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Ambivalence and Commitment in Work:

Labour Turnover and the Stability of African Employees in a Transvaal Border Industry

Roger D. J. Allen

AMBIVALENCE AND COMMITMENT IN WORK

LABOUR TURNOVER AND THE STABILITY OF AFRICAN
EMPLOYEES IN A TRANSVAAL BORDER INDUSTRY

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1978

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Each of these societies considers that its essential
and ultimate aim is to preserve its existing form
and carry on as it was established by its ancestors,
and for the sole reason that it was so fashioned by
its ancestors.

Claude Lévi-Strauss

...amid the diversity of our inventions and abstract
techniques of production and distribution there will
be found a great degree of cohesion and unity. This
consistency is not conscious in origin or effect and
seems to arise from a sort of collective dream. For
that reason, as well as because of the widespread
popularity of these objects and processes, they are
here referred to as "the folklore of industrial man".

Herbert Marshall McLuhan

PREFACE

Employment in South Africa has certain features which in substantial
measure reflect the consequences of broader political policies. One
such feature is the relatively very great scale of the phenomenon of
oscillating migrant African labour, moving to and fro between African
'homelands' and the industrial areas, with the possibilities of pro-
gressive urbanisation curtailed by legislation which limits rights to
domicile in the industrial 'common' area. Another feature is the growth
of decentralised production on the borders of the vast labour reservoirs
of the 'homelands', much of it in existing growth points but some of it
in rural settings. This study is centrally concerned with both of these
major issues as they bear upon a familiar topic of applied industrial
studies — labour turnover.

The history of industrial development in most societies has been a history
of major shifts in commitment as workers have discarded rural values and
disentangled themselves from rural ties in their striving for rewards in
the urban industrial milieu. This process in the main has involved a
combination of growing industrialisation ard urbanisation, with each
supporting and reinforcing the other. In South Africa, however, the con-
straints on the domestic movements of African migrants and the emergence
of non-urban industrial employment have created the potential possibility
of industrialisation without urbanisation.

Although this study concerns an industry which is rural by virtue of
its raw material and products (timber), the situation of the labour force,
in essence, is identical to that of other African migrants who work in
decentralised industrial growth points. In his search for insights re-
lating to labour mobility, Roger Allen deals extensively with the issue
of industrial commitment, how this is affected by a broader cultural
ambivalence among employees, and how both relate to the efficiency of the
labour force. The author presents a convincing and disquieting assessment
of the costs to industry of a system of labour-supply which is highly

convenient and cheap in situations of low-efficiency production, but which may be increasingly unsuitable where increased productivity and mechanisation along conventional lines is required. In the course of presenting his evidence and his arguments, the author provides not only useful advice for personnel officers but raises salient questions about the wider effects of the trends he reports, and about alternative possibilities in manpower planning and industrial organisation.

This report is a companion document to a slightly earlier study conducted in rural Natal and Eastern Transvaal as part of the same broad research programme undertaken under my general supervision. While many aspects of the basic planning of the two studies coincided, Roger Allen's analysis and interpretation is exclusively his own work.

It is hoped that the insights contained in this document will be helpful in assisting policy-formulation, not only in border-industrial settings but even in other settings where migrant labour is utilised on a large scale. We would like to thank the sponsoring companies for their substantial contribution towards the costs of this research, and in particular would hope that the study will prove useful in their future development.

Professor L. Schlemmer
Director
Centre for Applied Social Sciences

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This study of labour turnover is one particular part of a series of ongoing investigations, begun in 1973, into a range of loosely-related industrial labour problems in the South African timber industry. The activities of two large companies were the field of the investigations, the one a wattle growing and extracting industry in Natal, and the other a timber growing and processing industry in the Transvaal. While differing some-what in their production activities the two companies resemble each other in respect of their African workforces, their rural settings and their decentralised operations. The investigations, based on the common and urgent need to steadily increase the wages, and therefore the productivity, of the employees, also included a survey of local levels of the cost of living in relation to employee incomes, intra-familial financial dependence and budgeting; and more recently a detailed study of the employees them-selves vis-a-vis a broad range of attitudes, orientations, and human and social factors influencing motivation in the workplace.

Two different research teams independently studied the situations in the two companies, but to a certain extent there was co-operation between the teams over basic research strategy, data processing formats, and assess-ments of the most general features of the rural timber industry. Our own study of labour turnover in the Transvaal-based company, described here, therefore took place in a manner informed by prior familiarity with many local conditions. Selected earlier reports by Allen, Rawlins and Schlemmer, of this Centre, dealing with related aspects of the industry are listed in our References.

1.1   SETTING OF THE STUDY

This study examined virtually all of the Transvaal-based company's
African workforces, which in fact make up the great majority of all its
employees[1] — only managers, some managerial office staff and a few
senior supervisors are Whites. The company's activities are geographically
dispersed in the north-eastern Transvaal but divide broadly into two
distinct groups: one centred on the town of Louis Trichardt and referred
to in this report as the Northern Group; and one centred on the Drakensberg
Escarpment west of the town of Tzaneen, and referred to as the Southern
Group. The two Groups fall under two separate managements, but in terms
of jobs, administrative structures and most production activities, are
alike. A total of approximately one thousand migrant, semi-migrant, and
resident African workers are engaged in both Groups in forestry, logging,
sawmilling, timber processing and timber handling. Forest plantations,
saw mills, a timber stock-yard, vehicle maintenance garages and employee
accommodation compounds, amounting to at least fifteen separate company
installations, employ migrants from at least six distinct areas of the
Venda, Lebowa and Gazankulu homelands. With the exception of the stock-
yard, all the centres of employment are rurally situated in "White" areas,
but not far from neighbouring homeland areas. It is this feature,
together with the presence of large numbers of migrants in the workforce,
that gives the company its Border Industry character. Most centres of
employment have a small core of permanently resident workers, but the
great majority of workers are migrants of one kind or another. For
individual migrants, distances between workplace and homeland range from
three to eighty kilometres, while the frequency of migration may be
as often as daily or as seldom as annually.[2] No simple description of
links between particular centres of employment and particular homeland

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1) As the principal objects of this study, the African workforces are
   hereafter referred to simply as the "employees".

2) The definitional problems raised by this variance are dealt with later.

districts is possible, because of the ethnically-mixed workforces at
several centres, and because of the great geographic complexity of the
homelands. However, in the Northern Group the employees are principally
local Vendas, with just over twenty per cent Shangaans, while employees
in the Southern Group are principally Pedi with about ten per cent
Shangaans. Details of the relative positions of homeland areas and
the company's centres of employment are given in Maps I and II, Appendix
B. The majority of installations, including the two major sawmills,
and all forest plantations, are situated in forested mountainous terrain
characterised by high rainfall (900 to 2 000 mm. per annum), mist belts
and wide fluctuations of temperature.

The sawmills , where the majority of employees are concentrated,
typically employ at least one hundred men each. Although the industry
is rurally located and by nature labour-intensive, the organisation of
the mills is typically Western-industrial, with fixed production lines,
heavy machinery, a variety of specialised jobs, hierarchical administra-
tion and supervision, fixed working hours, and remuneration by monthly
cash wages. By contrast, the homeland areas from where most employees
originate are culturally quite different, being almost completely rural
and characterised to a large extent by an agricultural subsistence
economy, relative absence of manufactured goods and public services,
poverty, relatively high population densities,[1] and in some areas, aridity.
In particular, the relative backwardness of the homelands is culturally
characterised by the persistence, among much of the population, of
traditional tribal social structures together with a whole range of
corresponding attitudes and values,[2] and by poor levels of education and
literacy. Indeed, in their own home areas occasional shops, motor
vehicles, limited educational experience, and a few habits imported by
returning migrant workers, are probably the only significant concomitants
of industrial society encountered with any regularity by permanent
residents of the homelands. In terms of the education they have received,

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1) See Map III, Appendix B.

2) N.B. For a comprehensive account of "traditionalism" as an enduring
   disposition and orientation among many Black South Africans, rural
   and urban, see Orpen (1975), particularly pp.49-63.

about fifty per cent of the company's employees are literate in the baldest sense of the term; but, only thirty per cent can really be said to be literate in a way implying practice and familiarity with reading and writing. Without doubt, fewer still have actively utilised their literacy since leaving school. No more than six per cent of employees have had any urban experience during childhood, and no more than forty per cent are Christian — furthermore, of this latter proportion only half are members of Western churches.

In the sawmills themselves almost two-thirds of all jobs are unskilled and manual, this proportion increasing in the forest plantations. Of the remaining jobs the great majority tend to consist of the semi-skilled operation of simple machines and the supervision of unskilled or semi-skilled jobs. Clerks, heavy duty drivers and a few mechanics form a small elite, mainly confined to sawmills.   The size of the plantation workforces tends to fluctuate seasonally, increasing temporarily by about thirty per cent during each annual dry season, when extra employees, commonly the wives and other relatives of men already employed full time, assist in firebreak maintenance and some felling and clearing activities.

For the purpose of this report, the eight principal centres of employment have been identified as follows:

Centre	1974 Black workforce
Northern Major Sawmill	188 employees
Northern Timber Yard	107 employees
Northern Major Plantation	99 employees
Southern Major Sawmill	212 employees
Southern Subsidiary Sawmill	91 employees
Southern Garage	72 employees
Southern Major Plantation	45 employees
Southern Mountain Plantation	40 employees

The accommodation of employees varies from centre to centre but, where

provided, is always in company-owned buildings, usually near the work-
place. Broadly speaking, sawmill employees are accommodated in compounds
on or adjacent to the sawmill sites themselves. These compounds consist
principally of numbers of single quarters units, each occupied by about
half a dozen men or more. A small minority of relatively permanent
residents are able to live with their immediate families in separate
married quarters on the same sites. Limited communal cooking and eating
arrangements operate in accordance with the working hours of the sawmills.
In the case of the forest plantations, where the organisation of work is
by nature less routine and less predictable, employees live in quasi-
traditional settlements scattered through the plantations. Arrangements
are far less structured by the company, and many more employees are able
to live with their families in married quarters. In 1973/74 when we first
visited the various centres the suitability and quality of accommodation
in many places was notably poor: some compounds were overcrowded, untidy
and unhygienic, and some dwellings were self-built shanties. Since then
a general program of improvements, rebuilding and rehousing has been
gradually progressing. This study, however, while investigating the
leisure activities of employees to a certain extent, concentrates
essentially on the men as employees in a workplace rather than as resi-
dents in accommodation.

More detailed information about individual sawmills is recorded in
Appendix A (q.v.), placing each mill in its local context. Production
activities and the proportion of skilled labour are outlined, as well as
the situation of the mills in respect of their immediate environments,
their links with neighbouring towns and homeland areas, and the patterns
of migration of their employees.

Notes on the populations of the principal towns and villages in the two
areas of the Northern Group and the Southern Group will be found in
Appendix B.

1.2   RESEARCH METHODS

The data and impressions on which this report is based were collected
during four periods of fieldwork, totalling twenty weeks, which were con-
ducted in the Northern Transvaal by the writer and a research team of
this Centre.

After an initial pilot study on a labour-intensive forest plantation in
Natal, during which the general demeanour of employees, the nature of
likely communications problems between them and ourselves, and the
principal issues in the employment situation as seen by themselves were
assessed, appropriate arrangements were made to collect information.

Essentially, information was sought in two different ways: by means of
a statistical survey, and by relatively more empathic methods and obser-
vations. These two approaches complement each other: while the former
provides basic measurable data on a wide range of particulars, the
latter shows up qualitative nuances in the broad themes revealed, and
permits more informed and sensitive interpretation of statistics. In
addition to the theoretical perspectives which the investigator himself
brings to bear on the situation studied, empathy-based observations permit
an apprehension of possible local "folk models" in terms of which the
subjects of study perceive their own situation.

The statistical survey was carried out by systematic in-depth interviewing
of selected stratified samples of employees by means of a standard
structured interview-schedule specifically designed in accordance with
the findings of the pilot study. Both because of and in spite of our
relatively modest sample sizes, interviews were very much in-depth.
Indeed, because of the illiteracy of most respondents, and the complexity
of many of the issues explored in the interview, the use of skilled
interviewers and of much time was necessary in order to recover satisfactory
information. A successful interview, involving careful probing and
elaboration of numerous topics, many of which a hesitant respondent might

be properly considering for the first time, commonly took three to four
hours to complete. Ultimately, information on 156 distinguishable
variables was derivable from these interviews. The authenticity and
truth of responses are crucial factors in any interviewing situation,
and from the outset it was accepted by us that for interviewing to be
of any real value, and for it to effectively overcome the inevitable
barriers of language, idiom, suspicion and race relations, it would have
to be undertaken by very carefully briefed, African interviewers using
the indigenous languages of the respondents. This condition was con-
sistently met and we were in the event fortunate in succeeding in
recruiting as interviewers a number of Venda and Pedi university gradu-
ates, with training, moreover, in the behavioural sciences. As a
result, the quality of interviewing, and of subsequent comment on the
situation by interviewers, was excellent. In the fieldwork situation
every effort was made, when with employees, to avoid any apparent identifica-
tion of the research team with management,[1] and interviews were requested
and conducted in as informal a manner as possible, at the workplace, but
away from other employees. No refusals by any of the selected respondents
were encountered. Once recovered, the raw information in individual
interviews was studied, classified, coded, and stored in punched cards.
Subsequent statistical manipulation of the data was performed by computer.

The more qualitative collection of information was largely achieved by
the technique of group-interviews, particular details of which are de-
scribed in Appendix A. All the group-interviews were initially based on
standardised stimuli or topics which we wished to probe, but they were
also informal and flexible. Successful group-interviews are latently
structured to some extent by a skillful co-ordinator, but at the same time
are by nature open-ended and responsive to the initiatives of the group,

1) In fact, the Company gave valuable assistance by accommodating research
   teams and by arranging to "allow" sampled employees to be released from
   work duties for the purpose of interviewing when this occurred during
   working hours.

often thereby achieving an animation   in which the spontaneity or gut-
level of remarks undoubtedly reflects their authenticity. Above all,
group-interviews enable men to furnish information on their own terms —
and in contexts of their own choosing, sometimes suggesting to the
investigator genuinely novel conceptions of situations. The time-
honoured individual interview, although precise, is very much an
instrument of the more extrinsically-based social sciences which bears
with it all the assumptions of a literate, academic, highly analytic
mode of thought —— a product of "Print-culture". In practice, however,
the application to preliterate[1] people of interview schedules which
are necessarily structured, selective, itemised, sequential, etc.,
raises serious problems of communication. On the other hand, our own
experience with group-interviews leads us to the conviction that as a
method of rapidly collecting "semi-structured" information they
particularly suit the "preliterate mind" (as characterised by, inter
alia, McLuhan), as well as having other merits, and albeit failing to
yield statistics. In this case the group co-ordinators were members of
the interviewing team, who were thus able to opportunely invite to
group-interviews suitable selections of employees, with whom, moreover,
they were already familiar as a result of individual interviewing. This
order of events also enabled group co-ordinators to investigate at our
request issues which, it was clear from our monitoring of the individual
interviews, had not yet been clarified by individual interviewing. Once
again, in the fieldwork situation, when these interviews were undertaken,
we recognised that in all likelihood it would be quite un-
productive for ourselves, as Whites, to be present at what were in
effect sociable gatherings of Black workers. However, the African group
co-ordinators were very carefully briefed and de-briefed by us immediately
before and after every interviewing session, and the same co-ordinators
undertook the final transcription and translation into English of the
tape-recordings of the group-interviews.

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1) i.e. People who are culturally preliterate as well as individually
    illiterate.

A third and important mode of information collecting consisted of
personal observation by ourselves resulting from participation in a
variety of situations. This low intensity participant observation con-
centrated on aspects of management, on the organisation of work and the
experience of the work itself, on regional and geographic details in
the "two worlds" of the migrants, and, as far as possible, on the con-
trasts between the two cultures represented by the industrial workplace
on the one hand and the rural home districts of most employees on the
other. (This contrast, already noted in Section 1.1, will be referred
to again in a theoretical context.) In much of this observation and
in the attendant task of establishing rapport with various people we
were most effectively assisted by the interviewers/interpreters of our
own research team and by two African Personnel Officers employed by the
company. The young African Personnel Officers, themselves university
graduates and also undoubtedly in the trust of most employees, were a
valuable additional source of information about the lives of employees
in and out of the workplace.

The assembling of this report has been governed by two broad aims:
first, to identify and describe labour turnover in the various centres
of employment; and then by examination, comparisons and analysis, to
seek insights into some of the factors influencing the process of labour
turnover, to attempt to characterise a category of typical mobile employee,
and where possible to seek explanations for particular levels of turnover.
By observation of the relevant labour forces over a single sixteen month
period a single estimation of annual labour turnover during that period
was made for each employment centre. Complementing this information was
the fact that the identities and career-profiles of all employees leaving
employment during the same period were also known. In addition to this
information, the attitudes of all employees to a wide range of employment-
related issues were measured by our interviewing at the start of the
sixteen month period. Accordingly, a large measure of the analysis in
this report consists of comparisons between the attitudes of resigning
employees on the one hand, and remaining employees on the other, to a

successive range of issues. Analysis of attitudes to these issues is
undertaken in the light of various theories of the workplace.

1.3   THEORETICAL ORIENTATIONS

While it is true that the particular selection of theories used for an
investigation tends to determine the nature of the findings, it is
equally true that certain environments and situations necessarily
suggest the adoption of certain theories that are more appropriate, more
applicable than others. We consider that constraints of this kind
affect us in at least two ways in the present situation.

Although wishing to seek mainly sociological explanations for labour
turnover, we have to recognise that as a process maintained by a
succession of individual decisions, which in turn depend on individual
perceptions of situations, it has an unmistakably psychological component.
At the same time, such decisions tend to be based on evaluations of
situations having, by the very nature of work, important social content;
and they tend to take place within a framework of constraints many of
which are social. (Such a description applies particularly to decisions
of employees to resign from work, but also to decisions of managers to
dismiss men from work.) In accordance with these contrasting aspects of
the process, available theoretical views of labour turnover range from
psychologically-based theories at one extreme to sociologically-based
theories at the other, with the former tending to evaluate the placement
and retention of individuals in terms of skills, aptitude, motivation and
similar personal attributes, whereas the latter tend to view the worker
as just one of many comparable "actors" in the social processes of the
workplace.

Still more general theories, however, suggest the greater applicability
of certain of these views over others, in the context of the present
investigation. There are, for example, respectable theories which tell
us that members of traditional African societies tend to perceive situations

in which they act in much more sociocentric, sociomorphic terms than do
Westerners. Another very general theory — that of Maslow — warns us
that people with unsatisfied fundamental needs do not have, in an *active*
sense, higher more complex needs. In practice therefore it tells us
that for people preoccupied with basic needs such as survival, security
and feeding their families, the offering of relatively higher-order
satisfactions as rewards, such as in the context of work self-
actualisation would, by failing to correspond to any urgent or as yet
active need, be unlikely to generate any real response. The offering of
higher-order satisfactions would by and large be inappropriate for people
more concerned with seeking personal security and affiliation. As we are
dealing in the labour-forces of the timber industry overwhelmingly with
people who are traditionally-oriented Africans and who are predominantly
unskilled, poor and far from home, both of these very general views from
"grand theory" suggest strongly that the *sociology* of the working en-
vironment will be a matter of special importance to the employees both in
terms of their normal outlook and in terms of their particular needs at
present.[1] We have to conclude that the special relevance of socio-
logically-based theories of labour turnover is thereby clearly indicated.
This preference and the reasoning behind it are implicitly supported by
Charton's (1969) conclusion, in a comparable situation, that

> *it is perhaps to be expected that job satisfaction for the
> unskilled in an industrial society will consist largely in
> personal relationships and personal material gain, rather
> than in satisfaction gained from the performance of the job
> itself, or from its meaningfulness for the community of
> which he is a part.*

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1) Maslow is cited here to develop a certain argument, but not to suggest
    that the company's employees have no higher-order needs at all. In
    an earlier report (Schlemmer and Allen, 1974) we have suggested that
    dignity, self-esteem, and the desire to work independently with minimal
    supervision are prevalent germinal "higher-order" needs among unskilled
    African male employees in the company. The few employees in skilled
    jobs and in jobs with responsibility undoubtedly experience the
    activation of even higher-order needs. However, labour turnover among
    this category is negligible.

In reasoning thus we do not maintain that no psychologically-based ex-
planations of labour turnover would be possible here. But certainly it
would appear that deep psychology theory, although not irrelevant, will
not be particularly necessary in understanding a situation where simpler
factors are in all probability accounting largely for turnover.

Charton's latter comment on the employee's job's "meaningfulness for
the community of which he is a part" points toward the second type of
constraining factor in our selection of theory. Much as we would like
to deny it, a good deal of theory is in fact culture-bound. However, in
the situation here studied we need to adopt a two-culture approach, and
this limits theoretical choices. We have mentioned the existence of a
variety of theories, social and psychological, relevant to labour turn-
over, but the majority of both kinds tend to be "intra-workplace" theories.
They are defined in terms located *within* the orbit of the workplace, and
tend to take for granted assumptions made about the wider location and
environment of that workplace. For us however the wider environment has
to be regarded not as a given but as an important variable. Throughout
the methodology of a study of this kind there occurs the general problem
of the application locally of theories which have been generated else-
where — in the field of normally stable, monocultural, Western industries.
As such, these theories assume a certain cultural homogeneity between work
and leisure, between the sphere of employment and the sphere of the home,
assuming consequently a certain cultural identification with industry on
the part of the worker. These are assumptions which we cannot lightly make.
Rather, we would do well to recognise in the components of the employment
situation here examined a difference in cultures which extends to differences
in fundamental personal values and concepts. In a situation employing
migrant workers it cannot be assumed that the employee's *job itself* is
"meaningful for the community of which he is a part." Orpen (1974a) in-
directly supports this view by empirical psychological research which
strongly suggests the essential inapplicability of Hertzberg-style moti-
vation theory to unskilled African workers, particularly traditionally-
oriented (tribal) Africans. In the case of much of South African industry,

but especially in the case of border-industries, we have to acknowledge
the essential discontinuity of two situations, two facts, which obtain
in the workplace. Simply stated these are:

    1. work is organised along typical lines of industry,

    2. but the employees are not an established industrial
        proletariat.

