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Preface

This study originated from my own personal, professional and political experience at the beginning of the 1980's. The thought came during a seminar convened by the Institute of Personnel Management in Durban in the first half of 1984. The aim of the seminar was to look at the role of the (black) first-line supervisors in South African industrial relations. One of the invited speakers was an african industrial relations manager, whose input, I thought at the time, was not a reflection of someone drawn from the ranks of the nationally oppressed in South Africa. At the time I was working for a large South African corporation as an Industrial Relations Officer. To me the african industrial relations input sounded more like a talk given by one of the white managers, with whom I was interacting daily in my job. Immediately a question arose as to how come a black person can talk like a white person. Simplistic as this question might have been, of course in hindsight, but it was really asking a deeper and more fundamental question: What is the ideology of the african managers in South Africa's white controlled corporations? This question got refined as the struggle of the 1980's deepened with the question of class alliances being posed much more sharply with the growth of both the mass democratic and the labour movement. Other questions began to come up in my mind. On which side would the african corporate manager be when the crunch comes in the South African struggle? Was what I was hearing from the industrial relations manager a reflection of the thinking and the politics of the african petty bourgeoisie in South Africa? It was these questions that pre-occupied my mind for the rest of 1984 that led to this thesis.

However the thesis did not purely come out of the above event. It also came out of my very work that I was doing at the time, as an Industrial relations officer for a large South African corporation. During that year I was assigned to one of the company's mills to be part of the co-ordinating team in the retrenchment of about 500 mainly african workers. During that year I was finding it increasingly difficult to remain in such a job. How could I reconcile my own political beliefs and commitments to a non-

racial South Africa that is free of exploitation and oppression with the retrenchment of so many workers in one of the largest mechanisation exercises by big capital in South Africa? Although by the end of 1984 I had found another job, as an academic, one question kept on nagging me. How do all the african personnel practitioners cope with the situation where they are almost daily placed in structures and relationships that are antagonistic to the interests of the black working class? How can they be involved with such structures and at the same time go back to the townships and be part of the very same working class, and still maintain their sanity?.

The above events and thinking forced me to start thinking and reflecting on my own experiences as a personnel practitioner between 1982 and 1984. As I went through the systematic untangling of this experience, the research questions became more sharpened.

One of the crucial areas I was reflecting upon was that of my experience as a candidate for 'black advancement' in the same company. The one question that pre-occupied me was where would I be today had I continued working for big business? Would I have graduated out of the black advancement programme as a full-manager? How long would that take?

It was all the above questions and issues that cohered to form the substance of this work. Given the fact that it is a piece about a contemporary phenomenon, whose objective was also to contribute to the debates about class formation in apartheid South Africa, it was difficult to delineate where to end the thesis. Inevitably it ended at the end of 1989, as I was hoping to submit it the following year. But because of other commitment and various other problems I was unable to work on it consistently over the past 18 months. In the process major events took place in South Africa, that by right the thesis should have engaged. The most notable one was the unbanning of the African National Congress, the South African Communist Party, and other organisations on 2 February 1990. Although I believe that my substantive conclusions would still be valid even in the present period, and some of them are in fact being vindicated, it would have been proper to demonstrate this with an analysis of the present conjuncture. However to try and do this would be to almost start another major research project. I believe that the present work has got enough material from which one can develop the

analysis of the subject in the present conjuncture. Therefore the thesis only goes up to the end of the 1980's.

Many people have contributed to the fruition of this project, such that it would be impossible to give proper acknowledgement to all of them. First and foremost I would like to thank the Personnel Practitioners Association and many of its members who gave me all their documents and shared their time with me in a number of interviews. I would also like to thank the Food and Allied Workers shop stewards who took some of their time during their regional Congress in 1989 to share their experiences with me.

I would particularly like to thank Prof Ari Sitas, my supervisor, whose critical questioning of what I wrote forced me to be rigorous in approaching the question of the african corporate petty bourgeoisie. Without his keen sense of intellectual rigour some of the issues discussed in this work might not have come up.

Many thanks also go to the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies which, in conjunction with USSALEP, offered me a four and a half months fellowship in the US, during which time I was able to get the space to continue with my research. Also special thanks to Dr Abebe Zegeye of the Oxford Centre for African Studies, who invited me to Oxford in 1989 during which time I was also able to continue with the writing of this thesis.

I would also like to thank the Human Sciences Research Council which gave me the initial research grant for the research

My gratitude also goes to my colleague and friend, Dr Yvonne Muthien, whose comments and willingness to listen to the development of the ideas in this thesis, have fundamentally shaped my conclusions here.

Perhaps most important is my wife and comrade, Phumelele, who was always willing to take all the household chores to give me the space to write. However she did not only share the home responsibilities, but has made a profound intellectual contribution

through her comments at various stages of the thesis, and always unselfishly providing that much-needed encouragement and motivation. In a fact our three children were all born during the course of this work. Theirs is perhaps the most important contribution.

My mother also deserves special mention for the wholehearted support she has given me in all my endeavours, throughout my life. Without her looking after the kids this work would not have reached this stage.

I would also like to thank Karin Pampallis who patiently spent long hours proof reading my grammar; and Ian Edwards for his critical comments and editing of some of the chapters of this thesis.

The Education Projects Unit has also contributed immensely in the completion of this work. The Unit financed the costs of finally proofreading and printing this work, through its staff development programme.

Lastly, but not the least, this work is a sad tribute to one person who had come to occupy a very special place in my life, the late Comrade Jabulani Mzala Nxumalo - a teacher, a revolutionary, a soldier, a people's intellectual, and one of the finest scholars to be produced by the South African revolution. We spent many many days and late hours discussing various issues, and not least this very work. His tragic and untimely death at the age of 35, was a tragic loss not only to the national liberation struggle, but also to the intellectual community of South Africa. His ideas have made a permanent imprint on my own intellectual work. This work I DEDICATE TO HIM. Hamba kahle Qhawe lamaQhawe. Hamba Kahle Ndwandwe!

Chapter 1

Introduction and Methodological Issues

The role of the African petty bourgeoisie (APB) has occupied South Africa's political life and political sociology for most of this century. Within this movements for national liberation and socialism have been particularly concerned about the role of the african petty bourgeoisie in South African political struggles. The socialist movement in particular has always been confronted and preoccupied with the question of the leadership of the South African revolution, and the hegemony of the working class within the liberation struggle. Similarly the white ruling bloc has been keenly interested in, and concerned about the political alignments of the African petty bourgeoisie. The concern of the ruling class has been more in terms of co-opting this grouping as a means of pre-empting the revolutionary thrust of the mass of the oppressed and working people.

Before one engages in an analysis of the significance of this class in South African society and political sociology, it is important to outline what is meant by the concept 'african petty bourgeoisie'. The concept 'petty bourgeoisie' is used in the original Marxian sense to denote " ... a social class between the industrial workers and the capitalist class. It includes small manufacturers, workshop owners, small landowners and shopkeepers".¹ It is also expanded to include the more modern strata of the middle classes normally referred to as the new petty bourgeoisie. These strata would include professional, managerial and executive personnel, mainly, but not exclusively, found in modern industrial corporations, which are a twentieth century phenomenon.

However, the definition and boundaries of the petty bourgeoisie have been heavily debated within neo-Marxian scholarship particularly after the 1968 student uprisings in Europe. The debates have tended to polarise into two positions. One position, classically represented by Mallet, argues that most of the people who are regarded as the new petty bourgeoisie - professionals and managers - are merely but a new segment of the working class, a product of the growth of large industrial corporations. According to this position, therefore this

strata cannot be treated as belonging to the same class as the traditional petty bourgeoisie (viz. shopkeepers, small farmers, workshop owners, etc). The other position has been that of Poulantzas who argues that the petty bourgeoisie is one class, with its two major components being the traditional and new petty bourgeoisie.

What is however distinct about these debates is that they have hardly engaged the conception which has tended to be dominant within the socialist countries in Eastern Europe. The point of departure on the understanding of the petty bourgeoisie in socialist countries is that this group constitutes part of the working people, in the sense that they are not part of the capitalist class. Although in socialist countries this stratum is regarded as part of the working people, it is not part of the working class as defined in Marxist classics in the sense that it is not an exploited class. Exploitation is understood to mean production of surplus value.

Therefore, the concept of the african petty bourgeoisie as used here denotes all those strata of african society who are neither part of the capitalist class nor part of the working class as understood to mean those whose labour directly produces surplus value. Although the issue will not be thoroughly debated here, this concept will be further clarified in the next chapter.

In revolutions in underdeveloped countries, there are four issues that are almost always present: the class question, the development question, the democratic question and the national question.² These issues, according to Vilas, normally stand in contradiction to one another and they themselves are contradictions in the context of imperialist led domination. In all underdeveloped countries the national question cuts across all the others. Because of the complex articulation of these factors, national liberation struggles tend to assume a multi-class character, therefore raising very sharply the question of which class is to lead such struggles. Within such movements there is usually a contradiction between the need for the working class to lead such struggles, and the imperative of uniting all forces into one movement. It is usually the way this contradiction is resolved which determines the path of development for liberated or independent states.

Within national liberation movements, the petty bourgeoisie is a force that always has the

potential of inserting its own class project into the popular struggle, thereby seizing power and establishing and leading neo-colonial states. This is however not automatic, as is sometimes suggested by many critiques of third world revolutions. Using the case of Nicaragua, Vilas draws a very sharp distinction between bourgeois democratic revolutions and national democratic ones:

Bourgeois democratic revolutions ... appeal to the popular masses as a force to be manoeuvred to impose a capitalist project, and therefore welcome their mobilisation to the extent necessary to force absolutism to accept a transaction. The Sandinista struggle, on the other hand, testifies to the leadership by a vanguard that expresses the majority - worker and popular - component of the struggle, in alliance with other sectors The FSLN's leadership permitted these democratic and national contradictions to be articulated under the lead of the class contradiction, in a way that would express the historic hegemony of the popular classes.³

If the victory of the Sandinistas in Nicaragua, as well as that of Castro in Cuba reflects the correctness of the strategy of national liberation as a path to at least a non-capitalist development, laying the foundations for the advancement of the revolution towards a socialist transformation, the history of other third world countries indicate otherwise. Kenya, for instance, is a classic example of a bourgeois-democratic struggle par excellence, whose victory meant new forms of exploitation and domination of the working class and the popular masses as a whole. In such instances the role played by the petty bourgeoisie in mobilising the oppressed and exploited masses against colonialism in order to impose an imperialist-capitalist project is noticeable.

Although such developments are always inherent in underdeveloped countries - given the small size of the working class and its underdevelopment in terms of political consciousness - they also show the potential of the petty bourgeoisie to exercise its political hegemony over the masses of the people. Struggles like those of Nicaragua, Vietnam and Cuba, required a revolutionary strategy that incorporated the demands of the petty bourgeoisie and even non-imperialist sections of local capital, without weakening the leading position of the workers and peasants in the revolution.

In Africa then, the role of the petty bourgeoisie in national liberation and independence struggles has been of particular concern both to political movements and to scholars. The history of the independence struggles is at one level a history of the role of the petty bourgeoisie in such struggles.⁴ Although most of the debates on the role of the petty bourgeoisie in independence struggles in Africa took place in the 1970's as the independent countries failed to deliver the promised revolution to the popular masses, this issue was raised by some scholars and politicians during the heat of the independence struggles in the 1960's. For instance within the euphoria of "uhuru" in the late 1950's and early 1960's one of the most notable critics of the path taken by independence struggles and the immediate post-independence phase was Franz Fanon. One of Fanon's chief concerns was on the role of the petty bourgeoisie in the unfolding political events at the time. He was particularly scathing about this class, and in one of his famous accounts he reflects on the independence process thus:

After independence, the party sinks into an extraordinary lethargy ... The local party leaders are given administrative posts, the party becomes an administration, and the militants disappear into the crowd and take the empty title of citizen. Now that they have fulfilled their historical mission of leading the bourgeoisie to power, they are firmly invited to retire so that the bourgeoisie may carry out its mission in peace and quiet. But we have seen that the national bourgeoisie of underdeveloped countries is incapable of carrying out any mission whatsoever.¹

Although Fanon was making some very important observations here in terms of the path taken by independence struggles in Africa as well as the role of the petty bourgeoisie within them, he made some misjudgements in conceptualising and understanding this class. Amongst these are that, firstly, it is incorrect to comprehend the political role of the petty bourgeoisie in selling out the revolution as "historical mission". This notion tends to imply that the petty bourgeoisie is historically destined to sell out. As this thesis will attempt to show there is no truth in this. Secondly, Fanon tends to contradict himself by saying that the petty bourgeoisie fulfils its historical mission but at the same time it is incapable of carrying out any mission whatsoever. This sounds as if the petty bourgeoisie has a mission to serve the interests of the bourgeoisie and imperialism when it is still in struggle, but once

it transforms itself into a national bourgeoisie after independence it becomes incapable of carrying through any mission. This is ahistorical to say the least, given the role that has been played by the national bourgeoisie in Africa. In relation to such arguments Kennedy makes the important point that

...much of the argument concerning the inherent weakness of African capitalism, and therefore its irrelevance as a major vehicle for development, is based, implicitly or explicitly, on a comparison with the Western countries.²

The third weakness in virtually all of Fanon's works on the petty bourgeoisie, is that it remains as a critique, with no conception of the different roles and political positions that the petty bourgeoisie can play. For that matter Fanon does not even discuss how the petty bourgeoisie should relate to mass and revolutionary struggles, or what makes them adopt the path that they follow.

However it was not only radical scholars in Africa who began to raise serious questions about the capacity of independence to deliver. Some of the more radical politicians in Africa were also beginning to see the contradictions of independence struggles.³ Nkrumah, in some of his later writings after he was overthrown, becomes a sharp critic of the role being played by the petty bourgeoisie in Africa. What Nkrumah highlights in his works is the tendency for the petty bourgeoisie to fractionate and fluctuate. He identifies three main categories of the petty bourgeoisie in Africa during the phase of the national liberation and independence struggles. The first one is that group heavily committed to colonialism and to capitalist economic development. It is this sector which, if it captures power, becomes the ally to international and monopoly capital and becomes a comprador bourgeoisie. The second category is the revolutionary petty bourgeoisie - the nationalists who want to capture power from the colonialists but not to really transform society. This category also becomes an ally of international capital and becomes transformed after independence into a national bourgeoisie. The third category is that of those who tend to be passive onlookers.⁴

It is in this way that the petty bourgeoisie has always been an important component of revolutionary struggles, and potentially the most serious enemy from within the national liberation movements. It is because of the importance of this class in such struggles that this

study aims to look at a fraction of the APB in South Africa in some depth.

Although the articulation of these contradictions might take their own specific form in South Africa, they are all present. Further, within the politics of struggle in South Africa, the question of the petty bourgeoisie has been and continues to be of central importance both in practical day-to-day politics as well as within revolutionary theory. This question of the petty bourgeoisie has been present since the emergence of a socialist movement in the early 1920's, with the founding of the Communist Party of South Africa (CPSA).

Background: The African Petty Bourgeoisie in the history of the South African revolution.

The South African Communist Party (SACP) has been one of the key socialist organisations in the development of socialist theory and a progressive understanding of the relationship between the multi-class character of the national liberation movement and the leading role of the working class in laying the foundations for a socialist transformation in South Africa. The different theoretical and political shifts within the SACP are also a reflection of the change in thinking and conceptualisation of the role that non-working class elements should play in the struggle. However, it should be noted that firstly, within the SACP itself there was never unanimity on the question of the role of the APB in the national liberation struggle at least up to the 1950's. Secondly, although small, the Unity Movement was another socialist formation which consistently opposed the SACP, particularly on the question of the latter's understanding of the relationship between national liberation and socialism. One point of sharp difference was over the question of 'stages' of struggle, with the Unity Movement arguing for a more independent socialist organisation, and wary of too close an alliance with the national liberation movement.

The national question faced the SACP right from its inception, although it took some time before it fully incorporated the implications of national oppression within its political programme. When the Party was founded, it was heavily influenced by European ideas on communism and it also geared itself towards organising the white workers, who it saw as the most advanced at the time. The approach of the Party to the african workers was not only

captured in its contentious slogan of "Workers of the World Unite for a White South Africa", but also in its conceptualisation of the african worker in the early 1920's, as captured by Ivon Jones' report to the Comintern in 1921:

Owing to the heavy social disabilities and political backwardness the natives are not able to supply any active militants to the Communist movement. The immediate needs of white trade unionism, in which a number of our members are actively engaged, tends to throw the more difficult task of native emancipation into the background. The white movement dominates our attention, because the native workers' movement moves only spasmodically, and is neglected.⁵

However, the difficulties and neglect of the african workers in the early period was also related to the fact that the socialists at the time were whites who "... while accepting the principles of equal rights for all ... did not see work amongst the blacks as a realistic alternative to work among the whites".⁶

However, soon after the failure to organise the white workers and their alignment with the emerging and consolidated white dominated state, the Party began to turn its attention towards the african workers who were increasingly being drawn into formal employment in the cities. In the mid-1920's the Party was working earnestly among the african workers and especially in the major african trade union at the time, the ICU, although it was expelled in 1926.⁷ The work among the african workers began to direct the Party towards the national question, and towards the realisation that this question is not just about the african working class but the entire african population. This necessitated a political programme that was to simultaneously advance the liberation of all africans and a struggle for socialism.

The concrete theorisation and incorporation of this perspective was in the adoption of the contentious Native Republic thesis of 1928, which, inter alia, advanced the following understanding on the nature of the South African revolution and the APB in particular:

A characteristic feature of the colonial type of the country is the almost complete landlessness of the negro population ... There is no negro bourgeoisie as a class apart from individual negroes engaged in trading and a thin strata (sic) of negro intellectuals who do not play any essential role in the economic and political life of the country.⁸

The demand for a native republic was seen as a step towards a socialist republic, and this perspective was to form the basis of the revolutionary theory of the Party, formally incorporated into its 1962 programme, describing South Africa as a system of colonialism of a special type.

Realisation of the dominance of the national question in the South African social formation led to the realisation of the revolutionary potential of the african national liberation movement. When the Party turned towards the national liberation movement in the 1930's there were two immediate obstacles that caused the relationship between the two to flounder. Firstly, the ANC was dominated by an elite petty bourgeoisie and was by no means a revolutionary nationalist movement, and it was also seen by the Party as such. Secondly, although the Party had drawn in a number of african members, it was heavily dominated by white communists, who, to all intents and purposes, were not ready to assimilate the implications of the adoption of the slogan of a Native Republic. For instance the Politburo of the Party was heavily dominated by people who were still suspicious of working with the african nationalist movement.⁹ It was in the light of these problems within the Party that Kotane called for the Africanisation of the Party:

... our Party has and is suffering owing to being too Europeanised. That the Party is beyond the realms of realities, we are simply theoretical and our theory is less connected with practice. If one investigates the general ideology of our Party members (especially the whites), if sincere, he will not fail to see that they subordinate South Africa in the interests of Europe, in fact, ideologically they are not South Africans, they are foreigners who know nothing about and who are the least interested in the country in which they are living at present, but are valiant 'servants' of Europe.¹⁰

In fact Kotane's statement was made in the midst of heated debates within the Party about the relationship it should have with the ANC. The debate on this relationship occupied the pages of Umsebenzi in the early months of 1935. In one of the letters to Umsebenzi a party member Coka argued strongly against the position that the agenda of the ANC was dominated by the agenda of a black bourgeoisie. He lamented: "We seek it here, we seek it there, we seek it everywhere, but we cannot find the Native bourgeoisie. Where is it? Of whom is it

composed? It is news to learn that there is a Native bourgeoisie class in South Africa".¹¹ The next issue of Umsebenzi contained a vociferous reply to Coka. In reference to ANC President Seme's call for a National Fund, Marks and Mofutsanyana argued:

Now what class does he [Seme] represent? He undoubtedly represents the Native bourgeoisie, who exist as a definite class, practically and ideologically, and form the social basis of national reformism in South Africa ... The parasite class exploits wage labour and secures high profits ... The fact that the exploiting possibilities of the Native bourgeoisie are very much restricted by the oppression and strength of Anglo-Boer capital cannot be denied, but that does not mean that there is no Native bourgeoisie in South Africa.¹²

The debates about the APB within the Party in the mid to late 1930's were so intense that Coka was expelled from the Party in July 1935 for "... taking a leading part despite numerous warnings in attempting to inaugurate a new counter-revolutionary Nationalist Party among the Africans".¹³

Although these expulsions were symptomatic of a wider rift within the Party, they are a reflection of the centrality of the debates on the APB and class alliances in the history of the South African revolution. During the 1930's the mutual suspicions between the leadership of the Party and that of the ANC reached its climax.¹⁴ It was not until the ascendancy of Moses Kotane into the position of general secretary of the Party in 1939, and the recruitment of even greater numbers of african communists in the early 1940's that the Party's perspective on the ANC, the APB and the path towards a socialist transformation in South African conditions changed. Although Kotane himself was never expelled from the Party, the ideas he held on the alliances were similar to those of Coka, and he was later very instrumental in building a relationship between the ANC and the Party.

The relationship between the SACP and the ANC strengthened, ironically, in the 1950's when the Party was illegal. This happened because most of the communists, particularly african communists, worked within the then legal ANC. The Party was revived as an underground organisation in 1953, and its experience in working within the ANC sharpened its own understanding of the relationship between class and national oppression. This particular understanding is best articulated in the 1962 programme, which advanced the

theory of the South Africa as a colonialism of a special type. It was in this programme, and within this theorisation, that the Party outlined its position on the APB much more elaborately.

Contrary to a number of analyses that the SACP understands the growth and capacity of the APB only from the angle of national oppression, it has consistently been the Party which has understood the fate of the APB from within the context of imperialism and white-dominated monopoly capital. For instance at its last conference before its banning in 1950, the Party advanced the following understanding of the nature and prospects of an african bourgeoisie:

A prolonged crisis, chronic stagnation or serious decline in capitalist expansion, an extension of state control in the economy, a closer identification between the State and big capitalist units, are all disadvantageous to the emergence or survival of new capitalist elements. These conditions, which exist in South Africa as elsewhere, are not therefore favourable for the growth of a Non-European capitalist class.¹⁵

However this relationship between the APB and monopoly capital was also rooted in the national oppression of the African people as a whole:

A more direct, and far more serious obstacle, is the determination of the white bourgeoisie to retain their monopoly of capitalist enterprise. The whole purpose of 'segregation' is to prevent the Non-European from competing with the white ruling class...¹⁶

The above thinking was translated into a political programme and strategy that essentially understood the APB to be part of the oppressed bloc and their interests as being more immediately linked to the rest of oppressed. The 1962 programme specifically observed that there were very few africans who made profits by the exploitation of labour power. Although there were capitalist initiatives within the african population, like farming and trading, this class was hemmed by major disabilities. Similarly the programme observed that even african intellectuals and professionals share "...with their people all the hardships and indignities of colonialism".¹⁷ Therefore the role of the APB politically was firmly located within the national democratic revolution whose main character was conceptualised thus:

T(he) crisis (in South Africa) can only be resolved by a revolutionary change in the

social system which will overcome these conflicts by putting an end to the colonial oppression of the african and the other non-White people. The immediate and imperative interests of all sections of the South African people demand the carrying out of such a change, a national democratic revolution which will overthrow the colonialist state of White supremacy and establish an independent state of National Democracy in South Africa.¹⁸

Within this conception the APB was to be drawn in as a part of the national democratic revolution, with sections of it occupying leadership positions as before.

What has always been distinct about the analysis of the APB in South Africa, is the lack of dialogue between academic scholarly work on the subject and the conceptions emerging from political struggles on the ground. For instance in the 1960's two very important studies emerged on the APB; their major weakness was that they did not address the question from the angle of the role of the APB in political struggles.¹⁹ In a way the role of the APB as conceptualised within political organisations was separated from these 'academic' texts, and this was largely the latter's weakness in terms of addressing the political questions of the day. It is this particular concern which is the motive behind this study. Although it is a sociological analysis of a stratum of the APB, it is firmly located within contemporary political debates about the nature and class project of the APB in the struggle for transformation in South Africa. Conversely the weaknesses in the conceptualisation of the APB by the Party was its lack of theoretical and empirical clarity on a number of questions about this class.

Although when the mass struggles re-emerged in the 1970's there was a much better incorporation of political questions of the day within academic analyses of this class, this gap still remains to be adequately filled. The re-emergence of mass and worker struggles in the 1970's took place in a drastically changed South Africa. This radically altered both the political and intellectual terrain upon which the conceptualisation and practices of the APB were taking place. The 1970's were marked by changed conditions, two of which are the most distinct: firstly, the changing profile and social composition of the APB, a subject covered in some detail in the next chapter; secondly, and perhaps more important was the changed political terrain of the early to the mid 1970's, heralded by the 1973 workers strikes

and the 1976 student uprisings.

One of the most significant aspects about socialist theory and politics in South Africa was that the 1970's threw up a new group of socialists who were significantly drawn either directly to the labour movement, or provided a service to the fledgling labour movement. This group came largely from the universities, either as academics or from the ranks of the student movement. Their Marxism was radically different to that of the communists of the SACP. It was primarily a combination of western academic marxism, the marxism of the New Left, which was in the ascendancy in many western countries after the 1968 student uprisings, and new revisionist theories of class influenced mainly by the work of Althusser and Poulantzas.

This neo-Marxism was sharply characterised by its strong anti-Stalinism and aversion to the SACP, and suspicion if not hostility towards the ANC and other community-based popular organisations. Although not in its entirety, this sort of Marxism and its anti-SACP position was particularly dominant among those socialist intellectuals closely aligned with the core of the emerging labour movement. This core group ultimately became dominant in the Federation of South African Trade Unions (FOSATU).

Within this group was to be found a number other socialists, mainly trained overseas, who were to make an important theoretical contribution in the theorisation of the South African state. Through this work they were able to illuminate the relationship between the apartheid state and capitalist development.²⁰ Within this neo-Marxism there was also a group of social historians largely influenced by the work of EP Thompson. This latter group also began to do some serious historiography that was dominant in South Africa up until the early 1970's.²¹

Another group of socialists emerging at this time were to be found within the ranks of the Black Consciousness Movement, and particularly within the ranks of the South African Students Organisation (SASO). There were two distinct things about this group. The first was that their socialist thinking, although later in the 1970's to diverge in different directions, was largely influenced by pan-africanist thought and not explicitly connected to Marxism.

In fact in a number of instances it was anti-Marxist. Secondly, this group of black socialists failed to connect with the labour movement, and in fact did not succeed in implanting themselves beyond the black student movement. Although this grouping made an enormous contribution to the struggle in the 1970's, being at the helm of the 1976 student uprisings, they were quickly overtaken by events of the late 1970's and early 1980's, with some of them moving over to the non-racial labour and congress movements.

The emergence of a new group of socialists was taking place against a background of intensification of worker and mass struggles, increasing in tempo in the late 1970's and early 1980's. There were four important historical landmarks during this period that set the scene and structured the form of political debates. The first one was the 1973 workers' strike that rekindled the democratic labour movement. The second one was the 1976 student uprisings that laid the basis for the resurgence of mass struggles throughout the country. The third development was the official recognition of the democratic labour movement, bringing into place some of the most intense struggles and debates around the recognition and registration of progressive trade unions. The fourth landmark was the formation of the United Democratic Front (UDF) in 1983, preceded by the education struggles, initiated after the founding of the Congress of South African Students (COSAS) and the 1980 school boycotts.

It was then that some of the most intense debates about the tasks facing both popular and workers' organisations were taking place. The focus of these debates centred around the social composition of the national liberation and mass movements, the role of the trade unions in the wider struggles, and the form that political alliances should take in advancing the struggle for transformation. These debates were taking place both within and outside the mass organisations on the ground. The debates centred mainly around the relationship between class and national oppression, posed concretely in terms of the relationship to be forged between the trade unions and mass-based popular organisations.

The tone of the debates in the 1980's was set by Joe Foster's keynote address to the FOSATU congress in 1982. In this address Foster directed his attention largely to the need to build a working class movement, and a very strong caution on how the unions should

relate to mass-based community organisations. Mass organisations and the liberation movement were taken to be populist and under pressures that made it impossible for them to effectively lay the basis for working class leadership in the struggle. Two limitations arose, for Foster, for the national liberation movement to provide effective leadership of the working class in particular. Firstly, whilst "... no mass popular movement can be effective or be seen to be effective if it does not have some worker involvement or representation", there was always a danger for the working class movement to be subjected to mass popular organisations.²² Secondly it exposed the labour movement to state attacks for actions initiated and directed by leaders not subject to worker accountability.²³ However at the core of these arguments was the fact that non-trade union struggles were led by non-working class petty bourgeois elements, by virtue of the multi-class character of the national liberation movement and popular organisations.

The debates on class and national oppression sharpened with the formation of the UDF and its push to have unions affiliated to it. Two positions became clear. The first argued for a broad front that included workers not merely as a component of a front but as the leading force within that coalition. The primary goal for those who argued this position was to unite people across classes behind a programme of national liberation, and deprive the state of possible allies particularly from the ranks of the middle class.²⁴ At the heart of this argument was the fact that "It is questionable whether trade unions, with their accepted ambiguities, will represent the interests of the working class any better or more thoroughly than community organisations based within the residential areas of the same workers who are members of the trade unions".²⁵ In other words it was essential for the working class to insert itself into the wider political struggles in order to assert its hegemony from within.

The other position, represented primarily by FOSATU, was that working class interests are best served within working class organisations, in this instance the trade unions. It was the intensity of this debate that saw the emergence of the labels "populists" and "workerists" for the respective two positions.

At the heart of all these debates, although hardly overtly argued, was the role of particularly the APB, and its potential to assert its own class project within both the national liberation

movement and the popular organisations, thereby subjecting the working class to its hegemony. Part of the discourse of these debates was the use of the phrase "petty bourgeoisie" without any thorough analysis of what this class was made of in contemporary South Africa. Even those attempts that were made, largely by academic marxists, remained too reductionistic and abstracted this class from the dynamics of the struggle on the ground.²⁶ At the heart of those positions that argued for caution on the part of the labour movement in becoming part of a broader front was their understanding of national liberation struggles and what they are about. One of the strong arguments was made by Erwin, who pointed out that national liberation, with its (inherent) political terrains of nation defence, nation building and populism impose an imperative of unity which tends to suppress class interests within the oppressed bloc.²⁷ Because of this imperative, therefore, the question of transformation of the economy and the fundamental structures of society can never be adequately addressed, which "... leaves intact the structure and interests that are so minimal to the mass of workers and rural population".²⁸

However, there were two main deficiencies in the way these debates formulated the question of class alliances. The first was that one of the key questions they were addressing - the role and place of the petty bourgeoisie - was never overtly addressed. Secondly even where there were attempts to address the question directly, it was not adequate to show merely the nature, social composition, political character and the capacity of this class to reproduce itself. This is true of both the contemporary debates as well as those within the SACP. These two limitations were exacerbated by the fact that there has always been a disjuncture between academic analyses and the debates taking place within mass organisations.

Aims and objectives of this study

Therefore, given the above limitations, and the relative obscure nature of the APB in South Africa the aims and objectives of this study can be divided into aims and specific objectives:

Aims:

- i. Debates about the nature of the APB will hardly be resolved satisfactorily until such time that a thorough study and analysis of the nature and social composition of this

class is undertaken. That is the first major objective of this study, to undertake a thorough sociological analysis of the APB in contemporary South Africa.

ii. The second limitation in the understanding of both the sociological profile of the APB as well as its political behaviour has been the tendency for academic studies of this class to pose their questions rather abstractly, not relating them to the major debates and strategic considerations within organisations. Conversely, political organisations tend to use the phrase "APB" in a polemical way without engaging its nature and social composition, as pointed out above. Therefore the second major aim of the study is to undertake a sociological study that locates itself also within the major strategic questions of democracy and transformation in contemporary South Africa.

iii. The third objective of this study is to undertake an empirical study of a stratum of the APB in contemporary South Africa. Underlying this objective is the argument that the APB consists of various strata and fractions which cannot be easily collapsed into one undifferentiated group. Given the differentiation within this class, it is postulated here that it would be impossible to arrive at a complete understanding unless this is done via a thorough analysis of the class's various strata and fractions. Although the study does not incorporate a detailed study of the other strata, it is used as a way of showing the extent to which each stratum and fraction can have a different ideology, political behaviour and relationship to the dominant institutions of society.

iv. The growth of what has been referred to as the middle strata, generally in the western capitalist countries and specifically in South Africa has created enormous debates, as illustrated above. Therefore, the fourth aim of this study is to show the political behaviour of the APB, and its fluctuations within a specific social formation where there has been a very strong articulation between class and race. The analysis here will not merely be broad, but will be empirically based looking very closely at the evolution of a specific stratum of the APB, and its immediate social, economic and political context.

Objectives:

The choice of the African Corporate Petty Bourgeoisie, and specifically the African personnel practitioners is informed by the following reasons:

i. The African corporate petty bourgeoisie is the most recent stratum of the APB to emerge in South Africa. Much more significantly within the "reform" era of the PW Botha regime. It also represents an attempt by capital to promote a stratum that, by being given status and material benefits, will collaborate in order to protect the capitalist order in South Africa. Therefore, the first specific objective of this study is to assess the extent to which the creation of this class has succeeded. It aims to assess the rate and pattern of growth of this class and the extent to which it has become the likely defender of both apartheid and capitalism in South Africa.

ii. Secondly, the choice of the african corporate petty bourgeoisie is based on the fact that research done thus far on African managers tends to indicate that personnel officers/managers form a significant portion of all the African managers employed in industry and commerce.²⁹

iii. Thirdly, there has been a phenomenal growth of personnel management over the past two decades in South Africa. The growth of the labour movement and the intensifying struggles by the workers on the shop-floor has led to the growing importance of personnel management as the function to manage industrial conflict. Consequently, the personnel function has been diversified and professionalised with a corresponding increase in the number of african personnel practitioners (APP's), particularly after the 1973 strikes.³⁰

iv. The fact that the APP's are that fraction of the APB which is directly located within the sphere of production, compels it into daily contact and interaction within the african working class. A focus on the APP's allows us to study closely the intersection of class and race in the South African social formation, this being done

within the context of the dynamism of working class and mass struggles. Also, the fact that APP's are in the personnel management function, the very function that is responsible for managing conflict on the shop-floor, helps us understand better the intersection and diversion between the interests of african workers and those of the APB.

Overall this is a close empirical study of one stratum of the African petty bourgeoisie that will lay the basis for the study of the other strata and fractions. It is hoped that this study will raise further questions about the APB in both contemporary South Africa, and possibly indications about its future trajectory in a post-apartheid South Africa. Before engaging some of the theoretical issues on the APB, it is important to discuss methodological issues in this study.

Methodological considerations and issues

This section will present an outline of the methods used in collecting and analysing data, as well as some of the problems and issues encountered in carrying out the study. The aim of the section is to highlight some of the important issues to be taken into account in assessing the information contained here and in engaging the issues raised.

The 'past' and the 'present' in the Study

The time frame of the study focuses on the period from the 1970's to the end of the 1980's. It aims at understanding the contemporary social and political profile of the african corporate petty bourgeoisie. However, one of the major arguments advanced in the study is the fact that the pattern and mode of the reproduction, as well as the politics of the contemporary african corporate petty bourgeoisie cannot be adequately grasped unless its evolution prior to the period of study is understood.

This thesis can be divided into four parts for purposes of methodological considerations. The first part, which is chapter 2, is the theoretical framework, where the Marxist and neo-Marxian theoretical debates on the APB in South Africa are analysed.

The chapter on theory proper is immediately followed by one that attempts to outline the different strata and fractions of the APB. This chapter can be taken as part of the theoretical framework in that it attempts to address some of the gaps and omissions identified in the preceding chapter, and in that sense it is its completion.

The second part of the thesis is that consisting of chapters four and five. This part tries to address the 'past' of the african corporate petty bourgeoisie (ACPB). Chapter four addresses the question of the non-emergence of the ACPB at the time when their white counterparts were emerging and consolidating their class position in the racial division of labour. The main purpose of this chapter is to demonstrate and explain the patterns of the emergence of this class. Of importance here is the fact that the emergence of the ACPB about two decades after the emergence, on a wider scale, of its white counterparts, creates very specific limitations in the capacity of the ACPB to reproduce itself in the contemporary period. Because of this, the sources that are used here are both primary and secondary. The other reason of relying mainly on secondary sources is that the major characteristics and forces underpinning the suppression of the ACPB are relatively well documented in previous studies. Where there were gaps, these were filled by using primary sources: this also the re-interpretation of the secondary sources. The author is acutely aware of the fact that a lot of primary research needs to be done on the african petty bourgeoisie as a whole prior to the 1970's. But this was definitely outside the scope of the study, whose focus is the 'present'.

However it should be pointed out that there were particular difficulties encountered in trying to locate some of the major primary sources for chapter four. Some of the documents of the Labour Subcommittee of the Natal Chamber Industries could not be found because, according to its current executive director, these were destroyed about six years ago. Although some documents were found in the archives, those relating to the 1960's and early 1970's were more difficult to find. A major reason for the difficulty was that, in terms of laws governing the keeping and accessibility of documents, some of them were probably still in the closed files. This seems to be a general problem when one is doing a contemporary study that spans the last twenty to thirty years. In this instance heavy use was made of public documents of the Natal Chamber of Industries and, in some cases, the Federated Chamber of Industries. Further data was collected through oral interviews of individuals identified as

having been strategically placed in relation to the issues under investigation. In this regard six further interviews were done in constructing the picture that is presented in chapter four. The first interview was carried out with Bourquin, who was Native Affairs Commissioner in Durban in the 1950's to the 1970's. This interview was particularly useful on the history and role of izinduna, as well as the strategies used by capital in the exploitation of particularly african labour in the 1950's right through to the 1970's. The second most important interview was that done with an induna who was employed in 1958 in this capacity right until the late 1960's. Although one could have interviewed more of past izinduna, it was felt that one in-depth interview fulfilled the aims of this chapter, particularly given the other interviews and documents, as well as the fact that this was not the primary focus of the study. The rest of the interviews were mainly conducted with people who were personnel practitioners at different points in time since the 1940's. For instance, one retired white personnel manager, who had begun work in a personnel department in the late 1940's, was interviewed, as well as three APP's, two of whom had started in personnel in 1966.

Chapter five, whose focus is the circumstances under which the APP's emerged, uses the same sources of information as the preceding chapter. In summary, the second part of the thesis used a combination of documentary primary sources and secondary sources as well as oral interviews.³⁵

The third part of the thesis consists of chapters six to nine which constitute what can be referred to as the 'present'. These chapters are the crux of the study as a whole. They focus on the social profile of the ACPB as well as the immediate context within which it reproduces itself as a class, as well as the ideological and political positions of this class. It is important that a number of methodological aspects be highlighted here. Chapter six deals with the emergence of the discourse of 'black advancement' and how this becomes the terrain upon, and the ideology within, which the ACPB is reproduced. In this chapter the study focuses on the ACPB as a whole, with specific examples relating to the APP's themselves. The primary sources from which the data has been collected include historical documents, oral interviews and raw data obtained from two honours projects that were personally supervised by this author. The students who undertook this study were kind enough to hand over their raw data which included taped oral interviews with APP's, trainee

african managers and their white bosses. From this data one was able to reconstruct the course of 'black advancement' in contemporary South African corporations as well as its practical implementation through the black advancement programmes. This chapter highlights what is perhaps one of the single most important conclusions of this study, ie. despite the commitment by capital to create an ACPB, the class interests and practices of the white corporate petty bourgeoisie continue to undermine the extended reproduction of an ACPB. In this sense 'black advancement' becomes a contradictory process, which ultimately leads to the simultaneous exclusion and inclusion of the ACPB in the power centres of South African corporations, thereby sharpening the contradictory location of this class within the dominant institutions of capital accumulation and national oppression. The importance of this chapter lies in that it contextualises the lived experience, ideology and politics of the ACPB in South Africa.

The seventh chapter, which is rather short, presents a biographical profile of 38 APP's who were surveyed specifically for this purpose.³⁶ It is worth raising some points about the sample at this stage. The questionnaires were self-administered by the APP's who were drawn through the meetings of the PPA during 1987. The questionnaires were returned either through the PPA meetings, and directly collected by the author from each individual, or by post. Through this method confidentiality was ensured. A total of 50 questionnaires were sent out and 38 were returned. The guidelines for developing the questionnaire were based on an attempt to capture as completely as possible the biographical, work, social and political profile of the APP's. Further details about the representivity of the sample are contained at the beginning of Chapter 7 below.

The primary focus of the study is a sociological and in some instances psychological, analysis of a fraction of the african corporate petty bourgeoisie. This has been done through a close empirical and historical analysis of the emergence and social profile of the APP's. The sample of APP's interviewed and surveyed is a total of forty. Two APP's were separately interviewed on only certain aspects of the history of the Personnel Practitioners Association (PPA). The present author was requested by the PPA executive to conduct an internal survey and access to this raw data was permitted for this research thesis.

Chapter 8 is perhaps the key chapter of the whole thesis. Its primary sources were in-depth oral interviews that were conducted with twenty APP's. The purpose of these interviews were twofold. The first was aimed at generating detailed information about the lived experiences of the APP's, particularly their experiences of the corporations. The second aim was to assess the way the APP's construct and interpret their relationships with their white bosses, colleagues and particularly the african workers. Other sources that are used in this chapter, and the whole of part 3, were documents of their own professional organisations, particularly the Black Management Forum (BMF) and PPA. The importance of a biographical approach to understanding class is that one is able to capture the ideological dimensions of class, and how this is lived and projected in everyday life.³⁷ Without reducing class to merely experience, however, one is able to address a highly neglected aspect in Marxian methodology, that of the personal and how it articulates with the political.

The last chapter attempts an integration of the entire study by looking at the political behaviour of the ACPB in the contemporary period, as well as their likely behaviour in the period of transition and the immediate post-apartheid phase. In this chapter, a combination of sources are used. The chapter combines data from the internal PPA survey on the political affiliations and community activities of the APP's; interviews; documentary sources from the minutes of PPA; and from the information generated by the rest of the study itself. The focus of the last chapter is on the politics of the ACPB although this is done within the context of the politics and ideology of the APB as a whole.

It is therefore within the above context that this study should be evaluated.

1. Wilczynski, 1981 p. 432
2. Vilas, 1986
3. *ibid.*, p.144
4. Illife, 1983; Fanon, 1967 and 1980; Kennedy, 1988.
5. Fanon, 1967 p.137
6. Kennedy, 1988, p.87
7. Some of the most notable politicians of the 1960's in Africa who began to look critically at both the independence struggles and the immediate post-independence phase were people like Nyerere, Nkrumah, and Patrice Lumumba.
8. Nkrumah, 1970.
9. Bunting, 1975 p.21
10. *ibid.*
11. in South African Communists Speak, 1980, p.86
12. Resolution on the 'South African Question' adopted by the Executive Committee of the Communist International, 1928, in *ibid* p.91.
13. For instance Kotane's request for a meeting of 'African radicals' in 1934 was rejected by the Politburo on the grounds that it would result in the submission of the Party to domination by the bourgeois elements controlling the ANC (Bunting, 1975 p.67).
14. Letter from Kotane to the Johannesburg District Party Committee, February 23, 1934, in South African Communists Speak, 1980, p.120
15. Bunting, p.67
16. *ibid.*, p.68
17. in *ibid.*, p.69
18. For instance at the 1930 ANC national conference, its president, JT Gumede was stripped of his presidency for his sympathies towards communists and for praising what he had seen during his trip to the Soviet Union, saying he had seen the "new Jerusalem". (*ibid*).
19. Extract from Central Committee report to the National Conference of the Communist Party, January 6,7 and 8 1950 - South African Communists Speak, op cit., p.207.
20. *ibid.*

21. The Road to South African Freedom: Programme of the South African Communist Party adopted at the fifth national conference held inside the country in 1962, in ibid.p.305.
22. ibid., p.313
23. Mkele 1963; and Kuper 1965;
24. See the works of Davies, Innes, Kaplan, Morris, and O'Meara as reflected particularly in the pioneering debates published in the Review of African Political Economy, No 7, 1977.
25. Some of the most important works here were those of Bundy, 1972 and Bozzolli, 1975, just to mention a few.
26. Foster, J (1982) in Maree 1987, p.223.
27. Hindson, D 'Introduction', in ibid.
28. Njikelana, S in ibid.
29. Njikelana, S, in ibid., p.256.
30. See Chapter 3 for details on this issue.
31. Erwin, A 1985.
32. ibid., p. 70.
33. Wella, 1983.
34. Nzimande, B 1986.
35. Some of the most important documents are included as appendices.
36. See Appendix A
37. Carter, 1979; Thompson, 1988

Chapter 2

Some Theoretical Considerations on the African Petty Bourgeoisie in South Africa

Many scholars from different theoretical persuasions are at least in agreement that the growth of what invariably has been labelled as the 'middle strata', poses some new questions about the class structure of modern industrialised and industrialising societies. The growth of this stratum has in many instances led to some major theoretical revisions in different sociological and political discourses.

Since the 1950's, and particularly more so after the 1968 student uprisings in Europe and America, debates have proliferated on the question of the middle classes. These debates have even raised questions about the very validity of the methodology of class analysis stemming from Marx's works. This, according to Nadel, is because of the fact that:

The middle layers as a category unite various social groups which differ both in their roles in social production and in their places in the social organization of labour, in their functions, and in their economic position, social ties, interests, world outlook, political sympathies etc. These differences demand that we use a differential approach to the analysis of the middle layers.¹

Such calls have fuelled much debate and raise the key epistemological question of whether it is sound to adopt a class analysis which utilises different criteria in arriving at the character of each class. The immediate question that such an approach poses is whether in so doing one would not arrive at different class trajectories depending on what approach or criteria has been used in analysing each class. At this stage it is important to engage how the debate has evolved in South Africa, specifically on the question of the African petty bourgeoisie.

Liberal scholarship and its conception of the African corporate petty bourgeoisie in South Africa: The 'black advancement perspectives'

Liberal scholarship has done most of the work as far as the question of the African corporate petty bourgeoisie (ACPB) in South Africa is concerned. Most of these interventions have been carried out within the context of what has been known as 'Black advancement'. This is a set of propositions on strategies and methods of training and advancing African managers. In fact it is the major objective around which these interventions are structured. For example, Charoux states that:

Th(is) book's message is two-fold: South African organizations have reached the stage where they have no option but to accelerate the upward mobility of the Black employees. To merely accelerate this advancement ... however, will not suffice: I have attempted ...to suggest to organizations that they should have as their primary objective, not so much the upward mobility of their Black employees, but the latter's actual integration into the organization ... the Black potential manager needs to feel part of and accepted by the organization if his commitment and productivity levels are to increase.'²

Another major text by Human and Hofmeyer ³, despite its sensitivity to some broad structural features affecting the class position of the African corporate petty bourgeoisie, also falls into the same mould:

This practical text is about the advancement of black people to managerial positions in predominantly white organisations ... All we therefore attempt to do is to present, in a clear and practical way, our understanding of the issues surrounding the problems of Black Advancement and to suggest solutions to some of the problems with which many organisations are faced.⁴

It is in fact this narrow pre-occupation with practical ways and means of integrating black managers that becomes the ultimate weakness of such interventions in understanding the ACPB.

Almost all the major writers within this area of 'black advancement' are management consultants as well. Hence there is a lack of intellectual rigour found within these discourses. In their hurry to find solutions for management, major theoretical issues are either ignored or manipulated, in order to support the practical solutions and strategies they are so eager to sell to capital.

Another thread running through the black advancement perspective is a functionalist pluralist perspective. This situates the position of the ACPB, not only within strategies of advancement, but also within the 'race problematic' in South Africa. They thus seek to absorb the black managers into capitalist structures of hegemony, without upsetting the dominant relations of exploitation and domination. This tendency is represented by, inter alia, theories of marginality, cultural synergy and need for achievement, as represented by, inter alia, the works of Human, Godsell, and Hofmeyr.⁵ It is methodologically unsound and theoretically unhelpful to analyse the position of black managers purely in terms of racial differences and ignore the class nature and contradictions of capitalism.

To illustrate some of the weaknesses arising out of the haste of the 'black advancement' perspective to find practical solutions for management, a few issues will be discussed. For instance, in almost all of this literature there is a broad recognition that white attitudes present major obstacles to 'black advancement' (BA). For example, Moerdyk captures the problem thus:

Upward mobility of Black workers will, whether one likes it or not, proceed via the Africanisation of increasingly more senior posts, resulting in the displacement of Whites upward or out of the system. To a certain extent this has happened in some of the trades....The fear of this kind of displacement is a vital aspect of the resistance of some whites to the advancement of Black workers....⁶

However, this scholarship does not take to its logical conclusion the meaning and impact of such white fears and resistance to black advancement. Despite such realisation, many of these authors proceed to propose black advancement programmes without adequately showing how this white resistance is to be overcome. They initially problematise white attitudes and

then, in a big conceptual leap, end up proposing programmes whose heavy emphasis is on problems facing black managers themselves. In fact there is a contradiction here in that, in many instances, the whites identified as resisting black advancement are entrusted with the responsibility of advancing those black managers. Some of these authors and theoreticians do try to resolve this contradiction by arguing that white resistance can be overcome. Firstly, they suggest that commitment of top management should be secured. Secondly, people (obviously white managers) lower down the organisational hierarchy who have power and resources at their disposal should be identified.⁷ It should be noted that this is the very same power and resources that the white corporate petty bourgeoisie (WCPB) used to secure its own extended reproduction within capitalist organisations, as will be demonstrated in Chapter 6. In other instances, it is usually proposed that working on the 'organizational climate' will prepare the way for black upward mobility. This 'climate' is never really specified, and is usually defined using very vague concepts of culture and values, whose content is hardly spelt out.

However, in many instances, the contradiction between black advancement and white resistance is avoided by a frequent reference to the term 'organization', ie. 'the organization must be arranged or prepared'; 'the organization must clear the way for black advancement', etc, etc. For instance, Charoux, in talking about what he calls the 'pre-entry phase' of black advancement, says:

The Pre-entry phase of the Organizational Entry Decision Model is defined as the series of preparatory activities in which both the organization and the Black manager need to engage before they become ready for each other.... It aims at ensuring that ... the organization is well prepared for his arrival(W)ithout the Pre-entry phase, the organization is not ready to accept the Black Manager - it has no real need for him, it has not carefully 'thought' out the ideal initial criteria...⁸

It appears that there is so much faith in this 'organization', since it is hardly analysed, but is presented as an entity that 'can be prepared' and 'can be made to be willing' as and when the correct strategies are used. Sometimes the 'organization' is equated with a group of

'identified' individuals committed to black advancement who can make things happen.

The lack of specificity of who carries out the advancement of black managers and the problematic, vague use of 'organization' makes, for instance, Charoux's notion of 'organizational entry and preparation' not only vague, but conceals the real problems and trajectory of the class formation of the ACPB. The 'organization' is not just a neutral entity that can be moved anyhow, but is a concentration of class interests and '....reflects class divisions, and relations across these distinctions reveal class based animosities'⁹ One might hasten to add that in South Africa these animosities are also racially based.

In South Africa, because of the racial division of labour, these organisations are made up of historically cumulative racial interests. Therefore, the major question that must be posed in order to understand the processes of black advancement and class formation, is what interests are concentrated at each organisational entry point, that is, what is the dynamic of the internal labour market in white industrial corporations in South Africa? South African industrial organisations, as will be fully demonstrated later, are amongst other things, sites for the extended reproduction of the well-entrenched white working class and white petty bourgeoisie. It is only by fully understanding the implications of this that one comes to appreciate the real nature of the problems facing black advancement. However, what is surprising is that even though Hofmeyr and Human - the only text that comes close to a sophisticated understanding of the internal labour market - are aware of this, the 'consultancy approach' prevents them from taking through the implications of South African racial factory regimes to black advancement.

Another major pitfall of the 'black advancement perspective' to the question of the ACPB is the tendency to attribute the non-advancement of African managers to outside forces and to the African managers themselves. This problem seems to flow directly out of the previous shortfall, of not understanding the contradictory character of black advancement and white resistance. With regard to the 'externality' of problems relating to black advancement, Moerdyk, for instance, argues that "... many of the barriers to advancement lie outside the organisation's sphere of influence and cannot be addressed by it in the short- to middle term"¹⁰. While it is true that many of the problems and obstacles to black advancement do

lie outside specific organisations, these structural features of a wider inequality are not only incorporated into and reflected within these organisations, but the corporations themselves are the foundations of the wider structural inequalities in society. In fact, such a conception is characteristic of the apologists of capitalism, in that they deal with the problem of the ACPB outside of the context of the capitalist mode of production and its structures of capital accumulation. For instance, state-initiated racial discrimination was the very basis for expanded capital accumulation within these organisations, so that they, in themselves, are sharply characterized by 'internal apartheid'.

The above conception is in fact rooted in the tendency that exists within the liberal scholarship of drawing a thick dividing line between capitalism and apartheid. Their understanding of the relationship between the 'industrial' or 'economic' and the political, is that political factors interfere with the needs and logic of business requirements. This rupture, as presented in their argument, assumes that the 'political' level is moving in the opposite direction to 'normal' economic development; the interpenetration between the two is ignored. This conceptualisation of politics as interfering with business economics is also supported by, amongst others, Manganyi's early work, which simply reduces the problem facing blacks in industry to the 'unhappy marriage' between economics and politics in South Africa.¹¹

The primary concern of such analyses, at least at the level of economics, is the removal of political obstacles, on the assumption that without such 'interference,' black managers (or black people in general) would become 'happy children of the big capitalist family.' Such positions are to a large extent apologetic of the exploitative and repressive nature of capitalism.

One could continue, at length on the theoretical shortfalls of the liberal scholarship on the ACPB. However, this scholarship will further be evaluated in Chapter 6, particularly looking at its role as the scientification of the white corporate ideology in South Africa. Suffice to say here that the above criticisms have hopefully demonstrated the inability of this scholarship and 'theoretical' framework in helping one to understand the processes of class formation of the ACPB.

Despite these severe limitations of the liberal 'black advancement' perspective, it should however be noted that it is the only 'scholarship' (whatever its merits) that has tried to analyze and understand the ACPB. For instance these scholars have already collected an increasing empirical data base on the constraints facing African upward mobility in modern capitalist organisations. A serious Marxian analysis of this strata is urgently needed in order not to abandon the terrain to liberal 'consultant-cum-academics' whose immediate aim is the incorporation of the ACPB into the structures of capital accumulation, without much change to the racial division of labour.

Given these limitations, it is therefore proper to examine the work done by the Marxian and neo-Marxian scholars, particularly their ability to help understand the class formation and practices of the APB.

Marxian and Neo-Marxian conceptions of the African petty bourgeoisie

Any Marxist scholar faced with the task of analysing the macro socio-political issues of South African society is faced with a tricky and difficult task. Although this can be said to apply to all contemporary capitalist societies, South Africa presents some additional problems. This is not an argument for exceptionalism in the case of South Africa, but the particular relationship between race and class characteristic of South Africa is difficult to grasp. The major difficulty facing South African Marxism is how to grasp the interpenetration of class and race without abandoning the basic tenets of historical materialism, whose unit of analysis is class. For instance, one of the key issues is, how does one undertake a class analysis without collapsing race within such an analysis? Or posed conversely, how does one understand the materiality of race or racial domination without abandoning class analysis?

Some scholars have argued that the nature of South African society defies a class analysis, and therefore Marxist theory is not helpful in understanding it.¹² Others have argued that the difficulty facing Marxism in South Africa is a reflection of the crisis facing Marxism generally, particularly when it comes to theorising the 'political' instance of any capitalist

social formation. Yet others have argued that the problem is not in Marxism as such, but lies more in the economistic and instrumentalist reading and appreciation of Marxism. For instance Nolutshungu argues that:

The economic instrumentalist conception of politics ... is, indeed, often attributed to Marxism, and evidence can certainly be found in some of the writings of Marx and Engels. Yet Engels saw its dangers and warned against it, stressing the polemical context in which he and Marx had had to overemphasize the economic element.¹³

From this proposition, Nolutshungu argues that Marx's emphasis on relations of production indicated that he had a wider notion of the 'economic'. Therefore, Nolutshungu concludes, 'There is a necessary simultaneity between domination and exploitation ... even though the structures of exploitation and domination may, and do, develop differentially and unevenly'.¹⁴ Jordan takes Nolutshungu's argument even further by demonstrating that in the very works of Marx and Engels there are enough theoretical empirical tools to understand a society like South Africa. He argues that the writings of Marx and Engels on, particularly, the Irish question and British colonialism in India, gives us enough tools to understand South African society within a strictly Marxist discourse.¹⁵ However, despite these interventions, the theoretical tension between 'class' and 'race' remains acute.

The difficulty in articulating the particular interpenetration of race and class in South Africa has led to what I call a 'crisis' in South African Marxist scholarship. Whilst many left-wing scholars in South Africa are in agreement that class and race are interlinked, analyses tend to either privilege class and/or exclude race, or to privilege race at the expense of class. This is in part a result of the very difficulty of theorizing the relationship between the 'economic' and the 'political', and also an outcome of the particular political persuasion of scholars themselves.

Whilst there tends to be a coincidence between class and race in so far as both the bourgeoisie and the working class are largely divided according to race, the 'class-race tension' is at its acutest when one is dealing particularly with the African petty bourgeoisie. This is because of the fact that this class, like the rest of the petty bourgeoisie, derives its class identity from the nature of the relationship between the ruling class and the working class. The source of this character of the petty bourgeoisie in general is that:

(It) is not one of the main parties in the (famous) main contradiction; it is neither the ruling class nor the exploited one, but the in-between class, left over, the fluctuating remnantA remnant embarrassing to bear, especially for those who love nice, neat, simple world-views. For the fluctuating class is always the disturbing one. Its existence always injects confusion into theory and practice.¹⁶

At this abstract general level the APB in South Africa does share qualities with the petty bourgeoisie as a whole in capitalist social formations. However, in concrete terms, this derivative character and the 'in-betweenness' of the petty bourgeoisie are expressed through the injustices of apartheid and particularly the articulation between class and race. This particular articulation, put simply, manifests itself in the following manner: On the one hand, the African petty bourgeoisie is commonly oppressed (albeit differentially) with the rest of the African working class and thus share many oppressive conditions with the latter; on the other hand, it is incorporated within (particularly in industry), and is expected to identify (in order to be successful) with, the rest of the white petty bourgeoisie. In other words, it is absorbed as a servant to the very structures of their racial domination and exploitation. This contradictory position of the APB is further exacerbated by the rapidly shifting political conjuncture in South Africa, which does not only affect the articulation/disarticulation of class and race in general, but also specifically affects the position of the African petty bourgeoisie vis-a-vis the bourgeoisie and the working class. It is this particular character of the petty bourgeoisie in general, as well as the nature of the political conjuncture, that presents difficulties in theorizing both the social position of this grouping and its political behaviour.

Given this particular context, it is important to start by examining the different theoretical

positions that have emerged in an attempt to analyse the nature of the African petty bourgeoisie in South Africa. It should be noted that the review of the various theoretical conceptions of the APB will only be limited to questions of theory at this juncture, and the political perspectives that flow from such theoretical formulations will be taken up later in the concluding chapter of this study.

Before engaging some of the theoretical work done on the South African petty bourgeoisie, it is worth noting that there has hardly been any systematic work done by left wing scholars on the issue of the African corporate petty bourgeoisie. As pointed out above, this still remains the intellectual terrain of liberal scholarship. This presents some difficulties in reviewing Marxian analysis of this particular stratum. The reason for the neglect, despite the increasing amount of work on the APB in general, is because, as will be argued later, of the broad, unproblematic use of the term 'African petty bourgeoisie' within Marxist and neo-Marxian debates. These debates have taken various forms, for example, debating working class politics, the Freedom Charter and the nature of opposition politics.

Implicit in many of these debates, but not adequately or directly theorized and studied, has been the place of the APB in the struggle for national liberation and socialism. With the exception of a few articles on mainly the trading African petty bourgeoisie (TAPB), the word or category 'APB' has been used without any differentiation between the various strata and fractions that constitute this grouping. Due to the lack of work specifically on the African corporate petty bourgeoisie, this section will review some of the assumptions underlying the work either done on the TAPB or the APB in general.

Debates on, and theoretical conceptions of, the APB within Marxist and neo-Marxian discourses have been polarised principally between the 'Colonialism of a special type' thesis (CST), and those conceptions that shall be characterised as 'economistic'. There are also variations of conceptualisations that can be located between the two. Only two of the latter will be reviewed here.

The starting point of the CST thesis is that South Africa is principally a class society with capitalism as its dominant mode of production. Because of its colonial character, however,

the national oppression of Africans in particular, and black people in general, means that class exploitation cannot be separated from national oppression. This leads to a situation where national oppression becomes the dominant contradiction in South Africa in the current phase of the struggle. Slovo emphasizes this point by arguing that:

... there is no issue more immediate and relevant than the experience of national oppression. This is certainly the starting point of political consciousness for every black worker ... It is mainly in the actual struggle against national oppression that its class roots can be grasped most effectively. It is that struggle which illuminates most brightly the underlying relationship in our country between capitalism and national domination.¹⁷

From within this understanding of the dominance of national oppression, the proponents of the CST thesis argue that for reasons of colour the class mobility of the APB cannot proceed beyond a certain point. It is '... still hemmed in by national disabilities - economic, cultural, social and political - which separate them from their white counterparts'.¹⁸ Because of these disabilities, the immediate fate of the APB is much more directly linked to that of the working class than to their counterparts across the colour line.

However, contrary to many claims by critics of CST who insist that the emphasis on the national character of the immediate phase of the South African struggle leads to the non-recognition of class differentiation within the oppressed and therefore a lack of awareness of the 'class project' of the APB, Slovo makes it quite clear that:

It is obvious that the black capitalist class favours capitalism and that it will do its best to influence the post-apartheid society in this direction.... It is obvious that the black middle and upper classes who take part in a broad liberation alliance will jostle for hegemony and attempt to represent their interests as the interest of all Africans.... It is obvious that ... the black middle and upper strata, who find themselves on the side of the people's struggle, are often inconsistent and vacillating. They are usually the enemy's softest targets for achieving a reformist, rather than a revolutionary, outcome.¹⁹

However, according to the CST thesis, the above analysis is firmly rooted in its understanding of the determinants of the political behaviour of classes, and the role of class and race in this regard:

When, however, it comes to the behaviour patterns of class entities, experience has shown that, in general, they are motivated primarily by a desire to protect their economic interests. It follows that to determine which social force can, at a specific moment, be won over to the side of the revolution... requires, in the first place, an analysis of basic economic factors which will influence their participation. In other words, a shared opposition to race domination at the social level may not, on its own, be sufficient to cement, inter -alia, class alliances.²⁰

This clarification, I would argue, takes the debate on to the analysis of the concrete conditions of the African petty bourgeoisie, and the nature of the political conjuncture within which it operates. In fact, this is one strength of the CST formulation, in that it constantly points to the need for a concrete and conjunctural analysis of the nature and political behaviour of the APB. In this way it is able to overcome some debilitating theoreticism and structuralism in the analysis of classes and of the African petty bourgeoisie in South Africa.

The second theoretical position, which is more similar to the CST thesis than the other positions, is that of Nolutshungu. Nolutshungu's work is much more elaborate and detailed, and perhaps can be regarded as building on the basic tenets of the CST thesis. Nolutshungu's position on the African petty bourgeoisie is also rooted in his conceptualization of the relationship between what he calls the 'political' and the 'economic' within the South African social formation. Nolutshungu's book can perhaps be regarded as a critique of economic reductionism in analysing a society like South Africa. He demonstrates quite convincingly that within Marxism itself there are elements for constructing a theory of politics. He advances this argument as a critique of an economistic and reductionist reading of Marxism, which until recently, has been dominant within South Africa's academic Marxism of the mid-1970's period. His argument is basically: If politics

is a condition of the existence and reproduction of a mode of production, it is also distinct from the economic aspect of that mode, otherwise it would hardly deserve special mention. If, as in capitalism, the basic relation of the productive mode is contradictory, then politics as such can hardly be the simple instrument of one class or of its mode of production, but itself is a field of class antagonisms, now more or less favourable to one side, now the other....²¹

This particular conception of politics opens the way for Nolutshungu to conceptualize the relationship between class and national oppression in South Africa in terms of the colonial origins of that social formation, which give it its specific character. The character of South African society is such that the problem of race or nationality cannot be conceived as 'mere ideology' which is a cover for class exploitation, "... but rather as part of a specific political context with a distinctive place in the creation and reproduction of classes"²², and "... an integral component of the relations of domination and exploitation at their most fundamental level - of the social division of labour."²³

From the above conception Nolutshungu argues that the unity of class and race, as well as the structure of the politics of the South African social formation, makes the black petty bourgeoisie more open to alliances with the rest of the oppressed. He advances three principal reasons for this. Firstly, he argues that their exclusion from key economic positions as well as from the major political and ideological institutions is the basic frustration of this class. As a result "... there are deep conflicts of interests between the 'black middle class' and the ruling class which extend beyond the immediate differences of income and occupational opportunity into the very nature of their respective places in the South African capitalist order".²⁴ He continues by saying that even the political moderation of this class should not be read as meaning that they have some shared interests with the white ruling class, but might merely be reflecting distinct middle class concerns. Secondly, Nolutshungu argues that the chances of co-option by the ruling class are minimized by the fact that this very exclusion from the centres of economic and political power severely restricts their capacity to hegemonize themselves over the masses of the oppressed and therefore their capacity to reproduce themselves as a middle class. This observation points out a most crucial aspect of the African petty bourgeoisie, which has largely been ignored

by many neo-Marxian analyses inside South Africa. Thirdly, Nolutshungu asserts that the non-cooptability of the black petty bourgeoisie is due to the character of state political reforms which so far have not led to the embourgeoisement of this class but rather to encadrement. Therefore such reforms do not alter the basic structure of exploitation and national oppression.

The third position that I would like to discuss is what I call the economistic and reductionistic position vis-a-vis the African petty bourgeoisie. This position has been the most dominant in the left wing circles of the radical scholarship emerging from within academic departments of South African universities, particularly in the post-1973 era. On the subject of the African petty bourgeoisie it has largely been represented by the works of Sarakinsky,²⁵ and to a certain extent by that of Southall.²⁶ Briefly, this position is summed up by its proponents thus:

Since 1975... the...restrictions (on African traders) have been progressively lifted, to such an extent that it does not seem an exaggeration to suggest that a qualitative change is taking place in the position of the urban African bourgeoisie. This change, in our view renders highly unlikely any durable participation by this class in a popular alliance struggling for national liberation and the destruction of apartheid.²⁷

The entry point of this position is a criticism of the CST thesis on the grounds that it "...underestimate(s) and even ignore(s) the extent to which the relationship between the African capitalist class, and white capital and the State has changed. (Its) instrumentalist conception of the relationship between white capital and the State is such that the State is said to be unlikely to promote policies unfavourable to that class".²⁸ The proponents of this position assert that the CST thesis rules out a priori the possibility of African capital aligning itself with white capital. The whole purpose of their intervention then becomes an attempt to provide evidence to show that African traders have a much bigger capacity to reproduce themselves under the tutelage of both the state and white capital, and by so doing proving the CST thesis wrong.

The last theoretical position that I would like to discuss briefly is that of Wolpe.²⁹ In order to properly evaluate Wolpe's contribution to the subject, the most appropriate starting point is a review of his theoretical formulations of the relationship between class and race in South

Africa. It is important to quote him in full in order to grasp the essence of his argument on this issue:

...from a Marxist standpoint, the indispensable starting point for an analysis of a capitalist social formation (is) the concept of capital accumulation and the corresponding concept of the relations between capital and labour. However the concept of class ... establishes the essential, but limited, economic nexus between capital and labour, and cannot be construed as also entailing other qualities (ideological and political positions, culture, and so forth),... the concept of class is not also simultaneously an empirical description of concrete classes and the concept does not contain a prediction of the concrete, empirical consequences which will follow irrespective of other conditions.³⁰

From this understanding of the place of class in an analysis of a social formation, Wolpe argues that the particular concrete articulation of class will be expressed through other non-class forces, which in the case of South Africa will be racial domination or more appropriately, national oppression. Making use of Stuart Hall's formulation, he argues that in South Africa, race becomes the modality through which class is lived.

The above formulation then leads Wolpe to undertake a critique of both economic reductionism and the CST thesis. With regard to the former he says that whilst its starting point - class - is not the problem, it does impose the abstract (class) on the concrete as if they were homologous. He correctly identifies one major weakness of economic reductionist analyses of South Africa, that, according to this position, conflicts in the political and ideological spheres are nothing other than the mystified form of economic class struggle, if not an epiphenomenon of the class struggle. This particular critique by Wolpe also helps us to understand why the national question has never been an issue with such kinds of interventions.

Wolpe also extends his formulations to a critique of the CST position. Although he correctly points out that the CST thesis is the only one that has consistently refused class or race reductionism, he contends that it ultimately privileges racial domination over class divisions and contradictions within the oppressed. In his critique of, particularly, Slovo's formulation that the objective fate of the black middle classes in the immediate phase of struggle is linked

to that of the black working class, he argues that the political consequences of such a formulation are that the anti-racial or national struggle must have primacy in the South African struggle. Wolpe finds the CST inadequate, in that it fails to take through its own assumptions about the linkage between class and race and therefore ".....results in a failure to recognize that the national struggle and, indeed, anti-racist movements may incorporate alternative class objectives.... The consequence is to present the struggle for national liberation as if it were free of class implications."³¹

From the above critique, Wolpe then tries to develop what he calls a non-reductionist conception of the South African social formation. He makes the proposition that the relationship between class and race is a contingent one and not a necessary one. In other words the relationship is not a fixed one, neither in favour of national liberation as in the CST thesis, nor, for the economistic tendencies, fixed such that the class position of the APB is always against an alliance with the working class.

Let us now turn to a critique of each of these positions in order to assess their contributions to the understanding of the African petty bourgeoisie in South Africa. Looking at the CST thesis first, it is important to highlight the fact that its major strength is its continual attempt to relate the class and the national questions to class formation and the political behaviour of classes. This is even more important in the analysis of the petty bourgeoisie, whose political behaviour is always contingent upon the balance of forces between the principal contending forces in a social formation, ie the bourgeoisie and the working class.

However there is a major problem with the CST thesis, and that is the lack of specificity on the social composition of the APB. Further, the thesis lacks clarity on how the different strata and fractions composing this group stand in different economic and political relations to both the state and white-controlled monopoly capital.

Turning to Nolutshungu's position, it should first be pointed out that the most important contribution of Nolutshungu's theorisation is that he seriously engages the 'political' in the class formation and political behaviour of the black petty bourgeoisie. Many analyses have been rather too economistic, and only look at this class in relation to 'their place in the

relations of production'. However there are three main problems with Nolutshungu's arguments. The first one is that he analyses and constructs the 'non-co-optability' of the petty bourgeoisie purely on the basis of the structure of the political terrain, without relating this to the internal social composition of the group. This leads to a rather 'objectivist' conception of the group, without looking at how the changing economic and political structures are affecting its very social composition and 'fractionation', and vice versa. The second problem is that of treating them as a homogeneous group - 'the black petty bourgeoisie'. Thirdly is a related problem: the neglect of the relationship between this group and the capitalist class. The conclusions that Nolutshungu reaches stem from the fact that he only poses the question of the relationship between the petty bourgeoisie and the state. As will be argued below, the relationship between different strata and fractions of the African petty bourgeoisie and the state is different from the relationship the same sections have with capital. In fact one of the most neglected areas in the analysis of the African petty bourgeoisie is the role of white monopoly capital as an 'independent actor' in the struggle for the political loyalties of this class.

The third position, principally represented by Sarakinsky and Hudson's works, has a number of weaknesses which leaves their analytical framework highly problematic in giving an understanding of the dynamics underlying the class formation of the APB. Six major weaknesses are apparent: Firstly their argument maintains that both the state and capital are, not only capable of absorbing the demands of this group, but "... its principal demands have either been acceded to, or ...are about to be granted".³² However, their evidence for this assertion is based on very thin empirical data. For instance, in their 1986 article, most of what is provided as evidence are mere promises by the state which were never followed up. Despite this, it is from this basis that they then make an assessment of the concrete effects of these promises on the growth of the APB. They provide evidence such as the recommendations of the Riekert commission and their acceptance by the state; an investigation into the Group Areas Act; the President's Council's report; and the fact that "...the state president in his 1985 opening address of parliament raised the possibility of introducing freehold ownership rights for Africans in urban areas",³³ without assessing the impact that these would have on the reproduction of the African trading classes, given the state of African business in South Africa. That there are all these commitments by the state

does not mean that they will automatically translate to the rapid growth or strengthening of the African traders. It is surprising that a radical analysis falls into the apartheid trap of substituting rhetoric for reality. South Africa is replete with examples where the rhetoric of the white ruling class lags far behind empirical reality. As Jordan also argues, the fact that since 1976 white monopoly capital and the 'reformist' elements within the state has made no secret of their plans to create a collaborative African petty bourgeoisie "...should not tempt us into accepting that such co-optation has already been realized".³⁴

The second major weakness, which is related to the above, is that of equating deregulation with deracialisation. They write:

In the aftermath of the June 1976 uprising, white capital began calling for political reforms which would deracialize the capitalist economy and thereby prevent political grievances from becoming a threat to the economic system itself. In particular the removal of restrictions on African entrepreneurs....³⁵

Deregulation and deracialisation do not mean the same thing. Although it is agreed that removal of restrictions on African traders does lay the basis for their growth, such removal in itself does not automatically translate into the deracialisation of the economy.

