treats his employee poorly, overworks and underfeeds him, was evoked, and rioting spread to the neighbouring areas where Indians were attacked at random by angry Africans (The Leader, 11 October, 1974).

As in the case of the 1949 riots, an improvement in Indian-African relationships at the important level of personal contacts is virtually impossible as long as the gross structural inequalities persist.¹

1. The precariousness of Indian-African relations is evident when even respected African politicians, such as Chief Buthelezi, frequently exploit African-Indian enmities to gain the support of their own group. One such instance arose out of Indian pop-manufacturer's extension of credit facilities for thirty days to African storekeepers in African areas. The Indian manufacturer explained this as an act of goodwill since Africans are excluded from raising loans from building societies, insurance agencies, or banks. African traders used such extended credit facilities among other things to improve their premises, he maintained. In one instance, the municipality withdrew the African trader's license on the grounds that his business was "in fact owned by an Indian". These facts were then used by Buthelezi to threaten Indians publicly that they should desist from "using African businessmen as front-men". Responses such as these increase the uncertainty of Indians working in the African "homelands", where some 310 Indians are involved in manufacturing. Of these 22.6 percent are in food production and 58 percent in clothing manufacturing (South Africa, Indian Affairs, 1973:35).

3. Interest-based Alliances

When the impact of structural inequality is experienced across racial lines, certain cross-cutting alliances may be formed, on the basis of economic interests, regardless of race.

In the dispute about increases in bus fares by Indian bus owners in Chatsworth, evidence of Indian-African working class unity was noticeable.

The (African) Black Allied Workers' Union supported the (Indian) Southern Durban Civic Federation in rejecting the planned increases. The secretary of the union, Mr. Menziwe Mbeo, said, "Bus owners do not seem to realise that the majority of Indian and African workers in Durban earn far less than the standard poverty datum line" (Graphic, 20 September, 1974).

Recognition of their common cause was further reiterated by juxtaposing the situation of Blacks as against that of alien Western standards.

Hence, Mbeo continued: "The bus association should ponder on the fact that when purely business interests threaten to supercede the welfare of the whole Black community, then our community is rapidly getting as decadent as the West because over-commercialization for its own sake is foreign to the very spirit of this continent" (ibid.).

The 1973 strikes, though frequently described as "African Strikes", included a sizeable number of Indian participants. This was contrary to the general assumption that there existed an insurmountable rift between both groups. The rapid unionization of Indian workers in contrast to Africans,

(Schlemmer, 1973:39) the higher proportion of Indians in skilled positions and their higher level of education (Institute for Industrial Education, 1974:58) were said to separate the interests of both groups. Hence, the behaviour of Indian strikers was explained by many employers as being based on fear of African retaliation. In a subsequent investigation of these factors by the Durban "Institute for Industrial Education" it was found that 80 percent of the Indian participants interviewed had Standard 6 or less education, and almost a half earned below the poverty datum line figure of R18 per week. Indian workers were therefore neither better educated nor better paid than their African fellow-workers (ibid:59). With respect to fear as the motivating factor in the strike-participation of Indians, 60 percent of the sample (120) expressed solidarity with Africans as the reason for participation (ibid:62).

In addition to this type of actual collaboration, the past years also reveal some definite attempts by Indians to engage in philanthropic activities outside the group, especially on behalf of Africans. These include Indian doctors offering lower-cost medical attention to African patients, businessmen raising bursaries for African university students,¹ building a school in Kwa-Zulu, and Indian manufacturers helping to set up factories to be run by Africans.

Given the general South African racially structured inequality, however, these charitable activities are unlikely to have much impact on the

¹ The H.S. Ebrahim Memorial Trust provided funds for 11 African students to study at the University of the North (Natal Mercury, 4 February 1976).

perceptions of a more privileged group by a less privileged one and vice versa. Efforts to create goodwill, particularly when they appear to recipients as paternalistic and opportunistic, are likely to fail under conditions of enforced unequal separatism. This is heightened where the middle group lends itself to being the convenient buffer or shock absorber for the rulers and vulnerable scapegoat for the poor majority at the other end. It is hardly surprising that the Indian response in such a predicament is ambiguous: wavering according to circumstances rather than forming alliances with African nationalism as the future power. Generally speaking, Indian and African relationships have hardly improved since the time of the Durban riots. The often cited "unity of the oppressed in their common plight" would seem to remain a slogan.

4. Prospects for Inter-subordinate Alliances

With the decolonization of Mozambique, the impending changes to majority rule in Rhodesia, and the Cuban presence in Angola, South African Whites have been forced to ask themselves what potential support they can reasonably expect from their black fellow citizens.