We suggest that the interaction between these two disparate realities —
and all that they imply — is intimately related to the dynamic of labour
turnover as encountered in this study. Theoretical stances have to take
account of this principle.

For us, then, adopting a two-culture approach means bearing in mind the
two major cultural components represented in the workplace as a first
principle in judging the applicability of theory.

Schlemmer and Rawlins (1977), reporting on a comparable timber industry, set
out a comprehensive review of theories of labour turnover, and to this the
reader is referred.[1] Two of the theories there mentioned are of particular
interest to us, and are elaborated here. According to Kapferer (1972), a
most convenient way of assessing in terms of one idea the multiple "forces"
simultaneously acting to encourage and discourage the individual in
leaving an employment situation is to adopt the concept of "investments".
Investment analysis represents a useful advance on typical synchronic
"push-pull" models of labour migration. For the individual, it is
suggested, the totality of advantages and disadvantages implied in aban-
doning one situation for another may be weighed up in terms of the
investments he has made, and could make, in each. In this context, the
advantages of the investment concept in suggesting the commitment of
people to certain situations lie in its inclusiveness, flexibility and
diachronicity. For these reasons the theory is highly applicable not
only to the contrast of situations implied by a change of job, but equally

1)   Schlemmer, Lawrence and Rawlins, Christopher (1977): *Black Workers
     Who Leave.* pp. 1-14.

to the changes of cultural and social environments which are part and
parcel of migrant labour. By referring not simply to economic outlay,
nor even merely to social and political involvement, but also to ex-
penditure of valuables such as energy, time, identity, and emotion,
Kapferer's definition of the concept allows one to assess investments
just as much in terms, say, of accumulated real advantages in the past,
as in terms of expectations, reliance on a favoured current situation,
or normative commitments already extended to the prospect of a new
situation, etc. In this sense the concept is not limited to considera-
tions of the present, nor is it limited to assessments of the value of
some factor or other in terms of one commodity or in terms limited to
one culture. In practice, the most obvious investments accumulated, and
contemplated, by poor rural Africans are social ones. For African
migrants, invariably retaining important social links with their home
districts (kin, dependents), and at the same time tending to engage in
a sociocentric way with their employment (theory, Charton), an overall
analysis of social investments is appropriate. Yet this need be only the
beginning of the investigation, for when undertaken in Kapferer's terms
such an approach is more refined than that described by Mayer (1962).
While the latter proposes, via the study of social networks, an assessment
of the individual's commitment to a situation in terms of where his
"important personal ties" are, the investment approach goes further by
taking account of the particular new values, ideas, habits, etc., implied
by the adopting of personal ties in a new setting. These intangibles are
also recognised as investments *per se*, just as much as the social ties.
Finally, of course other intangible investments are quite possible which
are not really rooted in social ties at all, but are closer to what may
be termed "ideological commitment" — commitment to ideas and principles
which are absorbed not by participation in social relations but as a
result of acting in, and rendering intelligible to oneself, wholly new
environments and activities.

Commitment, a product of investments, will be referred to regularly in
this report. Indeed, one of our working hypotheses is that job commitment,

industrial commitment, and cultural commitment (as an aspect of
modernisation/urbanisation), while analytically separable, are not
necessarily distinguishable by a rurally-bound migrant who takes up
work in a border-industry.

Bearing in mind some of the conditions made explicit by Kapferer's
theory and by our own two-culture approach, the formulation of Flowers
and Hughes (1973) has the merits of flexibility as well as fundamental
relevance to all labour turnover. Flowers and Hughes begin by recog-
nising that the factors which tend to make an individual person stay
in a job, and the factors which might drive him to leave the job, lie
on two different continua:

STAY   LEAVE

Rather like Hertzberg's hygiene and motivator factors, these two species
of factors are consequently *not the opposite of each other*. Although
acting in opposite *directions* they are qualitatively different. However,
the "forces" tending to keep the individual in employment do, in effect,
counterbalance the "forces" which might drive him from his job. Flowers
and Hughes point out that the former type of factors, which consist
mainly of heavy investments of different kinds in the local situation,
add up to promote "inertia", which nearly always has the effect of
stabilising the employee in his current situation, irrespective to a
marked extent of the actual job. Stability is thus rooted in a type
of internally-based passivity. On the other hand, only a strong
"ejecting" type of factor varying on the other continuum, and this di-
mension consists largely of satisfaction or dissatisfaction in the job,
will make the individual seriously consider leaving. Until a particu-
larly strong force arises to drive the individual from a situation,
against the routinised, ambient tendency of inertia, he stays.

"INERTIA" FACTORS
(various local investments)

STAY   LEAVE

"EJECTING" FACTORS
(job satisfaction/dissatisfaction)
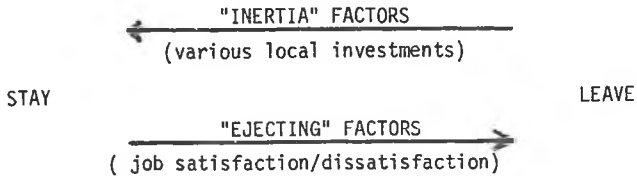
(This diagrammatic representation, devised by ourselves, is somewhat
idealised to convey the working principles of the model . Although
inertia factors consist *principally* of local investments, additional
factors undoubtedly combine to increase inertia — for example, mere
passage of time and advancing age contribute an increasingly intrinsic
character to inertia. Bonds of friendship, use of company facilities,
and increasing identification with company norms and ethics may also
compound inertia.)

One important consequence of the qualitative difference of counter-
vailing inertia factors and ejecting factors is that they can vary
independently of each other. A low level of inertia need not imply a
desire to leave the job, nor does satisfaction with the job itself
presuppose a high level of inertia in respect of the general employment
situation. However, Flowers and Hughes evidently consider that of the
two dimensions, inertia is an especially strong force which will, as
a rule, tend to overcome desires to leave. Put another way, only if a
strong ejecting type of factor is accompanied by relatively modest
inertia, will an employee in fact leave the job.

The independent variation of the inertia and ejecting factors allows,
by permutation alone, at least four basic states of the model:

17.

1.
← INERTIA

EJECTING →

2.
← INERTIA

EJECTING →

3.
← INERTIA

EJECTING →

4.
← INERTIA

EJECTING →
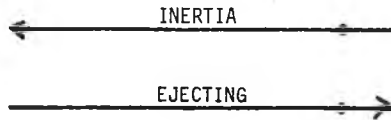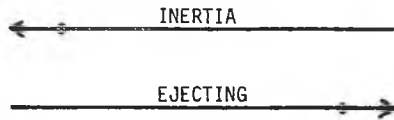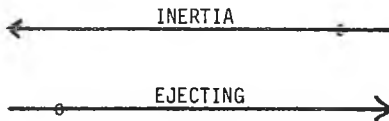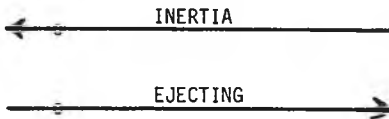
These four states in effect describe four basic types of response to
the employment situation, four types of attitude to work, which correspond
to four broad categories of employees. The four broad employee-types
derived in this way are named by Flowers and Hughes:

1. Turn-over,
2. Turn-off,
3. Turn-on,
4. Turn-on plus,

a terminology which aptly reflects the function of the classification in
distinguishing types of employee in terms of their probability of being
mobile. This predictive function conforms to the rules of the model,
which are (re-stated):

- minimal inertia "releases" the employee,
- but only high "ejecting force" (dissatisfaction) gives
  him the desire to leave

The terminology also reflects the affinity of this theory with psycho-
logically-based theories of motivation. The "ejecting factors" variable
being mainly job satisfaction/dissatisfaction, case 3, for example,
describes a motivated person whose job turns him on (in terms of moti-
vation he's happy to stay); while case 2 describes a demotivated person
whose job turns him off. The basic polarity in the terminology also
reflects the fact that these two cases represent the essential contrast;
they are the "core"-cases, so to speak. The other two types also re-
present turned-on and turned-off workers, but simply in cases made more
extreme by attendant states of inertia. Thus case 1 is also a turned-off
worker, but whose minimal inertia also frees him for mobility — i.e.
"turn-over"; while case 4 is a turned-on worker who is also well anchored
to his employment by a well developed inertia. As a turn-on-plus, this
latter is least likely of anybody to leave his job. By contrast, the
stability of the turned-on worker (case 3) is by no means guaranteed;
if his job satisfaction dwindles he very easily becomes a case 1 "turn-
over". He does, however, do his employer the favour of removing himself,
in contrast to a turn-on-plus who might suffer a similar transformation:

for if the job satisfaction of this latter (case 4) dwindles, he becomes
a troubled and troublesome character (case 2): restless and turned off
by his work, yet condemned by his great inertia to linger on unproductively
in the job. Stuck in this way, this turned-off type may, moreover, ex-
press his aggravated dissatisfaction in ways disruptive to the workplace.
This is recognised (as case 2) by Flowers and Hughes in their original
exposition of the theory, but is referred to by Schlemmer and Rawlins
as a case of "active turn-off".[1] What the latter refer to as "passive
turn-off" is in fact an intermediate state of the model:

INERTIA

EJECTING
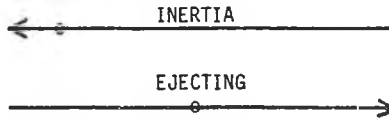
in which the individual's response to the job is neither overt satisfaction
nor dissatisfaction, but apathy. He is, however, still retained by inertia.
The unfortunate combination of inertia and apathy suggests a negligent
individual who nevertheless keeps a low profile in the workplace, with the
consequence that this sort of problem-state could conceivably accumulate
to serious levels while yet unnoticed.

As was mentioned earlier, the whole formulation of Flowers and Hughes not
only has undoubted fundamental heuristic merit,[2] but would also appear to

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1) How they would represent "active turn-off" on the model is not certain.
2) Empirical sense, explanatory value, predictive utility.

be profitably adaptable to conditions where migrant workers are employed. Indeed, the fact that certain "inertia"-factors in Flowers and Hughes' terms, such as investments in family and educational facilities in local suburbia, are not applicable in the case of migrants (and commuters), makes the model a "purer", more work-centric affair. Inertia can here be conceived of almost entirely in factory terms, in workplace-oriented investments.[1] And this is only appropriate in view of the fact that in the first instance, work, for its cash reward, is the migrant's only interest in his new situation. Some of his most important (inertia) investments such as ties of kinship and identity are already well established elsewhere in a "homeland". Furthermore because, in terms of official policies, migrants are regarded, rightly or wrongly, as mere visitors to border-industry areas, opportunities there are at the outset also curtailed for numerous other types of investment which would otherwise emerge in the long run. (By the same token the whole basis of employee inertia *within* most border-industries is con- siderably weakened — hence the comments of various writers to the effect that substantial labour turnover is an endemic problem in industries employing migrant labour.) On its inertia dimension, then, the model may be said to be simplified. However, when the motivation-theory basis of the "ejection factors" dimension (recognised by Schlemmer and Rawlins when they refer to "engagement"-with work) is considered, we are obliged to complicate it somewhat to accommodate our two-culture premise. While Flowers and Hughes rightly see the responses to a factory *job* as deter- mined essentially by considerations of motivation, or "engagement" with the work, we also have to take into account the employee's engagement with something far greater than the job *but still part of the job,* namely, an "engagement" with another culture. By "culture" here we mean a culture of industrial production, insofar as it is represented in a factory job.[2] Starting with the standard view of motivation as an

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1) Apt samples of this in the present situation are the meals, rations, accommodation and similar benefits actually supplied by the employer.

2) the job as distinct from the workplace.

engagement with work which stabilises the individual in a particular
job, what we in effect visualise as also necessary is a parallel
"cultural engagement" which simultaneously stabilises the employee
in a whole new mode or type of work (industrial work) — a system with
an attendant set of norms and values.[1] Only after such a process has
occurred can we truly speak of industrial commitment; and in this sense
it might be said that a migrant worker is only motivated[2] when he has
had this two-stranded response to his job. In the present model of
stability/mobility the job-satisfaction "ejection" dimension should
therefore be considered as being in some ways two-stranded.

Applied in this modified way the model is, we consider, most useful,
and examples of the categories it generates will be found in the analysis
of our findings presented in the succeeding chapters. In terms of one
of the particular employment problems which we set out to investigate
in the study, the Flowers and Hughes model has the additional advantage
of allowing morale and inertia to vary independently, freeing us from a
possible former conceptual problem. In conclusion we would caution the
reader, when considering or applying the major types: "turn-on", "turn-
off", etc., to bear very much in mind the two-dimensional basis of the
model, and in so doing, not confuse engagement with the job, on the one
hand, and engagement with the whole work-situation on the other. The
former is the domain of job-satisfaction, the latter is the domain of
inertia.

We have discussed above in some detail two general theories which are
expecially relevant to this study. Other, more particular theoretical
perspectives and working hypotheses which we have also adopted at times
are made clear at the relevant points in the body of the report. Prag-
matically conceived, the study is to a large degree a survey of a very

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1) One dimension of this parallel change would be the adoption of a new
   work-ethic, corresponding to a new conception of the very nature and
   function of work: Schlemmer and Rawlins (p.12) comment pertinently.

2) really motivated, as opposed to merely "K.I.T.A." (Hertzberg).

extensive situation, rather than a systematic testing of theories. The role of theory is therefore to assist informed comment and interpretation of findings rather than to proclaim confident predictions.

CHAPTER 2

DIFFERENTIAL RATES OF RESIGNATION, DISMISSAL, AND TURNOVER
AT EIGHT SEPARATE CENTRES OF EMPLOYMENT

In this chapter labour turnover, examined at the level of whole work-
forces, is looked at primarily as a collective phenomenon. In trying
to explain the different rates of turnover between whole groups of workers
we tend to consider the impact of equally collective or general forces
upon centres of employment. Explanations in terms of general prevailing
circumstances are sought. Ambient conditions and constraints in the
region and locality of the workplace are considered.

2.1   THE SETTING AND SOURCE OF DATA

During the original fieldwork for this broad study of African employees
in a Timber Industry, 231 respondents were interviewed. These respondents
constituted a stratified random sample of the workforce, at each of eight
places of employment, representative with respect to jobs, to marital
status, and to the residential circumstances of the employees. Residential
circumstances varied according to the migrant or "semi-migrant"[1] status
of many of the workers, while jobs embraced the entire range of activities
in sawmilling, logging, and forestry, with the exception of higher manage-
ment. Approximately twelve months after the date of interviewing, a
simple survey of labour turnover was made by ascertaining whether each of
the sampled respondents was still employed or had resigned (or had been
dismissed). The assumption is made that because the sampled respondents
were representative of the workforce, so also are they representative of
the incidence of turnover. Strictly speaking, it is theoretically
possible that the experience of the interview was an intervening fact in
the behaviour and outlook of respondents after our visits. If this possi-
bility was in any degree true, then the mobility of sampled employees
might have been influenced in some way by us, while that of other men
was not. However we are satisfied that the careful design of our interview,

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1) For clarification of this term see text, p. 41.

the training of our interviewers, and the interviewing arrangements in
situ have effectively obviated any such influence.

In actual fact, the time elapsed between initial fieldwork at each centre
and the subsequent turnover survey varied between 13 and 16 months; but
from the numbers of respondents resigning or being dismissed over either
period, standardised annual percentage rates of resignation and of dis-
missal for each centre have been computed.[1] Percentage turnover per
annum (T) is clearly the sum of percentage resignations (R) and per-
centage dismissals (D). The results of the survey are indicated
accordingly in Table 1, Figure 1 and Table 2. (q.v.).

In Table 1 and Figure 1 the employment centres of the Northern Group
(where African employees are mainly Venda, with some Shangaans) are
grouped together in the first three rows, the remaining five centres com-
prising the Southern Group (where African employees are mainly Pedi, with
some Shangaans). The three forest plantations have also been grouped
together centrally in the Table and Figure, as indicated by the symbol *FP*.

In interpreting the remainder of the Table it should be borne in mind
that the Northern Group and Southern Group have independent local manage-
ments, and that each group contains both sawmills and plantations. The
full range of forestry, logging and sawmilling activities is present in
each group, making the two groups entirely comparable vis-a-vis their
operations. Thus in administration and operational structure, the two
groups are virtually identical. They differ in their managements, in
their geographic separation, and in the ethnicity and languages of their
African workforces.

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1) The annual percentage rate of resignation is defined as the number of
    employees resigning from a workforce during one year, expressed as a
    percentage of the total number of employees comprising that workforce.

TABLE 1.

PERCENTAGE RESIGNATION, DISMISSAL, AND TURNOVER RATES,
PER ANNUM, BY CENTRES OF EMPLOYMENT, BY
MANAGEMENT GROUPS, AND BY MANUFACTURING ACTIVITIES:
AUGUST 1975

		Months Elapsed	Sample	Resigned	Dismissed	% Resignation p.a.	% Dismissal p.a.	% Turnover p.a.
						R	+ D =	T
C	NORTHERN MAJOR SAWMILL	16	32	8	0*	19	0*	19
	NORTHERN TIMBER YARD	16	35	5	2	11	4,3	15
FP	NORTHERN MAJOR PLANTATION	16	40	3	2	5,6	3,8	9,4
FP	SOUTHERN MOUNTAIN PLANTATION	13	10	0	0	0	0	0
FP	SOUTHERN MAJOR PLANTATIONS	13	30	0	1	0	3,1	3,1
C	SOUTHERN MAJOR SAWMILL	13	38	6	3	15	7,3	22
	SOUTHERN SUBSIDIARY SAWMILL	13	22	5	1	21	4,2	25
C	SOUTHERN GARAGE	13	24	4	2	15	7,7	23
	AVERAGE: NORTHERN GROUP	16	107	16	4	11	2,8	14
	AVERAGE: SOUTHERN GROUP	13	124	15	7	11	5,2	16
	AVERAGE: ALL PLANTATIONS	12	80	2,25	2,5	2,8	3,1	5,9
	AVERAGE: ALL SAWMILLS	12	92	16,1	3,7	18	4,0	22
	AVERAGE: ALL CENTRES	12	231	25,8	9,5	11	4,1	15

NOTE: FP indicates PLANTATION employment centres.

"C" indicates employment centres with Employee Accommodation Compounds on the premises.

* This Sawmill appears to have no dismissals. However, group-interview data reveal that dismissals do occur but in unorthodox form. (See Section 2.3 of text.)

FIGURE 1.
REPRESENTATION OF TABLE 1 IN BAR-GRAPH.
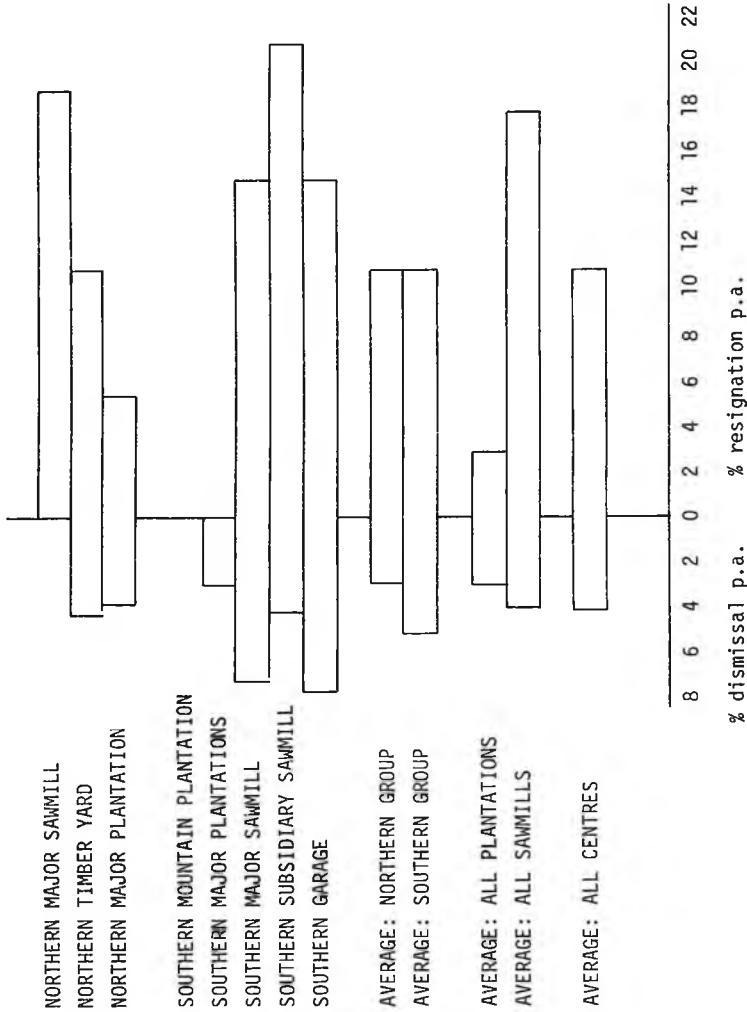
TABLE 2.

EMPLOYMENT CENTRES RANKED IN ORDER OF INCREASING RATES OF TURNOVER, AND OF RESIGNATIONS.

% TURNOVER p.a.   % RESIGNATIONS p.a.

	%	Centre			%	Centre
	25	SOUTHERN SUBSIDIARY SAWMILL			21	SOUTHERN SUBSIDIARY SAWMILL
	23	SOUTHERN GARAGE			19	*NORTHERN MAJOR SAWMILL*
	22	SOUTHERN MAJOR SAWMILL			15	SOUTHERN MAJOR SAWMILL
	19	*NORTHERN MAJOR SAWMILL*			15	SOUTHERN GARAGE
	15	*NORTHERN TIMBER YARD*			11	*NORTHERN TIMBER YARD*
FP	9,4	*NORTHERN MAJOR PLANTATION*	*FP*	5,6	*NORTHERN MAJOR PLANTATION*
FP	3,1	SOUTHERN MAJOR PLANTATIONS	*FP*	0	SOUTHERN MAJOR PLANTATIONS
FP	0	SOUTHERN MOUNTAIN PLANTATION	*FP*	0	SOUTHERN MOUNTAIN PLANTATION

NOTE: Employment centres of the Northern Group are indicated in italics.

FP   indicates PLANTATION employment centres.