The third weakness of the economic analyses is that of overestimating the capacity of the APB to reproduce itself. Sarakinsky argues that the CST underestimates the class competencies of the APB, while himself overestimating. This overestimating derives from a number of erroneous assumptions that informs this theorisation. One such assumption is that the South African social formation is deracialising to the extent that a core of an African capitalist class exists and, with further deracialisation, it is likely to increase. Despite these bold statements, these formulations never bother to try to define what 'deracialisation' means, nor to contextualise it within the phase of capitalist development in which it is taking place.

Their understanding of 'deracialisation' seems to be largely a legalistic one, in that statutes previously hampering the growth of an APB are being repealed. Without undermining the significance of these legal changes, deracialisation is not simply a legal process, but a social

process which undoes the whole fabric of racial domination. Time and again, it has been demonstrated that the removal of legal obstacles in itself does not lead to, in this instance, economic empowerment. Whilst it sets the scene and makes economic empowerment possible, de-regulation in itself does not equal economic empowerment, nor necessarily the creation of an African capitalist class. This has even been realised by the bourgeoisie itself, particularly in the United States, hence the emergence of the discourse of 'affirmative action' - the need to actively assist the 'disadvantaged', to overcome social obstacles that were created through the promulgation of those statutes. This now even includes what is called reverse discrimination. Therefore, deracialisation should in the first instance be understood as a social process rather than simply a repealing of statutes.

It is from this defective implicit understanding that they exaggerate the class competence of the APB. There is a serious neglect in analysing and understanding the phase and conjuncture during which 'deracialization' is taking place. It is rather strange that, as Marxists, representatives of these positions seem to conveniently forget the one major characteristic feature of monopoly capitalism: the tendency towards concentration and centralization of capital. Because of the 'simultaneity' of class exploitation and racial domination in South Africa, the capitalist class is essentially white. The concentration of capital into fewer and fewer hands has been concentration, not simply into the hands of capitalists, but into the hands of white capitalists. This is important in that monopoly capital is most impenetrable by smaller capital - particularly the kind of 'capital' that is in black control. It is therefore most inappropriate to talk of an African capitalist class in South Africa, since what we have, at best is a petty bourgeoisie aspiring to becoming a capitalist class. The best that the deracialisation that Sarakinsky and others refer to can do under present circumstances is the promotion of a small trading class, what has been sometimes referred to as 'Bazaar capitalists' - which in most instances is just one better than shack-shops found in every street corner of every township. What is suggested here is that the monopoly capitalist phase is incapable of the deracialisation which can lead to the embourgeoisement of the trading class. Nolutshungu (1982) may well be correct when he argues that:

The crucial issues are autonomy and the politics of accumulation: the relations that are being forged (by the ruling class), the interests that have priority, and the political reasoning which prevails, are more consistent with...containment rather

than transformation, encadrement rather than embourgeoisement.³⁶

It is precisely this 'politics of accumulation' that these formulations are unable to help us understand. It might well be worth drawing on some empirical evidence to show how much deracialization is taking place in South Africa in the sphere of trading and capital accumulation. In reply to Nolutshungu's above quoted assertion Sarakinsky points out that 'with the proposed deregulation of small businesses and the informal sector, and the establishment of the Small Business Development Corporation (SBDC) in 1981, we can expect the rate of increase to accelerate'.³⁷ However, if one looks at the SBDC, it is very surprising that Sarakinsky overlooks the amount of money advanced by this organisation. For example, between its formation in 1980 and 1986, the SBDC had advanced a total amount of only R2.6 million to 2 439 business concerns, in a fund specifically aimed to help NAFSOC membership. This, on average, amounts to R10 660 per one undertaking! Even if one looks at the activities of the development corporations in the bantustans, supposedly the 'heaven and earth' of African capitalism as originally promised by the architects of apartheid, the actual amount invested and the actual beneficiaries tell a different story. For instance, the KwaZulu Finance and Investment Corporation (KFC), directly under the political control of the Kwa Zulu Legislative Assembly, invested, in 1987, a total of R36.7 million for industrial development in KwaZulu, bringing to R271.7 million the cumulative fixed investment in industrial development. But is this money contributing to the development of the capitalist class? The 1987 Annual Report of the KFC states that eighteen of the 'Top 100' companies in South Africa have links with 30 of the industries in the notorious Kwa Zulu industrial areas of Isithebe, Ezakheni, Madadeni and Ulundi. In addition, the report continues:

'...24 companies listed on the Johannesburg
Stock Exchange have 33 industries in KFC estates.
A total of 22 foreign companies currently operate
from these industrial estates in spite of calls for
disinvestment.'³⁸

The major beneficiaries of these economic ventures by the development corporations are still local and international monopoly capitalist interests! Even within tripartite companies with

a total capital invested in 1987 in Kwa Zulu being R33 000 000, 2038 Africans had a collective share of 567 000 shares, at R1 per share invested in these. This amounts to an average of 245 shares per person, a total of R245-000. Although there may be individuals holding a much bigger share of the total investment, this definitely does not amount to the creation of a capitalist class, nor even a 'wealthy' petty bourgeoisie.

Although one can continue with such examples, that is not the primary focus of this discussion. All that needs to be shown is that what white monopoly capital is still interested in at the moment is the creation of a small and highly dependent African petty bourgeoisie. And as Saul and Gelb correctly observe, none of the measures involved touch the fundamental institutions of class domination and capital accumulation,³⁹ nor, I would hasten to add, racial domination. Deregulation on its own should not lead us to the conclusion that an African petty bourgeoisie is growing without examining empirically the effects of that process on material reality, as well as the contradictions of deregulation itself under apartheid. This is a distinct weakness of this intervention, as a large portion of the 1986 article is a mere presentation of legal changes without any attempt to demonstrate whether these have led to growth.

The fourth weakness of this position is its rather conspicuous silence on the national question. Despite an awareness that "Class interests and demands are always shaped by the specific conditions obtaining at a given moment in a society",⁴⁰ there is hardly any attempt at analyzing the political behaviour of the African petty bourgeoisie in relation to their being part of a nationally oppressed community. This is where the economism of the position becomes its own stumbling block in understanding the political behaviour of National African Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (NAFCOC). It is precisely the failure of this position to analyse the articulation of class and the national struggle which leads it into a deficient theorisation of the politics of the African petty bourgeoisie. It therefore gets caught up in its own major contradiction that, on the one hand, it accepts the basic Marxian notion that the petty bourgeoisie is a fluctuating class, while, on the other hand, the petty bourgeoisie is treated as already having a fixed political behaviour, gravitating only in one direction, that of being co-opted, by virtue of being a petty bourgeoisie. Hence the appropriateness of Jordan's criticism of this position that, "In spite of their best intentions

they forsake the battle field before issue has even been joined, thus handing victory to the principal enemy without a fight"⁴¹. It is argued here that the relationship between the state and white monopoly capital on the one hand and the African traders on the other hand, is specifically shaped by the fact that the latter grouping has been historically a suppressed petty bourgeoisie and therefore is being sponsored as a subordinate partner of white monopoly capital and the apartheid state in order to reproduce conditions of white domination. This relationship continues to limit the capacity of this group to reproduce itself as a petty bourgeoisie, let alone as a capitalist class.

The fifth weakness of this position is its failure to theorise and analyse the way in which the dominance of monopoly capitalism in South Africa blocks the realization of the aspirations of an African petty bourgeoisie. It is rather strange that a neo-Marxian analysis ignores the fact that the domination of monopoly capitalism makes it impossible for smaller capital to penetrate the former, and that the situation is hopeless for the kind of capital that is in the hands of African traders. Southall makes the point that

... African capitalism seems destined to remain almost wholly dependent upon external support, recent experience demonstrating that the chances of its taking off into self sustaining growth are minimal unless it so proceeds at the behest of the state and white business interests.⁴²

The hegemony of monopoly capital in South Africa and its relation to smaller capital is not just simply an economic relationship, but is also a political relationship, whose very historical foundations and conditions of its reproduction is the oppression of all classes within the black community, albeit unevenly.

The last major weakness of particularly the work of Hudson and Sarakinsky is a methodological one. Both articles referred to here make use of very outdated sources, especially in the later article by Sarakinsky, where he presents us with a picture of NAFCOC in the 1980's, quoting from NAFCOC's statements of the 1970's. As a result, his conclusions are a function of his outdated sources rather than from the real contemporary politics of NAFCOC in the 1980's. For example, he argues that NAFCOC is working closely with the community councils, the contemporary reality is that in 1987 NAFCOC's Southern Transvaal region voted to expel all councillors from its ranks. Furthermore,

struggles against community councils in the 1980's have led to NAFCOC, and other African traders, distancing themselves from people working in government structures.⁴³

The relationship between NAFCOC and government structures has been further estranged by attempts by the bureaucratic petty bourgeoisie to impose their patronage networks over the activities of the TAPB. As Motsuenyane explains,

Nafcoc members were also subjected to corruption and they had to pay 'sweets' and 'lobolo' to many homeland government and black town council officials for services they were entitled to in any case. Many Nafcoc members lost businesses to these unscrupulous officials on 'technicalities'.⁴⁴

It is also highly questionable to what extent one can read the politics and ideology of a class purely from statements pronounced in its journals, without actually attempting to assess these against the concrete political behaviour of the class.

Let us now turn to Wolpe's position. Although Wolpe tries very hard to go beyond the limitations of the economistic and class reductionistic tendencies, his own formulations share many of the weaknesses of these tendencies. Firstly, whilst he brilliantly formulates the relationship between class and race in pointing out that "...opposition to racial domination may tend to unite black people across class lines, and yet specifically defined class interests may at the same time tend to divide them along class lines," this formulation leaves the South African social formation without any dominant structural tendencies. The formulation is only correct at an abstract level, but it concretely implies that the social structure is open, where anything is possible. The way Wolpe concretely applies this formulation to the political behaviour of the African petty bourgeoisie results in a somewhat contradictory argument. On the one hand he says that the precise nature of the relationship between class and race will depend on the conjuncture. However he assumes that the petty bourgeoisie will collaborate with the regime, without specifying the ways in which the conjuncture has determined such an outcome. For instance, he argues that

The black petty bourgeoisie is opposed to white domination, but despite the very different conditions of their formation, both sections (urban and rural) are dependent on the apartheid state for their development, however limited that may be.... Indeed its response may be to press vigorously for its own narrow economic interests while

collaborating politically with the regime.⁴⁵

This conclusion is true of certain fractions of the petty bourgeoisie but not of the entire class. Also, it is not clear why dependence on the white ruling class should necessarily always result in the African petty bourgeoisie pursuing its objectives only through collaboration with the white ruling class, instead of seeking accommodation with the mass democratic movement and the national liberation movement. Whilst it may be true that dependency may lead to collaboration, this should be argued and demonstrated rather than assumed. As this conclusion remains assumed by Wolpe, he therefore fails to come to grips with the fact that because dependency is a contradictory relationship under apartheid, it might also impel sections of the African petty bourgeoisie to align themselves with the national liberation movement as its only hope for breaking this dependency. We have seen the petty bourgeoisie taking this route in many a third world struggle, as the best way of ensuring its survival after colonialism and imperialism is dislodged. Ultimately Wolpe's position is characterized by a class essentialism not dissimilar to the economistic analyses with which he takes issue.

In concluding this section, a brief summary will be made of the state of theory on the APB in South Africa. The first theoretical deficiency was that of the 'liberal' 'black advancement position', whose major shortcoming is in the mould of the deficiencies of liberal theory in South Africa, that racism is dysfunctional to capitalism. It was shown that its primary focus, though legitimate, is purely racial discrimination, unconnected to the processes of class formation in South Africa. Its major downfall however is its pre-occupation with the incorporation of a collaborative ACPB, thereby overlooking or unable to explain adequately the class interests of the WCPB.

With regard to Marxist theoretical formulations, there are six main theoretical deficiencies. First, the major Western theoreticians, whose formulations inform some of the South African analysts, are unable to explain what Nolutshungu calls the 'politics of accumulation' in the class formation and reproduction of the ACPB. Abstract categories are used without capturing the conjunctural aspects (political and ideological) of the class determination of the petty bourgeoisie. This also seems to be hampered by the primary focus of these theories, the 'boundary problem' as to who constitutes the petty bourgeoisie. Whilst these formulations

do give us some theoretical concepts, they are not sensitive enough to conjunctural aspects of the problem; they are rather too 'structuralist' and 'theoreticist'.

The second major theoretical deficiency is that of paying inadequate attention to the economic aspects of the class formation and political behaviour of the APB. Most notable here is the work of Nolutshungu which, whilst invaluable in terms of its analysis of the political (conjunctural) terrain, pays inadequate attention to the possibility of the State failing to win the APB, but monopoly capital coming into some kind of accommodation with this grouping. Whilst Nolutshungu is absolutely correct that the apartheid state cannot co-opt large sections of the APB, he should also have explored this issue in relation to capital. This weakness is shared by the CST, though to a much lesser degree than usually argued. Rather, the weakness of the CST is not the validity of its formulations on the APB as such, but the lack of specificity as to the conditions under which the APB is likely to align itself with the working class and other progressive forces. Part of this theoretical weakness of course, derives from the presentation of the CST thesis in immediate political terms as a political programme.

The third major theoretical weakness identified above is that of economic reductionism and class essentialism in the analysis of the APB. This is largely reflected in the work of Sarakinsky, who seems to be treating the APB as already co-opted by virtue of being a petty bourgeoisie. This formulation only looks at the economic determination of this group outside of the context of racial domination, and concludes that the APB cannot enter into an anti-apartheid alliance. It was argued that while class is the crucial starting point, one cannot deduce the politico-ideological stance of the APB simply from its economic class position.

The fourth weakness in theorizing the politico-ideological nature of the APB was identified as the assumption that, because the ruling class has ideologically committed itself to promoting a middle class, it is therefore already winning the middle class. This is a voluntaristic notion that maintains that the creation and co-option of the APB is due to the unilateral interventions and voluntary actions of the ruling class. From this perspective there is less emphasis on the objective imperative of monopoly capital and apartheid; this presents

obstacles to deracialization and co-option. This weakness characterises mainly the work of the class reductionists, and, to a lesser extent, that of Wolpe. It was pointed out that although Wolpe is acutely aware of the inadequacy of analysing the APB in terms of its class position, he does attest that the APB will not align itself with the national liberation movement. This was attributed to the fact that Wolpe does not heed his own theoretical formulations on race and class, and subsequently pays less attention to the structure of racial domination and the fact that the creation of a black middle class does not necessarily mean deracialisation. Instead it can result in new forms of economic and political domination of this group. This point was mainly illustrated by the discussion of the process of, inter alia, 'deregulation'.

The fifth major weakness identified was the failure to recognise the effects of monopoly capitalism in undermining deracialisation. It was argued that the single most important obstacle to deracialisation is monopoly capitalism itself, given the fact that the concentration and centralisation of wealth is in white hands. This, it was demonstrated, creates serious obstacles to the penetration of white monopoly capital by small (African) capital.

The sixth and last major weakness, shared by almost all the above theoretical formulations, albeit unevenly, is to treat the entire APB and its various class factions, as homogeneous. This conceptualisation creates very serious analytical obstacles in understanding the politico-ideological formation of the APB.

There are major theoretical gaps in our understanding of the APB. Most of these gaps are of an empirical nature, and derive from the fact that inadequate work has been done on the conjunctural determination of the politico-ideological behaviour of the APB. The next section, therefore, will briefly outline some of the necessary theoretical and empirical requirements if our knowledge of the APB is to be advanced.

Towards a theoretical framework for analysing and understanding the APB

The growth of these 'middle layers' in contemporary capitalist society has led to similar

'revisions' even in liberal, pro- capitalist scholarship. Although many of these revisions are nothing other than an opportunity to further attack Marxism, nevertheless they are significant in themselves. These developments have provided an opportunity to re-interpret and further assert the 'benefits' of capitalism as a 'free market economy ' (as it is affectionately known by its apologists). This scholarship asserts that the traditional Marxian notion that capitalist societies are going to split into two big hostile classes, is outdated. For them, the changing social composition of the workforce illustrates the upward movement of working class people into better paid jobs. This then becomes the ultimate proof of the benefits of a 'free market economy ' as well as the fact that the revolution predicted by Marx will never happen. Recent events in Eastern Europe have also thrown Marxism into an even deeper crisis thereby strengthening these assertions by liberal scholarship.

The growing importance of the 'middle strata' has also seen a more vigorous regeneration of the debates between Marxian and neo-Weberian scholarship. This intellectual exchange has led some scholars, such as Abercrombie and Urry to argue that an opportunity exists for synthesizing Marxian and neo-Weberian approaches to the question of class and social stratification. In fact, they even state in the preface of their book that:

Part of our purpose here will be to assess the thesis that there is incompatibility between Weberian and Marxist analyses of the middle classes (a doctrine which we shall call the Incompatibility thesis) ... arguing inter alia that, in considering the middle classes in particular, the alleged distinction between these forms of analysis collapses.⁴⁶

The exchange between Weberian and Marxist analyses of the middle classes has also seen some Marxists beginning to seriously incorporate notions traditionally regarded as 'Weberian', like 'labour market segmentation' in an attempt to come to grips with the phenomenon of the middle classes. Most notable in this regard is the work of Edwards.⁴⁷ Edwards defines the labour market as a process through which workers are hired into various jobs, as well as the principal means through which the working people are segmented. Flowing from this, labour markets (which are divided under monopoly capitalism) are also used as a means of lowering wages through the manipulation of the segmentation.

Instead of the traditional model of a dual labour market,⁴⁸ Edwards proposes an integrated model of the labour market with three segments: the secondary labour market (casual labour); the subordinate primary market (full time 'permanent' working class jobs); and the independent primary market (largely middle class and other 'white collar' occupations). In an attempt to show the importance of the labour market to class mobility, Edwards characterises the independent primary labour market as being distinct from the other sectors in that, amongst other things, it has considerable job security; involves general skills rather than firm or industry specific skills; requires a high standard of education; and "... tend to establish promotional paths through professional or craft standards as well as through employer imposed job structures".⁴⁹

An important contribution that Edwards makes in the understanding of the managerial and supervisory strata of what has been called the new petty bourgeoisie is that all these characteristics of the labour market have become institutionalised under monopoly capitalism. According to Edwards it is these characteristics that are important to take into account when one analyses class formation and reproduction of the managerial stratum. It is in this way that Edwards, and other 'neo-Weberian Marxists', have tried to go beyond the structuralist and theoreticist models of Marxism on the question of the petty bourgeoisie.

However, the immediate context within which the question of the 'middle strata' has been raised is that of the debates within the European communist parties regarding their attitude towards non-working class sections of society. Such theorisation of the middle classes arose from anti-fascist struggles in post World War 1 Europe. However, the question of the middle classes was a major issue within the Comintern in the 1940's and 1950's, particularly those debates within Communist Parties around their strategy of the Popular Front, ie, a strategy of the alliances between the working class and the new middle classes against fascism.⁵⁰

The new debates within communist, socialist and trade union organisations were in fact in response to the changing social composition of the working class under advanced monopoly capitalism. The debates were brought about by the creation and extended reproduction of the highly skilled technical workers and other professional workers.⁵¹ The debates on the

changing social composition of the working class were largely, though not exclusively, initiated by the seminal works of Mallet on the 'new working class'.⁵² Mallet's entry point was a criticism of the initial positions of some of the Western communist parties for having denied the existence of these new groups within the working class. His argument was essentially that some of these groups were playing a leading role in working class struggles in Western Europe.⁵³ Mallet argued that such workers should be regarded as a firm part of the working class.

Mallet's position was subsequently adopted by the French Communist Party. It was in reaction to this that some of the important works on the petty bourgeoisie were to emerge in the late 1960's and the early 1970's. For instance, Poulantzas' seminal work on the petty bourgeoisie was largely a polemical critique of the PCF's position, arguing that what is called the new working class is in fact a petty bourgeoisie which was distinct in some fundamental ways from the working class proper.⁵⁴ This debate was later to be expanded and took the form of the 'boundary problem' within neo-Marxian class analysis. The boundary problem debate was trying to draw a distinction between, on the one hand, the working class and the petty bourgeoisie, and, on the other hand, the petty bourgeoisie and the capitalist class. It was also within the context of this debate that Poulantzas wrote his work on classes in contemporary capitalism. Later these debates were to be taken up by other scholars leading to further pioneering debates around the question of the social composition of the petty bourgeoisie in modern capitalist society.⁵⁵

Although many of the contemporary theoretical discourses on the middle class in Europe have tended to focus on the social structure of the middle class, the ultimate objective of analysing the middle class in our situation is to try to predict its political behaviour in the struggle for national liberation and socialism. Of the neo-Marxian analyses it is particularly in the works of Poulantzas where a serious attempt has been made to use theoretical insights on the social composition of the petty bourgeoisie, in order to understand its political behaviour.⁵⁶ In addition, it is primarily from his political work that one gets a picture of the 'vacillating' nature of the petty bourgeoisie, as well as the fact that the ultimate political alignments of this grouping depend on the nature of the social formation and its conjuncture. For instance, in Spain, Greece and Portugal (particularly closer to the overthrow of the

dictatorship there in the 1970's), the petty bourgeoisie aligned itself with the working class and the other sections of the popular masses. In fascist Germany and Italy, however, this same class was the core of the social basis of the fascist ruling parties.⁵⁷ In fact, in the case of the former regimes, the ruling military juntas were never able to implant themselves within the petty bourgeoisie. These two examples in fact point to the importance of a conjunctural analysis of the political behaviour of the petty bourgeoisie. This is further highlighted by the fact that in certain political conjunctures the petty bourgeoisie would split into different fractions, some aligning themselves with the bourgeoisie and others with the working class. This further points out the importance of going beyond a structural, theoreticist understanding of the middle class if one is to understand its politics and ideology.

The above brief overview of the debates on the petty bourgeoisie aim to make the point that the class determination and political behaviour of the petty bourgeoisie are a function of the balance of class forces at different historical conjunctures. Therefore, in order to understand the petty bourgeoisie in any social formation one should develop theoretical conceptualisations capable of understanding those specific conjunctures within specific social formations.⁵⁸ An attempt to lay a theoretical framework within which to understand the petty bourgeoisie in South Africa, and its African component in particular, will be made below.

a) Monopoly Capitalism and Apartheid

The framework within which to theorize and concretely analyse the APB in South Africa is of course that proposed by Wolpe.⁵⁹ The basic starting point is the concept of capital accumulation and the class relations which are the foundations of the South African social formation. This should however, as Wolpe points out, only be the starting point and not the totality of one's analysis of the APB, or any aspect of the South African social formation for that matter. This analysis of course should be located within a general theory of the South African social formation.

In a nutshell the APB will be analysed in this study within the general theoretical framework

adopted: that whilst the fundamental contradiction in South Africa is that between labour and capital, its dominant form in the present conjuncture is a racial one. It is the articulation or disarticulation between these two axes of the dominant and fundamental contradictions which do not permit of either solely a class or race reductionistic understanding of the South African social formation; that is central. It is only within this context that one can understand the interrelationship between class and race in their simultaneity of expression. Whilst the relationship between class and race is not a fixed one, but a contingent one (as Wolpe correctly points out), this does not mean that one cannot talk of a class structure or structure of racial domination in South Africa. Nor does it mean that racial domination can simply be treated as an instrument of class exploitation, without its own logic or autonomy.

However, if one is to move beyond this abstract formulation to the concrete, it is necessary to look at the fundamental processes within which class and race exist. It is proposed here that to understand the contemporary APB, one needs to look at monopoly capitalism in its articulation with apartheid, and particularly how the evolution of monopoly capitalism in an apartheid context has structured the position, politics and ideology of the APB.

As pointed out above, it is surprising how neo-Marxian analyses of the APB have disregarded class formation under monopoly capitalism, and have presented monopoly capital as 'freely', 'voluntarily' and 'unilaterally' promoting or co-opting the APB. Two aspects of monopoly capitalism must be highlighted here as a basis for understanding the APB, particularly the corporate petty bourgeoisie. The first aspect is the concentration and centralisation noted by Marx in his analysis of capitalism. While transition to and consolidation of monopoly capitalism differ in detail for each capitalist country, there are essentially common processes at the core. A major characteristic of the development monopoly capitalism is the transformation of factories from small competitive units to large, well ordered and highly bureaucratic entities.⁶⁰ The process is characterised by mergers and takeovers, and basically the emergence of a few dominant companies. It is also a period of rapid growth where small competitive factories become a fetter on expanded capital accumulation. As competition is pushed to its limits, smaller companies are taken over by the bigger ones. The further impetus to this increased economic activity, brought about by the need to survive and grow, is a change from labour-intensive to capital intensive

production methods. The organic composition of capital rises.

Apart from the concentration and centralisation of capital as the major defining characteristic of capitalism, with its high point under monopoly capitalism, there is a second important aspect. Monopoly capitalism introduces new forms of division of labour, characterised by bureaucratisation and consequently the extended reproduction of new class places whose function is to manage the labour process on behalf of the capitalists. Management and hierarchical organisation become institutionalised and a permanent feature of the new division of labour. The beneficiaries of those new middle class places are usually highly skilled workers, clerical workers and other educated strata of society. For instance, Abercrombie and Urry point out that in Britain, between 1911 and 1971, the working class (in the traditional 'blue collar' sense) shrank by 21% and the professional category tripled in size, increasing most rapidly in the post war period between 1951 and 1971.⁶¹ This strata then becomes the crucial 'lieutenant' of big capital, and, I would argue, the largest beneficiary of capitalist expansion outside of the capitalist class itself. Monopolisation and its attendant bureaucratisation multiply the management ranks quite rapidly. In fact, this grouping soon becomes a class in itself, and starts developing its own interests and ideology to defend its position. This ideology is sharply characterized by its emphasis on meritocracy, individual achievement and professionalism.

South Africa was no different in terms of the multiplication of these class places particularly after the war. In fact these places multiplied almost threefold from 1945 to 1960.⁶² However, what was distinct about South Africa was that these class places were entirely taken up by whites, thereby developing a very strong white petty bourgeoisie. With the rise of the managerial class and their centrality in the capitalist labour process, there emerges new type of labour market, characterized by Edwards as the 'Independent Primary Market'.⁶³ This development requires an understanding of two further theoretical subtleties: that of labour market and life chances.

b) Labour market and life chances

Marxian scholars have, on average, been very reluctant to make use of this concept, largely

because it has sometimes been regarded as epiphenomenon - a simple reflection of the dominant relations of production. However this concept is very important in the analysis of, particularly, the corporate fraction of the petty bourgeoisie. This section will look into how labour markets in the industrial (manufacturing) corporations, mainly in relation to the petty bourgeoisie, are structured. This will be done as a basis for providing a theoretical framework within which one can analyse the process of class mobility of the ACPB, particularly in South Africa's white monopoly capitalism.

The above characteristics, some of them outlined earlier in introducing Edwards work, are of absolute importance when one looks at the South African situation. Whilst the managerial stratum does not own the means of production, monopoly capitalism has become entirely dependent on this stratum for the management of the labour and production processes.

To give an example on South Africa, as well as to anticipate some of the arguments to be made later in this study, let us take the independent primary market in South Africa in relation to the corporate petty bourgeoisie. Because of the racial division of labour in South Africa, which allocates whites into higher managerial positions, the independent primary market has been heavily dominated by whites. Of course this pattern of the labour market did not necessarily and at all times suit both the period of primitive accumulation as well as that of competitive capitalism. But it specifically came into conflict with that of monopoly capitalism. This was because, with the increasing demand for highly skilled labour and professional skills, it created a shortage of skilled labour due to the deliberate underdevelopment and non-training of blacks. It also did not favour the most efficient allocation of skills; whereby whites were being promoted purely on racial considerations than on other grounds. It also deprived capital of the opportunity to utilise the cheaper black labour to meet its requirements of skilled labour. Despite these factors, which, in theory, should have facilitated greater deracialisation, we have witnessed the continued dominance of whites in the independent primary market.

This situation of course arose as a result of the class interests of the WCPB and its continued reproduction through a racially structured labour market. It also arose out of the ability of

the WCPB, given the nature of its functions and power in the capitalist labour process, to use its position to ensure its class and racial dominance of this particular category. Hence the allocation of blacks and specifically the ACPB to subordinate and weaker positions in the division of labour. Although this tension, between the established labour market and the requirements of capital accumulation under monopoly capitalism, cannot go on forever, its resolution is not a simple matter to be unproblematically addressed through 'black advancement' programmes and 'willingness' of top management to change the racial imbalance.

It becomes clear from the above that it is important to conceptualise the class reproduction of an ACPB within the patterns of the labour market. A further point, particularly made by Abercrombie and Urry, is that not only are labour markets relatively autonomous, but this autonomy can have a profound effect on the processes of class formation themselves. They argue that since the knowledge and skills possessed by the corporate petty bourgeoisie have causal powers, such powers can be used by this class to affect the very process of class formation. They conclude, citing the work of Stark, that:

...occupants of...positions (do) not simply fill in a set of empty places created by forces completely divorced from their own activity, but actually participate(d), within a constellation of struggling classes, in the creation of these positions themselves.⁶⁴

They also add that the existence of a powerful professional class brought about monopoly capitalism in the first instance, '...served to exacerbate the demand for substantial opportunities to acquire such positions, in other words, that there should be widely diffused educational opportunities...'.⁶⁵ This demand in turn helped to produce a reserve army of mental labour, and to prescribe the professional or entry requirements into the petty bourgeoisie. This argument on the labour market points to a major weakness of structuralist theories of class formation. The structuralist arguments simply posit that the labour market has got nothing to do with the generation of class places; instead it is only relevant during

the allocation of agents to those class places.⁶⁶ The highlighting of this complexity of the relationship between labour markets and class formation raises a very fundamental point, that the characteristics of class agents are of vital importance in class formation. This is even more so where, as Abercrombie and Urry argue, the corporate middle class and professionals possess, by virtue of their social positions in the division of labour, causal powers that have empirical outcomes. This becomes even more important for South Africa where a significant portion of class places in the independent and primary markets were created specifically because of the characteristics of class agents and as a means of class defence by the WCPB.

However one needs to qualify this argument and be realistic about its contribution. It is not that the 'causal powers' possessed by the corporate petty bourgeoisie have no limits, given the class structure of capitalist society as well as the nature of the division of labour. However, the value of the argument lies in its ability to capture particularly the class-race dynamic in a country like South Africa, where racial domination is an integral part of class structuration and struggle. It also clearly highlights one major characteristic, and perhaps paradox, of the independent primary labour market that:

... Challenging power requires knowledge, yet
the acquisition of that knowledge is organised
so that it reinforces the very credentially
based system of power that is in part
the original object of contestation.⁶⁷

The assertion by Abercrombie and Urry also challenges and qualifies Edwards argument that '... the fundamental differences (among workers) are not so much among the workers as among jobs workers hold'.⁶⁸ Whilst Edwards argument is not necessarily untrue, it must be qualified given the importance of the characteristics of class agents in the process of class formation itself.

This, then, points to a number of important theoretical issues about the class formation and reproduction of particularly the 'new' petty bourgeoisie in South Africa. First of all, it

means that one cannot theorise about the APB outside the context of the class interests and reproduction of its white counterparts. It is in this relationship that the cutting edge of class and race is put into sharp relief. In other words, the creation of the APB cannot proceed in isolation from the extended reproduction of its white counterparts. Secondly, and flowing directly from the above, it is only when we understand this relationship that we can properly assess the 'life chances' of the APB, defined here as the capacity of the class to reproduce itself.

Conclusion

The politics and ideology of the APB need to be understood within the context of the relationship of class and race, not in the abstract, but in its concrete articulation in the relationship between monopoly capitalism and apartheid. It is also important to restate the point that, whilst new processes of class formation are being set in motion, racial domination continues, albeit in new forms and even in 'deracialised discourses' of advancement and deregulation, to structure the life chances of the APB. It is to the specific empirical and conjunctural analysis of these processes vis-a-vis the ACPB, that we now turn to. It is only from such a perspective that we can be able to concretely assess the changing social composition of the APB as well as the content of its politics and ideology. Such an assessment will then enable us to predict and understand the likely political behaviour of this class in the struggle for change in South Africa.

In summary, this chapter makes two general points: Firstly, that the state is trying to do two things that have to be done as it were: a) gain political legitimacy through the creation of an APB; b) at the same time create the conditions of increasing the rate of capital accumulation. These two processes usually stand in contradiction to each other. Secondly, it is in this context that there is class restructuring amongst Africans and the debates about the implications of this restructuring and differentiation.

1. Nadel, 1982, pp. 12-13
2. Charoux, 1986, p.ii.
3. Human and Hofmeyr, 1985.
4. Human and Hofmeyr, 1985 p. v-vi
5. Human, 1981; Human & Hofmeyr, 1985; Godsell, 1981; Nasser, 1981.
6. Moerdyk, 1986 p.157.
7. See Charoux, 1986 pp. 29-30.
8. Emphases added., ibid., pp. 21-22.
9. Salaman, 1981, p. 173
10. Moerdyk, 1987 p.157
11. Manganyi, 1973.
12. The most recent and thorough example of this position is that of Lipton, 1986.
13. Nolutshungu, 1983, p. 39.
14. ibid, p. 48.
15. Jordan, in van Diepen, 1988.
16. Enzensberger, 1976/77 p.1
17. Slovo, 1988 p. 5 - emphases in the original.
18. ibid. p. 9
19. ibid, p. 8
20. ibid, pp. 10-11.
- 21.. Nolutshungu, op cit. p.49
- 22.. ibid, p.62
- 23.. ibid, p.63
- 24.. ibid, pp.119-120
- 25.. For the purposes of this analysis two works will be used as the basis of a critique: i) Hudson, P. and Sarakinsky, M. (1986) "Class Interests and Politics: The Case of the Urban African Bourgeoisie", South African Review, 3, Johannesburg: SARS; and Sarakinsky, M. (1987), "The Ideology and Politics of

- African Capitalists", Africa Perspective, Vol 3, No. 4, June.
- 26.. Southall, 1980.
- 27.. Hudson and Sarakinsky, op cit. p.171
- 28.. Sarakinsky, op cit, p.58
- 29.. The following assessment will be based on Wolpe's latest work, Class, Race and the Apartheid State, 1988.
- 30.. Wolpe, p.50
31. ibid
- 32.. Hudson and Sarakinsky, p.182
- 33.. ibid, p.181
- 34.. Jordan, 1988.
- 35.. Hudson and Sarakinsky, p.177
36. Nolutshungu, 1982
37. Sarakinsky, 1986 p. 8
38. Annual Report of the KwaZulu Finance Corporation, 1987, p. 4
39. Saul and Gelb, 1981 p. 80
- 40.. Hudson and Sarakinsky, p.170
41. Jordan, op cit
- 42.. Southall, p. 70
- 43.. The Business Magazine, November 1988, p. 10. The fact that NAFCOC's executive later reversed the decision of the SOUTACOC, does not change the fact that NAFCOC's relationship with the community councillors changed during the mass struggles of the 1984 to 1986 period. Also, the announcement of the appointment of the mayor of Mamelodi to the Liquor Board was received with hisses and murmurs at the second annual general meeting of the Ukhamba Liquor Association - an association of african licensed liquor traders - in April, 1988, such that one delegate claimed that, 'This appointment is suspicious', and other delegates claimed that it was an attempt to revive the discredited community council system (Survey of Race Relations -SRR - 1987/1988, pp. 378-379).
- 44.. Interview with S. Motsuenyane, NAFCOC president, The Business Magazine, August 1988, p.4
- 45.. Wolpe, p. 53

46. Abercrombie and Urry, 1983, p. 11
47. Edwards, 1979.
48. The traditional model of dual labour markets advances the notion that labour markets are divided into two: an internal and an external labour market. The former refers to the chances and occupational mobility within the firm or work organisation. The latter refers to those processes of preparing and selecting labour outside of the division of labour, eg schooling and education.
49. *ibid*, p 176
50. Callinicos and Harman, 1987.
51. Poulantzas, 1978a, 1978b, 1979; Wright 1978, 1985
52. Mallet, 1975
53. In fact, the case studies in his text, originally published in 1963, show that these workers were playing a 'vanguard role' in some of the crucial struggles of the working class.
54. See Poulantzas, 1975a
55. Two of the most notable works here are that of Carchedi, 1974, and Wright, 1977 and 1985. Carchedi's work was on the criteria for the economic identification of classes. Wright was trying to comprehend more specifically the social composition of what he called the 'contradictory class location' (ie the petty bourgeoisie) in capitalist social formations.
56. Poulantzas, 1974a; 1974b; 1975.
57. Poulantzas, 1974a; 1974b.
58. This formulation need not necessarily be an exceptionalist theory of the South African petty bourgeoisie. In fact many of these formulations would apply to many other African social formations.
59. Wolpe, 1988.
60. Goldman and van Houten, 1980.
61. Abercrombie and Urry, 1983.
62. Davies, 1979
63. Edwards, 1979
64. Abercrombie and Urry, op cit, p.149.
65. *ibid*.

66. This is essentially Poulantzas' argument.

67. Abercrombie and Urry, op cit, p. 150.

68. Edwards, op cit, p. 166.

Chapter 3

Apartheid, Monopoly Capitalism and the changing social composition of the African Petty Bourgeoisie, 1960-1980's

There are three major problems in the way neo-Marxian scholarship has tended to analyse the African petty bourgeoisie in South Africa. The first one is that of omitting to investigate the relationship between the growth of monopoly capitalism to the reproduction and class practices of the APB. The second problem is the opposite, whereby the analysis of the APB is located almost purely at an economic level, leading to a rather narrow economic understanding of this class. The third problem is that of analysing the petty bourgeoisie as one undifferentiated class. It is quite understandable that whenever one analyses the politics and ideology of the APB there is a tendency to focus mainly on apartheid, because this grouping presents an immediate political question for the national liberation struggle. The danger here of course is to ignore a very basic characteristic of classes, that they are in the first instance economically defined.

The opposite mistake made by economic analyses is to take the above truism as the mode through which classes in a social formation are to be understood. This approach tends to ignore the fact that classes do not exist as abstract economic categories, but exist within the context of struggle in specific social formations. In a country like South Africa class analysis becomes even more difficult, particularly in relation to the petty bourgeoisie, because the dominant contradiction is a racial one, therefore leading to the blurring of class characteristics of the APB. } ne

With regard to the third problem there is a tendency to treat the APB as a homogeneous group, with fairly fixed class interests whose pursuance can only be through the route of collaboration with the regime. The central argument in this section shows that an enormous

amount of differentiation has taken place within the APB over the past 30 years. Although this section will not be very detailed, it is important that a historical analysis of the changing social composition of the APB during the apartheid period in South Africa be made. If one is to undertake this task successfully it is important that the relationship of monopoly capitalism to apartheid is properly grasped, as well as the relationship between class and race in the class formation of the APB. The section aims to demonstrate how the economic and political changes in South Africa between 1960 and the 1980's have drastically changed the class structure of South Africa, and have given rise to a dependent and differentiated APB which is quite distinct from that of the 1950's and before. Essentially the central thesis here is that one cannot grasp the politics of the contemporary petty bourgeoisie unless its various components and their evolution under monopoly capitalism are properly analysed.

1. The changing nature of capital accumulation in the 1960's

The end of the Second World War marked the beginning of an economic boom throughout the western world. This was particularly marked by the consolidation of monopoly capitalism and the drive to capture markets beyond the national geographic borders of the imperialist countries. In South Africa, because of the heavy reliance on foreign investment, this also meant ".....large new investments of foreign, imperialist capital in industry and the consequent reproduction within the South African industrial sector of the monopoly capitalist relations of production of the imperialist metropolises".¹ The period prior to the Second World War in South Africa was mainly characterised by the growth of the mining industry and gross underdevelopment of manufacturing or the secondary sector. The massive growth of the mining industry, according to Innes, called forth the development of supporting industry which was to supply essential services and materials to the new gold mines, mainly in the Orange Free State and parts of the Transvaal.²

The unimpeded growth of the manufacturing sector was threatened by a growing and politicised urban African working class, as manifested, inter alia, by the growth of unionisation during the war, the 1946 mineworkers' strike and the mass mobilisation of the African population in general under the leadership of the African National Congress. The

determination of the state to remove the political and economic threat of the African working class took the form of a series of measures in the 1950's, culminating in the harassment and banning of African unions and political organisations respectively in the early 1960's. The actions of the apartheid state were clearly aimed at a 'permanent' solution to the problem of the urbanised African population and were later to evolve into the bantustan system. The smashing of African popular resistance in the early 1960's marked both the end of an era of political struggle and the beginning of a massive economic boom for capital.³

The defeat of African popular organisations unleashed a degree of economic growth never experienced in South Africa, drastically changing the nature of capital accumulation and patterns of exploitation and domination. The transformation of the economy had tremendous impact on the relationship between the state and capital on one hand, and the mass of the exploited and oppressed people on the other. The full transition to monopoly capitalism also threw into the arena of class struggle new social and political forces that had a significant imprint on the South African social formation.

The centralisation and concentration of economic power in South Africa and the accompanying changes within the process of capital accumulation largely, though not exclusively, laid the foundations for new initiatives in the political subjugation of the African working class. Although the transition to monopoly capitalism laid the minimum objective conditions for the development of apartheid, it should not be mechanically taken as the only determinant. Already, particularly as from 1910, South Africa was evolving a particular form of subjugation of the African masses and the working class in particular. The evolving colonial subjugation, policies of segregation and colour-bar in themselves anticipated many mechanisms of oppression that were to be crystallized in apartheid as from 1948. That is why it is somewhat misleading to divide the history of apartheid around 1948 and refer to the earlier period as that of segregation. Such a conception tends to ignore the continuities between the two periods and the significance of 1910 in the evolution of national oppression and class exploitation in South Africa. In addition, the development of apartheid in South Africa was firmly rooted in the demands of Afrikaner nationalism, whose consolidation was to a large extent dependent on the smashing of African nationalism and resistance. O'Meara rightly warns that Afrikaner nationalism should not simply be understood as an ideology but

as a material force that had significant consequences on economic and political developments in South Africa.⁴ It can therefore be argued that, at one level, apartheid became the primary form that monopoly capitalism took in the exploitation and domination of the African masses.

The objectives of apartheid were not to be achieved through repression alone, but also by securing the support of a segment of the African population, which was to carry out the details of separate development. Since the material and ideological foundations of apartheid are based on the notion of different African ethnic groups, the source for the creation of a collaborationist stratum became the rural and traditional structures of African society. This strategy did not face the post-1948 regime for the first time, as it were, but constituted the whole site of the colonial struggles between the white colonisers and the African colonised in South Africa. Marks makes the point very convincingly:

The structures and social relationships of African pre-capitalist society profoundly shaped the struggles that actually crystallised in policies of segregation. The contests over the form and pace of proletarianisation took place at a bewildering number of levels: between capital and labour, between and within branches of the state, between capitalist interests, and between all of these and the pre-colonial ruling class of chiefs and headmen in the countryside, as well as between the latter and their subjects.⁵

It was these particular contradictions that the apartheid state inherited in 1948 and sought to exploit and direct in favour of its apartheid policies and structures, as the mechanism for rationalising labour supply.

The strikes by workers in Durban in 1973 and the Soweto uprising in 1976 threw the state and capital into a crisis not experienced since the 1950's. The resurgence of mass political resistance and working class struggles in the 1970's presented South Africa's white ruling bloc with new contradictions, and new political forces were thrown onto the terrain of class struggle, thereby calling forth new strategies to contain such resistance. While the 1960's can be regarded as a period of political acquiescence on the part of the exploited and oppressed black masses, the 1970's was a period of the re-emergence of political resistance, with the popular masses regaining the political initiative once more. Similarly, whilst the

1960's can also be regarded as a period when state attention was more on rural political restructuring, the 1970's forced the state to respond to political developments in the urban areas in new ways rather than through repression alone.

A new contradiction facing the white ruling bloc in the 1970's was that rural restructuring was indirectly giving rise to a unified urban African opposition in the cities, contrary to the state's expectations of creating an ethnically-fragmented African population. The second contradiction arose from the state treating urban Africans as temporary sojourners, while, conversely, the growth of monopoly capitalism required a stable labour force around major centres of economic activity. The result of this was the emergence of a better educated, semi-skilled and highly politicised African working class. These struggles were to have a tremendous impact on class formation in South Africa.

The capitalist class itself entered the 1970's with greater political and economic unity⁶ - a reflection of the processes of concentration and centralisation of economic wealth. Politically capital was in a better position to pressurise the state towards reforms, and more willing to take the political initiative - for example, in founding the Urban Foundation, by pressing for the reform of influx control regulations and by increasing rhetoric on the promotion of an urban APB. The ruling class strategy towards the oppressed at this time was now not pure repression but reform as well, through attempts at creating a 'privileged' working class and a stable, affluent and collaborative urban petty bourgeoisie. It was within this context that one saw the creation of an urban African bureaucratic petty bourgeoisie (through the community council system), the relaxation of restrictions placed on urban African traders, and the emergence of an African corporate petty bourgeoisie in South African industrial corporations.

2. The strata and fractions of the African petty bourgeoisie

The consolidation of monopoly capitalism and apartheid in South Africa, together with the subsequent crises of the 1970's, and the ruling class's response to these, drastically changed the social composition of the APB. It is here proposed that the APB in South Africa consists of four distinct strata:

- the bureaucratic petty bourgeoisie (BPB)

- the trading petty bourgeoisie (TAPB)
- the civil petty bourgeoisie (CPB)
- the corporate petty bourgeoisie (CAPB)

The first three strata have been in existence since the turn of the century, albeit with a different social composition. The fourth one is a new stratum emerging in the late 1960's and early 1970's. Although the first three were already there prior to the 1960's, their social composition and economic and political location has changed in very significant ways under monopoly capitalism and apartheid.

What was distinct about the emergence of the APB is that it was, inter alia, a firm part of the strategies of the white ruling bloc to deal with the crisis facing white rule at different points in time. As a result of this, the APB grew in a distorted way. It was not only highly dependent on the apartheid state and structures of capital accumulation, but was also firmly subjugated to its white counterpart. The intensity of mass struggles in the 1980's was to throw large sectors of the APB into crisis, and they were caught in the whirlwind of struggles against apartheid.

The discussion that follows below is primarily aimed at demonstrating that the petty bourgeoisie does not have a single political identity, and has the tendency to fractionate at critical moments of transition from one conjuncture to the next.

a) Political restructuring and the rise of a bantustan bureaucratic petty bourgeoisie

Since the 1960's was a period characterised by 'peaceful' capital accumulation, there is hardly any systematic and detailed account of political restructuring during this period. While this section does not claim any systematic or detailed analysis, it does attempt a very brief sketch of this political restructuring, highlighting those factors that have a bearing on the question under discussion.

The political restructuring through the bantustan system centred around the full incorporation of chiefs and headmen into the structures of political domination. However, this process was

not originated by the apartheid state; it had been in use for more than a century, particularly under the colonial administration in the Cape and Natal colonies.⁷ The struggles between the colonisers and the African people centred mainly around terms of subjugation, and consequently the chiefs became central to the whole process of restructuring. The co-option of chiefs onto structures of colonial domination had always been a problem for the British colonisers. It presented them with a series of dilemmas which, by the time the Nationalists took over, had never been fully resolved. Although AmaXhosa and AmaZulu were totally subjugated by the British empire, by the time of the Act of Union "...there were constraints on the power of the colonial state or capital to simply restructure African society in accord with immediate self-interest".⁸ Firstly this was because of the potential and probably real role conflict confronting the chief in his dual position as representative of his tribe and as an administrative official of the government. There was also a deep concern from the colonial administration about the effects of the government policy of limiting the chiefs' power for fear that the chiefs might take an anti-government position.⁹ This dilemma is perhaps best captured in a statement made by the governor general of Natal to his ministers

I cannot but wonder whether the very policy to which the government is committed ...in...preserving tribalism as far as is possible, and of supporting the authority of chiefs - is not seriously hindered by the failure to use this great capacity for personal devotion and discipline instead of trying to suppress it.¹⁰

The second dilemma relation to the question of full incorporation of the chiefs into the structures of colonial domination was that once conquered, the successful co-option of the existing ruling class - one accustomed, moreover, to exacting tribute - could lighten the burdens of a hard-pressed colonial service.¹¹ But at the same time too much co-operation with the coloniser by the chiefs could undermine their political legitimacy in the eyes of their 'subjects'. Such a state of affairs could cause the alliance between the chiefs and the colonial state to backfire, thereby weakening the ideological and political hegemony of such an alliance over the people. In fact, in the Transkei region, this problem of the chiefs was a subject of debate even among the African councillors serving on the Bunga for its whole existence between 1931 and 1956.¹² For example it was these dilemmas which characterised the British administration's contradictory attitude and relationship to King Solomon Zulu during his reign between 1913 and 1933.¹³

Although the institution of the chieftaincy was fully integrated into the colonial economy and colonial relations of domination, these specific dilemmas had at the same time created space for resistance on the part of many chiefs. In Natal the climax of this resistance was the Bhambatha rebellion in 1906. The masses on the other hand were caught in a dilemma between traditional loyalty to the chiefs, and resistance to colonial exploitation and oppression as exercised through the institution of chieftaincy. This dilemma manifested itself in the co-existence of both deference and massive resistance to chiefs.

It was these particular tensions that the Nationalists inherited when they came into power in 1948. The Bantu Authorities Act was the first concrete conceptualisation of territorial segregation under apartheid, and was further elaborated in the Promotion of Self-Government Act, 1959. The first task that the apartheid state sets itself to do in order to make the bantustans effective reservoirs of cheap labour, was to win over the chiefs. Whilst the British colonial administration was caught in a series of dilemmas vis-a-vis the incorporation of chiefs, the Nationalist government adopted a much more aggressive approach using a combination of positive rewards and repression to get the chiefs onto the side of the government. The chiefs were effectively relegated to the lower levels of the apartheid bureaucracy, as they fell under the control of white magistrates and commissioners. Nevertheless the promise of creating independent bantu states meant the removal of laws restricting the aspirations of the rural petty bourgeoisie and would give them control over the bantustan subordinate state apparatuses.¹⁴

This constituted the 'positive' inducement by the state. To some chiefs, particularly because their status was downgraded by the colonial administration, this arrangement was attractive. This was an opening for more effective political power. Southall even argues that it was largely their minor responsibilities of an administrative and judicial nature, that enabled the chiefs to maintain a considerable degree of popular esteem.¹⁵ It was this measure of popular esteem that some chiefs, and the institution of chieftaincy, had that further attracted the Nationalist government to the chiefs. It was hoped that the popularity of chiefs would legitimise apartheid and the bantustan system.

The apartheid state's strategy to co-opt chiefs was never a smooth process, precisely because

of this very popularity of the chiefs prior to 1948. Firstly there was a measure of resistance by some chiefs to their incorporation into the bantustan structures, as they feared losing their popularity with the masses. It was in response to this resistance that the negative method of punishing recalcitrant chiefs was used by the regime. For instance, between January 1955 and July 1958, thirty-five chiefs or headmen were deposed for a variety of official reasons, whose content was actually political.¹⁶

The introduction of Bantu Authorities also gave rise to popular resistance in many rural areas of South Africa. The most significant of these was the rebellion of Amampondo in the Transkei.¹⁷ The state's response to this resistance was tightened repression, and a handing over of more repressive powers to the pro-government chiefs who were already working within the system. For instance Proclamation 400 passed by the Transkei Legislative Assembly in the early 60's was directed to the Amampondo rebellion. There was also a further trap for the chiefs in their participation in the implementation of the bantustan strategy. Whilst it appeared as if the bantustan system was restoring the power which had been eroded by the colonial administration, in effect these new powers were intricately interwoven into the needs of monopoly capital and the state to manage the surplus population and the industrial reserve army of labour. As Kuper points out,

The chief does not rule his people with the aid of his council in the traditional manner. He rules by the indulgence of a foreign (sic) government, administering its politics and laws, and accountable to its bureaucracy.¹⁸

It was this process of incorporating chiefs within the bantustan system that saw them emerging as the core of the bureaucratic petty bourgeoisie in the bantustans. The organised power of the chiefs was also institutionalised through the composition of the bantustan legislative assemblies. In all the bantustans, there were (and are) more appointed than elected members in the legislative assemblies. It was in this way that the tribal paradigm within the bantustans became the dominant ideology of not only the state but also that of the bureaucratic petty bourgeoisie. Chieftaincy became the single most important institution in the bantustans, as captured by Matanzima's statement in 1975, shortly before its 'independence':

In the Transkei we will forever retain chieftainship.... the black man has his own system of democracy, centred on the royal chiefs. These chiefs legislated for the people - commoners did not make laws for the chiefs. It must be the chiefs who are sent to the United Nations and who take part in detente moves.¹⁹

As a result of these developments within the bantustans there has been a steady growth of "... a petty bourgeoisie... (which) has grown up within the protection of separate development policy."²⁰

However, what is most striking and perhaps the most important point that is being made in this thesis, is the extent of dependence and total subjugation of the bureaucratic petty bourgeoisie into the structures of capital accumulation and apartheid. Apart from the more complex mechanisms of control that the white ruling bloc institutionalised, there were more direct mechanisms for control that were set up. The apartheid regime despatched a large number of bureaucrats into seconded and permanent positions in the bantustan civil services, for example, departmental secretaries, township superintendents, managers of various bantustan development corporations, etc. Although the seconded officials were sent there under the guise of providing administrative 'expertise' and guiding these administrations through their initial stages, most of these seconded bureaucrats have spent all their careers in these institutions. Over and above this they make key appointments, either appointing other afrikaner bureaucrats or their own black protege's. The outcome of this has been a never-ending spree of secondments, thus ensuring permanent control of the bantustan bureaucracies.

The administrative continuity between Pretoria and the bantustans articulates itself in the way changes in South African law lead to exactly similar changes in the bantustans, eg. sales tax, detentions, states of emergency, etc. The positions occupied by white seconded officials were intended to be taken over ultimately by Africans, but they have become the site for the extended reproduction of an Afrikaner petty bourgeoisie. It is this contradiction that has further undermined the capacity of the bureaucratic petty bourgeoisie to reproduce itself on a wider scale, keeping the core small.

The consolidation of the relationship between the apartheid state and the bureaucratic petty bourgeoisie, strengthened the hold of monopoly capital, and subjected the African working class to the rigours of capital accumulation. As a result South Africa's white ruling bloc entered the 1970's with confidence about the hegemonic hold of monopoly capitalism over the whole of society, firmly in alliance with a collaborationist and dependent stratum of a bantustan bureaucratic petty bourgeoisie.

Although the bantustans were minimally affected by the struggles of the early to the mid-seventies, the struggles of the 1980's shook these protected enclaves of apartheid to the core. These struggles exposed once and for all the shaky foundations upon which these structures were erected. Since 1985 no single bantustan remains unaffected by the wave of the semi-insurrectionary struggle of this period. In fact, the seeds for the collapse of many bantustans in 1989-90, were planted during the mid-1980's. Because of the structural dependence of the bantustans on the apartheid state, a crisis for the regime became a crisis for these areas as well. There is also evidence that the regime is unable to tolerate the corruption and squandering of money and resources in these areas. One very clear indication of this intolerance on the part of the regime, is its unwillingness to interfere with the coups in the Transkei, Venda and Ciskei. All this means that the apartheid state no longer has the means to finance these little empires, because of its own fiscal crisis and an economy under siege.

However, the dependence of the bantustan bureaucratic petty bourgeoisie on the apartheid state has also been demonstrated by the fact that these bantustans, in times of crisis, have appealed to the state for more assistance. Whilst in the mid-1980's the state would use repression to immediately back these regimes to the hilt, of late the state has intervened less and less. This process has not only been taking place in the 'independent' bantustans, but also in the 'self-governing' ones. The increasing dependence of the bantustans on the apartheid repressive state apparatus is graphically illustrated through KwaZulu. Even though Inkatha had vowed not to take independence, and was at one stage popular as part of the national liberation movement, now the organisation has moved so close to the regime that it is contemplating an open and formalised alliance with the Nationalists.

By relying more and more on the state, the BPB has isolated itself even further from the

people. It is this contradiction that has weakened the bantustans, and consequently loosened the grip that the BPB had had. What is most striking in this regard is the fact that the civil petty bourgeoisie in the bantustans have played a key role in the struggles against the bureaucratic core. This shows that the relationship between the two strata has been nothing more than one based on patronage rather than consent. The participation of the civil petty bourgeoisie in mass struggles in the bantustans also indicates that it is only the bureaucratic petty bourgeoisie that benefits from the maintenance of the bantustan system.

The struggles within the bantustans have left the BPB very weak; in many places it has lost control over the bantustan state apparatuses. The conflicts have led to some sections of the BPB aligning themselves with the mass democratic and the national liberation movement. The fate of the core of the bureaucratic petty bourgeoisie remains tied to the future of apartheid. As the state becomes less capable of handling its own contradictions, so will the BPB be further weakened. In fact it is the realisation by the BPB that apartheid, in the long run, will not be able to secure their own class position in future, which makes them re-align themselves politically in the contemporary period.

b) Urban reproduction and the making of an urban bureaucratic petty bourgeoisie.

The resurgence of mass resistance in the 1970's, starting with the 1973 workers' strikes in Durban and the 1976 student rebellion threw the state and capital into an unprecedented crisis that shattered the acquiescence of the 1960's. These struggles were sharply characterised by the fact that they were almost exclusively urban. Because of this, many of the bantustans were minimally affected. Nevertheless, the issues that these struggles were raising had a significant impact on the policy of the bantustans. In other words the fundamental political questions posed by these struggles related to, *inter alia*, the very existence of bantustans. The uprisings in the urban areas posed a challenge to the existence of the bantustans as the apartheid state had hoped that every urban African would be a temporary sojourner who belonged to one of the homelands. The urban uprisings meant that those Africans in those areas regarded themselves as permanent. At another level these struggles were an aggressive assertion of the rejection of the bantustan scheme. Therefore the struggles in the urban areas

articulated very strongly with the bantustans, although in the mid-1970's there was a less direct connection between the two sites. However the urban struggles of the 1970's laid the basis for a closer articulation between these two sites, a situation that remains now at the beginning of the 1990's.²¹ The aim of this section is a brief account of the development of the urban struggles as a context within which to locate the emergence of an urban African bureaucratic petty bourgeoisie.

The presence and influx of Africans into the urban areas in South Africa has long been a central concern for the state. Since 1910 the state began to realise that the cities constitute the main terrain of struggle; this was highlighted by government spokespersons in 1919.²²

The significance of urbanisation for South Africa since the Union was founded lay in the fact that the formation of the Union itself was based on the subjugation of the African people. The subjugation of the majority implied strict control over the movement of Africans into and out of the cities. Since then the struggle over urbanisation has taken different forms and significance during different historical periods leading to the crisis in 1975-77 and the breakthroughs by the democratic movement in the 1980's.

The evolution of the struggles around urbanisation should be understood within the context of the reproduction of labour power under capitalism and "...historically within the state's interventions to assure the general conditions of the production and reproduction of capital and the political domination of the bourgeoisie."²³ The best conditions under which labour could be exploited in South African capitalism constitutes the fundamental contradiction in the development of urban policy. Nevertheless, the struggle over urbanisation in South Africa has over the years developed its own momentum, such that it has become the most crucial site of struggle for a democratic South Africa. Sometimes these struggles have taken their own momentum, even in contradistinction to the imperatives of capital accumulation. The central contradiction in the white ruling bloc's strategy towards African urbanisation has been how to provide labour for capital whilst at the same time limiting the influx of Africans into the cities. However, it is not the aim of this section to deal with the question of urbanisation per se, but rather it is concerned with the transformation of this problem into a terrain for the reproduction of a collaborative urban African bureaucratic petty bourgeoisie. This section focuses largely on the transformation as it took place around the 1976 explosions

in the country.

The background to the present crisis in the urban areas can be immediately traced to the strategies of the apartheid state post 1948. The rationale behind the state's urbanisation policies has been that Africans are temporary sojourners in the cities of South Africa. This was articulated by Eieslen, Secretary of Native Affairs of the first Nationalist government:

All the Bantu have their permanent homes in the Reserves and their entry into other areas and into the urban centres is merely of a temporary nature and for economic reasons ...The Bantu have no claim to permanency in the European areas...they are in these areas as workers, and can therefore own no real estate and claim no political rights outside the Bantu Reserves.²⁴

The beginning of the sixties was characterised by an earnest implementation of the bantustan system, and at the same time influx control was tightened as from 1964. The 1960's also witnessed the onset of massive removals, resettlements and endorsements of people out of the urban areas.²⁵ In 1961 the state created the Urban Bantu Councils (UBCs) to replace the Advisory Boards. Members of these councils were drawn from the African communities themselves. The UBCs were powerless institutions and defined by the state as strictly non-political, meant to act only as sounding boards to warn the state of possible discontent in African townships. There was very little difference between the Advisory Boards and the UBCs as Kuper notes:

The White (Bantu Administration) Committee is the gatekeeper, closing out the physical presence of the subordinate African, ensuring that executive decisions affecting his welfare should be taken for or against him, but never with him.²⁶

Although the Advisory Boards were used by some of the members of the urban African petty bourgeoisie to gain entry into business and trading, and also to advance their class interests, their powers were so constricted that the disadvantages far outweighed the advantages. For example the advantages of participation were offset by the intensifying mass struggles. The growing militancy of Africans in the 1950's, under the leadership of the ANC, chased the urban petty bourgeoisie away from participation. In the 1950's the level of radicalisation was diffused very widely amongst the petty bourgeoisie. The mass struggles further weakened

the UBCs, such that these bodies remained somewhat obscure even in the 1960's. At the beginning of the 1970's the UBCs were further subjugated to the Bantu Affairs Administration Boards, established in 1971 throughout the country. The subjugation of the UBCs under the Administration Boards ironically weakened them further, so that the prospects of making real concessions in co-opting the African petty bourgeoisie were minimal. The limits of UBCs as a site for the creation of a collaborative African petty bourgeoisie were also rooted in the fact that the state was at this stage totally against the making of concessions to urban Africans, who they regarded as being strictly there as labour. According to the state, the aspirations of an African petty bourgeoisie were to be met in the bantustans. At this stage the state had no interest in the development of an urban-based APB. In fact the urban policy of the apartheid state was aimed at crushing any development and consolidation of an APB.

The resurgence of worker and mass resistance in the early 1970's, culminating in the student uprisings in 1976, called forth the biggest capital and state restructuring of the apartheid era in South Africa. The restructuring was largely initiated by big capital itself with the formation of the Urban Foundation in December 1976. The thrust of the Urban Foundation was to contribute to the improvement of conditions in the urban African townships as a prerequisite for political stability. Implicit in this stance, of course, was the de facto recognition of the permanence of urban Africans, a stance going against official state policy at the time. The first object of attack in the township struggles of 1976 were the UBCs, derogately referred to by residents as the 'Urban Boys Council'. In fact in Soweto it was the UBC that collapsed first in the face of mass resistance.

The 1976 struggles threw the apartheid regime's urban policy into its worst crisis. It was this crisis that necessitated the granting of permanent residence to sections of the African population and new ways of maintaining control over the urban African population. The state appointed the Riekert Commission in 1977 to investigate the question of African urbanisation. The state however, also started setting up new structures for township administration in 1977, the community councils. These initiatives marked a significant departure from the early apartheid period, and in fact were a concession on the question of urban African residential rights. In a nutshell, the apartheid state's strategy was to grant urban rights to Africans

already permanently employed and settled in the urban areas, and tightening control on those without urban residential rights.

Similar to the 1950's and 1960's in the bantustans, in order to make the strategy viable, the state had to secure the consent of a collaborationist urban African petty bourgeoisie. The development of a collaborative urban petty bourgeoisie became part of the Total Strategy of a reformist PW Botha regime, incorporating, *inter alia*, a "new" urban policy attempting to solve mainly two problems:

Firstly the total unprofitability of administering townships had to be solved somehow. Secondly, the demands of the popular classes ... had to be taken into account, particularly given the growing significance of monopoly capital in state and economy.²⁷

The state started an earnest campaign to recruit community councillors, primarily from two sources. The first source was the people from the defunct UBCs. The second source was from the ranks of the aspirant trading African petty bourgeoisie, who saw opportunities to reproduce themselves through the control of administration in the townships. In fact the community councils were quickly transformed into sites for the reproduction of an aspirant African petty bourgeoisie wanting to become traders and shopkeepers. Community councils were introduced at the time when the state was lifting many of the restrictions on African traders in the urban areas. In order to secure the consent of this stratum the state offered certain concessions and powers that were absent for the earlier Advisory Boards and UBCs. Some of these powers included allocation and administration of sites for school and trading purposes, as well as housing; maintenance of general services in the townships; and combatting unlawful occupation of land and buildings.

However, the power granted to the community councils was like a double-edged sword in that it put this class sharply against the interests and the struggles of the people in the urban areas. The community councils were part of the state strategy to delegate some of its repressive powers to the community councillors, who were to distribute highly contested resources. What also sharpened the struggles around the distribution of township resources was the fact that the primary aim of the councillors for participating in local government was not to serve the people, but to use these resources for reproducing and strengthening their

own class positions. Because of this, right from the start the community councils, and the petty bourgeoisie within them, were set on a collision course with the people. The conflict between the community councillors and the people was also rooted in the fact that the state was escaping its responsibility to provide, and attempting to divert the focus of the struggle away from itself, to its collaborators. In this way the community councils were similar to the bantustans.

The community councillors were essentially a client petty bourgeoisie under the control and watchful eye of the Minister of Co-Operation and Development, through the administration boards. The fact that the councils were controlled by the unpopular administration boards further undermined their legitimacy with the popular masses. The beginning of the 1980's saw the resurgence of mass struggles on a higher level than before; in the urban areas they were largely aimed at the community councils. This was despite the proud claim by the state that by the end of the 1970's, 224 community councils had been established countrywide.

According to Hindson, the struggles against the Koornhof Bills, which led to the formation of the United Democratic Front, was the beginning of the end of the Riekert strategy of dividing the bantustan from the urban based working class.²⁸ This strategy was significantly undermined by the growth of the labour movement which was able to unite workers across the urban/bantustan divide. These developments were to throw South Africa into a semi-insurrectionary period beginning in 1984. The intensification of the mass struggles in the mid 1980's had effectively weakened the hold of the urban bureaucratic petty bourgeoisie, such that by the time of the first state of emergency in 1985, an estimated 350 000 township residents in the Reef alone had not paid rent for a year. Over and above this a total of 240 African councillors had resigned countrywide, and by the middle of 1986 only 3 township councils in the country as a whole were properly functioning.²⁹

Like their bantustan counterparts, the councillors are a dependent petty bourgeoisie whose continued survival is tied to the continuation of the undemocratic structures of apartheid. Therefore the rent boycott and the development of alternative democratic structures (civics, street committees, people's courts, etc.), are an immediate threat to the class interests of the urban bureaucratic petty bourgeoisie. In the same way as the bantustan bureaucratic petty

bourgeoisie, they have to rely more and more on the repressive state apparatuses to bail them out. This is happening increasingly as the struggle intensifies, and is seen particularly in the creation of 'municipal police' who are responsible to the councillors, and who work hand in hand with apartheid 'security' forces. The failure of the state to give the councils adequate funds - forcing the latter to rely on increased rents - has thrown the councils into an even deeper crisis and permanent structural conflict with the masses. Although the councils have not been given as much power as their bantustan counterparts, the above developments are pointers to the state's intentions in that direction.

However the unbanning of the ANC and the SACP, as well as the subsequent release of Nelson Mandela has weakened the bureaucratic petty bourgeoisie even more, both in the bantustans and the urban areas. This has thrown the entire African bureaucratic petty bourgeoisie into a crisis. They have to choose whether to align themselves with the regime and sink, or to align themselves with the national liberation movement. Already the bureaucratic petty bourgeoisie is split with some sections firmly aligning themselves with the democratic movement. The core of the urban bureaucratic petty bourgeoisie remains weakened, and its future will depend on its attitude to the democratic movement. With the latest developments, the chances of being revived are minimal; they can only strengthen themselves through an alignment with the national liberation movement as some sections are beginning to do.

c) Apartheid, monopoly capital and the making of a trading African petty bourgeoisie³⁰

The third stratum of the African petty bourgeoisie is the trading African petty bourgeoisie (TAPB). The TAPB, with the exception of the BPB, constitutes the most highly organised and 'politicised' stratum of the APB.³¹ Most of the debates on the APB in South Africa have largely centred around the political behaviour, ideology and class interests of this class as will be demonstrated in the next chapter. In this section the history and changing social composition of this class will be briefly sketched, as a means of showing its own specificities and general characteristics vis-a-vis the other strata of the APB. The focus will be on the changes within this stratum, such that it can be treated as a distinct stratum of the APB whilst

being a component of the whole.

Instead of treating the evolution of this stratum in the post War period in South Africa through a dry periodisation, this appraisal will be made within the context of some of the contemporary debates in South Africa. This will also be brief and will merely lay a foundation for some of the issues to be taken up in the last chapter. One of the important questions that has been posed about this stratum is its capacity to reproduce itself, as well as an assessment of the possibilities of winning it over to the programme of the national liberation movement. This will be done through a periodisation of its development and through some of the current political and economic features of the stratum.

The TAPB has been fully caught in the whirlwind of contemporary South African struggles in the townships and have been squeezed from all sides by the competing forces both in the political and economic arenas. This stratum is mainly, though not exclusively, organised under the auspices of the National African Federated Chamber of Commerce and Industry (NAFCOC), through its various branches and affiliates spread throughout the country, including the bantustans. Whilst this stratum has generally blossomed in many parts of Africa, and is in some instances becoming the domestic bourgeoisie, in South Africa it has become generally repressed, like all strata of the APB prior to the mid-1970's. Its suppression has largely shaped its contemporary capacity and social composition. However, in order to understand the evolution of this strata under apartheid and monopoly capitalism, one needs to examine its evolving relationship with the state and capital.

Relationship with the apartheid state

The history of the TAPB, as alluded to above, has been a history of suppression under apartheid. The reasons for the suppression of the TAPB can be broadly classified into three post-War periods. Firstly, the coming into power of the National Party resulted in a vigorous state policy of, *inter alia*, the promotion of the interests of Afrikaner volkskapitalisme.³² The achievement of this objective made it necessary to repress and

smash any traces of aspiring African capitalism. However, this process was largely a continuation of the British colonial policy of suppressing African business enterprises.³³ As in all capitalist societies, the pattern of growth of capitalism is largely connected to the type of state in such social formations. In Africa in particular, Illife argues that in the context of neo-colonialism, the attitude and practices of the state towards capitalism in general and indigenous capitalists in particular play a very significant role in the ability of the indigenous petty bourgeoisie to become a capitalist class.³⁴

Secondly, and flowing from the above, the TAPB lacked the financial and managerial resources and skills to strengthen its hold in the face of colonialism. The only source of financial support that African aspirant capitalists had for a long time was the Bantu Investment Corporation (BIC) founded in 1959. This provided very meagre resources, and its assistance was merely restricted to businesses operating in the highly depleted bantustans.³⁵ Overall, the policy of the apartheid regime ensured that such business enterprises remained small and restricted to the townships and the bantustans until the 1970's, when the state began to relax some of these restrictions. In other words, Africans were merely involved in what Geertz has referred to as 'bazaar capitalism' which is 'small in scale, commercial in form, and individualistic and ephemeral in organisation'.³⁶ Up to this day, despite some changes over the years, African business still remains essentially bazaar.

The relationship between the state and the TAPB has of course not been static. It has been a changing relationship, hence the varying nature of the social composition of the TAPB since World War II. The changing attitude of the state towards this grouping can be divided into three broad periods, and has essentially been underpinned by the intensification of the national liberation struggle and the subsequent crisis that has beset South Africa's white ruling bloc. The periodisation adopted here is very brief and is undertaken only in that it highlights the changing social composition of this stratum and its political fractionation in the recent period.

The first period of the relationship between the TAPB and the apartheid state is between 1948-1962. These years marked the ascendancy and consolidation of the power of the

apartheid state, coupled with and laying the foundations for the rise of monopoly capitalism in South Africa. The opportunities provided by the post-war period created immense scope for capital accumulation. Although the number of African traders were inevitably growing during this period, they were largely constrained within the framework of highly restrictive apartheid laws. Since the foundation of apartheid is separate development and national oppression (of Africans in particular), the state could only tolerate the growth of petty trading within the urban African residential areas and the bantustans. This proved, however, to be a threat to the growth of an afrikaner capitalist class in the commercial sector. It meant that afrikaner business could not have access to African buying power which had grown tremendously in the post war period.³⁷ It was against this background that the Afrikaans Chamber of Commerce argued at its 1958 conference that trading licenses to Africans in their own areas should be restricted. They saw money carried by Africans as 'white money' since '... the money Africans earn by employment in the cities is white. It therefore belonged to white people and it must come back to them'.³⁸ The state was at pains to explain that too many restrictions on African trading in their areas violated the principles and spirit of separate development. The dilemma faced by the state during this period was the necessity to reconcile the interests of a nascent Afrikaner commercial class and the 'logic' of apartheid. This dilemma was sharpened by the fact that African traders themselves sometimes manipulated the very language and policy of the state to try to open up more space for themselves:

The Nationalist government was a God-send to the (African) traders. The traders are well disposed to the government in this respect [that Africans should trade with their own people].... The one thing the traders feel the Government has done is to give them an opportunity to get shops.³⁹

Because the state largely represented the interests of the Afrikaner petty bourgeoisie, it chose to resolve this dilemma by imposing even more restrictions on urban African trading activity. The state tried to offset this reversal to African traders by promising them unlimited business opportunities in the bantustans.

The policy of the state towards the TAPB in the 1960's was to severely limit the opportunities of the African traders to accumulate. A very clear distinction was now

developing between the urban and the bantustan based TAPB. The urban African traders were heavily restricted, whilst the state was encouraging them to go and trade within the bantustans.⁴⁰ This created a very different relationship with the two fractions of the TAPB, the urban and the bantustan based. The differentiation between these two fractions, which heralded a radical differentiation in the social composition of the TAPB, marked the beginning of the second period of the relationship between the state and the TAPB.