It is frequently assumed that oppressed minorities would support attempts to alter either directly or indirectly the social, economic and political relationships within such societies. The promise of an egalitarian free society is said to provide great appeal to such groups, hence radicalism of the left variety is considered inevitable. This is the viewpoint

implicit in Almond, 1956; Pye, 1956; Myrdal, 1944; Lipset, 1960; and Staley, 1954. Almond (1956:230-94), for example, in the tradition of U.S. cold-war counterinsurgency research, outlines four types of "susceptibility" to communism, which can all be related to minority status.

As can be expected from the incumbents of power in polarized conflicts, they express confidence in their majority support, in order to boost morale and suppress doubts about the strength of the opposing camps. In the South African context, too, the rulers indicate certainty that they will have the support of the oppressed.¹

White government opponents, such as Colin Eglin, the leader of the Progressive Reform Party, paint the opposite picture.

"Far too many black people", Eglin said, "see what is happening in the North and in Angola as part of the process of their liberation from discrimination and domination within South Africa" (Rand Daily Mail, Feb. 19, 1976).

The reasons cited for this were the exclusion of Blacks from the "national unity" that the Nationalists speak of, the denial of elementary rights to Blacks, and the infliction on them of all the humiliating inequalities that stem from apartheid (ibid.). However, the conventional liberal wisdom about the reaction of minorities needs closer scrutiny, as the possibility of superordinate-subordinate alliances would still seem to exist under certain circumstances.

1. The S.A. Foreign Minister, Muller, for instance, said, that the government could "rely on the support of most of the non-Whites" if it were confronted by forces on its borders." (Daily News, 4 February, 1976).

While there are no reliable surveys of Black opinion on the matter, the articulated responses of two essentially similar minorities is indicative. Coloured leaders such as Norman Middleton and Sonny Leon both of the Labour party and ex-war veterans, say in no uncertain terms that unless the government made drastic changes in its policy toward Blacks, it would find itself without the support of the majority of Black people in the event of armed struggle. They pointed out that while they would defend South Africa, they would not defend its oppressors (The Graphic, 20/2/76). Referring to the last war where thousands of black South Africans joined the country's armed forces to fight Nazism, Leon, very much like civil rights leaders in the U.S. three decades earlier, reminisced about the soldiers' treatment like lepers when they returned home. They had fought for freedom abroad, but did not get it at home (ibid.). Similarly, Middleton said, the government had "no right" to call on Blacks to defend South Africa, and argued that it would be impossible for Blacks "to protect the very policy which has been oppressing him, all these years" (ibid.).

By contrast, the Chairman of the SAIC requests the government to train Indians to join the S.A. army so that they may participate in the defense of the country and be accepted as part of S.A. (Leader, 20 February, 1976). Another member of the SAIC, Rajbansi, as well as the former president of the SAIC, Joosub, take care to distinguish themselves as anti-Communist. "If the borders of South Africa are threatened by any Communist-oriented element, I am sure that the black people will stand

up and fight" (The Graphic, 20/2/76). However, both explained that if the outside forces were anti-Communist, the country's Whites would find themselves in a "very awkward situation" (ibid.).

On the other hand, informal communications with other Indian public figures indicate vehement opposition to having any part in a war on behalf of their white oppressors. They remember a similar state of affairs at the beginning of World War II, when the old Natal Indian Association started out opposing participation in the war. They changed their stand however as soon as Hitler attacked Russia, and they perceived the war to be a black peoples' war. They remember also Gandhi's futile attempts to show allegiance to the State during the Anglo-Boer War when he organised over a thousand Indians in the Indian Ambulance Corps (Palmer, 1957:63-64).

The apparently greater unanimity of opposition and non-collaboration with the government on the part of the coloured minority is noticeable. Although there is no systematic data here, the greater credibility of the coloured leadership may be assumed on the basis of the rapport of the Coloured Council to its people and its previous confrontation stance.

In contrast, the Indian community reflects a wider range of opinion. The response is far from unequivocal and is complicated further by distinguishing between the policies of the opponent and the alternative, as they see it, of communism. While the internalisation of the

Afrikaner propaganda on the Communist threat together with fears of violating South Africa's strict legal sanctions on this issue might explain part of the statements, there is an historical reality to which Indians as victims can point, unlike the indigenous Coloured minority. The Indian press frequently editorializes on this deep-seated fear of historical repetitions: "There was a time when one thought that whatever else was objectionable in Communist methods, racism was not part of it" (Graphic, 30/1/76). However, happenings in Zanzibar where, "naked racialism was directed against Asians and Arabs" (ibid.) as well as White imperialist tendencies of Russia toward her own non-White Mongolian and Asian inhabited states, would seem to have cast doubt on Communist credibility. "Already, some racist Africans have been making anti-Indian noises. And the fear is that the Communists will make tirades against 'capitalist exploiters' and in the same way that President Amin of Uganda falsely claimed that it was the Indians who were the capitalist exploiters, and Hitler blamed it on the Jews, Indians will be the scapegoats here" (ibid.).