2.2   THE LABOUR TURNOVER DATA AND THEIR SIGNIFICANCE

From the foregoing Tables it is clear that in general the rate of labour
turnover in the company is surprisingly low, especially in comparison
with the serious conditions in a comparable Natal timber industry
(Schlemmer and Rawlins *op.cit.*), — it ranges from levels of zero to
25 per cent per annum among the various centres. The average annual
turnover for the entire workforce of all the eight centres is only 15
per cent. The majority of this turnover is consistently due to resig-
nations, with dismissals accounting only for about one-quarter of
turnover in general. This is particularly true of the sawmills, where
on average, less than one-fifth of turnover is due to dismissals. On
the other hand, in all the plantations, taken en bloc, resignations and
dismissals run at about equal rates, though here the total rate of
turnover is low, at 5,9 per cent per annum.

This latter finding points to the most significant indication of the
results: that turnover is quite clearly a much more extant problem in
the sawmills than in the plantations. In this sense, the worst-off
plantation, with 9,4 per cent annual labour turnover, is still better
off than the best sawmill is at 15 per cent. The average labour turn-
over of all sawmills is 22 per cent per annum, while that of all
plantations is 5,9 per cent; moreover, the latter average itself would
be even lower had it not been pulled up by the major Northern Plantation
with its turnover of 9,4 per cent per annum — by contrast the Southern
Major Plantations register no resignations and only 3,1 per cent dis-
missals per annum, while the Southern Mountain Plantation has neither
resignations nor dismissals.

2.2.1 The Differential Contribution of Resignations and Dismissals to
      Turnover.

Not only is most turnover due to resignations, but the relative levels of
labour turnover among various centres may tend to be largely determined by
the resignation rate alone. Looking through the pattern of resignation
and dismissal rates for all eight centres, we may reasonably make the

general observation that dismissals occur at a fairly constant rate
through all the centres,[1] while it is resignations which vary con-
siderably. (See also bar-graphs, Figure 1.)

Although resignations and dismissals from industrial employment may,
according to conventional labour-relations wisdom,[2] be regarded in
certain contexts as being causally of common origin or causally
"equivalent", such a view is here probably misleading. We consider it
most likely in the situation here being investigated that resignation
rates are far more of an indicator of workforce attitudes than are dis-
missal rates. After all, resignations take place on the initiative of
the employees themselves, in spite of the implications of the view just
cited. Moreover, the "initiative of the employee" is an important and
ever-relevant factor in the situation of the oscillating migrant worker,
who, because he moves between two worlds, but is drawn to one of them
initially only by virtue of the employment it offers, regularly has to
"re-commit" himself to the world of his employment, and in so doing
regularly takes an initiative. When a repatriated oscillating migrant
decides once again to seek work in a foreign "world", an initiative is
required which clearly lies in the hands of that migrant. We gain the
impression that the industrial conflict emphasis has been formulated in
situations outside of, or unconscious of, the migrant labour field —
that is, formulated rather in situations where industrial employees
naturally have a more or less permanent residential and cultural, not to
mention political, commitment to their working milieu — and has

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1) The Major Northern Sawmill and the Southern Mountain Plantation are
   special cases where, as will be shown below, the values of D should
   actually be higher than zero.

2) Typically, industrial conflict theory: a broad variety of industrial
   problems, ranging from strikes through absenteeism to resignation,
   are all regarded as particular manifestations of a fundamental con-
   flict in interests (and therefore hostility) between management/
   owners and labour.

accordingly not considered the role of certain basic factors in industrial
commitment, which would influence labour turnover. These would be factors
not directly related to the work itself, but relevant to those conditions
of industrial society in which the migrant must live while working. In
the border industry being considered here, a "resignation" is commonly
reported to take the form of mere failure to return to employment
following a period of leave, a long weekend, or a period at home after
payday. Furthermore, we believe that the majority of resignations are
due to migrancy factors (see Table 3). In such circumstances it is by no
means certain that resignations and dismissals are statistically equiva-
lent. Rather, we consider it most likely in the situation here being
investigated that resignation rates are far more of an indicator of the
commitment of the migrant, *qua migrant*; that is, his commitment to some-
thing more than just his work and the factors bearing immediately on it.

TABLE 3.

INTENTIONS OF SAWMILL AND GARAGE EMPLOYEES WHO RESIGNED DURING TWELVE MONTHS ENDING AUGUST 1975

	RETURN TO HOMELAND	MOVE TO OTHER EMPLOYER	NO INFORMATION
CONSERVATIVE ESTIMATE:	50%	11%	39%
MORE PROBABLE DISTRIBUTION:	64%	11%	25%

(Source: Personal profiles of all resigning employees at times of
resignation, derived from company records. Variation between
estimates is due to ambiguous entries in some cases.)

A conclusion to be drawn conversely from the proposition just outlined
is that dismissal rates would tend to be more directly related to the
"management culture" prevailing at the centres — in this case fairly
homogeneous at the broadest level of Company policy, but not without
regional variations. This view may be examined further by comparing
the averages of R, D, and T for all plantations, with the corresponding
averages for all sawmills (q.v.), a distinction which combines both of
the regions and their respective managements while polarising employ-
ment situations (sawmills vs. plantations). These figures while
indicating a dramatic difference in rates of resignation between saw-
mills (18 per cent) and plantations (2,8 per cent), show a fairly steady
rate of dismissals — between 3 per cent and 4 per cent in both types of
employment situation. Similarly, comparing the averages of R, D, and T
for the Northern Group with the averages for the Southern Group (q.v.),
a distinction which combines employment-situations while contrasting, inter
alia, the two Group managements, it is found that dismissal rates are at
a similar low level in both Groups; though with a slight discrepancy here
between 5,2 per cent average dismissals per annum for the Southern Group
and 2,8 per cent average dismissals for the Northern Group. Nevertheless,
when it is recalled that there is very probably under-representation of
dismissals in the Northern Group, as will be shown below, then this dis-
crepancy narrows considerably. The remaining discrepancy, i.e. slightly
more percentage dismissals per annum in the Southern Group, could be an
oblique confirmation of our fieldwork team's impressions that management
in that Group tended in general to be slightly more authoritarian, less
skillful, and faced with an apparently less established company structure
than was the case in the North.

Because it is differences in resignation rates which apparently account
for the differences in turnover generally, a ranking of centres according
to resignations is nearly identical to a ranking by rates of turnover.
(See Table 2). The only real anomaly is the Northern Major Sawmill, where
under-representation of dismissals is suspected anyway.

2.2.2 Some General Conclusions.

Given that the average dismissal rate is virtually constant for whatever
grouping of the centres we choose, perhaps the most telling finding of
our survey is that resignations occur with exactly the same frequency in
the whole Northern Group as in the whole Southern Group, but roughly
six times more frequently in the sawmills en bloc (18 per cent per annum)
as in the plantations en bloc (2,8 per cent per annum). This discovery
clearly suggests that resignation rates are a function of, inter alia:

- job types,
and/or - type and circumstance of employment operations,[1]

but are NOT necessarily a function of:
- geography,
- ethnicity,
or - the styles of the two local managements.

To this we may add that from a consideration of the factors of commitment
and migration of the worker, it is clear that resignation rates are very
probably a function of whether or not employees *are* actually migrating
regularly between the centre of employment and some other "home" place.
A good many employees, the figure varying from centre to centre, are not
oscillating migrants in the proper sense of the term but reside virtually
permanently in company accommodation or even in what amount to their own
traditional villages on company land, a fact easily overlooked when
originally many have arrived with migrant status. Thus, workforces in

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1) This means, in effect: whether the employment centre's operations are
sawmilling or forestry. In practice this distinction also has further
implications in respect of the employees' residential arrangements:
forest plantations employ longstanding local residents, while vir-
tually all the oscillating migrants are employed in the sawmills.

which more or less permanent residents of company accommodation pre-
dominate tend to show markedly less employee mobility. The frequency,
range, and type of destinations, of journeys made by the "permanent
residents" would be factors in further classifying them according to a
"commitment" variable.

2.3   UNDER-REPRESENTATION OF DISMISSALS

There is good reason to believe that the figures deriving from our survey
underestimate the dismissals rates at the Northern Major Sawmill and at
the Southern Mountain Plantation. (See Table 1.A.)

In the case of the Northern Sawmill, there appear to be no dismissals
at all. Yet we have group interview evidence from this sawmill in which
clear complaints are frequently made concerning arbitrary dismissals.
Evidently, either the period in which we measured turnover was unrepre-
sentative, or the sawmill management have possibly misrepresented events
in returning information to us. Indeed, further complaints were also
recorded in the group interviews at this centre claiming that the manage-
ment, when it wished to retire or dismiss an employee, had been observed
to adopt a policy of downgrading his job or generally making conditions
difficult for him until the man himself resigned as a consequence. Such
falsely engineered "resignations", if true, are clearly dismissals in
disguise, and further artificially depress the observed rate of dismissals.

It is our informed and carefully considered opinion, having made allowances
for both these sources of inaccuracy, that the true rate of dismissals at
the Northern Major Sawmill may well be around 4 per cent per annum. This is a
conservative estimate comparable with the rate at the nearest operationally
similar centre, the Northern Timber Yard,[1] and also closer to the average
for all other sawmills. This estimate would also give the Northern Sawmill

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1)   which we suspect is more stable than the Northern Sawmill.

a total labour turnover of about 23 per cent per annum, ranking it at a
very similar level to its operationally and socially most analogous
counterpart, the Southern Major Sawmill.

In the case of the Southern Mountain Plantation, our results apparently
indicate that there have been zero dismissals. This could be technically
true, but if so it is undoubtedly because this centre is a special case.
The plantation community is a very small and very remote settlement,
situated high in the mountains of the Escarpment, and almost cut off from
the outside world. Probably the only reason for there still being a
human settlement at all is the operation of the large forest plantation.
People have virtually no reason to be in this place if not working on the
plantation, and conversely, it is apparently accepted by all that employ-
ment on the plantation may only be competed for by "plantation families",
namely, traditional residents of the Mountain Plantation. Nineteen dis-
tinct family names appear among the 52 men and women who compose the
plantation workforce, suggesting that the number of discrete families,
disregarding intermarriage, is not great. It is certain that many of
these families have never known any life outside of the Mountain Plantation,
and those men who have done any travelling appear to remain locally-bound.

At any rate the lone plantation manager (himself a long-time resident of
the Plantation) and his employees, are known very well to each other in
this small, closed, family-like community. The manager speaks fluent
Pedi, and has a basically sound and friendly relationship with the working
men.

Although the plantation land is the property of the company it would seem
that following from what amounts to an historical association with this
land, all the adult men have right of permanent residence (virtually
"inherited"), and that this guarantees or is equivalent to employment on
the plantation. In spite of this, dismissals of some kind must sometimes
take place as some sort of punitive sanction or assertion of the manager's
authority; but evidently these are of a ritualistic and impermanent nature,

since some time after justice has been done the offender is apparently
re-employed. When our fieldwork team returned in 1975 to re-interview
plantation men first interviewed in 1974 they were informed by the
manager that two men out of this sample of ten had recently been dis-
missed for serious offences of negligence. Yet, during the subsequent
re-interviewing these two men were discovered at work in the plantation
with their colleagues, feeling as much a part of the community as they
ever had done. In effect they had absolutely no other useful work to
do anywhere, nor had they any wish to leave their traditional home.
They did not perceive themselves as having been banished for good. And
according to our turnover survey made about eight weeks later, they were
back on the payroll.

The Mountain Plantation is therefore an anomaly, and in its unique social
conditions dismissals become ritualised, barely official, almost private
matters between employees and the manager. Such "dismissals" evidently
lack the formality and permanence to emerge in records and statistics.

2.4   RANKING OF THE CENTRES BY TURNOVER

If the centres of employment are ranked in order of increasing rates of
turnover, the following pattern, as we have seen, emerges:

% TURNOVER PER ANNUM

	25	SOUTHERN SUBSIDIARY SAWMILL
	23	SOUTHERN GARAGE
	22	SOUTHERN MAJOR SAWMILL
	19	*NORTHERN MAJOR SAWMILL*
	15	*NORTHERN TIMBER YARD*
FP	9,4	*NORTHERN MAJOR PLANTATION*
FP	3,1	SOUTHERN MAJOR PLANTATIONS
FP	0	SOUTHERN MOUNTAIN PLANTATION

NOTE: The centres of the Northern Group appear in italics.

From the clear, albeit simple, pattern apparent in the ranking, and from
a familiarity with the features and characteristics of the various
centres, and their situation in relation to homelands, indications are
that higher turnover in a centre correlates with the following factors
or situations (listed in order of priority):

- sawmills,[1]
- frequent migration of employees (frequent contact with an
  "alternative society").
- effective geographic proximity of homeland area/"alternative
  society",
- high levels of felt grievance in the workforce,
- a rural setting of the workplace (in the case of sawmills
  only).

Needless to say, singling out "sawmills" implies many further unmentioned
characteristics which distinguish a sawmill from a plantation as a working
environment. Not the least of these is a certain degree of mechanisation,
and slightly less laborious jobs, together with less rigorous working
hours; factors which might be expected to bring about a tendency toward
a relatively less discontented workforce and thus more stable employees.
In spite of this, however, we consider that in fact it is residential
factors, and the consequent social factors, which make plantation work-
forces more stable.

The workforces of the plantations are very different from those of the
sawmills in respect of residence and upbringing. Very few of the

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1) Throughout this analysis the term "sawmill" has been used to refer
   to any centre that is not a plantation. Operationally and qualita-
   tively, the Northern Timber Yard is very similar to a sawmill.
   Likewise, the Northern Sawmill includes a transport and vehicle
   maintenance section virtually identical to the Southern Garage.

plantations' employees are actually oscillating migrant workers. They
tend, rather, to have grown up on or near the plantations, and to have
spent all their working life employed in the same place. Virtually all
male plantation employees are living a permanent, settled, family life
in company accommodation (official or unofficial) on the plantation of
their employment. In this sense all the plantations resemble the
Southern Mountain Plantation, as described above, although to a lesser
degree. The settlements of company married quarters in the plantations
are in effect unified villages rather than chance coalitions of workers.
Not only do such groups feel a traditional link with the land they work
(the present owners of the plantations arrived relatively recently),
but the plantations, as their homes, tend to be geographically remote
from the official homeland areas. The result is therefore that the
plantation communities are socially as well as geographically isolated
from the official homelands. Situated in forested mountainous terrain
they are, furthermore, isolated even from other human settlements, shops,
and lines of communication within the White areas.

If we postulate that mobility is encouraged by, inter alia:

1. proximity, availability, and attractions, for migrants, of their
    "alternative society", or "original society",
1a. desire for contact with distant families/dependents,
2. dissatisfaction with, or alienation from, the workplace and/or
    accommodation,
3. malintegration of individuals socially into the workforce, and
    informal groupings therein,
4. communication with, and exposure to, alternative modes of employment
    and alternative structures of reward and incentive,

then it is clear that none of these particular factors will operate
effectively in the plantation workforces here being considered. In the
case of the first factor, the "alternative/original society", i.e. the
official homelands, is neither nearby nor could be called "original".

The plantation community is the only society these plantation employees have ever known. Regarding the second factor, we may take it for granted that individuals are unlikely to feel a fundamental alienation or repulsion from their own home district, however objectively deficient it may be. Moreover, in the cases here considered little opportunity of objective comparison, or indeed of comparison at all, occurs. In consideration of the third factor it should merely be noted that the plantation workforce is coterminous with what amounts to a longstanding village community in which not only are all individuals well known to each other, but in which no doubt multiplex (many-stranded) relation-ships are also soundly established. Finally, the fourth factor is a process which is specifically limited to a very low level by the isolated predicament of plantation employees, as noted above, and by a relative lack of inflow of information from the outside world.

The general picture is that sawmill workforces are relatively cosmo-politan groupings while plantation workforces tend to be quieter, more stable settlements.

The single exception in social terms to the general picture of plantation conditions just outlined is the Northern Major Plantation, which is situa-ted almost adjacent to the Mpephu district of the Venda homeland. This plantation recruits some of its workforce directly out of the homeland, and also accommodates some of its employees in the compound of the large Northern Major Sawmill, itself within the plantation. For all these reasons the plantation workforces undergoes a steady exchange of indi-viduals and information with the homeland and with the sawmill's more complex work-culture. The sawmill is also a communications link with the town of Louis Trichardt, 20 miles distant, and a focus of movement for visiting homeland traders (hawkers) as well as the numerous sawmill staff who commute daily out of Mpephu district. As one might therefore expect, this plantation has a noticeably higher turnover (q.v.) than other plantations.

An additional observation that may be made concerning the ranking of the

centres by turnover is that not only is a pattern discernible in the
ranking, but the pattern appears consistent. If it is true that the
variables postulated above (p.36) do correlate with higher turnover,
and according to the priority suggested, then from our knowledge of the
various centres it appears that none of them are out of their expected
positions in the ranking. In other words, the ranking is not in general
conformity but in precise conformity with the factors or variables that
suggest themselves. A further matter for future investigation, however,
would be to define or discern these factors with great precision.

In regard to the factor of high levels of felt grievances among the
workforce, as it bears on the levels of labour turnover at the centres,
it may be mentioned here that during our fieldwork the Southern
Subsidiary Sawmill was actually the scene of a strike, which represented
the culmination of a period of marked tension, and that during the same
period the Southern Garage was also experiencing tense labour relations
to the extent that management there feared that a similar strike was
imminent. These two centres exhibit the two highest rates of labour
turnover of all the centres of employment investigated by us. The strike
at the Subsidiary Sawmill was peaceful and orderly yet by all accounts
was clearly an outcome of high levels of frustration, aggrievance, and
indignation. The entire workforce was involved. We may suggest here
that two distinct factors, at least, contribute to promoting a sense of
felt grievance: a) poor objective conditions, and b) a strong sub-
jective attitude of indignation or protest (as distinct from an attitude
of tolerance or acceptance). Without the latter factor, a firm sense of
aggrievedness need not necessarily emerge. The role of expectations here
is clear. At the Southern Garage, indications are that although the ob-
jective conditions of the workforce were not as poor, especially in respect
of wages, as at the Subsidiary Sawmill, the sense of indignation, and
firmer or higher expectations, ran at a considerably higher level, so as
to more than compensate for this.

In all probability another factor unique to the Southern Garage also bears on its higher rate of turnover. This is the fact that almost half its employees hold the job of driver. The job of driver represents a skilled, qualified, and fairly exalted non-managerial position, in the present state of the rural Timber Industry. Drivers, as a distinguishable clique or sub-work-culture in the workforce, are conscious of their special status and of their competitiveness, if seeking alternative employment, as skilled operators "with a licence". Although driving per se is by no means the only skilled job performed in sawmilling operations it must be one of the very few skills being used here that can be immediately transferred to other fields of employment. For drivers, therefore, work in the timber industry could be an intermediate type of job while employment in some other locality or conditions is sought. The opportunity for higher turnover could thus be considerable. The relatively high status of driving as a job, moreover, appears to result in a certain pride or higher-than-average confidence with a correspondingly lowered tolerance for hardships or poor relations in the workplace.

Turning our attention to the Northern Group we find that the Northern Timber Yard appears in the ranking as the sawmilling centre with the lowest rate of turnover. Viewed on the dimension of felt grievances, this could be seen as confirmation of independent evidence that grievances at this centre run at a relatively lower level than at other sawmilling centres, or at least at a less aggravated or emotionally-charged level. Group-interview material from this centre does reveal fairly persistent complaints about poverty and wage-levels,[1] together with various predictable anxieties about machine danger and possible injuries,

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1) Yet even in this case, the virtually universal complaint about wage-levels was mentioned as a grievance by only 64% of employees at the Northern Timber Yard, compared with 95% of the workforce at both the Southern Subsidiary Sawmill and the Southern Garage, and an average of 79% of all company employees in both Groups.

but little sense of positive aggrievedness or indignation in the sense
of hostility toward management. White people are seen as detached,
ignorant of, or unconcerned with, the poverty of Black employees, but
are not seen as specifically unfair, or aggressive, or unreasonable in
the workplace. The research team's clear impression of the Northern
Timber Yard was of efficient, experienced management at all levels,
established work-routines, and relatively much better race-relations in
work administration. Among the employees an attitude of resignation
seemed a more typical response to hardships than protest. It is true
that Monday absenteeism was enough of a regularity for the Yard manager
to have shown concern for an early explanation and solution to the
problem, but our investigations showed that most absenteeism stemmed
from purely practical problems in the circumstances of the oscillating
migrant. Absenteeism at this centre, therefore, need not necessarily
be seen as a significant expression of discontent in the workforce. In
seeking to discount here a serious grievance basis to absenteeism we
again have in mind the type of labour-relations conflict theory that
asserts a type of symptomatic "equivalence" between absenteeism and labour
turnover in a factory. We consider that such an equivalence may not
automatically be assumed in the cross-cultural situation encountered here.

In addition to its lower levels of felt grievances, the Northern Timber
Yard is unique in being the only sawmilling operation actually situated
in an urban centre. Nevertheless, nearly half its employees commute
daily from the neighbouring Venda rural districts of Sinthumule and Mpephu.
A further 20 per cent board weekly in a township hostel, returning home
at weekends. Given the relatively low level of felt grievances, another
possible reason for lower turnover here might be the fact that many of
these employees are, as commuters, not in fact separated from their home
districts. Inasmuch as they go home to sleep with their families every
night, they are not oscillating migrants. Similarly, the weekly boarders
sleep with their own families each weekend and are thus effectively in
touch with their home districts on a regular basis. We have reserved the
term "semi-migrant" for employees in this category.

TABLE 4.