This period starts in 1962 when the state passed legislation restricting the activities of the TAPB in the urban areas, severely proscribing its capacity to reproduce itself as a petty bourgeoisie. During this period, the state created a highly dependent fraction in the bantustan because of its being closely tied to the finance injected by the apartheid state. The dependency of the TAPB in the bantustans was concretely cemented by the dependence of this fraction on the bantustan state apparatuses, which this class captured as a base for creating conditions for accumulation. Thus it was no surprise that even the social composition of the bantustan legislative assemblies showed a strong bias toward traders.⁴¹

For the non-bantustan fraction of the TAPB the situation was different. While the pre-1962 period was characterised by repressive tolerance, after 1962 there was even tighter control over the urban TAPB. It was in response to these developments that the forerunner to NAFCOC, the National African Chamber of Commerce, was formed in 1964 as an organisation representing the national interests of the African traders. Although the state gave NAFCOC a hearing at ministerial level for the first time in 1975, breaking with the past practices, and started lifting some of the restrictions on African traders, it was not until after 1976 that the state began to lift many of the most debilitating restrictions on African traders in the urban areas. However 1975 marked the end of the previous era and took the relationship between the state and the TAPB to a qualitatively different one.

The post-1976 reforms by the state began to seriously address the question of creating a black petty bourgeoisie. This process was initiated and led by capital, in the immediate aftermath of the Soweto students' uprisings, and the state tacked its post-1978 reform programme onto this model. Whilst the state had vigorously applied its restrictions on African traders in the urban areas prior to 1976, in the subsequent period the state relaxed many of the restrictions and initiated and encouraged assistance to what was to become known as the development

of black entrepreneurs. Some of the new regulations announced by the government in 1977 included: permission to African traders to operate more than one business; an extension of the number of trades that Africans could be involved in; freedom to employ people without permanent urban residential rights; and a ruling that insolvency no longer led to automatic withdrawal of a trading licence.⁴² The remaining restrictions were progressively lifted, so that by 1987 most of the legal and statutory restrictions on African traders had been removed.

The above developments led to the fractionation and differentiation within the TAPB that was to become the major characteristic of this stratum. Three fractions of the TAPB emerged. The first one was closely linked to the bureaucratic petty bourgeoisie in the bantustans. This fraction aligned itself closely with the bureaucratic petty bourgeoisie, so that its own reproduction was closely related to the survival of these structures of apartheid. What caused this close alignment to the BPB, was that there was often a big overlap between the members of this fraction and the BPB itself. The one primary characteristic is the use of the state apparatus by this class to reproduce itself. This process is sometimes referred to as parasitic capitalism. Its classic expression is in the way the Matanzima brothers in the Transkei used their positions in the bantustan state apparatuses to acquire more businesses, and came to own virtually every bottle store and liquor outlet in Umtata. In other words, this fraction of the TAPB is mostly the bureaucratic petty bourgeoisie itself.

The second fraction of the TAPB is that linked to the urban bureaucratic petty bourgeoisie in the townships. This fraction shares many of the same characteristics as the bantustan TAPB, in that they are also entirely dependent on the apartheid structures for their own reproduction. Over and above the fact that many of them are born out of these structures of apartheid (for example through the process of parasitic capitalism), they have used the township governing structures to acquire businesses. However, one distinct difference between the two is largely located in the difference between the bantustan BPB and its urban counterparts. The bantustan BPB, at least until very recently, have been quite strong and controlled a wide variety of resources in the bantustans. The township BPB has always been weak in light of the intensity of mass struggles in urban areas. This difference reproduces itself within the TAPB, in that the reproduction of the urban one is quite fragile, given the

weaknesses of their economic, social and political base. This goes to show the extent of the overlap between the TAPB and the BPB in the bantustans and within township councils. This fraction of the TAPB is largely the beneficiary of the post 1976 restructuring of urban African administration in South Africa's townships.

The third fraction of the TAPB is what can be referred to as the 'autonomous' fraction, largely located outside the bantustans. They are autonomous in that they are neither under the direct control of the bantustans nor the township councils. This fraction of the TAPB is the largest and is concentrated mainly in the urban areas. Its contemporary relationship with the apartheid state and its subsidiary structures, the bantustans and the township councils is characterised by tension and sometimes by bitter conflict. As will be argued later, the relationship between the apartheid state and the TAPB is principally one of tension and antagonism rather than collusion. It is a relationship that can neither be said to be one of collusion and/or collaboration with the state, nor that of outright commitment to a revolutionary overthrow of the apartheid regime.

The conflict between the 'autonomous' fraction and those fractions linked to the bureaucratic petty bourgeoisie however, has been much sharper. The tension here arises out of the fact that the latter controls the licensing and allocation of business sites. The allocation of these business resources is done through an entrenched patronage system, which on average acts against the interests of the autonomous fraction of the trading African petty bourgeoisie. This tension is sharply reflected in Natal in the breakaway of the KwaZulu and Natal Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KWANACOCI) - which is closely aligned to Inkatha - from the NAFCOC affiliate Inyanda.

The division between the various fractions of the TAPB is principally, but not exclusively, determined by their relationship to the apartheid state. For those fractions linked to the BPB, there is a close co-operation with the apartheid state, rooted in the structural linkages to the bantustans and township councils. The autonomous fraction operates apart from, though subjugated to the legal jurisdiction of these structures. Another important relationship that is an outcome of this fractionation, and also one of the determining factors, is that between the TAPB and monopoly capital. The fractions linked to the apartheid structures are entirely

dependent on investments from monopoly capital in their areas. This dependency manifests itself in various ways. For instance, the BPB engages in vicious attacks against the democratic movement in order to create maximum conditions for the exploitation of workers in their spheres of control and territories. They are also vehemently opposed to sanctions since the lifeline of the apartheid regime is also theirs. This dependency is also manifested in the tripartite companies. The BPB has been encouraging the formation of tripartite companies owned jointly by development corporations, white commercial capital, and African traders. These arrangements provide a base for the reproduction of the TAPB in these areas. Such companies also provide the much needed tax base for these economically depleted areas.

The autonomous TAPB on the other hand is largely anti-monopolies, since these give them what they call 'unfair competition' in their own areas. Consequently, they are against tripartite companies which they regard as depriving the African entrepreneur of a base for accumulation. Members of this fraction also argue that the tripartite companies encourage Africans to be used as fronts by the big monopolies. Although this fraction of the TAPB is also funded by the big monopolies, they see this funding as a contribution by capital to their own independent development.

With the growing mass struggles, the autonomous fraction of the TAPB has been catapulted onto the side of the mass democratic movement, as illustrated by NAFCOC's own political behaviour in the last few years. However NAFCOC, as the major representative of the class interests of this stratum, is much more complex. It is made complex by the fact that NAFCOC membership includes all the three fractions of the TAPB, although the autonomous fraction is the most dominant and hegemonic within the organisation. Therefore the tensions between the dependent fractions and the autonomous one is reproduced within NAFCOC itself. The growing struggles of the masses have tended to exacerbate these tensions as large sections of the TAPB are moving closer to the MDM. Their moving closer is not necessarily an outcome of total acceptance of the goals of the democratic movement - whose immediate goal is a national liberation that lays the basis for a long-term socialist transformation. However, this alignment illustrates the fact that in the current conjuncture, where the programme of the national liberation movement has become hegemonic within the mass

struggles, the TAPB can best pursue its interests via the route of the mass democratic movement. This factor creates a lot of space for the winning over of large sections of this stratum. This is even more so now, when in most bantustans the TAPB's position has been considerably weakened by the overthrow of previous bantustan cliques. Although those fractions aligned to the BPB are the most reactionary, the changes within the bantustans open up the possibility of sections of them aligning themselves with the national liberation movement. This does not, however, rule out the possibility that their alignment with the national liberation movement may be for opportunistic reasons in the light of their loss of power.

In a way, the change in the balance of forces in favour of the oppressed masses has opened up this stratum in particular for an alliance with progressive forces. Those in the bantustans and the township councils are faced with a very clear choice: Stick with apartheid and sink, or align with the liberation movement and negotiate your future with that movement. The latter option seems to be increasingly the route taken by even the TAPB in the bantustans. These developments of course will lead, as Slovo argues, to the sharpening of inter-class conflict within the national liberation movement. It should also be said that the realignment of forces within the oppressed bloc does not mean that the TAPB is merely being opportunistic. It is because a democratic change is ultimately in their deepest interests, particularly if a pro-capitalist black government takes over. To the TAPB these changes may create, for the first time in the history of South Africa, an opportunity to have access to state power which they might use to enter the bigger stakes of monopoly capital.

d) The civil petty bourgeoisie⁴³

This stratum consists mainly of the civil servants and other state employees in both the central state administration and the bantustan civil services. Even before the establishment of the bantustans this has traditionally been the largest stratum of the APB, mainly because other avenues for petty bourgeois advancement had been closed to Africans. During the era of colonialism proper it was British policy to encourage the growth of a small elite of teachers, nurses, lawyers and other civil servants, whose primary function was to 'serve' their own people. This was a way of administering and subjugating Africans under classic

colonial rule. The stratum consists mainly of teachers, nurses and clerks. The first two categories constitute the bulk of the civil petty bourgeoisie.

The stratum can also be divided into two major fractions. The one fraction is that of state parastatal employees or those employed by independent agencies, such as welfare agencies and private hospitals or schools. The second fraction consists of independent lawyers, doctors, and so on. This stratum is largely defined by its role in mediating the relationship between the state and civil society. Since the state in all capitalist societies depoliticises its relationship to civil society, this stratum is largely interpellated by capitalist ideology as 'impartial professionals'. This serves to depoliticise their role in society, and in that way strengthening the structures of exploitation and oppression. Although the apartheid state presents this stratum as neutral professionals, national oppression has tended to politicise them.

The apartheid regime has tended to encourage the growth of this stratum, because they have expanded tremendously with the growth of the bantustans, and they are most crucial in the day-to-day manning of these bureaucracies. This stratum is definitely not co-opted, and over the last five years has become politically active. The stratum is potentially the most reliable ally of the working class and progressive forces within the country for three main reasons. Firstly, members of the CPB are in most instances subject to poor treatment, not too dissimilar to that meted out to the working class. This becomes ironic in view of the emphasis by the state that they regard themselves as professionals. This contradiction leads to tensions in view of the treatment they get, eg. poor salaries, tight political and administrative control over their work lives, late payments and delayed salary increases.

Secondly, they are subjected to the patronage practices of the bureaucratic petty bourgeoisie. Promotions and appointment to positions is largely determined by individual relationships with the bureaucrats. This is their primary mode of relationship to the apartheid state and its subsidiary apparatuses in the bantustans and townships. Their relationship to the state structures also necessitates an analysis that distinguishes between the civil and the bureaucratic petty bourgeoisie. The latter consists of that stratum of the APB which is directly in control of the bantustan state apparatuses and are the direct beneficiaries of the

bantustan programme. This includes 'cabinet' ministers and the top bureaucrats directly interacting with the apartheid regime. The civil petty bourgeoisie, however consists of employees, under the firm control of the BPB. It is therefore not surprising that as the crisis facing the apartheid regime and its subsidiary structures deepens, the civil petty bourgeoisie has played an important part in the struggles against the stranglehold of the BPB. Their strength lies in their day-to-day control of the bantustan apparatuses and of those, albeit small, in the townships, and the central state administration. In the struggles against independence in KwaNdebele, it was only after the civil servants had joined in the strikes there, that the plans for independence were shelved. In Venda, in 1990, teachers and police went out on strike, and this forced Ravele to resign from power. In other words, the alignments of the civil petty bourgeoisie have been very crucial particularly in the struggles within the bantustans.⁴⁴

The third reason why this stratum of the APB is potentially the most reliable ally of the democratic movement, is that their continued existence and reproduction as a stratum is not necessarily dependent on the continued existence of apartheid, or even capitalist structures for that matter. This is because they have got skills that go beyond the existing structures of apartheid. In this regard they can be distinguished very sharply from the traders and the BPB, whose existence and reproduction is closely tied to the apartheid structures. One important illustration of the non-dependence of the civil petty bourgeoisie is their relative high level of mobility. And in fact apartheid structures and its patronage networks have tended to restrict this mobility, such that its abolition is in their deepest interests.

What is also worth noting is the fact that in virtually all the bantustan political parties the civil petty bourgeoisie is the most poorly represented. These political parties have tended to draw the chiefs and traders. For instance in Natal, Inkatha's weakest link is the absence of a civil (professional) petty bourgeoisie in its own ranks. On the contrary, the leadership of the national liberation movement has tended to be drawn from the ranks of this stratum.

The wave of struggles of the mid-1980's have also laid the basis for the drawing of the civil petty bourgeoisie into the ranks of the mass democratic movement. The 1990's have, for instance, started with unprecedented levels of mass action by teachers and nurses. All this

serves to highlight the potential within this stratum for mass action against oppression and exploitation.

e) 'Black advancement' and the birth of the African corporate petty bourgeoisie

The African corporate petty bourgeoisie (ACPB) is the most recent stratum to emerge under apartheid. It is largely a product of 'black advancement' initiatives by capital as well as the growing strength of working class organisation at the point of production. They are that stratum of the African petty bourgeoisie caught within the contradictions of white corporate life in an apartheid society on the one hand - paternalism, racism, white managerial ideology (petty stereotypes about blacks) - and the growing militancy of the black working class on the other hand. Their reproduction as an APB is uneasily situated between capital's attempts at creating an African middle class, and white management's defence of its own class interests. It is this particular stratum that is the subject of this study, and therefore its social composition, evolution, politics and ideology will be discussed in detail in the rest of the thesis.

In conclusion it is well worth noting that each of the strata of the APB, while sharing some common characteristics, are each quite distinct in important ways. Therefore it is impossible to talk about an African petty bourgeoisie in general in South Africa, without a thorough study of each stratum and fraction of this class. It is by going through the various strata and fractions that one can come up with a proper understanding of the ideology and politics of this class.

1. Davies, 1970 p.335
2. Innes, 1984.
3. Davies, 1979; Hindson, 1987; Wolpe, 1988
4. O'Meara, 1983.
5. Marks, p.5
6. Leggassick and Wolpe, 1976
7. Marks, 1986; Mbeki 1964
8. Marks, p.26
9. Carter et al., 1967 p.103
10. Marks, op cit p.41
11. ibid. p.27
12. Carter, op cit
13. Marks, op cit.
14. Kuper, 1965
15. Southall, 1977
16. SRR, 1959
17. See Mbeki, 1963 for more details
18. Kuper, op cit. p.23
19. Quoted in Southall, op cit., p.14
20. ibid
21. Nzimande, 1990; Rogers, 1980; Southall, 1983
22. "It is in the towns that the native question of the future will in an ever-increasing complexity have to be faced". Quoted in Bloch and Wilkinson, 1982, p.2.
23. ibid. p.4
24. quoted in ibid. p.10
25. ibid
26. Kuper, op cit., p. 331

27. Bloch, op cit p.46
28. Hindson, 1987
29. Watson, 1986
30. This section is largely taken from Nzimande (forthcoming) 'Class, National Oppression and the African Petty Bourgeoisie: The case of african traders'.
31. Politicised in so far as they are collectively and organisationally pursuing explicit political goals at the national level, that affect in one way or the other their collective interests.
32. O'Meara, 1983.
33. For details see Etherington, 1986, and Marks, 1983.
34. Illife, 1983.
35. For instance at its formation in 1959, BIC only had a share capital of R1m. Mandela (1986:83) derided this as '...mere eyewash: it would not suffice to build a single decent road, railway line or power station'.
36. Quoted in ibid, p. 13.
37. According to Kuper (1965), 'non-white' wages had more than doubled between 1938 and 1948, and africans spent 98% of their income and saved only 2 per cent.
38. Kuper, 1965 p. 272.
39. ibid., p. 285
40. For instance in the early 1960's the state passed further legislation restricting the types of businesses that african traders could be involved in; african traders in the urban areas were not allowed to form companies; etc.
41. For instance Kotze shows that there was an increase in the number of traders in the Transkei Legislature from 6 in 1963 to 17 in 1976. This is an increase from 13,3% to 22,6% of the total members of this legislature (in Southall, 1983 p.175)
42. Hudson and Sarakinsky, 1986 p. 175
43. The concept 'civil' is used here in a Gramscian sense, where this stratum of the petty bourgeoisie is largely performing functions that mediate between the state and civil society. Such a description goes beyond the usual one of describing this stratum as a state employed petty bourgeoisie, and includes the 'independent' civil petty bourgeoisie (eg private lawyers, doctors, etc). The latter group, though not employed by the state, plays a similar function in society to that of the state

employed fractions of this stratum, ie. mediating between the state and civil society.

44. See Mare and Ncube, 1989 for more details.

Chapter 4

‘In Search of a Past’: The Non-Emergence of an African Corporate Petty Bourgeoisie in South Africa, 1945-1970

In order to understand the contemporary ACPB, we have to come to grips with its past for the following reasons:

- a) It is of utmost importance that we pose the question why the ACPB has not grown when its white counterpart benefitted greatly from the expansion of the South African economy in the post World War II period. The massive industrialisation after the War provided substantial opportunities for semi-skilled, supervisory and managerial positions for the white wage-earning classes.
- b) It is important to try to explain why the ACPB only started emerging in the 1970's, and most prominently in the post-1976 era.
- c) As argued in chapter 2, it is very crucial to understand the petty bourgeoisie within the context of the evolving conjuncture of capital accumulation and racial domination.¹ Therefore, a knowledge of the conditions within which this class is emerging becomes essential in understanding the social composition of this stratum as well as its politico-ideological fluctuation.
- d) It is essential to analyse the non-emergence of this class prior to the 1970's in order to understand the effects of this suppression on its capacity to reproduce itself in the contemporary period.

The posing of these questions is of course informed by the hypothesis that the contemporary profile of the ACPB is largely an outcome of the conditions under which it emerged, as well

as the conjuncture during which they were being reproduced as a class.

1. The Apartheid state, labour rationalisation and the prohibition of the emergence of an African corporate petty bourgeoisie.

A massive amount of literature has been produced on the role of the apartheid state in rationalising labour supply during the early apartheid period up to at least the early 1970's.² It is important to briefly examine some of the arguments and problems of this literature, as an entry point to the issues to be discussed here.

Some of the most significant contributions have come from the researchers and scholars invariably known as the 'neo-Poulantzians' in the mid to late 1970's. Their interventions were largely, though not exclusively, a polemic with and a critique of liberal scholarship, particularly the notion that racial discrimination was largely dysfunctional to capital accumulation. Their contribution demonstrated that in fact racial discrimination was largely functional to capital accumulation. This formulation led them to focus on the organization of the state as an instrument of the capitalist class. For instance, the state was regarded as the creator and guarantor of the conditions for monopoly capital to assume hegemony in the 1960's.³

One of the major weaknesses of these formulations was their exclusive conceptualisation of the state as a capitalist state; less attention was paid to the state as an apartheid state - and an Afrikaner dominated state at that.⁴ Such formulations led to a virtually unproblematic collapse of all state actions into the 'logic of capital accumulation.' The tension between state strategies and capitalist interests, such as with the issue of job reservation, is simply explained in terms of conflicts between fractions of capital. Such a formulation obviously downplayed one other characteristic of the apartheid state, that the state apparatuses were being controlled by an Afrikaner bureaucratic bourgeoisie, whose class formation and interests could not simply be collapsed into the imperatives of capital accumulation. The articulation between Afrikaner ideology and economic interests on the one hand, and the ascendancy of monopoly capitalism on the other hand, was much more complex than this.

Inadequate attention was being paid to the suppression of black economic advancement, as not simply an imperative of monopoly capitalism, but as a means of dealing with the threat of such advancement to the reproduction of a white, particularly afrikaner, petty bourgeoisie.

Conceptualisation and description of the state as simply a capitalist state creates the problem of seeing the behaviour of the ruling class in undialectical terms, and an absence of the 'class struggle' in shaping the behaviour of the dominant classes. It is worth taking O'Meara's argument seriously in this regard that:

It is both mechanistic and undialectical to make a leap from the identification of particular class contradictions to the implementation of apartheid state policies. To do so, ignores the vital concrete elements through which the struggle between classes is fought out: organization and ideology.... The struggle between the exploited and exploiting classes is never simply a question of contending homogeneous armies ranged against each other in a battle for supremacy. Rather it rages at all levels and interstices of society and takes many forms.⁵

The thrust of this section is neither to engage these debates extensively nor to elaborate in any detail on the 'missing links'. Instead the intention is to highlight these problems in order to point out the gaps in understanding the issue of the articulation between class and race and, in this case, its relationship to the question of the suppression of the ACPB. For instance, some of the neo-Marxian scholarship is characterised by a voluntarism whereby the state was simply understood as manipulating the state apparatuses without any notion of struggle. In this regard Hindson's work on influx control, important as it is, has one major shortcoming: an almost exclusive focus on the state and capital's restructuring, without adequately locating this within class and popular struggles during the period under study. The exploited and dominated classes are totally 'absent' in the evolution of pass controls as well as in the choices facing the state. What we see in the evolution of pass controls is the state and capital 'in action', deciding here and there what to do in terms of the requirements for capital accumulation.

The other shortcoming of these formulations, which is of particular relevance to the present

study, is that of looking at labour rationalisation purely from the angle of the imperatives of capital accumulation, and in the process underplaying and obscuring the effects of state restructuring on the entire class structure of South African society.

Two other major omissions can be identified from these studies. The first one is that of looking at labour rationalisation under apartheid almost purely within the context of state-capital relations and not within that of the relationship between the white ruling bloc and the nationally oppressed black majority. For instance, labour rationalisation - characterized by the co-option of the white working class and the exclusion of all black classes from centres of economic power - gave the national question its particular features in South Africa. This omission perhaps better characterised as a major conceptual obstacle, is characterised by the failure to work through the political implications of the restructuring in the early apartheid period. Of course this also flows from a particular conception of class struggle, as a struggle and battle over the terms and conditions of the incorporation of labour into production relations. There is no conception of class struggle as a totality of contestations not only over terms for capital accumulation at the site of production, but also national oppression as a means and institutional form of securing South Africa as a capitalist country. As will be demonstrated later in this work, labour rationalization in the early apartheid era gave the trajectory of class struggle in South Africa its national character. Although the suppression of the african petty bourgeoisie preceded the apartheid period, apartheid made the suppression of all the strata and fractions, albeit unevenly, of the African petty bourgeoisie more systematic and subjected them to some of the worst forms of oppression. The impact of apartheid on the class map of South Africa gave the context within which to understand contemporary attempts at creating and co-opting an African petty bourgeoisie.

The second omission, flowing from a focus on state capital relations in assessing the early apartheid period, is that the impact of racial discrimination measures on the class structure and politics of the contemporary period is accorded a secondary, if not peripheral, status.

In order to try to overcome some of the limitations outlined above, as well as to explain and analyse the role of the apartheid state in the non-emergence of an ACPB in the early apartheid period, four issues will be briefly discussed: influx control; job reservation; bantu

education; and the importation of foreign labour.

a) Influx control

The apartheid state's response to the 'labour problem' after 1948 embodied measures that were to prove disastrous to African upward mobility in the South African economy. As noted in chapter 2, physical freedom of movement is one very crucial component for upward mobility in the independent secondary labour market.⁶ Under apartheid, the opportunities for the African professional stratum were restricted and they were effectively banished to the bantustans, where there were limited opportunities for advancement except perhaps in the fields of teaching and nursing. The predicament faced by the entire black population is captured by Govan Mbeki:

The policy of separate development, far from being an instrument to bring Africans back to their homelands, is in fact a compulsion on them to leave it'.⁷

The predicament of the African petty bourgeoisie was further heightened by the fact that more than a third were already located in the urban centres of South Africa. A notable phenomenon of influx control during the early apartheid period was that the carrying of 'passes' was in 1956 extended to African women, who in the 1950's already formed a sizeable proportion of the African petty bourgeoisie. For instance, while in 1921 African women constituted 31% of Africans in the professional, technical and related fields, by 1951 they constituted 80% of the total Africans in the professions.⁸ In fact, by 1960, African women professionals outnumbered African males (25, 487 compared to 23 000), and mainly dominating in the teaching and nursing fields.⁹ Although the issue of gender and class formation within the African petty bourgeoisie remains uninvestigated, it seems the state extension of passes to women was not unrelated to this factor, combined of course with the growing attraction of African women to the cities.

Influx control of the African population in general had its hardest impact on those people who had already severed their links with the bantustans or who were born in the urban areas.

Mafeje and Simkins (1963) estimated that about a third of the African petty bourgeoisie was already settled in Cape Town by the late 1950's. A total of 6 000 000 Africans were in the urban areas in the late 1950's.¹⁰

The overall impact of influx control on the ACPB was that the limitations on their freedoms were having a severe effect. The state was restructuring the 'external' labour market so that their chances of being employed in urban areas were diminishing rapidly. In fact the African petty bourgeoisie itself was treated as migrant labour and subjected to all the institutional vicissitudes of this system.

b) Job reservation

Job reservation, it is argued, was the single most severe obstacle to the creation of an ACPB during the early apartheid period. There is as yet no adequate analysis of the complete effects of job reservation, as well as the way it continues to structure the life chances of the contemporary ACPB, even long after its repeal as legislation. Job reservation constituted the apartheid state's most determined attempt to produce a racial division of labour as well as the racially stratified labour market. An attempt will be made in the following discussion to distinguish between job reservation in its legal form and job reservation as a social practice that protected the interests of white labour. This distinction is important to make in view of the earlier critiques of the treatment of the legal process as if it is the same as the social processes it legitimises. History shows that statutory regulation sets in motion processes that are difficult to reverse. It is particularly more so in the area of racial domination. The United States continues to be a classic example of how racism and racial practices continue to be a fundamental character of that society, long after the civil rights reforms of the early 1960's. Recently there have been attempts in the US to reverse some of the gains made by the repeal of discriminatory laws.¹¹

Section 77 of the Industrial Conciliation Act, 1956, empowered the Minister of Labour to set aside certain jobs for certain racial groups. It is important to state that this Section of the Act was largely a legal sanction to what was already happening during the early apartheid era. However, that it was giving legal protection to these social practices, should not lead us to undermine its subsequent impact on the racial hierarchical character of the division of

labour in the early apartheid period. It gave both the legal and 'moral' armour to white wage earners, enabling the rapid upward mobility of whites in all sectors of the economy and ensuring that blacks remained labourers. Job reservation ensured that even the most incompetent and underqualified of whites could move upwards, a factor also acutely grasped by South African capital itself. The oppressed were affected in numerous ways, some of which will be discussed below.

Job reservation specifically meant the setting aside of skilled and supervisory positions for whites, and the unskilled (later semi-skilled) jobs for blacks. In addition, no white employee was to be under the supervision of a black person. The immediate impact of this was that many black workers who were in positions designated as 'white' were either demoted or sacked. As the Minister of Labour put it in 1951:

We have a reservoir of unskilled European labour, and my contention is that we should not create a permanent stratum of unskilled European labour. We should lift them out of it.....we should take out those unskilled Europeans who are adaptable, who have necessary aptitude... (and) give them training.¹²

It was also in the state sector, rapidly being filled by Afrikaner bureaucrats, where the most vicious forms of African exclusion were taking place.

The other major effect of job reservation was that it was rapidly creating a white corporate petty bourgeoisie at a rate unthinkable prior to the War. For instance, the white petty bourgeoisie in the manufacturing industry between 1948 and 1970 had grown by about 74%.¹³ The devastating effect of this on the African population was that it was being effectively prohibited from upward mobility at a time when transition to monopoly capitalism was reproducing massive numbers of class places in the managerial and supervisory categories. The significance of this restructuring was that Africans almost lost permanently, under white-controlled monopoly capitalism, an opportunity to climb up the corporate ladder.

The scholars referred to earlier have tended to ignore or underplay the impact of job reservation on the class structure of South Africa. Davies, for instance, argues that:

Statutory job reservation determinations - the major new concessions made to white wage earners during the Apartheid period - have, in short, like all previous concessions available to them, operated within the limits dictated by the imperatives of capital accumulation: functioning in this case as 'regulators' of the margins of the class structure during a particular period of transition and restructuring. They have of course been responsible for determining that some agents who would otherwise probably have been rendered marginal to capitalist production, came to occupy certain places at the expense of blacks at the margins of the racial division of labour. But they have not brought about a class structure fundamentally different in its broad composition to that which would otherwise have been brought into existence at that particular stage of capitalist development. In other words, the specific form of racist hierarchical class structure brought about by the restructuring of the relations of production during the early Apartheid period, was determined principally by the requirements of capital accumulation and only secondarily by the demands of white wage-earners.¹⁴

It is important to engage these assertions by Davies, since they largely represent many other such arguments in the analysis of the early apartheid period. Here Davies only regards class formation as principally characterised by the allocation of class agents to class places irrespective of the characteristic features of the class agents themselves, ie. whether they are black or women. This assumption neglects the effects that a labour market can have on the process of capital accumulation itself. This neglect is further illustrated by Davies' point that job reservation and the racially-based allocation of class agents was not very significant, and did not bring about a class structure fundamentally different from '.....that which would otherwise have been brought into existence at that particular stage of capitalist development'. Davies does not make it clear what made the particular class structure of that period seem 'inevitable'.

For instance it will be argued and demonstrated in this work that were it not for practices

like job reservation and a racially structured labour market, the class structure of the period might have been radically different. Capital was being 'forced' to employ white labour in senior, skilled or supervisory positions. Capital, of course, would have liked to use black labour even in some of the skilled positions, because black labour was cheap. This factor should not be undermined because, had this happened, it would definitely have left a different imprint on the racial division of labour as well as the chances of upward mobility for blacks. This is not meant to credit capital with good intentions for advancing black labour at this stage, but this in itself would have been a perfectly logical step in the 'imperative for capital accumulation!' It was precisely because of this threat that the state wanted to ensure protection of white labour. Therefore, it is not correct to say that job reservation determinations did not have a significant impact on the class structure of South African society at the time.

The other problem in Davies' formulation is that his dismissal of the impact of job reservation as peripheral is based on his narrow conceptualisation of job reservation as simply of statutory determinations. While it is true that job reservation determinations were never directly invoked or applied in more than four percent of the total workforce at any point in time during the existence of the Statute, its impact was much wider than this four percent. This is because job reservation legislation was a consummation of social practices already in place in South Africa.

The other point that needs to be made with regards to Davies conceptualization relates to his argument that the hierarchical racist class structure was principally determined by the requirements of capital accumulation. This formulation is also problematic in a number of respects. The notion of 'requirements of capital accumulation' becomes an all embracing concept where things that need explanation are taken as explanations themselves. Such an approach 'short circuits' an analysis of why South African capitalism took a racial form. In other countries capitalism necessitated a liberal democratic framework within which capital accumulation was to take place. There is nothing inherent in capital accumulation which determines this or that path of development at the level of the social formation.

c) Bantu education and the reproduction of a racial division of labour

Before we look into the particular ways through which the state used black education to create a racially-differentiated independent secondary labour market, it is essential to isolate the political, social, economic and ideological foundations of bantu education, particularly as they relate to the issue under discussion.

The Commission of Enquiry into education for Africans under Dr W.W.M.Eiselen, which was appointed in 1949, had, inter alia, the following terms of reference:

- a) 'The formulation of the principles and aims of education for Natives as an independent race, in which their past and present, their inherent racial qualities, their distinctive characteristics and aptitude, and their needs under ever changing social conditions are taken into consideration.'
- b) 'The extent to which the existing primary, secondary, and vocational education system for Natives and the training of Native teachers should be modified in respect of the content and form of syllabuses in order to conform to the proposed principles and aims (of separate development), and to prepare Natives more effectively for their future occupations'¹⁵

From these very terms of reference one begins to get an idea of the underlying economic, political and ideological foundations and intentions of Bantu education. These foundations were to be clearly spelled out by Verwoerd, the then Minister of Bantu Education, in the now infamous statement:

'The paramount principle in the education of the child in the urban areas must be, just as it is in the Reserves, that we must try to retain the child as a child of his own national community, because it is the basic principle to keep the Bantu child a Bantu child.... The Bantu must be so educated that they do not want to become imitators (of

the Whites, but) that they will want to remain essentially Bantu ...¹⁶

And the statement continued to say

There is no place for him in the European community above the levels of certain forms of labour.... For that reason it is of no avail for him to receive a training which has as its aim absorption into the European community, where he cannot be absorbed.¹⁷

Although segregated schooling and some of the basic tenets to be later elaborated under Bantu education preceded its formal introduction in the 1950's, it is essential to point out some of the distinct differences between the pre- and post-bantu education period. The first difference is that prior to the introduction of bantu education, control of education for Africans was largely under the missionaries and other private institutions. Bantu education introduced central state control over the provision of education to Africans, which was in line with the role of the state as the guarantor of stable conditions for accumulation in the post-War period.¹⁸

Secondly, and ironically, bantu education introduced mass schooling for Africans, which was no longer restricted to the few, and mainly children of the elite. The number of Africans attending school in 1925 was 209 049, but by 1967 it was 2 229 556. The biggest increase occurred between 1950 and 1960, with the figures being 747 026 and 1 500 008 respectively.¹⁹ Although the issue of why the state embarked on mass education for Africans still awaits a thorough investigation, it is worth speculating that the labour requirements of a fast growing economy, requiring more literate and semi-skilled labour, is the primary reason. However, one should not undermine the fact that, as alluded to in Verwoerd's statements, ideological subjugation of Africans became a sine qua non for economic and political subjugation. This was also to be accomplished by the production of the correct mental attitude and discipline in the African child for manual labour and factory work. However, the increase in both the provision and expenditure on African education should not hide the nature and character of the education provision, which limited the ability of Africans to be upwardly mobile in the South African economy.

The emphasis of Bantu education seems to have been more on the general educational equipment of blacks for purposes of being absorbed as unskilled or semi-skilled labour. This became more evident with the training opportunities that were available to Africans at the post secondary school level, as will be shown in Chapter 6. Most of them were being drawn into professions and jobs of a 'reproductive' nature and away from the core functions in economic production. African professionals were being reproduced in teaching, nursing and clerical work.²⁰ If one looks at the type of graduates that were and still are coming out of African universities, the emphasis remains on the arts and social science direction with the largest percentage in education.²¹ In other words, even the limited higher education opportunities available to Africans were largely geared towards jobs that were servicing other Africans.

The most revealing aspect of the role that bantu education was playing in the reproduction of a racist hierarchical order in South African industry is vocational education. The importance of vocational education lies in the fact that it constituted the primary means of preparing class agents to take up their positions in the division of labour. The state's thinking on vocational education and its place in labour rationalisation is best captured by the then Minister of Bantu Education in 1967:

It would be an incorrect principle to begin with the training of Bantu engineers and other technologies for the most advanced services while there are insufficient numbers of technicians and tradesmen on the lower level of the pyramid.²²

Although this statement was being made in response to the pressures on the Government to address the skills shortage in the late 1960's, it captures the essence of state policy towards skills training for Africans. The aim of technical and vocational training under Bantu education was to provide only semi-skilled labour and nothing beyond that. This thinking is reflected in the state's provision of vocational and technical training for blacks and whites in the early apartheid period. In fact, vocational training came to occupy a central place in the State's provision of education, and the Eiselen Commission actually suggested the establishment of vocational schools but in line with the actual and potential avenues of

employment for Africans.²³

With the introduction of Bantu Education, blacks who were in white vocational and technical schools were removed, and without provision for alternative facilities. The following table reveals the extent to which blacks were being deprived of skills training, more so because in the 1950's technical and vocational training for blacks was non-existent.

TABLE 4.1
Enrollment in Technical and Vocational Education, 1953-1954

<u>Year</u>	<u>No of Institutions</u>		<u>No of Students</u>	
	<u>Whites</u>	<u>Non-whites</u>	<u>Whites</u>	<u>Non-whites</u>
1953	82	54	10 716	13 842
1954	88	21	11 814	3 981

(Source: SRR, 1954)

What is important to note in the above table is that whilst the number of white institutions were increasing those for blacks were cut by more than half. This affected the number of blacks receiving vocational and technical education quite severely. This factor is of utmost importance since skills acquisition was not merely a means to a skilled job, but it became a basis for upward mobility. The state, through education, was deliberately depriving blacks of the means to acquire skills and therefore fundamentally affecting their life chances.

The state's emphasis was on the provision of technical and vocational education increasingly to whites. This was not done merely to place more whites in skilled positions, but it became one of the important mechanisms through which the government was hoping to address the

likelihood of future skills shortage. Such provision of white skilled labour, it was hoped, could sustain the economy for as long as possible, even if it ensured the exclusion of Africans from skilled positions.²⁴

It was only in the 1960's that the government began introducing vocational and technical schools for Africans, mainly attached to existing secondary schools. In fact, from the beginning of 1961 the state started introducing technical and commercial Junior Certificate courses. This was largely in response to the growing needs for semi-skilled labour. These courses were, however, geared towards semi-skilled work, producing what was to be known as the 'maintenance worker' (semi-skilled operatives) in South African manufacturing industry. Also, during this period, also, artisan training for Africans was non-existent. The absence of training for African artisans is of utmost significance, since for whites it was from the ranks of artisans that foremen, assistant engineers and ultimately production managers and other senior 'petty bourgeois' positions were drawn. This provided the fastest route for upward mobility for the white wage earners. Understandably, this was the avenue closed almost completely to Africans till as recently as the late 1970's. These developments were to lay the structural foundations for both the skills shortages and the distorted distribution of skills in the South African labour force, as will be demonstrated later.

Apart from the lack of technical training at school, as well as the absence of trade schools, even those blacks who could have made it through experience - by working as 'tool boys' for white artisans - were denied this opportunity by being undermined by white trade unions.

d) Importation of labour through immigration

To conclude this section on the relationship between the apartheid state and the non-emergence of an ACPB, it is important to highlight the role of immigration and importation of (white) foreign labour in the whole process. Given the general lack of appropriate skills in the early apartheid period, even among whites, the state relied primarily on two processes to provide for these skills. The first one has already been discussed above, that is, the massive training of whites for skilled occupations.

However, given the relative backwardness of the country prior to the War, there was no way that the state, through internal training of whites only, could provide for the needs of a rapidly growing economy. The acuteness of the problem of skills shortage was due to the fact that prior to the War the South African economy was still an agricultural and mining economy.²⁵ The second important method to cope with the skills shortage was through the importation of skills, mainly from Europe and particularly from the United Kingdom.²⁶ Underlying this whole practice was the fact that South Africa was essentially a white-dominated country, determined to ensure white leadership at all levels of the social formation.

Influential sections of capital were also pushing for more importation of white skilled labour, sometimes even more than what the state thought was tolerable.²⁷ Importation of labour, primarily through the encouragement of immigration, played a very important role in providing the necessary skilled labour, as the primary means of avoiding the training of black labour.²⁸ Despite the expensive nature of this exercise, the government was committed to this in view of the type of society they wanted to create in South Africa.²⁹

As a basis for a brief discussion of the role of immigration and the importation of white skilled labour on the racial division of labour and consolidation of white economic hegemony, let us look into statistics between 1945 and 1970, in order to establish the pattern of this process. In 1958 alone there were 14 673 white and 28 black immigrants as compared to 8 807 white and 147 'non-white' emigrants.³⁰ The pattern of immigration after the Second World War is a clear reflection of the importance of importing white labour to address skills shortages of the very early apartheid period.

TABLE 4.2
Immigration and Emigration in South Africa, 1924-64 ³¹

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>IMMIGRANTS</u>	<u>EMIGRANTS</u>	<u>NET GAIN</u>
1924-1929	6 468	4 308	2 160
1930-1934	4 175	2 651	1 524
1935-1939	7 801	3 194	4 607
1940-1944	1 609	2 084	475
1945-1949	18 567	7 704	10 863
1950-1954	15 838	12 271	3 567
1955-1959	14 593	10 905	3 688
1960-1964	25 169	10 340	14 829

These figures are a reflection of the pattern of economic growth as well as cycles of political stability and upheavals in the country. The growth of immigrants between 1940 -44 and the four years after the war is quite significant. In terms of gains compared to emigrants it was a rapid growth from a loss of 475 to gaining 10 863. The drop thereafter in immigration, although still very high compared to pre-war levels, was indicative of political instability due to mass resistance in the 1950's. In fact towards the end of the 1950's South Africa experienced a recession as well as unprecedented capital flight directly connected to the intensification of mass struggle. The extent of the impact of political resistance is captured by the number of emigrants in the 1950's, cutting net gains by almost two-thirds. However, with the smashing of mass political organisations in 1960 -61, South Africa reverted to full

scale recruitment overseas, tripling the net gains to 14 829 in 1964. Despite the fact that a substantial number of immigrants were not skilled people - and this was a factor constantly disturbing to both the state and capital,³² - the large majority of 'employable' immigrants were professional, technical and skilled workers as shown in Table 4.3 below.

TABLE 4.3
Immigration by occupation (average)³³

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>TOTAL³⁴</u>	<u>PROFESSIONAL EXEC.</u>	<u>ADMIN. SALES & CLERICAL</u>	<u>CRAFTS & PRO- DUCTION</u>
1934-1938	7 479	1 022	928	1536
1944-1948	15 799	1 546	2 119	2777
1949-1953	15 508	1 548	1 455	2654
1958-1962	14 851	1 495	1 523	1857

Given the large number of immigrants and the costs involved, continuation with this policy clearly reflects the white ruling class commitment to the suppression of an ACPB and the establishment of white hegemony in all sectors of the economy.

To summarise this section on the role of the apartheid state in prohibiting the emergence of the ACPB, the following points have been demonstrated:

- a) the deficiencies of the theorisation of the apartheid state as purely a capitalist state;
- b) how influx control, education, job reservation and importation of labour prohibited the upward mobility of African labour

In essence such prohibition was an outcome of the fact that all African labour was treated and regarded as migrant labour. Migrancy and upward mobility have always been antagonistic processes throughout the history of modern capitalism. Migrancy also interferes with the necessary prerequisites for entering what Edwards call the 'independent secondary labour market'.

The above discussion attempted to show the absolute determination of the white ruling bloc to the smashing of any kind of economic consolidation by Africans outside of the unskilled and, later, semi-skilled positions. Of course all these measures were underpinned by an ideology of white supremacy and its racist practices, as well as the attitude of the state toward African labour. If the above was the attitude and practices of the apartheid state towards African economic advancement, this immediately begs the question as to what the economic practices of capital itself were towards African economic and occupational advancement.

2. Capital, white economic leadership and the non-emergence of the African corporate bourgeoisie

It has become fashionable among circles of capitalists, liberals and other apologists of capital to argue that the changes currently taking place in the economic sphere - the increased training of black skilled workers and the rise of a black corporate petty bourgeoisie - is what capital has long stood for. It has even been argued by more recent liberal scholarship that the 'deracialization' taking place now is a living testimony to the long held liberal and corporate view that economic growth will undo the 'artificial' apartheid restrictions.³⁵ If capital has always been committed to what it now refers to as 'black advancement', why was it not producing black skilled and managerial workers in the 1950's and 1960's? On the other hand Davies has argued in a manner that tends to underplay the role played by job reservation legislation in the suppression of the APB. Why then did we not see the rapid rise of an ACPB in the 1950's and 1960's?

The best starting point in answering these questions is to contextualise the discussion within

the general relationship between capital and the state in the early apartheid period, with a specific focus on the political behaviour of manufacturing capital, particularly towards black labour.

a) The political behaviour of manufacturing capital 1948-1970.

The relationship between the state and capital during this period has been the subject of many studies. What will be focused on here is that behaviour which had an impact on the suppression of an ACPB.

Contrary to liberal assertions, the relationship between capital and the state in the early apartheid period was that of collusion rather than antagonism. This, of course, does not mean that there were no instances of tension and conflict nor contradictions, but these were secondary to the primary feature of the relationship, ie., co-operation and working together. Posing the issue this way might give the impression that capitalism and apartheid were two processes that were interacting with each other rather 'independently'. In fact, apartheid became both the necessary condition as well as the terrain upon which capital accumulation took place. On the other hand this should not be read as simply collapsing apartheid into an instrument of capital accumulation, since it had its own 'logic' which at some moments came into conflict with the immediate requirements of capital accumulation.

The apartheid state evolved as a 'solution' to the twin problems of labour supply and the growing politicisation of the urban African working class in the 1940's. By World War II, state policies and structures were being seriously threatened by massive urbanisation and black political resistance. Accompanying these developments, and inaugurating the growth of secondary industry, was the collapse of the African reserves as means of sustaining life for their inhabitants. This inaugurated an unprecedented flow of Africans into the urban areas, a spectre which was not only haunting the state, but had capital horrified as well. For capital this inflow presented an opportunity for abundant African labour, but at the same time it led to rapid and unco-ordinated urbanisation and a labour supply which had the potential of disrupting economic growth.

The major problems facing capital in the immediate post-war period was high labour

turnover, absenteeism, and uneven provision of labour - phenomena always accompanying capitalist expansion given its contradiction of town and countryside. The United Party-controlled government tried in 1945, through the Native Urban Areas Amendment Act, to resolve this contradiction. However, these measures, despite their very severe disruptive effects on African life, were never able to contain the massive inflow, and the chaotic conditions of labour supply prevailing at the time. Without repeating what is already known, suffice to point out that it was the crisis of urbanisation, proletarianisation and politicisation which laid the foundations for the victory of the Nationalist Party in 1948.

The problem of uneven labour supply, and the threat to capital of having to sustain the urban proletariat, turned capital quickly to the very apartheid state with its emerging armoury of repressive laws. The major complaint of capital at that time is captured in the following statement from the report of the Natal Employers Association.

As to combating wastage and uneconomical use of labour, your General Council has been aware since the association was first brought into being that, due to factors mostly beyond the employers control, there is an exceedingly high degree of uneconomical use made of native labour. The principal cause of this is that this labour...is still largely migratory, and the native labourer, regarding each period of employment as totally unconnected, fails to appreciate the virtue and importance of experience in industry and makes no attempt, after his intermittent visits to his home in the rural areas, to seek employment again in that industry or occupation in which he has had previous experience. The result is, in countless cases, that native labour has to be trained afresh on each new engagement, and whatever experience has been gained in past employment is entirely lost to the industrialist.³⁶

This captures the nature and extent of the labour problems facing capital in the early apartheid period. Influx control was intended to provide the necessary mechanism to make Native labour 'appreciate' going back to the same industry and be used profitably. The extent of, particularly, the problem of high labour turnover is captured in two case studies done in the 1950's on African workers.³⁷ Apart from unemployment, there were two main reasons for the high labour instability of the early apartheid period at least up to the early

1960's. The first one was the fact that many workers, despite the rapid decline of the reserves, were still using industrial employment as a means of supplementing their resources in the reserves. For a long time Africans used to see industrial employment ('Esilungwini' - in the white man's sphere') as playing this role, until the reserves could no longer sustain any viable economic activity for the African working class. The strange irony, of course, was that this was used by apartheid as a basis for treating Africans as temporary sojourners (labour suppliers) in urban areas. The following case study and Table illustrates this point.

TABLE 4.4³⁸

Reasons for Non-Wage Earning Periods for Sellgood employees.

<i>Main Reason for non-wage earning</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>%</i>
1. Continuous wage employment	106	30
2. Unemployed	87	25
3. Ploughing at Home	75	21
4. Partly Ploughing at home, partly unemployed in Jhb.	13	4
5. Visiting home and resting	23	7
6. Home for Ceremonies, marriage, mourning, etc	3	1
7. Ill	14	4
8. In gaol	4	1
9. Other	6	2
10. No reason given	17	5
TOTAL	348	100

From this table one can see that non-wage earning periods connected with being at home (3, 4, 5, 6 above) accounted for 33% of the total non wage earning periods - a figure which can also be used as an index of labour turnover. This is what the Natal Employers Association was referring to as costing the industrialists dearly.

4, 5, 6 above) accounted for 33% of the total non wage earning periods - a figure which can also be used as an index of labour turnover. This is what the Natal Employers Association was referring to as costing the industrialists dearly.

The second major reason for high labour instability was the practice of changing jobs by workers, looking for better wages, particularly at the time when there were a lot of employment opportunities, mainly in the 1940's and 1950's. For instance the major complaint by employers in the late 1940's and early 1950's was that

... the attitude of Natives with working seeking passes ... was ... that they had not been slow to realize their labour was at a premium and instead of, as hitherto, being prepared to accept employment of any type, would not, in general, consider employment in heavy industry at all, but confined themselves to seeking work as messengers and delivery boys³⁹

Capital's pre-occupation with the supply of labour gives a clearer indication of how it was willing to co-operate with the apartheid state in the provision of cheap labour. By such behaviour one appreciates the extent to which capital was viewing Africans only as unskilled and migrant labour, as well as being a source of cheap labour. During the 1950's capital was wholeheartedly co-operating with the state in the suppression of the mass resistance which was proving to be a major negative factor in capital accumulation. Co-operating with the state, of course, meant that capital did not see any role for African labour outside of being a highly controlled source of unskilled operatives.

However it was in the area of (white skilled) labour importation through immigration that the attitude of capital towards African upward mobility became clearly demonstrated. Capital's whole attitude towards immigration was underpinned by the ideology of white leadership that had been dominant and institutionalised in South Africa since 1910. Despite some conflicts and misunderstandings, capital was firmly committed to white industrial leadership and the economic development of Africans being subsumed under the direction of whites, as captured in the Chairman's address to the NEA in 1952:

Since the duty of directing and controlling the industrial life of the Country has

devolved upon the European, the development of industry and the welfare of the non-European in industry must depend on the European labour resources ... I would venture to suggest that no-one would advocate a reversal of the control I have mentioned, for it seems to me that the European, with his higher intelligence, his background and greater opportunities for gaining a wide experience of World Affairs, is equipped with the essentials to enable him to carry out efficiently the task he has accepted.⁴⁰

In order to deal with the skills shortage, and given its commitment to white economic leadership, capital supported the efforts of the state in attracting more white skilled immigrants. The major reservation that capital had related to the expense involved in such an exercise, particularly the problem of housing the immigrants. There was, therefore, increasing pressure by capital, at least up to the 1960's, for the state to provide as much assistance as possible in importing white labour. It was not surprising therefore, that in the early 1960's the Cabinet portfolio of Labour and Immigration were combined into one Ministry.⁴¹

Capital's attitude towards African labour was not only informed by the racist notion that Africans were of lower intelligence, but also by the claim that they had a deformed culture, not suitable for industrial development.

The African will take all he can from the natural resources around him, the soil, the grass and forest without thought of the future. He is generally courageous, cheerful and very loyal to his kin ... He is possessed of a sound code of customary law and has ... a sense of the order of things and what is lacking in pure education is to an extent compensated for by his ability to imitate a semi-skilled manufacturing process.⁴²

It was on this racist basis that African labour was being incorporated into South African industry, mediated by the capital-state relationship. Capital normally points out to the fact that they were always opposed to influx control and job reservation, and generally stood for African upward mobility. It is, of course, true that capital did oppose the promulgation and

application of certain measures by the state. But it is important to discuss the raison d'être of capital's opposition to such measures as a means of highlighting the politics of capital - economic pragmatism - as well as further clarifying capital's attitude towards African corporate advancement.

The relationship between the state and capital was not without its contradictions. Each measure introduced by the state in the early apartheid period to secure the economic interests and dominance of whites was not without its own contradictions. The source of these was primarily the contradictory character of the state as both a capitalist state, and an Afrikaner-dominated white state aiming to secure the support of all classes within the white population. This character of the state, underpinned by apartheid ideology, developed its own momentum which attained its own autonomy, and could not be read off from the capitalist character of the state. This momentum reflected by the particular contradiction between the Afrikaner nationalist ideology of white supremacy and the requirements of capital accumulation. It was within these contradictions that the 'conflict' between capital and the state was played out.

The essence of this conflict was that some of the measures adopted by the state to secure the rapid upward occupational mobility of whites were, in numerous instances, not conducive to the cheapest possible way of exploiting labour. This was evident mostly in the institution of influx control and particularly job reservation.

For instance, while influx control enabled capital to streamline its labour supply, it created shortages in other sectors of employment. The establishment of the labour bureaux system in Natal for instance, affected the supply of 'togt' (contract) labour which was crucial in other sectors of the economy, like those industries whose demands for labour fluctuated at different periods in time, for instance, the sugar industry. Those Africans who had a right to seek employment in the urban areas preferred permanent and better employment. Also, while the labour bureaux, as it operated in the 1950's, served to regulate the supply and demand of labour in the urban areas and reduce the high labour turnover, this became at the same time an obstacle to the supply of semi-skilled labour through the labour bureaux system. In the 1960's, for instance conditions had changed - due to the rise in the organic

composition of capital - and new types of labour were required. It was because of these contradictions that capital called for a flexible application of the labour bureaux system in order not to create unnecessary bottlenecks in the supply of labour.

The labour bureaux system also undermined one of capital's major strategies of selecting and subjugating unskilled African labour during the 1950's - the izinduna system. The major means of recruiting unskilled labour, in the 1950's, was through what were called compound izinduna. All izinduna were encouraged by capital in their tendency to recruit labour from their own hometowns in the rural areas. This system served the purpose of ensuring that workers selected into industry were also controllable under the hegemony of their own 'tribesfolk'. This was the dominant form factory regimes took during the competitive phase of capitalism in South Africa, elements of which lasted up to the late 1960's. The practice of recruiting 'homeboys' was strongly favoured by capital since it brought social cohesion into the workforce. Strict application of the labour bureaux system meant that capital, in recruiting labour, had to rely on the labour bureaux, rather than their own compound izinduna, a factor which undermined the type of control and hegemony capital exercised over African workers.

The effects of influx control and particularly the labour bureaux system on factory regimes⁴³ was described by a former Municipal Native Affairs Commissioner in Durban thus:

In the olden days izinduna made a very important role in the engagement of labour. Most factories or business undertakings would rely on izinduna of the company to screen labour and to advise management about the suitability of labour. It is obvious and perhaps natural that they then also very often ensured that members of their own clans or home districts get preference in employment. This in itself was not a bad thing because it brought about a sort of cohesion within the labour force of a factory.⁴⁴

It was this type of factory regime that the labour bureaux system was beginning to erode.

Given the above contradictions it was inevitable that while employers fully supported the

labour bureaux system in so far as it streamlined labour supply, at the same time they opposed its rigid application, particularly where it tended to undermine the factory regimes of the time. For example, regarding the latter, Bourquin noted that:

... there was tightening up of labour control in the 1950's, particularly influx control regulations, which meant that it was no longer possible, generally speaking, for anybody, say from Mthunzini to find employment in Durban. Many employers used to complain that people recruited by their own izinduna could no longer register their own relatives or clanspeople at the bureaux. Consequently, a lot of employers used to come directly to me for permission to register people selected by them through izinduna.⁴⁵

Because the state was applying these regulations rigidly as a means of dealing not only with labour supply, but also with African urbanisation and its attendant political problems, instances of conflict with capital arose. It is therefore not true to say that capital opposed the intent and aim of influx control; rather it contested the best terms under which influx control could be applied. For the state to ensure white economic advancement across class boundaries, meant that it should apply these laws to the letter, although the state sometimes demonstrated tactical flexibility where capital raised serious objections. In other words, capital's basis of opposition to certain aspects of influx control was not meant to benefit the African worker, but was for purposes of extended capital accumulation.

The other area where most of the tensions between capital's own needs for expanded capital accumulation and state action took place, was that of job reservation. The attitude of employers towards job reservation captures the essence of capital's economic pragmatism.

Capital opposed the Job Reservation clauses of the Industrial Conciliation Act 1956, essentially on the grounds that :

Apart from the inevitable disruption, and high production costs, and the effects of these on the consuming public likely to result, the most serious feature is the

application of the system of artificial protection in certain tasks for certain races, with the consequent removal of the valuable incentive for these individuals to give of their best in a competitive labour market.⁴⁶

There were four main objections by capital. The first objection surrounded the fact that job reservation had the potential of disrupting production if applied rigidly. It could rapidly undo the nature of the division of labour prevalent during and immediately after the War. Davies points out that during the War a lot of Africans were employed in the many jobs which were classified as belonging to white semi-skilled operatives. If the provisions of job reservation were applied in their entirety, it could disrupt industrial production.

The second major objection capital had over job reservation was that it could no longer choose to employ cheap African labour where it suited it most. Capital vehemently opposed some of the discrimination arising from the Native Building Workers Act 1957⁴⁷ on the grounds that:

... the work now being performed by Natives and which will in future, unless exemption is granted, have to be performed by Asiatics or Coloureds, is of a very low semi-skilled nature and therefore only justifies the payment of wages that will be totally unattractive to Europeans and only slightly less unattractive to Asiatics and Coloureds. Moreover in many of the trades or branches of trades embraced by the definition of 'skilled work' members of these two races are, for physical or other good reasons, not suitable for employment on the work prescribed.⁴⁸

The dangers of job reservation to capital, as captured in the above statement, was that it interfered with the established labour market for blacks and whites. It also did not give capital the choice and necessary flexibility to restructure the racial division of labour as it deemed necessary.

The third main objection was that job reservation limited the capacity of capital to freely employ cheap African labour where it saw fit. In fact job reservation legislation was particularly directed at stopping the practice where employers would be tempted to use

African labour at the expense of white labour. Although capital was committed to white industrial leadership - through the allocation of supervisory functions to whites - it did not want to be circumscribed to the extent that it was unable to use African labour where white labour was either unwilling to be employed, or where labour costs would be unnecessarily raised, as the Chairman of the NEA noted in 1957:

Job reservation can never be justified unless the evidence unequivocally supports the need for it, and if it is brought into being, it is both practically and economically impossible for it to operate. Quite obviously no job reservation can operate if, from a practical standpoint, there is an insufficiency of employees of the race in whose favour the reservation is made, to fill the available positions, where the burden of extra costs of production involved would render the industry uneconomical.⁴⁹

The last major concern of capital about job reservation was the likely lack of motivation for white labour since they knew they were protected by law to occupy at least skilled and petty bourgeois positions in the racial division of labour. Although this might be regarded as a secondary concern, it did occupy capital in certain important ways because white labour was also very expensive.

In summary, capital was not against the restriction of African economic advancement as such, but rather it was concerned with the cheapest possible way in which this could be achieved. The political behaviour of capital towards state legislation that suppressed African economic advancement can be summed up thus: The tension and conflicts between capital and the state during the early apartheid period were not over capital's opposition to the assertion of white economic leadership but over the best possible means of exploiting and cheapening African labour. In other words, for capital the problem was the state's rigidity over the application of laws supporting and promoting white economic advancement. Where the state showed tactical flexibility and gave concessions to capital's needs, the latter had no problems.

An understanding of the role played by capital in the suppression of an ACPB is incomplete without looking at how African labour was being incorporated in the labour process itself.

b) Capital, Labour Process and the Incorporation of African Labour into the Racial Division of Labour, 1948-1960's

The best possible way of analysing the incorporation of African labour into South Africa's factory regimes of the 1950's and 1960's is not by simply looking at the labour process, but by looking at the way through which control of labour within that process was exercised. In any case the capitalist labour process is about control and the reproduction of the dominant relations of exploitation.

The factory regime characteristic of the period under discussion can be separated into two phases. The first one is that from 1945 (possibly 1939) to 1960. This is the period when relations of control typical of competitive capitalism were still dominant in South Africa, albeit rapidly declining and being substituted by those of monopoly capitalism. The 1960's is the second phase, where the character of the labour process and the factory regime typical of advanced monopoly capitalism began to emerge and consolidate.

Although it is difficult to draw a sharp dividing line between the two, such a periodisation is useful and better able to capture the trajectory of capitalist development in South Africa. Part of the difficulty in delineating these two periods arises out of the fact that secondary industrialisation in South Africa was initiated and facilitated by the penetration of international monopoly capital. This then partly accounts for the rapid development and economic growth of South Africa in the post-war period. This difficulty is also compounded by the fact that there was uneven development between industries, with those directly linked to international capital and relying heavily on export consumer markets (chemicals, metals, etc.) showing rapid movement towards the organic rise of capital and monopoly capitalist relations of production. This was much less so in the labour-intensive industries like textiles and clothing.

In this section I would like to focus on two major features of the factory regimes characteristic of this period. The first feature is the kind of African labour required by capital during this period. The second aspect will be the forms of control exercised by capital over African labour as well as the terms of its incorporation. There was a strong

connection between the type of labour employed and its mode of control. Through these two features one should be able to understand why capital itself did not promote an ACPB during this period.

The first ten to fifteen years of the apartheid period required primarily unskilled African labour, whose role in the labour process was the performance of highly repetitive and physically strenuous unskilled work. The type of labour required at the time is exemplified by the following account:

‘I got my first job by being approached by induna from my area at home who told me that he would be hiring on a particular day. I woke very early in the morning. It was dark and cold as it was still winter and I caught an early morning train to this very company. I waited until dawn so that I could look for this place and find it. I arrived late and induna saw red and scolded me for sleeping till late as if I did not want the job. Then the induna introduced me to the compound manager. At that time a black person was only employed for heavy, unskilled jobs, lifting things, instructed where to put them ... up and down ... up and down, like a donkey. There was not even recording or checking things that you were doing. This was the white foreman’s job with the help of boss boys. We were just carrying various sizes of gallons of oil. Since this was a ‘house of lifting’, they had particular methods of testing workers’ suitability for their jobs. You were required to prove and demonstrate your strength before the compound manager. There was a big box with concrete stones which you had to lift and put it down without letting it fall, walking from the induna’s office to the compound manager’s office. This box was heavier than the drums (large containers) in the factory, so as to ensure that you will cope with the heavy tasks expected of you.... This selection method was adopted by the compound manager after a number of complaints over the years from foremen that some weak workers were being hired. Others used to leave the job on the very first day, and abscond because of the heavy nature of the job. Foremen used to complain a lot about this also. So this method was introduced. It was only those with long service or who proved their loyalty to the company, who got promoted

mainly into boss-boys or some other pseudo-clerical jobs like recording or transcribing.⁵⁰

What is captured above is the basis upon which African labour was predominantly being incorporated into the capitalist division of labour prior to and during the 1940's and 1950's:

Factory work for the Native is at present time relatively simple, requiring ordinary intelligence and manual dexterity. The essential requirements are speed and accuracy.⁵¹

Although there was already a group of African semi-skilled operatives emerging in the 1950's, this remained a very small percentage until at least the early 1960's. Semi-skilled African operatives were estimated in the 1940's and 1950's at no more than 15%, of the total African workforce, as shown by the tables below⁵²:

TABLE 4.5

Percentages of workers of each race who fell into the various grades of skills, 1957

	<u>Skilled</u>	<u>Semi-skilled</u>	<u>Unskilled</u>	<u>All employees</u>
Whites	82.6	27.7	0.8	36.9
Coloured	5.5	20.2	13.2	11.2
Asians	5.6	10.2	3.9	5.6
Africans	6.2	41.8	82.0	46.3

TABLE 4.6

Skills of workers of each race, 1957 (%)

	<u>Skilled</u>	<u>Semi-skilled</u>	<u>Unskilled</u>	<u>Total</u>
White	86.4	12.5	1.1	100
Coloured	19.2	30.1	50.7	100
Asians	38.6	30.2	31.2	100
African	5.2	15.0	79.8	100
All empl- ees.	38.6	16.6	44.8	100

Many of the semi-skilled operative jobs occupied by Africans were primarily those arising out of white labour shortages during the war.⁵³ It was usually in those cases where Africans were already firmly entrenched in semi-skilled jobs that capital pressed for exemptions. It was also in such instances that capital tried to resolve some of the potentially disruptive effects of job reservation by placing white workers in artificially-created supervisory positions over Africans, as a means of absorbing them. This saw the rapid racialisation of labour, reproduced in the form of white 'mental' supervisory positions, and African unskilled positions.

This whole restructuring was underpinned by a particular racist corporate ideology which was fast becoming dominant in South African industry. The ideology of white superiority and white economic leadership, as well as its corresponding practices, was largely taken over from the mining industry which had 'perfected' the exploitation of African labour. The core of white economic leadership was informed by a particular conception of the African

worker which was articulated not only by capital, but was given its 'scientific' character by social researchers working on behalf of white capital. Amongst the leading 'organic' intellectuals of capital at the time were the National Development Foundation, The National Institute of Personnel Research (NIPR) and various university-based research institutions.⁵⁴ For instance the University of Natal's Department of Economics' study of the African worker had this to say about the African worker at the time:

Before the native came into general contact with Europeans, his life was simple and crude, closely bound up with the vagaries of the climate. It was a lazy, happy, carefree existence when nature was kind.... The idea of progress, whether national, social or personal, as understood by the Western World, is foreign to the Bantu, and he has not the drive of the European which we take for granted, to improve his economic position.... European ways are strange to him and he is not able to discriminate between the good and the bad in what to him are foreign ways...⁵⁵

It is not surprising that the major questions posed by the above-quoted study related to questions of how fast the Bantu should be incorporated into the higher echelons of industry, which was regarded as the white man's domain.⁵⁶ The very initial preoccupation of the National Institute of Personnel Research (NIPR) - which was formed by the state to advise capital on the best utilisation of, particularly, African labour - was on the question of the 'African personality'.⁵⁷ This work was largely directed towards assessing the suitability of Africans for industrial work.⁵⁸

Arising out of many of these studies was the conclusion that the African worker was more suited to unskilled and highly repetitive work. At the most, the African could be trained for semi-skilled work of an order lower than that of whites and other 'ethnic groups'. Of particular importance in this regard is the commonalities between these specific conclusions and the utterances of both capital and the state. One can then safely conclude that these 'scientific' studies formed the basis of a scientisation of the ideology and economic practices of the white ruling bloc. It was also a very crude legitimisation of what was already going on in many factories in the 1940's and 1950's:

‘African workers are usually started as sweepers or in other simple jobs, and can only rise to become low-grade semi-skilled operatives on repetition work. Apart from such low-grade work, there is no opportunity for them to become highly skilled workers....Many horizontal, i.e. interdepartmental, transfers take place in response to changing production requirements, for disciplinary reasons or because of evidence for maladjustment in initial jobs. None of these transfers involve ... an opportunity for promotion.⁵⁹

Coming out very clearly from the above analysis is that there was no question of conceptualising African labour as capable of anything beyond some repetitive semi-skilled work in the 1950's. However the reproduction of the racial division of labour and the domination of whites within the economy always had their own contradictions and tensions in South Africa.

Firstly, the racial division of labour served to fuel African solidarity and resistance across class lines. This resistance in the 1950's led to the strengthening of African nationalism and its subsequent radicalisation under the leadership of the African National Congress. This proved to be a continuous threat to the stability and profitability of capital. It is also of no surprise then that the APB was one of the core pillars of the nationalist movement of the 1950's - seriously undermining the later efforts by both the state and capital to create a collaborative APB.

The second major problem created by the particular racial division of labour evolving in South African industry was the social distance between the white supervisors and the African workers, seriously threatening the reproduction of the social relations of control. Capital tried to cope with this in two ways: firstly by tightening the repressive character of the racial hierarchy, and secondly through the reproduction of the work organisation and control that incorporated elements of African tribal organisation. The

latter form of control was particularly attractive in that capital always realised that the hegemony of capital over African labour cannot be achieved through repression alone, nor even primarily through repression. Although capital relied and benefitted from state repression, there was always a realisation of the necessity to build factory regimes that would have a 'human face', if not the appearance of an 'African face', as captured by the forceful plea made by the Chairman's address to the NEA in 1955:

... there is another statement of fact-a simple fact -
that I would like to add, and it is as follows: A human being is happier if he is regarded by those for whom he works as an individual with human hopes and aspirations and not as a kind of 'commodity', under the heading of 'labour' in the cost sheet.... This fact...may well include such activities as...schemes of joint consultation.....designed to convince the worker that he does indeed play a part in the successful running of business'.⁶⁰

Although capital was quick to abandon such thinking on African labour when repression seemed successful, such ideas were never completely outside of capital's considerations, as part of a process of intensifying capital accumulation. This is further illustrated by the warning delivered at the opening address of a NDMF conference on how to use African labour:

Certain Industrialists are endeavouring to improve productivity per man hour by merely 'hiring and firing'. In the meantime the country is paying dearly for this foolish policy in the form of labour and racial unrest and a low general productivity of the native worker.⁶¹

Capital responded to these contradictions in two, sometimes contradictory, ways. Firstly, there was pressure for more mechanisation, led and encouraged by the state itself, as a basis

of dealing with the crisis of profitability and labour unrest. Secondly, capital sought to tighten labour repression through close and tight supervision over African labour.

However, the former route, particularly in the 1950's, was being resisted by white labour unions whose jobs were at stake because of the deskilling of craft work accompanied by mechanisation.⁶² Lewis also points out that because of the easy availability of skilled and unskilled labour there was reluctance towards mechanisation. This of course would have undermined supervision as the basis of labour control as will be shown later. Mechanisation was also resisted in the 1950's by the large number of smaller firms for whom because of the abundance of cheap African labour, mechanisation would have been more costly than beneficial.

Because of the above, first line supervision became the most crucial aspect of the labour process. It was because of this that some Africans could break out of unskilled labour and fill the positions of izinduna and boss-boys, who were a crucial component of South Africa's factory regimes of the immediate post-War period. Although the question of izinduna and boss-boys will be taken up fully in the next section, it is important to highlight the role played by these institutions in strengthening and reproducing the factory regimes of the 1950's.

The system of izinduna and boss-boys was originally copied from agriculture, perfected in the mines and then copied by manufacturing industry. As alluded to above, this system was carried over from well before the War and continued to be of primary importance in the 1950's. In some instances it existed uncomfortably side by side with the increasing mechanisation and new forms of labour control emerging in the decade. The survival of the induna system in the early apartheid period was primarily due to the fact that unskilled (and particularly migrant) labour was much more susceptible to control through close and direct supervision rather than through bureaucracy and mechanisation. Also because of the continued availability of cheap labour and the expensive (unnecessary) costs of mechanisation, the induna and boss-boy system became even more central to enable capital to reap the benefits of the combination of industrial expansion and availability of cheap migratory labour.

The survival of the induna system well into the 1960's and early 1970's, was also due to the migratory, and hence highly unstable, nature of African labour. Large investment in training and improving productivity through 'modernised' means was too costly for capital, thereby inducing the latter to rely on the maximum possible exploitation at the point of production; the induna and boss-boy system was the only 'tried and tested' method in South Africa for labour control.

The point being made here is that the existence of African labour in 'supervisory' positions was rather due to it being the cheapest and most appropriate means of controlling African labour in the early apartheid period. Izinduna and boss-boys were almost an exception during the early apartheid period, at a time when almost all of African labour employed by manufacturing industry was only 'suitable for repetitive work'. The continued use of izinduna and boss-boys was also not in conflict with the dominant apartheid practices whereby Africans could only be in charge of other Africans under close top-down supervision by white foremen and overseers.

.... the 1960's

The rapid economic growth of the 1960's did not change the basis for the incorporation of African labour in the lower ranges of the racial division of labour. The most significant aspect of the 1960's was that there was a shift from incorporating African labour almost exclusively as unskilled labour, to using it as semi-skilled labour as well. Some of the key characteristics of this phase as far as the labour process is concerned, were the diminishing need for unskilled labour, and a corresponding increase in the demand for semi-skilled labour. This also meant a demand for a more stable and settled urban labour force in order to allow the increase in labour productivity. Job fragmentation of craft jobs proceeded apace and well beyond what was happening in the 1940's and 1950's, thereby reproducing new types of semi-skilled jobs, increasingly being filled up by Africans. This was also the period when white labour ultimately traded their skilled artisan/craft jobs for higher supervisory positions in the social division of labour. The effect of the 'new' forms of incorporation of African labour was that unskilled African workers became increasingly redundant, thereby swelling African unemployment in the cities by leaps and bounds.

The above processes were accompanied by a massive reproduction of supervisory and petty bourgeoisie class places, an outcome of the objective changes in the labour process.⁶³ Many artificial positions of overseer, superintendent, and supervisors were created for the deskilled white artisans, taking the racial division of labour to its higher forms.

Within the above context, the white wage-earning classes also used their economic and political power to press for more concessions from capital, thereby taking the racial division of labour to its higher and most severe forms in South Africa. Some of these processes in the case of SA Railways are described by First et al:

...a job previously done by a white man on his own is subdivided so that he continues to do the most skilled (and best paid) part of the work while Africans are brought in to do the rest. By 1971, for example, the labour shortage in the State Railways had reached to the category of artisans, and the management and the Artisan Staff Association (ASA) opened negotiations to find acceptable forms of job dilution. Under a plan worked out by ASA's negotiator...a new category of 'artisan assistants' was devised. It was estimated that an artisan and four assistants could in a short while do the work of 3.5 artisans.... By bringing in four African 'assistants' to replace 2.5 white artisans, therefore the railways stood to cut their wage costs by approximately two-thirds'.⁶⁴

The above processes firmly entrenched the respective class positions of African and white labour in the racial division of labour, as well as the structural articulation of racism in South African corporations.

In summary, it is important to restate the attitude of capital towards the creation of and the reproduction of an ACPB. Firstly, capital in South Africa, being white capital, firmly believed in the ideology and practices of white industrial leadership. This attitude was of course underpinned by the existence of a historically oppressed African population and the exigencies of capital accumulation during a period of economic growth and opportunities. The apartheid state provided the necessary subjection and supply of African labour. The 'conflicts' between the capital and the state arose primarily out of the latter's 'rigidity' in the

control of African labour, as a basis of creating a wealthy and loyal white nation, which sometimes underestimated labour requirements for capital. The tensions between the state and capital were over the terms and conditions under which the reproduction of cheap labour power was to be guaranteed. The place of African labour, and its basis of incorporation, into the capitalist division of labour was as unskilled and later semi-skilled operatives. This was made possible by the nature of the relationship between state, capital and white labour, whereby the latter 'traded' their skilled jobs for supervisory and other petty bourgeois positions. The racial division of labour and a racial hierarchy was therefore entrenched.