One of the noticeable differences between the Indians and Coloureds in South Africa is the larger middle class of the Indians, as reported earlier. Yet affluence alone would seem an insufficient explanation. The participation of the Chinese minority in the communist movement in Malaya for instance (Pye, 1954), despite their affluence for the most part, would seem to suggest that other explanations must be sought.

A second difference between both groups is the cultural and visible distinctiveness of Indians, bolstered by a host of traditional institutions and organisations. Throughout the history of Indian settlement in South Africa the antagonism of the rulers toward them was expressed in varying degrees of severity, from informal discrimination, to a more legitimated legislative exclusion. This discrimination, always more precarious than the indigenous Coloureds experienced, reinforced bonds of commonality which Indians shared with each other. Religion, music, customs, traditions, and distinctive food tastes formed part of the reconstruction of a womb-like structure to act as a bulwark against a hostile environment. As Hilda Kuper (1969:251) points out: "It is because identification with their own sub-groups is so meaningful that the political role of minorities becomes less effective."

This identity of the group, which emerged in the process of retaliating against an antagonistic environment, became reified. In so doing, it generated confidence of group members and insulated them from the perception as lower caste members by Whites. In some instances this cultural narcissism was so successful that Indians even believed themselves to be morally superior to their dominant group. The policy of Separate Development integrated these tendencies and gave official status to them, by pointing to their existence as a *raison d'être* for separate development.

Political change for the Coloureds has slightly different connotations than it does for Indians. Indeed, while both groups would benefit from egalitarian status and other political freedoms, political change for Indians, of the kind that would be offered by joining de-colonizing African forces, also presents the trauma of loss of identity. Since it is the preservation of identity which they see as having enabled them to survive white oppression, its perpetuation has become synonymous with survival and security itself. Eighty percent of all interviewees pointed to the importance of maintaining their identity.

For the Chinese minority in Malaya the main attraction offered by the Communists, apart from freedom from domination or oppression, would appear to have been its specifically "Chinese" character and the promise of a continued Chinese identity as opposed to incorporation into an alien Malay nation (Staley, 1954:207-9); for S.A. Indians, on the other hand, joining the outside liberatory forces means a merging of the group's identity into one political unit, with no certainty of being free of persecution by the new regime.¹

In the case of the present discrimination, Indians can point, at least, to

1. Leo Kuper (1975:58-9) formulated a similar conclusion in the following way: "A 'stranger' category, separated from the rest of the society by discontinuities in structure and culture, and affording a likely target for persecution, can hardly fail to be aware of the multi-racial structure of the society. One section may seek to align itself with the dominant race, another with the subordinate majority, and they may attack race as a criterion for social relationships, but they can hardly escape awareness of a separate identity." This would make the S.A. liberal dream of a common society in which group identifications are replaced by individualism a rather unlikely event.

the certainty of survival through cultivating their identity, while the future, in their perception, holds the trauma of greater anxiety. They prefer in their overwhelming majority the certainty of the unsatisfactory status quo.

XII. CONCLUSIONS

In this study, the responses of a minority to varying situations of discrimination and political exclusion in a racially structured polity have been examined.

Several theoretical approaches used for the analyses of minority and majority relations in other societal contexts were found inappropriate in the case of Indians in South Africa. Among those were perspectives which emphasised reduction of prejudice, value incongruence and discrimination, increasing secularism and the advance of science as inevitable factors in the elimination of ethnic and racial inequality through assimilation. Similarly, the pluralist perspective, while descriptive of South African society in some respects, fails to transcend that function. The narrower Marxist interpretation, which stressed the polarization of classes as the inevitable solution to situations of inequality, was considered unyielding and inaccurate for explaining the persistence of racial identifications and ethnic perceptions across class lines. What is more revealing, is the focus on the role of interests in a split labour market which is legally cemented in South Africa, and makes at least temporary alliances among the three subordinate groups a possibility. In this respect, the maintenance of ethnic solidarities among South African Indians takes place in a different structural context, compared with the characteristic reassertion and reaffirmation of ethnic loyalties on the part of most overseas Indian communities. The relationship between cross-cutting, class-based interests on the one hand, and ethnic loyalties on the other, would seem to be the most significant theoretical question for the explanation of the persistent mutual antagonisms.