RESIDENTIAL CIRCUMSTANCES OF AFRICAN EMPLOYEES AT
NORTHERN TIMBER YARD, *ca.* JULY 1974

% OF WORKFORCE	RESIDENTIAL CIRCUMSTANCES
46	HOMELAND RESIDENCE ("COMMUTER")
21	TOWNSHIP HOSTEL/LODGINGS ("SEMI-MIGRANT")
33	TOWNSHIP DWELLER ("MIGRANT"/"IMMIGRANT")

It is difficult to speculate as to whether, and in what way, any urban-
specific conditions in the Northern Timber Yard situation have the tendency
of reducing the incidence of labour turnover. Louis Trichardt, as a small
semi-industrial town does contain various alternative employers, but it
would seem that there is considerable competition for work in the town,
particularly as it is the only significant urban and communications centre
in the far northern Transvaal (excepting Messina). The town could be re-
garded as a stage in the progress of work-seekers from outlying rural
areas toward careers on the Pietersburg-Pretoria-Witwatersrand axis, but
it would seem that certain processes operate contrary to this notion:

1. More "endorsing out" of the big cities appears in fact to be moving
   greater numbers of migrant Vendas than ever before *back* to the
   Vendaland/Louis Trichardt region. The frequency of men with big-city
   work histories is noticeably higher among our respondents aged about
   45 and older than among younger generations. Accordingly, the "taste
   for travel" appears to have declined in recent times.
2. The Vendas who seem to have a relatively stronger consciousness of
   themselves *as Vendas,*[1] appear, given the isolation of Sibasa, to

1) what was described in an earlier report (Schlemmer and Allen, 1974)
   as: ".... a strong tribal identity ...."

regard Louis Trichardt as their principal town and regional centre.
In African terms, Louis Trichardt is distinctly "a Venda town",
whereas Pietersburg, its nearest large industrial neighbour, is a
Pedi centre. From our fieldwork visits to this region we gain the
very definite impression that a man going to work in Louis Trichardt
does not yet feel that he has left the "domain" or "general orbit"
of Vendaland, whereas in any other town he probably does. It could
be that Louis Trichardt has an attraction for Vendas that other
towns do not have. Possibly related to this is an element of con-
servatism, or traditionalism, detected among respondents group-
interviewed at the Northern Timber Yard concerning the desirability
of seeking work in a larger but distant city. It was strongly
asserted that the chance of improved income did not warrant the
serious loss of control over family affairs at home. [1]

3. Regarding Pietersburg, which lies adjacent to the Lebowa (North
Sotho) homeland areas, statistics published in 1972 reveal that job
competition among Africans may be just as fierce there as it is in
Louis Trichardt. An H.S.R.C. job-opportunity survey during 1970/71
found that only 3 549 job-opportunities existed in "Border areas
near the North Sotho homeland", compared with more than twenty
thousand job-opportunities in "Border areas in the Eastern Transvaal."[2]
In other words considerably fewer job-opportunities existed in areas
closer to Pietersburg.

Two conclusions seem to flow from note 3 above: a) the Phalaborwa-
Tzaneen region actually offers more job-opportunities than Pietersburg.
Lebowa Pedis responding logically to this would thus be drawn eastwards,
away from the Johannesburg/Pretoria region rather than toward it (via
Pietersburg).

1) See also, Appendix A, section 5.1, p.139.

2) "Stats", September 1972, p. 1586.

b) The Lebowa and Gazankulu homeland areas have a region of job-opportunities near them. From the point of view of the Venda homeland, however, this region of job-opportunities is further afield, while the Johannesburg/Pretoria region is very remote. Employed Vendas in Louis Trichardt may therefore perceive little or nothing to draw them elsewhere.

It should also be noted while comparing labour turnover between the Natal and Northern Transvaal timber industries in the light of job-opportunities, that the most important source of employment in the North Eastern Transvaal is the timber industry itself, whereas this is not the case in Natal, where the food and textile industries are the principal employers.

2.4.1 Comment

To resume some of what has been suggested in this chapter: labour turn-over among workforces employed on an industrial scale may be understood partially in terms of the demeanour and disposition of employees, and partially in terms of the management culture in centres of employment. In addition to these major factors many others affect the process. With respect to the management culture in the situations under investigation here, given a fairly universal basic level of labour mobility imposed by the migrant-labour/African-homelands situation, notably higher labour turnover at certain centres is almost certainly also an indicator of poor or inefficient administration, or disorganised work-procedures, in the employment situation. We are confident that this relationship obtains even in a situation where large proportions of barely literate, unskilled, and relatively uncommitted migrant workers are employed. For relatively uncritical workers of this sort, fair and efficient organisation of work is one aspect of maintaining reasonable morale.

CHAPTER 3.

TURNOVER AND LABOUR MOBILITY EXAMINED AT THE LEVEL OF INDIVIDUAL EMPLOYEES

In the previous chapter our principal units of analysis were whole workforces at each of the employment centres. By comparing whole groups of employees we sought general pressures and environmental factors which influence rates of labour turnover at a collective level. In this chapter, via the medium of statistics, we turn our attention to individual employees. Classified according to individual criteria, various types of employee who occur everywhere are compared and contrasted as such, without regard for regionalism. Specifically, the workforces of all the sawmills and garages are merged and regarded as one essentially continuous "factory-type" of workforce, within which the dispositions of individual workers are examined.

The workforces of the forest plantations are not considered in this analysis, because as workforces and work-cultures they are qualitatively different, and because, as we have shown, they exhibit negligible labour turnover.

3.1   WORK-GROUP INTEGRATION INDICES

We here attempt to investigate the relationship between the stability of employees and the degree to which they are socially integrated into their work-groups. Some jobs are not actually performed in groups, but nevertheless a sufficiently large majority of all sawmilling jobs are performed in groups as to make undoubtedly worthwhile such an investigation. In any case, whether or not a job is actually performed "in a group", each employee necessarily has a regular set of associates by virtue of his job and its context in the production process.

According to the classic theories of industrial sociology, workers are related to their work less than is supposed by the "cash-nexus", or even

by interest in the work itself, the "hobby-nexus", but more by a
"gang-nexus" or "status-nexus". Inasmuch as a work-group is also a
social group, solidarity in that social group binds together not
only group members but also workers. These theories — developed and
substantially verified, according to the standards of their time, by
the research of Elton Mayo — are based on the commonsense view that
the social world of the adult is primarily patterned about work
activity, and that accordingly industry in the modern world performs
not only on economic function of producing goods, but also a social
function of creating and distributing human satisfactions among the
people involved in it.

Thus in a typical Mayo study of high labour turnover in California
aircraft factories in 1943, where an unstable wartime situation was
being aggravated by turnover of more than 70 per cent, it was found
that

> .. *absenteeism and high labour turnover occurred predominantly*
> *amongst those workers who did not make a team, who had not*
> *managed to fit into any group (either because of personal*
> *peculiarities or, more usually, because they had not been*
> *given the opportunities to do so). Having no social back-*
> *ground, they had no feelings of loyalty and took little*
> *interest in what when on around them in the factory.*[1)]

Relevant to our own interests in this report is the additional fact that
in the industry examined by Mayo the drafting of workers into the army
was a constant drain on the labour force, and thousands of the newly-
inducted replacement workers were very recent immigrants to California.

In the situation here being investigated we have no reason not to
suppose that sound and satisfactory social relationships in the workplace
play an important role in binding an employee to his job. This may also
be viewed as another expression of the Investment/Commitment theory:[2)] if

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1) Brown, J.A.C. (1954), p.83.

2) Kapferer (1972).

a socially well-integrated employee resigns from employment, he loses
not only a job but also one of his principal social environments.   In
social terms he loses an important and probably long-standing
"investment".

In our investigation respondents were asked a number of questions seeking
information about attitudes to, and involvement with, a number of social
arenas in the workplace. Some of the variables thus measured may be
regarded as indices of the degree of integration of the employee into
his work-group. We now proceed to examine how these work-group inte-
gration indices vary against the stability or mobility of the employees.
It should be recalled that for each employee our index of mobility is
simply a knowledge of whether or not that employee had resigned from
employment within fifteen months of our survey of his attitudes.   In
practice, however, this measure has effectively labelled the great
majority of typical "mobile" employees. This is because, as an examina-
tion of Table 4 and Figure 2 will confirm, the majority (72 per cent)
of resignations under the present circumstances occur within two years
of the employee having joined the company. In effect, we now there-
fore examine the distributions of various indices of work-group inte-
gration among resigning employees on the one hand, and among the men
remaining in employment on the other. The very small proportion of
employees dismissed during the period are largely ignored in this analysis.

NOTE: In the text that follows the men remaining employed may be
referred to as "stable employees", and the resigning employees may be
referred to as "resigners", or as "mobile". Particularly in the case
of the "stable" employees, these terms should not be seen necessarily as
accurate descriptions of particular employees but rather as the most
convenient labels for two defined groups of personnel.

TABLE 5.

DISTRIBUTION OF SAWMILL AND GARAGE EMPLOYEES RESIGNING DURING TWELVE
MONTHS ENDING AUGUST 1975, ACCORDING TO LENGTH OF SERVICE

YEARS OF SERVICE	NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES	%	%
0 - ,5	8	28	48
,55 - 1	6	21	
1,05 - 1,5	5	17	24
1,55 - 2	2	7	
2,05 - 3	-	-	-
3,05 - 4	2	7	7
4,05 - 5	-	-	-
5,05 - 10	2	7	7
10,05 - 15	3	10	10
15,05 - 20	1	3	3

FIGURE 2.

DISTRIBUTION OF SAWMILL AND GARAGE EMPLOYEES RESIGNING DURING
TWELVE MONTHS ENDING AUGUST 1975, ACCORDING TO LENGTH OF SERVICE.
(BASED ON TABLE 5.)

years of service
of resigning employees
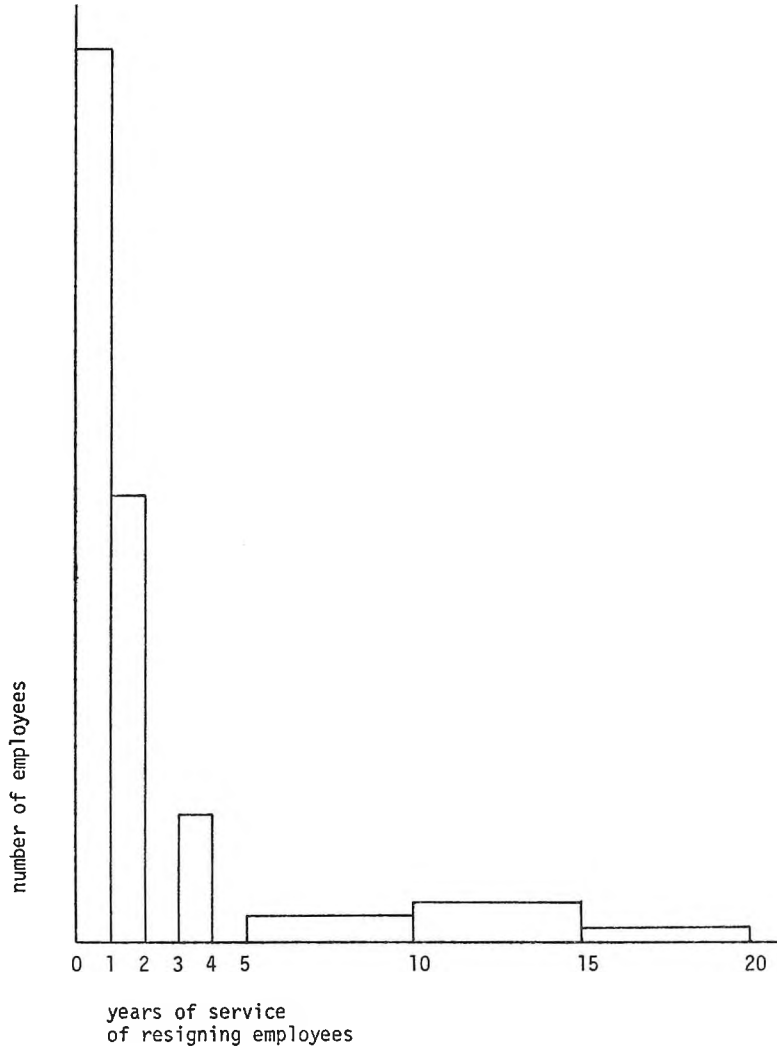
3.1.1 The Indices Examined.

Respondents were asked in individual interviews what their personal
reasons were for leaving their previous job. A large variety of
reasons were given, some relating to conditions in the home district
while others were job-oriented. Neither type of answer, however,
appears to correlate to any notable extent with the present mobility
of the employees. All that may be discerned is a faint indication
that employees who were dismissed from previous jobs tend to be well
represented among those dismissed now from the company, and a very
faint indication that men who left their previous job through no fault
of their own (e.g. for reasons such as discontinuation of their job,
retrenchment, redundancy, routine expiry of contract, employer selling
business) are more concentrated among those resigning from present
employment. The distinction here is between dismissal and resignation.
No hard and fast interpretation may as yet be put on these indications.

Examining all employees' job-histories within the company we find that 81
per cent of the sawmilling workforce have experienced no job improvement
during employment with the company, while 16 per cent have gained promo-
tion. Approximately two per cent have actually been demoted. Contrary
to expectations, promotions (or job-improvements) do not appear to affect
mobility one way or the other, as the same proportion of resigning employees
have been promoted as among those remaining employed. Similarly, lack of
promotion looked at broadly does not associate particularly with stability
or mobility. However, among the 81 per cent who have had no promotion
there are nevertheless 21 per cent of employees who have held two or more
jobs (i.e. they have had job-changes, but without objective improvement),
while the remaining 61 per cent have held a single job always. Using this
distinction we find indications that a lack of job-change of any kind
associates with a tendency to resign, while changes of job appear to in-
hibit mobility. Exactly why a change of job without a promotion should
inhibit mobility is not clear, but as a change of job may involve a change
of work-group, we may speculate that certain changes which have occurred
may have advantageously affected work-group composition or have even

involved improved job-allocation of the employees according to their
aptitudes, personalities and preferences.

Investigating why the various employees originally chose to seek em-
ployment with the company we find that 54 per cent were actually
attracted in some way to the sawmills, while 36 per cent were in a
position of having absolutely no alternative option while desperate for
employment. Another 6 per cent were directed to their present employ-
ment without real choice by some official authority or process (for
example, by a government labour office, or by the outcome of a pass-
book prosecution). Contrary to expectations, we find a faint indication
that it is those who had no other choice of employment who tend to be
slightly inclined toward stability; they are not likely to be particular-
ly committed or integrated socially to the work, but possibly their
feeling of lack of alternative employment inhibits them from leaving the
company. They could thus be a stable but, paradoxically, uncommitted
section of the workforce. If we distinguish however, among employees
who were attracted to Bruply, between those attracted by some factor
subsequently likely promote their social integration (for example, they
knew some one, or had a relative, working at a sawmill already), and
those attracted by some other non-social but positive factor, we find
an indication that the former category tend definitely to be stable while
the latter are mobile: only 8 per cent of resigning employees were
attracted to Bruply through a social relationship, as against 22 per cent
of the stable employees. The predisposition of certain men to seek employ-
ment where they already have a contact could represent the pre-selection of
a certain type of personality which is also associated in other ways with
labour stability.

In another stage of our interviewing each respondent was asked what sort
of image he would prefer his friends to have of himself — what, for
example, he would like to hear them saying about him. A wide variety of
responses arose, but for present purposes they may be classified under
three broad headings: Fifty-five per cent of employees desired images of
themselves which indicate a socially-oriented identity (for example, they

wished to be seen as co-operative, friendly, generous, popular, etc.),
36 per cent desired images of themselves indicating an individually-
oriented identity (they wished to be seen as competent, thrifty, having
status, etc.), and a residual eight per cent gave evasive opinions or
denied dependence on friends. Examined against labour mobility these
employee-orientations show a mild but significant relationship, con-
firming the significance of work-group integration. As might be ex-
pected, socially-oriented men as defined in this way tend to be slightly
more stable than individually-oriented men; employees favouring a
socially-oriented identity represent 50 per cent of resigners but 60
per cent of stable employees. Conversely, those individualistically
disposed represent 50 per cent of resigners but only 31 per cent of
stable employees.

In a further attempt to establish the ego- or socio-contricity of em-
ployees, respondents were asked two specially designed questions —
incorporating a choice of hypothetical situations — intended to elicit
unequivocal declarations of personal values.[1] Combined analysis of
responses to these questions confirms the distribution of attitudes
noted above; 66 per cent of employees are considered to be predominantly
socio-centric in orientation, and 31 per cent egocentric. However, per-
haps because the questions used do not relate directly to circumstances
in the workplace, clear relationships between orientations thus measured
and workforce mobility are not evident. In this case we find only a
faint indication, probably statistically insignificant, that the socio-
centric orientation coincides with stability and the egocentric orienta-
tion with turnover. Nevertheless an indication exists, and we consider

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1) The two questions, which were asked independently of each other, are
   as follows:

   - "Who do you admire most, a man who has many friends or a man who
     is rich but has no friends? Why?"

   - "Who do you think is more likely to be successful in life, a man
     who concerns himself only with his own problems, or a man who
     also concerns himself with the problems of his friends? Why?"

53.

this finding significant in its own way, and mention it here, because, like several other findings of seemingly poor statistical significance in this survey, it forms part of, and confirms, a broader pattern of cohesive findings.

In yet another look at the personal attitudes of employees we asked men to give reasons for the orientation they had revealed in responding to the two special questions mentioned above. Reasons and explanations given were used by us to once again categorise respondents as tending either to be egocentric or socio-centric. We must immediately acknow-ledge the limits to the significance of the resulting figures due to the second-order nature of the question. Nevertheless the expected dichotomy emerges, and we again find faint confirmation of the above-noted trend that a socio-centric orientation in employee inhibits mobility.

In an attempt to gauge by alternative means the social involvement of employees at the sawmills, and in particular whether social relation-ships are important in situations outside of the actual shop-floor and working hours, we investigated the leisure and recreational activities of the men. We also ascertained whether any serious friendships existed at the sawmills for each man. In questioning the men on this matter, friends were defined as "close friends whom you can trust", and in analysis of the responses we have excluded from the score any "friend" who is in fact already a member of the respondent's immediate family,[1] as such persons could be expected in a foreign place of employment to be the respondent's close friends anyway. On this basis we find that friendship so defined is rather scarce among the sawmill workforces, there being only ten per cent of employees with four or more friends at the workplace. Twenty-nine per cent have two or three friends, 27 per cent have a single friend only, and 36 per cent have no friends at all.

1) In this case the respondent's "immediate" family is defined as his children, siblings, parents, and mother's brother.

A modest correlation appears between incidence of serious friendship and
stability of the men: employees without any friends represent 34 per cent
of stable employees but 41 per cent of resigners; conversely, those with
two or more friends represent 36 per cent of stable employees but 27 per
cent of resigners. As one might have expected, we thus find faint indi-
cations that an absence of friends is more common among the less stable
group of men. We may infer therefore that the formation of serious
friendships between co-workers constitutes a significant bond which for
one reason or another helps attach the worker to his job. Whether the
employee's opinion of the company is good or bad, close friends who
share his job may be a benefit or "investment" at the workplace which
is not lightly discarded. Pursuing this reasoning a little further, and
noting from the data that employees with only one close friend tend
neither toward stability nor resignation, we may suggest that as a hypo-
thetical new employee forms friendships at the workplace, so what might
be termed the "switch-over" would appear to occur when he has acquired
more than one friend. At this stage our data tentatively suggest that
he is more likely to be in the stable group, though of course this by no
means guarantees his stability. It should be noted that these results
may well be considerably influenced by the intervening variable of the
length of tenure of job of the employees: we know that a majority of re-
signers leave within a year or two of joining the company, and it is
naturally likely that short-service employees establish fewer durable
friendships at work.

By way of a test of the line of investigation described above we also
asked respondents to tell us how many close friends they had in places
other than the sawmill. Somewhat surprisingly it appears that friend-
ship outside the employment situation, and under the same conditions of
definition, is almost as scarce as it is in the workplace, although
friends in the home district could now be included. Under these con-
ditions 49 per cent of employees have two or more friends (with only 17
per cent having four or more), while 20 per cent have only one friend and
29 per cent state that they have no friends at all. Interestingly, less
than two per cent have friends among their own relatives. Examining the

incidence of this friendship against mobility of the men we find a re-
lationship apparently confirming the trend noted in the preceding
paragraph: men with two or more friends are less likely to be mobile
than men with one friend or no friends. We are here dealing with the
employee's friends in his home area, none of whom could be presumed to
exercise only direct influence, via friendship per se, in binding the
individual to his job. This suggests that recording the incidence of
close personal relationships contracted by a person may be appropriate
merely for deriving some index of an attitude or inclination for social
integration in general, rather than measuring attachment to a particular
environment such as the home area or the workplace. One more observa-
tion is also of interest: if, from the men having two or more friends,
we isolate the sub-group of those stating that they have six or more
close friends in their home district, (11 per cent of employees)[1] then
a reversal of the broad trend just noted is evident. Men with at least
six close friends elsewhere tend to be a mobile group in the workforce.
Possibly at this relatively high number of strong relationships in an
environment alternative to the world of industrial employment one may
infer a stronger involvement in that alternative environment.

Turning to leisure activities, we first asked employees how they
typically spent their time when not actually working on the job. A
considerable variety of responses resulted, with activities ranging
from sleeping or resting, through commuting and gardening, to reading
and study, to mention just a few. These activities could be viewed in
many ways, but for the present analysis we have categorised them according
to whether or not they imply or necessitate regular social relations —
i.e. according to whether or not they are inherently "sociable activities"
suggesting that the participant actively seeks the company of others.
With this perspective we isolate three major groups of leisure activities,
undertaken by the following proportions of the workforce: those tending to
socially integrate the respondent (e.g. sport), 10 per cent; those that
are "constructive"[2] but not especially integrating (e.g. reading,

1) cf. Three per cent with as many close friends *in* the workplace.
2) Here used in the sense of "positive, orderly, self-advancing".

gardening), 49 per cent; and those indicative of helplessness or apathy
in the present predicament of the respondent (e.g. commuting, sleeping),
39 per cent. The very high proportion of persons obliged to engage in
various constructive activities after work reflects the low living-standard
and high dependency obligations of most employees; but perhaps more worry-
ing is the relatively large number of those who because of circumstances
or inclination engage in time-wasting leisure -activities, ineffective
leisure-activities, or no activities at all -- a situation suggestive of
poor energy and/or morale in perhaps more than one-third of the workforce.
Contrary to immediate expectations the group engaging in socially-
integrating leisure activities are just as likely to resign as to remain
in employment. However, employees engaging in constructive leisure acti-
vities represent 52 per cent of resigners but 45 per cent of stable
employees. And those reporting leisure activities indicative of apathy
or helplessness represent 33 per cent of resigners but 42 per cent of
stable employees. We consider these small contrasts to be faint but un-
mistakeable indications that employees undertaking constructive or self-
improving leisure activities are actually more likely to be mobile.
Given the relatively poor conditions prevailing in the timber industry
generally, this may reflect the departure of more enterprising individuals
in search of new situations. The other side of the coin would seem to be
that those remaining after such a process tend inter alia to adopt leisure
activities indicative of apathy or helplessness. For the employer this is
of course a regrettable indication, suggesting as it does that conditions
in the employment situation[1] are such as to be tolerable only by certain
types of employees of lower ambitions or with crippling dependency obli-
gations, who moreover, tend to accumulate in the workforce. Such a finding
may be seen as partial confirmation of the "syndrome of Psychological
Dependence" (growing out of initial residential dependence) on the employer,
suspected by us during fieldwork visits to the sawmills and mentioned in an
earlier report.[2]

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1) By this we mean in the timber industry generally, and indeed in other
   comparable border-industries.