The second point made was that it was only because of the contradictions of the racial division of labour and the need to tighten control and intensify the exploitation of African labour, that saw Africans occupying at least the low-level supervisory positions of izinduna and boss-boys. This grouping was, during the early apartheid period, virtually the only segment of African labour occupying what might be referred to as 'labour aristocratic' positions in manufacturing industry. Even the rapid creation of more skilled jobs and supervisory positions in the 1960's, saw the expanded reproduction of the racial hierarchy in the division of labour, in spite of growing labour shortages. Capital fully backed the immigration of more white skilled and managerial workers as a basis of dealing with skills shortages.

Perhaps the most important point that has been made in this discussion is that African labour in general (including the African petty bourgeoisie) was treated as migrant labour, thereby severely restricting opportunities for upward mobility across all classes within the African population. This is a point that has remained obscure in neo-Marxian scholarship in South Africa, yet it is a fundamental point in the analysis of the class reproduction of the African petty bourgeoisie in general. In other words national oppression played a fundamental role in the non-emergence of an African corporate petty bourgeoisie. This means that race in South Africa is an integral component of class formation (as argued in Chapter 2). Within neo-Marxism in South Africa there has been a tendency to strip class of its national content, thereby severely distorting our understanding of the class formation and reproduction of both the black and the white petty bourgeoisie.

3. General Characteristics of class structure at the end of the 1960's.

The assault on the possibilities of the emergence of an ACPB between 1948 and 1970, led by the state and reproduced by capital in the social division of labour, created the following picture by the beginning of the 1970's:

TABLE 4.7

South Africa's occupational structure, 1960 and 1970

	Africans		Whites	
	1960	1970	1960	1970
Profession -al, semi- profession -al and technical workers	48 487	93 300	137 858	200 700
Administra -tive workers	5716	4160	58 889	91 210
Clerical workers	19 276	91 960	276 542	391 960
Sales workers	28 894	110 200	97 535	142 690
Farmers and farm workers	1 474 860	2 051 600	117 358	97 210
Transport and communica -tion workers	63 598	201 560	71 617	85 140
Tradesmen, skilled, semi- skilled and unskilled workers	1 252 162	1 491 600	304 118	352 290
Service workers	711 156	1 011 860	58 951	101 240
TOTALS	3 604 149	5 056 240	1 122 778	1 462 510

(Source: Adjusted from Official Yearbook of the Republic of South Africa, Department of Information, 1985, pp. 479-480)

A number of important features are worth noting about the class structure of South African

society at the end of the 1960's particularly in relation to the suppression of the ACPB. The first noticeable characteristic is the massive growth of white administrative workers (which for the purposes of this section are taken to include managerial workers). Within a period of ten years the category of white administrative workers grew by about 64% (from 5 8889 to 9 1210), whilst African administrative workers declined in absolute terms by about 28% (from 5 716 to 4 160).⁶⁵ If one considers the share that Africans had of the administrative positions, it must have declined by much more than this percentage. These figures capture the extent of suppression of Africans in the administrative and managerial spheres in the economy.

Although African workers featured strongly in the professional, semi- professional and technical category, they only constituted 35% and 46% of the total number of whites in this category. A number of points need to be made here. Firstly, the reason why there was such a high number of Africans in these categories was because of the teachers and nurses. The professional, semi-professional and technician category was overwhelmingly dominated by teachers and nurses, largely employed in the growing bantustan bureaucracies. In the technician category, large sections of which were employed in private industry, Africans only formed 1.56% of the white technicians in 1960 and 2.9% in 1970 (See Table 4.8). Technicians were in very high demand during the post World War II era, and this sphere was virtually monopolised by whites.

The single most important discipline that has played a crucial role in the development of modern capitalism, particularly the manufacturing sector, has been that of engineering. In South Africa, in particular, it was from this category that a significant number of the managerial group was drawn.⁶⁶ In South Africa the engineers were among the fastest growing profession in the Post War period.⁶⁷ Although African engineers are indicated as having a higher growth rate between 1960 and 1970, this is very misleading if one looks at the numbers. African engineers only constituted 0,25% of white engineers in 1960 and 0,53% in 1970 - a rather insignificant growth!. The number of white engineers doubled from 7 594 in 1960 to 1 4950 in 1970 (See Table 4.8). Engineering became one of the functions which was highly monopolised by whites; this monopolisation was also underpinned by the fact that before 1976 there was not a single black university with an engineering

faculty. This symbolised the exclusion of Africans, and blacks in general, from the core field of petty bourgeois occupations, an occupation which under capitalism played such a central role:

... in the USA, in the period 1860-1930: standardising weights and measurements, modernizing patent law in favour of the science-based industrial corporations, developing large industrial research laboratories, integrating industrial and university-based research, ensuring an appropriate industry-based curriculum within the dramatically expanding university system, and helping to produce modern management and its techniques of overcoming workers's resistance.⁶⁸

TABLE 4.8

Annual rate of increase in selected occupations: Africans and Whites, 1960 - 1970.

	<u>Africans</u>		<u>Annual</u>
	<u>1960</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>rate</u>
			<u>of</u>
			<u>increase</u>
Engineers	19	80	32.1
Technicians	255	560	12.0
Doctors, dentists	109	120	1.0
Nurses	13 916	27 800	10.0
Architects & Quantity			
Surveyors	2	-	-
Physical Scientists	1	60	590.0
Teachers	23 458	43 960	8.7
	<u>Whites</u>		
Engineers	7 594	14 950	9.7
Technicians	16 303	19 240	1.8
Doctors, Dentists	7 388	9 180	2.4
Nurses	21 691	26 260	2.1
Architects & Quantity			
Surveyors	2 258	3 530	5.6
Physical Scientists	2 418	3 130	2.9
Teachers	38 907	56 500	2.0

Another important feature of the class structure of South Africa at the end of the 1960's was the growth of the clerical workers, an area where there was a significant growth of Africans.

Another important feature of the class structure of South Africa at the end of the 1960's was the growth of the clerical workers, an area where there was a significant growth of Africans. This can be explained in two ways. Firstly, as white males moved up the supervisory and managerial ladder the semi-skilled clerical work was largely taken up by white females and African males in that order. For instance, while white male clerical workers increased in absolute terms between 1960 and 1970, they declined in relative terms, with a relative and absolute increase in both white female share of the clerical occupation (from 144 922 to 241 570) during this period, as well as a significant increase of African clerical workers from 19 276 in 1960 to 91 960 in 1970.⁶⁹ Secondly, the bantustan bureaucracies themselves were generating a lot of clerical jobs, in order to run the expanding bantustan bureaucracies.

The last important feature of the occupational structure in South Africa at the end of the 1960's was the absolute decline of the white working class, and the relative decline of the African working class. The reasons for this phenomenon are important in that they further capture the nature of class formation under apartheid. The white working class was shrinking largely because it was moving up into highly skilled professional, supervisory and managerial jobs. In other words, the white working class was benefitting substantively from upward mobility through the new petty bourgeois class places thrown up by monopoly capitalism. The African working class, whilst increasing in absolute numbers, was declining in relative terms. Unlike the white working class, this decline was due to increasing unemployment facing the Africans, which was beginning to rise steeply in the 1960's as mechanisation proceeded apace.

In conclusion, one can identify three major features of South Africa's class structure at the end of the 1960's, particularly those that affected the creation of an ACPB. First of all, practices of both the state and capital 'perfected', as it were, a racially structured labour market. Certain jobs and class places became, if not by law, de facto 'racially-designated' jobs. This labour market, founded upon the racial division of labour, became the major institutional expression of white upward mobility and the suppression of the ACPB.

Secondly, and closely related to the first point, the extended reproduction of the white corporate petty bourgeoisie became directly dependent on the suppression of African

corporate advancement. This created a situation where African corporate advancement became a threat that was to be vehemently opposed by all white wage-earning classes. Therefore the 'life chances' of the African corporate petty bourgeoisie were not only influenced by the number of petty bourgeois class places generated in the capitalist division of labour, but largely by the behaviour of the white wage-earning classes themselves. This is a factor that has hardly been seriously examined by analysts working in this area in South Africa, i.e. the importance of the white corporate petty bourgeoisie in the class reproduction of an ACPB.

The third major characteristic of the class structure and class formation in South Africa, also related to the above, was that all sections and classes of whites acquired enormous economic (market) power through their occupation of key positions in the racial division of labour. This meant that they actually had day to day control over the means of production (economic possession) such that, as will be argued in chapter 6, it makes their behaviour of crucial importance in the creation and reproduction of an ACPB.

The above three conclusions in fact can be regarded as constituting the essential hypothesis of this work. It will be argued in the rest of the thesis that one of the major reasons for the discrepancy between capital's rhetoric on 'black advancement' and the low number of blacks occupying supervisory and other petty bourgeoisie positions, is because of resistance by white wage earning classes to 'black advancement'. Whilst capital might be committed to some kind of 'black advancement', this constitutes a threat to the extended reproduction of the white petty bourgeoisie and other wage-earning classes. And since capital is heavily dependent on the skills (technical, supervisory and managerial), loyalty, and co-operation of the white petty bourgeoisie, it is not in a position to discard them in favour of rapid black upward mobility. This then becomes the contradiction upon which the emergence and reproduction of an ACPB is based. From this perspective one is therefore able to assess the capacity of the ACPB to reproduce itself, as well as to understand the politics and ideology of the ACPB.

With this background it is possible to move on and look at the emergence of the ACPB.

1. The analysis of the african petty bourgeoisie differs from the earlier analyses, particularly those undertaken by Mkele, 1960 and Kuper 1965. These two tended to analyse this class almost purely from the angle of race and national domination, with adequate attention being paid to the processes of capital accumulation and class exploitation.
2. The most important works include Davies, 1979; Hindson, op cit; Kaplan, 1976; Leggassick, 1974; Wolpe, 1978.
3. for example Davies, 1979
4. Perhaps O'Meara, 1983 is an exception here.
5. O'Meara, 1983, p.3
6. Edwards, op cit
7. Mbeki, 1964 p.20
8. Union Statistics, 1910-1960
9. SA Statistics, 1968
10. Mafeje and Simkins, 1963.
11. Recently, an American court of law in Virginia set aside an affirmative action statute requiring that a certain percentage of business be set aside for minorities in view of past discrimination. The court declared that any government programme that favours one race over another to be intrinsically highly suspect and should be subjected to the most severe scrutiny. The right wing has quickly jumped on this ruling and argued in this instance that it is not enough to say the US was (or is) racist. Blacks have to show concrete evidence of actual discrimination (Washington Post, February 3, 1989).
12. Quoted in Davies, op cit. p.341
13. ibid
14. Davies, op cit., p.35 - emphases added.
15. Horrell, 1968 p.4
16. SRR, 1958\59 pp 254-255
17. Christie and Collins, 1984 p.173

18. Of the 7 000 african schools in existence just prior to the introduction of bantu education, 5 000 were run by the missionaries. But by 1959 virtually all african schools were under the control of the Native Affairs Department (Christie and Collins, 1984, p.162)
19. Horrell, 1968
20. Charney, 1988
21. Nkomo, 1984
22. Horrell, op cit., p. 98
23. Christie and Collins, op cit
24. For instance in 1959 there were 4 633 commercial and technical high schools for whites and not a single such institution for africans. Similarly in the same year there were 6 004 trade schools for whites and none for africans (Survey of Race Relations, 1960).
25. In 1952 the former Secretary of Labour, Ivan Walker had estimated that 8 000 skilled white workers would have to be found by 1956 to satisfy the requirements of the mining industry, and a minimum of 20 000 artisans would be needed by other industries by 1953 (Natal Employers Association - NEA - Annual Report, 30 June 1952) The crisis was also reflected in the practice of 'poaching' skilled labour between government and private industry, leading to a threat by the government that
... unless commerce and industry discourage recruitment from the Public Service the government would have to consider the appointment of a body without whose consent it would not be possible to engage civil servants (Address by Minister of Posts and Telegraphs to the Northern Transvaal Chamber of Industries, quoted in ibid, 1951, p.43)
26. Union Statistics, 1924-64
27. Sometimes, and ironically, the state had reservations about immigration because there were fears about the potential negative side-effects of this process, as captured by the words of the then prime minister:
'It is impossible for a country like South Africa to absorb on a large scale immigrants who come from countries which do not understand the colour problems of South Africa, who aggravate our difficulties on arrival here' (SRR, 1958\59 p.207).
28. For instance in 1958 the South African government joined an international organisation called the Inter-Governmental Committee for European Migration, whereby the government could apply for skilled workers and information on qualifications of would-be immigrants (SRR, 1958\59).

29. For instance the employers only paid 30 pounds per immigrant recruit; the rest of the costs were paid for by the government (ibid).
30. SRR, 1958\59
31. Report 286 statistics of 1924-64, Bureau of Statistics
32. For instance of the total number of immigrants between 1949 - 1953 fifty eight percent (58%) were either economically inactive or of unspecified occupations (Bureau of Statistics, 1924-1964 statistics)
33. ibid
34. This represents the total number of immigrants in the time period, including those classified as not economically active.
35. Lipton, 1986
36. Annual Report of the Natal Employers Association (hereafter NEA) for year ended 30 June 1953, pp17-18
37. Economic Research Unit, 1950; Hellman, 1953
38. ibid, p.21
39. NEA, 1951 p.16
40. NEA, 1952 p.40
41. see NEA, 1961
42. Chairman's address, NEA, 1953 p.43
43. The concept "factory regime" is taken from Burawoy's work. The concept, at least for the present author, incorporates a wider understanding of the production process than the concept of "labour process". This concept, according to Burawoy, enables one to, firstly, differentiate "... between the politics of production and the political apparatuses of production that shape that politics; second, how both are limited by the labour process on one side and market forces on the other; and third, how both politics and apparatuses at the level of production differ from and relate to state politics and state apparatuses" (Burawoy, 1985 p.122). The usefulness of this concept also lies in its ability to sharply discern and periodise the historical development of the labour process in specific social formations.
44. Interview with S Bourquin, a former bantu affairs commissioner in Durban in the 1950's through to the 1970's (hereafter referred to as 'Bourquin interview').
45. Bourquin interview

46. Chairman's address, NEA, 1958 p.33
47. This act, amongst other things, prohibited the employment of any 'native' on skilled work in connection with the erection, completion, restoration, repair, maintenance or alteration of a building within a particular radius of 'white' urban areas.
48. NEA, June, 1955 p.13
49. NEA, 1957 p.39
50. Induna interview, op cit.
51. Economics Research Unit, 1950 p.7
52. SRR, 1957\58 p.171
53. See Lewis, 1984
54. See Webster, 1980 pp. 67-68, for a list of some of the work of universities and university based researchers on workers in industry during the 1940's and 1950's
y.
55. Economics Research Unit, op cit pp.17-18
56. Some of the questions posed by this study were: 'Can the Native assimilate Western standards of civilisation and how fast? Are we expecting too much and that too soon? Is it necessary for the survival of the Native race that it should pass through the long period of slow economic and social development that characterised the growth of Western civilisation?' (ibid, p.18).
57. See some of Biesheuvel's works in the 1940's to the 1960's.
58. The NIPR's early work during the 1950's was largely 'concerned with the important question of scientifically testing the aptitude of the native for industrial work both as an operative and in more responsible positions' (Quoted in Webster, 1980 pp. 68-69)
59. Economic Research Unit, op cit, p. 21 - emphasis added.
60. NEA, 1955 p. 46
61. Conference proceedings of the National Development of Manpower Foundation (NDMF), 1953 p.11
62. See Lewis, 1984 chapter 7 for details on this resistance.
63. 'Reclassification of jobs is understood by both sides (ie capital and the state) to be a way of shifting the colour bar as economic conditions change: Africans move into more jobs - more skilled jobs - and may receive marginally higher wages, but the whites move even further' (First et al, 1972 p.62).

64. First et al, op cit, pp.71-72

65. The statistics here is largely taken from the Bulletin of Statistics, Department of Statistics, 1975.

66. In a survey undertaken in South Africa of persons with engineering degrees, it was found that 33% of them had been moved into administrative and managerial posts. (Official Yearbook of the Republic of South Africa, 1975 p.481). Abercrombie and Urry (1983), quoting Noble (1979), argue that the profession of modern engineering in the US was from the very beginning integrated with that of corporate capital, and '... they (the engineers) in part produced the divorce between mental and manual labour ... in other words, their struggle in part transformed the existing class structure'. (p.149)

67. Of the selected occupations for whites they grew at a higher rate than any of the other categories ie. at 9.7% per annum between 1960 and 1970 (see tables 4.8 and 4.9)

68. Abercrombie and Urry, op cit, p.148

69. Department of Information (1975) Official Yearbook of the Republic of South Africa.

Chapter 5

The Changing Labour Process, Political Crises and the Emergence of an African Petty Bourgeoisie

The emergence of an ACPB in the 1970's was mainly a product of two interrelated but distinct processes. The first was the changing nature of the labour process in the 1960's, calling forth new forms of labour control and its incorporation into the racial division of labour. The second and perhaps more important one was the political upheavals, and the subsequent crisis that rocked South Africa in the mid 1970's:

The particular combination of these factors laid the objective conditions for the emergence of 'black advancement' as a discourse of the white ruling bloc, within which an ACPB was to be reproduced. This chapter will deal with each of these issues in turn, simultaneously demonstrating their interconnectedness in the rise of the ACPB.

However, before discussing these two factors it is important to situate them within the context of skills shortages in South Africa. The debates on skills shortages in South Africa magnify some of the most fundamental contradictions facing the white ruling bloc in its attempts to rationalise labour supply. There are two sides to the ruling class's attempts to deal with skill shortages. On the one hand, attempts to address the problem show the contradiction facing the ruling class, that of trying to simultaneously ensure the supply of the required quality and quantity of skills and at the same time protecting white economic leadership. On the other hand, the persistence of skills shortages is used to try to create a collaborative African petty bourgeoisie and divide the black working class. These two strategies to address skills shortages sit uneasily with each other.

1. Skills Shortages and the Modification of 'Our Traditional Labour Practices'

The suppression of an ACPB in the 1950's and 1960's secured and perfected the racial division of labour and the intensification of the exploitation of black labour, and created favourable conditions for rapid capital accumulation between 1948 and 1970. It also laid the basis for South Africa's persistent shortage of skilled labour at various levels of the economy, a problem which became more acute in the 1970's.

However, one of the ironies of capital accumulation and its trajectory through the racial division of labour in South Africa, is that the creation of skills shortages did not become a material basis and spur to African advancement; instead, they became an arena for consolidation of white dominance in skilled occupations.

Despite the above assertion, there are five reasons why an examination of the skills shortages in the post-war era in South Africa is important in trying to understand the historical suppression and subsequent emergence of the ACPB. Firstly, the debates on the skills shortages within ruling class circles clearly illustrate the contradictory stances of both the state and capital towards the promotion of an ACPB prior to the 1970's. Secondly, responses to skills shortages also illustrate the coincidence of interests of whites over the oppression and exploitation of blacks in South Africa. Thirdly, skills shortages have been used as a means to argue for the creation of a black petty bourgeoisie, and have put pressure on the white wage-earning classes to accept some form of black advancement. Fourthly, responses to skills shortages by the white power bloc enable us to understand better some of the basis of 'conflicts' within the power bloc over the incorporation of black, particularly African, labour into the capitalist division of labour. Lastly, debates over skills shortages allow us to pull together the reasons for the suppression of an ACPB, and the subsequent pressure towards creating this stratum.

According to Kraak, attempts at grappling with the question of skills shortages have led to the emergence of two positions within neo-Marxist scholarship in South Africa.¹ These positions, he argues are polarised around Davies and Meth.² Davies argues that the skills

shortage in South Africa started to reach crisis proportions in the mid-1960's because "... the reproduction of monopoly capitalist relations of production proceeded at a rate far in excess of the rate of growth (and consequently, the technical training) of the white population."³ This observation begs the question of why the state and capital did not train blacks to deal with the skills shortages. Davies advances two reasons why the state did not train blacks to address this problem: firstly, that the adverse effects of skills shortages were being cushioned by the policy of floating the colour bar, i.e. fragmentation of skills and employing cheaper semi-skilled labour. Secondly, the abundance of foreign capital acted as a counter to the adverse effects of shortages on productivity. According to Davies this took place at least up until the mid 1970's; thereafter, these cushioning effects were collapsing.

However Davies' answer further begs the question of why is skills training for blacks proceeding at a much slower rate than capitalist rhetoric despite the collapse of the cushioning effects, as the argument suggests? Perhaps an answer to this is that whilst the state relaxed all the legal restrictions on African upward mobility (e.g. scrapping of job reservation in 1977, and making provision for African artisan training, to mention just the most important), the entrenched social and structural processes characteristic of the racial division of labour remained intact. It is the fundamental thesis of this work that the creation of an ACPB in South Africa is still largely caught in the contradiction of, on the one hand, the need to train African labour to address these problems, and on the other hand, the protection of the class interests of all white wage-earning classes. White wage-earning classes, as shown in the previous chapter, achieved economic dominance through their privileged economic position within the racial division of labour, a position which they continue to use up to this day. White control over the means of production on a day-to-day basis ensures their own extended reproduction in key economic positions, despite rhetoric to the contrary by capital and its apologists.

The discrepancy between rhetoric and action in African skills training has been explained by Meth as indicating that the shortage is far more exaggerated than reality. This represents the other polarity of the argument. Meth, using government statistics, compared the figures on skills shortages with actual existing vacancies. His findings in this regard are important

in that they show a big discrepancy between the two, with actual existing vacancies far less than the assumed skill shortages.⁴ From this exercise Meth argues that, in fact, the rhetoric on skills shortage by capital, is made with other purposes in mind, "... as a convenient smokescreen behind which cooptation of an incipient black petty bourgeoisie can proceed"⁵ This argument has also been advanced by other South African scholars as an explanation of the discrepancy between the expressed alarm about skills shortages and the very limited action by the state and capital.⁶

Although Kraak argues that skills shortages have been a reality in South Africa, he criticises both positions on the grounds that they focus only on the technical component of skills and not on what he calls the ideological and socially-constructed components of skills. His other criticism is that job dilution and reskilling are not mutually exclusive. He then argues that a definition of skill must incorporate the ideological components of skills, as well as understand that deskilling and reskilling do happen at the same time.

It is argued here that the way Kraak formulates the debate leaves one with an impression that the two positions are mutually exclusive. The existence of a skills shortage on the one hand, and the failure of capital and the state to train Africans in dealing with the problem on the other hand, are not necessarily opposites. The argument put forward here is that failure of the state and capital to deal with the skills shortage by deliberately not training blacks, in fact clearly illustrates the contradictory plane on which African corporate advancement has been, and continues to , take place. Davies is essentially correct in pointing out that from the mid-1960's skills shortages reached a 'crisis' point in South Africa. However, the evidence given by him on how capital coped with the skills shortages have a serious omission. Whilst it is true that economic growth, foreign investment and the floating of the colour bar were the major means of coping with the shortages, Davies underplays the factors underlying the white power bloc's structurally determined resistance to train blacks. Despite the cushioning effects of these factors, the skills shortage was pushing the price of white (skilled) labour very high, a factor that was responsible for the increasing rate of inflation in the late 1960's and 1970's. In order to offset this high cost, capital relied mainly on a continued supply of cheap African labour. The underlying principle behind all this was that the imperative of sustaining white economic leadership came into conflict with the skilling of Africans. The

trajectory of capital accumulation in South Africa cannot simply be explained in economic terms or limited to 'production-bound' explanations, without incorporating the fact that capital accumulation acted to strengthen the foundations of white rule.

The above argument is empirically supported by the actions of the state in its responses to skills shortages. Despite the inconsistencies in the figures provided by the government itself and many other independent surveys, there is an indication that the mid-1960's saw the onset of severe skills shortages. There was general agreement on this by both government and private industry.⁷ However, the state was looking at all other methods of resolving the problems other than the training of blacks. Some of these strategies have already been outlined above and they included the importation of labour from overseas, and the encouragement of job dilution.

It is important to discuss some of the other strategies to illustrate that the state's response was not only purely an 'economic' response, but had its foundations in the ideology and practice of apartheid. In 1968, the state responded to the crisis of the mid-1960's by instituting a Working Committee on Manpower Training under the auspices of the Prime Minister's Economic Advisory Council, "to report on training programmes in various sectors of the economy and to stimulate further training by publishing information in connection with approaches to manpower training".⁸ The state insisted that this must happen within the strict confines of government policy in order to protect 'our traditional labour practices'.

We cannot in a country such as this simply calculate our manpower requirements in terms of the shortages of skilled workers and technicians and what this will be in ten years' time. We must also take into account our traditional labour pattern...the attitude of the various groups of workers. We must know what our aim is, who we want to train, and what we want to train them for, if we do not want to disrupt industrial peace.⁹

Within the framework of the government policy, the state insisted that the training of

Africans for skilled jobs should take place in the bantustans. This was justified with the clearly impracticable reasoning that:

the indivisibility and interdependence of the South African market will ensure that any improvement in the quality and productivity of labour, irrespective of the region where it is employed, will render its contribution to an increased overall rate of economic advance.¹⁰

With the 1968-1969 recession and the pressure particularly from English-speaking capital, the government finally appointed a Committee for the Better Utilisation of Labour under the chairmanship of the Secretary of Labour.

Despite protestations by both the opposition in Parliament English big capital, the state intensified job reservation. Two important measures were taken by the state in the late 1960's and early 1970's, showing its clear determination not to allow skills shortages to lead to the training of Africans in skilled work. The first action was the tightening of job reservation through the introduction of a new Bill, the Bantu Laws Amendment Bill, in 1969, the very same year that skills shortages were reported to have reached a serious stage, and the year (1968-1969) which saw South Africa going through a recession.¹¹ The Bill empowered the Minister of Bantu Administration at one months notice in the government gazette "... to prohibit the performance of work by, or the employment of a Bantu a) in a specified area; b) in a specified class of employment; c) in a specified trade; d) in the service of specified employer or class of employers."¹²

The new legislation in fact extended the powers of the state in ensuring job reservation, such that it even shook the Johannesburg City Council into sending a deputation to the Deputy Minister of Bantu Administration.¹³ This action by the state was largely a response to its concerns that employers were exploiting the skills shortage to employ African labour in 'white jobs', therefore upsetting the racial division of labour. The state's commitment to the suppression of African corporate advancement was such that for instance, in 1970, P. Koornhof, the then Deputy Minister of Bantu Administration sought the assistance of the Attorney-General to prosecute those employers employing African labour in the Western

Cape.¹⁴

The second major response of the state to employers using Africans as skilled labour, which was the first action under the new legislation. In 1970, Koornhof as Deputy Minister of Bantu Administration, issued a Government notice on 3 April of his intention to prohibit employment of Africans, and /or performance of such jobs as counter-assistant or salesman in a shop or cafe; a receptionist in a commercial or professional undertaking; a telephonist or telephone switchboard operator in a shop, office, factory or an hotel; a clerk, cashier, or typist in similar places.¹⁵ Employment of Africans in such occupations were only to be allowed in African townships, bantustans and where the state made specific concessions. This was the first direct state attack on the small, but growing, trickle of an African corporate petty bourgeoisie. This was clearly an attempt to reverse the situation where employers were increasingly exploiting skills shortages to employ cheap African labour. For instance, in a survey by the Financial Mail attempting to assess the number of Africans employed in these threatened categories, the survey returns indicated that the total would be no less than 25 000.¹⁶

The Government's action prompted an outcry in the corridors of liberal capital and its ideologists, with the *Rand Daily Mail* mourning a lost opportunity:

This is the emerging African middle class that we should be doing our utmost to encourage and stabilize ... The Bantustans are in no position to absorb them ... So they will stay in the cities, seeking out more menial jobs ... Loss of jobs can mean loss of home as well, and the loss of the right to remain in an urban area.¹⁷

At the same time capital was beginning to push vehemently for the skills shortages to be addressed through the increased training of African labour. However, what is noticeable about the responses of capital in the late sixties and early seventies on skills shortages was that it began to realise the shortcomings of relying on white local and immigrant labour to

sustain economic growth. The difference between the responses of capital to skills shortages in the 1950's and the late 1960's was that capital was now willing to train more blacks in higher skilled jobs, but at the same time was not willing to upset the core elements of the racial division of labour. Earlier capital did not even contemplate training blacks for skilled positions. However, there was a very strong continuity between the earlier attitudes and those still held by capital in the late sixties. For instance SEIFSA formulated, *inter alia*, the following plan to address skills shortages:

... speeding up of immigration and extending the range of immigrants into the higher categories of semi-skilled labour. This is in accordance with ... the Australian policy apparently being geared to bringing in immigrants in excess of the immediate absorption capacity of industry and commerce and this policy tends to generate sustained industrial and economic take-off.¹⁸

Together with this emphasis on immigration, there was at the same time a realization that

... immigration, is only part of the means whereby our labour problems may be combated. The Republic has a large reserve of unskilled and semi-skilled labour in its Bantu population, which, but for job reservation, could well make a contribution in alleviating the acute labour shortage ...¹⁹

This illustrates the hesitancy of capital to train black labour, despite the realisation that the skills shortages had to be addressed. This hesitancy was a reflection of two processes taking place at the end of the 1960's and the beginning of the 1970's. First of all there was a very sharp ideological and political division between English and Afrikaner capital on the training of blacks. Whilst both of them were committed by the early 1970's to some training of blacks in skilled jobs, Afrikaner capital, through its mouthpiece, the Afrikaanse Handelsinstituut (AHI), still wanted this to be done strictly within the strict confines of job reservation, while English capital was willing to forsake job reservation.²⁰

Secondly, it captures the fact that responses by both the state and capital to skills shortages were not purely based on technical considerations of 'supply and demand', but on considerations and effects of the wider economic and political crises. This factor, best illustrated by Torchia, shows that the political behaviour of manufacturing capital and its responses to economic crises was always strongly related to the state of political resistance inside the country. For instance, manufacturing capital's strongest attack on job reservation came immediately after Sharpeville, 'attacking' the principle behind it.²¹ However during the period of political tranquillity of the 1960's, employers criticised the manner of application of job reservation and not the principle behind it.²²

What does all the above mean for the debate between those that say skills shortages are only rhetoric and those saying that they are a reality but cushioned by other factors? As indicated earlier, these positions are not mutually exclusive. Rather they both have serious omissions. There is no doubt that there have been skills shortages in South Africa, but what Meth's position does not explain is how the state and capital have coped with such shortages up to this point in time. It is also questionable to use existing vacancies as a measure of the extent of skills shortages, as Meth does. That there are fewer vacancies does not mean that such vacancies are an expression of the skills shortages. On the other hand, Davies does point out that the major cushioning effects collapsed in the mid 1970's. What needs to be explained is how capital is coping with such shortages in the contemporary period. This seems to give legitimacy to the argument that skills shortages have been used as a 'ploy' to create a black corporate petty bourgeoisie in the post-1976 period. Kraak himself does not show in what way the incorporation of the ideological dimensions of skill explains whether or not there are skill shortages in South Africa. Another weakness in Meth's argument is that it closes us off from examining the ways through which both the state and capital are coping with the skills shortages.

Thus, the contradictions facing white capital and the state in South Africa is that skills shortages can only be addressed through training of (especially) Africans, while at the same time the political and economic consequences of such training to white economic and political leadership in South Africa are unpredictable. This is the issue that the Meth position on skills shortages fails to address. This contradiction of the existence of skills shortages and

failure to train blacks, seems to have been temporarily 'contained' in three ways. First of all, the white ruling bloc has been willing to sacrifice whatever potential benefits may arise in skilling blacks, for the sake of protecting the fundamental structures of white rule. The ability of the white ruling class to maintain this situation is its ability to keep the structures of national oppression intact, keeping African labour as essentially cheap labour. The negative spin off from this has been the growth of the strength and vitality of the democratic labour movement, representing predominantly African workers, which further throws capital back to relying on state repression to contain the contradiction. Secondly, this contradiction has been contained through highly controlled training and advancement of Africans into highly focused jobs and occupations. However, the third and most crucial factor has been the resistance of the white wage-earning classes themselves to any rapid upward mobility of Africans in the white corporate hierarchy. This resistance is made possible by the fact that the day-to-day running of the corporations is in the hands of the white wage-earning classes.

This presents capital's mildest intentions of advancing Africans with a fundamental dilemma. Apart from capital's own concerns, they cannot sacrifice the white managerial classes and skilled workers, in order to promote African upward mobility. On the other hand, capital is quite clear about the desirability of creating a collaborative African corporate petty bourgeoisie. This constitutes the terrain upon which 'black advancement' takes place. In other words, 'black advancement' itself, becomes the site for the reproduction of apartheid and the racial division of labour in new ways, as will be demonstrated later. This then, I would argue, explains the discrepancy between rhetoric and action in addressing skills shortages. It is ironically these contradictions that sustain the skills shortages.

In conclusion I would like to point out that skills shortages in themselves have not given rise to 'black advancement', but have provided part of the ideological and 'moral' weaponry of capital to convince white wage-earning classes of the importance of advancing blacks. So far that is where the significance of skills shortages lie for the creation of an African corporate petty bourgeoisie. At the same time the rhetoric of skills shortages is not merely a 'ploy' by the white ruling bloc against the white wage earning classes, but reflects a problem whose solution is continually being undermined by the entrenched racial division of

labour and the privileged position of the white-wage earning classes. What is important here is that skills shortages should not be looked at in isolation from wider political and economic factors or from the balance of class forces at different conjunctures. The essential argument being advanced here is that it has rather been the changing requirements for control over labour and other economic crises, together with the political crises, that have pushed 'black advancement' further in South Africa. The response of capital to skills shortages needs to be located within this wider context, which the Meth and Davies analyses do not adequately do. The next two sections will look at how economic and political crises have led to the emergence of an African corporate petty bourgeoisie.

2. Semi-skilled labour, changing factory regimes and the rise of an African corporate petty bourgeoisie: The foundations of the modern personnel function.

This section will proceed by way of a case study in an attempt to illustrate the following three processes that have laid the foundations for the rise of the ACPB:

(i) The first area of real 'black advancement', which produced the first fraction of an ACPB, was not necessarily created as a response to skills shortages as such, but was an opportunity thrown up by the changing nature of the labour process and the corresponding forms of labour control.

(ii) The emergence of an ACPB was a product of the changing requirements of capital accumulation and modes of sustaining white rule, more than a function of a planned process of creating an African petty bourgeoisie.

(iii) It was only after this class had emerged, and the changed political conjuncture, that the attention of capital was focussed on the reproduction of this class as a goal in itself.

The core of the African corporate petty bourgeoisie in South Africa consists of personnel practitioners and marketing or sales managers. The African personnel practitioners (APP's) are used as a case study here for the following reasons:

- As will be demonstrated below, the APP's were the first group of the ACPB to emerge in the late 1960's.
- Research done thus far on African managers tends to indicate that personnel officers/managers form a significant portion of all African managers employed in industry and commerce.²³
- Because the APP's are that fraction of the African corporate petty bourgeoisie which is located directly within the sphere of production and in direct contact with the working class, studying them allows us to capture the finer details of the politics of the reproduction of an ACPB in South Africa.

The best way to capture the birth and emergence of the APP's, as an (occupational) fraction of the ACPB, is to locate this process within a brief history of the personnel/industrial relations function in South Africa.

a) The Personnel function in the 1950's

As indicated earlier, the 1950's in South Africa was characterised by the massive growth of manufacturing industry,, but with the level of mechanisation still very low compared to that of 1960's. African labour was still being largely incorporated as unskilled labour, doing physically heavy and highly repetitive jobs. The factories were still small, albeit growing and laying the basis for monopolisation that was to be consolidated in the 1960's.²⁴ In short, the labour process and nature of factories in the 1950's was largely characteristic of the phase of competitive capitalism. The only distinct difference in South Africa was that secondary industrialization was being led by the state and by international monopoly capital, a factor which hastened monopolisation of South African capitalism itself.

Studies of the labour process and the personnel function show that there is a close relationship between the level of development of the productive forces and forms of labour control. For instance the competitive phase of capitalism largely corresponds to the 'welfarist' forms of labour control characteristic of the less sophisticated forms of labour

employed. The phase of monopoly capitalism witnesses an evolution of more sophisticated forms of labour control including the development of sophisticated personnel and industrial relations systems.²⁵ Whilst South Africa essentially followed a similar pattern to that in the western capitalist countries, if one looked at the development of the labour process, but the national oppression of blacks gave capital the space to control African labour using the most crude and repressive methods. The outcome of this was a very underdeveloped personnel function for a long time in South Africa. The 1950's in particular were characterised by very crude and repressive methods of incorporating and controlling African labour.

There are a number of reasons why the personnel function was very rudimentary and underdeveloped in the 1950's in South Africa. The first reason was that the type of labour employed was largely unskilled and unstable because of migrancy. According to the personnel manager of a large international oil company, "The present standard of evolution of the majority of non-Europeans remains largely comparable to conditions prevalent in England in Feudal times."²⁶ Given this kind of understanding of African labour, he went on to suggest the essentials of what he termed an 'industrial relations programme' for African labour at the time:

- (a) simple education and training
- (b) dignified and clear instruction
- (c) sympathy and understanding especially in time of injury and trouble.²⁷

The major task facing employers during this period was that : "He (the employer) must train the native to work harder and more productively so that he can justify the extra money which he will get".²⁸

The above captures the essence of the personnel function in the 1950's, and the attitude and practices of capital towards African labour. However, it should be pointed out that the personnel function in the 1950's had a 'dual' nature, with one set of practices geared towards white skilled and supervisory personnel, and the other towards unskilled African labour. This was captured by a white personnel manager thus:

The position of South African labour has, however, been

far more difficult, due to one section of the community being industrially mature while the other section, containing the bulk of the industrial workers, is virtually un-initiated in the complexities of modern industrial life.²⁹

This, in terms of personnel management practices, translated into the "...Personnel Department deal(ing) with (white) Staff, and Industrial Relations departments with (African) labour".³⁰ In practice this meant that the personnel departments in the 1950's emphasised skills training towards whites - which was referred to as the proper personnel function - and with regard to African labour the emphasis was on selection, testing, absenteeism, labour turnover, health and literacy.³¹ This different emphasis of the early personnel departments is also captured by a recently retired white personnel manager, talking about his experiences in the late 1940's:

Our first personnel job was actually in 1956. But I came into the personnel function somewhat earlier than that really, to be specific in 1948, and I was involved in training. In fact I came into the personnel function via training. And this came about because immediately after the war, the company realised that business was expanding and growing and that the white supervisors at that stage were people who came up through the ranks very quickly. White supervisors needed to be trained in basic supervisory skills. And at that time, you may be aware of this, an industrial training programme was developed in England to assist industry in training supervisors in the ammunitions factories. And the programme, which was called T11, was made up of three parts: Training in industry; there was a programme of job relations and instruction - how to teach people their jobs; and job methods...The company had actually sent a man overseas who had been trained in England by the Ministry of Labour...and I had to go to one of his programmes. In other words I was exposed to training techniques, discussion leading techniques, instruction techniques and that kind of a thing...³²

The second reason for the underdevelopment of the (black) personnel function, was the

cheapness of African labour. The ease with which cheap, unskilled African labour could be replaced did not require any sophisticated means of dealing with that labour. As shown in the previous chapter, it is simply not true to suggest that there was a general shift of black workers into semi- skilled positions by 1950, as Lewis suggests. This is corroborated by the evidence that Lewis himself provides regarding, for example, incentive schemes. It is not inconsequential that, despite pressures by the government and management ideologists for companies to introduce incentive schemes and scientific time studies, by 1960 only 19% of the firms had introduced such schemes.³³

The general behaviour of capital towards labour in the 1950's was to shy away from any major innovations in labour control, given the cheapness and unskilled nature and ready availability of African workers. It was therefore no coincidence that in the 1950's the primary concerns of capital vis-a-vis the utilisation of African labour were recruitment and selection, as illustrated by the major pre-occupations of social scientists and researchers at the time.³⁴ The reluctance of capital to develop any expensive 'personnel techniques' was underpinned by the extent of oppression and control exercised by the white state over African labour. Also, by this time the co-operation of white labour with capital provided a situation where there were no incentives to introduce new schemes of labour control.

The extent of state regulation and intervention in the rationalisation of labour supply and control, was the third reason why capital in the 1950's did not see the need to develop elaborate personnel departments. Unlike capital in the West, in South Africa many of the personnel and control functions that should have been done by individual companies, were performed by various state agencies. For instance, in the whole area of labour supply and recruitment, the labour bureaux system, introduced in 1952, gave capital relief from the problems of recruiting labour. South African capital did not have to compete for African labour, but had to simply go to the labour bureaux to get the kind of labour they needed. This substantially reduced the need to develop personnel departments that were adequately geared to the whole recruitment process. All that capital was concerned with was the proper placement of that labour. The whole governmental infrastructure of labour control relieved individual firms from instituting elaborate personnel procedures, in these areas. In other words, the national oppression of blacks translated into the stabilisation of internal factory

regimes and reduced the costs to capital in this regard quite dramatically.

Over and above the regulation of labour in general by the state, other bodies were set up by the state to help capital to smoothly incorporate African labour into the labour process. For instance, the National Institute of Personnel Research (NIPR), was set up in 1946 to assist capital in the selection and placement of African labour, particularly through aptitude testing. The NIPR did not only provide a service to capital in general, but performed specific tasks for individual companies as well. This acted as a further brake to the development of the personnel management function in the 1950's beyond providing for internal housing (compound administration) and general welfare for the African workers. For instance, the South African Air Force, the General Post Office, the Civil Aviation Co, the Transvaal Clothing Manufacturers Association, and the Chamber of Mines, were among the first organisations "...to put specific requests to the Bureau (NIPR), to undertake research into the best utilisation of labour in industry".³⁵

Also of great assistance to capital in terms of its need to rationalise the exploitation of African labour was the growing interest of the universities in academic research on industry. This marked the beginning of the harnessing of social science research into the service of capital, aptly referred to by Webster as the emergence of social scientists as Servants of Apartheid.³⁶ Virtually all the major universities were doing social science research work for capital in the 1940's and 1950's. They included Rhodes University (Institute of Leather Industries), The University of Natal Department of Economics (The African Factory Worker), E. Theron from Stellenbosch University ("Fabriekwerksters in Kaapstad", 1942), and so on.³⁷ All these research and service institutions provided capital with the necessary 'technology of control' for African labour in the 1950's.

It was therefore no surprise that the calls from the ideologists and functionaries of capital for more humane personnel management systems, fell on deaf ears. For instance, a very forceful plea was made by the Chairman of the Natal Employers' Association in 1955, for companies to start introducing personnel departments:

The contribution of personnel Management does not stop at selection and placement

...³⁸ A human being is happier if he is regarded by those for whom he works as an individual with human hopes and aspirations and not as a kind of 'commodity' under the heading of 'labour' in the cost sheet. This fact again opens a wide field and the adequate recognition of its truth may well include such activities as the operation of schemes of joint consultation between management and worker, designed to convince the worker that he does indeed play a part in the successful running of the business..., and I would add that in this respect all managers should be Personnel Managers.³⁹ ✱

This plea was also a response to two other developments in the 1950's. The talk was given against the background of the intensification of community and worker resistance in the country. It is no coincidence that the talk was given in 1955, the year that the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU) was formed and the Freedom Charter adopted, a climax of political mobilisation in the country. Also significantly is the fact that the plea for a personnel management function was made within the context of the collapse of the Durban Branch of the Institute of Personnel Management (IPM) early in 1955:

...because of lack of adequate support. This seemed clearly to indicate a lack of appreciation of the services that Personnel Management could render to industry in Natal, and served to confirm my own personal opinion that these advantages are by no means fully appreciated in Durban.⁴⁰

However the underdevelopment and lack of interest by individual firms in personnel management is best illustrated by the membership of the IPM in the 1950's.

TABLE 5.1⁴¹

IPM MEMBERSHIP 1946 - 1976

1946	147	1964	401	
1948	212	1965	545	
1949	219	1969	870	
1950	243	1973	1277	<i>Same Institution</i>
1952	218	1974	1546	
1953	198	1976	4000	
1955	195			
1956	221			
1960	250			
1963	362			

Since its formation, the membership of the IPM had been growing, but in the first half of the 1950's there was a decline. Even though growth takes place between 1955 and 1960, the figure of the latter year is only seven members more than in 1950. This trend runs counter to the growth of the personnel function in the West as industrialisation advanced. As will be demonstrated later, it was only after 1965 that the IPM started growing rapidly, and even more so after 1973.

The slow development of the personnel function is, to conclude, a reflection of what Lewis explains thus:

State action in weakening African trade unions lessened the pressure on management to negotiate with them. At the same time the Nationalist government was able to reach an accommodation with industrial capital over the whole question of labour supply and the rationalization of the labour structure by intervening on questions of training, selection, and incentives, and by directing black labour through a system of labour bureaux. In this way the state succeeded in representing the interests of capital in general whilst retaining the political support of the white petty bourgeoisie and white wage earners.⁴²

If 'personnel management' was not the major tool used by capital to incorporate labour in the 1950's, what then was the nature of the factory regimes in South Africa?

b) The compound and induna systems in the 1950's

The extent of state and university supported institutions, coupled with the unskilled and migrant nature of African labour, all combined to produce a particular form of factory regimes in the 1950's. The core of the factory regime was based on the following elements: The factory compounds, many of them located within factory premises; in charge of the factory compounds were white compound managers, assisted by African izinduna; within the line of production were white foremen who were assisted by African 'boss-boys'. This constituted the basis for the control and subjugation of African labour in the 1950's.

The compound is the single most significant institution in the exploitation of African labour in South Africa. This institution was developed and 'perfected' in the mining industry, and then adopted by manufacturing industry. The compound system became a central institution in the control and incorporation of African labour within the manufacturing sector in the 1950's. The major focus of control during that period was located in the compounds, largely those located within factory premises. Although not all African labour was housed in factory compounds, it will be argued and demonstrated here that they nevertheless constituted a major means of control.

The person in charge of the factory compounds was usually a white compound manager whose role was:

The maintenance of Law and Order in the compound, Food Rations, Attendance registers, Employees personal files, Time cards, reference books... Supervision of mail letters for the residents.⁴³

In other words, the compound manager was responsible for the total control of the compound and ensured that workers '...get to work in time, and no worker remains in the hostel for unacceptable reasons... and ensuring that labour is available in the quantities and qualities

needed by the white factory foreman.⁴⁴

The office of the compound manager was located in the compound itself. There was usually a passage leading directly from the compound to the factory, with the clock card station located in the passage.⁴⁵ According to one personnel director, the compound manager was "...the early white personnel manager, who, however, did not understand the modern personnel and industrial relation techniques and methods... a 'primitive' man who only knew the 'language of command' and not negotiation with the workers".⁴⁶

The compound manager was primarily responsible for recruitment and the total 'welfare' of workers in the compounds. According to one African personnel manager, referring to one of the compound managers he encountered when employed by a shipping company in 1971:

I remember there was a chap called...Mbhekaphansi ('One who walks looking at the ground') who hardly really knew what he was doing ... That chap, when recruiting workers, would just go to the gate and shout, pointing to anyone, 'Hey you boy, come here!'. He was employed here simply because he knew how to speak Zulu, and because he grew up on a farm, doing 'stick fighting' with young African boys. He was known for his jokes in Zulu, which of course always included embarrassing vulgar language. Workers queuing for jobs or already employed would of course laugh, not because they enjoyed the jokes or the language, but as a means to get jobs or secure their employment.⁴⁷

This account captures the type of person employed as a compound manager in the 1950's, his relationship to the workers, and the type of job that he performed. Compound managers were usually employed on the basis of their understanding of 'African culture' and languages. They were frequently former police officers, small farmers displaced by the emergence of agribusiness, or sons of farmers who had grown up with Africans on the farms.

This captures the dominant mode through which workers were controlled, with management trying to reproduce factory regimes modeled along their conception of African societies and communities. The philosophy underlying these factory regimes was that the most important thing required to win the allegiance and commitment of African workers was an

understanding of their 'customs and habits' and an ability to communicate in African languages. This model was, of course, copied from the mine compound system where workers were divided according to ethnic groups, with mine management attempting to reproduce not only ethnic solidarity, but conditions approximating the hierarchical, authoritarian aspects of African society.

The relationship of the compound manager to the workers was that of 'father and children', characterised by a highly authoritarian model of interaction, treating and addressing African workers as 'boys'. Compound managers were the disciplinarians of workers. They also had the power to fire workers, in consultation with the factory foreman, despite the fact that they were not in the direct line of command in the production line. However, the person who was in direct and daily contact with the workers, and the right-hand man of the white compound manager was the African compound induna. Izinduna were the assistants to the compound manager and can be taken, as will be shown below, as the precursors to the modern APP. Before and immediately after World War II, industrial manufacturing firms tended to be smaller and more labour intensive, relying heavily on unstable migrant labour. This allowed for the very efficient use of the induna system. It is worth quoting at length from a written job description of an African compound induna employed by a large oil company in 1958, in order to fully understand the job of induna:

This employee must be able to read, write and speak English and Zulu, and be able to do simple arithmetic and have a fair handwriting. He must have a good knowledge of tribal habits and customs of the various tribes housed in the compound.... He must have the ability to control and instruct others without abusing his authority. He must have a general knowledge of regulations enforced by the Native Affairs Department.... He must be able to use the telephone and know who to contact and when....He must hold a First Certificate.⁴⁸

Although this job description does capture the essence of the type of person needed to perform such a job, it is however more true of izinduna employed by larger companies, which were already beginning to move towards the elimination of the induna system. Many izinduna did not have all these qualifications:

Many of my colleagues I knew from other firms could neither read nor write, or use the telephone. Some of them were even afraid to pick up a telephone because they could not speak English, but rather used Fanakalo. I was rather an exception because I had passed Std 8 at school... and many other izinduna did not even go to school, because they were employed long before such requirements were stipulated for appointment.⁴⁹

The characteristics required of the induna were in line with the major functions that he performed. These were, *inter alia*:

Act as liaison between the compound manager and the residents of the compound...Act as an interpreter when required... Attend ALL meetings and entertainment held in the compound...He will, during the absence of the compound manager, be responsible for Law and Order; that no resident of the compound disturbs the peace by making noises, shouting, quarrelling, collecting a crowd or other riotous, violent unseemly behaviour...He will assist and give information to the SA Police when required to do so... He will assist the compound manager with: The weekly/monthly pay out of all non-Europeans, the collection of Native Taxes; Mass X-Ray examinations; medical examinations... He will receive all complaints and requests from the labour force and pass them on to the compound manager immediately. This is to promote welfare and to foster happy and contented relations in the compound... If it is necessary, he will call upon watchmen, Boss-boys, room orderlies, or any resident of the compound to assist in maintaining control and discipline in the compound...⁵⁰

From the above job description one can identify three major functions of the induna: Recruitment and Selection; Discipline; and 'Welfare'.

The recruitment and selection of workers constituted perhaps the most important function of izinduna. It was the cheapest, quickest and most reliable way of securing labour. An induna would normally recruit workers from his own community, and this was a practice encouraged by management since it ensured that recruits would be from the same tribe, and would

respect the induna in whatever he said. This form of recruitment and selection constituted the major mechanism through which factory discipline was maintained. According to the Chief Native Affairs Officer in Durban in the 1950's, this practice of recruitment of workers by the induna from his own community

...in itself was not a bad thing because it brought about a sort of cohesion within the labour force of a factory. They all belonged to one group, and if somebody misbehaved the rest of the labour force would discipline or ostracise that person.⁵¹

The 'cohesion' referred to above was in fact evident in the social composition of the labour force of many factories in many industrial areas. It was perhaps more pronounced in Natal, where there was a close relationship between certain factories and people coming from particular areas. This is, in fact, still characteristic of many labour forces in Natal. One APP observed when he joined his company in the early 1970's:

When I arrived here I found that half the workers came from Eshowe, Empangeni and Mthunzini (Northern Zululand), and the other half came from Umkhomazi, Mzimkhulu and Port Shepstone, because the izinduna from our docks and workshops came from these areas. This was obviously not a type of 'free-market type' recruitment process, because each induna made sure to recruit people who were coming from his own area... People who were going to respect them unquestioningly.⁵²

According to the former induna a lot of people in his factory came from the Natal midlands areas of Camperdown and Intshanga because his induna came from there.⁵³

Management did not only encourage this type of recruitment, but even went further sometimes using izinduna to purge people coming from particular areas where there were problems:

...When I was appointed as induna here there were many problems experienced by the company with the people coming from Camperdown where in the late fifties, there

was a lot of faction fighting. Part of my brief when I started my new job was to employ people from my own area in the South Coast - Emzumbi, where there was no such fighting'.⁵⁴

In other words management was in this instance using the induna system to try and prevent the widespread problem of faction fighting from spilling over into the work areas. The induna in the above case claims that he was so effective in achieving this that after about four or five years, almost half the workforce were people from his own area in the South Coast. Once this initial batch of workers was selected from a particular area, the process thereafter more or less took care of itself. For instance, when the compound manager told the induna that on particular days a certain number of new workers would be needed, induna would 'send out a word' to his home town. He would usually ask those workers who were to leave for home the following weekend to bring back with them their brothers, cousins, sons, and other relatives to be considered for employment.⁵⁵

The above practices did not only give the induna his basis of hegemony over the workforce, but also gave him immense power over workers' 'life chances' in obtaining employment. In many instances, workers already employed would approach izinduna for work on behalf of their friends or relatives. From this power of the induna, there emerged the practice of 'ukugwazisa' (underhand payment to induna to 'buy' into a job), a problem which has plagued industrial workers in South Africa for decades.⁵⁶

The power exercised by the induna through 'recruitment and selection' translated itself into his hegemonic position over the workers. This constituted the core of the highly repressive factory regimes of the 1950's into the 1960's, where the induna's connections and knowledge as well as his intimate 'understanding' of the workers was the major mode of control.

It was on this basis that the induna's second function of discipline and control was exercised. The normal practice in disciplinary cases was for the white foreman to call upon the induna to talk to workers who had committed certain offenses. It was in such instances that the induna used his whole armoury of 'patronage' over workers to make sure that the workers subjected themselves to factory discipline:

I used to call a 'problem worker' aside and first talk to him nicely... warning him of the consequences of losing his job. In many instances I knew the relatives or parents of workers at home, and if the problem persisted I would even pass on a warning to the relatives about the worker's behaviour or even go to them personally when I was at home... Sometimes I would point out to some of the troublesome workers that they are a disgrace to the people of Mzumbe, who were otherwise very good, disciplined and loyal workers...⁵⁷

The ability of an induna to win the further allegiance of the workers was also based on his ability to implant himself within the fabric of the workers' social life in the compounds.

I attended all social functions in the compound, and I was also the soccer star of the company soccer team, where I was a 'sharp-shoot left winger'.... I even knew almost all the workers personally, knowing their girlfriends in the white neighbourhood, connections in neighbouring townships when they were off.... Such that with many workers I could almost tell where they were if not in the compound.... Through this I gained a lot of respect from workers...taking me as their father, friend and a person they could entrust their lives with.... This was absolutely important if induna was to function effectively.⁵⁸

* The above relationship between induna and workers structured the way in which the induna performed his 'industrial relations/welfare' functions. This constituted the third major function of izinduna. Izinduna acted as the medium of communication between 'line management' - mainly the white foremen - and the workers. Workers were to contact the induna about all their problems in the compound and inside the factory. The compound managers also used izinduna to communicate with the workers. The induna had the power to directly resolve many of the problems that arose particularly within the compound. It was only in those instances where an induna either did not have the authority to resolve matters or where approval of management was needed, that such problems would be taken to the white compound manager.⁵⁹ Many of these functions were also those of the general maintenance and reproduction of the working class and their conditions of employment, like assisting the compound manager in work relating to the supply of food rations, attendance

registers, employees' personnel files, time cards, reference books, clothing, etc.⁶⁰

It is also important to briefly outline the relationship between izinduna and boss boys, in order to give a complete picture of the regime of control at the time, and the role of each. *

It should be highlighted that izinduna were largely located in the compound, responsible for the total subjugation, rationalisation and reproduction of the overall conditions for the exploitation of the working class. The boss-boys on the other hand, were the right-hand persons of the white foremen in the immediate production line, largely responsible for passing on work instructions to workers, as well as their day-to-day supervision. The boss-boys were under the close control of the white foremen. However, the induna had a higher status than the boss-boys, the latter being under the control of the induna in the compound. For instance, the induna had, in many cases, the power to call upon all residents of the compound, and other 'senior' workers in the compound or factory like watchmen and boss-boys, to assist him in the general administration of the compound.⁶¹ Sometimes there was a tension between izinduna and boss-boys, as it was not uncommon for white foremen to go straight to the induna, particularly in disciplinary cases, as izinduna were responsible for the overall discipline and conduct of the workers.⁶² Izinduna wielded a lot of power over workers, and in some instances even had direct access to the offices of managing directors or general managers in charge of entire factories.⁶³

However, whilst the above picture is true of the role of factory compound izinduna, the situation was different and much more complex for those izinduna in the municipal compounds. Although a substantially high number of workers in the immediate post war period, and through to the 1950's, stayed in company-owned factory compounds, municipal compounds were also growing at the time. These compounds were owned and under the direct administration of the various municipal native affairs departments. It was in the control of workers in such compounds that the role played by the state in the overall control and subjugation of labour becomes clear. The manner in which these compounds were controlled gives us the full picture of how the state did not only control labour via general labour legislation and its implementation, but also controlled labour directly on behalf of capital.

Natal, and primarily the Durban area, will be used as an example here. In the 1950's the largest concentration of African workers in municipal hostels was in Sontseu, catering for the larger Durban industrial region, with hostel inmates estimated at about 10 000 by the late 1950's.⁶⁴ White hostel superintendents were in charge of these hostels; they were assisted by a number of izinduna, who were employees of the Native Affairs Department.

The mode of control was a typical example of how the state and capital used a combination of culture, tradition and African izinduna to produce highly repressive institutions. Labour in the municipal hostels presented certain difficulties and new complexities for capital in terms of control. Unlike workers in private factory compounds, who were located at their different factories and relatively easy to control, labour in municipal compounds was more difficult to control. The difficulty was that the residents consisted of labour drawn from different factories and areas; therefore, they could not be controlled in the same way as those in factory compounds who were homogenous and drawn from the same area as the induna.

Because of this situation, the workers from municipal compounds were more easily accessible to the influence of trade unions and mass organisations. Both employers and the state were concerned about this, particularly in the 1950's when SACTU and the African National Congress were heavily engaged in organising African workers and the African community at large. The unease of employers and the state was further heightened by the fact that the national liberation movement at the time focused their energies in organising Africans around their conditions and situations in the urban areas. The head of the Native Affairs Dept bitterly complained at the time:

... My department came under severe attack from political organizations and again particularly at that time from the ANC, and we were accused of being the arm of the government... So the agitation was directed at my department and actually went beyond that. It was directed against senior officials personally, or superintendents in the townships and hostels, and came under attack if they took action against illegal squatters in the township or people infiltrating the hostels illegally... I personally came under attack, just because I was the head of the

department, and I was called Satan (the devil) ... and the general term applied to us was Amadlagusha (eaters of sheep - a term generally applied to Boers) despite the fact that our staff was practically 99% English speaking.⁶⁵

The Native Affairs Department (NAD) in the 1950's became the central and key 'industrial relations' strategising institution on behalf of the bosses. It functioned in primarily three ways. Firstly, in the case of Natal for example, the NAD fully exploited the image and social standing of the Zulu Royal Family amongst the workers, as an instrument of controlling and subjugating African labour.⁶⁶ The key person in this strategy was Mntwana Phika Zulu, a senior member of the Zulu Royal Family, who was employed by the NAD in Durban in 1915. The way his job was structured in the 1950's gives a good idea of the way culture, ideology and structures of Zulu society were being incorporated into the strategies of capital and the state in subjugating African labour. Prince Phika Zulu, already in his 70's at the time, was employed by the Native Affairs Department as Head Induna. It is worth quoting in full from one interview regarding his job:

Phika had a very colourful history in the (Native Affairs) Department. He had been in the department since 1915, and we kept him since then...Phika ka Sithela ka Mpande. So he was the direct grandson of Mpande.... We kept him on account of his personality, his long service and his status as a Prince. He was so highly respected that eventually, and as he got older, we did not want to use him in any specific function in any particular office.... His functions were three fold: Firstly, he was a go-between our whole departmental labour and ourselves [Charity begins at home! BN]....Anybody who had a complaint... would go to Phika and Phika would, in turn, come to us. And they knew that they could rely on his confidentiality. He could never let a man down... he was a real diplomat.... (Secondly), he was to establish a link between us and the general public in Durban.... the Black (African) population... He had no fixed duty hours. He could come and go as he pleased. And he would go to Victoria Street beer hall or Umngeni beer hall, and he would sit there for an hour or two, having his beer, talking to people, and he would move on say...go to South Coast, Junction beer hall or spend some hours at the S. J. Smith hostel and sit with people there.... He would be accepted by people wherever he

went, also because people knew he was not an informer... he did not probe into people's business in order to come and report specific individuals.... He would come back twice or three times a week and report to some of our senior officials...and say people are unhappy about this or that...The third function was to provide a link between us and the Zulu Royal House, again on account of his status.⁶⁷

The above captures the way in which the NAD tried to control African labour using African traditions and structures, which were by now fully harnessed and integrated into the structures of apartheid, as aptly described by Govan Mbeki in the early 1960's:

Natal still bears the stamp of Theophilus Shepstone...who set out to crush the might of the Zulu skilfully, so as to use their traditional social system.... Tribal ceremony, especially the Zulu war dance, that beautiful body-building exercise, receives special recognition from the Native Affairs Dept.⁶⁸

The subjugation of chiefs and other structures of 'traditional' African society by apartheid, was now becoming one of the major instruments of securing conditions for expanded capital accumulation in the 1950's. For instance, many companies, in Durban in particular, had direct relationships with certain chiefs from whom they drew their labour force.⁶⁹ Under apartheid, gone were the days of independent chiefs who could refuse to co-operate with both the state and capital.⁷⁰

Secondly, and flowing from the above role of Umntwana Phika ka Sithela, a Paramount Chief Advisory Council in the urban areas was formed in Durban in the 1950's.⁷¹ The role of the Council was to provide a link between the Zulu King and his subjects in the urban areas, who were inevitably the Zulu working class. This Council advised the King on the welfare of his subjects, thereby ensuring the smooth incorporation of the 'King's subjects' into the vagaries of economic exploitation. The Council consisted of men who were conveniently placed in various locations where workers were to be found. For instance, the first Council consisted of about 19 men, two of them being members of the Zulu Royal Family (one being Phika himself), and the others being mainly factory and municipal compound izinduna, traders and clerks.⁷² They were spread throughout the Durban townships and hostels. This council also ensured the overall 'good' behaviour of the Zulu

urban workers.

The third, and perhaps the most important role played by the NAD in controlling African labour directly on behalf of capital, was to design strategies aimed at undermining the influence of mass organisations and militant African trade unions. Apart from the direct tight control of the Municipal compounds and townships, through a permit system of entry and residence, the NAD co-ordinated strategies to ensure depoliticisation of workers. Again in the case of Durban in the late 1950's, at the height of mass resistance, the Durban Municipal Native Affairs department initiated and formed what was known as Isicoco Assembly of Indunas and Boss-Boys. This body was formed in the late 1950's with the specific aim of co-ordinating the response of the employers and the state to the intensifying struggles of the late 1950's. It was formed in direct response to the stay-away calls made by SACTU and the ANC during this time.⁷³

This body brought together izinduna, boss-boys and other 'respected' elderly workers from commerce and industry. It was referred to as Isicoco "...because we didn't want to refer to this meeting as a meeting of izinduna and boss-boys... we just referred to the old Zulu term of the ringhead, symbolising the men with wisdom and balanced outlook on life...."⁷⁴ The choice of the name is particularly instructive in relation to the aims and objectives of this assembly.

The aims of Isicoco was to co-ordinate the subjugation of African labour in its different forms of residential incorporation in Durban. It was to enable both the state and capital to control labour housed in factory compounds, and particularly that 'heterogeneous' labour housed in municipal compounds and labour residing in the emerging African townships in the urban areas. The way Isicoco operated marks the beginning of a sophisticated, but still crude, system of 'personnel and industrial relations'. It was a strategy using a combination of Zulu traditions, Zulu cultural symbols and a system of information gathering, as illustrated by Isicoco's mode of operation:

(Isicoco) had possibly more than five meetings. They were held at, say, two or three month intervals. During the peak of the period of agitation, if there were stayaways

or strikes, we would decide to call this assembly which was then attended by about 150 to 200 men. And they were informal meetings addressed by a variety of speakers. I, as the head of the (Native Affairs) department, would normally welcome the men...But there were also senior officials of the department present.... The meetings were kept as informal as possible, and it was for that reason that minutes were not kept.... (In the meetings) we would talk generally but specifically ask about political agitation... They would say 'Yes, we have been asked by our organisations to stayaway or boycott certain things'. We told ...our workforce (through the izinduna) not to heed these calls.... Matters which affected the department and the administration of labour were definitely raised ...⁷⁵

However, the meetings were not only restricted to matters affecting workers' problems in the factories. They discussed other general grievances of the African communities. These meetings, for instance, were able to pick up general grievances like shortages of water, bus shelters, transport and long queues at the bus stops. This information enabled the NAD to attend to some of the pressing problems in order to counter mass organisations who were mobilising around these issues:

...many of these problems were followed up, and some where, in practicality we wouldn't be able to address soon - like bus shelters along the streets...we did try to speed up and streamline our work procedures so that, the bus queues were reduced particularly at the beginning of the month, and those sorts of things.⁷⁶

Since township superintendents, hostel superintendents and other functionaries were normally present at Isicoco meetings to plan strategy on how to deal with the problems that were emerging, they were also expected to address some of these problems. The Isicoco collapsed in the early 1960's when the ANC and other organisations were banned, because " ...African life was returning to normality, with political and labour problems gone".⁷⁷

In concluding this section one needs to make a few observations regarding the role of the izinduna in the 1950's:

Firstly, some differences should be briefly highlighted between the use of induna system in Natal and in the Witwatersrand, the heart of South Africa's manufacturing industry. Whilst the practices of the induna system essentially embodied the same underlying principles, viz. reproduction of African 'traditional' culture and practices within the labour process, in Natal these practices were taken to their furthest possible application. In the Reef, management had to deal with people coming from different backgrounds, and therefore used different compounds or arrangements, while in Natal employers used to their advantage the relative homogeneity of African labour in the region. Whilst in the Reef, labour had been drawn from very distant places, in Natal industry was located right in the heart of long settled communities, where there was much more 'cultural homogeneity' compared to people drawn from outside the region. Whilst in the Reef, capital was exploiting African culture by maximising ethnic divisions, in Natal capital was consolidating and exploiting the existing 'Zuluness', and manipulated to the full Zulu traditions, symbols and social structures. The material existence of a strong Zulu culture in Natal continues up to this day, as illustrated by how Inkatha has mobilised its support through the discourse of 'Zuluness'.⁷⁸

Secondly, the roles that were played by factory izinduna can be regarded as the early forms of the personnel and industrial relations functions, that were suitable at the time given the level of development of productive forces and the kind of labour required. In this sense, izinduna can be regarded as the forerunners to the modern African personnel practitioners. As will be demonstrated in the next section, some of the key functions performed by the induna - the most notable being 'recruitment and selection' and some form of industrial relations - were to become the key functions of the African personnel practitioners in the contemporary period.

The third observation is that these forms of labour control and the key role of the induna in this type of factory regime were made possible by the migratory nature of labour and the fact that African labour was largely unskilled. This form of labour was in itself an ideal type to provide a source of cheap labour. All this was ultimately made possible by the level of development of the productive forces and the intensifying national oppression, which not only weakened African trade unions but divided the working class into two hostile camps - the white working class which was benefiting from white minority rule, and the African

working class that had no political or trade union rights.

The fourth observation is that induna can be regarded as the highest position that could be attained by an African within the racial division of labour in private industry at that time. This, in itself, is a manifestation of the way in which apartheid was being reproduced inside the factories. The practice of appointing an African to deal with other Africans was a further illustration of 'internal apartheid', but also prefigured the pattern within which the African petty bourgeoisie was to be reproduced later.

However, the whole factory regime of the 1950's was to be drastically transformed by the developments in the 1960's, laying the basis for the emergence of the modern African personnel practitioners.

c) The changing labour process, crisis of control and the emergence of the African corporate petty bourgeoisie:

The Case of the African Personnel Practitioners.

The basic starting point for understanding the emergence of the APP's is the changing nature of the labour process, and the dismantling of the factory regimes of the 1950's. Briefly, the major change at the beginning of the 1960's was the intensification of mechanisation, thereby drastically changing the nature of the labour process and factory regimes. This development necessitated changes in the type of labour required by capital. The mechanised and modernised factories required better educated semi-skilled African labour. This was brought about by the processes outlined in the previous chapter, the process of floating the colour bar accompanied by the fragmentation of artisanal jobs resulting in semi-skilled positions being increasingly taken up by Africans.

Perhaps the most important thing to note here is that this semi-skilled labour was not being supplied through the training and upgrading of existing unskilled African labour only, but also through the recruitment and selection of better-educated African labour. This development, spurred by the rapid monopolisation of the economy during this decade, marked a fundamental assault on the previous factory regime based on the induna.

Transition to monopoly capitalism, in general, leads to general problems and labour instability, and calls for creativity in the handling of labour problems and those arising from the labour market. However, because of the smashing of all opposition organisations including the African trade union movement, South Africa was spared some of the volatility of labour usually accompanying the transition to monopoly capitalism. The few major problem areas were in the rise in the cost of training and subjugating highly skilled labour; the rise in unemployment and the fragmentation of skills of artisanal labour; and, because of repression, the rise in the militancy of labour.

Because skilled labour was co-opted and black trade unions smashed, South Africa departed in significant ways from the typical problems experienced in the West during periods of transition to monopoly capitalism. Cheap and subjugated African labour ensured a relatively smooth and highly controlled transition, that only demanded innovations within the labour process itself, particularly in the area of labour control.⁷⁹

The impact of these changes on the emergence of an African corporate petty bourgeoisie, the APP's in this instance, can best be traced through the following: the decline of the induna system and the need for more sophisticated means of selecting, training and control of, particularly, African labour.

i) The Decline of the Induna System in the 1960's

The 1960's is a period that saw a rapid decline of induna system and its replacement by APP's. There are four main reasons why the induna system declined.

Firstly, and perhaps the most important reason, was the need for new semi-skilled labour which called forth new forms of recruitment and selection. This new labour had to be selected using much more sophisticated tests and methods, and was beginning to be drawn from people with slightly more specific backgrounds and experiences. The shift away from unskilled to semi-skilled African labour specifically meant that izinduna could no longer recruit and select at random, as was previously the case. In order to be selected relatives, siblings or people from the induna's own neighbourhood had to have skills and some form

of education, a situation which was highly unlikely. Monopoly capitalism and the organic rise of the composition of capital severely proscribed the practice of random recruitment and selection. It is also worth noting that whilst the semi-skilled worker was to be the new worker of the 1960's and the future South Africa this initially presented capital with a very serious dilemma. On the one hand it threatened the old 'tried and tested' factory regime based on the hegemony of the induna. On the other hand izinduna were not qualified to recruit the new worker. It was no surprise then, that, during the early 1960's capital tried to reconcile these two systems by continuing to use izinduna for recruiting labour:

The compound manager used to tell me to try and get some better educated workers from the neighbourhood. This presented me with difficulties because I came from an area where there were not too many educated people... and worse some of the younger kids wanted to stay in school longer.⁸⁰

The second aspect that marked the beginning of the fall of the induna system, was the fact that capital required more stable and settled African labour. This meant the dismantling of the factory compounds, the most central institution of control and the base of the induna's hegemony. Migratory labour was, under conditions of monopoly capitalism, unsuitable for purposes of further capital accumulation.⁸¹ This was because semi-skilled labour needed to be supplied constantly, and was more expensive to replace. However, the need for 'permanent' and settled labour, at the same time, presented new threats and problems to capital, including the following:

- A permanent labour force implied more expense for capital in the reproduction of the working class.
- The other side of the coin, and a further threat to expanded capital accumulation, was that migratory labour had all along provided very cheap, and easily controllable labour.

This constituted the fundamental contradiction facing capital at this stage.

It is also important to outline the implications of these changes for the state, in order to contextualise the decline of the induna system. The state was faced with the dilemma of providing for the needs of capital, on the one hand, but on the other hand allowing permanently settled urban African labour was a threat to the very stability of the regime itself and the long-term needs of capital accumulation. The response of the state to this problem was what Hindson calls the 'differentiation of African labour power', by allowing a small section of African labour 'permanency' or rather 'lengthened stay whilst employed', and tightening influx control for those who did not qualify to be in the urban areas. Through this, the state was trying to stem the tide of urbanisation, at a time when the implications of the changing requirements of capital, ie settled labour, meant increasing political problems.

This policy of the state was effected through the building of African townships or 'massive compounds' in an attempt to simultaneously secure the conditions for further capital accumulation, whilst reproducing conditions of control not too dissimilar to the factory and municipal compounds. However, it is important to note that the state was not only producing labour power differentiated between urban dwellers and 'outsiders', but also a differentiation within the urban dwellers. For example, the state, whilst providing township houses, also continued to build massive municipal compounds adjacent to the townships in order to try to limit labour settled in the townships. In other words the strategy of the state was still essentially underpinned by conceptualising African labour as migrant labour, albeit of a different type to that of the 1950's.