In the case of Ugandan Indians, Morris comments on "caste" and "sect" as the most relevant structural units which guide the lives of most Indians, and

constitute the source of unending rivalries (Morris, 1957:316). With regard to Indians in Trinidad, Malik (1971:168) points to the manner in which the cultural and social segregation practiced by Indians prevents them from gaining wider political support. Arasaratnam refers to Indians in Malaysia and Singapore as "a difficult community to integrate" (1970:196), due to their persistent attachment to the Indian subcontinent as the source for their cultural and religious inspiration (ibid: 196-7). Neither does the opportunity of integration exist for Indian South Africans in a legally exclusive system, nor even a promising possibility of successful resistance. The futility of being as "determined and fearless as a warrior" which Ames and Inglis (1973/74:15) mention as a "guiding image" of exile Sikhs in British Columbia towards those who threaten the well-being of their community, is apparent. However, in all these contexts, much antagonism and hostility toward this conspicuous minority is evident.

In the case of South African Indians, due to a variety of unique factors such as specific discrimination and official reinforcement of group differences, cultural persistence has taken different forms. Unlike the Ugandan Indians, caste and sect have not been significantly important in the South African Indian community. Instead, major Indian linguistic groups and broad religious definitions have emerged as rallying points for community needs.

The persistence of Indian identity to varying extents in these different contexts has been attributed to several factors: (1) the exclusivist nature of Indian culture and its resilience in transplantation; (2) the restrictiveness of the new environment, thereby providing the structure for ethnic enclaves; (3) the insecurity experienced by Indian minorities who live under the constant threat of arbitrary behaviour on the part of

more powerful groups. While there is some evidence for all of these propositions, Barth's admonition seems crucial here, namely that it is the "ethnic boundary that defines the group not the cultural stuff that it encloses" (Barth, 1969:15). As such, the nature of Indian culture, apart from its capacity to survive in different environments, would seem least relevant. In the South African case, the "continual expression and validation" (ibid) of boundaries through the sustained power and ideological intransigence of the superordinates has had an important influence. In addition, the multi-ethnic character of the Indian community in South Africa, in contrast to the relatively homogeneous group in Uganda, or the early East Indians in Canada, has had the effect of broadening definitions of Indianness. Furthermore, in South Africa both geographic distance, together with the restriction of immigration from India, have allowed the evolution of a specific exile culture unlike in pre-Amin Uganda, Malaysia or Singapore, where a constant importing of "culture" from the motherland counter-acted geographical isolation. Almost all overseas Indian settlements, however, seem to face varying degrees of insecurity which would seem to be positively related to the persistence of cultural identity. In the perception of the threatened, this would ensure their acceptance in the motherland in the event of major changes in the country of their adoption.

The story of Indians in South Africa in many ways evokes a similar conclusion to that of Eugene Genovese (1974) in his study of slavery in the American South, namely, that there is more to life than the dialectic of oppression. What is of interest is, as he points out, that the powerless made the best of a bad situation. By bargaining, pleading, compromising, and resisting, South African Indians made some space within that society, and maintained a way of life in which family and religion served to preserve a sense of self-dignity. This "achievement" was aided by the specific cultural tenets of their belief-system.

The traditional Indian value system, as expressed in the virtues praised in the socialization process, resemble the bourgeois model of Western Europe. Indians, as insecure newcomers in an hostile environment, adhered to the protestant ethic of their white masters, more than did the indigenous African and coloured population. This is expressed in the high appreciation of work and achievement; the conviction that respective efforts are worth-while, culminating in the belief that upward mobility as a reward is possible. Associated with this "bourgeois" outlook is the acquiescence of differences between people and their situation, affirmation of competition, capacity for thrift as the ability to postpone short-term for long-term gratification, respect for property, and the search for social recognition and status, as

evidenced in rigid adherence to the group norms prescribing appropriate behaviour. Politeness, orderliness, conscientious work combined with modesty, uncritical obedience towards authority, be it the older members of the family, teachers or the civil power, are all regarded as desirable behaviour. The unique passive disobedience campaign of the fifties was viewed out of all political proportion by the Indian participants, precisely because it temporarily set aside the traditional value system, even though it was only possible because of the "disciplined" socialisation. This redefinition by the leadership occurred because the goal of the campaign was the very realisation of the bourgeois ideal of equality of opportunities. These were above all seen as realizable through education, in the absence of accumulated wealth. The glorification of formal education, regardless of content and potential usefulness, served the twofold function of supposedly equipping the subordinates for their equal competition in later life as well as serving as the most important criteria for intra-group status-differentiation. Marriages for instance were arranged, above all, on the basis of comparable educational levels rather than mutual wealth.