2) Allen and Schlemmer (1975), pp. 59,60 (q.v.).

After investigating how employees typically spent their leisure time
de facto, we went on to ask them what, ideally, their favourite kind
of recreation was. Once again a wide variety of activities was
mentioned, though with a differing distribution; and we have classified
them under the same headings as were used above. With the constraints
of reality removed, the pattern of preferred leisure activity is
altered radically. The incidence of individuals preferring activities
suggesting helplessness and/or apathy remains similar (at 35 per cent)
to that noted in the preceding paragraph, but many more respondents
(51 per cent) now prefer socially integrating activities to "constructive"
ones   (Now preferred by a mere 12 percent). This is as might be ex-
pected, and in spite of the new distribution the relation between labour
mobility and preferred recreation maintains the same general pattern,
with somewhat increased contrasts indeed. Employees preferring "con-
structive" recreation constitute 28 per cent of resigners but 8 per cent
of stable employees, whereas those preferring "apathetic" pastimes
constitute only 17 per cent of resigners but 39 per cent of stable em-
ployees. Thus the indications are as before that resigners tend to be
more interested in constructive activities, and stable employees tend to
show more involvement in either integrating or "apathetic"-type pastimes.
To remind the reader: our category "constructive activities" includes
reading, study, domestic tasks, gardening, developing property, tinker-
ing, etc; while the category "apathetic" activities includes sitting,
sleeping, resting, drinking, doing nothing, doing shift-work, etc.

We now turn from social relations at large in the sawmills to an
examination of more specific working relations in the workplace. In
what was considered to be a crucial test of work-group integration
theories, employees were each asked whether they would prefer working
with their current workmates or with new ones. Reasons for their choice
were also given by the respondents. Presumably working relations would
have to deteriorate considerably before men would actually ask for
changes of personnel in their group, but it was hoped that the responses
would throw up some sort of contrast. As it happens, only five per cent

of employees declared a wish for new workmates, while 89 per cent pre-
ferred their current colleagues. Analysing the latter category we find
that whereas 26 per cent of the men prefer to keep their present work-
mates for specifically personal or socially-oriented reasons (for example,
because of friendship, supportive ties, etc.), 61 per cent prefer present
workmates for relatively more job-oriented reasons (e.g. they are
familiar with the job, are an effective team, etc.). From our theo-
retical perspective the examination of these results against stability
and turnover is disappointing. Apart from a clear indication that the
few employees preferring to have new workmates are more involved in
turnover there is very little else in the way of significant or ex-
pected findings. Employees preferring present workmates show only a
very slight tendency toward specific stability — the difference in
distribution is not statistically significant. Moreover, of the two
species of reasons for preferring present workmates, the socially-
oriented reasons carry no special significance. In fact, contrary to
expectations it appears to be the job-oriented reasons for the prefer-
ence that are associated with any notable stability. In considering
these apparently disappointing findings we must remember that the lack
of any notable relationship between mobility and the attitudes of
workers to co-workers is itself significant, especially as a certain
theoretical approach would have predicted otherwise. That theoretical
approach was formulated in employment conditions operationally re-
sembling those in the industry studied here, but in social and cultural
circumstances which were markedly different. Before further discussion
of this field, however, it is necessary for us to examine another set
of relationships and attitudes — namely, those between employees on the
shop-floor and their immediate superiors.

Continuing our examination of specific working relations in the workplace,
we asked employees whether they considered the African charge-hands under
whom they worked to be generally popular or not. Respondents were also
asked to elaborate reasons for the answers they gave. Answers to the
preliminary question are of three basic types: those declaring that the

charge-hand is popular (55 per cent of employees), those stating that
he is unpopular (18 per cent), and those of an evasive or intermediate
type (25 per cent). Examples of the last type are answers claiming
ignorance, or the impossibility of categorisation, or explaining that
the respondent works in an unsupervised job. At this point we may al-
ready remark that nearly one-fifth of the sawmill workforces consider
their immediate supervisors unpopular, and that this proportion is
almost evenly maintained through the various centres of employment.
This type of unpopularity appears therefore to have a rather problematic
salience everywhere. We consider, moreover, that this figure does
reflect the incidence of actual conditions and behaviour in supervisory
situations rather than the incidence of mere opinions or the whims of the
respondents at the time of interviewing, because it contrasts — as would
be expected — with a proportion of only 7 per cent holding the same
opinion in the plantation workforces. In addition the proportion rises
noticeably to 23 per cent at the De Hoek sawmill, a centre where evidence
of fear of the charge-hands has already been noted in the course of
group-interviews conducted by us.[1] To return to the 55 per cent of
employees who consider their charge-hands popular, when we go on to
examine the reasons given for this opinion it becomes clear that they may
be divided into two broad types: forty per cent of employees find their
charge-hands popular for specifically personal or socially-oriented
reasons which suggest a personal attachment of some sort between workmen
and supervisor (for example, the charge-hand is said to be sympathetic,
respectful, or having leadership skills, or sharing responsibility for
the work), while 15 per cent find him popular for other purely job-
oriented reasons (e.g. he has technical skills). When these various
findings are examined against employee turnover and stability, significant
and important contrasts emerge. First, employees who find their charge-
hands unpopular constitute 29 per cent of resigners but only 17 per
cent of stable employees. However, employees giving no specific opinion

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1) See R. Allen and L. Schlemmer (1975) *op.cit*, p.73.

on their charge-hand's popularity are equally represented among re-
signers and stable employees. Similarly, the representation of men
considering their charge-hands popular for job-oriented reasons only,
is equal among both resigners and stayers, at 16 per cent. But finally,
those employees who consider their charge-hands popular for personal/
social reasons make up 29 per cent of resigning men, as against 43 per
cent of those who remained employed. These contrasts make a great deal
of sense, though in an unexpected quarter. They are considerably more
pronounced than has been the case with the other socio-centric variables
considered in this chapter. Irrespective of the actual salience of un-
popularity of charge-hands, an important connection has been found
between an employee's mobility and his attitude to these supervisors;
and this attitude is here expressed in such a way that we may reasonably
assume that it reflects the style of the relationship between the two.

Such a finding is best considered in the light of other findings ex-
pressed in the previous paragraph and also in the light of the "classical
theories" outlined earlier. The classical view predicts that the degree
of integration of the worker into the social group of his co-workers
profoundly affects his experience of his job and its satisfactions, and
therefore ultimately affects his tenure of that job. But here we find
that attitudes to supervision relate clearly to tenure. The important
inference is that in the border-industry employment situation here being
studied it would appear that a sound relationship with the charge-hand is
considerably more important in establishing the stability of an employee
than is a sound relationship with his working colleagues. It is possible
that from the general perspective and conditions of a typical employee the
relationship with the charge-hand is for some reason known or considered
to be more important than that with ordinary work-colleagues. We suspect
that this in turn rests upon the entire conception and view of the African
charge-hand in the mind of the migrant. The African migrant worker coming
from a traditionally-oriented rural home district may unconsciously have
a prior concept of the position and role of the charge-hand, which is
flavoured or modelled by his own culture or social institutions, in which

corresponding father-figures or leader-figures or spokesman-figures are seen as particularly important. Such a view would be amplified if the charge-hands in turn were to style themselves in the same idiom.

A more employment-centred explanation for the situation might be that ongoing labour turnover and re-allocation of employees tends to change the composition of the work-group regularly, making co-workers a transient factor in the situation compared with the relatively stable and permanent charge-hands. As was noted earlier, little more than one-third of the workforce have more than a single close friend at their place of employment. Clearly under such circumstances the employee's most lasting workplace relationship, of whatever quality, would be with the charge-hand. Another view is that if the work situation is dominated in some places — as we believe it is — by unduly powerful or harsh charge-hands, then this might very naturally result in a preoccupation, on the part of the worker, with the supervisory relationship.

Yet another view of the apparent situation might be that a lack of concern for co-workers reflects a general lack of commitment to industrial employment. According to this view the migrant worker takes a purely mercenary and short-term interest in his employment, probably assumes that co-workers are doing likewise, and so directs his attentions toward the charge-hand who represents the link with the employer. Further evidence will be cited elsewhere in this report for what we may term the "mercenary orientation". In competing for the favour of the charge-hand the employee would be acting in a situation analagous to situations involving the patrimonial dispensation of powers and privileges in certain traditional forms of African society.

3.1.2 Summary of Findings.

To summarize this section, we have examined a number of factors and attitudes prevailing among employees which reveal in general whether they have special social ties with their centres of employment, indicate in particular

the extent of their social integration into their work groups, investigate two specific types of relationship crucial in the workplace, and indeed indicate employees' differing outlooks on interpersonal relations in general. With respect to turnover our principal findings may be summarized as:

1. Non-mobility of employees is clearly related to poor morale, and certain components of poor morale.
2. Non-Mobility of employees is clearly related to the establishment of satisfactory relations between employee and charge-hand.

Attitudes of resignation, and conditions of helplessness or extreme hardship in the general circumstances of employees associate with low mobility among those employees. Evidently, broad conditions bringing about poor morale tend to generate apathy, which in turn encourages "stability". The converse of this situation is as follows:

a. Taking a *personal* perspective on the employee, indications of initiative and energy associate with tendency to resign;
b. Taking a *social* perspective, individualism in the employee, and malintegration into working groups also associate with a tendency to resign.

Regarding work group integration indices, interest in co-workers associates more with stability than with turnover. To be sure, the contrasts are small in some cases, but all are in the expected direction. An employee with kinsmen or homeboys working in his same sawmill tends to be stable. More important, however, is the discovery that "integration" of the employee with the charge-hand(s) is more crucial to stability than work-group integration (i.e. integration with the employee's peers). If more specific reasons for this condition could be known, we have little doubt that an improved understanding of the social dynamics of the workplace in these sawmills might be expected.

3.2   LABOUR MOBILITY AND GEOGRAPHIC MOBILITY: MATTERS AFFECTING THE MIGRATION AND OTHER MOVEMENTS OF EMPLOYEES

Under this heading we examine a number of variables reflecting attitudes and biographical aspects of employees which are likely to influence their physical movement into or out of employment situations, and hence influence their labour mobility.   Broadly speaking, two species of factors may be said to influence a man's movements during his working life: on the one hand, links with kinfolk and the birthplace or home district; and on the other, career factors.   Migration and movement are virtually given conditions in the situations of most sawmill employees in the situation studied, most of whom have come from more or less distant homes to take up employment.   Even among those living with their families in company married quarters there are almost none whose real homes (in the sense of birthplace, etc.) are on or near the sawmill site.   The variables we here intend to examine fall roughly into four groups, dealing with matters as follows:

1.   The background of the employee.
2.   The more recent background of the employee, as influenced by working history.
3.   The employee's present work situation.
4.   The employee's plans and goals for the future; his preferences, his feelings about the future.

These variables are examined with a view to the implications which they have for the migration and movements — past, present and future — of the men.

3.2.1 Basic Residential Circumstances.

The residential circumstances of sawmill employees vary.   Thirty-seven per cent live in a homeland dwelling — their own home in virtually all cases — from where they commute daily to work.   Members of this group who are married are obviously in regular daily contact with their families.   They

are able to commute in this way because their homes are near to that
part of the White area where the sawmill which employs them is situated.
Thirty-one per cent of the men, whether married or not, live a bachelor
life in company single quarters or an equivalent company compound. Such
men typically come from more distant homeland areas than the daily
commuters. If they are married they see their families only when they
travel home — an event which may happen as often as weekly or as seldom
as annually, depending on distances, resources, and on leave-time and
transport available. Unlike the commuters, who inevitably retain a re-
latively strong and continuous identity in terms of the homeland — and
its "alternative society" and culture — these oscillating migrants spend
long periods of time living on the sawmill site. A relatively small
elite of 18 per cent of the workforce lives on-site in company married
quarters together with at least a part of their nuclear family. Finally,
a residual 13 per cent of employees live in an urban township situation:
either a township hostel, or a temporary township home or in township
lodgings. These latter special cases are all confined to the Northern Timber
Yard, which has no accommodation of its own for employees. Many of the
men in this category maintain a home and family in a rural home district
in Venda, and from the perspective of whether or not they retain durable
links with the homeland "alternative society", they are therefore equiva-
lent to the intermediate category of the single-quarter-dwelling migrants
in the other sawmills.

Examination of the mobility of employees against their residential circum-
stances clearly reveals the pattern we would expect. From the foregoing
outline of situations, we would note that married-quarters residents have
the satisfaction of having their families living with them at the workplace
(i.e. no strong close kinship ties with homeland areas), that they also
have a vested interest in retaining their company-owned dwellings by con-
tinuing to work for the company, and we would expect them to be a non-
mobile group. Our cross-tabulation confirms that they have a distinct
tendency to predominate in the non-mobile group. Correspondingly, homeland
residents have frequent contact and links with their "alternative society",

might be expected to show relatively little industrial commitment, and are in fact revealed by our findings to be a markedly mobile group. This is perhaps our most important indication at this stage; homeland-resident commuters constitute only 34 per cent of stable employees compared with 56 per cent of resigners. Single-quarters tenants live on-site but retain, via their absent families, at least one strong link with the homeland. Their families are accommodated outside of the employment situation, so these employees have no particular vested interest other than the job-situation in retaining their single quarters. We would expect them to be predominantly homeland-oriented, and our cross tabulations reveal that they undoubtedly tend to be a mobile group.

3.2.2 Other Background Factors.

Relevant to but not equivalent to the residential circumstances of em-ployees is demographic data revealing the locus of each employee's nuclear family relative to the employee himself. Fifty-one per cent of all employees have their nuclear family living with them — though this in-cludes both homeland-resident employees and married-quarters residents. This category of employee is equally represented among non-mobile and resigning men. Thirty-six per cent of employees' families are living away from them, and members of this category constitute 39 per cent of non-mobile men but 24 per cent of resigners. This is an unexpected finding, as it indicates that employees with absent families actually tend more toward stability than those who have their family living with them. However, the category of men with absent families is not exactly coterminous with the category of men occupying company single quarters. Some men commute to work from a homeland but nevertheless do not live with their families; and many of those living in single quarters are unmarried. Of the entire workforce, 13 per cent are single. These men tend definitely toward mobility, constituting 24 per cent of resigners.

TABLE 6.

MOBILITY BY MARITAL STATUS

	RESPONDENT'S	MARITAL STATUS	
	SINGLE	MARRIED OR FORMERLY MARRIED	
% Still employed	11	89	100
% Resigned	24	76	100

In addition to data about employees' nuclear families, we have information
on the whereabouts of employees dependents generally. The two sorts of
group are distinct; a man's dependents, particularly in an African society,
may number many more than his nuclear family, and many include grandparents,
parents, widowed siblings and orphaned nephews and nieces. Also, men who
are single and have no nuclear family may already have a number of de-
pendents with legitimate claims. Cross tabulation of locus of dependents
against mobility gives us mild confirmation of a trend noted above — men
whose dependents are not living with them are commoner (47 per cent) among
the non-mobile employees than among the resigners (40 per cent). The
small proportion of men with no dependents at all are shown to be dis-
tinctly unstable; only two per cent of non-mobile employees are without
dependents, as against 8 per cent of the resigners. The greater tendency
to mobility of employees with virtually no kinship ties is as expected.

TABLE 7.

MOBILITY BY OBLIGATION TO DEPENDENTS

	RESPONDENT'S OBLIGATION TO DEPENDENTS		
	NO DEPENDENTS	HAS DEPENDENTS	
% Still employed	2	98	100
% Resigned	8	92	100

A question concerning travel which applied equally to all our respondents, irrespective of their residential situation, was one in which we asked "How often do you return to your homeland?" The frequencies of employees' visits to their respective homelands were distributed as follows: thirty-four per cent daily (i.e. commuters residing in homeland), 13 per cent weekly, 28 per cent monthly, 13 per cent two to four times per annum, and 11 per cent annually. These various frequencies of contacts are not evenly distributed through the centres — for example the Southern Subsidiary sawmill is staffed entirely by daily commuters, while most of those who visit only annually work at the Southern Major Sawmill, a centre remote from the homelands which supply its labour. Looking at turnover we find, as expected according to the "alternative society" model, that daily commuters tend toward mobility. However, men migrating annually also tend to be mobile. On the other hand, men migrating at monthly intervals appear to be distinctly more stable. Clearly, no simple relationship exists connecting stability with the period between visits to the homeland — both very long and very short-term periods between absences from the world of employment appear to associate with relatively poorer commitment to the company, while monthly-spaced migrations appear to have favourable consequences. At this stage we can only hypothesize an explanation, but, given that homeland life assumes a set of values and orientations which differ considerably from those favoured by a regimented industrial environment, it may be that monthly migration represents a happy medium between effective commitment to the welfare of the family on the one hand (a commitment lacking perhaps or less rewarding among men who migrate only annually), and freedom from the constant distractions, pulls, obligations of full-time homeland life on the other — in other words, a relative commitment, rather, to industrial employment. Regarding commitment to the family, monthly visits home are invariably timed to occur on the weekends following paydays (Fridays), enabling a direct association between receipt of wages and maintenance of dependents to be set up. Information from various studies indicates that one of the principal anxieties of long-range migrants concerns their inability to contribute properly to the progress and wellbeing of their distant families — or in some cases, even to retain proper communication with their families, and thereby know whether all is well at home. To sum up, what we here suggest

is that migration only at annual intervals may encourage a certain degree
of industrial commitment but also promotes anxiety about distant de-
pendents — and possibly real deterioration in their situation and
morale — and hence promotes instability of labour. At the opposite
extreme, very frequent or daily migration permits continuous supervision
of dependents but favours commitment to the rural homeland life rather
than industrial commitment — and hence also promotes instability of
labour. Monthly migration, we suggest, permits sufficiently frequent
contact with the distant family to maintain reassuring links, but also
results in the majority of time (including daily leisure time) being
spent at the workplace thus favouring industrial commitment, minimising
"homeland pull", and facilitating speedy remittance of earnings to re-
mote dependents. Pay itself is received monthly.

A similar examination of movements took the form of investigating the
greatest geographical range of other journeys (other than to their home-
land home) normally undertaken by employees. Our categorization of re-
sponses is based on the recognition that virtually all the centres of
employment are situated in remote, rural, thinly-populated settings. By
our categories, possible types of destination were: a big town or big
city (4 per cent of employees), the nearest town (25 per cent), local
White rural areas (10 per cent), or local homeland rural areas (excluding
the respondent's own home district) (38 per cent). A residual 23 per
cent of employees make no habitual movements away from the sawmills other
than to their own home district. This latter category show a slight
tendency toward mobility — not unexpected in terms of an "alternative
society" model. The distribution of employees regularly visiting other
homeland areas is identical among both employed and resigning groups.
Only employees regularly visiting the nearest towns show any marked ten-
dency, and that is toward stability. If we hold in mind the hypothesis of
the "pipeline phenomenon",[1] then this is a surprising finding, as that
view would hold that exposure to new job-opportunities and similar urban

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1) Essentially this is the hypothesis that rural employment and the small
   towns represent "staging-posts" in an ongoing outflow of labour from re-
   mote rural areas ultimately seeking employment in the major industrial
   conurbations.

experience draws men toward urban migration. However, if it is simply assumed that regular contact with towns inculcates the types of values promoting industrial commitment, then the relative lack of labour mobility noted is to be expected.

In a question dealing with family links, migrant employees with families — excluding the small proportion whose families live with them in company married quarters — were asked whether, if it were possible, they would wish their families to live with them at or near the place where they are employed. As all the families in question currently reside in traditional homeland settlements, this question in effect asked employees whether or not they would wish to re-settle their families, in the process probably abandoning all dependence on the homeland life and committing themselves in various ways to the world of the border-industry. Needless to say, this was a largely hypothetical question for some men, but the sentiments expressed by them in responding are sincere. For this reason and others we venture to suggest that, properly applied, this question could well be an effective test of the "homeland orientation", or commitment to the homeland way of life, among migrant workers in rural border industries. Of the men in question, 54 per cent wanted their wife or family to be with them, while 46 per cent wished them to remain living in the homeland; at least 26 per cent of the men expressed the homeland option with a specific comment indicating an ultimate intention to opt seriously for the homeland life. For example they wished to retain rights of tenure, or to maintain agriculture, in the homeland. However, in spite of the clear polarisation of respondents on this basis no particular correlation appears between these attitudes and mobility of employees, other than a very faint tendency toward stability among those advocating that their families join them at the workplace; and a somewhat more distinct tendency toward resignation among those specifically expressing personal goals in the homelands. Statistically these indications are extremely weak, but they are in the expected directions.

An alternative, and evidently different, perspective on homes and movements was afforded by a question intended to elicit *hypothetical ideal* places of residence. Respondents were asked where they would like best to live "if

you were a free man, and could live and work anywhere you like". In the
event, the hypothetical basis of this question was not grasped by some
men, thereby shrinking our sample somewhat, but the unexpected correlation
ultimately arrived at suggests that a novel perspective was indeed
achieved. Responses could be classified into three groups: forty-
eight per cent of respondents preferred to live in a homeland, 26 per
cent preferred to live in a town or big city in a White area, and an
unexpected 24 per cent expressed a preference for living in company
accommodation. Cross tabulation against mobility reveals relationships
with a significance which is not at all clear. Surprisingly, there is
little clear contrast between resigners and men remaining employed.
The only significant indication appears to be that men who prefer to live
in a homeland tend toward stability. This finding is hard to explain.
Similarly, there appears to be a faint tendency for more of the mobile em-
ployees to favour company accommodation. Superficially, these findings
contradict rather than corroborate others noted above. At this stage we
may only speculate that the hypothetical and more general level of the
original question prompts responses whose significance is to be read on
a corresponding level. Thus it may be that the homeland, expressed *as*
an ideal,[1] is an index of a generally more stable orientation, a quieter,
relatively non-mobile outlook.