Capital responded by essentially backing the state strategy of controlling African labour, but pressurised the state to build more townships and provided efficient transport to ferry workers between home and factories.⁸² What this meant was that as more municipal compounds and townships were being built, factories were getting rid of their own factory compounds. The situation the factory compounds became redundant, new forms of labour control had to be developed.

For a while new and old forms existed together, creating tensions, with capital not knowing what to do with the 'loyal' izinduna. The situation deprived izinduna of their base and cut

away a big slice of their jobs. Some of the izinduna were moved to personnel departments or to being office security guards, as the bigger firms began building large blocks of offices or some other types of jobs.⁸³

The function of recruitment by izinduna was further undermined by the tightening of influx control, where work-seekers needed to be registered and selected through the labour bureaux. The tightening of influx regulations in 1962 meant that izinduna could not employ their townfolk as before, even if they met the new requirements for semi-skilled labour. The Durban Native Affairs Commissioner had this to say about these changes:

So if an induna, for instance, wanted to bring his own son to town and engage him in the firm and keep an eye on him, and train him and have a fatherly interest in that boy, ensuring that he would turn out to good work. That was no longer possible. So the 'quality' of labour suffered and also the supervision which an induna exercised over his labour force. Now, according to the permit system an employer had to apply to the labour office for labour and he was given a 'bunch' to choose from.... So there was no connection between the established labour force and the newcomers... Induna had no idea where these men came from, what their family backgrounds were, what sort of men they were...they were complete strangers.⁸⁴

The third development in the 1960's that undermined the function of induna, was the restructuring of the labour process to incorporate the new type of labour. This represented a shift away from paternalistic control over labour, to bureaucratic control.⁸⁵ One of the strong points of the induna, as pointed out above, was that he knew virtually the entire workforce of his factory. In the 1960's this became impossible for three main reasons. The first one was that as factories expanded massively, it became impossible for induna to know all the workers personally. This undermined his ability to use his personal knowledge to discipline or 'motivate' the workers. The second reason was the new skilled workers were like strangers that were increasingly supplied through the labour bureau system, 'products' of, inter alia, the new psychological (aptitude) tests. Thirdly, a number of younger educated workers were being drawn in, who did not have a similar type of deference and respect to the induna as the previous generation. Therefore new forms of legitimising the social

division of labour and the hierarchy were required, which increasingly included bureaucratic rules - written employment contracts, formalised induction procedures, and so on.

By 1968 some of the bigger companies were beginning to introduce formalised and tightly-defined job descriptions and employment procedures. The following extract is from guidelines on job descriptions for use by management and white supervisors or foremen:

Industries of today because of expanding markets and population growths are increasing in numbers and size all over the world. They are becoming more and more complex and are posing more and more problems for management. This changing pattern ... is placing more and more responsibility on the men who have to make decisions and take a lead ... But to do this successfully they must have the right kind of people, who can carry out their duties correctly and efficiently.... The employment of some of the management aids, techniques and controls is essential to reduce the hazards of casual selection.... If one purchased an expensive piece of machinery and does not harness it to perform a task for which it was designed one is wasting an asset.⁸⁶

This restructuring undermined the entire basis on which the hegemony of the induna was based. The hegemony of izinduna was also based on their intimate understanding of the 'habits, culture and traditions' of African workers. The demise of the induna meant new ways and means of understanding these 'habits and traditions', which management still regarded as important. This meant, among other things, that white supervisors and foremen had, themselves, to develop an understanding.

The fourth and last factor that marked the demise of izinduna were the 1973 strikes and the re-emergence of the labour movement. Whilst the 1960's can be regarded as the time of the rapid decline of the induna system, 1973 and its aftermath marked the final blow to the existence of izinduna. The 1973 strikes gave birth to a new force on the shopfloor - the shop stewards. The declining role of izinduna is captured in the following interview with a shop steward:

I first had trouble in January, 1974. It was when Ignus Makhanya (the chief shop steward) had lost his father and was away ... these indunas decided they would try and break the union. They decided this was their time to catch me because I was alone. It was me and Ignus they were afraid of. And so they called a meeting early in the morning The meeting was for indunas, machine operators, and people who had been working at the factory for more than ten years ... They told the workers they must not listen to me any more. From today they must turn back and do what they told them, because they were the leaders of this factory.⁸⁷

This interview highlights a number of developments characterising the relationship between shop stewards and izinduna in the early to mid 1970's. Firstly, there was a struggle over the leadership of the working class. Izinduna felt threatened by the emergence of the shop stewards who were seen as taking over their role as 'leaders of the factory!' In fact Ignus Makhanya, a shop steward in the above case, was ultimately killed by izinduna. This reflects how desperate the izinduna were to save their positions, as well as illustrating the extent to which shop stewards were successful in winning over the allegiance of the workers.

The second problem presented by shop stewards to izinduna was the fact that the shop steward's legitimacy was based on democracy, a process that was directly antithetical to the basis of legitimacy of izinduna. Izinduna expected deference and their whole position derived from the hierarchical nature of organisations, and therefore their power was based on the whole institutional matrix of oppression and exploitation of the working class within the factory. The democratic alternative being presented to workers by the shop stewards and trade unions was even more of a threat to the position of izinduna, in that democracy meant workers had to make decisions about their own lives, and not be dependent on the induna as their 'representative' and 'spokesperson'.

The third arena of contestation between izinduna and shop stewards was centred around the fact that when management introduced works and liaison committees, some izinduna were appointed or, through management's influence, elected to these committees.⁸⁸ And one of the first institutions to be attacked by shop stewards was the works and liaison committees, sometimes taking them over as unionisation proceeded apace in the 1970's: "...And we had

to chase them, (izinduna), you see. They are off the works committee now".⁸⁹ The success of the shop stewards in contesting works committee elections and transforming them into union shop steward committees meant the erosion of the power of izinduna. The role of izinduna as a communication link between management and the workers was completely undermined. And it was the increasing unionisation of the African working class that ultimately put an end to the system of izinduna. As the labour movement grew in strength in the post 1973 era, some of izinduna even joined the unions as many of them were increasingly transferred to working class jobs.⁹⁰

It is important to conclude this section on the decline of izinduna by pointing out their ultimate fate. Firstly, as the functions of induna declined inside the factory, a substantial number were eliminated through the process of natural attrition "... as many of them were old men by the end of the 1960's".⁹¹ Secondly, some companies tried to keep them for as long as possible, acting in numerous undefined supervisory positions, advising management on various aspects of labour.⁹² Those izinduna who had a better educational background were placed in personnel departments working under the newly appointed APP's. In the case of one induna:

In 1967 I was appointed to the personnel department as a Bantu Training Officer.... This is where my Std 8 certificate helped me, as well as my experience in communicating with workers and understanding them. I now help in the induction of new workers and interpreting in the presentation of training courses where required.... This is the job I am currently doing.... But for about a year between 1967 and 1968 I worked with our new African personnel officer who ...was a university graduate, appointed in 1967.⁹³

But this induna recalls his job with a combination of pride, nostalgia, bitterness, and very little respect for the APP's.

These personnel officers do not understand the workers. I knew and understood each and every worker in the factory.... I played soccer with them, I advised them both in work and out of work related problems.... I showed concern.... These

personnel officers do not know how to help the workers, sometimes it's like they are inhuman. I think that is the reason why there are so many strikes today ... In our time workers did not see the need to strike because we cared for them (!)⁹⁴

(ii) The modern Personnel function and the emergence of the African Personnel Practitioners.⁹⁵

As a basis for understanding the emergence of the APP's it is important to summarise some of the major socio-economic developments of the 1960's, and some of the inputs leading to those developments.

The growth of labour in itself requires new forms for its subjugation. The old induna system became a fetter on labour control; with new forms were required. Therefore, dividing the second half of the 1960's there was massive restructuring of forms of labour control, thus creating new factory regimes. For example, the first major development that occurred in the mid-1960's was a shift away from the compound as the locus of control to the newly emerging modern personnel departments. This marked the disappearance of the white compound manager who was replaced by the better qualified and later university-trained, white personnel managers. The compound manager, whose claim to competence was his understanding of African people, their language and culture, was becoming less able to deal with the new type of labour in this period. The newly emerging white personnel managers and APP's described and saw compound managers as unprofessional and not trained for the new challenges:

The compound manager I found here was 'everything', he did not even know what he was doing. In fact he was so terribly embarrassed the day one guy who was going to be our boss asked him to sit down and write out what his job was or else his job would come to an end.... All he knew was to deal with problems through hiring and firing. His time was finished.⁹⁶

The middle of the 1960's, then, saw the beginning of the expansion of personnel departments

within the context of 'professional management'. For example, the University of Cape Town opened its first Master of Business Administration programme, producing its first graduates in 1966, followed by the founding of the Wits Business School in 1967.⁹⁷ South Africa was beginning to embrace the ethic of professionalism as a basis of restructuring factory relations within the context of monopoly capitalism.⁹⁸ The 1960's saw the appointment of white personnel managers, some of them still drawn from the ranks of the former compound managers "... who had been displaced because (factory) compounds were being sold up, and turning these compound managers into personnel managers, without however realising that the nature of the job was quite different ...certainly very different from the level at which these people (the compound managers) had been operating."⁹⁹

Organised capital was also involved in some major restructuring regarding the handling of labour matters. For example, in Natal, two employer organisations existed between the early 1940's and the mid-1960's: the Natal Chamber of Industries (NCI), and the Natal Employers Association (NEA). The latter was founded at the initiative of the former during the war (1942) "... to handle labour matters because at that time it was felt that it would be advisable to unite all employers so that there would be an organized body of employers able to assist its members in dealing with any problems that might arise in the labour field".¹⁰⁰

In forming this organisation the NCI tried to persuade the Federated Chamber of Industries to join in and form a labour wing of capital, but the FCI did not take up the offer.¹⁰¹ In 1968, as the problem of rationalising labour utilisation became acute, the NCI tried to absorb the NEA into its structures. The motivation behind this was to make advice on labour matters available to all employers as the NEA had only a membership of 113 whilst the NCI had 611. Although this offer of a merger was initially declined by the NEA, in 1969 it ultimately decided to disband and to become incorporated into the NCI. This was after the NCI had formed its own Labour Affairs division which became functional on 1 July 1969.¹⁰²

The above rationalisation also arose out of the complex types and categories of African labour, as the apartheid state tried to further rationalise the exploitation of African labour. For instance, the NCI complained that in 1968 there were five different categories of African labour. A complex Pay- As-You-Earn (PAYE) system was also introduced in the same

year.¹⁰³

The growing complexities of both the type of labour employed in the 1960's and the complexity of its 'management' led to the employment of African personnel practitioners in the late 1960's. The reasons for their employment are captured by the following APP employed in 1970:

Proper personnel management started around the time I was employed, as a means of meaningful integration of the black labour forcefor instance things like job evaluation were in actual fact stated during those days as well as promotional programmes, training and development. That is when organisations needed somebody above matric, as prior to that personnel was merely keeping and updating of records, and there used to be a labour manager and a personnel clerk, and there was nothing more than purely administrative work done for black labour.¹⁰⁴

The APP's were employed primarily to undertake two types of functions. The first was recruitment and selection. The APP was to be somebody who could be trained to understand all the regulations governing the employment of African labour, and be able to ensure the steady supply of suitable African labour as and when it was required. This labour was to be drawn exclusively from the labour bureaux. This was already one significant difference between izinduna and APP's. The former did not have to understand the complex rules governing the selection of labour, and did not have to deal with complex regulations of the labour bureaux. The scenery changed from people drawn from the hometown of the induna or queues at factory gates, to endless visits to the labour bureaux to meet that 'white-black' man in a suit who might change the worker's 'life's fortunes!'

The recruitment process was now also based on the new relationship between the personnel department and 'line management'. Foremen were now being trained how to write job descriptions and person specifications, and were asked to fill in requisition forms and asking the personnel department for certain, specified types of labour. The APP had to 'study' the person specification in preparation for yet another 'pilgrimage' to the labour bureau. "... as I became well known and developed good relationships with bureau clerks and

officials...the workers used to flock and surround my car each one trying to get his dompas first to me.... Some even threw their passes through my window to try and ensure that they get a job".¹⁰⁵ Relationships between the personnel departments and line management, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, between the personnel department and the workers, became highly bureaucratised. The former was now mediated through memoranda, job descriptions and 'official' recorded communications. It was unlike the period of izinduna where 'oral' and informal communications between the compound manager and the white foremen were the order of the day. Only the bare necessary records were kept in the office of the compound manager. The relationship between workers and the APP's was now mediated through the labour bureaux and the myriad labour regulations governing the employment of African labour.

The bureaucratisation of employment and the entire factory relations, led to the second major job of the APP's employed in the late 1960's and early 1970's. This was administrative work, the keeping and updating of formal records of African labour. The knowledge that the induna kept in his head about each and every worker, had now to be kept in the ever-growing filing cabinets of the APP's. The workforce had grown by more than 100% between 1960 and 1970, and the growing concentration and centralisation of capital was most intense between 1969 and 1973.¹⁰⁶ Every 'transaction' of the personnel department had to be kept on record in order to ensure maximum control over the labour process. Within the ambit of this administrative work, the APP's also had the function of translating for management, a task formerly carried out by izinduna.

Despite these developments in the late 1960's, the personnel function before 1973 was still largely an administrative function. It was also still largely characterised by the reluctance of capital to get rid of the old methods of control entirely. For instance, many compound managers were kept, re-integrated as labour managers, and some of the izinduna were attached to personnel departments. This also created problems for the incoming APP's:

When I started here in 1970 both the labour manager and induna created immense problems for me. Management would sometimes call upon induna to come and sort

some labour problems, and I was being regarded as a records clerk and employment officer.... When I tried to 'upgrade' standards induna did not have a clue of what I was doing. Dealing with the workers who were recruited by induna was in itself a problem, with the workers expressing misgivings about what my role was.¹⁰⁷

However this did not necessarily mean that the workers wanted to retain the 'old order', "... as I was received with mixed feelings by the workers. On the one hand workers were hopeful that there was now our own brother in the offices, things might improve, but at the same time the labour managers were actually instigating against me in the labour force. They used to tell the workers: '... all what I have been doing for you, you are no longer going to get, because of the arrival of this black person who thinks he is a white person'".¹⁰⁸

At this time there was also a clash between the informal ways of doing things and the new bureaucratic order,

"Like for instance in the case of compassionate leave. What used to happen before was that the compound manager would grant the leave at his discretion, and its length was dependent on the relationship between the worker and the induna or compound manager. Now there were rules and regulations I had to stick to providing for the circumstances under which such leave could be granted and its length".

This often caused the APP's to be seen by workers as unreasonable; the surviving white labour managers and izinduna exploited this, "... and the hope of the workers that the arrival of a senior, more educated black person, in the company would improve things, was quickly shattered".¹⁰⁹

The personnel function in the late 1960's and early 1970's was described by one personnel manager, in hindsight of course, as basically a defensive rather than an offensive function that had to relieve line management of the interference of human relations problems in their otherwise strictly 'production function'.

"It was not regarded as a department assisting line management with the 'human factor' problem, as it has become the practice now of human and industrial relations functions, as these cannot be separated from physical production, with the personnel department assisting line management to integrate the human being into physical production".¹¹⁰

Although there are no reliable statistics available, the interviews quoted in this section firmly indicate that by the end of the 1960's the bigger companies had almost all employed personnel practitioners. At this time they were a mixture of people with matriculation, drawn from the ranks of record clerks, and some of the first batch of graduates being produced by the Bantustan University Colleges established in the early 1960's.¹¹¹ For instance, the manpower survey of 1971 shows a total number of 406 Africans classified as staff clerk, personnel clerk and employment officer.¹¹²

Therefore the APP's were the first stratum of the ACPB, soon to be followed by sales officers. But what is distinct about the emergence and reproduction of this group is that their jobs were to deal exclusively with African labour, a pattern that was to be the distinct character of the reproduction of the African petty bourgeoisie as a whole:

"... our jobs are dependent solely on the continued employment of African workers, and I cannot even imagine, say, an organisation employing whites only employing an African as a personnel man. Whites are totally irrelevant for the continuation of our jobs".¹¹³

The emerging personnel departments were all, without exception, headed by white personnel managers, whether they were the 'upgraded' compound managers or the new graduate white personnel practitioners. The genesis of the APP's was firmly located within the 'logic of apartheid', where blacks could only look after the needs of other blacks, under the close supervision of whites. It was easy for whites to be appointed to the senior managerial positions in the personnel departments, as they were drawn from other supervisory or petty bourgeois class positions within organisations. The whole racial division of labour had set up a racially-segmented labour market, whose effects were beginning to be felt in the class

reproduction of an ACPB.

The birth of the APP's, as a class stratum of the African petty bourgeoisie, had nothing to do with 'black advancement'. These were class and racial 'job categories' thrown up by the 'politics' of capital accumulation under conditions of monopoly capitalism. However, these issues will be taken up further in the next two chapters, where there will be a closer examination of the conditions under which the APP's perform their functions and through which they continue to be reproduced.

It was not until after the 1973 strikes that the 'old factory regimes' were to finally crumble, and the personnel function reached a higher stage, facilitating the full entry of the APP's into South African corporations.

The 1973 strikes, that saw an estimated 100 000 workers challenging the old factory regime and the conditions of their exploitation, were a watershed in the emergence of the modern APP's.¹¹⁴ These strikes changed the whole terrain upon which capital accumulation took place, and shook the industrial scene to its roots. These strikes, which first erupted in Durban, "... unleashed a crisis in control resulting in a number of changes and significant measures of restructuring"¹¹⁵ They set in motion one of the most volatile scenes of the 1970's and gave birth to the militant African trade unions that were to stretch the responses of the white ruling class to its limits. The editorial of People and Profits, a journal of the Institute of Personnel Management (IPM), reflected on the implications of '1973' thus:

The Durban Strikes were the thin edge of the wedge. Not just blacks, but all groups are now asking pertinent questions about the circumstances under which they earn their living. Inflated profits and extraordinary growth figures are not going to be sufficient justification for a company's existence - the satisfaction of legitimate employee demands is becoming more and more important.... The problem employers face is to prevent a labour crisis rather than to be able to deal with it when it arises.¹¹⁶

Although capital could not prevent the crisis, because it had already started, at least they

could talk of ways of preventing further crises. The strikes brought forward the kind of creativity from all sides last seen during the upheavals of the 1950's. Both the state and capital tried new strategies, as repression alone could not sway the tide. On the other side, workers began their long road of rebuilding a democratic and militant labour movement.

The state was quick to move in, and promulgated the Bantu Labour Relation Amendment Act, 1973, in order to revive the dormant worker and liaison committees that were originally created through the Industrial Conciliation Act, 1956. This new legislation provided for the representation of workers through plant-based works and liaison committees. The aim was to try to open up some form of communication between workers and management, whilst at the same time undercutting any form of solidarity across factories that might emerge. The liaison committees in particular were structured in such a way that half of their representatives were appointed by management.

The legislative restructuring was immediately taken up by capital, which was caught completely unaware by the upheavals, to try to address some of the immediate causes of the strikes as they understood them, whilst at the same time reproducing conditions for the expanded accumulation of capital. Whilst the state largely explained the strikes in terms of its now famous 'agitator theory', capital identified the major problem as 'communication' and the inadequacy of the 'old regime' in opening up dialogue with the workers:

The need for effective communications is nowhere more sharply evident than in relations between management at its various levels and black employees. In the past communications were largely a matter of tribal procedures. These obviously do not provide efficient industrial communications in a changing labour scene, and they are being replaced by a series of committees with both nominated and elected representatives at different operational levels.¹¹⁷

Given the extent of the upheavals, the way the old order was shaken, and capital's understanding of the problem, South African capital instituted one of the most thoroughgoing restructuring programmes since the beginning of the 1960's. Three main areas of restructuring were targeted in the period immediately after the 1973 strikes.

The first area of change was the massive introduction of liaison and works committees. Although there were liaison and works committees in existence prior to 1973, they were few and far in between. Between July 1973 and 31 August 1974 the number of liaison committees increased from 120 to 1 211, and works committees (during the same period) increased from 43 to 200.¹¹⁸ There were two main reasons why these committees mushroomed after 1973. Firstly, they were to be the forum for 'pseudo-negotiations' on the bureaucratic rules set up to control workers. These rules included grievance procedures and disciplinary codes, whose success depended on establishing their legitimacy within the working class. Secondly, the liaison committees were formed to 'improve' communication between workers and management. These developments marked a radical shift from the previous factory regime based on the induna as a 'representative' and 'spokesperson' of the workers as well as their 'custodian' and disciplinarian. The liaison committees were to take over some of the functions that were previously embodied in the induna. Management was shifting away from the notion of explicit, direct control as a means of dealing with workers problems, to 'voluntary compliance' based on 'consensus' over rules reached through negotiations in the liaison committees.

The second major area of restructuring as a direct outcome of the 1973 strikes was that of relationships at the point of production. This change was characterised by the transformation of the boss-boy function to that of the first-line supervisor. Whilst the boss boy's job was purely to pass on instructions from the white foremen and ensure that they were carried out to the letter, the first-line supervisor was trained in behavioural skills and taught the practice of 'managing' the workforce. This included the ability to counsel workers and worker motivation based on proper communication and interaction. The boss-boy had relied exclusively on command, and used the 'stick' approach more readily than the 'carrots'. This shift is captured by a white training manager thus:

... round about 1973 we thought that the informal performance of jobs was no longer a good state of affairs. And that is when we got rid of the last vestiges of the functions of boss-boys and izinduna. Even the word induna was inappropriate, because it was strictly a Zulu word, appropriate only for somebody having a total control of the work force...at that time we started writing more specific titles in job

descriptions, and we undertook an evaluation of all the jobs within the organization...we started training African first-line supervisors in the skills of management and the principles of supervision, and it took us, if I remember correctly, about three years to finish the whole exercise to our satisfaction.¹¹⁹

Underpinning the restructuring of the relationships between first-line supervisors and workers was a very strong 'humanistic' discourse firmly rooted within the pluralistic and paternalistic ideology of the human relations school:

The 1973 strikes shocked us as employers. We started to seriously look at our own values and attitudes towards our employees. When I joined the company in 1974, my first task was to work on relationships between people, and undertake organization development and improve lines of communication. For the first time we said, as a company we must really understand the values of our Zulu workers, if we are to move into the future with confidence.¹²⁰

This heralded the beginnings of the now famous 'supervisory development programmes' that are to be found in virtually every industrial or work organisation today. This training did not only involve the emerging African first line supervisors, but also included the training of white foremen in new behavioural and supervisory skills. Most of these white foremen were employed during the old era of induna, where their handling of workers was based on harsh, repressive discipline. Supervisor training and development was integrated into the new communication and representation structures. Line management had to be trained in grievance and discipline procedures and the right lines of communication. This marked the beginnings of a new 'industrial relations' discourse. These developments were, however, uneven, and were taken furthest in the 1970's mainly in the bigger companies. However, due to the powerlessness of the workers and liaison committees, management continued in many respects to use repressive measures.¹²¹

The third major development which was a direct offshoot of the 1973 strikes, was the massive employment of both white and black personnel practitioners. This development was immediately reflected in the swelling of ranks of the IPM membership, from a meagre 870

in 1969 to 4 000 in 1976.¹²² During the period 1975 to 1980 people doing personnel work increased more rapidly than the total staff establishment in many companies. Although the overall number of APP's was considerably lower than whites, they grew by 40% between 1975 and 1980 as opposed to 34% for whites.¹²³ The other indication of the growth of APP's in the post-1973 period was the growth of the number of Africans classified as employment officers from 687 in 1973 to 1 510 in 1979.¹²⁴ One major function of the personnel practitioners in this period, was to ensure the successful operation of the liaison and works committee system:

The personnel department is often responsible for explaining the system to new black workers, and (personnel department) officials frequently serve on the liaison committees. In works committees, personnel department officials often represent management, by way of invitation.... The type of information handled or communicated by the committees mainly concerns hygiene factors such as conditions of service, wages, working conditions, and safety.... As these criteria are largely centred around personnel administration, it is clear that by improving their function in an organisation, the committee will become less of a grievance procedure, and more of an effective information exchange procedure.¹²⁵

It is within this context that the emergence of the African personnel practitioners should be located and understood. As the size and complexity of the industrial workforce increased and operations became more rationalised, personnel departments featured largely in the reproduction of the total relations of production.

The APP's also played a very important role in giving legitimacy to liaison committees. This⁴ resulted from an attempt to allocate the responsibility for mediating the rules of communication to an 'outsider', someone not in the direct line of command in the hierarchy of exploitation and domination. These developments ushered the APP's onto the centre stage of industrial relations in South Africa.

The APP's were, therefore, initially employed as a means to undertake the recruitment and

placement of the 'new' African worker, as a means of communication, and as part of management's strategy to improve the image of liaison committees in order to prevent the formation of trade unions. A typical job of an APP in the post-1973 era included interpreting in liaison committee meetings, hiring of black labour, and routine clerical functions pertaining to the smooth functioning of personnel departments.¹²⁶ Therefore the entry point of the APP's was their role in helping management contain worker action through, amongst other things, the setting up of bureaucratic rules and interpretation of workers' 'needs' to management.

Despite all these changes and the shift from the induna system to APP's, one common thread running through was the tight control by whites over the individuals performing these jobs, with their authority tightly limited to dealing with strictly African unskilled or semi-skilled workers.¹²⁷

It has been important to give a detailed analysis of the emergence of the ACPB in order to account for the real factors that led to the emergence of this fraction of the African petty bourgeoisie. Of particular significance in the emergence of this stratum is the changing face of factory regimes in South Africa, with very little direct connection to the question of skills shortages. The process of the emergence of the ACPB is also not an outcome of a planned strategy to create an African corporate petty bourgeoisie. It is rather the articulation (or disarticulation) between the factors outlined above and the new political conjuncture of the post-1973 period that provides the key to understanding the creation and reproduction of an ACPB, as the next three chapters will demonstrate.

1. Kraak, 1989
2. Davies, 1979; Meth, 1981 and 1983
3. Kraak, op cit, p.3
4. Meth, 1983
5. in Kraak, op cit, p.4
6. See Kraak, *ibid*, for more details on this.
7. In 1968 the Minister of Immigration, addressing a National Party meeting, admitted that the seriousness of skills shortages was such that even if every adult white worker were in employment there would still be 12 000 to 13 000 skilled posts to be filled annually (SRR, 1968 p.86).
8. in Crankshaw, 1987 p. 4
9. Response of Minister of Labour to Dr G Jacobs MP (United Party) in the House of Assembly (SRR, 1969 p.85 - emphases added)
10. Dr PJ Riekert in a press statement of March, 1965 (SRR, 1966 p.204)
11. SRR, 1969 p. 90; Crankshaw, op cit, p.7
12. SRR, 1969 p.90
13. *ibid*, p.92
14. SRR, 1971 p.193
15. SRR, 1970 p.88
16. *ibid*, pp.90-91
17. *ibid*, p.89
18. Natal Chamber of Industries Annual Report (NCI), 1968-69, p.84
19. *ibid*, p.85
20. For what surveys are worth in South Africa, a poll conducted by Adam during the mid-1960's suggested that 77% of English-speaking entrepreneurs wanted job reservation scrapped while 73% of Afrikaner entrepreneurs wanted it retained. This result suggests the importance of apartheid ideology on its own, not easily reducible to the 'logic of capital accumulation' (Quoted in Torchia, 1988 p.428)

21. The Board of Industry and Trade condemned the policy at this time as: '... unequally rigid, restrictive, destructive of productivity, poisonous of human relationships, a dictate to management, a destroyer of workers' ambitions and an infringement on the rights of man. It conforms to no theory of economic welfare, no principle of social justice, no practice of management' (in Torchia, op cit, p.428)

22. For instance in 1964, the president of the Federated Chamber of Industries (FCI), after the banning of political organisations and the arrests at Rivonia, had this to say of all discriminatory labour legislation, including job reservation, that such legislation '... was accepted as a most desirable social measure, and that his appeal for more freedom was not in respect of that type of Government intervention and supervision. Administered reasonably and sympathetically such measures served a real need' (Quoted in ibid, p.429).

23. See Nzimande, 1986

24. Innes, 1984

25. Braverman, 1974

26. Bok (Shell Company's internal paper), 1958, p.12

27. ibid, p.15

28. ibid

29. ibid, p.12

30. ibid, p.2

31. Lewis, 1984 p.124

32. Author's interview with a Personnel Director of a large oil company (hereafter referred to as PD interview), 11 March 1988.

33. Lewis, op cit, p.120

34. See Webster, 1980; Lewis, 1984 p.123

35. Webster, 1980 p.168

36. For further information on how industrial psychologists in particular were, through their studies on african workers, providing a service to capital, see Wiendick, 1978 and Nzimande, 1985.

37. See Webster, 1980 for more details on these research institutes.

38. NEA, 1955 p.46

39. ibid, p.46 - emphasis in original

40. Chairman's address, NEA, 1955 p.40
41. In Webster, 1980 pp.70-71
42. Lewis, op cit, pp.126-127 - emphasis added
43. Job description of a compound induna, 1958 (see Appendix B)
44. Interview with a former compound induna (hereafter referred to as Induna interview), 1 September 1988
45. Induna interview
46. PD interview
47. Author's interview with an African personnel practitioner conducted on 27 March 1988 (hereafter referred to as APP interview)
48. Job description of a former induna
49. Author's interview with a former compound Induna, 1 September 1988.
50. Induna's job description
51. Bourquin interview, op cit.
52. APP interview
53. Induna interview
54. ibid
55. ibid
56. Nzimande, 1983
57. Induna interview
58. ibid
59. ibid
60. Job description of induna, op cit
61. ibid
62. PD interview, op cit
63. APP interview, op cit
64. ibid
65. ibid

66. 'There were some ... domestic informal arrangements between my department and the Zulu Royal Family. For instance the Paramount Chief's Urban Council played a part in linking the King with his people in the urban areas.... It would organise his visits and collect money from workers. On our part we merely ensured that the King had access to his subjects in the hostels' (Bourquin interview, op cit).
67. *ibid*
68. Mbeki, 1964
69. Induna interview, op cit
70. For example independent chiefs in many instances refused to co-operate or supply labour to farmers or industry. The restructuring of the african reserves in the 1950's into the bantustans was accompanied by the deposing of the unco-operative chiefs and their replacement with the 'friends of apartheid'. Mbeki also describes what happened to recalcitrant chiefs under British colonialism where Cape Governor Sir Harry Smith in 1848 '...ordered a wagon loaded with dynamite to be blown up in their presence. As the splinters flew in all directions he warned the chiefs that such would be the fate which awaited them if they resisted the laws of the Cape government(!)' (Mbeki, 1984 p.32).
71. Bourquin interview, op cit
72. Undated document listing the names of people serving on the Paramount Chief's Council in the 1960's in Durban.
73. Bourquin interview, op cit
74. Isicoco refers to the head ring worn by old men in Zulu society, men who were past child-bearing age and who were regarded as the wise men of society who were to guide the younger men and other members of society.
75. Bourquin interview, op cit.
76. *ibid*
77. Bourquin interview, op cit.
78. See Mdluli, 1987
79. For instance, in the West trade union membership between 1880 and 1930, a period generally regarded as the transition to monopoly capitalism, shot up and unions became very militant; the high point of mobilisation was marked by the Communist movement in Europe and the US. In the United Kingdom, trade union membership grew from 5-and-a-half to 7-and-a-half million members just between 1917 and 1919 (Lenin, 1975 'Left-Wing Communism: An infantile disorder', p.45).

80. Induna interview, op cit. Hindson also observes a similar process at the time, where capital continued to select labour other than through the labour bureaux.

81. 'This (migratory labour) tended to raise labour turnover rates, and was a major barrier to the creation of a skilled black workforce; it was often uneconomic to expend time and resources in training migrant workers who were continually travelling between the homelands and the urban area, and the efficiency of their production teams suffered during their absences' (Torchia, 1988 p.430).

82. Going through the annual reports of both the Natal Employers Association and the Natal Chamber of Industries one is struck by the fact that during the early 1960's, housing and transport for africans became standing items, with increasing pressure being put on the state to provide urban housing for africans. It is therefore no coincidence that many of the major townships were built in the late 1950's through to the 1960's.

83. Induna interview, op cit; PD interview, op cit

84. Bourquin interview, op cit

85. By 'bureaucratic control' it is meant the use of rules and procedures in dealing with labour, as opposed to the unsystematic handling of labour based on the personal relationship and authority of the induna over the workers. Bureaucratic control saw the gradual emergence of rules and procedures over matters of discipline, grievances, employment and dismissals.

86. Guidelines on Employment Techniques, Huletts Sugar, 1968

87. 'A Conversation with Chairperson of the Trade Union Advisory Co-ordinating Council' in South African Labour Bulletin, 2.4, 1975 p.55 (Hereafter referred to as 'TUACC conversation').

88. TUACC conversation, p.58

89. ibid

90. Induna interview, op cit; and TUACC conversation, op cit

91. Induna interview, op cit.

92. PD interview, op cit

93. Induna interview, op cit.

94. ibid

95. This section has been expanded and revised from Nzimande, 1986

96. APP interview, op cit

97. SRR, 1967

98. To further prepare for the kind of new management that was required, university social science (and business) departments began, in the late 1960's, to introduce 'industrial studies' courses. In 1968 Wits University launched a major in Industrial Sociology, and in the same year, the University of Potchefstroom introduced its own three-year major in Industrial Sociology (Webster, 1980).

99. PD interview, op cit

100. NCI AGM Executive report, 1968-1969

101. ibid

102. ibid

103. NCI Executive Report, 1968-1969 p.86

104. APP interview, op cit

105. APP interview, op cit

106. Webster, 1980

107. APP interview, op cit.

108. ibid

109. ibid

110. PD Interview, op cit

111. ibid

112. Dept of Manpower, Manpower Survey, 1971

113. APP interview, op cit

114. Nzimande, 1986

115. Nzimande, 1986 p.43

116. People and Profits, 2.2, August 1974 p.3

117. Optima: Anglo-American Corporation's Magazine, 1973 p.83

118. Verster, 1975. The reason why liaison, and not works, committees became popular with capital was because the former consisted of representatives half of which were nominated by management. Works committee members on the other hand were all elected by workers. Liaison committees gave management space to offer some kind of worker representation, without at the same time losing control over their functioning.

119. PD interview, op cit
120. Author's interview with a white training manager, 11 August 1988 (hereafter referred to as TM interview).
121. TUACC conversation, op cit
122. Webster, 1980
123. Langenhoven, 1981
124. Dept of Manpower, Manpower Surveys No's 10 and 13, 1979.
125. Verster, 1975 p.8
126. See Job description of an APP in 1977 in Appendix C.
127. See APP's job description, particularly the column on 'Limits of Authority'

Chapter 6

"Black Advancement", White Resistance and the Politics of Class Reproduction

"...the gravest and most disastrous error Marxists could make would be to mistake words for deeds, deceptive appearances for reality or generally for something serious" (Lenin, July 1917).¹

The previous chapters have tried to demonstrate that the entrenchment and reproduction of a racial division of labour limited the creation and upward mobility of an African corporate petty bourgeoisie (ACPB). The last chapter, in particular, was trying to show that the creation of an ACPB was largely determined by the particular stage of the development of the productive forces, necessitating new relations of production for extended capital accumulation. In other words, the ever-present contradiction between the forces of production and the relations of production reached a stage where new class places were generated. Given the entrenched racial division of labour, such class places were filled by Africans.

Two particular conclusions were drawn in the previous chapter. The first one was that upward mobility under capitalism is dependent upon the capacity of the economy to generate petty bourgeois class places; this is a process that cannot be freely manipulated by the capitalist class at will. The second conclusion was that in South Africa upward mobility was racially based, necessitating the filling up of these petty bourgeois class places by whites. It was the changes within the labour process - due to the rise in the organic composition of capital - that necessitated new factory regimes in the 1960's which required the services of more advanced and sophisticated African personnel practitioners - the first occupational fraction of the ACPB in South Africa. In the early stages, the creation of an ACPB was not a goal in itself, but rather an outcome of the changes in the South African economy, whose path of development necessitated new strategies.

However, it would be inadequate to explain the politics of the reproduction of this stratum

in the contemporary period purely in terms of the 'logic of capital accumulation' under monopoly capitalism and apartheid. The economic and political crises of the 1970's brought forward new thinking and strategies on the part of the white ruling bloc, which now incorporated, amongst other things, the creation of a collaborative black petty bourgeoisie, to be strategically reproduced at various levels of the South African social formation. It is this particular shift in the thinking and practices of the white ruling bloc that forms the substance of this chapter.

In its opening sections, the chapter attempts to demonstrate how capital in particular saw the creation of an ACPB as a goal in itself. The essence of this chapter, however, lies in its demonstration that the political goal of creating a collaborative pro-capitalist ACPB is not a simple process, but that it stands in contradiction to the entrenched racial division of labour in South African corporations. Whilst capital has embarked on a strategy of 'black advancement', such a strategy has to be reconciled with the legacy of a racially-segmented labour market, which continually reproduces a white corporate petty bourgeoisie at the direct expense of its African counterpart. In this way, a critique is provided of both the liberal and neo-Marxian analyses of the politics of the reproduction of an ACPB in South Africa. Whilst the purpose of the two previous chapters was to show how a racial division of labour has been entrenched in South African corporations, this chapter uses the information presented in those chapters to show how this historical entrenchment of race continually acts to undermine attempts at creating an ACPB in the contemporary period.

Most, if not all, of the liberal analysts in South Africa argue that the most serious obstacle to African upward mobility is the cultural background of Africans, which tends to emphasise 'need for affiliation' instead of 'need for achievement'.² Such analyses normally take pains to demonstrate how the supposedly "elusive" trait of "need for achievement" can be developed in Africans. Even those analyses that are sensitive to the wider structural determinants of class reproduction normally confuse these factors with other supposedly inherent or cultural factors which they try to use to explain the slow upward mobility of Africans in South African corporations. The 'achievement motive' is normally said to include qualities like initiative, problem-solving, decisiveness, independence and risk-taking.³ Because of this particular orientation, liberal perspectives tend to focus their attention on

affirmative action whose main content is the training and development of individual black managers to equip them with the necessary 'confidence', 'assertiveness' and other managerial skills. Consequently the focus of liberal scholarship is largely on internal organisational processes, with little attention being paid to factors external to the organisation and the articulation between the two. Whilst the focus on internal organisational and individual processes of "black advancement" is a legitimate area of enquiry, it is only part of the problem. As a result liberal scholarship fails to understand the totality of the limitations facing the reproduction of the ACPB.

Whilst liberal scholarship makes a serious attempt to understand, albeit in a deficient way, the internal organisational terrain upon which the ACPB is being reproduced, neo-Marxian analyses hardly make an attempt at all to assess the capacity of this class to reproduce itself. Neo-Marxian analyses, as pointed out in chapter 2, have fallen into the trap of taking the rhetoric of the white ruling class for reality. These analyses have not engaged and assessed the actual existing opportunities for the reproduction of the APB. Most neo-Marxian scholarship takes it for granted that because after 1976 both the state and capital committed themselves to the promotion of a collaborative black petty bourgeoisie, this process is already taking place and at the pace set by the ruling class.

Two main arguments are presented in this chapter. The first one is that the reproduction of an APB is not a straightforward process, but is riddled with contradictions. This argument will be illustrated through a close empirical analysis of the capacity of the ACPB to reproduce itself. This will involve an assessment of the capacity of the now so fashionable "black advancement" programmes aimed at creating and reproducing this class. Secondly, it will be argued that, in the case of the ACPB, its capacity to reproduce itself is limited by, primarily, three factors, viz.

- i. historical suppression under apartheid;
- ii. access to higher education; and
- iii. the class practices of the white corporate petty bourgeoisie.

A further argument that will be made, flowing from the third factor, is that the single most

important obstacle in the reproduction of this class, is the white corporate petty bourgeoisie (WCPB). This latter aspect has been entirely neglected by Neo-Marxian scholarship. It will be argued that since the white corporate petty bourgeoisie (WCPB) controls the day to day operations within South African corporations, including the very same "black advancement" programmes, they are the most decisive factor in the upward mobility of the ACPB. The major thesis of this chapter is that "black advancement" is a contradictory unity of, on the one hand, attempts by the white ruling class to create a collaborative APB within South African corporations, and, on the other, an institutional expression of the defence of the interests of the white corporate petty bourgeoisie. //

Having already discussed the emergence of the ACPB in the previous chapter, this chapter will begin by tracing the history of "black advancement" within South African corporations. This historical survey will be located within the context of the politics of the liberal bourgeoisie in contemporary South Africa. This will be followed by an attempt to quantify "black advancement", looking particularly at the growth of the ACPB in the post-1976 era. Thirdly, the chapter will look into access to higher education and white resistance as the two most important processes in the capacity of the ACPB to reproduce itself. White resistance to "black advancement" will be analysed and explained as a defence of class interests by the white corporate petty bourgeoisie. Lastly, the chapter will examine the ways through which liberal analyses of "black advancement" have become the ideology of the white corporate petty bourgeoisie.

1. What is "black advancement"?

The best way to answer this question is by tracing the origins of black advancement as the discourse of capital in the post-1976 period in South Africa. It is only in this way that one can understand the meaning of "black advancement" and its significance to the life chances of the ACPB.

Perhaps it is important to first explain why "black advancement" has been chosen as a subject for discussion in the analysis of the ACPB. As will become clear later, capital's conscious

undertaking of a systematic programme to train and advance Africans in industrial corporations has been implemented through the institution of black advancement programmes. Although the term "black advancement" is in itself racist, it is deliberately used here not only to denote attempts at corporate upward mobility for Africans, but also to capture the fact that "black advancement" has become a discourse of capital in the contemporary period. This discourse has its own underlying ideology and set of practices which sometimes, as will be demonstrated later, incorporate tendencies contradictory or opposing to its ultimate objectives.

As alluded to in the earlier chapters, skills shortages, Verwoerdian education, the unskilled nature of the black working class, and the need to co-ordinate labour in new forms, all congealed into the ideology of 'black advancement'. 'Black advancement' is a result of a crisis in the relationship between agents of production and new relations of production. Although it became a new ideology of the white ruling bloc, although this does not mean that there are no real processes of African upward mobility taking place. The emergence of the 'black advancement' discourse - in both its real and ideological forms - heralds a shift away from the old conservative paternalism to a new, liberal form of paternalism within the new factory regimes of the post 1973 era. This ideology has had some material results, as will be shown in this and the following chapters, but it is not producing what it purports to be producing, that is, a rapid creation of an African managerial class.

As demonstrated in the previous chapters, the trajectory of capital accumulation in South Africa in the post World War II period incorporated racial and national oppression as its necessary conditions. Within this process there was deliberate suppression of, particularly, an ACPB. However, the trajectory of capital accumulation, was to become its own enemy in the mid-1970's, thereby necessitating restructuring that was to lead to the emergence of "black advancement" (BA). The term "BA" was first used in South African corporations in the early 1970's. At this stage it mainly referred to the employment of blacks as an attempt to address the problem of skills shortages and as part of the attempts at cheapening African labour power in light of the economic crises facing South African capital in the early 1970's. It also arose in the immediate aftermath of the 1973 strikes, as a necessary requirement if capital was to be able to deal effectively with the problem of "industrial communication"

raised by these strikes. The strikes led both the state and capital to look much more closely at the question of the grievances of African workers, one of which was lack of opportunities by African workers to acquire skills. The context within which BA was understood at that time is captured by one of the foremost personnel managers in South Africa in the early 1970's thus:

We shall have to accept the importance of viable Black representation, Black leadership and the fact that Black workers will take the initiative and act in unison to promote their interests. We shall have to come to terms with the reality of Black anger, even though we shall endeavour to contain it, and project it outside our sphere of influence.... The consequences of this are clear: White people cannot avoid their increasing involvement in the development of Black people.⁴

In other words, at this stage BA was seen as a means to improve black-white relations within the immediate work environment. It also articulated itself as an immediate response to a crisis.

At this stage BA was still seen as a process that was to overtly develop Africans in a paternalistic way, and not to empower them to act as independent managers or supervisors. This was still largely guided by the old ideology and practices of white leadership of the economy in South Africa. The overriding factor in BA was still to be the protection of white interests, and where whites had to be moved, this could only be upwards:

In investigating the problem of White involvement in the development of the Blacks, we must consider the fears and resistance of the people who face the very real threat of losing their jobs to Blacks ... Successful programmes for Black advancement must be accompanied by some sort of reassurance of White workers ... and steps must be taken to ensure the ... opening up of new job opportunities which provide greater scope for them [whites] to utilise their skills ... Relationships between Black and White are marked by feelings of dependence. When we speak of developing Black people, we must realise that we are concerned with people who are attuned to dependence.⁵

It must be highlighted that up to 1977 it was still illegal to employ African managers in urban ('white') areas.⁶ The 'Top Centre' chain of clothing stores was refused permission to train African managers for its eighty stores sited almost exclusively in the African areas.⁷

It was the 1976 political upheavals that were to give new content to BA, which then transcended its earlier model. The 1976 student rebellion and its immediate aftermath caused alarm in ruling class circles, and shook the apartheid regime to its core. It was not only the state which was shaken by these developments, capital was the first to take new initiatives, other than repression, to try to deal with the situation. Capital also began to set up new 'reformist' initiatives, and began pressurising the state to move in a similar direction. For instance, a mere six months after the Soweto student uprisings, capital founded the Urban Foundation. The Urban Foundation aimed at dealing with the 'problem' of urban Africans, through the upgrading of urban townships and pressurising the state to give permanent residential rights to urban Africans.

Capital, for the first time since the 1950's, experienced planned worker stayaways and an incredible restiveness of the urban workforce. Given the fact that the bulk of the black workforce at this time was urbanised, it is not surprising that it was capital which took the most serious reform initiatives. Apart from the issue of permanency of urban Africans and housing, capital began to focus on the question of the economic opportunities for urban Africans, and one of the prerequisites for the success of the Urban Foundation was seen as "...the adoption of free enterprise values by urban blacks" (sic! Africans).⁸

The 1976 uprisings came at a time when the works and liaison committees, which had been revived in the aftermath of 1973, were being rejected by the workers; the young, recently re-emerged labour movement was beginning to grow in a very dramatic way at this time.¹⁴

The 1976 uprisings were therefore like rubbing salt onto the wound for capital, in that they showed that even the minimum requirements for the urban African working class were not being met. Therefore, the period immediately after 1976 saw both the state and capital beginning to think very seriously about a long-term industrial relations strategy.

On the part of the state two very significant steps were taken to try to move in this direction. Firstly, the state appointed the Wiehahn Commission of Enquiry into labour legislation, and the Riekert Commission to look into the aspects of labour utilisation and the question of African labour mobility in the urban areas. Secondly, in 1977, the state began to repeal some of the job reservation clauses in an attempt to free the labour market from "abnormal" restrictions.¹⁰ These actions marked the beginnings of new initiatives from the state to deal with the issue of urban Africans.

Capital on the other hand embarked on a fairly extensive exercise of restructuring. Although this restructuring began in 1973, as was typical of many such initiatives before 1976, they were to be under the tight control of (white) management, as illustrated by the strategy to create more liaison than works committees immediately after 1973. In looking at the restructuring by capital, it is important to look closely at the continuities and discontinuities prior to and after 1976, as a basis for situating BA.

The first major response of capital after 1976 was the understanding that the crisis was much more far-reaching than just the factory floor. Whilst in the immediate post-1973 period, capital saw the problem as largely that of communication on the factory floor, the problem after 1976 was seen within the wider South African political context. For instance, the immediate response of some sections of capital to the 1976 student rebellion is captured by the comment made by the chief executive of Nedbank:

Unless we have a rather dramatic breakthrough on the socio-political side, and here I must think of a settlement of the South West African (sic) problem, and worthwhile and definite steps to eliminate discrimination, we cannot expect capital inflows of any consequence.¹¹

It became clearer to capital that unless a much more sophisticated strategy of industrial relations was developed, they were going to be overrun by events. With personnel management moving more onto the centre stage of the factory regimes of the post 1973 period, it was inevitable that personnel specialists were going to be the leading think-tanks in guiding capital in this regard. For instance People & Profits, the journal of the Institute of Personnel Management at the time, undertook a major survey in 1977 on the question of Industrial Relations. This study aimed at assessing

To what degree is the function of Industrial Relations being practiced in South Africa and how this is being done? ... and questioned [organisations] about their philosophy, as well as their policies and practices in this regard".¹²

This survey found that all of 14 major corporations in the Pretoria/Witwatersrand/Vereeniging complex had begun a process of developing long-term industrial relations strategies. Perhaps what was more significant in this study was that most of these companies were beginning to incorporate training and advancement of black workers as an integral component of their industrial relations strategies. This was a significant departure from the pre 1976 period.

At the same time, personnel management specialists were beginning to examine the whole concept of Equal Employment Opportunities, taking the US as their model and drawing implications for South African corporations. One such major exercise was undertaken by the Institute of Personnel Management through its executive director in 1977. This study was undertaken as a specific response to "The Carter administration's pre-occupation with the fight for human rights [which] may have repercussions in Southern Africa...".¹³ One of the major conclusions and recommendations to come out of this study was that:

The personnel executive who has overall responsibility for the personnel function must have a good understanding of Equal Employment Opportunity and must convey such understanding to every executive in the organization. His company, in recognizing its social responsibility, may have to make special commitments to provide and promote equal employment opportunity.... Each personnel executive may wish to design his own affirmative action programme to suit particular needs.... The effect of adapting such procedures will serve to improve the personnel management and efficiency of the company by using the full potential of the workforce and not over-reaction...¹⁴

The above signalled the beginnings of BA as an end in itself, and heralded a more systematic focus on the improvement of organisational climate. This was the second major response by capital to the uprisings of 1976, and marked a distinct discontinuity with the earlier period.

Perhaps the single most significant impact of 1976 for South Africa, was the international backlash to internal developments within the country. The campaigns for the isolation of South Africa and the application of economic sanctions began in earnest. This was accompanied by pressure on particularly US and British multinationals to disinvest from South Africa. The major response by these companies to pressure to disinvest was to argue that their being in South Africa would contribute positively to socio-political changes inside the country. The pressure that was coming through the Carter administration, which was conscious of the complicity of the US administration with the apartheid regime, and trying desperately to present a good image, meant that the US companies began to feel the pressure even more than the other multinationals operating in South Africa. This pressure was also increased by the similarities between what was going on in South Africa and the racism and national oppression of blacks in the US itself.

Because of international pressure the multinational (and particularly US) corporations took concrete step of introducing what were then known as equal employment/opportunity programmes, to prove that their presence in South Africa was "beneficial" to blacks. The most significant and well-known of these programmes was developed within the prescriptions of the Sullivan Code of Employment Practice. This Code was intended to be binding on all US multinational corporations operating in South Africa. The Code was named after the Reverend Leon Sullivan, who had joined the Board of Directors of General Motors in New York. The Code stipulated, amongst other things, the abolition of discriminatory practices as well as creating space for equal opportunities for all employees irrespective of race, colour, sex or creed.

The Sullivan Code was to lay the basis for other codes of employment practice from different sections of capital (both multinationals and local) to 'fall like autumn leaves'.¹⁵ For instance, within one year between the middle of 1977 and mid 1978, eight codes of employment practice aimed at companies operating in South Africa were drawn up. Inevitably, the multinational companies were the most forthright at this stage about the question of BA.

These codes marked the entry of BA as a significant discourse of capital in South Africa.

The Sullivan Code signatories even went to the extent of setting racial targets, and timetables for its companies to have trained and promoted black supervisory and managerial personnel. The centrality of the discourse of BA within capital quickly translated itself to the setting up of BA programmes by virtually all the major corporations in South Africa.¹⁶ In 1981 the same survey indicated that there was already a shift beyond 'equal opportunities' towards giving blacks some 'special treatment' - affirmative action - in an attempt to give practical effect to BA.¹⁷

Although what was meant by black advancement varied widely between companies (ranging from special attention to the training of African managers to desegregating canteen facilities and toilets¹⁸), the one most distinct component was black, particularly African, upward mobility. This was captured much more succinctly by the Transvaal Chamber of Industries shortly after the 1976 student uprisings:

If we are to believe this (ceiling placed on black upward mobility) to be acceptable to them (blacks) we are deluding ourselves to our ultimate downfall, since the rising generation is no longer prepared to accept the limitations which its parents accepted, as a penalty for having been born without a white skin.¹⁹

The growth of black advancement or affirmative action thinking was such that by the beginning of the 1980's, most training directed at Africans within industrial corporations, was conceptualised and carried out within the context of black advancement programmes. It was in this way that BA programmes became the site upon which an ACPB was to be reproduced. In other words, in most large companies, African upward mobility was taking place within the confines of this discourse. This meant that no training or promotion of African supervisory and managerial personnel was to occur outside of a systematic BA programme. It is because of this development that one should closely examine the nature of these programmes in order to assess the capacity of the ACPB to reproduce itself in contemporary South African corporations.

The development of BA programmes in the late 1970's and early 1980's was to cohere into what has been popularly known as 'corporate social responsibility' programmes.²⁰ This was another distinct difference in the responses of capital between the pre and post 1976 period to the developing crisis within the country. Prior to 1976, there was hardly any consensus

within the capitalist class on the need for corporate social responsibility, and there was far less activity on this front. Before 1976, and largely in response to the 1973 strikes, the more enlightened sectors of capital were calling on companies to spend or invest more on corporate social responsibility. Other sections were more vehemently opposed to this idea on the grounds that "...the object of a trading company is to make more profits, and no action which does not contribute directly or indirectly to achieving that object is permissible".²¹ But after 1976, corporate social responsibility became a major activity of, particularly, monopoly capital, with BA as one of its key components.²²

It was also against this background that the Wiehahn and the Riekert Commissions were appointed. After 1976, the question of the training and utilisation of labour incorporated very specifically the training of African managers. From as early as 1977, the Association of Chambers of Commerce (ASSOCOM) made representations to the Minister of Bantu Administration; a special committee was appointed to investigate the possibility of the training and appointment of African managers in 'white' urban areas in companies or shops that had mainly African employees and African customers. Although this initiative was largely motivated by the existence of the 'Top Centres' that were selling exclusively to African customers - a continuation of the pattern of the emergence of the APP's - a more specific political goal was now incorporated in such initiatives:

...the urban black 'middle class' must be won over to the side of whites in order to contain on a long term basis the irresponsible economic and political ambitions of those Blacks who are influenced against their own real interests from within and without our borders.²³

The above captures what is now the essence of BA. On the one hand it is driven by the necessity to employ Africans in jobs that will bring about the most harmonious relationships between African labour and customers; at the same time it must create a politically conservative stratum of an African petty bourgeoisie in the corporate sphere. These two objectives sit uneasily within the discourse of BA, in that they are usually in conflict with each other. At one level the militancy of the African masses prevents the ACPB from effectively promoting the interests of capital among the oppressed and thereby limiting their potential usefulness for the white ruling class as the struggle intensifies. Secondly, the

narrow power base and lack of adequate economic resources that the ACPB command prevents them from hegemonising themselves over the masses. Thirdly, the hopes of capital that the ACPB, and the APB in general, will be able to influence 'the masses' to accept capitalism, is based on the naive assumption that educated Africans are respected and listened to by the African working class irrespective of their relationship to the structures of the labour movement and the democratic movement as a whole.

Another tension in BA is that the political desirability of creating an ACPB must be reconciled with the absence of both the ideological and the physical space to advance such Africans within South African corporations, given the historically entrenched economic interests of the white wage-earning classes. All these characteristics have come to dominate BA programmes, thereby creating all the contradictions found within this discourse, which ultimately, as will be demonstrated below, severely weaken the capacity of the ACPB to reproduce itself.

2. Quantifying "Black Advancement"

Before engaging some of the fundamental obstacles to African upward mobility, it is important to first assess the extent to which there has been African upward mobility in South African corporations since 1976. Although BA does not only incorporate the appointment and promotion of African managers - it sometimes incorporates every other conceivable act of removing obstacles to African upward mobility within corporations - its primary focus is on creating a stratum of African managers. Also, since the focus of my study is on managers rather than low-level supervisors, a statistical assessment of this category, as defined in the earlier chapters, will be made.

It must be pointed out that the primary aim of this work is not to count the number of African managers in South African corporations. Rather, it is to understand the processes of the formation of the APB - through a specific study of the ACPB - as well as its politics and ideology in contemporary South Africa. However, it cannot be denied that the bottom line from which to assess the extent of the creation of the ACPB is the statistical picture. The question of numbers vis-a-vis the petty bourgeoisie is a very tricky one. This is because

of the fact that the extent of the influence of the petty bourgeoisie in society cannot simply be determined by its numerical strength. Because this class normally possesses skills and are usually in day-to-day control - possession - of the capitalist means of production, their influence is much more powerful compared to their small size vis-a-vis the rest of the working class. Whilst their size, in terms of numbers, is not inconsequential, other factors become important in assessing their power and influence in society.

A small petty bourgeoisie in control of some of the most important means to reproduce themselves can have much more influence than a more numerous petty bourgeoisie whose control over the dominant institutions in society is weak. This factor is even more important in colonial, neo-colonial and other similar types of societies typical of the third world. Poverty of the majority of the people, underdevelopment of the working classes, both in terms of size and political consciousness, and full backing of the petty bourgeoisie by powerful imperialist forces, usually give the petty bourgeoisie enormous power and influence, particularly over other sections of the popular classes, no matter how small the class is. This is the situation in many neo-colonial arrangements in the third world. Furthermore, the power and ideological influence of a small section of the petty bourgeoisie have been significantly boosted in many an anti-colonial struggle, particularly where the working class or other popular forces are weak. This is therefore an important factor to consider, so that there must be caution in how one interprets the political implications of the size of a petty bourgeoisie, particularly in countries with a history of national oppression.

It cannot be denied that figures provide one of the best criteria to assess progress in the area of employee advancement and upward mobility. At the same time, though, figures may be misleading because of some of the problems associated with the compilation of national statistics, particularly in a country like South Africa.

This section will make use of government statistics, given the fact that they are the only ones available; this will, however, be done with some caution. Also, the focus of this section will be on middle management positions and upwards, as positions that normally carry some decision-making powers of a kind fairly significant to the day-to-day operation of capitalist enterprises.

It is important to begin by looking at the nature and extent of African upward mobility in the post-1976 era, as one important means through which one can assess the extent of the changes. This will be done through selected occupations, mainly but not exclusively, in the manufacturing sector.

TABLE 6.1

Percentage of Africans to the total in Professional and Managerial jobs, 1970, 1980,1985.

	<u>Professionals</u>	<u>Managerial</u>
1970	28,26	4,48
1979	5 (89)	less than 1 (96)
1985	4 (89)	1 (95)

(Source: Department of Manpower, Manpower Surveys, 1970; 1980; and 1985)
(The 1970 figure is high because official statistics prior to 1971 included a whole range of functions/occupations under administrative and managerial personnel, eg. supervisors, etc.)

TABLE 6.2

Comparison of whites and Africans on selected professional, semi-professional and technical occupations, 1983

	<u>Whites</u>	<u>Africans</u>	<u>Africans as % of whites</u>
Chemical Engineer	768	1	0,13
Electrical Engineer	2 569	3	0,11
Electronic "	707	6	0,84
Industrial "	756	-	-
Nurses	21 797	21 893	100,4
Teachers	64 692	89 516	138,3

TABLE 6.3

A comparison of white and African personnel practitioners, also showing Africans as a percentage of whites

	<u>White</u>	<u>African</u>	<u>%</u>
Managers	4 208	218	5,18
Employment officers and clerks	7 089	3 013	42,5

(Both Tables 6.2 and 6.3 are taken from the 1983 Manpower Surveys)

From the above tables it is clear that Africans are still grossly under-represented in the engineering professions, which constitute the core of the function of modern industrial corporations. Of particular importance is that in 1983 there was not even a single African industrial engineer picked up by the surveys. Even in those engineering professions where Africans are represented, they constitute a small fraction of their white counterparts. Of

even greater significance is the fact that of the total professional, semi-professional and technical occupations, it is only in the fields of nursing and teaching where Africans are either equal or outstrip whites. Of the total of the professional, semi-professional and technical category, teachers and nurses alone constitute 79,48% of the entire category.

In the field of personnel management, despite the dramatic growth of the APP's in the late 1970's, African personnel managers constitute only 5,18% of their white counterparts. The dramatic growth of the APP's seems to be reflected in the area of personnel clerks and employment officers, where they are 42,5% of their white counterparts. This still reflects the racial division of labour, where even in managerial positions, Africans tend to be reproduced as a subordinate stratum of the white bosses. Even in later surveys the percentage of Africans to whites does not change significantly.

Although in the 1980's Africans became represented in all professional and managerial categories, their numbers remained pitifully small. This is an important point to make, in that the overall growth of the APB, does not tell us much about the pattern of their growth. Three major characteristics are of significant importance in the growth of the APB in South Africa. First, a disproportionately high figure of Africans are represented in the teaching and nursing professions. Secondly, even those members of the APB in the corporations largely dominate in two functions: personnel management and sales management, and following closely on these the public relations functions in some major corporations. Although these functions are important for capital, they remain largely peripheralised in relation to some of the core functions like finance, accounting, technical work and engineering. The third very distinct characteristic of the growth of the APB is that it has grown largely in those functions where its members have to operate at the 'black-white interface', and largely deal with other Africans. The pattern of the reproduction of the APB has, in this regard, not changed much from what it was prior to 1976. This is a direct outcome of the pattern established under apartheid, and which was earlier enforced rigidly through legislation. It is this particular pattern that has continued to undermine the reproduction of the APB, particularly its spread into those class places in which it had been previously under-represented.

The reproduction of the ACPB away from the core functions of capitalist management is an important issue not merely from the point of view of a narrow 'sociology of occupations'. It is a matter that goes into the heart of the capacity of the ACPB to reproduce itself in present day South Africa. It reveals two particular processes in the class formation of the APB as a whole in contemporary South Africa. First of all, the legacy of the suppression of an African corporate petty bourgeoisie continues to reproduce itself despite the legal relaxation of many laws that were restricting the upward mobility of Africans. Secondly it shows that apartheid continues to reproduce itself by channelling the African petty bourgeoisie not only away from the core functions of capital, but also away from areas where they would supervise and control whites. These two points highlight the structural interconnection between national oppression and class formation. The articulation between the two is even more transparent in the pattern of the reproduction of the ACPB. In other words, national oppression and race are not external to, but an intrinsic component of, the division of labour and the determination of social classes under apartheid.

Whilst the above assertion does not mean that there is a contingent relationship between race and class in an abstract sense; as Wolpe would respond to this assertion, it does concretely mean that in South Africa this linkage continues to reproduce itself even in the period of 'reform'. It also highlights the fact that racial domination is not merely a legalistic matter that can be undone by simply doing away with restrictive laws, coupled with a rhetorical commitment from the state, but it is a structural phenomenon deeply ingrained into the very social fabric of South African society.

It is to the reasons for the continuation of this particular pattern of the reproduction of an ACPB that I shall now turn also as a further illustration of how race and class continue to be linked despite the attempts by the state and capital to sunder the two in the post-1976 era. This will also be a way of assessing the 'life chances' of an ACPB in the contemporary period as well as in the near future. Two aspects of the class reproduction of an ACPB will be looked at next, *viz.* access to higher education and the class practices of the white corporate petty bourgeoisie.

3. Obstacles to African upward mobility

Although there is an infinite number of reasons for the slow advancement of Africans, and the 'distorted' nature of the reproduction of the African petty bourgeoisie, two stand out as the most important. The first one is access to formal education, and the second one is white resistance to African upward mobility. All other reasons can essentially be subsumed between the two, whose underlying essence is the historical suppression of the APB as a whole.

a) Education for Africans: The 'making' and the breaking of an African corporate petty bourgeoisie.

Poulantzas makes the point that the ideology of 'promotion' and of 'climbing up' as well as the role ascribed to learning by the (new) petty bourgeoisie "...continues to feed the illusions and hopes that these agents have for themselves and especially for their children".²⁴ Perhaps one can hasten to add that the connection between learning, particularly higher learning, and the upward mobility of the corporate petty bourgeoisie does not merely reinforce the illusion, but enables it to become a reality, with higher education having become the sine qua non of 'making it in the corporate world'.

In South Africa there are very few radical or Marxist analyses that have specifically connected formal education to the processes of the reproduction of an ACPB. This weakness, particularly as it manifests itself within the neo-Marxian analyses, is a direct outcome of the lack of a rigorous analysis of the terrain upon which the APB as a whole is created. This deficiency of neo-Marxian scholarship is also rooted in its rather strange assumption that just because capital and the state have rhetorically committed themselves to the creation of a black petty bourgeoisie, this is already happening.

Liberal scholarship - the 'black advancement perspective' - does realise the role that is played by formal education in limiting the life chances of the ACPB.²⁵ However its weakness is that, whilst recognising this limitation, it ends up focuses most of its attention on intra-organisational processes as the route to creating an ACPB, without linking it to the question of formal education. This then closes their analyses off from posing the question of the

decreasing supply of even those very African managers to be trained in the intra-organisational 'black advancement programmes'.

It is also important to preface the discussion in this section by highlighting the fact that the generally poor access to education and therefore the poor qualifications of Africans, are the fruit of the introduction of bantu education in 1955 as it were. The full impact of bantu education was to be realised in the 1970's. This section can also be taken as a reflection of the outcome of the introduction of bantu education and the limiting of the life chances of the African corporate petty bourgeoisie and the African petty bourgeoisie as a whole. Therefore, this section is not intended to be detailed given that some of the very early consequences of the implementation of bantu education were highlighted in chapter 4.

It must be made clear right from the onset that it is not education per se that allocates class agents to certain class positions. "The specific range of occupations, their differentiations and hierarchies are determined outside the educational system in the organization of the production process itself".²⁶ It should also be highlighted that the nature of education credentials do not necessarily perfectly mirror the requirements of the capitalist economy.²⁷ However, schooling and education do play a very central role in differentiating and dividing, and thereby legitimating, the different roles of class agents in the capitalist hierarchy. In other words, education plays an important role in the distribution of class agents in the division of labour. Education also plays a significant role in the class formation of the corporate petty bourgeoisie.

Higher education has become a very important commodity for the reproduction of the corporate petty bourgeoisie, and the new petty bourgeoisie as a whole. The origins of this importance can be traced back to the separation of mental and manual labour characteristic of the rapidly developing capitalist labour process. This division assumed its most sophisticated form under monopoly capitalism. Under monopoly capitalism, the labourer has been progressively stripped of all his/her knowledge; this process has been concentrated in management. Accompanying the process of taking away the knowledge of workers and being monopolised by a small stratum of management, was the growing importance of higher education qualifications and credentials.

The immediate indication of the importance of education under monopoly capitalism was the massive increase of institutions of higher education in the US between 1880 and 1930, a period associated with the transition to monopoly capitalism in that country. For instance, Abercrombie and Urry note that by 1930 the US had academic personnel, university and college population which was ten times larger than the total secondary school population of France at the time.²⁸ This was despite the fact that the total population of the US was only three times more than that of France in 1930. These authors also continue to argue that it was this failure by France to expand higher education between 1930 and 1940, which led to the retarded development of the new petty bourgeoisie in the country.

What the above points to then is that the distribution of opportunities to acquire formal education does affect the access of class agents to the different places in the division of labour. Contrary to liberal conceptions of distribution of 'life chances' in capitalist society, education provision is not an equal process but is underpinned by class differentiation in capitalist society. In other words access to education is class-based. However, in a country like South Africa, race played, and continues to play a very central role in the access of different people to education. The national oppression of African people in particular, has thrown the majority out of schools and deprived millions of the opportunity to be educated. Already the high school drop-out rate among the Africans indicates the impact of national oppression. For instance in Standards 9 and 10 in 1986, the drop-out rate as a percentage of total enrolment was 44,7%.²⁹ In the lower classes the percentage outflow is even higher: in 1986 64,1% of African pupils dropped out even before they reached junior secondary school.³⁰ This factor severely hampers the opportunities of most African pupils to acquire higher education.

The focus here will, however, be on the access to higher education particularly as it affects the reproduction of an African corporate petty bourgeoisie in South Africa. There are a variety of indices that one can use to assess the extent to which Africans have access to a higher education that prepares them for petty bourgeois class places in the division of labour. Only three of these will be discussed here.

The first index is the matriculation pass rate in African schools. Matriculation is chosen on

the grounds that it is usually the gateway to preparation for petty bourgeois class places. The level of education among employees in South Africa has been rising very rapidly in the past 20 years, and that the demand for people with at least a post matriculation qualification is very high.³¹ The following table is most revealing in terms of the access of Africans to higher education:

TABLE 6.4

Matriculation exam results, 1960-1983

<u>Year</u>	<u>No of candidates</u>	<u>No passed</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>No of exemptions</u>	<u>%</u>
1960	716	128	17,9	28	3,9
1965	1 339	827	61,8	323	24,1
1970	2 846	1 856	65,2	1 013	35,6
1975	8 445	5 400	63,9	3 520	41,7
1976	9 593	7 996	83,4	3 404	35,5
1977	8 225	5 899	71,7	2 294	27,9
1978	9 804	7 468	76,2	3 806	38,8
1979	14 574	10 706	73,5	4 136	28,4
1980	29 973	15 935	53,2	4 714	15,7
1982	60 108	30 541	50,8	6 336	10,5
1983	72 168	34 876	48,3	7 108	9,8

(Source: Race Relations Survey, 1983 p.439)

The first thing to note here is that since the 1976 uprisings the number of African pupils

obtaining a matriculation exemption has declined very rapidly, such that in 1983 less than 10% of African matriculants obtained an exemption, and only 48,3% obtained a pass. Although the pass rate picked up slightly in the mid-1980's up to 28,6% exemptions, this figure was only as high as the 1979 one. The pass rate of only 42% in 1989 marks the lowest since 1960.³²

It is an interesting 'coincidence' that this decline starts at the time when both capital and the state commit themselves to 'black advancement'. Although the rhetoric of the 'upliftment of the African population' has increased since 1976, African education has been hit with persistent crises and disasters, to such an extent that it is surprising how academics can analyse the question of the reproduction of an African petty bourgeoisie without engaging the question of the crisis of bantu education. Since matriculation is the gateway to tertiary education, and the corporate petty bourgeoisie is being increasingly drawn from the ranks of people with some post-matric qualification, the declining number of African students passing matric (let alone being able to get financial support to go to a tertiary institution), severely hampers the ability of the African petty bourgeoisie to reproduce itself. This limitation is heightened by the fact that, as will be shown in the next chapter, more than half of the children of the African petty bourgeoisie are enrolled in the very same crisis-ridden township schools. This means that the high failure rate in matriculation in African township schools does not only affect the children from working class families; it affects the African petty bourgeoisie in a very direct and fundamental way.

The second index of the access that Africans have to higher education is that of technikons and other colleges for advanced technical education (CATE). One of the most significant contradictions of apartheid education and the 'reform' process as a whole is that whilst most of the legal restrictions in the labour market have been removed, training in technikons and vocational colleges largely takes place on a segregated basis.³³ This has given rise to the most glaring inequalities in the provision of technical education to black people in general, and African people in particular. Technical colleges and technikons have only been given permission to decide on their own admissions criteria in 1987. Until that time they were required to admit students purely on a racial basis, to cater for the needs of their designated 'group'. Technical training, given the shortage of skills in the country, has become one of

the most important avenues for upward mobility within the corporations. It is in the area of technical education that the disabilities facing prospective agents for petty bourgeois class positions from the African population manifest themselves most acutely.

Table 6.2³⁴
Technical and Related Institutions at Secondary and Tertiary Level According to population
group, 1960 - 1980

<u>Pop.</u> <u>Group</u>	<u>1960</u>		<u>1970</u>		<u>1980</u>		<u>1988</u>	
	<u>No</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>%</u>
Afr.	1734	3	1959	3	2919	3	15 613	13
White	45 415	84	52 597	83	85 957	87	86 529	73
Col.	2 274	4	2 744	4	6 139	6	8 461	7
Asian	4 569	9	6 286	10	4 198	4	8 424	7

TOTAL	53 992	100	63 586	100	99 213	100	119 027	100

The aspect first noticed from this table is the fact that the percentage of Africans receiving technical and other such related education remained constant at 3% of the total students in such institutions between 1960 and 1980. In actual numbers, there was only an increase from 1734 to 2919, which in relative terms was a decline. During the same period, whites had a share of 84% of the total number of students in technikons or doing technical education in 1960, rising to 87% in 1980. This was doubling the 45 415 figure in 1960, to 85 957 in 1980. Although the period between 1980 and 1988 saw a significant increase in the number of Africans receiving technical education, from 2919 to 15 613 (excluding the four so-called independent bantustans), they only constituted 13% of the total number of students at such

institutions. This spectacular growth can largely be attributed to the establishment in the 1980's of the only two African technikons in the early 1980's in existence. This high figure of just under 16 000 might also be due to students receiving low-level technical education in vocational or technical colleges.

The above clearly shows that there is more emphasis on preparing whites for advanced technical jobs than Africans, who are largely prepared for semi-skilled or low-level technical work. The situation still largely reflects the racial division of labour characteristic of the 1950's and 1960's. Although the numbers of Africans might have increased during the post 1976 era, essentially the racial division of labour continues to reproduce itself. The commitment of the state, as can be assessed from these figures, is still largely the training of whites to take leadership and skilled occupations in the South African economy. This pattern continues to be reproduced despite the 'reform' intentions of the state since 1978.