It would seem that the conservatism inherent in this outlook of an ideologically integrated community is gradually losing ground.

While inevitable adjustment to an overwhelming reality is still the dominant perspective, the belief in the rightfulness and successful outcome of this approach is increasingly questioned. No longer are life-chances guaranteed by higher education,

as it was assumed previously. As more and more atomized individuals resist ideological and conformity pressures, working class group members in particular, are able to redefine their priorities according to their own experience. This has led, for the most part, to a status-fatalism with emphasis on day-to-day concerns as opposed to previous sustained efforts for a doubtful future. Evident among the poorer sections of the Indian group is a mentality of "we" and "they", with an unbridgeable gap between the two. No longer is the social environment mainly viewed as a hierarchy, in which slow advancement is after all possible. Instead, the world is increasingly seen in dichotomous terms, crystallizing and reinforcing an apathetic, resignative outlook without much hope and alternative for those on the wrong side of the tracks. However, while in the past, "they" represented the ruling whites, never including members of their own racial group, now Indians of the top stratum are frequently viewed as being as distant and alien as the real rulers.

It has been argued earlier that the concept "community" is inappropriate to describe the social organization of South African Indians in view of their political and ethnic diversity, size, and increasingly secondary character of human relationships. These tendencies have been accelerated and accentuated by the Nationalist government's policies in two ways: the impact of the Group Areas Act has solidified into relatively class homogeneous settlement patterns, thereby clarifying emerging intracommunal class distinctions; the designation of an elitist Indian

Council, comprised of the Indian economic upper strata, defined by the government as "leaders", despite the status inconsistency they themselves experience as powerless "non-Whites", is far removed from the interest of workers. This official alliance with the Indian bourgeoisie further undermined the former appeals to the sense of community and heightened the awareness of more significant intra-communal distinctions.

Indians generally have responded to this new situation with three ambiguous and contradictory attitudes, which are often not held simultaneously, but are activated according to the situation and issue involved. There is a higher degree of what may be called political introversion. Instead of focusing directly on the real source of oppression, the frustrations of group members are increasingly directed against the Indian Council, which is blamed for the exploitation of the existing inequality. Given their tenuous group security, Indians still emphasize cultural superiority in their quest for identity and use it as a bulwark against political domination, as well as a psychological substitute for economic success. While its positive effects can be seen in the high level of the group's self-confidence, it also results in the reification of identity and militates against political effectiveness. Cultural narcissism prevents real intersubordinate alliances. Contradicting political introversion and cultural narcissism, are newer interest-based alliances among the three subordinate groups. However, these cross-ethnic ties need as their activating incentive either a highly developed

political consciousness, as reflected in the Indian membership of the SASO, or direct, concrete advantages. Thus during the strikes in 1972 Indian workers sometimes joined Africans in the demand for higher wages, frequently against Indian employers. Such a breach of ethnic group solidarity would have been inconceivable during the early phases of the Indian struggle. At another level, symbolic contact also continues between the new Indian and African administrative elites, although this has differing implications and is generally in the interests of maintaining a slightly modified status quo.

While common bases of class interest that cut across ethnic lines could theoretically widen and be potentially strengthened in the foreseeable future, the administrative aspects and the differential application of separate development to the various groups succeed now, more than ever before, in differentiating the problem of one group from another.

At the same time, heightened intragroup class distinctions, and the feeling experienced by many Indians of being exploited by their own group members, have tended to accentuate the decline of the relevance of sentimental community affiliation. Instead, interests determine action in concrete situations. To what extent such interests will continue to predominate is, however, dependent on the nature of the assurances and the type of security that the more sizable African subordinate group offers the wavering Indian minority, as well as the kind of concession to Indians that the ruling group is willing to grant to prevent a potential subordinate alliance.

In conclusion, the foregoing analysis of the political behaviour of Indians in South Africa differs from other studies of overseas Indians by an interdisciplinary, historical and comparative perspective. Unlike those studies which provide a mere historical account of relevant events, this analysis uses historical data primarily to enhance the understanding of the present behaviour of Indian South Africans. While the focus on changes in cultural characteristics in several studies of Indians in the diaspora is undoubtedly of interest in itself, relatively little attention is paid here to specifically describing cultural changes. Instead, this study investigates the extent to which class and status differences have replaced ethnic identity or coincide with it. The politicisation of cultural differences is viewed by tracing the interplay between political discrimination and "identity maintenance".