3.2.3 Recent Job-Histories.

Turning to a brief examination of the background of the employee as in-
fluenced by his work, we examine the job-histories of our respondents, and
more particularly some relationships between previous employment and present
mobility.

Employees have been categorised according to the number of previous jobs
held before working with this company, and also according to the average
duration of previous jobs. The distribution of men in the former set of
categories are as follows: ten per cent have held five or more jobs

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1) i.e. Rather than as an actual locus of dependents, property, etc.

previously, 56 per cent have held two to four jobs, 26 per cent have
held only a single prior job, and a residual 9 per cent have had no
previous employment at all. Mild contrasts between mobile and stable
employees are found in the cross tabulation, systematically suggesting
that employees with more of a history of job-changes are less prone
now to resignation, while employees with little experience of losing or
leaving jobs are more prepared to resign. The group for whom this
company is the first employer is distinctly unstable.

Possibly those with more varied job-histories experience an increasing
need for security as a result of repeated experiences of change, as well
as through the intervening variable of age: the holding of more jobs in
the past tends to correlate with greater age, which in turn correlates
independently with greater stability.

Looking at the other dimension of employees' job-histories, the distri-
bution of men according to the average duration of all their previous jobs
is as follows:

More than 5 years	28
3 to 4,99 years	20
1 to 2,99 years	32
0 to 0,99 years	12
Not applicable: no previous jobs	8
	100

Cross tabulation of these categories by mobility yields a clear indication
of the relative stability of employees who have held their previous jobs
for longer periods (see Table 8). In particular, the holding of former
jobs for periods of three years or more is distinctly associated with
relative stability. Conversely, those who have held their previous jobs
for periods shorter than two years tend to be notably mobile in terms of
our definitions. Note that the intervening variable of age exerts a
minimal influence on this correlation (in comparison with the previous

72.

correlation) because *average* duration of all previous jobs rather than total duration of all previous jobs is the quantity we have measured.

What conclusions may be drawn from our examination above of two dimensions of job-history: job-tenure, and mobility? The previous behaviour — in particular the stability — of employees appears to be replicated to some extent in their performance with the present employer. Inter alia, it would thus appear that for many, "stability", or "mobility" depends on or derives from factors pertaining to the individual himself rather than to the work environment. In other words mobility, viewed in this way, tends to be a quality which men bring with them to the company rather than manifest after appointment as a result of exposure to experiences within the company. Certainly, it appears that conditions in the company tend *not* to be able to change the habits (i.e. improve the stability) of the "chronic resigner", and this is an assessment which obviously has important implications for company policy.

TABLE 8.

MOBILITY BY AVERAGE DURATION OF PREVIOUS JOBS

| | AVERAGE DURATION OF PREVIOUS JOBS (YEARS) | | | | |
	N.A.	0 - 0,9	1 - 2,9	3 - 4,9	5+	
% Still employed	7	10	30	21	32	100
% Resigned	17	21	37	17	8	100

3.2.4 Present Work Situation.

In further examination of migrancy and movement factors, via the effects of the employee's present work situation, we consider the attractiveness of employees' present employment benefits in contrast with those of other employers, employees' promotion opportunities, and the general sense of security of employees in their present employment situation.

Part of our investigation of perceptions of employment benefits has given
us an evaluation of some subjective estimations made by the men as to how
their benefits compare with those offered by other employers, both rural
and urban. Men were asked to decide generally whether or not they were
better off than men in other companies of similar stature. It appears
that 54 per cent of employees consider that "others are better off than
us", while 23 per cent feel themselves to be better off than others.
In cross tabulating this information against mobility we ask whether
perceptions of unfavourable or favourable standards of benefits play any
part in labour turnover or labour stability, respectively. In fact this
comparison yields no particular indications and certainly none of the
associations that might have been expected. If anything, a minor indi-
cation is found that employees judging their own company to be relatively
favourable regarding benefits are slightly less stable than the norm.
At the present stage, however, any attempt to explain this association
would be pure speculation.[1]

Hypothesizing that promotional opportunities might affect the inclination
of men to remain with the company, we have measured employees' perceptions
of their own chances of moving into better jobs in the company. On this
basis, only 13 per cent consider that they have changes of promotion,
while at least three-quarters of all employees feel they have no chances.
Apart from a very minor tendency toward mobility among those perceiving
no promotion chances, cross tabulation reveals virtually no contrasts
whatever between resigners and those remaining in employment.

An examination of the degree of security felt by employees does, however,
seem to yield meaningful contrasts. In seeking to measure whether or not

1) It might be speculated, for example, that a positive judgement of the
   company's benefits may merely indicate a generally positive orienta-
   tion or morale in the respondent. After all, most men were not in a
   position to consider this question with any objectivity or relevant
   experience. It would then appear that better morale or positive
   orientation associates with tendency to turnover, a relationship
   already suggested by other indicators, i.e. suggestions that
   "Apathetics" tend to collect in the workforce.

individual employees felt secure in their jobs we asked them if they
ever worried about losing their jobs, and what reasons they had for
their feelings. When categorised, the various responses indicate that
almost exactly half of employees feel insecure in these terms, that 40
per cent feel secure, and that 10 per cent have a carefree or fatalistic
attitude to job tenure and do not really concern themselves with the
notion of "security" at all. Cross tabulation of these distributions is
shown in Table 9.

TABLE 9.

MOBILITY BY SUBJECTIVE SECURITY OF RESPONDENT

	HOW SECURE RESPONDENT FEELS IN PRESENT JOB			
	INSECURE	CAREFREE	SECURE	
% Still employed	52	10	39	100
% Resigned	40	12	48	100

By grouping together all the various types of responses indicating either
security or insecurity, we can see that in broad terms contrasts are
evident, though not as we might have initially expected. The pattern,
however, may be meaningful. In fact, employees feeling insecure tend
actually to be less mobile, while more of the "secure-feeling" employees
have resigned. It might be said that the insecure-feeling employees tend
to cling to their jobs so as to reassure themselves. In the case of
secure-feeling employees the question immediately arises: is their feeling
of security rooted in an innate self-confidence which then colours op-
timistically their view of job-security, or does their feeling derive
objectively from evidence of real job-security? Either situation could
result in a lowered "sense of insecurity" and a correspondingly increased
readiness to take on the risks of mobility. On the other hand, an
analysis in terms of personal "investment" in the job is not able to
explain the observed correlation. It could only be expected that a sense
of security would be the result of increased "investments" in the job,

but such increased investments could in turn only be expected to promote stability.

In all probability it is independent sources of confidence among certain employees that account for both a feeling of security in the job and a readiness to leave the job.

To some extent the quality of social relations in the employment situation plays a part in affecting the sense of security of workers. Almost one-quarter of all employees stated that sound relationships, or alternatively, deteriorating relationships in the workplace were the principal reason for their feeling secure or insecure, respectively. However, a cross tabulation taking into account these particular forms of security or insecurity fails to indicate any further influence on labour turnover; rather, it shows that the soundness or deterioration of relationships does not appear to significantly affect stability or instability of tenure of jobs.

3.2.5 Orientations to the Future.

To conclude this examination of the effects of constraints such as travel and migration on the mobility of employees, we look at some of the feelings, plans and preferences that employees have when thinking about the future.

In this connection our respondents were first asked to assess how likely it was that they would be able to find employment elsewhere if they were to leave the company. Confidence in eligibility for alternative employment appeared to vary between two extremes. One-quarter of employees felt plainly that it was virtually impossible for them to find other jobs. In this context these respondents tended to feel that they were too old or too restricted by family ties. At the other extreme, one-quarter of employees felt confident, without giving the matter great thought, that they could find employment elsewhere without difficulty. Their confidence

apparently derived from their possession of particular skills and ex-
perience, or from sheer optimism rooted in youth and relative independence.
One-third of employees expressed, only after a certain amount of intro-
spection on the question, the opinion that they might possibly succeed
in finding employment in other places, but also mentioned various con-
ditions or obstacles that would have to be considered beforehand. A
residual 13 per cent had a carefree or unconcerned attitude to the problem.
Although seemingly polar attitudes were thus encountered, no particular
association of either with instability is evident. A cross tabulation of
mobility against assessments of the possibility of finding other jobs
produces no conclusive pattern; both the "confident" respondents and the
"doubtfuls" are highly represented among resigners.

In another attempt to probe attitudes about the future we asked employees
to describe to us what sort of job they would prefer if they were ever to
seek a new job. Unfortunately the efficacy of this question has been all
but annihilated by the vast majority (77 per cent) of the responses
turning out to be "don't know"s. Only 7 per cent actually specified that
they would like a change, fewer in fact that the 13 per cent who stated
that they were satisfied with, or resigned to, their present jobs. The
most that can be directly discerned about labour turnover is that as
expected, the small minority actually expressing satisfaction with jobs
are distinctly stable. Indirectly we would infer that the response re-
ceived indicates that there is very little evidence of a career-
orientation among most employees — given a chance to speculate, they do
not know what they intend doing in the future. Indeed, these and other
findings suggest that possible future situations of the migrant workers
here studied, and orientations toward the variety of possible or con-
ceivable futures, are not factors which have much bearing on their
stability or likelihood of leaving employment. Such a state of affairs,
if true, is entirely consonant with our "alternative society" view of
the typical homeland citizen's participation in employment in border
industries, and of his perception of his own predicament as on oscillating
migrant. He views, according to this perspective, the industrial workplace

and the whole civilization it represents in much the same way as the
true drop-out views "the establishment" — disinterestedly. He himself
espouses an alternative society in a very true sense of that phrase —
an age-old society, and culture, which apparently fulfill all his human
needs[1], with the exception of some economic ones — and as a consequence
he need not necessarily take seriously the new social conventions, and
implied values, of the industrial culture into which he ventures merely
to earn cash. He has no necessary ideological commitment to the principles
of industrial society, and consequently may live in it on a relatively
spontaneous and day-to-day basis. In this sense the industrial milieu
may be seen by the migrant as a convenient situation to exploit, rather
than a sacrosanct way of life with which to become earnestly involved.
Thus, migrants who, while employed in border-industries nevertheless
remain near their homelands, or who visit their homes more often than
merely annually may perhaps be described (as members of African Separatist
Churches on the Witwatersrand have been described) as men who earn their
living in one society, but gain their identity in another. Under such
circumstances the idea of commitment to some chosen career in the in-
dustrial employment situation, or indeed the idea of "a career" at all,
may well be expected to fall away or become relatively meaningless; if
this is so, we need not necessarily be surprised to find a large majority
of individuals in this border-industry caring little about what new job
they might prefer, even though in cash terms they as a group come from an
under-employed population in the sense that the subsistence pursuits in
the home area do not involve full-time commitment to work or adequate sub-
sistence rewards.

Some of these ideas may be relevant to an understanding of the next
question considered. Essentially, this sought to determine whether or
not employees would like to work in a city, assuming reasonable employment

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1) See footnote p.101.

was available. Just over two-thirds of the employees interviewed
answered this question in the negative, some of them (11 per cent)
actually stating that they preferred their present working environment.
The remaining one-third of employees expressed a clear interest in
city work, with only two or three per cent making their interest con-
ditional — upon the satisfaction of certain family obligations, for
example. In spite of this clear polarization of attitudes, no corre-
lation with labour turnover exists at all. In fact, men expressing
interest in city work are equally represented among both resigners and
employees remaining in service. Bearing in mind some of the ideas ad-
vanced in the preceding paragraph we consider it relevant to note that
none of the men interested in city work expressed their attraction in
terms of career-prospects. Rather, the city was seen as a place which
merely offers better pay, or better working conditions, or excitement
and relative freedom. This may be further evidence of what has else-
where in this report been termed the "mercenary orientation".

In a final look at employee orientations to the future we examine a
question which asked men to describe what real plans they had for the
future. In the interview situation this question was, however, asked
long before the series of questions dealing fairly explicitly with issues
related to turnover and resignation. It is hoped therefore that frank
and spontaneous answers were recorded. A great variety of responses was
received, some entirely practical, others somewhat idealistic. Still
others afforded an opportunity for respondents to comment obliquely on
their predicament as timber industry employees, or as migrant workers,
or as Blacks in South Africa. For example some men spoke of the need to
seek independence of the White man, and others of the need to project
their children "out of darkness and squalor". One or two commented
cynically that plans required as a prerequisite adequate pay, something
which was not available in the timber industry. One charge hand replied
that his plans were, if possible, "to build a good house, well furnished,
where I shall stay and enjoy the energy I've lost at _ _ _ _ _".[1] The

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1) He here named the branch of the Company where he was employed.

majority of plans however were more plainly expressed, ranging from mere
subsistence, through family advancement and acquisition of property,
to entrepreneurial ambitions. For present purposes we have categorised
the great range of responses under three specialised headings as follows:

1. Plans very probably requiring that respondent resign present job.
2. Plans possibly requiring that respondent resign present job.
3. Plans not necessarily requiring that respondent resign present job.

All the plans mentioned are accommodated by this scheme. The proportions
of the workforce in each category are as follows:

1. 20 per cent.
2. 17 per cent.
3. 40 per cent.

A residual 22 per cent of employees said they had no plans. What this
categorization fails to take account of is the time-scale of the re-
spondent's ambitions. Thus, we know the broad intentions of respondents,
but not their urgency. This may explain the failure of cross-tabulation
of these distributions against stability to produce in detail the expec-
ted sort of correlation. We might, for example, have expected a definite
tendency for men expressing plans virtually requiring that they resign
their present jobs to be an unstable group. This turns out not to be the
case. There are however definite contrasts in the cross-tabulation, as
Table 10a shows, and there is corresponding scope for speculation. Perhaps
the most straightforward contrast is that indicating that employees who
have no plans tend toward stability — confirmation perhaps of a sus-
picion noted elsewhere in this report and suggested by other data, namely
that somehow conditions in the employment situation are such that relative-
ly apathetic individuals tend, via selective turnover, to accumulate in
the workforce. If type (1) plans and type (2) plans are taken together and
regarded as one basic type of future goal, then in fact an intelligible
though faint correlation is seen: men having plans which will at some time
necessitate their leaving the company have in fact tended to be less stable

than men with plans not necessarily requiring resignation.

TABLE 10a.

MOBILITY BY GOALS OF RESPONDENT'S FUTURE PLANS

	RESPONDENT'S FUTURE PLANS					
	TYPE 1	TYPE 2	TYPE 3	NO PLANS	(OTHER)	
% Still employed	21	13	41	24	1	100
% Resigned	8	38	38	13	3	100

However, listing the sorts of plans categorised under type (1) reveals the surprising fact that employees with ambitions such as:

- change career/get better job,
- go to cities,
- entrepreneurial ambitions,
- learn to drive,
- settle in homeland,

have actually tended to be non-mobile. One explanation of this apparent incongruence might be that many of the responses falling under type (1) were actually too idealistic or hypothetical to be considered as serious plans for the future reflecting realistic intentions.

TABLE 10b.

	RESPONDENT'S FUTURE PLANS				
	TYPES 1 and 2	TYPE 3	NO PLANS	(OTHER)	
% Still employed	34	41	24	1	100
% Resigned	46	38	13	3	100

Our general impression from this and other future-oriented variables
examined above is a confirmed suspicion that the tendencies of indi-
viduals toward stability or mobility in employment are, in the circum-
stances of the migrants here studied, not derived from far-sighted
orientations to the future nearly so much as from orientations toward
contemporaneous, relatively parochial factors, — geographic factors,
kinship considerations, and so on.

The percentage of employees who seriously adopt a framework of orienta-
tions congruent with industrial employment structures (and corresponding
processes of advancement), and embark on appropriate careers suggestive
of long-term commitment to industry appears to be low.

3.2.6 Summary of Key Findings.

To conclude this review of factors relating to geographic mobility and
their bearing on the labour mobility of employees we briefly summarise
some of the ideas suggested by our findings. With regard to the back-
ground of employees, it would appear that men with families and dependents
elsewhere, rather than present in company accommodation, tend to be
stable; that oscillating migrants who visit their home districts monthly
tend to be stable, while those visiting daily or annually tend to be
mobile; and that employees who habitually visit nearby towns tend to be
stable. With regard to the job-histories of employees, it would appear
that mobile men are chronically so, tending to repeat past habits of
mobility. With regard to the current work situation of employees it
appears that positive morale in the men associates with a tendency to
resign, and similarly that the more secure-feeling men tend to be the
resigners, but that no relationship exists between stability and career-
prospects in the employment situation. With regard to the future of
employees, their plans, and their attitudes to the future, it would
appear that such considerations, where salient at all, have virtually no
bearing on the mobility of men. Whether or not a man has ambitions to
seek work in a city, for example, appears to have no bearing on his
mobility in the present situation. Similarly, the confidence or scepticism

of men in assessing their own chances of finding alternative employment
shows no correlation whatever with mobility. Indeed, we infer from the
wide negative response to questions regarding the desirability of alter-
native new jobs that only minimal "career-concepts" feature in the
outlook of these employees. Of course, many are able to articulate
personal plans of one kind or another, but even in the most general terms
no relationship exists between any kind of plan and the mobility of the
employee concerned. The most that can be said is that individuals with
no plans or future-orientation at all do tend to be stable.

3.3   WAGES AND REWARD FACTORS IN RELATION TO MOBILITY

Under this title we go on to test the influence of further factors in the
employment situation on the mobility of sawmill employees.

However, in the following sections details of the variables under con-
sideration will be presented in the form of brief paragraph headings.
Relevant statistics, relationships and comments will then be briefly
laid out in the associated paragraphs.

In this section factors such as incomes, patterns of dependency, distri-
bution of incomes, and perceptions of levels of income are examined,
together with any relationships that may exist between them and the
mobility of employees.

3.3.1

Percentage of Wage Remitted to Dependents:

Fifty-two per cent of employees make no remittances of any kind to de-
pendents; some of these will include the very small percentage whose
closest kin live with them in company married quarters. Seventeen per
cent remit 5 - 14 per cent of their wages, 22 per cent remit 15 - 37 per
cent of their wages, only 9 per cent remit more than 38 per cent of their
wages. Resigners are more likely to be remitting nothing than stable employees.

However, remittances in the 15 - 37 per cent range appear to associate quite distinctly with relative stability.

3.3.2

Net Wage Received by Respondent:

We find very little truly significant correlation of mobility with wage levels. Resigners are well represented in all wage groups. The employees in the wage range R35 to R49, into which 14 per cent of employees fall, are slightly less mobile than other categories. This middle range of earnings corresponds to middle ranges in terms of age of men and their length of service — naturally stable circumstances.

3.3.3

Respondent's Estimation of a Fair Wage:

A broad variety of estimations were given, ranging from figures as low as R25 per month up to R100 and more. This variety is undoubtedly a reflection of the variety of jobs and skills represented in the workforce — and the corresponding variety of expectations. The median expected wage lies in the R40 - R49 range; a second smaller peak in the distribution curve, at the R100-and-more bracket, reflects the aspirations of the small elite of skilled and relatively more confident employees such as drivers, clerks and saw-doctor. Because of this intervention of another uncontrolled variable — skills/aspirations — we would not expect a systematic correlation between subjective fair-wage estimations and mobility of employees, in this heterogeneous workforce. Cross-tabulation confirms this expectation. However, two contrasts do stand out: Employees expecting wages in the range R40 - R49 tend to predominate among resigners, while those expecting wages in the range R50 - R59 tend to be relatively stable. We might very cautiously infer that the higher expectations, or the probable higher ability or job-status that they conceal, associate with greater commitment.

3.3.4

How Respondent Evaluates his Wage:

Most men evaluate the wage they are receiving in absolute terms. By considering its buying power, for example, they refer to their absolute needs. Men in this category constitute 69 per cent of the workforce. A further 16 per cent of the men evaluate their wages via a wholly different perspective — that of comparing themselves with other reference groups; this is a more status-oriented evaluation. The former group show a very slight tendency to be more mobile than the latter.

3.3.5

Nature of Respondent's Economic Dependency:

Forty-one per cent of employees — and their families — are highly de- pendent on the company, in the sense that their wages are their only source of income. At the opposite extreme, 17 per cent of employees may be re- garded as relatively independent of the company because they depend not exclusively on wages, but also on the incomes of other members of their families and on their own agricultural produce. Theoretically we might have expected the latter, more independent, group to be more mobile in that they could more easily afford to undertake the inevitable wageless period between resigning from one job and finding another. To put it in other terms, they have relatively less "investment" in the company with respect to their economic survival.

Empirically, however, no systematic relationship is found between the stability of employees and their degree of dependency on company wages.

3.3.6 Summary:

With the single exception of remittances, no economic variables in the personal affairs of employees show any co-variance with their mobility. Neither wage-expectations, real wages, nor perceptions of the real wage give any clues as to the commitment of the employees. Of those variables involving employees' perceptions of life in the home area, the degree of

personal "investment" in alternative economies — i.e. rural subsistence
economy or border-industry cash economy — shows no relationship with
mobility, whereas the percentage of the wage remitted does. Remittance
of money is a serious matter to most oscillating migrants, and is per-
haps a major economic variable,[1] implying as it does, social links
with the home area. In this situation employees not remitting money at
all are found to be more likely to resign than those making a typical
remittance: about one-quarter of their wage. An established pattern of
remittances on the part of individual employees may be one index of their
commitment to the job.

3.4   MOBILITY AND THE NATURE OF WORK

Approximately fifty distinguishable jobs are performed in a typical saw-
mill. In this section various aspects, qualities, or experiential
conditions of the various jobs that employees perform are considered.
Not merely a detailed description of the job, but what it really means
to perform each different job, is what our detailed interviewing method
sought to elicit from the working men themselves, in probing this subject.
Once a full understanding of the range of all jobs, and their implications,
is achieved, various different perspectives are then applicable for the
purpose of contrasting them. This will become clear in the following
paragraphs. Each different perspective on jobs — for example, the effort
involved in doing them — has permitted a different classification of the
total range of jobs.