The third and perhaps most crucial area to look into in order to assess the capacity of the ACPB to reproduce itself, is the area of university education. Together with the entire schooling system, university education has been segregated and unequal in South Africa since 1959.³⁵ Universities in South Africa have mirrored the class inequalities in society, and particularly embody within themselves all the dominant characteristics of national oppression. Universities under monopoly capitalism have played an increasingly important role in the training and supply of the managerial stratum needed to run capitalist enterprises. This has been the dominant characteristic of universities throughout the western capitalist world.

Universities in colonial and neo-colonial countries have produced some of the most dedicated revolutionaries leading their own people to liberation and independence; they have also been the training and hunting ground for elements of the comprador or bureaucratic bourgeoisie found in many third world countries. South Africa has been no exception. The top bureaucrats, civil servants, corporate managers and executives in apartheid South Africa are increasingly being drawn from the ranks of university graduates. In the same way that university (professional) training has become a necessity for the managerial strata throughout the capitalist countries, South Africa has seen a massive increase in the supply of university education over the past 20 years.³⁶

Acquisition of a university degree has become one of the pillars upon which the ideology of meritocracy as expounded by the petty bourgeoisie is based. Knowledge plays a very crucial role in the reproduction of the dominant relations of production under capitalism. As mentioned earlier, the progressive 'dispossession' of all the knowledge and skills related to work by management under capitalism is proportionately reflected in the steady growth of universities this century. This has led to a situation where specialist knowledge functions as a key component of capitalist control.³⁷ It is important to understand this fact in order to dispel the notion that it is the complexity of knowledge per se that has led to the current role of education in the training of management cadres.

Rather, the very complexity of knowledge, the extent to which it remains 'esoteric', is determined by the degree to which it functions to promote and maintain capital in the course of its appropriation and expansionary dynamics.... The 'ideology of professionalism' will be an effective strategy only when its claims coincide with and draw upon the dominant ideological processes of capital.³⁸

If capitalist ideology provides the necessary effectivity to the ideology of professionalism through credentials, then the universities and other tertiary institutions are the suppliers of this knowledge. It is within this context that university education has become crucial in the 'life chances' of the corporate petty bourgeoisie.

The first indicator of the access that the African population has to university education is the ratio of the number of African university students per 1 000 of the African population. This ratio has grown from 0,04 in 1945 to 2,3 in 1985. That of whites during the same period has grown from 6,1% to 28,8%.³⁹ The ratio of white students per 1 000 of the white population is only second to that of the United States.⁴⁰ During the period 1976 to 1985, the African ratio has only increased by about 1,7%, whilst that of whites by 4,4%. All this continued to happen during the era of 'black advancement' when the state and capital 'committed' themselves to promoting an African petty bourgeoisie in South Africa!

However the most revealing aspect about university education for Africans is the types of degrees awarded, as shown in Appendix D.

As is to be expected, the largest number of graduates in South African universities are in the humanities and social science fields. This is largely due to the fact that technical education and training in South Africa as a whole lags far behind the training in what are normally called the 'soft' disciplines. What is more significant, though, is the fact that African graduates are disproportionately found in the arts, social science and education faculties, and grossly under-represented in the technological and natural scientific disciplines.

The largest disparity is in the fields of engineering, computer science, mathematics and natural sciences, and most interestingly, in the business and management spheres. For instance, in 1975 there was not a single African engineering graduate in South African universities, compared to 895 white graduates. In 1985 there was only 25 African graduates as compared to 1476 white graduates in engineering.

Such a disparity is not unexpected given all the factors discussed above, but even more so due to the fact that up to the early 1980's there was not a single black university in South Africa (bantustans included) offering an engineering degree. Nkomo, in fact, notes that in 1983 Kenya was producing more African engineering graduates than South Africa!⁴¹ He correctly argues that despite the fact that South African universities are producing more skilled personnel than any other single African country, the performance of black (particularly African) university students in South Africa, compares with the most underdeveloped countries. In other words, the situation of many African university students is typical, and sometimes worse than, the colonial era in many of the African countries. If 33% of South African engineers provide the top management of South Africa's corporations, as shown in Chapter 5, then it is clear that Africans are severely inhibited in this regard.

Perhaps of most significance to this study are the number of African graduates in the fields of business management and commerce. Although the figures might be low given the fact that the universities in the bantustans are excluded, this cannot hide the fact that there is a gross underproduction of African graduates in the field of management. For instance in 1985 there were 456 African graduates and 4 820 white graduates in Business and Commercial studies. This pattern reflects the extent to which African graduates are being 'trained out of' the core corporate and managerial functions. Although the number of African graduates has

been growing since 1975, this does not alter the fact that this sphere is still disproportionately dominated by whites.

Access to higher education by Africans is even more significant given the fact that most of the corporate petty bourgeoisie in contemporary South Africa is still being drawn from the ranks of the working class, as will be demonstrated in the next chapter. This indicates that education, more than intra-class mobility, is still the major determining factor in the creation of an African corporate petty bourgeoisie. If the working class is struggling to provide higher education to its children, as it does in South Africa, then the base from which the African corporate petty bourgeoisie is drawn is indeed restricted and narrow.

Another related factor in the access to education by Africans is the crisis that has become endemic in African schooling, including universities, since 1976. Since more than half the children of the African corporate petty bourgeoisie attend township schools, this crisis acts as a break to the supply of potential candidates for petty bourgeois class places. The fact that an African person comes from a petty bourgeois background is not an automatic guarantee that he or she will make it into the ranks of this class, as is almost the standard within South Africa's white community. Of course, African children from middle class families have got decidedly more advantages over working class children, but the similarities of conditions of schooling and life circumstances, amongst other things, severely limits that advantage for the former.

Given the nature of African education under apartheid, including the nature of university education, even those who make it into the corporations face severe problems. Apart from the fact that Africans joining the ranks of the corporate petty bourgeoisie have generally got a poor educational background, this poor education also serves to reinforce the white racism against potential African managers. It is this very fact of poor education that is exploited by the white corporate petty bourgeoisie to slow down the process of African upward mobility in the corporations, even in instances where there is no direct connection between performance and the education background of the African managers.

However, it is not merely education that limits the capacity of the growth of an ACPB, given

the fact that even white education in South Africa is not as rosy as it is normally painted. The class practices of the white corporate petty bourgeoisie are a major obstacle. It is this issue that the next section examines.

b) Class interests of the white corporate petty bourgeoisie as an obstacle to 'black advancement'

Before one fully engages the nature of white resistance to BA, it will be useful to outline a typical 'black advancement' programme in a corporation operating in South Africa.⁴² A typical BA programme would involve the following steps:

- i. Establishment of a company policy on BA. This task is usually given to the training sections of personnel departments.
- ii. Analysis of the work-force (personnel audit) to identify jobs, departments and units to which blacks or Africans can be promoted.
- iii. The setting of specific, measurable, attainable recruitment and promotion goals, with time scales, in each area of development. This is usually the most contentious aspect of BA. Many companies do not want to set targets for the number of black managers to be trained or promoted. They normally argue that setting time limits on numbers to be produced makes BA a numbers game, rather than producing 'quality' black managers. Also, many white managers are resistant to the idea of being given deadlines.
- iv. An internal identification of blacks with potential, and the design of training programmes 'suited' for those individuals, usually in conjunction with the boss and/or a mentor assigned to be responsible for the overall training and development of such candidates. It is however very rare that a mentor be another black person; he/she is almost always a white person. It is this factor which gives white managers immense control over the whole of the BA process,

and consequently the reproduction of an ACPB.

v. The revision of all employment procedures to ensure that they do not have discriminatory effects and that they help to attain the goals stated in the company policy. (It is normally from this exercise that the now famous new company policy statements are produced vis-a-vis employment opportunities and discrimination). Accompanying this process there is usually a monitoring procedure that is meant to control all deviations from policy.

vi. In many companies, the overall responsibility for the success of the programme is assigned to a top company official. In many large companies this official becomes a personnel director, who reports to the chief executive and sits on the board of directors.

Although the term 'black advancement' is used to describe such initiatives, they largely focus on African advancement, and not on coloured and Indian advancement. As a manager of a large company said, reflecting on the achievements of their BA programme:

Early in 1981, two trends were becoming obvious: the growth of African managers in the organization was slowing down and the growth of Indian managers was dramatically increasing. In mid 1981, our National Management called a conference of all key managers at which a reassessment of our achievements was undertaken. In short the outcome of this event was a redefinition of a target plus the identification of several new key tactics to be implemented.... Our new commitment was now to target a total achievement of 12% of African, Coloured and Indian managers by 1985 but with the specific recognition that...future development activities would need to be concentrated on Black Africans.⁴³

The above brief sketch of a typical BA programme is, on paper, something with great potential to make affirmative action a success. However, it is in the actual implementation of these steps and processes that the reality of the politics of class reproduction in South African corporations becomes magnified.

Since the advent of BA in the post-1976 period, white resistance to African upward mobility has been a consistent factor, which, surprisingly has not been given the attention it requires. In many analyses of BA the focus has been on the weaknesses of the black, particularly African, managers. In many instances the African managers themselves have been regarded as their own stumbling blocks given their inadequate educational background and lack of the right 'culture' and exposure needed to succeed in white business. This discourse has been the major explanation for the rather slow movement in the upward mobility of Africans in South African corporations. As will be shown, liberal scholars have also played an important role in strengthening this discourse as the context within which to understand obstacles to African upward mobility.

White resistance has been identified by many major studies on 'black advancement'. In one of the pioneering studies of African and white corporate managers, Gathercole, concluded that one of the most important factors influencing African upward mobility was what she called 'white prejudice'.⁴⁴ In another study done by Icely in 1986 on white attitudes towards BA, he concludes that "On the whole, views and attitudes amongst the (white) respondents to black advancement and vertical occupational mobility are negative".⁴⁵ Many other studies subsequent to this have also concluded that white resistance is the single major obstacle to BA.⁴⁶

The discussion below will focus largely on white resistance as it manifests itself from within the ranks of the white corporate petty bourgeoisie, which occupies the 93% of corporate middle and senior management positions. There are two main reasons for focusing on this stratum of the white petty bourgeoisie. First of all, they are the people who design, and are in charge of, the numerous BA programmes in South African corporations. Secondly their resistance takes much more sophisticated and subtle forms than the straight racist reactions of the white working class. Sometimes this sophistication is mistaken for acceptance and commitment by members of this stratum to the creation of an African managerial stratum in South African corporations.

White resistance to African upward mobility manifests itself in principally three ways. The first takes an explicitly racist form, largely rooted in the belief that African people are

inherently more or less incapable of managerial and 'think-work'. This is captured graphically by some of Gathercole's white interviewees:

'They (Africans) cannot do a thing on their own - no creativity nor ideas - not efficient. They are not up to white standards and never will be. Blacks(sic! Africans) have proved in all aspects to be primitive and inadequate. I have no illusions about their ability. I like them and get on well with them. They are inefficient and lack planning ability. They show indifference to the company and have no feeling of belonging.'⁴⁷

Other white managers believe that Africans are downright 'stupid':

'There is the problem of stupidity of Blacks at the lower levels coming up. It is better if Blacks are not directly responsible for whites. It will perhaps be more successful if Blacks are not in control of Whites and do not have much to do with them.'⁴⁸

The above responses represent the classic rejection of Africans as incapable managers. Nowadays one is unlikely to find much of this attitude being expressed as bluntly as this. This is not because of a change of attitude in many white managers, but is a result of the fact that they are faced with the reality of instituting BA programmes, in many instances in response to pressure from their bosses - the capitalist class itself - as this manager complains:

'Although I can assure you that I firmly believe that Africans must be trained and developed to occupy any jobs in industry, what I hate most is that top management always prescribes to us how we should go about carrying out black advancement. This irritates the hell out of me, and it undermines the whole purpose of the exercise since I am put in a situation where I cannot use my own judgement. Who is the loser ultimately? The black man himself.'⁴⁹

The pressure from capital for some form of African upward movement to occur, originally as a response to international pressure, has contributed significantly to the acceptance (no matter how conditionally and grudgingly) by many white managers of the inevitability of black advancement programmes. This is not meant to exclude those liberal white managers who genuinely believe, however paternalistically, that something must be done to correct the injustices of apartheid. But even where such beliefs exist, this, on its own, does not remove

the threat of the creation of an ACPB to the expanded reproduction of the white corporate petty bourgeoisie.

The second way in which white resistance manifests itself begins to take a more sophisticated form, although in substance it is still underlined by racism. This is characterised by the use of 'African culture' as an explanation of the incompetence of African managers, and hence the problems of BA. Such explanations, it is argued, constitute the core of the ideology of the white corporate petty bourgeoisie in South Africa. The main argument by many white managers is that the reason why African managers do not advance more rapidly is because their whole cultural background does not adequately prepare them for managerial class positions in the corporate world. According to one white manager, the 'culture problem' is the major obstacle to the rapid upward mobility of Africans:

'Cultural differences are the essence of the differences between black and white in this country. You see, for a white person the free enterprise system is in his own culture, deeply ingrained. A young white child grows up in a family where the father is a professional, a businessman, etc. The father might not even be a professional, he may be a motor mechanic having a small workshop that he owns and runs. Because of this the white child begins to learn about the principles of free enterprise right inside the home. For the black child all these things are absent, and black culture also tends to emphasize collectivism, which may lead to dependency, and even lack of initiative. That is why the black manager comes into the organization ill-prepared.'

Coldwell and Moerdyk, who have been in the forefront of the theorisation of this 'problem', come out with an even more blatantly ideological explanation of how Africans are collectively 'victims' of this culture. In an article that became influential in some management circles, they first object to the criticism of the use of culture to explain BA problems which says that but most blacks have been in the urban areas for too long to be still influenced by their traditional culture. Quoting Van den Berg, they argue to the contrary that:

There are a host of customs and usages that undoubtedly change in a process of enculturation, but there are also many deep-rooted beliefs, customs and

traditions, of which the upbringing of youth is one, that resist change and are often strengthened in adversity.⁵⁰

They continue by advancing the rather ridiculous and racist argument that the idea that germs cause disease in man runs counter to the African conception of causality, and it is therefore inconceivable! They then conclude that the black (sic) manager is confronted with a dilemma caused by his/her existence in two worlds.

It is such conceptions that are advanced by many a white manager in South African corporations as the reasons for the slow progress that African managers have made in South African capitalism. This of course marks a shift from the overtly racist language and explanations of the earlier period.

The use of the 'backwardness' of African culture as an explanation of the slow advancement of Africans is also accompanied by a whole baggage of expectations of African managers by their white bosses. There are expectations about dress, acquaintances, manner of address, etc, which are regarded by white managers as part of the corporate world that Africans will have to accept if they are to be successful. More often than not this comes across in a very racist fashion.

The African managers have to learn a lot of mannerisms that are important for success in the business world. Some of our junior African managers here have got the tendency of sitting with African workers in the canteen. This is not a good image for a manager.

For other white managers this behaviour is even more intolerable:

Can you imagine a white manager sitting with Africans who are eating by hand, and then hope to come back and be respected by his subordinates and colleagues?

This illustrates the extent to which peripheral issues become centralised by the white corporate petty bourgeoisie in a very paternalistic way and used to evaluate the behaviour of their African counterparts in order to assert control over them.

The third manifestation of white resistance is through the ideology of meritocracy:

I fully support black advancement, but the opportunities being given to young black graduates is placing the young white graduates at a disadvantage. Black advancement programmes are effectively reverse discrimination, since the bright young whites are excluded.... Over and above this many of these black graduates are promoted into management jobs before they are ready. If things continue this way it would be very difficult for young whites to make it into the managerial ranks.... There should be equal opportunity, and not better opportunities for one race group over another.

The above statement by this white manager, who happens to be the mentor of a black graduate in a BA programme, captures the fundamental contradictions of black advancement. First of all it reflects the extent to which white managers are threatened by these black advancement programmes. Secondly, it shows how the ideology of meritocracy and equality is used by white managers to slow down rapid upward mobility of Africans. The statement above is contradictory in itself in the sense that how can this manager believe in BA and at the same time feel that such programmes are discriminatory? How else are Africans going to be trained and promoted into full managerial jobs if they are not to be given special attention of some kind? The very same manager replies:

I am not saying that BA is incompatible with equal opportunity. But we, as experienced managers, should have more say on the progress of black guys rather than having them being promoted even if we think they are not ready. Black advancement should not mean slowing down the progress and excluding young prospective white managers. If these programmes are managed properly, there would be no problem.

In this answer there lies an explanation of the slow upward mobility of Africans in South African corporations. African upward mobility is all right for white managers as long as they can control and determine the pace of the upward movement of the African candidates. This is, therefore, the essence of BA in contemporary South African industry. Although the above is a statement by one white manager, it captures the common responses and attitudes of many white managers towards African upward mobility, and is corroborated by many other studies on this issue. For instance, a leading personnel consultant says in this regard:

We take racism for granted, it's a matter of extreme naturalness to us whites. Over the years we have developed a highly sophisticated set of rationalizations to prevent blacks from 'climbing' the ladder...the approach should be not so much 'black development' as development of the business organisation as a whole. ⁵¹

It is, therefore, not surprising that in a case study of BA in a large company that has been in the forefront of such initiatives, there was a high labour turnover of African graduates, and mostly before they completed their training under the BA programme.⁵² In this study both the African candidates for advancement, and more importantly the white managers themselves, agree that since the start of this programme in 1977, it has been plagued by a high turnover and, consequently, there has been little headway in increasing the number of African managers in the company. There was also a general consensus among both the African participants and their white managers and/or "mentors" as to the main reasons for the bottlenecks in the programme. According to one white manager:

Directors are quite genuine, but below that I can't really comment. Talking to some top managers, some are quite doubtful about the whole thing, whether or not it would benefit anybody.

The African candidate in the programme shares the same view:

... we've got a situation where top management is very much committed.... Then we have middle and bottom management...that's where you get the problem.⁵³

White middle management definitely seems to be the area where there is most resistance to African managers and black advancement programmes. The extent of resistance by white middle management is even seen as something that could explode and backfire in the future, depending on how far these BA programmes are taken. According to a white manager:

...blacks are our future. I would like to see the format change - advancing people for their worth...it may backfire in ten years when you've got a soft middle management if you've pushed them too fast.⁵⁴

It is important to explain why the white corporate petty bourgeoisie is threatened by the

training and promotion of black managers in general. Liberal analyses tend to explain this resistance in terms of 'attitudes', and suggest that in order to deal with white resistance one needs to focus attention on 'attitude change' for white managers so that they can accept black managers. According to Charoux a series of seminars and an introduction of the BA programme ahead of time are the successful methods of changing white attitudes. In terms of his model, a BA review committee should be set up that will identify those (white) managers who are for or against BA.⁵⁵ From such exercises and studies, many liberal analysts have also come up with the proposal that the better educated whites are less resistant to African managers.⁵⁶ This is usually attributed to the fact that the more one is exposed to higher education, the more he/she acquires liberal and enlightened values about society.

It is argued here that there are two major weaknesses in the framework used by liberal scholarship in explaining white resistance to African upward mobility. The first one is that such an approach fails to understand that 'attitudes' are not mere mental sets that can simply be changed by introducing new information. Attitudes are rooted in the material circumstances within which people operate. Whilst it is not for a moment suggested here that attitudes can simply be reduced to the material circumstances of people, at the same time attitudes and attitude change cannot be understood or effected outside of the context of the material circumstances of the individuals concerned. Secondly, liberal scholarship links higher education with 'enlightened views' without even bothering to show how education changes attitudes. In positing the issue of white resistance in this way, they fail to incorporate the question of class and power in shaping the behaviour of white managers towards black managers in general.

It is also argued here that it is not higher education per se that makes white managers react differently to African upward mobility compared to, for instance, the white working class. The essence of their reaction is the fact that white managers, on average, wield a lot of power in the corporations, by virtue of being managers. Such power allows them to appear to support African upward mobility, and at the same time knowing that they have control over the pace of that upward mobility. In other words the way white managers defend and advance their own class interests is different to that of the white working class, in that the

former has the power to block any threatening initiatives. They are, after all, in charge of these BA programmes. They do not have to alienate themselves from the bosses by being seen to oppose BA, but at the same time they control the process so that their own extended reproduction as a class is not threatened.

Put differently, white managers are not threatened by BA programmes since they are in control of such programmes, and such programmes already incorporate the necessary 'checks and balances' so as not to upset the status quo too radically. The apparent security of white managers that liberal analyses talk about is not an outcome of 'enlightened attitudes', but rather of their position of power in the racial division of labour. In fact BA programmes are a reflection of this reality more than just simply a straightforward way of advancing black managers. It is precisely this power and control that the white corporate petty bourgeoisie wields in South Africa, which makes resistance to African upward mobility appear as acceptance. What some sections of the white corporate petty bourgeoisie may accept is some limited form of advancement that does not threaten their class position. This limited form of advancement enables the white corporate petty bourgeoisie to demonstrate that the prescriptions of company policy on 'equal opportunity' and affirmative action are being fulfilled. This is the nature of BA in South African corporations!

The above account is not meant to be a conspiratorial analysis, but tries to unpack the structural dynamic of racism and its modus operandi in the very processes of class formation.

There are basically two reasons why African upward mobility is a threat to white management, particularly white middle management. The first one is that the pace at which the white corporate petty bourgeoisie has been created and reproduced has been directly dependent on the suppression of particularly its African counterparts. Chapter 4 showed how the extended reproduction of the white petty bourgeoisie and the suppression of its African counterparts is structurally embedded in the processes of class formation in South Africa. A reversal of this process means that the pace of the reproduction of the white petty bourgeoisie will have to be slowed down tremendously. Given the structural features of the reproduction of an ACPB under apartheid, there is no reason to believe that its white counterpart is prepared to halt or slow down its own extended reproduction.

The second reason why the white corporate petty bourgeoisie is threatened by the accelerated creation of the ACPB is due to the fact that the economic crisis and stagnation facing South Africa from the early 1970's, and actually deepening in the 1980's, are not creating adequate petty bourgeois places to enable the rapid creation of an ACPB. Perhaps this is the fundamental contradiction facing BA in South Africa. 'BA' emerged as a response to a crisis that is threatening to erode the very privileges enjoyed by whites. What BA seems to be doing is trying to co-opt a few blacks who are meant to ultimately defend white rule, albeit in a different form. But in order to secure the long-term survival of white rule through co-option, whites are expected to make sacrifices in the short term, in the form of BA. This is the dilemma that BA is grappling with.

The reason why BA programmes are unable to resolve this contradiction is because they are being instituted in the midst of intensifying struggles against apartheid, so that the type of short-term sacrifices expected from sections of the white ruling bloc cannot guarantee the long-term security of white rule itself. This point is entirely missed by many neo-Marxian analyses, particularly those of an economistic and reductionistic type. Before one can say that the intentions of the white ruling bloc to create a black petty bourgeoisie - let alone a collaborative one - are being realised, it will have to be demonstrated that these contradictions are being overcome by the white ruling bloc.

The most appropriate indicator of the extent to which the economic crisis is negatively affecting the extended reproduction of the WCPB, is the number of managerial vacancies available each year in South Africa.

Many commentators and analysts have pointed out that the need for more African managers is highlighted by the shortage of managerial personnel and the number of managers needed by the South African economy. Such analysts normally point out that the white population can never meet this need. This is also the way in which capital tries to convince white managers about the need to speed up African upward mobility. The shortage of managerial personnel is also used to allay white fears that black upward mobility will lead to loss of jobs:

Bearing in mind that in the USA approximately 25 percent of the economically

active population fall into the leading group of professional people, entrepreneurs, managers, senior officials, etc., it is clearly beyond the capacity of South African whites with their shrinking share of the economically active population. Members of other racial groups will have to move up into more skilled and responsible positions if economic growth rates are not to fall to ever lower levels.⁵⁷

For example, Professor Black of the Business School at the University of Cape Town made the observation in 1985 that, "Twice as many blacks as whites need to be brought to skilled labour level in the next five to fifteen years to maintain the required annual GDP growth of five per cent necessary to prevent unemployment".⁵⁸ A similar argument is advanced by Hofmeyr when he says that the projected annual demand for executives is more than ten times the actual achievement from 1959 - 1979.⁵⁹

It is particularly interesting to note the discrepancy between the projected needs and the actual shortages of managers. In spite of the fact that we were told that as from 1980 the annual additions to the labour force of executive/ managerial staff other than whites was going to be 3 800, in 1981 there was an actual shortage of only 997 in the public sector and 1790 in the private sector! Such projections therefore beg the question as to where these highly inflated numbers come from. It seems that many of the projections on workforce shortages are based on the ideal or desirable number of vacancies that would be created if the economy were 'healthy', for as Black suggests, "...about 160 000 blacks need to reach executive level to give the country a healthier ratio of management to worker".⁶⁰ These projections hardly take into account the whole crisis in the country and how it continually undermines the economic growth necessary for job creation. It is therefore clear that the discrepancy between the ideal and actual vacancies can be taken to "...demonstrate what very few people believe, namely that there are limits, at a surprisingly low level, to the process of upward mobility".⁶¹

If there are such limits, it becomes clear that the very process of the extended reproduction of the WCPB is being severely limited by the deepening economic and political crises. Under such conditions white resistance becomes understandable, and the prospects of any rapid creation of an ACPB are indeed dim, if not altogether absent.

From the above analysis, a number of important conclusions can be made regarding black advancement and the capacity of the ACPB to reproduce itself. The most important conclusion is that black advancement is a contradictory unity of, on the one hand, the need to create a conservative stratum of an APB, and, at the same time, an expression of the resistance of the white corporate petty bourgeoisie aiming to protect its own extended reproduction. It is essentially this contradiction which keeps on undermining the capacity of the ACPB to reproduce itself.

The second conclusion that can be made out of this analysis is that capital is unable to resolve this contradiction because it is caught in a very serious and structurally based dilemma. The dilemma is that, whilst it is in the deepest interests of the bourgeoisie in South Africa to create a collaborative African petty bourgeoisie as a means of protecting capitalism in the long term, capital is however very reluctant to simply abandon its 'tried and tested lieutenants' - the white managers - who historically occupy the key positions as day-to-day managers of capitalist enterprises. This dilemma manifests itself in the debates and tensions about how to make affirmative action work without at the same time turning it into reverse discrimination or endangering the jobs and long-term security of white managers. The deepening economic crisis sharpens this dilemma for the bourgeoisie.

The third conclusion to be made is that the two contradictions mentioned above are being reflected day in and day out by the following facts and processes. The extent of window dressing - promoting African or black managers to highly placed jobs in the hierarchy, but without the necessary authority, responsibility and level of decision making - in South African corporations is disturbingly high. It is argued here that the extent of window dressing, which has in fact become a very distinct component of BA programmes, is a reflection of the tension between the need to create an ACPB and a lack of the necessary ideological and physical space to do so. By lack of the necessary ideological space is meant the absence of a total acceptance of African upward mobility as reflected in the resistance of the white wage-earning classes. The lack of physical space refers to the inadequate generation of petty bourgeois class places that can satisfy both the demands of the white petty bourgeoisie and the expanded reproduction of an African corporate petty bourgeoisie.

Another indicator of the fundamental contradictions of BA is the continued reproduction of the ACPB as a stratum subordinate to its white counterparts. Up to this day whites that are replaced by blacks move upwards and not down or out of the racial division of labour. This shows the extent to which the historical suppression of the ACPB has placed them in a position of structural weakness and disadvantage, even when job reservation has been removed. This factor also continues to reproduce apartheid, despite the stated intentions to the contrary by the white ruling bloc.

The fourth and perhaps most significant conclusion is that obstacles to the creation of an APB are not simply legalistic but are structural. In other words, removing legal obstacles in the labour market does not, in itself, translate to rapid upward mobility for those sections of society that are oppressed. The small number of African managers is a reflection of these structural limitations, embedded in both the labour market and the division of labour in contemporary South Africa. It is therefore absurd to suggest that - as Sarakinsky does - removal of legal obstacles is unproblematically leading to the growth of an APB. Such arguments conveniently ignore the structural basis of class reproduction, and reduce it to a legalistic basis. This is thoroughly 'unMarxist', to say the least. That is what this type of Marxism shares with liberal scholarship, the belief that removal of legal obstacles will translate into the growth of an APB.

Lastly, it is worth pointing out that the liberal explanations of obstacles to African upward mobility are primarily, though not exclusively, a scientification of the ideology of the white corporate petty bourgeoisie to stall the creation of an ACPB. Since it has been demonstrated that all sorts of rationalizations are used by the WCPB to slow the growth of its black counterparts - eg. 'black advancement lowers standards; African do not understand business principles', etc.- liberal scholarship has largely become the intellectual laboratory for the manufacture of such managerial ideologies. The BA packages, designed by many consultants operating within this scholarship, provide the perfect rationale for not advancing blacks too quickly. Because many of the BA programmes flowing out of liberal scholarship create a legitimate space for turning black managers into permanent trainees, they temporarily relieve white managers from accusations that they are blocking BA.

It is in this way, then, that the term 'black advancement' is racist, because it focuses on black managers only and ignores the class practices of the white corporate petty bourgeoisie, which are an integral part of this discourse. Sometimes such scholars are unashamedly bold in their avoidance of situating African upward mobility within the totality of apartheid and capitalism. For instance, Charoux concludes his book thus:

Finally the reader will have noticed that we have carefully steered our course away from the very many macro issues which, directly or indirectly, continue to influence the organisational entry of the Black manager.... We believe that...it is not possible in South Africa to address economic issues without addressing political issues, but that it would have been well beyond the scope of this book to have attempted to do so.⁶²

What a contradiction! Macro issues are important in understanding problems facing black managers, and the book is about black managers, and yet these macro issues fall outside the scope of the book!

This chapter will be concluded by highlighting some of the other ways through which the liberal discourse on 'black advancement' has become the ideology of the white corporate petty bourgeoisie. The most dominant liberal (academic) input that is informing BA initiatives argues that the most serious obstacles to the advancement of Africans in the corporations is traditional African culture, as highlighted earlier.

According to Miles these notions can be traced back to the times of the ascendancy of British colonialism in the 19th century. In one of the most extensive studies done on the relationship between racism and labour, Miles makes the following observations about such arguments:

...the economic and political supremacy of capitalism generated a response at the ideological level in that the British bourgeoisie sought an explanation for its position of not only national but also international domination.⁶³.... In other words, the then enforced economic underdevelopment of the colonies and parts of Africa, as a necessary precondition for the development of British capitalism, was subsequently refracted at the level of ideological relations in the dialectic between the defined primitiveness and backwardness of the 'Negro' and the material advancement of the British 'race'.⁶⁴

There are three main weaknesses of the 'cultural' paradigm, as Miles begins to show above, particularly in its attempts to explain the slow upward mobility of Africans in South African industrial corporations. Firstly, it obscures the ways through which apartheid has shaped the life chances of Africans in white corporations. As Miles argues, such explanations project the problem back onto its victims and thereby divert attention from the burning realities of apartheid. The second problem with these cultural explanations is that they do not show any convincing evidence why it is that, whilst there "... are a lot of customs and usages that undoubtedly change in a process of enculturation, but there are also many deep-rooted beliefs, customs and traditions ... that resist change".⁶⁵ Until the 'culturalists' demonstrate beyond any doubt which cultural patterns have remained, which ones have changed, and replaced by what and why, they remain apologists for the racial division of labour. Thirdly, the arguments of the culturalists fail to demonstrate adequately why the cultural patterns of Africans are an obstacle to their upward mobility. This remains assumed and has never been adequately argued. In this way such explanations serve as an ideological instruments in the hands of the white corporate petty bourgeoisie.

The cultural paradigm has further been extended by many other liberal social scientists, particularly psychologists, to try to explain problems of black advancement. These extensions have mainly used some well-known psychological constructs in conceptualising problems facing African in South African corporations. The main theory that has emerged along these lines is that called 'need for achievement' theory (Nach). This theory was originally developed by McClelland, after conducting studies in a number of countries. From his work McClelland defines the Nach as a relatively stable predisposition to strive for success ie " ... a behaviour toward competition with a standard of excellence".⁶⁶ This theory was taken over in South Africa by Nasser who has applied it as a means of training particularly African managers. Nasser's assertion was that Africans generally have a low need for achievement. The argument has also been extended by others who subscribe to the notion that Africans "... are used to doing things by group consensus, acting slowly and non-individualistically".⁶⁷

What these notions do not address is the fact that 'achievement' is socially and historically defined. It is problematic to talk about a general 'need for achievement' across social

formations. Even within any particular society achievement is related to dominant values and tends to reflect class, gender and racial distinctions within that society. For instance, the economic, political and social agenda of the working class is obviously different to that of the ruling classes of our society, and consequently conceptions of 'achievement' would be different as well. In this way the ideological basis of such a theory is laid bare, because it normally presents what is only the ruling class conception of achievement as if it were in the interest of every 'achievement oriented individual'.

Miles has generally traced such conceptions to what he calls scientific racism. He states that, "The 'scientific' racism of the nineteenth century insisted that there was a deterministic relationship between phenotypical variation and cultural difference".⁶⁸ Whilst one can definitely see the traces of scientific racism in such explanations, Miles' argument can nonetheless obscure the fundamental class determinants of such behaviour. As argued earlier in this chapter, the foundations of this ideology are the class interests of the white wage-earning classes in South Africa. The ideology is structurally rooted in the fact that African upward mobility is a direct threat to the extended reproduction of the white corporate petty bourgeoisie in particular. This ideology reflects the contradictions within the discourse of black advancement as outlined earlier.

It is therefore only within the context of the contradictions of class mobility and national oppression that we can articulate and understand the 'black advancement' process. For instance, the existing socio-psychological and cultural explanations of 'black advancement' fail to articulate the contradictory consciousness and behaviour of both white and African managers. It is also from the perspective outlined in this chapter that one can be able to analyse and understand white managerial ideologies and practices as an essential component of the discourse of 'black advancement'. From this angle one can also situate the ambiguities in class consciousness and behaviour of African managers. Such an approach would constitute the essential elements of the politics and psychology of class mobility in South Africa, which the rest of this study attempts to do.

Having assessed the terrain upon which the ACPB is being reproduced, we can now turn to the class profile of the ACPB, and how African managers live their class experiences as

APP's.

1. Lenin, V I "The Beginning of Bonapartism" in Tucker (1975) The Lenin Anthology p. 307
2. Nasser, M (1981) "Need for Achievement - The Base for Successful Black Advancement and Managerial Development in Free Enterprise System - A Position Paper" Paper presented at School of Business Leadership, UNISA, July.
3. Human and Hofmeyr, 1985.
4. Cortis, 1974, p. 12
5. ibid
6. Survey of Race Relations, 1977. There was still commitment on the part of the state, even at this stage, to maintain police job reservation. For example, in 1977, 18 employers were prosecuted for contravening the provisions of the legislation (Survey of Race Relations, 1977, p. 225).
7. Survey of Race Relations (SRR), 1977 p. 228
8. Anton Rupert's keynote address at the founding of the Urban Foundation (Financial Mail, 3/12/1976 p. 889).
9. For instance the most central issue in the first three years of the existence of the Metal and Allied Workers Union was the rejection of the liaison committee system (Webster, 1985).
10. Some of the proclamations made by the Minister of Bantu Administration in terms of proclamation R3, 4 and 5 of 1968, prohibiting employers employing african receptionists and front desk clerks in 'white' areas, were withdrawn, and some of the restrictions in terms of the Black Labour Regulations Act, 1964, were withdrawn (SRR, 1979 p. 214).
11. Financial Mail, 20/08/76, p. 633
12. People and Profits, 4.8, February 1977, p. 10
13. Berry, 1977 p. 27
14. ibid - emphasis in original
15. People and Profits Vol 5 No 9 March, 1978 p. 27
16. In a nationwide survey of 200 companies carried out by one of the most respected personnel consultants, it was found that by 1979 80% of these companies had formally adopted policies of equal opprtunity. Sixty-nine percent had developed some form of black

advancement programmes to deal with 'disadvantages' facing blacks in South African industry, particularly when competing with whites. Seventy three per cent of these companies were also signatories of at least one of the existing codes of employment practice, with 47% subscribing to the Urban Foundation code, 24% to the Sullivan Code, and 21% to the European Economic Community Code of Employment Practice (Fine Spamer Associates, 1979).

17. *ibid.*

18. Fine Spamer and Associates (1979) "Asiatic Black Coloured Advancement in South Africa".

19. TCI memorandum to the Prime Minister, BJ Vorster, quoted in Financial Mail, 20/8/76 p. 634. This was a memorandum directed to the government to give urgent attention to the grievances of urban africans in the country.

20. For instance between 1980 and 1981, there was an increase in corporate contributions and donations to what was called community development from R2,8m to R5m; and contributions to education from R3,5m to R4m. The largest portion of these contributions went to african development (SRR 1981 p. 214).

21. Mannie Bradlow, Chairman of Bradlows, People and Profits, 3.1 July 1975 p. 5.

22. Fine Spamer Associates, 1979 & 1981; People and Profits, 5.9 March 1978.

23. TCI memorandum, *op cit.* in Financial Mail 27/8/76 p. 723.

24. Poulantzas, 1975 p. 284.

25. See particularly Human and Hofmeyr, 1985.

26. Sharp, R 1980 p. 128.

27. Abercrombie and Urry, 1983.

28. Abercrombie and Urry, 1983 p. 103.

29. Institute of Race Relations Race Relations Survey, 1987/88.

30. *ibid.*

31. Dreijmanis, J 'The role of the South African government in tertiary education'. South African Institute of Race Relations; Dostal, E "The long term future of education in South Africa, 1989.

32. Race Relations Surveys, 1983-89.

33. Bot, M "Training on Separate Tracks" Institute of Race Relations, 1988.

34. Table taken from Dostal, 1989 p.16

35. See Gwala, 1989, for more details on the situation of universities in South Africa.
36. See chapter 5.
37. Johnson, Terry (in Salaman and Esland, 1980).
38. *ibid*, p. 359.
39. Dreijmanis, 1988 pp. 120 & 122.
40. *ibid*.
41. Nkomo, 1984.
42. The programme outlined here is adjusted from Sebesho, 1986, p.25, and incorporates the author's own previous experience both as a personnel practitioner in charge of a black advancement programme and as a candidate in such programmes (See Nzimande, 1984).
43. Powis, P 'Training Blacks for Management: A Corporate Perspective' Unpublished paper presented at a Black Advancement Seminar held at Mangosuthu Technikon, Durban, 25/5/83. (emphasis added).
44. Gathercole, J 1981.
45. Icely, JNB 1986 p. 121.
46. For more information see Human&Hofmeyr *op cit*; Charoux *op cit*; Smollan, R 1986.
47. Gathercole, 1981 p.78
48. *ibid* pp. 78-79
49. This quotation, and subsequent ones in this section - unless indicated otherwise - are taken from recorded interviews done by Sharon Campbell, who was my honours student in 1988, and who kindly allowed me to use her tapes.
50. Coldwell, DAL and Moerdyk, AP 'Paradigms apart: Black Managers in a White Man's World', 1981 p. 71.
51. Mike Alfred, Daily News 24/2/87.
52. Campbell, S 1988.
53. *ibid*. p. 83
54. *ibid*. p. 103
55. Charoux, 1986 pp. 33-34.
56. Icely, *op cit*.

57. Black, 1985.
58. Daily News, 3/4/85.
59. Business Day, 27/6/85.
60. Black, op cit.
61. Meth, 1983 pp. 196-197.
62. Charoux, op cit p. 150
63. Miles, 1982 p.113
64. ibid, p114
65. Coldwell and Moerdyk, op cit, p.71
66. in Parker and Steers, 1975 p.48
67. Nasser, 1981; this quote is from Reese, 1981 p.23
68. Miles, op cit, p.51

Chapter 7

"Izingane Zabawashi" (Children of domestic workers): The Class Origins and Biographical Profile of the African personnel practitioners

The aim of this chapter is to present a sociological profile of APP's. An attempt will be made to answer questions like: who are the APP's and what is their class origin? This analysis, will illustrate how their initial suppression and subsequent emergence has produced the specificities of an ACPB in South Africa.

The results presented in this section are drawn from a questionnaire administered in 1987 to a sample comprising thirty-eight members of the Personnel Practitioners Association (PPA). The sample was about 20% of the total membership of the PPA which in 1987 had a total of 200 members. The PPA is a Natal based association of APP's. According to its own internal survey done in 1986, there was about a total of between 250-300 APP's in the Natal region, concentrated mainly in the Durban-Pinetown-New Germany industrial complex, followed by Pietermaritzburg and Hammarsdale, KwaSithebe (near Mandeni) and Ezakheni (near Ladysmith).¹

The sample represented about 10-15% of the APP's in the Natal region. The aims of the questionnaire were to compile a biographical picture of the APP's in South Africa and to determine their class origins. The themes presented and discussed below are those which were assessed in the questionnaire.

TABLE 7.1

<u>Age</u>		
Range	No	%
Less than 25 yrs	1	2,63
Between 26-29	8	21,05
30-35	1	28,94
36-40	6	15,78
41-45	6	15,78
46-50	4	10,52
51-55	2	5,26
Over 55	0	0
Total	38	100,0

The average age of APP's was 30-35 years, and this meant that the largest single group of APP's was part of the 'class of 1976'. The overall majority of APP's were between the ages of 30-45, clearly indicating that most of them were recruited after the 1973 strikes and most probably after 1976. This indicated that the original recruits of the late 1960's are increasingly being replaced by a new brand of younger and probably better educated group of practitioners.

TABLE 7.2
Formal Academic and Professional Qualifications

<u>Qualifications</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>%</u>
Below matric	0	0
Matric	20	52,63
University degree	12	31,57
Postgraduate degree	6	15,78
Total	38	100,00

TABLE 7.3
Professional qualifications

<u>Qualification</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>%</u>
Damelin Personnel Management diploma	4	10,52
University diploma	12	31,57
IPM diploma	3	7,89
Studying towards a diploma	2	5,26
Other	2	5,26
None	15	39,47
Total	38	100,00

What is of particular interest here is that 52,63% of the APP's did not have university

degrees. However, of this group only 30% did not have any personnel management/ industrial relations qualifications at all. This meant that they had supplemented their matric with a relevant personnel management qualification. Most of those with matriculation qualifications had their diplomas from either Damelin or the diploma of the Institute of Personnel Management. Quite a number of them also had more than one diploma, as a means of compensating for their formal lack of education.

Those with university degrees tended to either continue with higher degrees or do university diplomas, the most common being those from the UNISA School of Business Leadership. However, half of those holding university degrees did not have any of the other personnel management or industrial relations diplomas. This is an indication of the extent to which a degree is becoming a standard requirement for those APP's being recruited in the contemporary period. This is supported by the fact that the average age for those with matriculation was between 36-45, with the single largest concentration being in the 41-45 age category. What this suggests is that most of those with matriculation were amongst the first APP's recruited in the late 1960's and early 1970's. It was only later (in the post 1973 period) that emphasis was placed on university degrees, and even more so in the post-Wiehahn era. One hundred percent of those fifty years and above were among the group whose highest academic qualification was matric.

On the other hand, the average age range of those with university degrees was 26-35 (58,8%), with the single highest concentration being the 30-35 age group (35,2%), followed by the 26-29 age range (23,52%).

A number of conclusions can be drawn from the educational and professional qualifications of contemporary APP's. First of all it clearly shows that the APP's constitute the first generation of african corporate managers, and therefore the first generation of an African corporate petty bourgeoisie. Secondly, it indicates that the reason why people with matric were initially employed was because the major requirement at the emergence of the APP's was somebody who could speak, write and communicate in English and one other (African) language. With the intensification of the class struggle at the point of production, beginning in 1973, management needed to develop more sophisticated strategies, and therefore needed

more intellectually sophisticated APP's who could be trained to implement sophisticated industrial relations strategies. This became even more important at the time of the recognition of African trade unions at the beginning of the 1980's. The added professional qualifications of those who had matric is a further reflection of the rising formal qualifications expected of APP's in the contemporary period. It is clear that the early APP's of the late 1960's and early 1970's were merely expected to be one better than izinduna, whilst the contemporary APP's are part of a sophisticated industrial relations strategy by management.

Thirdly, the higher qualifications might be a reflection of the requirements for affirmative action. As illustrated in the previous chapter, affirmative action or "black advancement" programmes require highly qualified blacks who will ensure some measure of "success" within such programmes. Linked to this is the fact that because of racism, blacks are expected to be doubly qualified in order to make it in the racial hierarchy of the division of labour. Higher qualifications serve two purposes. To ensure 'success', and also to make things doubly difficult for African managers so that they do not threaten the extended reproduction of the white corporate petty bourgeoisie, as has been pointed out in the previous chapter.

TABLE 7.4
Salary - 1988

	<u>Salary</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>%</u>
Less than	R12 000 p.a.	2	5,26
Between	R12 000 - R20 000	16	42,10
	R21 000 - R25 000	5	13,15
	R26 000 - R30 000	6	15,78
	R31 000 - R40 000	5	13,15
	R41 000 - R50 000	2	5,26
Over	R50 000	2	5,26

Although comparative figures with white personnel practitioners were not compiled, it is

clear that the majority of APP's are operating at a level much lower than most white APP's. For instance, it is significant that only 4 out of the total sample earned more than R40 000, and only two more than R50 000. All the four APP's earning more than R40 000 were either classified as senior personnel/industrial relations officers or internal personnel consultants or managers. There was also a positive correlation between a very senior job and the level of education, suggesting that those APP's with university degrees were more likely to get promotions or be employed at slightly higher levels of the occupational ladder.

However, a further indication of the level at which the APP's were operating in their companies was that only 5 percent were heads of their respective personnel departments. There was another 5 percent, who though not heads of departments, were operating at a level similar to that of those who headed departments. The salaries were also an indicator of the level at which they operated. This indicates that the ACPB is still reproduced as a subordinate stratum, under the control of the white petty bourgeoisie. Although the subordinate role of the ACPB in South Africa's industrial corporations will be taken up later in this chapter and has already been highlighted in the previous one, this aspect clearly demonstrates the extent to which the racial division of labour in particular, and apartheid in general, are still the major institutions through which the African petty bourgeoisie is reproduced. It is in this way that apartheid continues to reproduce itself, at the same time as it reproduces an african petty bourgeoisie.

1. "‘Illegitimate’ Children of the Working Class”: The Class Origins of the APP’s

The class origins of the APP's is a very interesting but rather tricky phenomenon from which one can draw conclusions about the politics and ideology of the ACPB. The following tables which look at the class background of the APP's are most revealing:

TABLE 7.5
Parent's Education

<u>Highest Standard of Education Passed</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>%</u>
<i>Father's Education</i>		
No education	5	13,16
First year - Std. 2	5	13,15
Std. 3 - Std. 6	16	42,10
Std. 7 - Std. 9	6	15,78
Matriculation	2	5,26
University degree	4	10,52
Total	38	100,00
<i>Mother's education</i>		
No education	4	10,52
First year - Std. 2	4	10,52
Std. 3 - Std. 6	16	42,10
Std. 7 - Std. 9	10	26,31
Matriculation	3	7,89
University degree	1	2,63
Total	38	100,00

TABLE 7.6
Parents' Occupations

<u>Occupation</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>%</u>
<i>Father's occupation</i>		
Labourer	20	52,63
Teacher	2	5,26
University lecturer	2	5,26
Supervisor/Induna	2	5,26
Minister of Religion	3	7,89
Small business/trader/small farmer	2	5,26
Security officer	1	2,63
Medical practitioner	1	2,63
Clerk	3	7,89
Police	1	2,63
Unspecified	1	2,63
<i>Total</i>		
Working class	21	55,63
Petty bourgeoisie	17	44,74
Other	1	2,63

Mother's occupation

Housewife	20	52,63
Domestic servant	4	10,53
School teacher	5	13,16
Factory worker/labourer	2	5,26
Nurse	4	10,53
Dressmaker	3	7,89

Total

Working class	29	76,32
Petty bourgeoisie	9	23,68

The above tables on the class origins and social background capture in a very dramatic way the history and contemporary 'politics' of the reproduction of not only the ACPB, but the entire African petty bourgeoisie in South Africa. The major distinctive characteristic of the ACPB is that it comes from a working class background. For instance, about 51% of the APP's are born of fathers who come from working class backgrounds, and with 76% of the mothers coming from a similar background. Even those born of petty bourgeois families are largely drawn from the lower ranks of the petty bourgeoisie. These would include supervisors or izinduna, clerks, and some small traders and farmers. Out of the total of those who come from distinctly working class backgrounds, only 4% had parents who had other sources of income. These other sources of income included shebeens and informal sector type of activities like hawking, carpentry, building etc. Another distinctive feature was that, with the exception of only 2% of the sample, all those who had working class fathers also had mothers who were working class - "Izingane zabawashi" (children of washer-women), as the township saying goes.

A number of explanations and conclusions can be deduced from this sociological picture. First of all, this profile reflects the extent to which an African petty bourgeoisie has been suppressed in South Africa, such that the first generation of the African petty bourgeoisie is drawn from the children of the working class - hence the use of the figurative expression that

they are the "illegitimate" children of the working class. Secondly, these statistics also reflect a change in the political economy of schooling in the post-1960 period, which is radically different from that of prior periods in South Africa. For instance in the study of the African petty bourgeoisie by Leo Kuper in the late 1950's, he found that more than 60% of medical students at the University of Natal during that period came from petty bourgeois backgrounds.² The introduction of Bantu Education in the second half of the 1950's, as a response to the need for semi-skilled workers by emerging white monopoly capital, extended the opportunity for schooling to the children of the increasing numbers of the African working class. This was a radical shift from the period prior to the introduction of Bantu education where evidence suggests that the African school-going population was small and dominated by children of the petty bourgeoisie. The latter point in fact helps to explain the differences between Kuper's findings and those of this study. The overwhelming domination of children of the working class in Bantu education schools made the process of even the most random selection into the ranks of the petty bourgeoisie result in a numerical preponderance of working class children. The results of this study are also backed by the findings of a pilot study of the class background of 800 sociology students from the University of the Western Cape. The pilot study indicates that 80% of these students come from working class backgrounds.³

However, the above scenario begs the question of how can the working class afford to educate its children? A number of related reasons can be advanced in answer to this question. First of all, one can get glimpses of an answer from the reasons advanced by the APP's themselves on how they managed to acquire their education. The education of the APP's was a combination of sheer determination of the parents against all odds; student weekend jobs, like gardening in the white suburbs to help them with school requirements; elder siblings leaving school early, either permanently or for a while, to educate younger siblings; or bursaries, particularly from the 1970's on. In a study done in 1982, african workers, because of their abhorrence of the conditions under which they were working, would put all they had into educating their children in order to avoid having their children doing the same jobs.⁴

Sources of funds for workers would come from joint savings clubs (stokvels); borrowing from informal loan networks which saps the workers year in, year out; horse-racing, etc. Nevertheless, all these factors should not be misinterpreted

to mean that the majority of workers could afford to educate their children. The very high drop-out rate in African schools is an indication of the difficulties facing African children and their parents. Nevertheless, given the predominance of working class children at school, the contemporary petty bourgeoisie gets drawn from the ranks of the working class.

Further evidence of the difficulties faced by the working class in educating its children is the relatively slower growth of the African petty bourgeoisie compared to the white petty bourgeoisie. Even where there is a shortage of professional workers - like teachers - the working class is unable to educate sufficient teachers to make up for this shortfall. The fact that the APP's are children of the working class is an exact indication of the outcomes of the suppression of the African petty bourgeoisie under apartheid.

That the ACPB is drawn from the ranks of the working class poses some very important questions regarding the political behaviour of this class. Although this question will be taken up more fully in the final chapter, it is necessary to make some preliminary comments here. Of course, for economistic Marxists the fact that the ACPB are children of the African working class is immaterial. What is more important for them is the current economic class position of the APB, which solely determines their political behaviour. However, for Jordan (1988) this is not insignificant, given the nature of the petty bourgeoisie in general, and the mode of reproduction of the African petty bourgeoisie in South Africa in particular. He argues that the petty bourgeoisie in general is a transitional stratum that recruits its members from both the upwardly mobile proletariat, and from bankrupted capitalists who descend first into the ranks of the petty bourgeoisie. But in South Africa, "This stratum is specifically composed of upwardly mobile individuals, drawn from the traditional or modern peasantry, or from the proletariat. None of its recruits are declassed bourgeoisie".⁵

Although Jordan does not draw any specific political implications from the class origins of the APB, these origins place the African petty bourgeoisie in a particular relationship to the African working class. Contrary to what structuralism would posit, material circumstances do shape our consciousness in particular ways. First of all, when children of the working class join the ranks of the petty bourgeoisie, it is not the family as such that becomes upwardly mobile, but the individual member; the family usually remains working class.

Given the fact that for most Africans, relationships with families are rarely cut off completely, they are constantly forced to relate to the struggles and sufferings of the working class in one way or the other. This is even more so in the case of the African petty bourgeoisie who continue to reside in the townships together with the working class. They are never insulated from the struggles of the youth, students and the working class in general. All this opens them up to be drawn into broad struggles against apartheid. Stayaways, school boycotts, rent boycotts and other such township struggles affect them directly and continually force them to take a stand. This is because either family members and/or neighbours are involved in such struggles, or by virtue of their being physically located right in the heart of those struggles. It is also this situation which creates tensions between the role of the APP's as personnel /industrial relations officers, and their being part of the wider african community in the townships.

Despite their class origins and being located within the oppressed African communities, there is a class-in-formation here, whose social circumstances and personal fortunes are very distinct from the working class. Hence they can be regarded as the "illegitimate" children of the working class, in that, whilst their social origins are working class, their own social circumstances and long-term objectives are quite distinct from those social origins.

2. The Social Circumstances of the APP's: A Class in the Making

Three major characteristics are generally applicable to the petty bourgeoisie. First of all, their place in the relations of production is such that they are neither the direct producers of surplus value nor the owners of the means of production, and in the case of the corporate petty bourgeoisie their "...major function in the social division may be described as the reproduction of capitalist culture and capitalist class relations".⁶ The second characteristic is that they start developing their own ideology, reflecting largely the concerns and dilemmas of upward mobility. The third characteristic, largely derived from above, is that their own social circumstances reflect the patterns of their own expanded reproduction. The first two characteristics will be dealt with later; and this section will focus on the latter.

TABLE 7.7
Spouses of APP's⁷

<u>Qualification/Occupation</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>%</u>
Nurses	10	34,48
Teacher/Lecturer	8	27,58
Housewife	5	17,24
Salesperson	1	3,44
Bookkeeper	1	3,44
Social Worker	1	3,44
Cultural Organizer	1	3,44
Bantu teller/Clerk	2	6,89
Total	29	100,00

A number of points can be made from the above table. It is worth noting that the personnel\industrial relations function is still heavily male-dominated, and all of the APP's from the sample were male. The first noticeable trend from the above sample is that the overwhelming majority of their spouses were clearly drawn from the ranks of the petty bourgeoisie. This is, however, not a particularly startling phenomenon as virtually all previous studies of the APB have shown that they choose spouses from the same class, thereby consolidating their membership of the petty bourgeoisie.

However, what is of particular interest from the above table is the fact that an overwhelmingly large percentage of spouses were drawn from the civil petty bourgeoisie, the largest section being nurses, followed by teachers. This is a reflection of the pattern of class reproduction of the African petty bourgeoisie in general. There were only two spouses who were drawn from the ranks of the corporate petty bourgeoisie, clearly reflecting male domination in the corporate sphere. The fact that more than half of the spouses ($\pm 65\%$) were drawn from the civil petty bourgeoisie, reflects three further aspects of the class

reproduction of the African petty bourgeoisie as a whole in South Africa. Firstly, the majority of the members of the African petty bourgeoisie belong to the civil petty bourgeoisie. Secondly, the civil petty bourgeoisie is dominated by particularly two professions: teachers and nurses (estimated at more than 70% of the entire african civil petty bourgeoisie). Thirdly, in these two professions females far outnumber males. Therefore, it would be no exaggeration (as indicated by these statistics) to say that any male member of the African petty bourgeoisie is likely to be married to either a nurse or a teacher, and in that order.

As a further assessment of the class situation of the ACPB, the questionnaire also examined the type of schools attended by their children.

TABLE 7.8
Type of Schools Attended by Children⁸

<u>Type of School</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>%</u>
Township Government School	27	62,79
Township/Missionary Private School	4	9,30
Private, "multi-racial" School	10	23,25
Other	2	4,65
Total	43	100,00

The above table captures the contradictory processes of class formation and the reproduction of an African petty bourgeoisie under apartheid. The majority of APP's send their children to African schools in the townships and\or private or church-run schools set aside for africans only. This is an indication of the fact that, despite the upward mobility of their parents, the children of the ACPB still attend school together with working class children. This factor emphasises the extent to which the African petty bourgeoisie is still socially rooted in the african working class communities, and is therefore forced, almost on a daily basis, to relate

to the working class and township struggles. The injustices and repression of apartheid echo right inside the homes of the upwardly mobile families of the African petty bourgeoisie.

In the post-1976 period there has been a steadily growing tendency for the african petty bourgeoisie to send its children to the expensive, predominantly white, but 'multi-racial' private schools. As reflected in the above table, 23,25% of the children of the APP's in the sample were in the private multi-racial schools. This is due to two factors in the post-1976 era. First of all, the exclusively white, private schools opened up to blacks as part of the liberal reformist thrust and discourse of the white ruling bloc emerging after the 1976 political upheavals. Secondly, conditions and standards in African schools have deteriorated as struggles for educational transformations continue. It is not insignificant that the second largest group of school-going children of the APP's attend these expensive private schools. This is also made possible by the fact that the African corporate petty bourgeoisie constitutes, on average, one of the highest-paid strata of the African petty bourgeoisie, and can afford to send their children to these expensive schools.

However, for the African petty bourgeoisie to send their children to these private schools is much more costly in both an economic and political sense, than it is for their white counterparts. Physically, the townships are usually located miles away from many of the schools in the white suburbs. According to one APP, sending his child to a multi-racial school meant: "I have to wake up very early to take the child to school. And sometimes this cost me time at work since the school starts shortly before I have to get to work.... Fortunately the company is sympathetic to my predicament."⁹

Politically, it causes immense political problems for the African petty bourgeoisie residing in the townships to have their children schooling outside the townships.

The most difficult time is when there are school boycotts in the townships.... As our kids are normally referred to as sell-outs, they cannot afford to be seen going to school when other (African) children are boycotting in the townships. What I normally do in such cases is to take the child out of the township before dawn, and drop her with her friends in the white suburbs, whose parents normally drive them all to school....

I also have to pick her up from there soon after dusk, so that we can reach the township when it is already dark.... This becomes a double day for me, but what can you do? ... But the worst thing is when our children are referred to as 'black-whites' (Abelungu Abamnyama), by other children in the township... but what is better is that in our area there are a number of african kids attending multi-racial schools... Some township residents are just plain jealous that our children are progressing.

The above description captures very starkly the contradictions of creating an African petty bourgeoisie in South Africa. On the one hand, class mobility brings all the benefits of a comfortable economic life, but under apartheid it forces and restricts the petty bourgeoisie to working class communities in the townships. Whilst the emergence of small, separate suburbs designated for the elite inside the townships helps to alleviate this 'problem', it does not alter the fact that those areas are still located in the highly militant townships, and literally surrounded by the working class and the militant youth. This is a perfect illustration of the extent to which attempts to create and co-opt a petty bourgeoisie are threatened by the reproduction of apartheid within the same process of class formation. This shows the extent to which co-optation under apartheid is not a smooth, unproblematic process, but is riddled with contradictions, whose acuteness sometimes threaten to undermine the very process of the creation of a petty bourgeoisie within African communities.

1. PPA Internal Membership Survey Report, 22 March 1986.
2. Kuper, 1965
3. Association for Sociology in South Africa (ASSA), 1988.
4. Nzimande, 1982
5. Jordan, 1988 p.4
6. Nzimande, 1986 p.59
7. This table reflects only those APP's who were married at the time the survey was carried out, and therefore it is not the total sample.
8. The total number does not coincide with the number of people in the sample, since some of the interviewees had more than one schooling child.
9. This quotation and subsequent ones, unless indicated otherwise, are taken from the author's interviews with APP's.

Chapter 8

Class as Lived Experience: The experiences and ideological constitution of the African personnel practitioners

Upon the different forms of property, upon the social conditions of existence, rises an entire superstructure of distinct and particularly formed sentiments, illusions, modes of thought and view of life. The entire class creates and forces them out of the corresponding social relations.¹

Although Marx made this statement in relation to the distinction between industrial capital and the landowners in France, it gives us an idea of how classes try to make sense out of their material conditions. Through our understanding of the material circumstances that shape individual and social behaviour, one can understand and explain these 'modes of thought' and 'views of life'. Put simply, people always try to consciously make sense of their everyday experiences, and consciously structure their interventions in their daily lives and circumstances. This also means that mental representations of reality can give us an insight into the reality which is being reconstructed by that representation.

The aim of this chapter is to present a social profile of African personnel practitioners, both as individuals and as a collective. This is done not simply as a psychologistic and positivist exercise where personal interviews and data are presented in such a way that they will "speak for themselves". It is undertaken on the assumption that classes are not merely 'objective' categories, but that they carry within them a baggage of subjective experiences. These subjective experiences, for a long time neglected by Marxism, can in themselves help us understand better the processes of class formation. However, by so arguing it does not mean that this subjective experience can be completely understood outside of material circumstances. As Adorno aptly observes:

The subjectively oriented analyses have their value only within the objective theory
- that is, psychological analysis is insufficient without a theory that recognizes the

psyche itself as a distillation of history.²

A presentation and analysis of the APP's experiences in the 'hidden abode' of personnel departments in South Africa's industrial corporations, is important in understanding both the politics and ideology of the ACPB. Carter also emphasises the importance of subjective experiences in class analysis quite forcefully:

No matter how internally consistent, a theory must sometime be tested against the raw experience of everyday life. The contradictions of society are nurtured in the blood, flesh and nerves of human beings.³

Whilst the sociological profile in the previous chapter clearly gives us some indications of the social nature of the emerging ACPB, it is also quite clear that the processes of class formation under apartheid and white-controlled monopoly capitalism are riddled with contradictions. It is, therefore, important to assess the social and personal effects, as well as the manifestations, of these contradictions on the African personnel practitioners directly. By so doing, we will get a better idea of the formation of the 'subjectivity' of the African corporate petty bourgeoisie. As Therborn aptly observes, "A person acts out, lives his/her personality as a subject, in different forms of subjectivity.... The forms of human subjectivity are constituted by intersections of the psychic and the social...."⁴

Before engaging the data, from which an attempt will be made to fully describe the class experiences of the APP's, it is important to engage theoretically what this section attempts to do.

Although this section relies heavily on interviews carried out with a section of APP's, its objectives must be distinguished from a mere individualistic, if not psychologistic, description and presentation of the APP's subjective experiences. Rather, the section attempts to situate the experiences of APP's within the context of their class position, both in the racial division of labour and in the wider context of the national oppression of African people in general. Therefore, it does not try to reduce the experiences of APP's to the narrow psychological processes of individual cognition or 'role psychology'. This study goes beyond the phenomenological notion that people's experiences are unproblematically the reflection of

reality, in that reality is presented within the phenomenological framework as nothing more than subjective experiences and perceptions of the world by living human beings.⁵ Phenomenological psychology usually argues that objective reality does not exist outside of its subjective perception by thinking individuals. This study also goes beyond the study of experiences normally adopted by cognitive psychologists. Dominant trends in cognitive psychology, in looking at the way individuals process information and categorise the social world, normally looks at these processes in terms of the psychology of the individual.

If the functions of categorization or inference are discussed, they will be in relation to tasks which these processes enable the individual to perceive. It is as if the individual is an isolated Robinson Crusoe, who has been yanked out of the flow of historical time.... What tends to be overlooked is the social nature and content of thought.⁶

The focus of the discussion will be on what kinds of themes and counter-themes emerge out of the everyday discourse of the APP's, in their attempts to capture and make sense of their position in South African corporations.

This section will also attempt to capture the ideological dimensions of the articulation of this experience. This approach will be informed by the fact that ideology plays a crucial role in the way it structures people's perception of their own life circumstances. Therefore, at the same time as the subjective experiences of the APP's are analysed, an attempt will also be made to specifically identify and articulate the ideological dimensions of this experience. In other words, an assessment of how both the dominant ideology and the discourses of the oppressed interpellate the APP's as subjects will be made.

Since subjects are never simply passive subjects, but they themselves are actors and shapers of their own destinies, the study will also look at how, given the different 'interpellations' that the APP's are subjected to, the APP's incorporate these 'ideological dilemmas', given the different ideological 'interpellations' to which they are subjected.⁷

The primary mechanism through which the above will be achieved is by looking at the

'function' performed by the APP's in modern South African industrial corporations. Despite the fact that the explanatory value of "function" in class analysis has been a subject of considerable controversy, it is nevertheless argued here that the functions performed by the various strata and fractions of the new petty bourgeoisie can be useful in understanding the class determination and political behaviour of this group. Evidence of this is the fact that this very grouping has been referred to as the 'new petty bourgeoisie' using "function" as the primary explanatory concept. In spite of the refusal of some class theorists to concede this point, a close examination of the most influential theorists (in particular Wright and Poulantzas) clearly shows that "function" plays a major role in the class determination of this group.

However, a distinction must be made between the way "function" is defined and the concept of "role" as normally used in social and industrial psychology/ sociology. Whilst "function" is not meant to reduce "human agency" to being unwilling victims of their class places, the conception of "function" here is radically different from "role theory" which tends to focus narrowly on personal behaviour and interpersonal relations.

1. The Experience of Job Performance

The structure of personnel departments in modern corporations

Before analysing the APP's experiences in their jobs, it is important to outline the typical structure of a personnel department of a large South African corporation.⁸ Most large companies will have various plants falling within the same overall company administrative structure. Each plant has a local personnel department, normally headed by a white personnel manager. In smaller plants the white personnel manager is normally assisted by one or two African personnel practitioners. One of the APPs is usually a 'generalist' who handles the three major components of the personnel function: training, personnel administration and industrial relations. In this type of situation the division of labour is such that the white personnel manager is responsible for overseeing the overall implementation of company personnel policy, as well as dealing with 'personnel' problems of white labour.

The APP deals with the day-to-day implementation of personnel procedures, as captured by the descriptions of tasks by one APP operating at this level:

My key performance areas are recruitment, induction, training of African employees and dealing with procedural matters in industrial relations.... As an industrial relations officer, my main functions are to make sure that all the industrial relations procedures are implemented, and deal with problems that arise from such implementation.⁹

Although many of the APP's normally deal with all of the personnel management functions, most of their time is usually spent on industrial relations:

I am not spending much time on training, and on occasions, where I have to do training, I do mainly productivity training.... My main duties are in industrial relations, where I deal with trade unions and do the processing of some of the agreements made between the company and the trade union.

In larger plants, there is usually a position of an assistant personnel manager. This position is frequently filled by young white graduates, and is mainly used as a training ground for promotion to the position of 'company personnel manager'. Another reason why the job of assistant personnel manager is usually filled by whites, is that they can deal with the day-to-day problems of white workers. Up to this day the APP's, on the whole, do not handle problems involving white workers.

One sees here a very rigid racial division of labour within the personnel department themselves. About 80% of the sample of APP's in this study operated at the plant level. Only 5% of the sample were heads of their plant personnel departments, and were also the only APP's who had whites reporting to them.

Not all of the APP's were 'generalist' personnel officers: some were specifically employed either as training or industrial relations officers.

In cases where a company has a number of plants located in different areas, there is usually a head office personnel department. These are almost exclusively headed by white personnel directors. The personnel director reports to the chief executive or managing director of a company, and normally sits on the board of directors as the direct advisor on company personnel and industrial relations policy. The personnel director normally has under him a group of "experts" in the different sub-functions of the personnel function: training, personnel administration and industrial relations.

The head office personnel department makes policy and ensures that the different plants fall within the ambit of overall company personnel policy. It also assists plant-based personnel departments with the necessary expertise where it is needed, as described by one APP working in a head office personnel department:

All the various units have local personnel departments. We are removed from the plant scene here at the head office. As you probably know, all that the head office does is to formulate policies and see to it that these policies are filtered right down through the line, and that they reach everybody.... Our role is that of professional and expert advice. We never get involved directly in the work of the local (personnel) departments, unless they have a problem and invite us to come down. For instance recently there were amendments to the rules and operation of the pension fund scheme. Because the rules were a bit confusing, we had to go to each operation and ensure that these are understood and properly explained.

Because of the growth of the labour movement in the recent past together with the crisis facing South African capitalism personnel management has come to occupy a central and strategic place in co-ordinating capital's industrial relations strategy. One also sees more and more centralisation of power at the top of the corporations, with the personnel departments taking more of the global functions of capital in the reproduction of the dominant relations of exploitation and domination. The present factory regimes in South Africa are witnessing an increasing centrality of the personnel departments in the overall hegemonic regimes of capital accumulation. It is this imperative that places the APP's on the cutting edge of the class struggle, thereby sharpening their contradictory location between capital and labour.

Their experience on the job is evidence of their contradictory location.

Simultaneous inclusion and exclusion

As alluded to above, the position of the APP's can be characterised as a contradictory location at various levels, both within the South African corporations as well within the South African social formation as a whole. The first level at which this contradictory location can be captured is that of what has been referred to by conventional industrial sociology and psychology as marginality. This perspective argues that the fact APP's are black leads to their exclusion from the core centres of power and decision-making in the white-controlled corporations. The marginality, it is argued, is reproduced very sharply even within personnel departments.

It is not untrue to say that APP's are not fully involved in the central decision-making process of personnel departments, as reported by virtually all the APP's interviewed in this study.

I am black, the business culture does not accept my black values, and I have to compromise my true feelings.... Management does not cater for black aspirations. Management is also seen as an exploiter and I have to sit on the margin.

And flowing from this:

You have to perform twice as whites do, double up because you are black, in order to prove that you are capable. You talk and you are not taken seriously.

This treatment, of course, translates into a particular form of assignments for the APP's:

I am not part of the management team that negotiates with the union. They use me as an interpreter and translator.... I hate this intensely, but unfortunately it has to be done, since I am the only person here capable of doing that. But I feel anybody can do this job. We have got translators, interpreters in courts of law. You do not need a university degree to do this.

The 'under-utilisation' of the APP's leads to a certain level of bias and frustration, since their advancement through the corporate hierarchy is slow:

It has taken me quite a long time to reach this level in this particular field, and I must admit I was about to get frustrated seeing that I am worth nothing. I got promoted, but in fact even now I believe I am worth more than what I am rated by the company. But it is about the best job so far, particularly when one looks around where other blacks are in the market place.

However, one needs to be careful about how we read and interpret this particular experience. The conventional sociological concept of marginality is limited, because it only captures one side of the job situation of the APP's. It emphasises the fact that they are excluded, and by so doing treats them as if they are outside of the institutions of hegemony within the corporations. Such a conception closes us off from analysing the way that the APP's are incorporated into the factory regimes. A one-sided view like that presented by the concept of marginality, does not fully comprehend the consequences of that particular form of inclusion of the APP's. This is what Molapo refers to as the process of simultaneous exclusion and inclusion in the primary axis on which apartheid and capitalism in South Africa has related to black people.

The... form of bourgeois domination (in South Africa) involves the constant separation, fragmentation and subordination of the black majority. Drawn into the great urban-industrial complexes, as labourers, and consumers, they are also simultaneously kept at a distance - confined by Group Areas Act to the township.... They are provided with the rudimentary cultural basics that are required by the developing forces of production, but simultaneously excluded into racially inferior, under-funded educational institutions ... It is in this constant dialectic of simultaneous inclusion and exclusion that the contradictory essence of our (society) lies. This is a contradiction within the workings of South African capitalism itself, between the social forces of production and the mode of domination....¹⁰

This particular formulation enables us to go beyond the limits of the concept of marginality, and grasp the contradictory way in which the APP's, and for that matter the entire ACPB, are incorporated into the structure of South Africa's industrial corporations. This is one level within which we can situate the contradictory location of the APP's - at the level of the simultaneous inclusion and exclusion of blacks in South Africa.

However, a distinction needs to be made between the way in which the black working class and the black petty bourgeoisie are differently and unevenly inserted into the structures of economic and political domination. The one distinct difference between the incorporation of the African working class, and, in this case, the incorporation of the APP's, is that the latter is being incorporated into the structures of control over the working class, thereby creating certain contradictions and frustrations for APP's:

I started in personnel in 1979. It's how many years now? I think it is seven, no, eight years. You know if I were white I would be a manager definitely, but because I am black I am still an IR officer, and it does not look as if I am going to get anywhere.... I can improve my qualifications, I can develop my career, but unless I move away from this organization and join another, I am stuck forever.

However, such exclusion of the APP's from more responsible positions structures their jobs in a particular way, creating distinct kinds of problems which undermine their job performance.

I do not have decision-making powers here, management take or leave what I say as they please ... Such that now, although workers know that I am a personnel officer, they simply bypass me, as they know that everything they ask for, I will have to take it up to higher authorities - my boss to be specific. I am becoming useless whilst being employed. Workers, and even white foremen, when they have problems with their workforce simply say 'Let's go straight to the personnel manager to save time', rather than to the black personnel officer.

This particular form of exclusion of the APP's leads, ironically, to their being undermined

in terms of job performance, at a time when they are acutely needed by white management for the proper functioning of their personnel departments. The APP's are also needed for the purposes of sustaining and reproducing the contemporary 'industrial relations'-based factory regimes. The reliance of white management on the APP's usually becomes more acute in times of crises.

We have once had a work stoppage. That was in 1982 when there was this threat from the government to freeze workers' pension money.... In fact I did warn management that there was a strike coming, but because the director at that particular time was unco-operative, they just ignored my warnings ... But when the strike came I was instructed to go and explain the situation to the employees that the bill was not yet passed, but was still being discussed in Parliament ... So management expected me to support them, but I made it clear to them that I cannot be a management or government spokesman to defend the bill....