The central focus has been on the political responses of the group to the system of structured inequality, ranging from attempts at persuasion to calls of confrontation. These are traced at two levels of intergroup relations, namely Indian relationships with other subordinate groups, as well as with the superordinate group. Unlike most other studies, relative homogeneity of the group, as implicit in the concept "community", is not assumed. Intra-group cleavages are explored and evaluated. Their role in determining the group's likely

future political alliances is stressed. In this respect, the difference between class and race conflicts is elucidated. Changes in the occupational structure through diversification of economic activity reveal that with industrial integration and interdependence, Indians have experienced status changes vis a vis other groups, thrusting them into a middleman position. The implications of such factors in multi-ethnic contexts is of considerable importance. It is in this respect that the potential for ethnic conflict may be said to be structurally predetermined, despite overriding class-based interests in the traditional Marxist sense. This is exacerbated by the effectiveness of the official doctrine of "separate development" with its focus on group-specific residential areas, educational and political institutions, especially in the context of "homeland" developments. Such tendencies have on the whole been successful in separating the political grievances of subordinate groups from each other. In the case of Indians, resentment is now frequently directed against more privileged group members and those who are perceived as government collaborators.

The political behaviour of Indians would seem to indicate how the dialectic of resistance and acquiescence operates in particular historical circumstances. Indeed, neither class consciousness nor ethnicity in themselves constitute satisfactory concepts for generalizations and predictions. Which bond is successfully activated would seem to depend on the specific historical context and perceptions of interest. These proved to have undergone considerable changes, according to the emerging social stratification of the group, despite the common experience of racial discrimination.

Predominant Indian political reactions under future majority rule in an African-dominated government would above all depend on the as yet unpredictable policies at that stage, the degree of animosity experienced, and the kind of security awarded to the vulnerable and, therefore, ambivalent, suspicious "strangers" in between.

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2. SOUTH AFRICAN PERIODICALS USED

a. Daily and Sunday Newspapers

Daily News (Argus Group, Durban)
The Natal Mercury (Independent, Durban)
Rand Daily Mail (S.A. Associated Newspapers, Johannesburg)
The Cape Times (S.A. Associated Newspapers, Cape Town)
The Natal Witness (Independent, Pietermaritzburg)
The Star (Argus Group, Johannesburg)
Daily Dispatch (Independent, East London)
Sunday Tribune (Argus Group, Durban)
Sunday Times (S.A. Associated Newspapers, Johannesburg)

Translations from the Afrikaans Press as reported in
"Comment and Opinion" and regular translation service of
the Institute of Race Relations, Johannesburg

b. Weeklies

The Leader (Durban)
The Graphic (Durban)
Post (Johannesburg)
The World (Johannesburg)
Financial Mail (Johannesburg)
To the Point (Johannesburg)

c. Monthlies, Bi-monthlies and Quarterlies

Reality. A Journal of Liberal and Radical Opinion
(Pietermaritzburg)
South African Outlook (Cape Town)
South African Labour Bulletin. Institute of Industrial Education
Race Relations News. South African Institute of Race Relations
(Johannesburg)
South African Journal of Economics (Braamfontein)
Newsletter. The South African Institute of International
Affairs (Pretoria)
South African Journal of Racial Affairs. South African Bureau
of Racial Affairs (Pretoria)
Optima. Anglo-American Corporation (Johannesburg)

SASO (South African Students' Organisation) Newsletter (Durban)

New Nation. The South African Review of Opinion and Fact
(Johannesburg)

STATS. Monthly Statistical and Marketing Digest

Social Dynamics (Cape Town)

Views and News (irregular, Durban)

The Ratepayer (discontinued, Durban)

Black Review. Black Community Programmes (annually, Durban)

d. Regular Government Publications

South African Panorama (Monthly)

Comment and Opinion. A weekly survey of the South African Press
and Radio (Weekly)

South African Digest (Weekly)

Fiat Lux (Monthly: published on behalf of the Department of
Indian Affairs)