3.4.1

Degree of Physical Effort in Respondent's Job:
This variable is an index of how strenuous, and in some cases how exhausting
or even debilitating, each employee's job is. Thus, with respect to effort

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1) N.B. "Major" in the sense of its personal and sociological significance,
   rather than its economic significance.

required, the range of all jobs has been classified into four categories
as follows:

- very heavy manual jobs:	26 per cent of employees.
- medium-heavy manual jobs:	45 per cent of employees.
- light manual jobs:	18 per cent of employees.
- non-manual jobs:	11 per cent of employees.

Cross-tabulation of this distribution against mobility yields only mini-
mal and insignificant contrasts between resigning and stable employees,
but with one exception: men in light manual jobs are found to have
a very slight tendency toward stability. In a sawmilling environment
this is not surprising. We know that medium and heavy manual jobs are
very arduous, and at the opposite extreme it may well be that the few non-
manual jobs (mainly clerical) are seen as having too little scope and
career potential in the sawmill situation by those talented, skilled and
educated enough to do them.

3.4.2

Environmental Component of Respondent's Job:

This variable is designed to serve as an index of the exposure to poor
weather or generally unsheltered conditions involved in each job. The
distribution of the workforce in the four categories devised by us is as
follows:

- constantly outdoors:	33 per cent.
- part outdoors, part protected:	20 per cent.
- protected by cab/shelter/open shed:	39 per cent.
- indoors:	8 per cent.

Although no statistically significant correlation of stability with en-
vironmental exposure is found, we may mention a very faint indication that
employees working outdoors are relatively more mobile than others.

3.4.3

Degree of Discomfort in Respondent's Job:

This is a variable designed to indicate the prevalence of unavoidable
irritants — as defined in an earlier report[1] — in each job. All jobs
were classified either as having full-time exposure to irritants, or
as having no irritants, or as involving occasional, irregular exposure
to irritants. Stable employees and resigners are, however, equally re-
presented in each of these three categories.

3.4.4 Conclusion.

The inescapable conclusion of this brief examination of subjective per-
ceptions of different kinds of work is that work-inherent factors have,
in the circumstances here studied, virtually no bearing on the mobility
of the men performing that work. This apparently surprising finding
may be better understood when it is recalled that we have in this
section only considered the work each man performs, not his job. In
making this subtle but important distinction, we consider that the *work*
a man does consists of those of his activities in the workplace which
have significance purely in the context of the *total production process*
of his employers, i.e. his directly productive activities only; whereas
his *job* includes this and more: principally, his activities in the
additional context of the *total social interaction* implied by working
together with other people in a factory situation, i.e. principally, the
various social relationships (administrative, supervisory, informal,
etc.) undertaken in the workplace — many of them directly necessitated
by the work. Some of these formally-structured social aspects of the job
are considered separately in the following section.

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1)   Allen, R.D.J. (1975), p.4, para. 2.1.4 (q.v.)

3.5   LABOUR MOBILITY AND LABOUR RELATIONS

This section examines certain employee perceptions of management tradition
as manifested in employee-supervisor relations, perceptions of the ad-
ministration of working relations generally, and attitudes toward various
real and possible modes of supervision and of worker-management communica-
tion.   Certain aspects of labour relations, notably, the nature of the
relationship between on-line employees and charge-hands (foremen), have
already been examined (3.1.1) as modifiers of the integration of work
groups.

3.5.1

How White Management Could Make the Respondent's Job Easier:
In the individual interviews this question was initially presented in an
open-ended way, with respondents later being asked to advance reasons for
their views.   Employees were simply asked if there was any way that the
supervisors could make their job easier.   The men divide broadly into 44
per cent who advanced various suggestions, and a surprising 56 per cent
who stated that no changes were necessary or possible, or who showed an
attitude of resignation to current circumstances.   The latter group, who
in effect declare no need for change, are a distinctly mobile group,
while those enumerating problem areas tend in fact to be relatively non-
mobile.   To analyse the group actually suggesting change, in order of
salience the suggestions offered are as follows:

- ease overwork:	14 per cent	24 per cent
- mechanise/re-organise work:	10 per cent	
- improve wages/rewards/conditions:	10 per cent	
- improve workplace social relations[1]:	10 per cent	
	44 per cent	

1)   Includes supervisory and administrative relationships.

The first two suggestions may be seen as variations of the same basic complaint. Significantly, the only one of these four sub-groups not sharing the tendency to be non-mobile is the group appealing for the improvement of workplace social relations. Generally, it may be that the apparent laissez-faire attitude of the subsequently mobile group reflects what was already at the time of interviewing a relative lack of commitment to the employer — at any rate, a lack of concern for the future policies of the company, which, the uncommitted respondent may have felt, were unlikely to occur in time to affect him. What we are suggesting here is that interest in, or concern for, the future of an institution, organisation or place of work may well be a key index of commitment to it.

3.5.2

Respondent's Opinion as to How the White Supervisors Could lead and guide the Men Better:

Whereas the variable just discussed dealt specifically with the respondent's own predicament only, the present question was phrased such a way as to refer to supervision of the workforce in general. The distribution of responses, suitably categorised, is as follows:

- apathetic/passive attitude:	36 per cent
- minimise supervision, maximise autonomy:	28 per cent
- empathise with workers:	20 per cent
- improve rewards per unit work:	6 per cent
- not applicable (job requires no supervision)	10 per cent

The "apathetic" group have a noticeable tendency toward stability, while those in unsupervised jobs (generally the more skilled and specialised jobs) appear more likely to resign. There is, however, no association of mobility with any of the attitudes expressed in direct response to the question of supervisory practices.

3.5.3

Respondent's Attitudes to Liaison Committee:

At the time of our fieldwork the liaison committee system had recently
been introduced into the sawmills. Respondents, were therefore asked
to express their own conception of the nature and function of the liaison
committee as well as their attitudes to it. The numerous varieties of
response have been categorised as follows:

- never heard of committee:	3 per cent
- no informed opinion of committee:	13 per cent
- negative perceptions of committee:	17 per cent
- positive perceptions of committee:	64 per cent

Cross-tabulation of mobility against these distributions yields, as Table
11 shows, contrasts which are quite pronounced but whose significance
is not immediately clear.

TABLE 11.

MOBILITY BY ATTITUDES TO LIAISON COMMITTEES

	RESPONDENT'S ATTITUDE TO LIAISON COMMITTEE					
	TOTALLY IGNORANT	NO INFORMED OPINION	NEGATIVE PERCEPTIONS	POSITIVE PERCEPTIONS	OTHER	
% Still employed	4	9	18	67	2	100
% Resigned	0	26	10	53	11	100

Immediately apparent is a clear indication that those with confused or mis-
informed ideas about the liaison committees tend to be over-represented in
the mobile group. These were, typically, men who knew of the existence
of a committee, but who did not understand how it worked, or did not know
who the elected representatives were, or who (it was clear from their

comments) generally did not understand what the committees were intended
for at all. The ignorance of some of this group may be due to some of
them having been only recently employed — such men would not have
participated in the election of representatives, for example. We know
that the majority of the resigning group are short-service employees.
The remainder of Table 11 indicates, however, that both those with
positive perceptions of the liaison committees and those with negative
perceptions of them tend to be less mobile than others. The only
common factor shared by these two groups is a clear understanding of
what the committees are for. This result might then be read as further
indication of an idea suggested elsewhere (paragraphs 3.5.1, 3.5.7);
namely, that ignorance of details of the conditions of employment or of
the future plans of the company may, by signalling lack of interest,
also signal a significant lack of commitment. Both lack of interest in
the internal workings of the employment situation and the apparent lack
of commitment inferred might in fact be aspects common to a general syn-
drome of alienation among the workers concerned. However, as indications
arise elsewhere that the morale of mobile employees is not necessarily
poor, we rather take the view that their apparent ignorance of certain
arguably relevant matters is the result of a calculated disinterest. As
part and parcel of such a calculated disinterest we would discern a
temporary, instrumental, even exploitative, perception of their involve-
ment with the workplace on the part of such mobile employees.

3.5.4
Respondent's Opinion as to What the Purpose of the Liaison Committee Should Be:

Without any prompting or prior suggestions employees were encouraged to
outline what they considered should be the ultimate function of their
liaison committee. The responses were almost all of two types only:
eighty-six per cent gave what we may term the "traditional definition" of
the liaison committee — this being that it should be a body which re-
presents the opinions of workers and transmits their problems to management;
thirteen per cent however gave a relatively more radical conception,

stating that over and above its traditional definition a liaison
committee should operate actively to guarantee the security and pro-
tection of workers, curtail injustices, and so on — in short, take on
more of a trade union function. That this latter outlook may indicate
a degree of dissatisfaction is a suggestion supported by the finding
that the latter category of employees tend to be mobile while the former
category, giving the traditional definition, tend somewhat toward
stability. Contrasts, however, are not marked.

3.5.5

Attitude of Respondent to Suggested "Senior African Supervisor":
This variable derives from an entirely hypothetical situation which was
put to employees in the question: "What do you think of the idea of a
Senior African Supervisor being in charge of the workers and charge-
hands?" We consider this an important question, and it would appear that
it has yielded significant results. Needless to say, it was an unexpected
and possibly controversial idea, and accordingly the overwhelming majority
of responses were clearly and forcefully expressed. Responses have been
classified under five broad headings, as set out below, with positive
and negative signs assigned to each category as abbreviations symbolizing
how favourable or unfavourable responses were:

(++)	Favourable: improved relationships would result	35 per cent
(+)	Favourable: improved status of Blacks would result	20 per cent
(+)	Favourable: various other reasons	20 per cent
(±)	Noncommittal/Equivocal response	11 per cent
(-)	Unfavourable	11 per cent

The second and third categories in this classification (indicated by the
abbreviation +) both represent egocentrically-based favourable attitudes,
whereas the first category represents socio-centrically-based favourable
attitudes.

This distribution is tabulated against mobility in Table 12 (q.v.), which

appears to give yet another indication that the "apathetic employee" type tends to be stable: those not interested in, or actually opposed to, the innovation represented by the idea of the Senior African Supervisor ($\pm$ and -, respectively) are shown to be a group tending clearly toward stability. Conversely, two of the categories favouring an African Supervisor are occupied by men who clearly tend to be mobile. Only the group favouring an African Supervisor for reasons specifically connected with social relations in the workplace are shown to be relatively stable. This would appear to confirm earlier findings connecting stability with a concern for harmonious social relationships in the workplace.

TABLE 12.

MOBILITY BY ATTITUDE TO SENIOR AFRICAN SUPERVISOR

	RESPONDENT'S ATTITUDE TO SENIOR AFRICAN SUPERVISOR						
	++	+	+	+	-	OTHER	
% Still employed	36	19	17	13	12	3	100
		35		25			
% Resigned	22	30	30	4	9	5	100
		61		13			

3.5.6

Qualities the "Senior African Supervisor" Should Have:

This variable is based on the opinions of the respondents following discussion of the idea of the proposed supervisor. The qualities expressed as desirable were mentioned by the following proportions of the workforce:

-	human sympathy:	40 per cent
-	education, training:	30 per cent
-	should be a workers' representative:	17 per cent
-	experience, efficiency in the job:	8 per cent
-	human sympathy plus education, training:	8 per cent

Leadership and supervision are important matters to most on-line
workers, and, as has been noted earlier in this report, the nature of
the relationship between such workers and their immediate supervisors
is very clearly related to their mobility (Section 3.1.1). For this
reason we would expect the different perceptions of the hypothetical
supervisor expressed by respondents at this point to correlate in some
way with mobility. However, apart from a faint tendency toward insta-
bility on the part of the group expressing the wish that a senior
African supervisor should "be a workers' representative", the range of
qualities suggested by employees here is distributed virtually identi-
cally among both the resigners and the stable group.

3.5.7

*Type of Information Concerning the Employmeit Situation which Respondent
would like the Company to Clarify:*

This variable was intended to indicate which aspects of their employment
situation the men felt were insufficiently clearly defined by their
employer. Our experience in other studies of this nature is that poorly
defined conditions of employment, such as working hours or the precise
obligations of each job, can lead to confusion on the part of workers
or feelings of resentment that they are being exploited, especially if,
as is the case in certain primary industries, daily routines or working
hours are varied in accordance with fluctuations in the supply of raw
materials. In this case, therefore, without any prompting or prior
suggestions, men were initially asked if there were any aspects of their
jobs, or of the company, about which they required information. While a
variety of unclear issues were mentioned in responses by 62 per cent of
employees, a surprising 38 per cent plainly stated — even after repetition
of the question — that they had no queries about any aspect of their

employment. The attitude of this latter group is, we feel, unexpected
and inauthentic. From other fieldwork experience, notably from group
interviews, we know that in fact virtually none of the employees have
any clear conception as to what rules and conditions of employment
apply to them in respect of wage-rates, working-hours, benefits, overtime,
etc. It is almost certain therefore that we find here a group who are
ignorant of an important type of information and are almost consciously
content to remain so. This group becomes even more interesting when
cross-tabulation reveals that mobile employees are disproportionately
highly represented in it. In fact, we find that the employees with no
queries regarding their conditions of service have a clear tendency to
resign; they represent 56 per cent of resigners but only 35 per cent of
the stable employees. Conversely, all the categories of men asking for
clarification of various conditions of employment are more strongly re-
presented by the non-mobile employees than by those resigning. In total,
men desiring clarification of working conditions make up 44 per cent of
resigners, but 65 per cent of non-mobile employees. Amplifying an idea
proposed earlier, we would suggest that measurement of the degree of
interest of employees in the finer details of their conditions of employ-
ment might well serve as a useful and widely applicable index of their
commitment to a place of employment, and conceivably even of their
commitment to industrial employment generally. Certainly a lack of
interest would almost undoubtedly appear to indicate a lack of any long-
term interest in the employer. The employee with no long-term interest
in any aspect of the employer must be regarded as potentially mobile —
although he may via a process of apathy gradually become "stabilised".
Such a lack of interest might also be seen as one more aspect of what
we have previously termed the mercenary orientation.

3.5.8 Summary

Results here are disappointing in the sense that correlations between some-
what cruder categories than were expected emerge. The general findings of
this section are that mobility in employees correlates not with any

particular views of the administration of labour relations, but, more
simply, merely with whether or not the individual employee has any views
on these issues at all. That is to say, with whether or not he takes any
active, objective interest at all in the management and administrative
practices of his working environment. Disinterested or laissez-faire
attitudes with respect to detailed aspects of management practice,
coupled with a somewhat cynical view of the whole employment situation,
coincide with the likelihood of being mobile. In particular, there are
clear tendencies for mobile employees to be unable to give an informed
opinion on the nature of the liaison committee; to be ignorant of the less
obvious conditions of employment and apparently content to remain so; and
to take the curious attitude that no ameliorating changes in the policy
of White management are necessary or even possible. Only on a controversial
issue, the role of the liaison committee, do they venture an opinion: indi-
cating that they favour a more radical conception of its function than
stabler employees. Similarly, mobile employees favour the idea of the
Senior African Supervisor proposed to them by our interviewers, but in con-
trast to other employees, only for status-centred and self-centred reasons.[1]

The general picture of the mobile employee, in the present context, is of
an individual who is relatively unaware of the fuller significance of the
employment structures of which he is part, and who has not attempted to
consider the implications for himself of his position in those structures.
He regards these matters as unworthy of consideration or discussion possibly
because he perceives a certain absolute futility in doing so — unsatisfied
with the elements of his prevailing predicament, he simultaneously sees
himself as powerless to affect them. However, this opting to "recognise
futility", and the consequent abdication of positive involvement in employ-
ment, appears to be rooted not in poor morale, but in a certain cynical
realism. Disillusioned but not demoralised, this mobile employee is one
of a type whose fundamental attitude to involvement with the employee is
increasingly mercenary.

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1) Only non-mobile employees favoured the proposed Senior African
   Supervisor for socio-centric reasons.

3.6   MOBILITY AND PERSONAL PROGRESS

For reasons set out below, we consider that the conception of "personal
progress" of employees likely to relate in any way with mobility must
embrace not only advancement in the context of work but also the progress
of the individual to a better personal situation in spheres of action
independent of his employment — principally his home district and home
life.

Promotion and the advancement of a career are of course aspects of one
of the major rewards able to be conferred by hierarchically organised
industrial work, apart from immediate remuneration. Qualitatively quite
different from remuneration, they are distinguished from it in being
long-term rewards, deferred and intangible. Indeed, requiring for their
achievement a grasp and understanding of ideas and processes which may be
quite novel to a relatively uneducated individual entering employment for
the first time, promotion and career-advancement may be fairly said to be
both causes and effects of commitment. And commitment in this sense re-
quires for its development more than a transient "penetration" of the
norms of industrial society as manifested in the industrial workplace.

Whether personal progress seen in these terms is necessarily potent as a
motivator of migrant workers, or even recognised by them, is by no means
certain in the situation we now examine. Although there is a sense in
which all industry socialises its employees into accepted ways of desiring
advancement — the personnel administration structures within a company
by their very design teach employees how a certain strategy should be
played out in order to exploit them — in the cross-cultural situation
encountered in a rural border-industry the employees' most fundamental
conceptions of "industry" may be inimical to a working socialisation of
this sort. In stating this we do not mean to suggest that African migrants
are not able to adopt a career-based conception of advancement, but rather
that the social and political structures in which they find themselves tend

to make many of them not amenable to such a usage.[1] Bearing in mind
also the fairly widespread poverty in the homeland areas from where many
employees originate, we therefore consider it appropriate to examine
personal progress on the wider terms of the employees themselves —
whatever they may be — rather than impose, for example, a view con-
strained by theories of the workplace only.

3.6.1
Respondent's Progress, Subjectively Assessed, Since Joining the Company:
In a relatively open-ended question, employees were asked whether they had
made "any progress in their lives" since being employed by the company.
The idea of progress was not defined in the question, so as to allow each
person to judge his progress — or lack of it — by his own standards.
In this way it was hoped that a fairly reliable "standard" index of the
true subjective satisfaction of all respondents might emerge which would
not be distorted by the variations in expectations between individuals.
(As will be seen below, a separate analysis of the responses has in fact
enabled us to classify the different concepts or definitions of progress

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1) Schlemmer and Rawlins (1977, p.75) venture the opinion that because
   notions of two co-existent economies competing for the labour of
   migrants are outmoded, and because traditional economic ties to
   the land are largely eroded, "South Africa's African workers over-
   whelmingly display commitment to industrial work". While this
   reasoning no doubt explains, via sheer economic pressures, a
   certain *"cash*-commitment" to industrial work, we are not at all
   convinced that most African workers, migrants especially, necessarily
   have what we shall term *"career*-commitment" to industrial work —
   by this we mean true commitment based on a normative, ideological
   allegiance to industrial employment and what it represents. In this
   connection Orpen (1976, p.52), summarising socially and psycholo-
   gically researched responses of Black South Africans to modernisation,
   comments: "traditionalists, even though they may of necessity have to
   spend most of their lives in an urban area, still consider their
   particular tribal way of life (Xhosa, Zulu, Sotho, etc.) as basically
   superior to others and as worth the sacrifice and self-denial involved
   in not fully accepting the White man's job".

implied by employees in their comments.) On this basis it is found that
two-thirds of the employees feel that they have made no progress of any
sort since starting work with the company. Of the remainder, 23 per cent
consider that they have made slight progress of one kind or another, and
a further 7 per cent feel they have made definite and satisfactory pro-
gress. The genuinely satisfied group in this perspective are thus a
fairly sharply distinguished minority, but in addition to them nearly a
quarter of employees have advanced in some way. Contrary to expectations,
however, there is absolutely no correlation between degrees of progress
felt by employees, and their likelihood of resignation.

Disappointing though these results are in terms of revelations concerning
the process of labour turnover they do contrast in an interesting way
with independently derived evidence, cited elsewhere (3.1.1), concerning
the *objective* progress of the employees at work. In contrast with the
distribution of feelings reported here, that evidence revealed that in
terms of real promotion as many as 83 per cent of employees had at the
time of interviewing had no job improvement during their employment with
the company, while no more than 16 per cent had experienced promotion.
This discrepancy could arise for various reasons, and no certain inter-
pretation may be put on it. It possibly lends support to our view that
"work progress" for these employees need not actually manifest itself
in terms exclusive to the workplace; it certainly does not challenge this
stance.

3.6.2

Respondent's Concept of Progress:

As was noted above, "progress" means different things to different people.
Among the migrant workforce considered here, it appears, from our analysis
of descriptions of progress given, that six major conceptions of progress
may be discerned, in the context of general discussions of "progress in
your life since you have been working at this mill".

The meanings assigned to "progress", and their salience, are as follows:

Progress consists of:

- salary increase/money savings   68 per cent
- acquisition of consumer goods/property   2 per cent
- job-improvement   5 per cent
- family advancement/lobola   2 per cent
- mere survival   10 per cent
- no progress-concept   13 per cent

The group with no progress-concept includes men giving "don't know"
responses to our question about their progress, and men giving responses
which were clearly unintelligible in the context of the question, or
which equally clearly indicated total unfamiliarity with, or non-usage
of, the very idea of progress. This finding may strike the reader as
being strange, almost incredible perhaps, but the fact is that the
"aspirations" of some of the employees are extraordinarily modest by
Western standards. We believe this is due partly to cultural differences
and partly to the crippling poverty and dependency obligations with which
many employees are burdened. Cross-tabulation of mobility against the
distribution of progress-concepts shows up two distinct relationships.
The first is a clear tendency toward mobility among those to whom progress
means improvement in salary or savings — those for whom progress is
evidently measured in money. Employees with this money-centric progress-
concept represent 65 per cent of stable employees, but 88 per cent of
resigners. Conversely, there is a faint but appropriate indication of
relative stability among those measuring their progress in terms of job-
improvement — that is, those with a job-centric progress-concept. The
second important relationship is a clear tendency toward stability among
those having no progress-concept. In fact, not a single resigner is
represented in this class, whereas 16 per cent of the men remaining em-
ployed are. The phenomenon here of individuals with no progress-concept
deserves our close interest. An inescapable observation is that the lack
of the very concept of progress places an absolute limitation on the
ability of the individual to experience or even think about progress as we

know it. Such a person must, after all, be unfamiliar with the whole
notion of progress.[1] Indeed, it seems reasonable to suggest that such
a complete absence of a progress-concept is, in the social milieu of
industry, very probably indicative of a relatively passive, non-
instrumental relationship with employment. If this is true, then once
again our data suggest that the more apathetically-disposed individuals
among the workforce tend to be non-mobile.