Autonomy and subordination

The particular form incorporation of the APP's is a classic illustration of how their jobs are structured by their white bosses. They are subjected to control mechanisms not determined by their own judgment of the different situations the company find itself in, but mechanisms designed from above. This was a particular complaint that ran throughout the interviews and constituted the aspect they disliked most about their jobs. The most extreme case was the experience of the following APP:

At first I was happy in my job, but now all that is gone. I was originally employed by an American white manager, but he later left the company. Now my new boss is so biased, and in fact racist, that I am no longer happy.... I have no work pressure as such, because I do not have motivation anymore.... I have learnt to have no anxieties about my job because I can't get any better or worse ... Black advancement is a song. If they want to advance blacks they have to start lower down there to train the whites to accept the upward mobility of blacks.

It has been argued in chapter 6 that the most fundamental contradiction of "black

advancement" strategies is the fact that there is no physical or ideological space within which to advance Africans within the racial division of labour, hence the relatively slow increase in the number of fully-fledged African personnel managers. The growth of APP's after 1973 was largely at the level of low-ranking personnel officers working under the direct control of white personnel managers. What these experiences of the APP's clearly illustrate is the tension between the need for African personnel practitioners in the strategic design of capital and white management, and their highly controlled entry into the corporations to ensure that the process of incorporation does not go beyond certain limits.

The negative experiences and frustrations of the APP's on their jobs, however, begs the question of how do they cope with this situation. One aspect that gives the APP's happiness and less anxiety in their jobs is when the overall relationship between workers and management is, on average, 'good', and (white) management is enlightened, and prepared to deal with workers' problems.

I would say it is an interesting job provided management are using an open and enlightened management style, and managers are prepared to do their best in order to solve workers' problems ... but if you are working with managers who ... simply do not understand things, and who are not prepared to sort of help workers you are simply faced with big problems as a black personnel officer.

Although there is hardly a company where you would have "good" industrial relations, there are instances where relationships are good, either because certain specific problems have been resolved or because there have been successful negotiations. This gives the APP's the necessary boost enabling them to perform their jobs with a bit more confidence.

Not having problems at the labour-management interface, I find it quite exciting.... Successful resolution of problems makes me feel proud to be associated with the company.... If management treat employees as people, it does work. Just to make an example, in order to be precise, recently we had a record production and credit wasn't just given to management as is normally the case, but workers got recognition and received a decent salary increase, unlike the past two years where we have had

strikes during wage negotiations. In this case workers see themselves as part of the organisation, in the same way as management see themselves as part of the company. This is a relief to me, and makes my job enjoyable.

Given the fact that the 'fortunes' and anxieties of the APP's fluctuate with the state of conflict between workers and management, it is of no surprise that for most of the APP's, industrial relations sometimes become the least enjoyed part of the job.

... As you know IR at the moment is the most tricky aspect of the job which needs a lot of tolerance, because you normally have to deal with all workers' problems on the shop-floor.

The softer side of things

For many of the 'generalist' APP's, staff training seems to be the most preferred job function.

Well ... I am very much relieved to concentrate on training, and even in industrial relations, I enjoy the training side of it. These areas I like most because I came into contact with the workforce.

There are four main reasons why training is often the most exciting part of the APP's jobs. Firstly, it is not enjoyed simply because it brings them into contact with the workers as such, but because the APP's are able to relate to the workers in a non-conflictual way. It is unlike the industrial relations function where they have to sit in tough, and usually bitter, negotiation sessions, or sit in grievance and disciplinary enquiries. Secondly, performing the training function makes them feel that there is some information and knowledge they are imparting to workers:

I think I like the training part of my job a lot. I like giving people information because I believe that if I work with well-informed people, I have less problems.

Thirdly, and flowing from the above, giving workers information also provides an

opportunity for the APP's to influence workers' thinking, not necessarily towards a positive perception of the company, but to create a positive climate between themselves and workers. This is also underpinned by the APP's beliefs that many of the workers' actions arise out of lack of information on the part of the workers:

... a lot of problems in industry today come from people who get very little or no information, people that assume things will go this way or that way, and things should always go in their favour....

Sometimes there are strong feelings among APP's that workers are in some instances being misled or misinformed by trade unions:

At the moment a lot of workers have joined unions with wrong impressions. They have been told they will be assisted and helped when they are faced with arrogant employers. But it's unfortunate that workers have been misinformed. As a result they are unable to deal with management since they do not have the right kind of knowledge and information about management and how companies work ... Now the workers only listen to the unions, and I wish employer groups, particularly personnel practitioners, could have enough information to give to worker groups ... It's too late to reverse this situation now since workers accept very little from us.

It seems that like doing training gives the APP's an opportunity to "influence" workers and correct this "misinformation".

Fourthly, training gives APP's the rare instances in their jobs where they can satisfy both management and workers at the same time. "Training" allows the APP's to fulfill their "obligations" to white management, and be seen to be doing their jobs. At the same time it gives them satisfaction to "give something" to the workers, without necessarily being seen to be management agents.

(In training session) you are dealing with people, training them, giving them knowledge and skills, and also solving their problems. Workers like this because it

improves their own performance and chances of promotion.

The other enjoyable aspect of APP's work is what is referred to as "counselling" workers. This normally involves advising workers about their personal (family) problems, or dealing with misunderstandings and problems arising out of work relations.

This is the aspect of my job I enjoy most, and I regard it as my key performance area. I like it very much since I am also qualified as a social worker, as I normally enjoy working with people. I was thinking that I would practice as a social worker ... helping people to help themselves. I like it very much.

Between the hammer and the anvil

The behaviour of the APP's is firmly underpinned by racial domination under apartheid. The position of the APP's is characterised by tensions since, as part of the nationally oppressed black community, the APP's feel uncomfortable about working in white corporations and under the instructions of white management. The APP's are also particularly aware that they are regarded with suspicion by black workers and in some instances even regarded as sell-outs:

They (workers) think I am for the interests of whites. There is a stigma attached to our jobs, because whites have exploited and robbed black people and workers for a long time. So anyone who works closely with management is not trusted, and is labelled a sell-out.

However, APP's regard such labelling as being rejected and no longer considered as black by the workers and the community at large.:

Other black people perceived you as a "white-black person", who is no longer authentically black.

And according to another APP:

Workers refer to us as "o Ndabazabelungu" (dealing with white affairs)
instead of "o Ndabazabantu" (dealing with black affairs).

On the other hand, in order to keep their jobs and secure their own class reproduction, the APP's have got to perform their jobs to the satisfaction of their white bosses and the white-owned corporations. White management always wants to assert its authority over APP's, and ensure that they are "kept within certain bounds". Over and above this, the relationship between APP's and white management is not simply a boss-subordinate relationship, but a black-white relationship as well, where white authority, if not superiority, is always forcefully asserted:

Your white partner or boss tends to be against you in the midst of other white colleagues - even though you had received his assurance about your actions. It can be very embarrassing. The aim is always to prove to other whites that blacks do not have the ability. What is worse is that most of our white counterparts are in their positions not because of their educational background, but ordinary experience. If you show interest in improving yourself educationally, you become a threat, and the threat is always diffused by always aiming at proving you wrong in front of other whites. Afterwards he (the white boss) says "don't worry about the way I reacted in the meeting, its part of your development".

This captures the extent to which the APP's are treated with suspicion by the workers and the African community at large without at the same time being fully accepted by white management. This situation heightens the contradictions and problems faced by the APP's in the racial division of labour. In proving their "loyalty" and usefulness to their white bosses, they are further alienated from the black working class. With the increasing intensity of worker and community struggles, their position and even their personal security have become more precarious.

It is this contradictory location between white capital and black labour which constitutes the core of the APP's lived experiences. The the next two sections examine the relationship between the APP's on the one hand, and white management and black workers on the other

hand, in a bit more detail.

2. African Personnel Practitioners Experience of, and Relations with, White Management

Whilst chapter 6 examined the wider relationships between the African and the white corporate petty bourgeoisie, this section will deal specifically with the relationships within personnel departments. It will focus on two aspects: firstly, the relationship between APP's and their white colleagues, both in the personnel departments and in line management; secondly, the relationship between the APP's and their white bosses.

a) Relationship with Colleagues

APP's normally have to deal with two types of colleagues on a day-to-day basis inside the factories, viz. white line (production) management and other white personnel practitioners. The former relationship must be understood within the context of the relationship between the personnel department and line management. Personnel Management is usually defined by its practitioners as follows:

Personnel work focuses on the human side of the enterprise. It normally includes such responsibilities as examining present and future needs of employees, as well as their recruitment and placement, orientation and development ... Basically, personnel is concerned with the matching of people to the job to achieve the organization's goals.¹¹

The personnel function is located outside the direct line of production, but forms an essential part of the immediate process of production in that it ensures a smooth incorporation of workers into the production and labour processes. In South African industrial organisations personnel officers are meant to service the white foremen who, with the help of black supervisors, are directly in charge of African workers on the production line. The personnel

managers operate at the level of the production managers and engineers who are in charge of the entire production process.

Whilst the relationship between African personnel officers and white foremen is supposed to be an 'equal' relationship, in many instances white foremen relate to African personnel officers as if they (APP's) were their subordinates.

The factory foremen are very cheeky. The fact that we recruit workers for them, and sit in grievance and disciplinary hearings, they treat us as their servants. But they don't do this to white personnel officers. It is very frustrating.

The relationship between the APP's and the white foremen or white production management is also underpinned by racism. The white foremen and production managers are more often than not drawn from the ranks of the conservative white working class - mainly artisans - who do not think much of a 'black skin':

I must remind you that these white foremen are the people who are the loyal supporters of the National Party, and even the ultra-right wing parties in South Africa. The way that they treat blacks on the shop floor is sometimes unbelievable, and their attitude towards me as a black person is a reflection of their treatment of blacks in general.

However, because the APP's have been around for quite some time, the white foremen

...are slowly learning how to work and live with us, and perhaps I should say to tolerate us. Nowadays they are also trained in behavioural and management skills. It is much better now, than the frustration of being pushed around by these 'Std. 3 whites'..

Regarding the attitudes of the APP's towards white foremen, the last statement reveals both a reaction based on the racial tension between the two groups, as well as a class-based response where white foremen are "... the uneducated whites who have been looked after by

the civilised labour policy and job reservation. Surely if they were black they would be beggars in the streets". The white foremen, in fact, constitute the core that is undermining the liberal capitalist project of "black advancement" and the creation of a collaborative African corporate petty bourgeoisie. Their behaviour, as captured in the interviews with APP's, reflects the extent to which the APP's themselves might be seen by this group as a threat to white hegemony within South Africa's capitalist enterprises. As a result they try to keep their 'empires' inside the factories intact, and do not allow the personnel departments to interfere too much in the way they run their affairs. Foremen only want the personnel departments to be invited by them to deal with the issues that they can't handle, such as union-related matters.

To a certain extent the relationship between the APP's and the foremen reflect this tension. There are still many white foremen who still see the personnel department as 'helping' the shop stewards and the unions to run the show:

White foremen feel that we, in the personnel department, introduced all these industrial relations procedures that have given the workers and the unions the right to do as they like. They complain that they can no longer fire the workers as they saw fit, and the shop stewards have become workers' lawyers who challenge every single thing that the foremen do.¹²

This relationship constitutes one of the dynamics of the personnel function in the contemporary period of heightened class struggle.

The other revealing relationship is that between the APP's and those white colleagues who operate at a relatively similar level. The nature of the relationship can be described as one of tension and mistrust. This is caused by two factors. First, the young white personnel practitioners who join the personnel departments are usually employed at a level slightly above that of the APP's, as evidenced by the experience of one APP in his previous company:

I joined that company seven years ago. When I arrived there the personnel

department was still very small, and in fact I can say I started it from scratch. At that time I reported directly to the factory manager, who usually dealt with IR issues at the level of negotiating with the liaison committee. Three years later the company employed a white colleague, at a time when we were negotiating with a union for a recognition agreement. This was a young man who was fresh from the army and I taught him all the work. But when we signed the recognition agreement with the union he was made the senior personnel officer, and sat with management as part of the negotiating team. I continued as an interpreter. Although both of us at that time were still reporting to the factory manager, I was later told that I should report to him directly on IR matters. A year later he was made a full personnel manager, and I had to report to him ... I resented this so much that within the following eight months I had found another job, and I resigned.

The above scenario is, in fact, characteristic of the experiences of many black workers, where newly-employed white workers who they taught the job rise faster than them, and sometimes even become their bosses later.¹³

For the APP's, their white colleagues are a source of bitterness because of their distinctly different path of upward mobility. Through the rapid upward mobility of young white personnel practitioners, the APP's come to understand better their own life chances within industrial corporations.

I started in personnel in 1968, close to twenty years now. Although I have risen quite high in the ranks, white people who started way after me, some of them are managing directors of large firms today. Others are personnel directors. My boss at the moment started in personnel about five years after me. Simply because he is white, he is my boss today.

What seems to be even more painful to the APP's is the fact that even non-South African whites have much better chances of upward mobility.

The white guy who is the assistant personnel manager here, came from Zimbabwe in

1982, running away from Mugabe. He only had matric and had never worked before. He came here with only one pair of torn tennis shoes, with no money, but today he drives a company car. He found me already here, and I taught him the very basic concepts of personnel management, how to organise and file personnel records, how to fill in a requisition form, but today he tells me what to do and how to do it. He is the one who is saying, now, that black culture does not prepare us to operate at a managerial level, the very same "black culture" which taught him personnel management. Worse, he is not even a South African citizen.

In order to cope with this situation, APP's seem to be relying increasingly on acquiring more educational qualifications, in an attempt to improve their life chances.

The manner of approach is very bad, so I have to update myself educationally all the time to be able to cope with them.

And this seems to set and reinforce a whole process where:

We as black personnel practitioners have got to be doubly qualified than our white colleagues in order to improve our chances for upward mobility. Our whole existence here is such that we have got to continually compensate for the colour of our skin ... Improving one's self in competition with whites who tend to have things easier is a life-time occupation in itself.

Despite the above accounts, there seem to be other obstacles for the APP's in their competition with white personnel practitioners.

It is really frustrating ... because, at the same time, educational qualifications without the necessary on-the-job experience is meaningless. These whites turn around and call you an academic, continually emphasising that you have to unlearn a lot of what you did at university in order to be effective in the real world of corporations ... These whites just break you by not giving you the necessary experience and exposure, and you are finished.

Other APP's seem to think it is necessary to study the behaviour of whites in order to be successful.

You have to study these whites very closely in order to live with them and outwit them. Sometimes I even feel I must know what they like, understand cricket, rugby perhaps. We have to understand the rules of the game as played by whites ... we are in white organisations after all.

Yet at the same time, trying to imitate whites in order to improve their life chances creates other tensions for the APP's.

I am black, the business culture doesn't accept my black values, I have to compromise my true self and values ... it is like betraying yourself.

Trying to 'imitate' whites does not only reproduce itself as an 'internal' ideological or psychological dilemma; its dangers sometimes go even wider.

It is really frustrating, they are pulling you away from your own people, from your own community, but when you are up there in the management hierarchy, you get rejected by (white) management.

And

... workers and people from the black community as a whole then become justified to call you "Umlungu-omnyama" (a white-washed black).

The corporate environment is characterised by acute competitiveness, as people vie for positions, power, prestige and, of course, all the financial benefits that accompany upward mobility. This behaviour is reinforced by capital itself, where rewards are based on the extent to which management is able to extract as much as possible out of the working class. This competition takes the form of a competition between individuals. However, this competitiveness takes a particular form within service functions like personnel management,

marketing, public relations and so on, mainly because the contribution of these functions to the profitability of firms cannot be measured in the same way as line production functions. There is also a tendency in times of recession for capital to look at pruning the "soft" functions, of which the personnel department is one. This heightens the competitiveness, as the functionaries in such departments always try to "prove" their contribution to the company's balance sheet in one way or the other.

The APP's, therefore, become caught in a vicious circle. Attempts to enhance their own competitiveness in the corporations, infer the need to assimilate the dominant corporate culture, but the "black community" weighs heavily on their minds. This is not just a psychological phenomenon, but rather is rooted in the material existence of an oppressed black community where the costs of being seen to be collaborating are too high, either due to the internalisation of the "demands" of the black community or due to the reality of the existence of those pressures. This tension, stripped of its particular form of manifestation, reflects the articulation of class and race in the class formation of an African petty bourgeoisie. It reflects the contradictory relationship of class mobility within the context of national oppression. It is this particular relationship that economic and reductionist analyses of the African petty bourgeoisie fail to help us to understand.

The tensions and contradictions of the class formation and reproduction of the ACPB become clearly articulated when one also considers the relationship between the APP's and their white bosses.

b) Relationship with White Bosses: "We are Managers Who Happen to be Black"

The jobs of APP's are structured and closely controlled, with variations of course, by white middle management. Control over the entire labour process in contemporary factory regimes in South Africa effectively remains in the hands of white managers. Only a few APP's, usually the more senior ones, feel that they have freedom to do their jobs as they see fit.

Although it took me a long time to be accepted in my career as a black personnel

officer, now my boss and other top executives respect me. I am in charge of the entire IR function within the company. I have fully demonstrated my credentials.... I am now a full member of the management team that normally negotiate with the unions, and in some issues I become the chief negotiator for the company.

This, however, represented no more than 8% of the sample of APP's in this study. The situation of the average APP's is closely controlled by white middle management and, in many cases, under very paternalistic relations, as described by a white boss of an APP.

You try and set the guy job objectives, and I do that. I will directly get involved in his job performance depending on how the guy is progressing. You have to judge the situation, such that you do not interfere in the guy's performance of the job.¹⁴

This 'involvement' seems to invariably translate itself into lack of, or lower level, decision-making, a frequent complaint of APP's:

To start with ... they never get you involved in making decisions, and because of this I normally do not come forward with my ideas in meetings and management workshops. Then they turn around and say that I am not competent or creative enough.

This situation seems to lead to a relationship of dependency, whereby APP's find themselves being forced to continually check with their bosses.

I sort of check with my manager now and again on how things are going, and on how am I doing. I always ask him if he is still happy with what I am doing, and where he is not happy he must say so immediately.

The contradictory aspect about this arrangement is that, while one of the most important reasons why Africans are employed as personnel practitioners is to facilitate the "understanding" (for purposes of control and subordination) of African workers, APP's rarely

have the freedom to interact with workers in an independent fashion. Because white management is the group charged with the responsibility of design and overall management of personnel and industrial relations systems, APP's are therefore restricted. However, the fact that white management relies on the APP's for control of workers, and at the same time wants to control their sphere of operation, captures two contradictions inherent in the relationship. The first one is that of the contradictions inherent in workers' control in an apartheid society, where, because of the 'social distance' between blacks and whites (language, race, socialisation), it becomes necessary to employ blacks to control other blacks. The second contradiction is that, in order to give APP's legitimacy, they must be seen to be operating independently of 'whites', and yet white management is responsible for the total reproduction of the relations of exploitation and domination, as aptly captured by one APP.

Management expects you to be a sort of mediator between them and the workers, but at the same time when they experience problems they expect you to act strictly within the confines of company policy, which they dictate to you.

These tensions seem to reflect another aspect of the contradictory location of APP's in the white industrial corporations. White management, on the one hand, expects the APP's to operate strictly within the context of company industrial relations strategy and policy, hence the extent of control over their performance areas. On the other hand, the 'pressures from below' makes the APP's too uncomfortable, particularly if they are seen to be closely aligned to white management's thinking and strategies. White management, whilst understanding pressures facing APP's in this regard, is very clear about the place of APP's in relation to the working class.

I don't think black guys experience the same pressures as white management regarding production issues. I have not seen a black manager in the production line, where the pressures really are. However, I think their pressures really come from the townships during the times of strikes and stayaways. Since strikes and stayaways are nowadays more political and less work-related, they really become pressurised to conform. I really do pity them in this regard. It shows that they really have to behave in two conflicting ways. But the company expects them to behave like

managers, since they are not part of the workforce. Union members are a specific and distinct group of people from our black managers.¹⁵

This is the "price" that APP's, and, for that matter, the entire African corporate petty bourgeoisie has to pay for their upward mobility in the midst of racially structured exploitation and national oppression.

The relationship of APP's to their white bosses - whose primary characteristic is that of subordination and control - generates tensions reflected in a simultaneous internalisation of, and resentment towards, the dominant (white) corporate ideology and practices. This particular tension is not necessarily specific to the lived experience of the APP's, but is characteristic of the 'adult (worker) personality' under capitalism:

... the ideology of production of a gendered class subject involves for the individual a number of psychological mechanisms whereby the imperatives of the social order are internalized to a greater or lesser degree ... and (simultaneously) the consequent resistance of the individual to dominant forces.¹⁶

However, for the APP's the simultaneous articulation of internalisation and resistance assumes a particular form within the racial division of labour in apartheid South Africa. As shown above, the APP's deeply resent their subordination to the dictates of white corporate management. They attribute this subordination to the fact of being black in a white-dominated corporate and social world. At the same time, in their attempts to deal with this racial oppression, the APP's assert their identity as managers and treat their blackness as secondary.

The root of the problems is that we are treated as blacks before we are managers. The problems will remain until whites realize the fact that we are managers just like any other managers, whether black, yellow or red ... Truly speaking we should not be treated as black managers, but as managers who happen to be black.

The discourse of APP's towards their white bosses is that of putting more emphasis on their

class position, and, in this instance, 'denying' that blackness should cause them to be treated differently. However, their particular discourse incorporates within it a very strong identification with the dominant capitalist culture of the corporate world, which they know will prepare them for success.

Our major task is to produce quality managers with the necessary cognitive skills to negotiate the mine-fields in the corporate world.... We are not just about degree or diploma certificates - but about a rounded-off person, men and women of stature and high quality.... We are talking about women and men who can stand their ground anywhere in the world. People who can manage effectively within a very hostile environment.¹⁷

Sometimes this determination to succeed even causes those African managers climbing up the corporate ladder to deny the very existence of racism in their companies.

"At (Company A) we service customers not colour and there has been no negative reaction at all (to his promotion - BN).¹⁸

And another successful black manager is unusually more praising of his company:

... may I state if anything my appointment is yet another indication that something is really brewing at the (SA) Breweries.¹⁹

However, as demonstrated in earlier sections of this chapter, despite this very identification with the goals and objectives of their companies, there is still deep-seated resentment at the control and subordination exercised by white bosses over black managers in general. This particular tension, as will be demonstrated in the last chapter, is also characteristic of the professional organisations representing the interests of the African corporate petty bourgeoisie, such as the Black Management Forum (BMF). This does not necessarily reflect a contradiction necessarily, but is rather an expression of the contradictory articulation of class and race in the lived experience of APP's and the ACPB as a whole.

The contradictory location of the APP's and its concurrent ideological dilemmas is manifested in all its dimensions in the relationship between the APP's and the black, particularly African, working class.

3. "We are Black Managers, Part of the Black Community": African Personnel Practitioners, and the Black Working Class

The personnel function in the post-1973 era

Before engaging the finer articulations and experiences of the APP's in relation to workers, it is important to situate this relationship historically. The relationship between workers and the APP's can best be understood within the context of the development of the personnel function in the post-1973 era, and particularly its professionalisation in recent times.

?

Since World War II, South Africa has experienced a growth in the social sciences. The discipline that developed the closest relationship with capital has been industrial psychology. As pointed out in the previous chapter, the services of industrial psychology to capital were delivered primarily through the work of the National Institute of Personnel Research (NIPR). The NIPR, which until the early 1970's was headed by the most eminent industrial psychologist in the country, Dr. Simon Biesheuvel, performed various tasks for capital ranging from 'psychological testing' to 'motivating workers' and 'productivity and incentive schemes'. Given the racial division of labour and the national oppression of Africans in particular, the NIPR, right from its inception, developed a 'psychology of racial differences'. This thrust of the NIPR had earlier been spelt out by Biesheuvel himself in his book, African Intelligence, published in 1941. His motivation for writing the book was to set guidelines for the "... dispassionate and scientific study of the problem of race differences ... which was to occur as an exercise of both reason and of humanity in the complex racial affairs of South Africa".²⁰ This was to constitute the basic thrust of industrial psychological research in South Africa, which was essentially the 'scienticisation' and rationalization of capitalist exploitation and apartheid. The period between 1948 and 1972 saw the strengthening of the relationship between capital and the NIPR as well as the triumph of 'Biesheuvelian psychology' - the alliance between industrial psychological research on the one hand, and

capital and apartheid on the other hand. This period was also a victorious one for capital in its continuing search for the subjugation of the social sciences to the interests of capital accumulation.

The 1973 strikes and the ensuing crisis of control marked an end to industrial psychology practiced from 'outside' the immediate process of production. (The NIPR was an outside agency, not located within the corporations' own internal structures). Up until this time the personnel function had been largely an administrative function. The response by capital to the 1973 strikes heralded a shift away from a simple pre-occupation with questions of recruitment and training. Capital started to seriously address the question of industrial relations, albeit in a rudimentary way at this stage. The 1973 strikes, as argued earlier, called forth new initiatives and strategies from capital. Such initiatives were aimed at beginning an accommodation of some of the aspirations of the African working class. This shift threw industrial psychology into a state of crisis. Since industrial psychology had been primarily concerned with questions of recruitment, testing and productivity schemes, it was incapable of guiding capital in the handling of conflict with the workers. For instance, until 1977, not a single article on 'industrial relations' or 'industrial conflict' appeared on the pages of *Psychologia Africana* - an NIPR journal. This journal was the major industrial psychology journal in the country at the time. Fullagar argues that one reason for the neglect of industrial relations by industrial psychology was that the discipline (and its applications) had always tended to identify itself with 'managerial psychology', due to the fact that "... right from its beginnings, industrial psychology was under some form of obligation to management to promote the industrial efficiency of the individual workers".²¹ Fullagar further points out that

One of the outcomes of this sponsorship was that ... it also restricted the scope of the discipline to management defined problems. Business sponsors were not interested in research on labour-management relations when these could be controlled using the traditional managerial approaches. As a result, industrial psychologists have cornered themselves into a position where, as representatives and an embodiment of managerial ideology, they cannot investigate the issues of industrial relations as so-called 'objective social scientists'.²²

Capital, in its attempts to regain control over the profoundly shaken relations of power within the factory in the post-1973 era, opted to develop and strengthen their internal personnel departments rather than calling on the inept industrial psychologists for assistance. Personnel departments grew faster than any other 'staff' functions in South African industry after 1973.²³

The period immediately after 1973 was one of fundamental crisis for Biesheuvelian psychology. This crisis - which also heralded the ascendancy of personnel management in the modern factory regimes - manifested itself in the dispute between industrial psychology and personnel management, a battle for legitimacy in the eyes of capital. Not surprisingly, Professor Langenhoven, at this time an important figure in South African psychology and personnel management, acted as a 'broker' - essentially arguing that both industrial psychology and personnel management had a role to play in the management of labour.²⁴ It was also a period marked by an intensification of the push for statutory registration of industrial psychologists - a goal achieved in 1974. Whilst the registration of industrial psychologists could be seen as the culmination of the improved image of industrial psychologists as 'selectors' and 'psychological testers' of industrial labour in the 1950's and 1960's, it could also be seen as an attempt to improve its flagging status with capital. Ironically, legal recognition and regulation of industrial psychologists marked both their climax and the beginning of their decline within capitalist enterprises in South Africa. Many of the functions performed by industrial psychologists in the 1950's and 1960's were systematised and incorporated into the growing personnel practice. Now industrial psychologists were being used in a different way - as personnel practitioners; statistics indicate that about 90% of industrial psychologists are employed in the private sector as personnel practitioners and not as industrial psychologists.²⁵

The personnel function was born out of the intensification of workers' struggles inside and outside the factories. South Africa is no exception to this general rule characteristic of the circumstances under which personnel management is born in capitalist countries. Times of crisis provide the ideal conditions under which personnel management flourishes. In the mid-1970's in South Africa, personnel practitioners were fast asserting themselves as the 'professional handlers' of labour relations and labour problems. The way personnel

management defined itself, particularly also in relation to industrial psychology, is informative of the general development of personnel management at this time. The following distinction, articulated by an industrial psychologist employed as a personnel practitioner, was to become the standard discourse and an indication of the thrust of personnel management.

The personnel manager is having to deal with issues on an integrated, multi-disciplinary basis, using concepts and knowledge from a range of fields.... The industrial psychologist tends to be more of a specialist, unless he attempts to ensure his general development.²⁶

Two particular developments are captured in this definition. Firstly, personnel management became the form through which social science knowledge was to be incorporated into capital accumulation. Secondly, industrial psychology was being effectively relegated to the status of a subdiscipline of personnel management.

What is ironical about the development of the personnel function is that whilst it was born out of crisis, its development moved towards professionalisation as a means of dealing with its own internal tensions. If 1973 was the year of crisis for industrial psychology, it was also a year of the ascendancy of the personnel function onto the centre-stage of industrial conflict, thereby sharpening its own internal contradictions. The contradictions within South African personnel management came to a 'boiling point' with the student uprisings of 1976, precipitating an unprecedented crisis of legitimacy within the function.²⁷ This crisis is best captured in the following extract from a keynote address at the 1977 IPM National Convention held at the Rand Afrikaans University:

The Soweto riots (sic!) and removal of squatters at Modderdam are no longer static events to be conceptualized from the print of a newspaper. The great disparity in national affluence, the potential for violence and disorder have been seen by many of us, and we have had to integrate new experiences and develop a new perspective.... Political regimes around us have changed and will continue to change.... If then there is one major mission for resolution of conflicts ... we can no longer afford to

live with passive workers, nor can we risk unrest, turnovers or absenteeism. Industrial relations becomes a philosophy of management: the system calls for a major integration into our whole personnel function.... There has emerged among the Black people, moreover, a new breed of leaders who are tough, outspoken, and aware of their strength. We in business will come to terms with them.... The question then ... which I would like to set you is simply this: What ideology can we offer to the dispossessed in our land? I do not believe such an ideology will emerge with ease and without pain. Historical forces will work through the fabric of our society. And our success will depend on our ability to learn, and to start afresh, even though the conflict around us will touch our most violent political emotions. This is the self-sufficiency we have to discover in ourselves.²⁸

The subsequent escalation of industrial conflict was far beyond the capacity of management to handle it. This was compounded by the fact that South African management had always relied on either direct state repression or their own authoritarian methods in dealing with workers' resistance. The 1970's were calling forth new 'softer' approaches to deal with industrial conflict. The methods of the old factory regimes were fast becoming obsolete, and were reeling under the rapid growth of democratic trade unions in the 1970's.

There are two notable responses by capital toward labour and labour control in the post-1976 period. The first one was the placement of more pressure on the state to recognise African trade unions, albeit as an alternative means of control, rather than liberalisation per se. This was to lead to the appointment of the Wiehahn Commission and the subsequent acceptance of most of its major recommendations by the government. The other potential avenue for the resolution of conflict appeared (to personnel practitioners) to lie in professionalisation of the personnel management function.²⁹ The Institute of Personnel Management set up its own commission of enquiry in 1977, under Professor H.P. Langenhoven, to investigate this possibility. The reasons for exploring professionalisation were captured by the 1980/81 President of the IPM, thus:

We started thinking about the concept of professional recognition in late 1976, early 1977. It was obvious that, at that time, personnel was beginning to move towards the

centre stage.... Today personnel has become very much involved in Industrial Relations.... In 1977 we could foresee this kind of development taking place. We were concerned about whether the personnel manager was ready to adopt that sort of "starring role" in management.... We did not believe that the level of competence in personnel practice was as high as it should be in order to meet the challenges rising over the horizon.³⁰

The aims of this investigation and the subsequent recommendations capture the real essence and thrust of personnel management in the late 1970's into the early 1980's:

A profession is among other things characterized by highly specialized intellectual services to mankind ... Professionalization can promote the professional training and conduct of the members of a profession. In South Africa the engineering and accountancy professions ... have already been professionalized. Only the personnel management function is not yet served by a recognized profession. The question is why this is so?³¹

Although the discourse on the professionalization of the personnel function focused largely on ensuring ethics, the content of those ethics went beyond the simple behaviour of individual members to an attempt to establish 'rules' for mediating industrial conflict. It was hoped that professionalisation would help personnel management to acquire the neutral (professional) image so crucial in propagating ideology and managing discontent. For personnel practitioners, professionalisation would (hopefully) sunder them, in part, from the major sources of political and economic hegemony within the factory.³² Professionalisation would also help establish their legitimacy in the eyes of the working class by stressing 'autonomy', thus directing attention "...away from the ways in which they (professionals) themselves feature in the larger structures of capitalist power and organisation. They lead us, in fact, to overlook the ways in which the professions as concentrations of middle class culture have become generators of ideology which legitimates the operation of social order in society".³³

Professionalisation of the personnel function progressed in line with the deepening crisis facing South Africa's white ruling establishment. This deepening crisis also sharpened the

contradictions facing the APP's in particular ways, and they increasingly sought refuge in the professionalisation of personnel management as one of the methods of coping with their contradictory location. However, the gradual move towards seeking refuge through professionalisation must also be understood within the context of the changing nature of the relationship between workers and APP's from the late 1960's to the present. The twenty year period of the existence of APP's can be periodised into four distinct - albeit overlapping - phases. An understanding of these phases is crucial in situating the current relationships between the APP's and black workers.

The relationship in its historical context

The first period of the existence of the APP's is that between the latter half of the 1960's and 1973. This was the period of the emergence of the APP's. Although the APP's were originally employed to set up the bureaucratic mechanism and the modernisation of labour control, they inherited many of the induna functions, as well as the climate within which izinduna operated. They came into an environment where workers were docile and still 'habituated' to patronage and policing by izinduna. In many instances the APP's were seen as the modern, educated izinduna who were to be some kind of white man's ear amongst the workers. However, a particular characteristic of the relationship between workers and APP's was that there was a gulf between them and the workers, largely a 'class' one, in the sense that the APP's were a modern educated elite who did not understand the workers as well as izinduna.

One of the major disadvantages of the African personnel officer was that he did not stay, eat and socialize with the workers at the hostels.... I could see that workers were unsure of him, not trusting him as they did with me ... He was an estranged man.³⁴

This is an illustration of the fact that izinduna were drawn from the ranks of the working class, whilst the APP's were a new petty bourgeoisie.

For the APP's themselves it was an uncertain environment, one in which they thought izinduna had done a lot of damage.

I had to undo all that had gone before me. I had to start establishing a new, more professional relationship with workers, where things had to be done formally, without favouritism. But it was very difficult to create this climate because the workers themselves were so used to izindunas' behaviour".³⁵

The weak position of the working class at this time, that is, before the emergence of the democratic labour movement, was fully exploited by the APP's, in that they rejected only those aspects that were clearly unacceptable to the new factory regimes, but kept those things which benefited them. The one distinct thing was the fact that APP's continued to take bribes, like izinduna before them, to offer jobs to workers. The practice seems to have flourished even more at this time as unemployment began to bite, coupled with the tightening of influx control laws in the 1960's. The APP's started developing relationships with some officials at the labour bureaux who also benefited from what was to develop into a standard practice: for workers to "buy" themselves into jobs.

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The second phase of the evolving relationship between workers and APP's took place between 1973 and 1979. This phase was characterised by the dramatic growth of the APP's, employed primarily to set up the communication structures in response to the 1973 wave of strikes. Similarly it was a period of the growth of the democratic trade unions. This period witnesses the beginnings of the questioning of the representivity of APP's of workers interests. It is a period of dual representation of workers interests, albeit essentially by what are still management or management-controlled structures. Liaison and works committees were set up as structures for pseudo-representation of workers' interests. However, the role of APP's was still distinctly one of acting as a communicating channel between workers and management. This was done either directly by having workers raising their concerns through the personnel departments or indirectly within the context of the role played by APP's in the liaison committees. Initially there was essentially no conflict between these dual communicating structures, since it was the personnel department that played the key role in the proper functioning of liaison and works committees. The unity of these structures was concretely expressed through the role of APP's as interpreters and translators in the meetings of the liaison committees.

However, this period was a very fluid one in the history of South African society as a whole. It was also characterised by rapid developments in both the labour and the political spheres. The first characteristic of this period was the rapid rise and growth of the black consciousness movement, capturing the minds of the oppressed. However, after 1976, black consciousness witnessed a rapid decline and also failed to organise workers, largely because it saw itself purely in terms of uniting blacks on the question of racial exploitation and oppression, with a rather ambiguous stance towards class exploitation.³⁶ This was largely due to its tendency to equate class with race. It was also unable to translate this mass psychological mobilisation into coherent structures.³⁷

This period was also characterised by a dramatic change in the profile of the African working class. According to Sitas, there was now a younger, if not new, working class, whose 'childhood of experience' was radically different from the older generation of the 1950's.³⁸ The workers of this period were decidedly the children of apartheid. According to Webster, most union members in the Durban area were between thirty and forty-nine years of age.³⁹ Sitas captures the distinction between the old and new generation of workers and some of the implications of these distinctions for the struggles that were to take place later:

Prior to 1976, what for the parents became a need to invest in the future, to invest in their children's future and education, became the new melting pot: The school. It was from here that the new generation began its political education to explode into the factories. The rise of Black Consciousness in the late 1960's and early 1970's was a catalyst.... Simultaneously pupils read the future of their lives as wage labourers with disdain.⁴⁰

The rise of black consciousness and the experiences of younger workers within this political conscientisation, were to play a crucial role in laying the basis for labour militancy in the late 1970's and early 1980's. One of Sitas' worker informants reflects on this experience:

Black power was amazing. I wish I could stay at school longer. To be part of it longer. I was just a piccanin when I started working - as a caddy, then in a furniture shop then in (metal).... 'Power' said 'look, black man you better fight for (your) rights'.⁴¹

FORD
PEASANT
PROBLE

The politicisation and organisation of the working class was to be greatly assisted by the political explosion of 1976. It quickly transcended black consciousness and grew into the non-racial labour movement. Despite these developments during this period, it was a period of contestations during which the old factory regime was trying to survive the birth of the new one. In a number of factories, as indicated earlier, the induna system was trying to hold out in the face of new forms of division of labour and management control. The induna system was also being assaulted by the new shop stewards, with management trying out liaison and works committees as a last ditch attempt to assert and protect old forms of control and managing discontent. In the post-1976 period, events began to move decisively towards the final demise of the works and liaison committees, with workers' confidence in their own organisations growing apace. At the same time, according to Sitas, these were the "lean years" for the African working class, when trade unions were growing but under the most difficult and trying conditions. It was no wonder that the foremost fear of most workers during this period was arbitrary dismissal for trade union activity.⁴² In a survey of union membership among african workers by Webster in 1975, he found that 44% of the workers gave intimidation from employers as the major reason for not joining the union, despite the fact that they knew that the union could help them solve their problems. One worker sums up this period thus:

They (workers) fear employers who always give an impression that the unions are dangerous and adventurous bodies and threaten to dismiss anyone who joins the union. They have fear of the police. The police consider the union as the same thing with the Congress (ANC) because it fights against oppression.... Many believe there can be informers within the union membership which at a later stage can lead to some ill information oozing out to the police or management, leading to arrests.⁴³

For workers, this was confirmed by the arrests and bannings of many union activists and organisers in the 1970's.

Within the above context the APP's attempted to assert themselves as 'representatives' of the workers. However, the period after 1976 began to undermine 'representation' as the basis for the legitimacy of the APP's. This was an outcome not only of the growing strength of

organised labour, but also of the growing contradictions sharpened by the resurgence of community struggles to which the APP's were forced to relate. It is not surprising then, that the Black Management Forum was formed in 1978 in direct response to the dangers of increasing isolation facing the ACPB in particular; this will be fully demonstrated in the final chapter. The APP's were also beginning to explore new ways of responding and relating to the post-1976 labour and community struggles, with professionalisation being one of the most attractive routes.

The third period of the relationship between the APP's and African workers is that between 1979 and 1983/4. The recognition and subsequent growth of the African trade union movement marks a fundamental break of this period from the earlier one. These developments heralded a new era of industrial relations in South Africa, where workers finally asserted themselves and took their representation into their own hands.

The growth of the labour movement also heralded the era of true collective bargaining in South Africa, where employers had to negotiate directly with workers through their own organisations, thereby tasting the raw power of African trade unionism. Management could no longer rely solely on the apartheid state, but needed to manage conflict through new structures. Any pretence on the part of the APP's that they were representing the interests of workers were quickly smashed, throwing them into a different role, that of true 'managers of discontent'.

The above developments threw APP's into a situation where they had to re-examine their roles. The sharpening contradictions led to an attempt in 1981 by the APP's to form an organisation of their own. In their very first meetings it became clear what their problems were. On the one hand, because of racism, they were not accepted as part of white management, and they saw the Institute of Personnel Management as not catering for their needs. They felt that, although there was a need for a professional association representing the interests of personnel practitioners, the Institute of Personnel Management did not cater for their specific needs as blacks.⁴⁴ On the other hand, the APP's were concerned about their lack of contribution to the wider (black) society, and their failure to take a clear stand

with regard to broader (political) issues; more specifically, they felt that they had no protection whatsoever from the pressure by trade unions and workers.⁴⁵

During this period APP's largely attributed their problems to the fact that their status as professionals was questionable. This issue was to occupy them for most part of this period. Consequently their energies at this point in time were internally directed at securing their own positions through equipping themselves with the necessary skills and improving their professional standing. The attempts at improving the image of the APP's is best captured by a meeting of the Black Personnel Contact Group (BPCG) formed in Durban in 1982, where there was intense and sometimes acrimonious debate on the need for APP's to stop the practice of accepting bribes for giving jobs to workers ("Ukugwazisa").⁴⁶ It was agreed that this practice was the single major obstacle to the development of a professional image for APP's. It was no surprise that when this group formed themselves into the Personnel Practitioners Association (PPA) in 1983, the issue of the code of ethics was highly emphasised. Their attempt at professionalisation was, on the one hand, directed at racial discrimination, as captured by the Contact Group's Statement of Beliefs:

The Black Personnel and Training Practitioners ... declare that, conscious of their experiences, they dedicate themselves to practice the Personnel and Training profession within the ambit of non-racialism.... People are born equal in terms of ability and capacity to develop themselves and their environment, irrespective of colour, race, sex, creed or religion.... People need to be given an equal opportunity to develop these innate abilities.⁴⁷

However, greater attention was focused on the streamlining the relationship with African workers.

The structure of personnel departments must be clear and acceptable. (We must be) tactful and diplomatic. If invited by a Union to a mass meeting assess possible dangers/implications of attending or not attending.... To always keep lines of communication between ourselves and Unions open (during peace or 'war').⁴⁸

It was professionalisation that the APP's saw as their 'salvation' during this period.

Through professionalisation, they hoped that they could mediate in the conflict between labour and capital in such a way that they would not be seen to be favouring any one side. Although they were employed as part of management, the APP's felt that this did not mean that they could not perform a neutral role. This attitude also signified a break with the previous period where they still saw themselves as 'representing' workers' interests by virtue of their being part of the wider African community. However, professionalisation was to be on their own terms and not those of their white bosses as articulated by the IPM. Distancing themselves from the IPM also served two other purposes. The first one was to try to improve their capacity to reproduce themselves by creating an independent platform to push for their upward mobility. The second one was to improve their image among black workers. We cannot explain this stance in conspiratorial terms as a 'ploy' on the part of the APP's, but it captures their material circumstances in South African industry as well as their subjective experiencing of this situation. It was, therefore, a response to their contradictory location between capital and labour.

The fourth period in the development of the relationship between APP's and African workers is from 1983 to the present. This period was set into motion by the unprecedented mass mobilisation and workers' struggles of the 1983-1986 period. A number of significant developments took place during this period. The first one was the formation of the UDF in 1983, largely as a response to the emerging localised township struggles. This was followed by the formation of COSATU in December 1985. COSATU, right at its inception, took the workers struggles onto the centre stage of wider political struggles. If the earlier period had sharpened the contradictions facing the APP's only inside the factories, the formation of COSATU and its own brand of politics sharpened those contradictions at the community level as well. The alliance between the UDF and COSATU raised very sharply the question of class alliances and the place of the APB in relation to these struggles. The growing confidence of the African workers not only inside the factories, but in the wider political struggles as well, meant that the APP's were forced to take a stand in relation to the struggles waged by the mass democratic movement (MDM), giving birth to a new set of relations between workers and the APP's inside the factories.

Janus faced or Corporate guerilla's?

These developments had a number of outcomes for the relationship between African workers and the APP's. Firstly, the APP's, both as individuals and as a collective, came dangerously close to being made 'redundant' in their roles as mediators. According to African shop stewards.

We are very aware that the APP's work on behalf of management, although they are supposed to be solving workers problems. They side with employers most of the time, and if we bring our problems to them, it's like we are disturbing them from their normal duties. In our company the African personnel practitioner sits with the directors in meetings to plan for us. After these meetings he comes back with bad news almost all the time.⁴⁹

The APP's themselves are increasingly aware of their isolation, and this constitutes a major problem for them.

African workers see us as "black-white" persons ... There are also misconceptions as well, such that at times we are perceived as informers for white management. Workers expect you to take part in community issues.

Whilst the basis for this suspicion of APP's by workers is rooted in their function that is basically reflecting "... the anti-thesis between the labourers, as the direct producer, and the owner of the means of production", they sometimes dismiss these as misconceptions.⁵⁰

Workers are suspicious because of their lack of knowledge about the role of a manager. They see you as somebody who should always be sympathetic towards them; disregarding or overlooking your own managerial role. For example in a disciplinary hearing he expects you to plead on his behalf - even if he is glaringly wrong.⁵¹

The second outcome of the developments of the mid-1980's on APP-worker relations, was the drastic change in the function of APP's within the division of labour. Whilst the very early APP's, up to at least the late 1970's, could claim to be central in management-worker

communication, that role was effectively replaced by the trade unions; workers questioned even the very need for the existence of APP's under current factory regimes.

For us we think the future of APP's is very bleak since they are powerless and unions are now representing us. To give an example, sometimes you go to the personnel office, say to ask for a special leave arrangement. Sometimes they just do not even try to take the matter up, they refuse. Even if they take it up they come with a negative answer. But when you take the matter to the shop steward, and one gets a quicker and positive response. Then you wonder what these guys are there for.⁵²

This powerlessness of the APP's is related to a number of factors. Some of them are:

- (i) their subordinate status in the management hierarchy;
- (ii) the growing strength of worker organisations;
- (iii) their diminishing power vis-a-vis the hiring, placement and representation of labour.

Thirdly, the relationship between APP's and workers became more politicised along class lines. The APP's were being increasingly assessed by workers in terms of their role in the mass struggles taking place in the townships.

The future of APP's is very bleak as the liberation struggle intensifies. Many of them isolate themselves from the struggles in the townships. They stay inside their houses with big concrete fences. Even if you are his neighbour, it becomes very difficult to pay him a visit since he has isolated himself. Even when he leaves his house, he drives through the township in his car. All this makes it extremely difficult to make even a distant informal relationship.⁵³

Another shop steward also emphasised the same point:

To us it looks like they are living high up there, as a different class. I believe that even if you are a 'high class' - a personnel officer, it is important for him to greet workers and ask how they are doing. Even if he goes past a group of workers either in the morning or during lunch breaks he hardly talks to them. Even where these personnel officers know that a particular department has, say, a stubborn white foreman, they would hardly talk to workers about these problems. The shop stewards are the only people genuinely interested in resolving our problems.⁵⁴

If professionalisation was aimed at improving the image of APP's and the personnel function as a whole, it only succeeded in streamlining and enhancing the bureaucratic role of the personnel function. It was proving to be inadequate in improving the nature of the APP's relationship with workers. Professionalisation could go some way in addressing the contradictory location of APP's within factory relations by ensuring that the personnel function was thoroughly professionalised, but given the increasing militancy of the black working class, it did not do so.

It was this tension between the APP's function within the factory and their being part of an oppressed African community which was heightened by the upsurge of mass struggles. The overtly political direction of COSATU, interestingly enough, put the question of class alliances within the oppressed at the top of the political agenda in the post-1986 period. This direction of the working class combined with the fact that despite class differences Africans are a nationally oppressed group, gave the relationship between APP's and workers its particular character in the contemporary period. Whilst their relationship can be characterised as one of suspicion and tension, it is definitely not an antagonistic one. The relationship is captured by shop stewards thus:

Having expressed our reservations and problems about APP's, we should however emphasise that we should not throw the baby out with the bath water. We are aware that APP's are employees of our companies just as we are. We also know that they work within certain company rules and procedures which they have to follow, otherwise they will be fired just as workers are fired. There are a few of them who have told us what management thinking and strategies are on particular issues, and

they also understand problems of exploitation and oppression more than their white counterparts. So we cannot dismiss them entirely, they are our people in white corporations. Sometimes we think we must make more use of them in our battles with management. It is our task to try and organise these people to become part of our political struggle. We think that as long as they do their work without being management spies, we should leave them alone.⁵⁵

The above response captures two particular dynamics of APP-worker relations in the contemporary period. Firstly, this relationship cannot be unproblematically collapsed into a class relation; one should also understand the national content of the relationship. Secondly, the attitude of the workers reflects their growing confidence in handling both factory and wider political problems. This attitude, of course, does not mean that workers are not aware of the class practices of the APP's and the potential for them to align themselves with the structures of oppression.

It is also the reality of national oppression that makes the APP's go beyond their 'professionalism' to emphasise their blackness in their dealings with African workers:

We are all blacks. Legally we suffer from the same restrictions: economically, we are standing on the pavements watching the mainstream go by: socially, even the 'cocktail set' still go back to the ghettos.⁵⁶

The emphasis even becomes greater when dealing with the tensions they have with African workers.

Workers have to understand our positions. Although we are managers in these white corporations, we are still treated as blacks and excluded from the running of these corporations. We are therefore not just managers but black managers, and we are part and parcel of the black community.⁵⁷

According to the BMF, black managers are not merely managers; their role is part of the wider struggle for liberation:

To say that we are sell-outs is very inappropriate. It is necessary that blacks be represented at all levels of the South African economy. By being there in the midst of white managers in the corporations, is also our contribution to the struggle. In essence we are no different from guerilla's fighting on the South African borders. We are also corporate guerilla's, fighting the war right inside the corporations. The only difference is that we use other means and a different terrain.⁵⁸

The 'materiality' and reality of national oppression for APP's does not mean that it cannot be used by them to further their own class-based projects. However, what is being highlighted here is the fact that we should separate the materiality of national oppression for the APB from its use by the very same class to further its own goals. The economic reductionist conceptualisation of this issue is that the APB simply uses national oppression as a ploy for advancing their class interests; it forgets to highlight the materiality of this oppression. This leads to two very serious analytical and political errors. Firstly, it implies that the APB, by virtue of being a petty bourgeoisie, is no longer oppressed as part of the African masses. Secondly, it leads to a failure to understand the significance of the materiality of national oppression in the class politics of the APB, and therefore deprives us of a thorough understanding of this class. Of course, members of the APB do exploit their being part of the nationally oppressed majority to try to assert their own class projects in the national liberation struggle, and no less so with the APP's within the factories.

Black workers should respect us and understand that promotion of more and more black managers is a step forward for the Black nation in South Africa. They should not believe in all that trade unions tell them about us, because it can be misleading.

In conclusion, it is important to state that the lived experience of the APP's captures the fundamental tensions faced by the ACPB in South Africa. The central dilemma facing the APP's is how to secure their class reproduction, through upward mobility, without being alienated from the struggles below. Their capacity to reproduce themselves depends, on the one hand, on the behaviour of the white corporate petty bourgeoisie, and on the other hand, on the ACPB's ability to 'sell' its class mobility to the 'masses from below'. The class mobility of the APP's and their ability to perform their functions is largely influenced by the

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fact that they are still socially rooted in the African working class communities, while the terrain upon which they are reproduced embodies within it the oppression and exploitation of the majority of the African population - the African working class. This is the source of their contradictory class location under apartheid, as reflected in their own lived experience discussed above.

1. Marx, 1963, p.47
2. Lasch (in Jacoby, 1975)
3. Carter, 1979 p.102
4. Therborn, 1980 p.16
5. See Duesenberry University studies on Phenomenology, as one strand of this reasoning (Giorgi, et al, 1973). This method of analysing human behaviour normally uses the concept of 'experiencing' as an expression of human behaviour, and through which one can understand the world. Though useful, this concept is usually stripped of the materialist basis of perception, and does not directly engage the important role played by ideology in the formation of the 'subject'.
6. Billig et al, 1988 p.2
7. The concept of 'ideological dilemmas' is taken from Billig et al and is explained thus: 'In analyzing the ideological representation of dilemmas in modern consciousness, we are not viewing individual thinkers as blindly following the dictates of ideological schemata. We see them thinking, but within the constraints of ideology and with the elements of ideology. Thus ideologies in everyday life should not be equated with the concealment, or prevention, of thought. Also, in a real sense ideologies shape what people actually do think about, and permit the possibility of thought'. (p.26)
8. This description is largely based on the author's own personal experiences working in a personnel department between 1982 and 1984, supplemented by the interviews referred to below.
9. Unless otherwise specified, these quotes are taken from the author's interviews with APP's.
10. Molapo, 1988 p.69 - emphasis in original.
11. Glueck, in Nzimande, 1986 p.10
12. PD interview, op cit.
13. Nzimande, 1981
14. Interview with a white manager, taken from Campbell, 1988.
15. Campbell, op cit
16. Leonard, 1984 pp 191-192
17. BMF President in Black Leader, June 1989 p.7

18. Interview in ibid, p.10
19. ibid, p.11
20. McCaul, 1983 p.51
21. Fullagar, 1984 p.97
22. ibid
23. Nzimande, 1986
24. ibid
25. Nzimande, 1988
26. van Eeden, D Address to the PPA meeting 27/8/83
27. Nzimande, 1986
28. Cortis, 1977 in Nzimande, 1986 pp.51-52
29. Nzimande, 1986
30. Whyte, G, "Professional Registration of Personnel Practitioners" undated booklet (probably released in 1981).
31. ibid
32. Nzimande, 1986
33. Esland, 1980 p.219
34. Induna interview, op cit
35. APP interview, op cit
36. Sitas, 1986
37. Nzimande and Zulu, 1986
38. Sitas, op cit
39. Webster, 1979
40. Sitas, op cit p.9
41. ibid, p.13
42. Webster, 1979
43. in Webster, 1979 pp.25-26
44. Minutes of the Black Personnel Contact Group, 19/9/81
45. Minutes of the Black Personnel Contact Group, 25/8/81

46. BPCG Minutes, 27/3/82
47. Report of the Personnel Contact Group, 21/5/83
48. ibid
49. Author's interview with Food and Allied Workers Union shop stewards in the Southern Natal region, June 1988.
50. Marx, in Poulantzas, 1978 p.226
51. APP interview, op cit
52. Interview with FAWU shopstewards, op cit
53. ibid.
54. ibid
55. ibid
56. In Nzimande, 1986
57. APP interview, op cit
58. This quotation is taken from an unpublished report of a survey undertaken by the Department of Industrial Psychology at the Umlazi Campus of the University of Zululand in October, 1989. This was part of a survey of black managers, including an examination of the political attitudes and perceptions of black managers in South Africa.

Chapter 9

Race, Class and the Politics of the African corporate petty bourgeoisie

It has been observed by Wolpe, amongst others, that it is difficult to present a coherent picture of the political and ideological positions of the new African petty bourgeoisie. Firstly, the different fractions that make up this class do not exhibit any coherence in political and ideological outlook. Secondly, organisations which explicitly express its political and ideological outlook are not well established.¹ This is even more so of the African corporate petty bourgeoisie in South Africa. Additional reasons for this difficulty include the following:

- i. It is still a relatively small, albeit growing, and new stratum of the African petty bourgeoisie.
- ii. It controls very few resources through which it can intervene with a bigger impact in the wider political scene. This lack of a powerful resource base is due to their very subordinate position under the white corporate petty bourgeoisie. Unlike, for instance, the bureaucratic petty bourgeoisie, which wields a lot of power because of its control over the bantustan and township apparatuses of the apartheid state, the ACPB is highly controlled by its white counterparts. The state of subordination and relative weakness of the ACPB, has ironically, 'protected' this stratum from the most contested arenas of class struggle. Interestingly enough though, the workers themselves do realise the powerlessness of the ACPB within South Africa's corporations, as demonstrated in Chapter 8.
- iii. The ACPB has been located in the relatively 'insulated' arena of South Africa's industrial corporations, with a noticeable organisational absence in the wider community struggles.
- iv. The ACPB's relationship to the working class is primarily on an individual basis in the various factories. In other words, the conflict that sometimes takes place between members of this class and the workers, takes the form of, for example,

workers' dissatisfaction with a particular personnel officer in a particular firm. Such interaction and occasional conflicts have not translated into a generalised collective confrontation between the ACPB and the working class or sections of the mass democratic movement. This is one very crucial distinction between the bureaucratic petty bourgeoisie and the ACPB with regard to mass struggles.

v. The contradictory location of the ACPB between capital and labour, under conditions where race is integrally linked with class and national oppression, also makes for incoherence.

Consequently, the ACPB has been less politically active than the other strata of the African petty bourgeoisie.

It is, however, important to first raise a methodological issue with regard to the study and analysis of the political behaviour of the African petty bourgeoisie. In undertaking this task, a distinction must be made between the political utterances of this class, as might be reflected in its public statements and journals, and its actual political behaviour. Sarakinsky makes a very serious analytical error in his study of the African traders, in that he relies almost exclusively on the statements of this class about itself as a basis for understanding its politics. As one must distinguish between the intentions and the reality of the actions of the white ruling bloc, as argued and demonstrated in chapter 6, we must do the same with regard to the African petty bourgeoisie. Sarakinsky tends to treat the utterances and rhetorical intentions of the African traders as the reflection of the totality of the politics of this class. Whilst the pronouncements of a class are important starting points for understanding its political behaviour, they are incomplete, and one should go beyond them to examine the actual political behaviour of the class. Sometimes this may be reflected in its own statements, but in other instances, and for a variety of reasons, the latter may actually conflict with the former.

Vilas, although analysing the situation of the Nicaraguan bourgeoisie on the eve of the overthrow of Somoza, warns us about the behaviour of the petty bourgeoisie under conditions of revolutionary upsurge. He points out that the petty bourgeoisie:

...tends to give its struggle a much more belligerent and decisive character - even

though an analysis of its pronouncements and direct actions shows a moderate tone in both its ends and its focus.²

Vilas also criticises academic analyses of the Sandinista revolution in Nicaragua precisely on its problematic understanding of the politics of the Latin American petty or non-monopoly bourgeoisie. He highlights an error similar to that being committed by some South African academic analysts in analysing the petty bourgeoisie: that of taking the politics and ideology of the petty bourgeoisie in a particular period, and characterising it as the (unchanging) essence of this class. Vilas makes the important point that

...the contrast of the collective actions adopted by these bourgeois fractions and lack of understanding, together with their fear or insecurity, inclined the bourgeoisie to experience their actions as if they were extremely bold.³

This tendency is also clearly observed in the work of Sarakinsky, where he relies almost completely on the statements of the National African Federated Chamber of Commerce (NAFCOC) to tell us about the politics of this class in general.⁴

Although this chapter will also be using documents and pronouncements of the ACPB in analysing its politics, an attempt will be made to situate such pronouncements against two very important contextual approaches. The first one is to continually evaluate such pronouncements against the actual political behaviour of the class. Secondly, such pronouncements will be situated within the context of the rapidly changing conjuncture in contemporary South Africa.

The purpose of this chapter is to conclude this study as a whole by carrying out a close analysis of the political behaviour of the ACPB in contemporary South African struggles. This is done in order to complete the analyses in the earlier chapters, from whose results one can begin to both assess and infer the politics of this stratum of the APB. Of course the best place from which to proceed in analysing the politics and ideology of this stratum is by looking at their own (professional) organisations. Therefore, this chapter will start by undertaking a very brief history of the two most important organisations of the ACPB - the Personnel Practitioners Association (PPA), and the Black Management Forum. This will be followed by an in-depth analysis of the behaviour of this class from various dimensions. These dimensions are largely derived from a biographical survey done on the PPA,

supplemented by the results of an internal study done by the PPA itself, and in-depth individual oral interviews. The results of this survey form an important, though not the only, basis upon which the entire analysis of the politics and the ideological constitution of the class can be grounded. The chapter will end by undertaking a critique of a variety of theoretical formulations and debates on the politics of the African petty bourgeoisie, particularly those discussed in Chapter 2. Although the focus will still be the ACPB, in the last section of the chapter the behaviour of this class will be situated within the context of the behaviour of the APB as a whole in South Africa.

1. The organisations of the African corporate petty bourgeoisie in historical perspective.

It would be incomplete, if not incorrect, to analyse the politics of the ACPB only in terms of the demands of the situation within which this stratum finds itself, without looking at its own responses and interventions.⁵ Harry Braverman, the regenerator of labour process studies in recent times, has been criticised precisely for his tendency to restrict the class analysis of managers to a functional study of internal organisational structure and processes. Thus Salaman points out that

...position within the division of labour and differences in location within the authority system of the enterprise, represent an important basis of class structuration. But the influence of these factors is greatly increased when they are allied to extra-organizational factors affecting the class of these groups.⁶

The same question arises when one is dealing with the APP's and the ACPB as a whole.

The history of the PPA will be examined first, particularly its role in the class politics of the African corporate petty bourgeoisie in South Africa. The PPA's origins can be traced back to the 1970's. In 1970 the first organisation of African personnel practitioners was formed, and it was called the Non-European Personnel, Training and Development Association of South Africa (NEPTDASA).⁷ This association was formally launched in January 1971 after a group of African personnel practitioners had attended a recently-introduced diploma course in personnel management at the University of Fort Hare. This course was especially

designed for the newly emerged APP's. It was a short course, at which

A group of African personnel practitioners got an opportunity to be together for the first time. During this course, we shared our experiences as blacks in the personnel departments of South African organisations. We came up with the idea of forming this association after realising the common nature of our problems, as well as the fact that the IPM catered mainly for the interests of the white personnel managers.⁸

Although NEPTDASA was a very small organisation, in 1972 a few liberal members of both the white IPM and the South African Society for Training of Development (SASTD), became worried about the existence of an organisation that catered for the interests of Africans only. Both organisations tried very hard to lure this association into their own fold. Members of NEPTDASA resisted this, largely because

It was only a very tiny minority of enlightened members of these organisations who were worried about the existence of a separate black group. Otherwise the rest of the membership was conservative, and the way these organisations were structured, the way they functioned, did not cater for the specific needs and problems of black personnel practitioners.⁹

Thus NEPTDASA continued in its original form, as an exclusively African organisation.

However, in 1973, the organisation was formalised with a proper constitution, and it changed its name to the Personnel Management Association (PMA). Although it was still a small and weak organisation, it was tremendously strengthened by the increased employment of more APP's in the aftermath of the 1973 strikes. The PMA was launched as a national organisation, with branches in three regions - Natal (mainly Durban), the Eastern Cape and the Witwatersrand. This was an inevitable development, given the fact that it was these regions that represented the most industrially developed parts of South Africa. Because of the growth of the numbers of the PMA, "... the IPM came back very strongly to court us into their own ranks." And at this stage the IPM used new tactics in order to convince the PMA to amalgamate with it.

I will never forget the meeting we held with the IPM on 8 March 1975, where we

were negotiating about the possibility of amalgamation. The IPM told us that it has now become a multi-racial organisation, and of course we told them that we were not multi-racial, but non-racial. And the negotiations broke down on that day. The IPM, however, never stopped trying to get us into their ranks, because it was politically embarrassing to some of those white liberals to have a separate black organisation. I think they were also concerned about their international affiliations, particularly if they were seen to be a 'whites only' organisation. In 1976 they co-opted one of our executive members in Jo'burg, and they gave him a portfolio in their organisation.¹⁰

In 1977 some of the key Transvaal members defected to the IPM, and they declared the PMA dissolved

...through some manoeuvres to get the backing of the East London and Durban branches, who were always strongly opposed to amalgamation with the IPM. These branches accepted the dissolution, not being fully aware that the dissolution meant amalgamating with the IPM.¹¹

Between 1977 and 1980, there was a little interest by the APP's in organising themselves as a separate group. But there was always very bitter opposition from Natal APP's to the IPM, which was still seen by the APP's as catering only for the needs of white personnel practitioners.

In 1980, a meeting was convened by the former members of the PMA in Durban. At this meeting it was decided that an organisation catering for the needs of APP's must be formed. This was also a response to the growing labour movement and the resurgence of mass struggles, which made the APP's particularly vulnerable. There were three major concerns of the APP's at that time. Firstly, that the IPM did not cater for the peculiar needs of blacks. Secondly, the newly qualified APP's were not benefitting from the experience of the (black) 'old hands'. Thirdly, and perhaps most significantly, the APP's saw themselves as not having any protection from pressures emanating from both the employers and the workers, as well as other, possibly white, practitioners in South African corporations.¹² Underpinning all this was a concern about their own opportunities for advancement within

the corporations. For instance, the proposal to revive a structure representing the interests of the APP's emphasized the fact that APP's were not recognised as professionals, and that they were not gainfully employed, as manifested by the widely reported window-dressing in those jobs occupied by the ACPB.¹³

In the early 1980's a 'Black Personnel Contact Group' was formalised, to work towards a constitution and the formation of a new organisation representing the interests of the APP's.¹⁴ Renamed the Personnel Practitioners Association (PPA), the Contact Group was formally launched in Pietermaritzburg in 1984.¹⁵ Although the initial consultation for the formation of such a group was national, it effectively became a Natal-based group when it was launched; its entire membership was found in the Durban/Pinetown, Natal Midlands, South Coast and North Coast regions. Although the association described itself as non-racial, the PPA was exclusively an African organisation.

The history of the PPA was a very rocky one. It effectively collapsed in 1988, although it was not formally declared so. The issues that were taken up by the PPA, since its days as the Contact Group primarily revolved around three issues. These were its own reproduction as a fraction of the ACPB in South African corporations; its relationship with the militant labour movement; and its role in the community. These issues will later be examined more closely as part of an attempt to articulate the politics and ideology of the ACPB as a whole.

A brief history of the BMF will also be undertaken, as it come to be the major organisation representing both the political and professional interests of the ACPB in contemporary South Africa. Whilst it can be argued that African corporate managers were more or less spectators to their own genesis, they have now begun to respond proactively to their situation. The BMF was founded in 1976 as an association "to encourage and assist members of the Black community to develop effective management skills".¹⁶ The BMF's objective of management development was at this time catered for by the (white dominated) Manpower Management Foundation (MMF) and various other professional associations like the Institute of Personnel Management (IPM). At its formation the BMF was quick to point out its differences with other organisations that had similar objectives:

The truth of the matter is that existing businessmen's clubs and foundations were initially brought into being solely to advance and protect the career interests of White managers.¹⁷

Although the BMF was still very small and weak at the time of registration as a 'company not for gain' in 1981, it took its inspiration from the achievements of the Afrikaner manager after a long period of suppression by the English:

Some forty or fifty years ago the emergent Afrikaner businessman found himself at the threshold of real management. European and British management kept him at the door because they considered him immature for the cut-and-thrust game of management. They were not questioning his ability to manage. In essence it was his upbringing, his attitudes and his expectations that they were not so sure about. They could not trust his background.... Today, the Black manager is standing outside the same door. Afrikaner and other white managers are asking the same questions about him.¹⁸

The BMF saw itself as the organisation to deliver the African managers into the core of South African corporations.

The formation of the BMF was firmly rooted in the emergence of black advancement within South African corporations in the immediate post-1976 period. It was also a product of the intensifying struggles that started in 1976. In other words the formation of the BMF incorporated two immediate objectives: the training of African managers, and the provision of guidance in their dealings with the wider issues affecting the black community.

The aim of the BMF is to serve the mutual needs of the black community, on the one hand, and those of business management on the other. It is a black initiative that seeks to place black managers on an equal footing with managers from other backgrounds.¹⁹

When the BMF was formed it defined itself as a strictly non-political organisation that was

concerned purely with the progress of its members within the corporations.²⁰ However, since its formation it has undergone some significant political shifts, as it will become clearer below. It has also grown in numbers quite significantly, and by 1988 it claimed a membership of 1 000.

Before discussing the specific political outlook of the ACPB it is important to highlight some of the aspects of the relationship between the BMF and PPA. Contrary to what one might expect, the relationship between the two organisations has been one of tension and sometimes open hostility; up to the collapse of the PPA there was neither a working relationship nor common forums between the two. The tension between the two derived firstly from the regional location of these organisation at the time of their formation. The PPA, which was Natal based, saw the BMF as a Reef-based organisation that was trying to impose itself over the already organised APP's in Natal. The second area of tension revolved around the PPA's perception of the BMF as an elitist organisation which was trying to imitate white managers in its attempts to become an organisation representing aspirant African managers:

We did not like the style of the BMF. It was a very elitist organisation that was bound to remove the black manager even further away from the black masses. It was trying to make black managers to imitate whites as a means of improving their members' own status among white managers. I do not think we should sell our souls to whites by dumping our own African culture. There is also too close a relationship between the white corporations and the BMF, they are being sponsored and 'molly-coddled' by big business. To be quite honest we are suspicious of the intentions of the BMF.²¹

The concern that the PPA had about the close relationship between the white corporations and the BMF, was based on the fact that the BMF had corporate sponsorship. For instance, in 1984 and 1985 the BMF used Mobil-owned premises as its head office without paying any rent, as well as a photocopier and office furniture owned by the Mobil company. This had a value of about R34 600 per annum.²² Furthermore, the BMF received a donation of R50 000 from Burroughs Machines in July 1985, and the first edition of its magazine, The Black Leader, was made possible by a donation of R2 000 from Coca-Cola.²³

The PPA itself, whilst it was still the Contact Group, was very cautious about the sources of its own money, and actually took a decision not to acquire any assets for some time to come.²⁴ These differences between the BMF and the PPA were largely a reflection of the social composition of the membership of these two organisations. The essence of this difference was that the BMF tended to attract more senior African managers than the PPA. The latter tended to draw very junior African managers, and in a few instances even personnel clerks. In this way the BMF set itself on a course of becoming a prestigious organisation no less glamorous than the professional management organisations of their white bosses. For instance, in 1987 the BMF introduced what has become one of the most prestigious awards in black management circles, the BMF/Kellog's Excellence In Achievement Award.²⁵ This was one of capital's direct contributions to the strengthening of the growing ACPB. As the managing director of Kellog's said at the introduction of this award, "For the first time in South Africa, the black professional who excels, will receive recognition that has been long overdue".²⁶

Whilst the ties between capital and the BMF were growing and getting stronger, the PPA on the other hand was involved in a 'life and death' struggle with the IPM. This was over the issue of the establishment of statutory professional registration for all personnel practitioners. It is important to discuss this issue to further clarify the differences between the PPA and the BMF, as well as a means to further understand the politics of the ACPB.

In 1981, the Institute of Personnel Management (IPM), released a draft register of the personnel practitioners in South Africa, under a board of professional practice. The establishment of such a board was "against the background of the South African situation, the problems which are experienced and changes which are taking place in the field of labour...."²⁷ As pointed out in chapter 8, this initiative was taken in direct response to the growth of the black labour movement, particularly after its legalisation following the acceptance of the recommendations of the Wiehahn Commission by the apartheid state. The objectives of the board were, inter alia:

- a) to control all matters affecting the standard professional conduct of persons in

personnel practice who are registered under the charter;

b) to promote the standard of training of persons in personnel practice, and to recognise training which qualifies persons for registration under this Charter....²⁸

The proposed register distinguished between personnel practitioners - people who had qualifications and experience of operating at middle to top management levels in personnel - and personnel technicians who were operating at junior management or personnel officer level. In effect, the overwhelming majority of people registered in each category were going to be white and black respectively. It was this particular state of affairs that saw the PPA mounting a tremendous amount of resistance to the idea of professional registration of personnel practitioners. Although the APP's saw professional registration as important in that it "...would improve and enhance the status of the personnel practitioner as well as the personnel practice both within and outside the organisation", they had serious reservations about the manner of registration.²⁹

The PPA had two major concerns about the registration of personnel practitioners, and both of them were related to the question of the reproduction of the APP's own positions in South African corporations. The first concern was that the board was a closed shop which was introduced at a time "...when a large number of blacks are just entering the personnel practice". The second, and perhaps more serious concern was that

It is unfortunate that the grade stratification suggested by the Board is similar to the departments in organisations where practitioners (Personnel Managers) are white and technicians (Personnel Officers) are black.³⁰

Further to the concerns about the entrenchment of the subordinate status of Africans in the corporations' personnel departments, was that the establishment of the board marked collusion between the white corporate petty bourgeoisie, on the one hand, and the state and capital on the other hand. The protestations of the APP's led to a series of meetings between members of the Board and PPA to negotiate a solution to this issue.

Since the days of NEPTDASA the IPM was very careful not to exclude the APP's in its designs, and the memoranda on registration tried to address some of the fears of the APP's:

This formalisation of the profession will not restrict the Black Personnel Practitioner at all.... A large number of our IPM students are Black.... We will not operate in closed shop in any way. An older Black practitioner, who might not have had the facilities available to him to qualify when he entered the personnel profession, is still going to continue to function in exactly the same way that he has in the past.³¹

The conflict over the question of registration was in fact another terrain upon which the 'struggle' between APP's and their white colleagues and bosses was being fought. The PPA ultimately lost because of its lack of resources to fight this issue. In addition, the PPA did not have the means to stop some of its members registering privately with the Board so as not to be excluded from some of the benefits of registration. Some of these benefits included enhancing the chances of employment in senior positions and internal promotion.