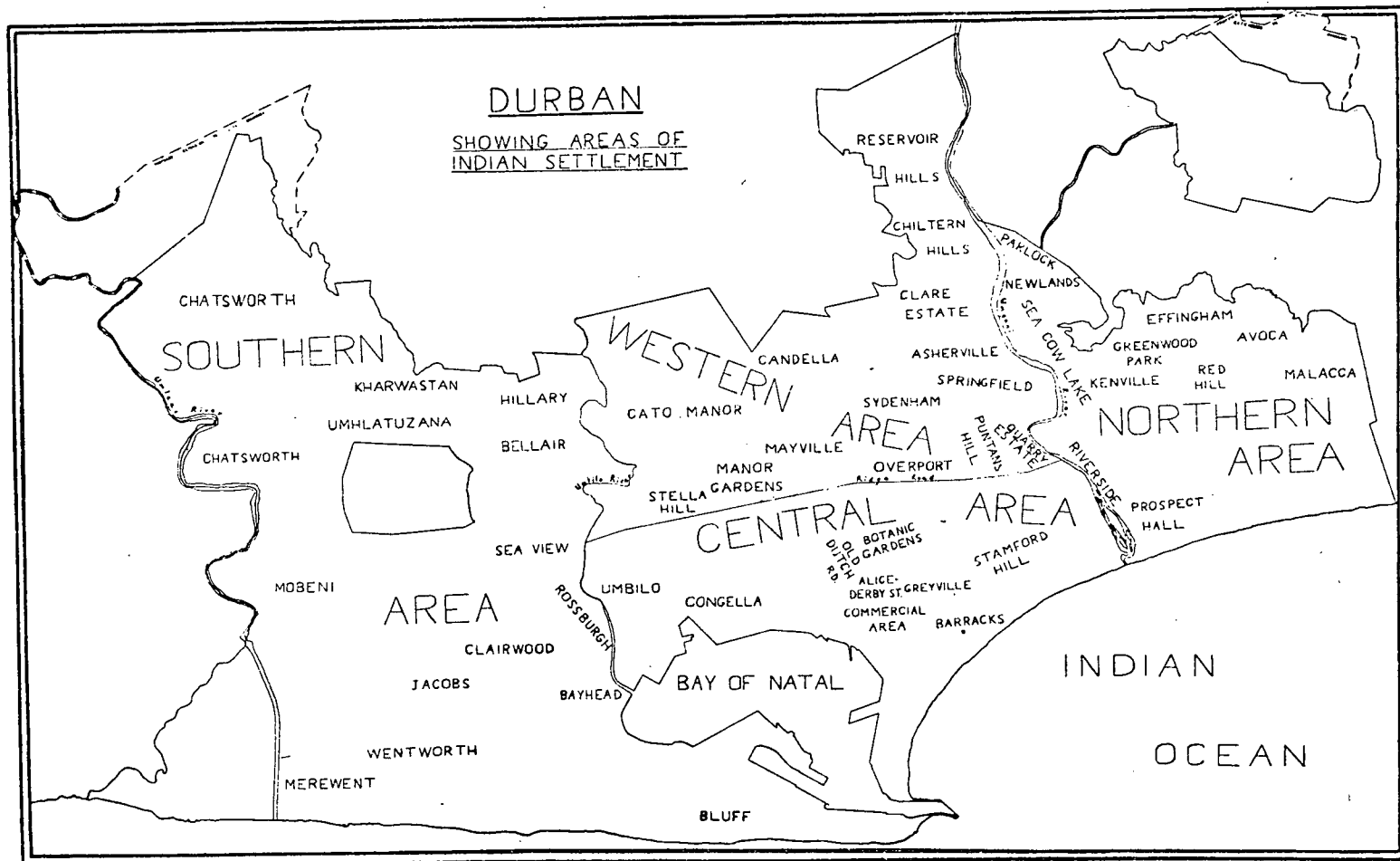
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For other Government publications see "South Africa" in bibliography.

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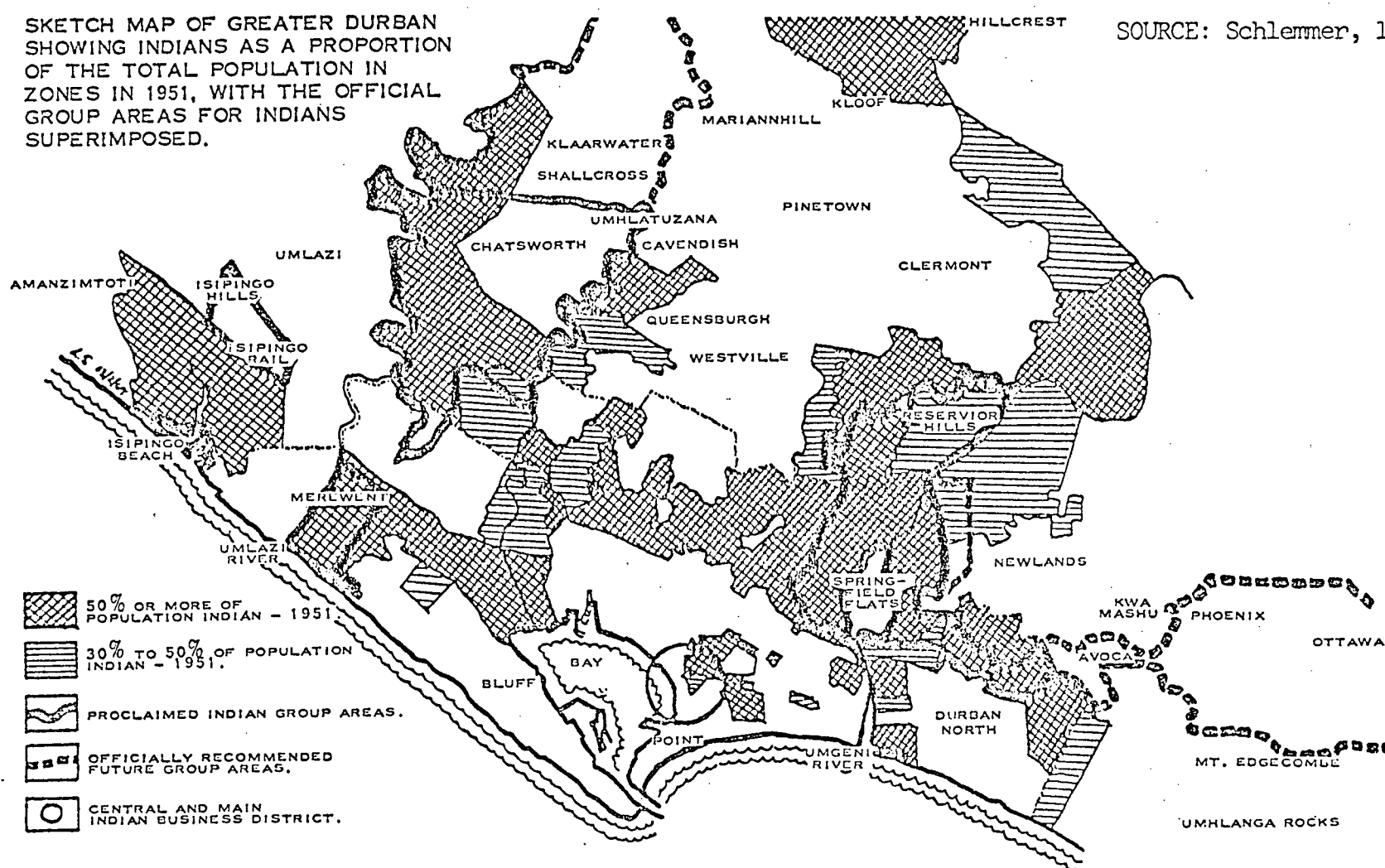
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Source: Pillay and Ellison, 1969.

SKETCH MAP OF GREATER DURBAN
SHOWING INDIANS AS A PROPORTION
OF THE TOTAL POPULATION IN
ZONES IN 1951, WITH THE OFFICIAL
GROUP AREAS FOR INDIANS
SUPERIMPOSED.

SOURCE: Schlemmer, 1967.



Sociological research project on comparative student aspirations

Please write a short essay in the space below of approximately 1 to 2 pages on the history of South Africa, projected into the future. Imagine you are a historian writing in the 21st century and giving a brief outline history of South Africa from 1973 to 2000. Do not merely write a description of South Africa in 25 years time but write an actual history of the intervening period. This is not a test of imagination - just describe what you really expect to happen.

At the end, please add a short paragraph concerning your personal plans and expectations for the future. (Write anonymously and frankly. Do not give your name, but please complete the statistics at the end).

The situation in South Africa is approximately
the same it will be only a little different
in what it is today. Most if not all the
black community of South Africa stand up on
our own two feet at light

Most of the black community are the
degenerate population of S.A. They form most
not all the illiterate & people of S.A.
a proper but certain views that cannot
be altered by less educated people (black).
who feel strongly that their position
should change to their social position,
political position & economical position

The economical position of black South
Africans especially the Africans is so
bad that the young Africans just cannot
begin to educate themselves. Recent papers
published an article about the cost of
white, African & Indian to attend
school a remarkable the white state
which ~~payed~~ paid the least fees in
comparison to either Indian or African.

In conclusion I note that
the position in S.A. in about 25 yrs
will be the same as a long as
the majority of our black