The struggles waged by the PPA against white management were virtually absent on the side of the BMF. The differences between the two organisations were not insignificant; for a long time they weakened the Durban branch of the BMF, which was not able to take off for a number of years. The difficulties of the BMF in establishing a branch in Durban in particular, are highlighted by the following report compiled by the then convener of the BMF in Durban:

Durban is a difficult area to organise ... there seems to be a serious historical problem ... In Durban, there is at this stage an organisation known as the Personnel Practitioners Association ... When the PPA was being formed, there was a Black delegation from Johannesburg which was there to put heads together with the Durbanites on the question of Black IPM membership. No success entertained these talks and PPA was an association totally divorced from IPM. The current effort to form a BMF branch in Durban co-incide with the formation of PPA, and a time when there is a lot of politicking in Black management circles. The question of the Johannesburg base of BMF once again became controversial and the void in Durban had been closed by the formation of PPA. BMF was criticised as an elitist Black group which has failed to achieve anything. The use of the term "Black" in the organisation's name was questioned.³²

This document captures the essence of the differences between the two organisations. Another area of importance highlighted by this report is the fact that since the 'sell-out' by Johannesburg based members of the forerunner of the PPA, the PMA, the members of PPA became very suspicious of Johannesburg based black professional organisations, and saw them as in cahoots with the white bosses. The BMF made another serious mistake in inviting African managers in Durban to a BMF meeting, at a 'problematic venue' as further captured by the report:

We, the protagonists of BMF have made the mistake of convening meetings at an MMF venue and when we realised that mistake we went on to convene meetings as BMF meetings when there was no BMF branch in Durban and when we should have requested the audience of PPA.³³

The tensions and suspicions, particularly on the side of PPA, continued to grow in the mid-1980's, as revealed by PPA's own internal survey. When the PPA membership was asked what relationship they should have with the BMF, 22% of PPA members felt that there should be no relationship whatsoever with the BMF; 17% felt they needed to know more about the BMF; 13% said there should be a 'brotherly' relationship; and only 4% said that a firm relationship should be established. Forty-four percent of the members were either suspicious or preferred to maintain a distant and critical relationship. Some of their responses included: "Establish a relationship if necessary"; "Loose, distant and cool"; "Persuasive and educative"; "Don't alienate, rather make PPA stand known"; and "Share views on Black Advancement".³⁴

However, it must to be said that the stance taken by the PPA towards the BMF was not due to a radical political discourse on the part of the former, but was rather a reflection of the fear of pressure from the workers and the wider community on the part of the PPA, particularly if it was seen to be too closely associated with the white establishment. As will be shown below, the core of the PPA remained no less conservative than that of the BMF, although there was a much more visible strand of radicalism on the fringes of the PPA than in the BMF.

Ironically, it was the reluctance of PPA to seek financial assistance from white corporations and other sources within the white ruling bloc that created the conditions for its demise in 1988. It was unable to meet the development needs and aspirations of its membership, an area in which the BMF has been very effective. Consequently the BMF has become much stronger and is the organisation currently articulating the interests of the ACPB, although its Durban branch remains relatively weak. This weakness is evident in the fact that in spite of the collapse of the PPA, its members have not moved over to the BMF, a situation that makes it possible for the PPA to revive. Consequently, the Durban Branch of the BMF was only formally launched in 1987, eleven years after its formation.³⁵ However, shortly before the PPA collapsed there was beginning to be a rapprochement with the BMF, and for the first time since the existence of these organisations, the BMF president was invited to address a PPA meeting in August 1987.³⁶

2. Politics and Professions: The political behaviour of the African corporate petty bourgeoisie.

The politics and ideology of the ACPB in contemporary South Africa is a reflection of a class caught in the intensifying struggles between the principal contending forces in the South African struggle, the white capitalist class and the black working class. The politics and ideology of this class reflects very sharply confinement in the dominant contradiction of the racially-based national oppression in the country. As demonstrated in the previous chapter, the contradictory location of this stratum of the APB translates itself into a particular kind of politics. The analysis in this section will proceed with a discussion of certain dimensions developed from a questionnaire administered to members of the PPA. However these dimensions will merely form the basis for discussion; they will be further developed by looking at the actual political practices of this stratum in a variety of instances.

a) The African corporate petty bourgeoisie and the African 'community'

The fact that members of the ACPB are part and parcel of the African communities in the

various townships where they are located makes the 'presence' of the African community acutely felt in whatever they are doing. There is a constant evaluation of how its actions are seen by the wider community. As part of this process, the ACPB itself also 'constructs' this community and presents it in a particular way that is not too dissonant with its own political and economic aspirations. As the community makes its presence felt, there is also an ideological reconstruction of this community by the ACPB itself. In this process the ACPB does not only comprehend the black community as it objectively exists, but continually interprets its aspirations and interests in particular ways.

The first and very common ideological construction of the ACPB's own relationship to the community, is to see themselves as leaders of the black community by virtue of their occupational positions and educational qualifications. This discourse, which has become the core of the discourse of 'black economic empowerment, is captured by one of the foremost organic intellectuals of the ACPB, Reuel Khoza, thus:

If we accept that black advancement refers to the advancement of the black manager as a species then our orientation veer towards, at worst, careerism and at best narrow and sectional interests.... I would like to interpret (black advancement) to mean advancement of the black nation and not of the black manager as a species. Our advancement necessarily involves, as one of many facets, the advancement of black management cadres, developed in requisite skills and playing a role in our economic life that it ought to play. The advancement of our nation especially in the socio-economic field, requires that we develop institutions and managers who will help to shape the larger South African economic and corporate agenda. We are the nucleus of such a management cadre that can begin to effectively complement other facets of the national development effort. As black managers we may not amount to much in numbers ... (but) this should not deter us from facing our challenge head on, because our effectiveness ... will ... come from strength in vision, purpose and singular clarity in our ability to define and to strategise on national issues of the day.³⁷

It has been necessary to quote Khoza in full since this highlights very graphically the particular way in which the ACPB attempts to insert its own project into the wider

community struggles against apartheid. It marks a very sophisticated understanding of the relationship between the black community and black managers. Whilst this is definitely a means through which the ACPB tries to find a niche for itself in the wider struggles in South Africa, it should not simply be reduced to a ploy used by the ACPB to hegemonise its project over the masses. Such a political stance illustrates the extent to which mass struggles have defined the agenda beyond the working class. The petty bourgeoisie itself is forced to define its project in relation to that of the mass democratic movement. The particular definition of the project of the ACPB by its proponents further reflects the extent to which the APB as a whole has got to respond to mass struggles, since they are part of those struggling masses. Therefore, it is too simplistic to dismiss this as a mere ploy.

However, it is through their own community involvement that one gets a better understanding of the ideological content of what Khoza calls ‘the national agenda’. This will be illustrated through a discussion of the type of community activities in which the ACPB is involved, and how they see this in relation to their project.

TABLE 9.1
Community activities of a sample of African personnel practitioners.

<u>Name of activity</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Church	17	36,95
Educational	4	8,69
Political	3	6,52
Sports and Recreation	5	10,86
Business/Professional	4	8,69
Youth Groups/Clubs	6	13,04
Welfare/Community dev.	7	15,21
TOTAL	46 ³⁸	100,00

The single most common type of community activity that the APP’s were involved in were church-related activities. However, in all instances, they were involved in what can be regarded as leadership activities. The type of positions they held in the church included the

following: Secretary of Parish Council; Chairperson of fund-raising committee; Choir-master; Associate Dean; Church steward; Treasurer of Parish Council; youth leadership and training programmes. It is significant that the highest number of activities in the church involved youth leadership and training programmes. This was normally done through church-based youth clubs. Although it is difficult to quantify, the churches are putting a great deal of effort into drawing the youth into their own structures.

The second most frequent kind of activity that the APP's were involved in was what could be broadly classified as welfare and community development activities. Although most of the respondents were not specific as to the nature of their activities within this category, a number of them were family and welfare societies.

The third highest category of activity was that broadly defined as youth groups and clubs. These were not the political youth organisations, but rather the less frequently seen types of youth clubs organised mainly around entertainment, church-based and 'apolitical' cultural activities. These types of youth clubs have been largely replaced by the highly political and militant youth structures that have mushroomed since 1976. Virtually all the APP's involved in these youth activities were running leadership courses, mainly on preparing the youth for adulthood.

What is apparent from this table is that only 6,52% of APP's were directly involved in what could be referred to as political activity. All these were linked to UDF-affiliated youth organisations. Although this is a small percentage, it marks what could be an increasing trend, perhaps indicating that some of the younger members of the ACPB are increasingly being drawn from the ranks of the militant youth and student structures. This in itself will not necessarily change the nature of the core of the ACPB, but it is a significant development that might have an influence in the political orientation of the organisations of the ACPB.

The most distinct aspect about the community involvement of the ACPB is that they are active in those sectors of the community which are not linked to the democratic movement.
Even where they are so involved, they are engaged in these activities as individuals and not as a collective body of corporate managers.

There are very significant conclusions that can be drawn from such a pattern of community activities, conclusions which can give us insight into the politics and ideology of the ACPB. First of all, members of the ACPB define the community in a particular way. Their view of the African community is from a conservative political perspective; it is seen as needing guidance and assistance in order to be pulled out of its misery. This particular definition is embodied in the way they understand their role in the community. They largely see themselves as leaders, by virtue of the skills and knowledge of the business world that they possess. In other words, and in their opinion, they earn the leadership of the community by virtue of being managers. This has become the core of the ideology of the APB as a whole in South Africa, as illustrated by the following statement by the BMF:

The emphasis today of the BMF is on the development of effective Black business leadership which is obviously not confined to managers in corporations but goes beyond the normal workplace into the community. The predominant focus of the organisation, however, remains in commerce and industry.³⁹

Since the upsurge of mass struggles in 1984, there has been a shift away from claiming overall leadership of the African communities towards claiming economic leadership of those same communities. This particular line of thinking first emanated from within the ranks of NAFCOC, particularly after its discussions with the ANC, when they claimed that the ANC did recognise the leadership of NAFCOC in 'black economic empowerment'.⁴⁰

However, the most significant conclusion that one can draw from a study of the community involvement of the ACPB is that it exercises 'its leadership' outside of the structures of the democratic movement. As will be shown in the next section, there is a reluctance to fully participate in the structures of the democratic movement in the community. This point is significant precisely because it limits the ability of the ACPB to hegemonise over the popular and militant community struggles. Their point of entry into the community is structured around politically conservative projects that can only thrive outside the democratic structures. This particular approach to involvement in the community is a reflection of the contradictory location of the APB within a community that is militant and predominantly working class.

b) The 'economic' discourse of the African corporate petty bourgeoisie

The most revealing aspect about the politics and ideology of the ACPB is in their preferences for an economic system, and how they understand economic change in relation to broader political changes. In the survey of APP's the following picture emerged:

TABLE 9.2
Preferred economic system of the APP's

<u>Type</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>%</u>
'Free market' capitalist economy	18	46
Mixed economy	14	36
Socialist	6	15
Other	1	3

Although there is a limit in using preferences gleaned from a survey, the discussion here will be supplemented by looking beyond these results into the economic discourse of the ACPB as it emanates from its own publications and public political statements on the issue of the economy. The way the ACPB sees the economy is very crucial in understanding the politics and ideology of this grouping, given the growing demands for a socialist transformation from within the ranks of the working class and the militant youth.

The majority of the APP's believe in the capitalist system. They believe that it is the only type of economic system that is likely to bring about equal economic opportunities in the country. For the core of the ACPB, some of the reasons given for such a choice are:

'Free market economy without apartheid is/ or should be a clean competitive system and can lead to prosperity.'

'People must be given equal opportunities in developing themselves and must have full rights and freedom of trading wherever they like in order to realise their ambitions'.

‘I believe that this system offers a great measure of incentives to propel every member of the society to exploit and exercise his abilities and capabilities’.⁴¹

An almost equal number of APP's in the survey preferred what they understood to be a mixed economy. Although the concept of a 'mixed economy' can mean different things for different people, it is through the reasons given that one can understand what most of them meant:

‘A different "ism" that, whilst operationally it is free market oriented, but attempts to achieve the values of socialist ideologies as goals and objectives’

‘The poor will get better while the rich will not be too rich’

‘A mixture of socialist and free market economy would help towards the upliftment of the rural and underprivileged community’

‘Because it blends more than one system to cater for needs of different groups especially in South Africa with its history’.⁴²

There are basically two reasons why a significant proportion of the ACPB would opt for a mixed economy. The first one is that such an economy is able to achieve two objectives at the same time. On the one hand it allows for accumulation and upward mobility for the APB, and at the same time, it (hopefully) addresses some of the pressing problems of the working class and the poor. In this way the upward mobility of the ACPB is not looked at as a promotion of one sector of the community at the expense of the most poor sections. This would relieve all the pressure of the APB being seen as part of the system, since, as they see it, everybody would be benefitting. This is understandable given the way that the ‘African working class’ weighs on the APB as a whole. There seems to be a realisation that unless some of the basic demands of the working class are met, African upward mobility would always be looked at with suspicion. This attitude on the part of the ACPB does not negate its overall preference for an essentially capitalist economy.

The second reason why the ACPB would prefer a mixed economy is that it has the potential of incorporating some effective affirmative action programmes that would particularly assist them in their desire for upward mobility and even capital accumulation. This is graphically illustrated by the response of the BMF to the NAFCOC meeting with the ANC in Lusaka in 1986. In a major policy speech the president of the BMF, reflecting on the agreement reached at this meeting, particularly on the question of affirmative action and a mixed economy, commented with obvious relief: "This does not smack of any Marxism (although) the ANC delegation which spoke to NAFCOC included those members that have been called Communists".⁴³

The increasing demands for socialism by the working class and the youth have caused immense restiveness within the ranks of the ACPB. This concern led to the BMF to convene a seminar on the future economic system of South Africa, in April 1988. Interestingly enough, Jay Naidoo of Cosatu was invited to come to this seminar to talk about socialism. This was the culmination of a long soul-searching process, wherein the BMF took about 18 months to consciously develop its own economic policy.⁴⁴

One further example should suffice to illustrate the impact of the growing popularity of socialism in South Africa. Following an article written by the editor of UmAfrika on a BMF conference held in early August 1988, the BMF President was particularly disturbed by the description of the BMF as a pro-capitalist organisation, and was thereafter given space to spell out the economic policy of the BMF. The editor of UmAfrika, in his report, had highlighted the contradiction that whilst the BMF stands for capitalism at the same time it aligns itself with the democratic movement, whose core stands for a socialist South Africa.⁴⁵ It is worth referring to the BMF President's response in order to understand the economic discourse of the ACPB. He first pointed out that political power alone without economic power could not bring about true liberation.⁴⁶ This truism was then used to assert that, as black managers, they had a special role to play in bringing about economic liberation. From this assertion he then pointed out that, "We in the BMF do not believe in 'isms' (like Capitalism or Socialism), but if we are forced to choose an 'ism' we would choose 'Successism' like the Japanese."⁴⁷ However he did not clarify what this successism means, except for the explanation that it is a system that would "...focus directly in providing for

the needs of the people of South Africa ... the masses of the people of this country, irrespective of colour, nationality or religion".⁴⁸

The position of the BMF in this regard remains both vague and contradictory. It is vague in that providing for the needs of the people can be claimed to be possible under both capitalism and socialism. Perhaps this vagueness is deliberate and is a reflection of the contradictory and fluctuating character of the APB in South Africa. The BMF's economic policy is also contradictory in that, in further spelling out the economic policy of his organisation, the President continues to say that "It is the people themselves who will decide what kind of economic system they want, by exercising their democratic right under majority rule".⁴⁹ It is doubtful, though, whether a non-capitalist or socialist path would be acceptable to the ACPB. By remaining vague, the ACPB hopes not to alienate either side in the class struggle. This is also an outcome of the increasing pressure on them from below, which explains this apparent openness and flexibility.

The pressure from the militancy of the organised youth and the working class, as well as the criticism that capitalism has been subjected to in South Africa, have all sensitised the ACPB to the depth of challenge to capitalism in South Africa. Because of their belief in an essentially capitalist economy, they are at pains to try to reinterpret why the workers are against capitalism. They try to present the workers' problems as what the BMF calls 'apartheid capitalism' rather than the content of capitalism as such:

...the daily life of workers in this country as evidenced by a number of illustrations like the hawkers, the spaza shops, the back-yard mechanics, etc. does not support a pure anti-capitalist struggle. The reality indicates that the fight is more against apartheid capitalism than just against a free market economy. Our role as managers is varied. We must for instance explode this myth about the workers anti-capitalism struggle.⁵⁰

For the ACPB, the existence of what essentially is an 'informal sector' continues to provide hope for diverting the working class away from a socialist path.

The contradictory and perhaps conflictual articulation of the economic discourse of the ACPB

to that of the working class directly raises the question of the relationship between the ACPB and the working class. Although a component of this relationship was discussed in the previous chapter, it is worth looking at the interaction between the ACPB, as a class, and the working class as a political force.

The location of the ACPB in managerial positions in South Africa's corporations places it in a particular relationship to the working class. Although there has hardly been any 'class' conflict between the ACPB and the working class, the relationship is potentially an explosive one. There is no doubt that the increasing militancy of the black working class acts as a very crucial factor in the political behaviour of the ACPB. This can be illustrated through the history of the PPA, and how it has been responding to major campaigns undertaken by organised workers in the 1980's.

One example through which one can begin to understand the articulation of the interests of the ACPB to those of the working class, was the collective response of the APP's to the wave of the 'pensions strikes' in the early 1980's. The APP's were the most directly affected group because, as shown in the previous chapter, they were the people who were the first on the firing line in handling the workers demands for the withdrawal of their money from company pension schemes. It was not unusual for individual APP's to be asked by their companies to go to the workers to explain the 'benefits' of the company's pension scheme. The APP's were caught in the crossfire; they were seen by the workers to be the stumbling block, since they could not on their own accede to workers' demands, as the ultimate decisions lay with the white bosses. Some of the problems identified by the APP's included the following:

The Black Personnel Practitioner has been and is still being used, in most cases as a buffer between White management and Black employees.... The Black Personnel Practitioners were and/or are still involved in the education of employees on the pension fund. His explanation is seen as defending the pension fund, management and the government. The Black employees do not know or hear the representation the Black Personnel Practitioner makes on behalf of the Black employees.⁵¹

As if the pressure from the workers was not enough, employers saw the APP's as champions of the 'black cause' and believed they were not acting as corporate managers. Furthermore, some employers used the APP's to dodge the issue, by simply reducing the problem to that of 'ignorance' on the part of the workers, therefore requiring the APP's to go and educate their fellow blacks about the benefits of belonging to a pension scheme.⁵²

In response, the APP's drafted guidelines on how to handle the pensions problem. The pressure from below made the APP's very sympathetic to the workers' demands; they asked each member of the then Contact Group to go and explain the decisions to their respective employers. There was general agreement amongst the APP's that they should not allow themselves to be used to explain the pension schemes to workers, but rather the company should call outside experts to do that job. Despite this sympathy for workers' demands, the APP's themselves still believed that workers needed to be guided and educated in this instance.

Acceding to the Black employees' demands of paying back pension contributions per se is not an answer to the problem nor is it in the long term interests of Blacks as a nation.... There are other options to secure the long term security and welfare that have not yet been explored.⁵³

Responses to the pensions strikes clearly reveals the extent to which the APP's were trying to satisfy both parties, in this instance by trying to extricate themselves from the problem, whilst at the same time offering advice to the workers.

The relationship between the workers and the ACPB reflects the acuteness of the contradictory location of this class in apartheid South Africa. It also captures the way national oppression and class formation intersect in producing the specificity of the politics of the ACPB in contemporary South Africa. For instance racial discrimination and national oppression in South Africa have produced a situation where members of the APB share many of the humiliating conditions and frustrations with black workers. Members of the APB have been, together with the working class, victims of forced removals, group areas legislation, tight and bureaucratic control over their lives, etc.⁵⁴ Over the years, this has tended to blur the class differences between the two, particularly on the social and political terrains.

However, within the corporations the ACPB performs what are objectively capitalist functions, which are fundamentally contrary to working class interests, and are perceived by workers as such.⁵⁵ It is also this contradiction that sharpens the acuteness of the problems for the ACPB; they try to manage this by emphasising the importance of their work to the 'nation':

...the BMF does not view itself as an "agent of capitalist control" but as an organisation that prepares the nation to man our economy tomorrow irrespective of the economic system that prevails.⁵⁶

Sometimes the management of these contradictions by the ACPB entails the denial of working class interests apart from the common oppression of blacks under apartheid:

What are the interests of the working class? Without knowing your answer to this question you can safely assume the BMF would be supportive and in fact promote such interests in the main. This assumption is based on our experience as victims and children of the victims of apartheid capitalism. The interest of the working man in South Africa is to improve his lot - is a better life. Despite all the academic arguments on economic systems, they will embrace any economic order which they regard as providing a fair opportunity to achieve this objective and live harmoniously with his brothers.⁵⁷

The simultaneous inclusion and exclusion of the ACPB in the dominant institutions of capital accumulation is also reflected in the co-existence of, on the one hand, hostility and suspicion towards capital and whites in general, and, on the other hand, elitism towards the black working class. This is captured by a comment that a Mr Shuenyane - a member of the BMF - made in response to a question on the black middle class:

There is no such thing as the 'black middle class'. *We are all blacks. Legally we suffer from the same restrictions: economically, we are standing on the pavements watching the mainstream go by: socially, even the 'cocktail set' still go back to the ghettos. So why is there this cry that we're selling out? It is a cry from the frustrated hearts of mediocrity, from the forces of low-standards and of non-achievement - the*

forces of laziness. ⁵⁸

Whilst there is some degree of identification with the oppressed majority, the class distance and impatience at being excluded from the black community by virtue of being a middle class is also regarded as unfair.

c) Class struggle and the political affiliations and alignments of the ACPB

In order to understand the political behaviour of the ACPB, it is important to start by identifying the political affiliations of this stratum of the APB. In the PPA survey on the desirability of the PPA making a public stand on political issues, particularly as they affect black people in this country, 60% of the APP's felt that it was desirable to do so. Only 20% opposed this; the other 20% were either doubtful or had no comment. The reasons given for the need for such action are very revealing about the politics of the ACPB. The single largest percentage of those who felt the PPA should make its stand known, said that "Personnel practitioners are leaders and should behave as such to influence events"; the reasons for such action were otherwise defensive.⁵⁹ For the majority, the reasons that warrant the PPA making its political stand known included the urgency of creating conditions that would make it possible to "avoid being seen as a bourgeoisie, lest we might lose understanding of the people we have to manage". For others there was a concern that they should not be tagged 'irrelevant' and 'middle class.' The defensiveness definitely overrides the need to actively and directly participate in democratic struggles for the overthrow of apartheid; they largely saw their task in terms of a "need to be known and have an identity". This model of the basic mode of political intervention by the ACPB is supported by the pattern of their political affiliations.

Although the ACPB does realise the importance of political intervention, for them it is best done outside the major political organisations, through their own professional organisations. The following table shows the political affiliations of the APP's.

TABLE 9.3

Membership of political organisations by the members of PPA.

<u>Political organisation</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>%</u>
Inkatha	2	5
United Democratic Front	6	15
Other	-	-
No political affiliation	31	79

Although 20% of the APP's had direct political affiliations APP's, the overwhelming majority of the APP's did not belong to any political organisation. Three major reasons were given for non-affiliation. The first reason was what Sitas calls 'cosmopolitan apoliticism.'⁶⁰ This attitude is one of avoiding overt political alignments in the hope of being treated as politically neutral, if not totally 'apolitical.' Some of the APP's felt that,

"As a businessman I need to be apolitical"; "I believe I can play a much better and effective role by not 'labelling' myself in terms of membership of any particular group".⁶¹

The second reason for non-affiliation was pure cynicism about political activism in general:

"I love all of them"; "I do not understand the objectives of any political organisation"

The third and most common reason for non-affiliation was fear of the consequences of being involved in political struggle. This fear manifested itself in two ways. The first one was fear of repression from the state, as illustrated by the following statements:

"The political system of this country is confusing. The ruling party fails to differentiate between political activists who aim to improve the country's outlook and those whose aims are contrary to this. This makes it difficult for me to identify myself with any political movement though I go along with certain principles of some"

"I would have liked to belong to one but for fear of reprisals both to me and my family,

I decided to keep a very low profile"

"For me circumstances are not right at this point in time. I do however subscribe to some of the values of some of the political organisations".⁶²

Another manifestation of this fear was that of alienating themselves either from the employers or from the workers:

"Because of my job title I negotiate with political organisations and/or people affiliated to organisations with conflicting ideologies"

"We should not be seen as shop stewards in our jobs".⁶³

The expressed need for the ACPB to make its political views known seems to be contradicted by its lack of membership in political organisations. This is not in essence a contradiction, but a reflection of the particular mode through which the ACPB expresses its political interests. Two points are worth highlighting with regard to the expression of these political aspirations. First of all, the ACPB does not feel the need to get directly involved in political struggles in order to express its political interests; it can make use of its own organisations to make its political stand known. In this way members of this stratum are able to 'play it safe' by not alienating themselves from capital and white management, and placing their jobs on the line, and at the same time not alienating themselves from the black working class by being seen as disinterested in the political plight of the majority of the people in the country. Secondly, by making use of their own professional associations to make their political stand known, they are safe from harassment and repression, hence the reliance on other political organisations to further their own interests where appropriate. Such behaviour does not commit the ACPB to a long term political programme, which in other instances might act to undermine its own class interests. This does not mean that the petty bourgeoisie does not have long-term political interests, but the attainment of such interests can sometimes embody contradictory and/or conflicting strategies depending on the balance of forces at different times of the struggle. Such behaviour captures the essence of the nature of the petty bourgeoisie, as a fluctuating class. It is this fluctuating character which makes it possible to pursue its own class interests either through an alignment with a revolutionary project, as

has happened in countries like Nicaragua and Vietnam, or through an alignment with fascism, as happened in Germany and Italy between the two world wars. That is why, then, the character of the APB is largely derivative and dependent on the balance of forces between the principal antagonistic forces in capitalist societies. In South Africa this places the ACPB in a position of weakness vis-a-vis its ability to influence the political direction of the democratic movement.

The non-affiliation to political organisations does not mean that the ACPB does not have its own political preferences between the whole range of forces struggling for hegemony in society. For instance, when asked which political organisations they thought were capable of bringing about a peaceful, prosperous and democratic South Africa, the following picture emerged:

TABLE 9.4
Political preferences of members of PPA

<u>Political organisation</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>%</u>
African National Congress	11	28
United Democratic Front	8	21
Inkatha	3	8
PFP	3	8
Coalition of all above	6	15
No preference	8	21
TOTAL	39	100

There are a number of striking factors about the above table. First of all, although 79% of the APP's in this survey did not belong to any political organisation, it was only 21 percent who did not have any political preference, or some kind of political alignment. This shows the extent to which the ACPB is reluctant to be directly involved with political organisations. The second factor to note is that the organisation drawing the single highest number of preferences is the ANC. In fact the ANC and the UDF combined have a total support of just under 50% of the people in this survey. Over and above this they were the only

organisations which attracted the preferences of APP's from across the whole range of their economic preferences. For example, of the 18 APP's who believed in a capitalist economy 4 thought the ANC and UDF were capable of bringing about peace and democracy in South Africa. Of the 14 who believed in some kind of a mixed economy, 7 believed in the ANC and/or the UDF and one in COSATU. All those APP's who indicated that socialism was the only desirable economic system for the country, thought that the ANC and/or the UDF had the capacity to bring about democracy and prosperity for all in South Africa. This is an indication of the extent to which the ANC and UDF is able to attract both the working class and sections of the APB. This has already been highlighted above, about the comments made by the BMF on the ANC/NAFCOC meeting in Lusaka. The support that the two organisations have from the ranks of the APB is further highlighted by the alignment of the largest sections of the trading African petty bourgeoisie (TAPB) to the mass democratic and national liberation movement, under the leadership of the ANC, particularly in the post-1984 period.

The spread of the political preferences of the ACPB also captures one other very significant characteristic of the petty bourgeoisie as a whole. This characteristic is the tendency for fractionation within the ranks of the petty bourgeoisie as the struggle deepens, so that sections of it are thrown into an even deeper alliance with the ruling bloc, and other sections throw in their lot with the oppressed and exploited masses. The way the largest sections will behave is largely dependent on the strength of the revolutionary forces to assert themselves and hegemonise their project within the people's camp. In South Africa this will largely be determined by the ability of the revolutionary forces, with the working class as the core, to incorporate and advance the demands of all the oppressed, without at the same time abandoning the proletarian character of the struggle.

Given the above characterisation of the ACPB, it is important to evaluate the ability of the different theoretical conceptualisations of the APB to help us analyse and predict the political behaviour of the ACPB.

3. Politics and Class Theory: On the politics and ideology of the African corporate petty bourgeoisie

The fundamental aim of this study is ultimately a sociological analysis of the ACPB, with the goal of drawing implications for the political behaviour and alignments of this stratum. It is aimed at studying the ACPB, as an intervention in the wider debates on the place and status of class alliances in the national liberation struggle and its deeper trajectory towards a socialist transformation in South Africa. Given this concern it is important to conclude the study with a discussion on the politics of the ACPB. Since any study of a stratum or fraction of the APB, can not be complete without being situated within the context of the class as a whole, this section will begin by looking at the behaviour of the different strata and fractions of the APB. Thereafter two fundamental questions about the political behaviour of the ACPB will be examined, viz. co-optation and, secondly, leadership of the mass democratic and/or national liberation movements. This will be undertaken through a critique of the political implications of the theoretical formulations discussed in chapter 2.

Whilst chapter 3 examined the changing social composition of the APB up to the mid-1980's, this section will begin by looking at the APB in the late 1980's, to highlight the impact that the 1984-86 struggles had on the political behaviour of this class.⁶⁴ The 1984-86 period drastically changed the relationship between the white ruling bloc and the oppressed. But even more significant is that these struggles have also changed the nature of the relationship within the oppressed bloc itself in some very fundamental ways. Most notable in these changes is the impact of these struggles on the political behaviour and alignments of the APB. The basis for these changes was laid by the strong re-emergence of the Congress tradition in the late 1970's, spearheaded by the founding of the Congress of South African Students (COSAS), and later the launching of the United Democratic Front (UDF) in 1983. This process of rapid politicisation and intensification of mass struggles was deepened in 1985 by the formation of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), giving a new content to the meaning and practice of working class politics, by taking the workers' struggle right into the centre of broader democratic struggles. The political practices of COSATU marked a significant departure from the earlier period where working class politics were, under its predecessor - FOSATU, largely focused on factory-based struggles and a

reluctance to engage in wider political struggles. This hesitancy by FOSATU was an outcome of both its conception of how the factory struggles should articulate with wider mass-based struggles, as well as the objective imperative of protecting the labour movement at all costs during its infancy. The post 1985 developments led to the emergence of the mass democratic movement (MDM), with the UDF and COSATU at its core. Together with the growth of the MDM, the African National Congress emerged as the undisputed vanguard of the national liberation struggle, hegemonising its programme over the mass struggles inside the country.

It is specifically the growth of the MDM and its ideological hegemony over anti-apartheid struggles that have precipitated certain political shifts within the ranks of the APB, some of which were unthought of even as late as the early 1980's. Although the full impact of the 1984-86 struggles still remains to be untangled, the first and most significant impact of these struggles on the African petty bourgeoisie was the isolation of the most reactionary elements of the APB, and the actual dislocation of many of them from their already fragile hold over the subordinate apparatuses of the apartheid state. This was particularly more visible in the urban townships, and to a lesser extent in the bantustans. The second impact of the 1984-86 semi-insurrectionary struggles was an effective narrowing of the space occupied by the 'middle ground', thereby depriving large sections of the APB of their pre-1984 political refuge of presenting themselves as neutral in relation to the struggles taking place around them. In other words, the growth of the MDM and its ideological hegemony forced the APB to relate to its programmes of action in one way or the other. For the APB the impact of the struggles of this period were felt even more because of its physical location in the townships, right in the midst of those struggles. The third impact of these struggles on the APB was that they raised the stakes, by making the price to be paid for collaboration with the regime much higher.

It is against this background that one should assess the impact of the conjuncture on the contemporary political behaviour of the APB. Not a single stratum or fraction of the APB was not affected by these struggles. The impact of these developments was first seen on the trading African petty bourgeoisie. Tensions within this class were sharpened, particularly within NAFCOC. Important realignments within NAFCOC have taken place at two levels.

First of all, there has been a political division within the TAPB: a split between that fraction of this stratum which was closely aligned with the bantustan state apparatuses and the urban township state institutions, and that located largely in the urban areas outside of these structures. In a way this was the expression of a long existing tension between that fraction of the TAPB closely aligned and overlapping with the bureaucratic petty bourgeoisie, and the 'autonomous' fraction, which is the hegemonic fraction in NAFCOC. This political fractionation within the TAPB is reflected in its most acute form in the split between Inyanda, aligned to the 'autonomous' fraction of NAFCOC, and the KwaZulu Natal Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KWANACOCI), which is anti-NAFCOC and pro-Inkatha. Therefore NAFCOC's visit to the ANC in 1986 should not be seen as simply a ploy by the TAPB to make itself acceptable to the masses, but as reflecting the increasing fractionation of the APB, and the growing hegemony of the programme of the national liberation movement.

However, the biggest impact of the 1984-86 struggles was felt in, ironically, the most unexpected quarters of the APB, *viz.* the bureaucratic petty bourgeoisie. Community councils collapsed countrywide, with many councillors resigning and significant sections of them throwing their lot in with the MDM. This made it difficult for the state to govern the African townships, precipitating the most brutal measures in the history of the apartheid state.

The bantustan sections of the bureaucratic petty bourgeoisie were also shaken to the core. A few examples are worth mentioning here. The most significant development during this period was the struggle against 'independence' in KwaNdebele, producing an unprecedented alliance of workers, youth, the civil petty bourgeoisie, chiefs and the Mahlangu royal family. This led to the collapse of the pro-apartheid Sikhosana 'regime'. The KwaNdebele example more or less set the pace for the most unprecedented upheavals within the bantustans: a coup in the Transkei; attempted coups in Bophuthatswana and the Ciskei; widespread struggles in Venda led by the students and workers; and Enos Mabuza in KaNgwane moving even closer to the MDM. In the mid-1980's there was no single bantustan untouched by the widespread struggles of this period.⁶⁵ Apart from the fact that these upheavals were a reflection of the depth of the 1984-86 struggles, they also reflected the sharpening of the contradictions

between the bureaucratic petty bourgeoisie and the civil petty bourgeoisie. Many of the struggles in the bantustans were actually being led by the civil petty bourgeoisie, in the form of strikes by nurses, teachers and clerks, and other methods of struggle. The involvement of the civil petty bourgeoisie in the struggles against the bantustan ruling cliques also shows that there is a deep conflict of interest between these two strata, and that their relationship in the present conjuncture is one of patronage and repression rather than straight-forward collusion. It also shows the restiveness of the African civil petty bourgeoisie in contemporary struggles in South Africa.

a) The impact of mass struggles on the African corporate petty bourgeoisie

The impact of the semi-insurrectionary struggles of the mid-1980's have been no less felt within the ranks of the ACPB. It has already been demonstrated in the previous chapter how the post-1985 struggles have sharpened the contradictions within the APP's. Although the ACPB has been less politically active compared to the other strata of the APB, it has been affected in very fundamental ways by the growth and ideological hegemony of the MDM. Apart from discussions amongst APP's, the effects have manifested themselves in two very distinct ways. Firstly, the BMF appointed a Commission of Linkages and Political Affairs, to investigate and make proposals on how the BMF is seen by the wider African community.⁶⁶ Some of the conclusions of this Commission were:

- a) BMF is politically insignificant
- b) BMF is generally unknown to the public
- c) Some people who know the organisation regard it as an irrelevant elitist organisation.⁶⁷

The Commission suggested that positive steps should be taken to correct this perception. The first important recommendation was that "...we should address such political and economic issues as affect our people and communities and remove from the set of our objectives the words 'strictly non-political.'"⁶⁸ From this suggested new stance the commission further recommended that

We should do the following without being copy-cats or bandwagon jumpers:

1. Protest against the presence of the SADF in Black townships
2. Call for the upliftment of the state of emergency
3. Pledge our solidarity with detainees and their families
4. Support the call for the release of political prisoners
5. Reject institutions which are created in order to perpetuate apartheid.⁶⁹

Clearly the intensification of both the mass struggles and state repression in response to these, precipitated a major ideological shift in the ranks of the ACPB. Although the ACPB has not followed these resolutions to the letter, they did mark a significant shift from the earlier position of 'non-alignment'.

The second way through which the struggles of the MDM affected ideological shifts within the ranks of the ACPB, is reflected in the change of the language of this stratum. This is illustrated by the way in which the ACPB defines its own struggles in a very defensive way in relation to the mass struggles. In a major paper by Khoza, quoted earlier, significantly titled 'Acting in Concert with other Constituencies', he forcefully charts the way for the BMF by arguing that

...we must first declare ourselves and act as part of a constituent of a larger family with interwoven and inextricable interests. We should begin to be counted among the constituencies in our community, political, educational, labour and civic that are seen to be striving for the advancement and development of blacks.⁷⁰

Although this could be interpreted in many different ways, it signifies the extent to which the demands of the masses have forced the ACPB to relate their own programme to these. The shifts by the ACPB to define its mission as part of a 'national agenda' for liberation is reflected both in its economic and political thinking in the post-1985 era. On the economic front the president of the BMF argues:

My thesis is very simple. Blacks will never achieve economic power under the current economic framework and dispensation. The current system is too loaded against the underprivileged and man of colour. If the current economic framework is not

overhauled to reflect aspirations, psychographics, demographics and the will of the inhabitants of our country, then Blacks as a nation will never acquire the necessary economic power...⁷¹

It has been argued very strongly by economistic Marxism that all the above initiatives by the sections of the APB are nothing but mere posturing. If not posturing, it reflects an attempt by the APB to insert its political project through the appropriation of the language of the popular masses.⁷² Whilst this is not necessarily untrue, it is more probably a reflection of the worst forms of class essentialism - anything that the class does is consciously calculated to further its own interests and exercise hegemony over the black working class. What this argument overlooks is the extent to which the APB is sometimes forced to adopt positions not always consciously thought out in a calculated way or even positions not compatible with its own long-term interests; such positions are sometimes forced upon them by circumstances. Evidence of this is the contradictory nature of the economic discourse of the ACPB as shown above. To argue that this class always has a neat and calculated response to each and every issue closes us off from grasping the way in which mass struggles shape the politics and ideology of the APB, and also the way in which such struggles sharpen the contradictions and ideological dilemmas of this class. This class essentialism also obscures the ways in which the political behaviour and ideology of the APB is shaped by the terrain of political struggle.

b) Co-optation and leadership of the mass democratic struggles

Most debates on the APB have centred around two major issues which are closely connected. The first one is an assessment of the extent to which this class can be successfully co-opted onto the side of the white ruling bloc. The second question is usually expressed in the form of a fear that the growth of the APB poses a constant threat to the working class leadership of the mass struggles. This fear expresses itself most sharply particularly when the nature of the mass democratic movement and the programme of the national liberation movement is examined. It is to these two questions that the following discussion will address itself, particularly as they relate to the African corporate petty bourgeoisie.

Let us begin by examining these questions and arguments as they relate to some of the third world revolutionary struggles. The importance of first examining these issues in relation to third world struggles is threefold. Firstly, to show that it is in relation to national liberation struggles that these tensions and debates manifest themselves in their sharpest forms. Secondly, this brief excursion is meant to demonstrate that such issues do not face the South African revolution only. Thirdly, it is aimed at showing that the best examples and theoretical models that we should be looking at in relation to the role of the petty bourgeoisie in liberation struggles are not in the seminar rooms and publications from European and American Marxists, but in the crucible of national liberation and anti-imperialist struggles in the third world. This is not to say that there are no distinct differences between many of the third world struggles and those in South Africa, but rather to make the point that there are more similarities between these two situations than with European experiences from which most of our South African Marxism draws its inspiration. Ironically, 'South African Marxism', particularly that strand emanating from the liberal campuses, is one of the most Eurocentric brands in the third world. Of course, South African Marxists are not entirely to blame for this state of affairs, as it is due in no small way to the historical colonial connections between the United Kingdom, in particular, and South Africa.

The issues to be dealt with here are best summarized in the work of Vilas (referred to in Chapter 1) on the Sandinista revolution in Nicaragua, and other third world revolutions in general.⁷³ It is therefore important to summarise the issues involved in national liberation struggles and how these can help us to situate the role of the ACPB in the South African liberation struggle. Vilas starts by outlining some of the general Marxian criticisms normally levelled at national liberation movements and the character of revolutionary struggles in general in the third world. He first makes the important point that it is normally economistic Marxism that finds it difficult to accept the path taken by the revolutionary movements in Latin America. Class reductionistic Marxists normally refuse to regard national liberation and democratic struggles as revolutionary arenas of struggle. He attributes this to the fact that "... given projects and regimes were prejudged through a set of rigid equations that flattens the richness of the conjuncture: proletariat equalled socialism; petty bourgeoisie or bourgeoisie equalled (national) democracy".⁷⁴ Also, economic reductionism often dismisses such liberation movements as being petty bourgeois, and thus reformist, due to the presence

within them of elements of the intermediate (petty bourgeois) sectors; it holds that such movements raise and advance the claims of broad sectors of the population together with the demands of the proletariat. This tendency manifests itself very sharply in South Africa, particularly within that strand of South African Marxism emanating from the corridors of social science departments of 'liberal' universities in post 1970 South Africa.

It is the above tendency that has on average done much of the theoretical work on the APB, as illustrated by the work of Sarakinsky and Hudson. This tendency basically argues along the lines set out by Vilas. Its major thrust is that the national liberation struggle is essentially about the establishment of a bourgeois democracy in South Africa.⁷⁵ The usual reason given for this is the fact that national liberation struggles are usually about nation-building, and therefore pursue nationalist and anti-socialist struggles.⁷⁶ National liberation struggles seem to derive this character from their being led by the petty bourgeoisie. Nearly always the starting point of such an analysis, as well as the way it couches its terms of reference, is a critique of the CST thesis, which is regarded as unMarxist, if not liberal; it is castigated as a theory that privileges the national struggle over the class struggle. With regard to the petty bourgeoisie, the CST thesis is criticised for undermining the capacity of the APB to reproduce itself and thereby its capacity to impose its own nationalist and capitalist project over that of the black working class.

The way issues are posed within this scholarship or political discourse boils down to fundamentally two issues. The first one revolves around the co-optability of the APB onto the side of the white ruling bloc and capitalist interests. The second question is that of the ability of the APB to assert its hegemony over the popular masses and therefore to lead the national liberation struggle. It is to these questions that I shall now turn, in order to discuss the politics of the ACPB and the APB as a whole.

It is the fundamental argument of this work that the essential character of the South African struggle articulates the four processes outlined by Vilas *viz.* the national question, the development question, the democratic question and the class question, although in different combinations and levels of sharpness compared to other third world situations. From this particular understanding of the content of third world revolutions Vilas further argues that

"... Hasty or sectarian analyses of Latin American liberation movements have often dismissed them in the name of theoretical purity which is compatible only with political isolation and operational inertia."⁷⁷

Before engaging the political implications of the theories discussed in chapter 2 through a discussion of the question of co-optation and leadership, it is important to briefly outline the way in which these processes articulate with each other in South Africa, and their particular relationship to the political behaviour of the APB. It is within this framework that a critique of some of the theories discussed earlier can be undertaken, as well as providing the means to analyse the political behaviour of the ACPB. The national question is perhaps the dominant question in contemporary South Africa, and has been so for a long time. The essence of this question in South Africa is the national oppression of the African people in particular, and the black people in general. This national oppression crosscuts class divisions, a factor which has tended to unite all black classes behind the programme of the national liberation movement. The black petty bourgeoisie has been, albeit unevenly, an important component of this alliance, a factor that has given the national liberation struggles their particular character in terms of their class composition, as Vilas points out

... the class character of revolutions of national liberation arises from the fact that they are, to a certain degree and during certain periods, multi-class processes, when the national democratic and development tasks bring together classes that are located in different camps with regard to the fundamental contradiction, and involve them in demands and objectives of unequal breadth and depth.⁷⁸

The fundamental contradiction in South Africa is a class one, given the capitalist character of the social formation. This means that the social transformation in South Africa would not be complete without the abolition of the capitalist system itself. This therefore means that the APB, large sections of which are committed to capitalism, are not interested in a deeper social transformation that goes beyond the abolition of apartheid. Because of the existence of capitalism, the question of democracy, as in all capitalist societies, is a key question. However, because of national oppression, whose essence is racial domination, the struggle for democracy in South Africa is given an even sharper edge, and therefore the democratic

content of the struggle occupies a more central place than in many other capitalist societies.

Similarly the development question is very integral to South African struggles. The way the development question articulates with the other questions in South Africa is radically different than, for instance, in many Latin American countries. There are two major differences in this regard. First of all, in the latter countries, the development question takes the form of underdevelopment of the entire country due to the existence of a domestic or indigenous bourgeoisie which collaborates with the imperialist forces against the interests of the working class and other classes in those countries. In South Africa, it is only the black population that suffers most intensely from capitalist exploitation and national oppression, whilst all white classes have on average benefitted from the collaboration between imperial capital and the South African bourgeoisie. The second difference, which was demonstrated in Chapter 3, is that imperial capital has strengthened the growth of a white domestic bourgeoisie directly at the expense of the development of a black domestic bourgeoisie. This has led to a situation where the white population in South Africa lives in affluence, which approximates that of the most advanced capitalist countries. The black population on the other hand lives under conditions worse than those obtaining in some of the most underdeveloped countries of the third world. The development question, therefore, in South Africa takes the form of a redistribution of wealth based on the legacy of racial disparities. It is this factor also which makes national oppression the dominant contradiction in South Africa.

Given the above framework, it is important to assess the appropriateness of the theoretical models reviewed earlier. This will be done mainly by looking at the question of the co-optability of the ACPB.

c) The co-optability of the African corporate petty bourgeoisie

Although this section is less concerned about the liberal conception of this question, a few comments are worth making. Liberal scholarship advances the argument that the creation of an African corporate petty bourgeoisie will lead to the emergence of a stratum that will to all intents and purposes defend capitalism against the revolutionary forces. It is not made

clear how the creation of such of a class would translate into the halting of a revolutionary transformation. The assumption is usually that a managerial elite will have influence over the working class such that the former's hegemony will prevail, thereby eliminating all vestiges of a revolutionary ideology. This argument is normally based on the liberal assumption that 'elites' have influence over the 'lower classes' by virtue of the knowledge that they possess. What is not engaged at all in this scholarship is the fact that leadership and hegemony over the 'lower classes' is not automatically guaranteed, unless the petty bourgeoisie captures the leadership of the democratic movement and assert its authority there. A petty bourgeoisie whose professional organisations are not located within mass organisations of the oppressed is put at a severe disadvantage vis-a-vis its influence over the mass of the exploited and oppressed. The situation becomes even worse where the petty bourgeoisie does not even have access to state power and all the other ideological apparatuses needed to assert a class's hegemony over the population. The ACPB in South Africa, as demonstrated above, have neither of these levers.

The central argument of economistic Marxism is that, since after 1976 the capacity of the APB to reproduce itself has increased so much, it now has the capacity to assert its own class interests over that of other popular classes. In this argument, asserted by Sarakinsky and Hudson, two factors are advanced to argue for the dangers of the APB asserting its project over that of the working class. The first one is that of size, and in this regard Sarakinsky argues that "Conventional wisdom, in form of the Internal Colonialist analysis (sic) of South Africa, is based on very scanty empirical research regarding the size of this class...."⁷⁹ As already alluded to in chapter 7, the size of the petty bourgeoisie in itself cannot be taken as a determinant of its influence in society. The ability of the petty bourgeoisie to influence the working class is dependent on its capacity to control and mobilise the resources and the ideological apparatuses of the state in order to assert its own project. Size alone does not mean much outside of the dominant institutions in society. This is definitely not the case with regards to the ACPB, as shown in previous chapters, nor the TAPB for matter, which is the subject of Sarakinsky's study.⁸⁰

The second process put forward by economistic Marxism to argue for the capacity of the APB to assert its influence on the politics of the oppressed is that the APB has developed a

complex political and ideological discourse that has the potential of appealing to the working class. This argument is presented without even bothering to demonstrate how this discourse appeals to South Africa's black working class. It has been demonstrated earlier in this chapter that it is precisely the attempts by the ACPB to appeal to both the white ruling bloc, particularly capital, and the African working class, that makes its economic and political discourse incoherent, and even sometimes contradictory. Most important is that this incoherence can largely be attributed to the intensifying working class and popular struggles which have led the ACPB to define its own programme in relation, and sometimes in subordination, to that of the mass democratic movement. There is no doubt that from the mid-1980's the programme of the MDM has become the dominant discourse of the oppressed, thereby severely weakening the capacity of the various strata of the APB to hegemonise over the mass of the oppressed people.

The overestimation of the capacity of the APB to hegemonise over the popular classes can largely be attributed to the treatment of the class question in isolation from the national question. Since it has been pointed out that the national question cuts across the class question in the determination of political behaviour in South Africa, one cannot fully understand the politics and ideology of the APB without an articulation of how these processes relate to each other. National oppression has created severe disabilities for the APB as a whole, and even more so for the ACPB, as demonstrated in the previous chapters.

Perhaps the most serious weakness of economistic Marxism in South Africa is its failure to articulate a political programme vis-a-vis the relationship between the national and the class questions. Almost all of its analyses are couched in negative criticism of the CST thesis, and not the development of a substantive programme that addresses particularly the national, class and democratic questions in South Africa. There is usually an undialectical posing of these questions, such that the class question is regarded as fundamentally opposed to the national and democratic questions. Strangely enough, though, there is a recognition of the need for broad unity between all classes; at the same such unity is also seen as undermining the struggle.⁸¹ With regard to the petty bourgeoisie, this contradictory posing of the tasks facing the national liberation movement manifests itself through a dismissal of the APB as

representing a nationalist capitalist path; at the same time it emphasises the need to draw non-working class forces into a broad alliance with the working class. Then one wonders who the working class is to enter into an alliance with? It is therefore not surprising that virtually all the interventions within this type of Marxism consists only of a negative criticism of the CST thesis with no coherent political programme on how to address these questions. Therefore, the political implication of economistic Marxism is to push for socialism as the basis for class alliances, although that is hardly ever spelt out in detail. If protagonists of this position push for socialism, they do not explain how those forces who are simultaneously anti-apartheid and anti-socialist should be drawn into the struggle in South Africa. If they are talking about alliances, then alliance between which classes? The working class in alliance with itself? What is the need for class alliances after all in such a situation?

Wolpe goes beyond some of the limitations of economistic Marxism, but falls short by not posing the question of how the APB is to be drawn into the national liberation struggle in South Africa. This is an outcome of the failure to articulate the politics and ideology of the APB. Wolpe is definitely sensitive to the national dimension of the petty bourgeoisie, but does not exploit to the full the political implications of his own analysis.

Contrary to many of the arguments being advanced within South Africa's Marxism, it is largely the CST thesis that squarely confronts the articulation of the class question to the national and democratic questions in South Africa. The fundamental thesis of the CST in relation to the APB is that because of its political and economic disabilities, national liberation and the abolition of apartheid is in the deepest interests of this class. However, similarly with Nolutshungu, the CST thesis does not differentiate between the various strata and fractions of the APB. Also it tends to focus on the way apartheid hampers the APB, and consequently less attention has been given to the ability of capital to win over some sections of the APB, no matter how anti-apartheid they can be. This creates a tension about drawing this class into an anti-apartheid alliance, without specifying what happens to it in the post apartheid phase, particularly its role in the transition towards socialism. The fact that the APB is only interested in the abolition of apartheid, makes it reserved about its involvement in anti-apartheid struggles; it's hope is that victory over apartheid does not jeopardise the existence and continued reproduction of a capitalist economy. However, the CST thesis is

quite correct in conceptualising the petty bourgeoisie as interested in some fundamental departures from apartheid, provided these will strengthen their own future economic positions.

Given some of these weaknesses in the precise understanding of the political behaviour of the APB, this section will conclude by summarising and emphasising the nature of the politics and ideology of specifically the ACPB. The political behaviour of the ACPB shows three major characteristics. First of all, because of the long period of the suppression of this class, and the continued reproduction of this suppression even during the period of reform, the ACPB is fundamentally opposed to apartheid, because apartheid interferes with their chances for upward mobility. This is even more so for the ACPB which has very little to lose from the total abolition of apartheid, since its own reproduction is not even minimally dependent on the reproduction of the structures of apartheid. Instead, apartheid stands as a negation to its own reproduction.

However, the discourse of the ACPB in relation to capitalism is quite different to that on apartheid. Despite the fact that the ACPB appears to be placing equal emphasis on addressing the needs of the black community, the route through which they want to travel is decidedly a capitalist one. And this is the second characteristic of the discourse of the ACPB. The discourse of a 'mixed economy' reflects the tensions and ideological dilemmas facing the ACPB; wanting to see a capitalist society, but at the same time removing the poverty facing the black people. This poverty causes anxieties for themselves, and turns upward mobility into a liability in the midst of intensifying mass struggles. It is clear that, on average, the capitalist class has succeeded in creating a stratum of an APB that is committed and attracted to capitalism. Capitalism legitimates itself within the ranks of the ACPB through its ideology of a 'free-market economy'. This becomes particularly attractive to the ACPB, whose disabilities look like they could be corrected if a pure, non-apartheid capitalist economy can come about in South Africa.

The capitalist discourse has become even more legitimate within the ranks of the ACPB because of attempts by the white ruling bloc to sunder apartheid from capitalism. This 'ideological rupture' (incorporating elements of the old liberal thinking in South Africa) was

'inaugurated' by the reform programme introduced in the late 1970's by PW Botha, which attempted to depoliticise labour and employment, leaving it to capital to sort out these relationships on its own, with less direct assistance from the apartheid state. The drive towards privatisation tends to underline further the possibilities for a deracialised capitalist economy for the ACPB. At this level, the capitalist class has been successful in getting across its ideology of a free enterprise economy to the ACPB.

However, before one can say that this class is successfully co-opted, this whole study has shown that the disabilities faced by this group are still enormous. This is the third characteristic of the ACPB. These disabilities are both of an economic and political nature. On the economic front, apartheid and the extended reproduction of the white corporate petty bourgeoisie continue to limit the capacity of the ACPB to reproduce itself within South Africa's corporations. The inability of the white ruling class to speed up this process despite more than a decade of 'black advancement' is rooted in its hesitancy to interfere with the extended reproduction of the white corporate petty bourgeoisie, as demonstrated in chapter 6.

It is in the very contradictions of apartheid itself that the contradictory location of the ACPB can be explained further. All these contradictions place the ACPB in a position of weakness both in relation to the corporate hierarchy and the wider political struggles. To even suggest that the ACPB can assert its project over that of the black working class in the present phase of apartheid rule, would be rather simplistic. In fact, I would argue that it is these very weaknesses vis-a-vis the white ruling bloc, that tends to push the ACPB towards the mass democratic movement. The ACPB is a reluctant partner of the white ruling bloc. What this means is that although this stratum of the APB is for capitalism, apartheid continues to deny it the chances of upward mobility, therefore pitching the interests of the white ruling bloc against those of this class.

Given the above picture then it is important to summarise by pointing out some of the major weaknesses that make the ACPB's project of spreading its discourse over to the working class to be severely proscribed, despite all the attempts by the power bloc to create a class that will impose its hegemony over the popular masses.

There are basically four reasons why this class is unable to assert itself and move closer to being a class that can lead the mass democratic struggles.

The first one is that it has no access to state power to strengthen its position vis-a-vis other classes in society. Secondly, it has no control over the major institutions of capital accumulation. Thirdly, it is organised outside the structures of the MDM, a factor that severely hampers its ability to assert its own project over that of the working class. Fourthly, its ideological discourse is incoherent and contradictory, such that it cannot offer and lead a programme for liberation for the masses of the oppressed people in South Africa. Its programme is largely defensive, and its discourse largely an attempt to relate to the MDM without at the same time losing the opportunities for advancement provided by the capitalist class, and, to a lesser extent, the apartheid state. Therefore no matter how much rhetoric it has on the intention to play a leading role in the struggles, it is very weak.

The conjuncture during which the white ruling bloc is making some concessions to the APB, does not easily translate these concessions to gains for the ACPB. More so the price of collaborating with the regime has become higher since the intensification of mass struggles in the 1980's. The APB in particular has been under immense pressure in the 1980's to define its stance in relation to the mass democratic struggles.

All these pressures, therefore, make this class to gravitate towards the mass democratic movement. At this juncture, it is more likely that it will become part of the anti-apartheid struggles. The conjuncture of the late 1980's dictates that its own class interests can from now onwards be catered for via some kind of collaboration and accommodation with the mass democratic movement. Economistic marxism has always argued that the class interests of the APB make it gravitate towards the white ruling bloc. Such an assertion treats the notion of class interests as if they can be pursued only through one route. Because the petty bourgeoisie is a class in between the principal contending classes, its class interests need not be attained only through the route of collaboration. Although at an abstract level, it may be correct to say that this class acts to protect its class interests, this does not in itself exclude

the possibility of pursuing such interests through accommodation with the MDM. Class position and class politics are mediated by a range of political factors that need to be carefully grasped and explained. The mediating factors in the case of the ACPB include its continued reproduction as a class subordinate to its white counterparts.

It is in this way, then, that the national and democratic question crosscuts the class question in shaping the political behaviour of the African corporate petty bourgeoisie. This crosscutting makes the political alignment of the ACPB a contested, rather than a fixed matter in contemporary South Africa.

* * * *

As the thesis opened on a personal note in its preface, it would proper to end it on a short personal/political note. Hopefully it has been demonstrated that the african petty bourgeoisie is a fluctuating class, whose fate is largely dependent on the respective strengths and weaknesses of the principal contending forces in society. It is clear that I did not merely fluctuate towards the left, but more of a drift towards the left narrows the space for one to remain in South Africa's industrial corporations. Of course I left the industrial corporations at the time when the mass semi-insurrectionary struggles of the mid-1980's were at their height - 31 December 1984.

However the period that South Africa has entered probably provides both comfort and fears for the african petty bourgeoisie. Comfort in so far as that the ANC - as the most popular political organisation - seems to be moderating the militancy of the era of the mass democratic movement. The ANC's attempts to also win the middle ground within the black townships, a space that was narrowing for the ACPB to operate within the dominant institutions of apartheid and capitalism in South Africa, is re-opening again - a space for *corporate guerillas*. Within the structures of the ANC it is less comfortable to be both an upwardly mobile african executive and still be an ANC member. Fears on the part of the APB probably emanates from the strength of the ideology of socialism, not only within the working class, but echoing right inside the grassroots membership of the ANC.

Although it is not my intention to analyse the post-February 2 scenario, and the possible implications of these developments for class alliances, it is worth pointing out at this juncture that just as the ANC is up for grabs in terms of the political direction it takes, the APB still remains a fluctuating class, which seems to be drifting even more towards the national liberation movement as a possible (hopefully for them) future home for an African national bourgeoisie!

1. Nzimande, 1986 p. 53
2. Vilas, 1986 p. 127
3. ibid, p. 8
4. Sarakinsky, op cit.
5. Nzimande, 1986
6. in Nzimande, ibid p. 53
7. All the information on the early history of PPA prior to 1981, unless indicated otherwise, is taken from an interview (21/1/90) with a founder member of NEPTDASA, who once acted as its chairperson.
8. Interview, 21/2/90.
9. ibid.
10. ibid.
11. ibid.
12. Report of the Proceedings of a meeting of black personnel practitioners, held at the Athlone Hotel, Durban - 19/9/81.
13. ibid p. 3
14. ibid, p. 3
15. Minutes of the inaugural meeting of the Personnel Practitioners Association, 9/6/84.
16. BMF constitution, 1981.
17. Mafuna, E First BMF president, undated document on what the BMF is. p. 1
18. ibid. p. 2
19. in Nzimande, 1986 p. 54
20. 'The BMF: What it is and how it functions'. An undated BMF / document on its aims and objectives, p. 6.
21. Interview with a PPA executive member APP, 11/3/88.
22. Report of the BMF Directors for the year ended 31 March 1985, p. 2
23. ibid

24. Minutes of the Black Personnel Practitioners Contact Group, 25/8/81. Although the later constitution of the PPA did cater for corporate membership, it did not pursue this matter actively. The BMF has got a lot of corporate members whose subscriptions are an important source of finance for the organisation.
25. City Press, 20/9/87
26. *ibid.*
27. 'Memorandum on the Professional Registration of Personnel Practitioners' IPM 1981, p. 39. //
28. *ibid*, p. 2
29. Report on PPA workshop on Proposed Registration with the Board of Personnel Practice, held on 5/12/84, p. 1.
30. *ibid*, p. 3
31. Memorandum on Professional registration, *op cit*, p. 23
32. Report of the Durban convenor to the BMF head office, 1985.
33. *ibid*, p. 2
34. Report on PPA Internal Survey, 22/3/86.
35. Black Leader Vol 7 August 1987.
36. The Black Leader, Vol 8, December 1987.
37. Khoza, R 'The role of the Black Manager: Acting in Concert with other constituencies'. The Black Leader, Vol 7, 1987 p. 6
38. The total is not equal to the number of APP's completed the questionnaire (39), since in a few instances some individuals were involved in more than one activity.
39. Undated BMF document on statement of principles
40. The Black Leader, Vol 7, 1987 p. 8
41. Survey on PPA members, 1988.
42. *ibid.*
43. Mkhwanazi, D in Black Leader, 1987 Vol 7 p. 15
44. UmAfrika, 3/9/88. This is Natal-based Zulu weekly newspaper, and consequently all translations from the paper are mine.
45. UmAfrika, 13/8/88.
46. *ibid.*

47. *ibid.*
48. *ibid.*
49. *ibid.*
50. This is taken from a questionnaire sent to the BMF national office. It was discussed by the board of directors and replied on behalf of the organisation. 25 October 1989.
51. Work on the "Pension Problem" done by the Black Personnel Practitioners Contact Group, 24/10/81.
52. *ibid.*
53. *ibid.*
54. Nzimande, 1986
55. *ibid.*
56. BMF Directors, op cit.
57. *ibid.*
58. in *ibid*, pp. 49-50. Emphases added.
59. PPA internal survey, op cit.
60. Sitas, 1985 (SALB).
61. Survey done on PPA by author, op cit.
62. *ibid.*
63. *ibid.*
64. The discussion of the political implications of the 1984-86 struggles is taken from Nzimande 'Class, National Oppression and the African Petty Bourgeoisie in South Africa: The case of the african traders' in Nzimande et al (forthcoming, 1990).
65. Race Relations Surveys 1985 - 88; Mare and Ncube, 1989.
66. BMF 'Report on the Commission of Linkages and Political Affairs' 1985.
67. *ibid.*
68. *ibid.*
69. *ibid.*
70. Khoza, R in Black Leader, Vol 7, August 1987 p. 10

71. Black Leader, Vol 7 August 1987, p. 7
72. Sarakinsky, op cit.
73. Vilas, 1986.
74. ibid., p. 36
75. Hudson, 1986.
76. Erwin, SALB, 1986
77. ibid p. 38
78. ibid, p. 37
79. Sarakinsky, 1987 p. 43.
80. See Nzimande, 1990 (forthcoming) for detailed arguments on the capacity of the African traders to reproduce themselves.
81. This contradiction comes out very succinctly in Erwin's argument. In the same breath he talks about the imperative for unity, but at the same time such unity does not lead to what he calls the 'politics' of transformation'. (Erwin, 1985).

f) Salary

Less than R12 000 p.a.	_____
Between R12 000 - R20 000	_____
R21 000 - R25 000	_____
R26 000 - R30 000	_____
R31 000 - R40 000	_____
R41 000 - R50 000	_____
Over R50 000	_____

g) Other perks (specify e.g. car, housing allowance, etc.)

.....

h) Job title

.....

i) Number of years in current job

.....

2. SOCIAL BACKGROUND

a) Parental background

Father:

Highest standard passed (including university degrees)

.....

Occupation (e.g. labourer, teacher, nurse, etc.)

.....

Other sources of income

.....

Mother:

Appendix A

Questionnaire and interview schedule

PERSONNEL PRACTITIONERS : BIOGRAPHICAL PROFILE

1. BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

a) Age:

Less than 25	_____
Between 26 - 29	_____
30 - 35	_____
36 - 40	_____
41 - 45	_____
46 - 50	_____
51 - 55	_____
Over 55	_____

b) Formal education:

Less than matric	_____
Matric	_____
University degree	_____
Postgraduate degree	_____

c) Professional qualifications (e.g. IPM diploma)

.....

d) Place of birth

.....

e) Residence (Umlazi, Imbali, etc.)

.....

Highest educational qualifications.....

Occupation

Other sources of income

b) How would you describe your family \ childhood background ?

Very poor _____

Poor _____

Relatively comfortable _____

Affluent _____

c) What support systems did you have to help you with your education? (Parents, bursaries, relatives, other sources, etc. - please be as specific as possible)

.....

.....

d) What is the occupation of wife\husband.....

.....

e) Where do your children go to school ?

Township govt school _____

Township private school (e.g. Inanda Seminary) _____

Private (multi-racial) school _____

Other (Specify in as much detail as possible)

.....

.....

3. WHAT COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES ARE YOU INVOLVED IN ? (E.G. WELFARE SOCIETIES, YOUTH GROUPS, CHURCH, ETC. - PLEASE SPECIFY WHAT ROLE YOU PLAY IN EACH).

.....

.....

.....

.....

4. NAME THREE MOST SIGNIFICANT PROBLEMS\OBSTACLES YOU ENCOUNTER
IN YOUR JOB AS AN AFRICAN PERSONNEL PRACTITIONER

.....

.....

.....

5. WHAT KIND OF AN ECONOMIC SYSTEM YOU THINK WILL LEAD TO
ECONOMIC PROSPERITY FOR ALL IN A POST-APATRHEID SOUTH AFRICA ?

FREE MARKET ECONOMY _____

MIXED ECONOMY (SPECIFY) _____

SOCIALIST ECONOMY _____

OTHER (SPECIFY) _____

WHY ? (GIVE AS MUCH DETAIL AS YOU POSSIBLY CAN)

.....

6. WHICH POLITICAL ORGANIZATION DO YOU BELONG TO ?

INKATHA _____

UDF _____

AZAPO _____

OTHER (Give name) _____

DO NOT BELONG TO
ANY POLITICAL
ORGANIZATION _____

WHY ?.....

.....

7. WHICH POLITICAL ORGANIZATION DO YOU THINK HAS THE POTENTIAL
OF BRINGING ABOUT PEACE, STABILITY AND ECONOMIC PROSPERITY FOR
ALL IN S.A.?

UDF _____

INKATHA	_____
ANC	_____
PFP	_____
AZAPO	_____
OTHER	_____

8. WHICH OTHER PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS DO YOU BELONG TO ?

.....

9. TELL ME ABOUT THE WORK YOU DO, WHAT YOU LIKE ABOUT IT AND WHAT YOU DO NOT LIKE?

10. TELL ME ABOUT THE RELATIONSHIPS YOU HAVE AT WORK AND HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THEM?

11. HOW WOULD YOU SPECIFICALLY DESCRIBE YOUR RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE WORKERS IN YOUR COMPANY AND THE COMMUNITY AT LARGE?

COMPOUND KUNDUNA

This employee must be able to read, write and speak English and Zulu and be able to do simple arithmetic and have a fair handwriting.

He must have a good knowledge of tribal habits and customs of the various tribes housed in the Compound.

He must have the ability to control and instruct others without abusing his authority.

He must have a general knowledge of regulations enforced by the Native Affairs Department.

He must be able to use the telephone and know who to contact and when.

He must hold a First Aid Certificate.

Under instructions from the Compound Manager :-

- (1) Act as Liaison between the Compound Manager and the residents of the Compound.
- (2) Act as an interpreter when required.
- (3) Assist the Compound Manager with clerical work relating to :-
 - (a) Rations
 - (b) Attendance registers
 - (c) Employees' personal files
 - (d) Time Cards
 - (e) Reference books
 - (f) Clothing issues
 - (g) Receiving and issuing of goods for Compound.
 - (h) Supervision of mail matters for the residents.
- (4) He will attend all meetings and entertainments held in the Compound.
- (5) He will see that no unauthorised person or persons enter the Compound without permission and that no unauthorised persons enter the bungalows.
- (6) He will, during the absence of the Compound Manager, be responsible :
 - (a) For Law and Order in the Compound.
 - (b) That no resident of the Compound disturbs the peace by making noise, shouting, wrangling, quarrelling, collecting a crowd or other riotous, violent or unruly behaviour.
 - (c) That no person willfully or negligently damages any building, windows, doors, pipes, fittings, refuse bins, etc.
 - (d) That no person enters or leaves the Compound other than by the proper gates provided.
 - (e) That no person takes part in any game of chance for gain. (Gambling)
 - (f) That no person meets the requirements of nature in such a place or in such a manner as to cause a nuisance.
 - (g) That no person deposits refuse or waste food or other material except in or at a place specially provided for the purpose.
 - (h) That no person brings into the Compound illicit liquor, sticks or other dangerous weapons.
 - (i) That no person stores or keeps in his bungalow any food, meat, putu, samp, etc., or any Kaffir beer that may be issued as a ration.
 - (j) That no person uses in or around his bed any screen of any description that may obstruct the free passage of air and light.

APPENDIX "C"

APP NO. 15 10 51

APP JOB DESCRIPTION - 1977

NAME:

POSITION: PERSONNEL MANAGER

POSITION: PERSONNEL OFFICER

JOB PURPOSE: ADMINISTRATION OF PERSONNEL
INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS
RECRUITMENT, SELECTION & PLACEMENT

	KEY TASKS	STANDARDS AND MEASUREMENT	LIMITS OF AUTHORITY
1.	RECRUITMENT, SELECTION, AND PLACEMENT OF STAFF WELFARE AND RECREATION	STAFF TURNOVER FIGURES WITHIN 5% INDEX EMPLOYEE EFFECTIVENESS, GOOD RELATIONS WITH LABOUR ORGANISATIONS BUDGETS WITHIN 5% REDUCE ABSENTEEISM BY 5% IN CURRENT YEAR	RECRUITMENT OF STAFF BEYOND THE ESTABLISHED COMPLEMENT WITHOUT WRITTEN AUTHORITY INSTITUTE ANY PROCEDURE CONTRARY TO COMPANY POLICY
2.	INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS LIAISON OF STAFF	NO LABOUR UNREST NO COMEBACKS AFTER DISCIPLINARY ACTION GOOD STAFF RELATIONS, NO COMPLAINTS	INSTITUTE ANY PROCEDURE CONTRARY TO GOVERNMENT LEGISLATION OR COMPANY POLICY. MAKE DECISIONS ON BEHALF OF MANAGEMENT
3.	STAFF SERVICES, TRAINING HOLIDAYS	CONTENTED NO REPROACHES ADEQUATE SERVICES, HEALTHY WORKFORCE FEEDING WITHIN LAID DOWN STANDARDS BUDGETS WITHIN 5% UP TO DATE RECORDS	AUTHORISE ACCOMMODATION FOR STAFF ABOVE RATE 12 AUTHORISE EXPENDITURE NOT CATERED FOR IN THE BUDGET
4.	ADMINISTRATIVE TIMEKEEPING	UP TO DATE RECORDS 100% ACCURACY IN TIMEKEEPING RETURNS SUBMITTED ON TIME NO COMEBACKS	

APPENDIX "D"

TABLE 9: DEGREES AND DIPLOMAS OBTAINED AT UNIVERSITIES IN SOUTH AFRICA³⁾, 1975, 1980 AND 1985

Course of Study	Year	Whites	Coloureds	Asians	Blacks	Total
Agriculture	1975	343	-	-	2	345
	1980	496	-	-	-	496
	1985	658	6	-	40	704
Architecture and Environmental Design	1975	293	3	2	-	298
	1980	395	2	7	4	408
	1985	357	4	3	7	371
Arts	1975	90	-	6	-	96
	1980	489	13	3	1	506
	1985	565	18	33	25	641
Business, Commerce, Management and Administration	1975	2 593	21	136	43	2 793
	1980	3 121	34	92	46	3 293
	1985	4 820	147	255	456	5 678
Education and Physical Education	1975	2 691	89	156	253	3 189
	1980	4 065	83	120	59	4 327
	1985	3 869	480	557	2 375	7 281
Arts, Philosophy and Others ²⁾	1975	5 342	162	163	434	6 101
	1980	6 870	173	227	178	7 448
	1985	7 410	595	716	1 249	9 970
Law	1975	885	12	20	100	1 017
	1980	1 381	14	53	26	1 474
	1985	1 646	36	97	271	2 050
Engineering and Engineering Technology	1975	895	5	8	-	908
	1980	1 046	6	4	1	1 057
	1985	1 476	15	26	25	1 542
Computer Science	1975 ¹⁾	-	-	-	-	-
	1980	142	2	1	1	146
	1985	136	1	2	1	140
Mathematics and Natural Science	1975	1 863	35	97	88	2 083
	1980	1 924	32	37	11	2 004
	1985	2 016	93	145	177	2 431
Health Care and Health Science	1975	1 324	34	76	44	1 478
	1980	2 136	28	75	123	2 362
	1985	2 644	86	196	433	3 359
Total	1975	16 319	361	664	964	18 308
	1980	22 065	387	619	450	23 521
	1985	26 049	1 494	2 052	5 082	34 677

Sources: National Manpower Commission (1987), based on figures by Central Statistical Service and Department of National Education.

Notes: 1) Not available.

2) Degrees and diplomas obtained in Psychology, Social Science, Communication, Home Economics and Military Science are, besides others, included here.

3) Table excludes TBVC states. Approximately 20 percent of all black students was enrolled at universities in the TBVC states in 1986.

(Source: Dostal, 1989 p. 15)

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