We have only to consider what may be inferred about the attitudes and
orientations of employees from their progress-concepts to realise the
serious significance of the two relationships here discovered. As in
previous instances, our findings strongly suggest that the workforce tends
to collect relative apathetics (no progress-concept), while those with
initiative (money-centric and property-centric progress-concepts) are in-
volved in turnover and tend to pass out of the labour force. Moreover,
this initiative may undoubtedly be regarded as an as yet latent potential
for a motivation to work productively, given appropriate circumstances.

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1) Levi-Strauss, discussing from an anthropological perspective the
   enduring but separate validity of preliterate societies, at the
   same time comments on the status of "progress" in such ahistorical
   societies:

   "CHARBONNIER: Progress, which is something that seems to have a
   meaning for us, or to which we attribute a meaning, has no meaning
   in the societies you study.
   LEVI-STRAUSS: Agreed.
   CHARBONNIER: It would make no sense for them.
   LEVI-STRAUSS: Definitely not. Each of these societies considers
   that its essential and ultimate aim is to persevere in its existing
   form and carry on as it was established by its ancestors, and for
   the sole reason that it was so fashioned by its ancestors. There
   is no need for any further justification; 'that is how we have
   always done it' is the reply we receive without fail whenever we
   ask an informant the reason for a particular custom or institution.
   The fact that it exists is its only justification. It is legiti-
   mate because it has endured.
   ...But it is undoubtedly true that they are societies in which the
   whole of the population participates much more fully and completely
   in the group culture than is the case in Western societies".

   (Charbonnier (1969), pp. 45,49)

3.7   INJURY AND ILLNESS

This section briefly examines the influence exerted on mobility of em-
ployees by subjective perceptions of their own health, by attitudes to
health problems, and by the type of health-problems perceived as serious
enough to cause absenteeism.

3.7.1

Respondent's Subjective Estimation of His Own Health:

Employees were asked to choose, from a scale of three descriptions, one
which best summed up their state of health. On this basis, 77 per cent
considered themselves "healthy and strong", 13 per cent considered them-
selves "NOT very healthy and strong", and 10 per cent felt they were
"weak and sick". Thus the health of nearly one-quarter of employees
gives cause for concern. Cross-tabulation of the mobility of employees
against their state of health gives a minor but definite confirmation
of our theoretical expectation that the sick would be more likely to
resign, while the healthy would be less likely to.

TABLE 13.

MOBILITY BY ESTIMATION OF OWN HEALTH

	RESPONDENT'S ESTIMATION OF OWN HEALTH			
	HEALTHY AND STRONG	NOT VERY HEALTHY AND STRONG	WEAK AND SICK	
% Still employed	80	11	9	100
% Resigned	72	12	16	100

3.7.2

Respondent's Reasons for Stated Estimation of Own Health:

We here look in particular at the reasons offered by the unhealthy em-
ployees for their condition. The reasons for ill-health advanced divide
mainly into two broad species: job-connected reasons, and reasons inherent

in the employee himself or his social circumstances. Examples of the
latter species of reason include: weakness and generally weak constitu-
tion, old age, injury and disablement, specific medical disorders, and
insufficient or malnutritious diet. Examples of job-connected reasons
given for ill-health are: overwork and long hours, work that is too
strenuous, work discomfort and frustration, poor weather and extremes
of temperature, and depression deriving from the job or the perceived
insufficiency of the wage.

Although mentioned in only 11 per cent of responses, job-connected
reasons for ill-health associate with resignations. No other significant
correlations occur.

3.7.3

Illnesses/Factors Keeping Men Away from Work:
This variable attempts to investigate one aspect of absenteeism. With
reference to the workforce in general, employees were asked: "What are
the common illnesses that keep men away from work?" The typical causes
of sickness sufficient to result in absenteeism, according to respondents,
vary from straightforward health-problems, through job-problems, to
factors originating in leisure behaviour and traditional home life. In
comparing stable employees with resigners in this respect, distinct con-
trasts emerge. Those seeing what we may term "absentee-illness" (not
necessarily their own) as caused by straightforward ailments and diseases
tend to be stable; but those who see absentee-illness as being typically
caused by:

- the job
- drink
- witchcraft or supernatural factors,

tend clearly to resign more. This interesting finding would appear to
warrant further investigation. Unfortunately our own data on medical
variables in the workforce lack the necessary detail.

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TABLE 14.

MOBILITY BY PERCEPTION OF "ABSENTEE-ILLNESS"

PERCEIVED CAUSES OF ILLNESS CAUSING ABSENTEEISM

	DUE TO COMMON AILMENTS/SICKNESS	DUE TO JOB/DRINK/ WITCHCRAFT/SUPERNATURAL	OTHER	
% Still employed	57	20	16	100
% Resigned	36	48	23	100

The relatively unsensational, commonsense perception of illness and absentee-ism associates with stability, while the more radical and interpretative re-sponses to the initial query associate with instability. Bearing in mind that we are dealing here with the employee's opinions about the workforce at large, rather than empirical facts about the employee himself, it seems reasonable to suppose that these results are more a measure of the re-spondent's own mentality and outlook than an indication of de facto dynamic conditions in tne workforce.

CHAPTER 4.

DISCUSSION.

In spite of certain statistical limitations with respect to our sample
size and to the strength of some of the individual correlations to have
emerged, we feel certain in our ability to draw conclusions with regard
to a number of matters relating to mobility, or the proneness to
mobility. Our confidence is based on three sorts of "second-order"
evidence: First, the mutual reinforcement of many separate correlations
in respect of related matters that would by themselves be considered
not statistically significant. Second, the confirmation of various
trends by indications derived from group-interviews. And third, our own
insights and convictions resulting from personal observation, in the
field, of aspects of the situation investigated, during this and other
stages of the ongoing study.

The significance of this study, however, is to be found not only in an
overall assessment. Many individual findings reported in the text above
are significant by themselves, and as such have clear implications for the
management and administration of a company. Different views, insights,
and remedial strategies which suggest themselves, have to be weighed up
against each other by management in the light of their own broad goals.
Our aim is not so much to make recommendations outright, as to suggest to
management fruitful ways of seeing and understanding their situation and
the situation of employees as perceived by those employees.

Having stated this we nevertheless intend to point out, from the vantage-
point of a more detached view, certain groups of features associated
with mobile employees. In this sense at least two types of relevant
variables in the circumstances of employees might be distinguished: on
the one hand, variables tending to determine mobility generally, and on
the other, variables tending merely to increase the likelihood of mobility
in individual cases. But this terminology should be understood as simply

a provisional way of contrasting the influence of two classes of factors.
We shall return to this distinction shortly.

From our comparative analysis of the employment-centres as wholes, certain
basic features stand out. The total average level of labour turnover is
surprisingly low. at 15 per cent per annum, for a situation employing such
a large proportion of migrant workers.   (However, this is not an
industry, or situation, where the employment of migrants automatically
means an annual "end of contract" and a consequent built-in high turn-
over, as is typical in the gold-mining industry. Although the great
majority of sawmill employees return to their home districts during the
annual Christmas shutdown, this is not regarded by the company as an
"end of contract". These same employees are expected back in the New
Year, and their jobs are held for them.) Labour turnover is confined
mainly to the sawmills, as opposed to the forest plantations, and it
consists almost entirely of resignations rather than dismissals. In
turn, there are clear suggestions that the majority of resignations are
due to factors deriving directly from the concomitants of migration, i.e.
from the predicament of migrants *as migrants,* rather than from factors
relating to their world of work. In other words, the majority of resig-
nations are due to what we may term "migrancy factors". However, the
fact that mobile sectors of the workforce are not seen to be leaving the
company principally for *work*-oriented reasons is by no means an indication
of satisfactory working conditions; rather, it is a reflection of the
great pressure of African unemployment in the region. There is evidence
of less mobility in workforces where there are more permanently-
accommodated men. Elsewhere, however, higher turnover in a centre as a
whole appears to be encouraged by frequent migrations of the employees,
by a rural setting of the workplace (in the case of sawmills), by the
proximity of homeland areas and contact with those areas, and by higher
levels of felt grievances. Both the Southern Garage and the Southern
Subsidiary Sawmill, which are close to homeland areas and which have
experienced notable labour unrest, have higher than average rates of
turnover. A brief postulation of just some of the relevant correlates

of higher turnover, in the context of an entire workforce, is made in
section 2.4, p.36.

Summaries of our key findings in various domains have been given regular-
ly through the report (in particular, sections 2.2.2, 2.4.1, 3.1.2, 3.2.6,
3.3.6, 3.4.4, and 3.5.8), and to these the reader might refer again.
Primarily from the analysis of mobility in individuals, some salient
points among the findings unmistakeably form a cohesive pattern. First,
from straightforward profiles of the sampled resigners it is clear that
a typical resigner is young, of short service (approximately 18 months),
and working in an unskilled manual job. The very few exceptions, a small
long-service group of ten to fifteen years experience (who alone would
represent an annual turnover of less than three per cent), undoubtedly
represent the natural and inevitable rate of turnover in the
organisation due to simple ageing and transit of employees. Some of the
further correlates of mobility may be seen as partially, but not entirely,
consequences of short service in employment.

The effects of good and bad morale among the employees have to be under-
stood in different contexts. Strictly within the context of the social
work-group, poor morale is found to be somewhat related to mobility; *but*,
not all mobile men suffer poor morale, and we later find that social ties
with work-group peers are in fact much less important in respect of
mobility than are hierarchical ties — specifically, relationships with
charge-hands. Indeed, it is positive morale, particularly when experienced as
a subjective feeling of security in the job, that is, in a later stage of our
analysis found to favour mobility. In this case positive morale is to be
seen as a type of confidence rooted in freedom from kin obligations and
in actually having few kin. Complementing this is the observation that
cases of extreme personal hardship lead, via a sense of helplessness, to
poor morale which is manifested as a general apathy with respect to the
workplace; this apathy, as a form of inertia, has the effect of
"stabilising" problematic un-motivated men in their jobs. For the most
part, then, good morale, both in its *social* manifestations of indivi-
dualism and weak social integration into work-groups, and in its *individual*

manifestations of initiative and personal energy, is associated with
mobility.

In comparison with men who visit their home districts at other intervals,
monthly migrants clearly tend to be non-mobile. We argue that this is
in some way an optimal frequency in terms of the balancing-off of forces
which include remote family needs, work commitment, and the intervals
between pay-days. The need, hereby suggested, for some sort of satis-
factory equilibrium to be sought, derives from the essential discontinuity
between the culture and values of the industrial workplace, and the
indigenous culture and values of the migrants — particularly short-
service migrants. Possibly also to be understood in terms of a culture-
diffusion view of modernisation is the finding that men who include
among their habitual movements regular visits to nearby towns are more
likely to be non-mobile employees.

An important indication is one suggesting strongly that mobility is a
chronic characteristic in the individual: mobile men are as a rule re-
peating a past habit of mobility. This notion is confirmed at other
points in our analysis by various evidence suggesting that the determinants
of individual mobility are not so much factors located in the job situa-
tion per se, but rather are personal factors or attributes (extrinsic to
the workplace) which the individual brings with him to the job.

Attitudes to, or prospects of, the future, where extant at all among
employees, cannot be related in any way to mobility. In a sense this is
confirmation of various indications arising elsewhere in our analysis
that "future-mindedness", a realistic foresight in respect of jobs and
work, is only rarely evident in the population studied. Indications are
that many employees, but especially mobile men, are fundamentally not
career-oriented or progress-oriented in their awareness of the work-
situation. While this may be partly an effect of poor morale, we gain
the firm impression that it is largely a result of the entire work
situation seeming to be basically conceived of as a temporary convenience
or state, even if the employee has actually been in it for some time.

There is little evidence of a planning-orientation with regard to em-
ployment. Where any disposition at all toward the future is detectable,
it tends to be diffuse and carefree. (In a purely egocentric sense,
mobile do, however, tend to have clearer long-term personal goals, while
these tend to be absent among stables.)

Similarly, any questions or issues which require the company, its
organisation and its future to be taken seriously tend to provoke a dis-
interested attitude, even cynicism, among typical mobile individuals.
Abdication of any sense of fundamental obligation to engage with work
characterises this type of employee, who has minimal inertia in the work
situation and seems to have views consonant with sceptical experimenta-
tion in a new situation. Signs of a well-informed understanding of the
operational principles of the workplace, on the other hand, such as
principles of supervision or promotion, indicate a growing commitment to
the company. The only exceptions to this principle are in respect of
relatively novel, possibly controversial, considerations: the role of
the liaison-committees, and the possibility of African supervision at a
very senior level. Here, the mobile employees do show an interest, but
are distinguished from other types in basing their interest on relatively
egocentric and competitive perspectives. This is one of a number of
signs of a clear lack of identity with the company, in the minds of mobiles.

Remittances are the only personal economic variable which show any re-
lationship with mobility. In particular, regular consistent remittances
may indicate increasing commitment to a job. Quantities of, opinions on,
and intvestments in, other personal economic variables such as incomes
or savings show no connections with mobility at all. However, among
mobile employees money-centric and property-centric progress-concepts are
more likely to be found than non-materialistic criteria of progress such
as improvement of skills, family welfare and personal status. Various
employee opinions, or lack of them, on the subject of personal progress
confirm independent indications that a certain type of more apathetically-
disposed individual tends to accumulate in the workforce by virtue of non-
mobility,

Contrary to findings in a socially analogous Natal timber industry,
absolutely no relation of mobility to aspects of particular jobs, such
as effort or discomfort, is found, although a comparable range of jobs
and remunerations is present in both industries. One consequence is
that we are unable to infer any relationships between types of job and
states of psychological stress in individuals which might derive from
their jobs. However, time and again we find in our assessments of
various results, contrasts that seem to reflect unfavourably on the
mental health of many employees, particularly a certain category of non-
mobile types. Here, we have to distinguish between non-mobiles whose
inertia is based on a syndrome of apathy, and those whose inertia is
based on increasing commitment to a job and the employment structure.
The latter tend to be a minority, working in the more skilled jobs. The
former however, are in simpler, strenuous work and also tend to be more
hampered by poverty and various hardships in and out of work. The lives
of unskilled manual workers tend, partly as a result of long hours and
fatigue, to be disorganised and undirected. Probably related to this is
a tendency detectable throughout our analysis, for equivocal or evasive
responses to associate with stability. A type of diffuse but pervasive
confusion would appear to characterise much of the outlook of the apa-
thetic non-mobile type. The mobile type, characterised by short service,
egocentric orientations, and initiative, possibly react to this problem
sooner, before an irreversible inertia is established, and leave if con-
straints of age and kin allow them. We find independently that mobile
employees are certainly more likely to feel unhealthy, and are also more
likely to blame the company's jobs for their poor health.

As we have a number of indications that mobility is a characteristic which
tend to be intrinsic to the individual rather than to situations he acts
in, an alternative way of expressing some of our findings might be to
generate comprehensive overall profiles of a "typical mobile" employee
and a "typical non-mobile" employee, in parallel for purposes of com-
parison. At the risk of some repetition, this is attempted in the follow-
ing Table.

TABLE 15.

CONTRASTED IDEALISED PROFILES OF
TYPICAL MOBILE EMPLOYEE AND TYPICAL STABLE EMPLOYEE

STABLE

MOBILE

socially oriented:
    social integration
    sociable image of self
    socio-centric values
    gregarious leisure activities
2 or more close friends
comparatively-based expectations
conservative
apathetically disposed
evaluates wage comparatively
likely to be healthy

individually oriented:
    social isolation, malintegration
    individualistic image of self
    egocentric values
    solitary leisure activities
no close friends
need-based expectations
interested in innovation
having initiative and mental energy
evaluates wage via absolute terms
likely to be sick, unhealthy

poor morale
feels insecure in job
has no plans for the future
aware of immediate present, immediate situation
apathetic/helpless leisure-activities

positive morale, confidence
feels secure in job
has various personal plans
more conscious of own broad objective situation
constructive leisure-activities

visits homeland monthly
hypothetical ideal general residence:
 homeland
regular movements include visits to nearest
 town

visits homeland annually or daily
hypothetical ideal general residence: company
 accommodation
regular movements of other range and
 destination

married
dependents and/or family
remittances of the midrange (15-37% of wage)
resident of married quarters

single
no dependents at all
remitting nothing
resident of homeland area or single quarters

had previous industrial/wage employment
held each former job for 3 years +
sought work in company because no other choice
attracted to work in company via some social
 relation
would like family to live at workplace

present work first industrial/wage employment
held each former job less than 2 years
attracted to work in the company
attracted to work in company by other positive
 feature
would like family remain in homeland

considers charge-hands acceptable
considers charge-hands admired for social/
 personal reasons
good relationship with own charge-hand
signs of germinal commitments to job:
    - desires clarification of conditions
      of employment
    - makes suggestions re easing, and
      efficient administration, of jobs
    - interested in liaison-committees
likely to have little or no notions of
 "progress"
job-centric conceptions of progress, if any
modest stance vs. management
traditional conception of liaison-committee

considers charge-hands unpopular
considers charge-hands popular for work-/efficiency-
 oriented reasons
poor relations with fellow workers
laissez-faire attitudes to employment:
    - not interested in detailed conditions of
      employment
    - no comment on, or concern for, future running
      of the company and work-relations
    - poorly-informed re liaison-committees
objectively aware of own progress

money-centric conceptions of progress
competitive "bargaining" attitude to management
prefers more radical labour-relations definition of
 liaison-committee

unenthusiastic about hypothetical Senior
 African Supervisor
suggests intrinsic reasons for ill-health

interested in hypothetical Senior African Supervisor;
 reasons: labour-relations, Black status
suggests job-connected reasons for ill-health:
 morale, fatigue, etc.

As a very tentative principle, we suggest that variables appearing higher on the Table are those we have previously suggested as tending to determine mobility, while those placed lower in the Table are the ones tending merely to increase its probability, given certain other conditions.

In certain comments made above it has been implied that two basic species of non-mobile employees are distinguishable. The one type are, inter alia, earnest, committed, and concerned about working conditions. A second type are "apathetics", characterised by conservatism/ traditionalism which in the context of poor morale in an industrial setting manifests itself as a certain nihilism. Against these two types, "stabilised" in quite different ways (the former are probably progressive-ly-oriented Africans), we discern an essentially unitary type of mobile employee: adventurous, a "loner" in personality, unattached, and re-latively cynical in outlook. We have no doubt that these three types are, in the order described, clear examples of the types "turn-on", "turn-off", and "turn-over" as generated by the Flowers and Hughes model of labour mobility (q.v., p. 15). In addition, older men in the first, "committed" category will tend to be nearer the type "turn-on-plus".

Three very broad species of influences may be seen as generating the factors necessary to encourage mobility:

1. Geographic pressures. (Also implies 2-culture considerations in present political context &"border-industry features".)
2. Good morale, sense of competence in the individual. (Also implies freedom from certain constraints and inhibitions.)
3. "Withdrawn" outlook in the personality. (Also implies poor integration into groups of various kinds.)

These generalisations are made specifically for the situation represented by the type of remote rurally situated border-industry investigated here. On these same assumptions, some more specific details regarding point 3 may be given: The most likely employee to be mobile is young, has few

dependents, is enterprising and tends to be egocentric, shows the
"mercenary orientation", and is uninterested in the minutiae of company
policy. Clearly, some of these attributes are open to the effects of
persuasion, and are amenable to influences of change such as training or
orientation courses undertaken soon after the intake of new employees.

The charge-hands' level of administration has been shown to be crucial
in influencing the employees' tenure of jobs. In particular a satis-
factory relationship with the charge-hand appears to be more effective
than any other social tie in tending to stabilise an employee. The
interstitial role of the charge-hands is important not only for
structural reasons within the company, but also, we argue is important
(even to an employee who has not analysed his situation in an adminis-
trative structure) in terms of aspects of traditionalist views. The
status of charge-hands in the workplace is apparently assessed by the
men in terms of concepts and views originating in tribal culture —
views which are held by most employees. Independent theoretical support
of this view is cited by Orpen (1976, p.55) in an assessment of psycho-
logical researches into ascription of status:

> At the risk of over-simplifying the difference, it seems that
> whereas the progressive (-oriented African) ranks largely in
> terms of one dimension, based mainly on educational differences,
> the traditionalist who lives in an urban area ranks in terms
> of two dimensions, the first based largely on the position the
> person occupies in tribal society and the second based largely
> on the extent the person is perceived to be capable of
> 'assisting' them in their dealings with Whites, especially at
> work.

The latter dimension is clearly highly applicable to the interstitial role
of charge-hands. We shall return to the significance of this fact
shortly.

At this point we should like to venture two comments on the general problems
of border-industries, which are highlighted in a survey such as this.

In the context of the *ongoing total industrial development* of South
Africa and its population, border industries, by employing migrant
"men of two worlds" while being themselves actually situated near an
important geo-politically-defined cultural interface, carry a signifi-
cant social and economic burden. They carry this burden more so than
other industries located elsewhere (in the major conurbations, for
example), and furthermore to a certain extent they carry this burden on
behalf of other industries.

In the context of industrial development, border-industries are carrying the
burden of acculturating rurally-oriented African migrants. We refer
here to the transmission of what was earlier in this report termed a
culture of industrial production.   The rural situation of a border-
industry makes this acculturation a particularly difficult process
without the environmental support of an urban-industrial milieu.   Indeed,
we would argue that the acculturation tends to be regularly neutralised
by the periodic movements of employees back to an alternative society/
culture, which is, moreover, "preserved" in a quasi-original state by
current political ideology.

Border industries are also carrying the burden, or at least getting in-
volved with carrying the burden, of homeland poverty. They experience
this directly when faced with the problem of raising the wages of migrant
employees who in a certain sense are men who will never have enough.   In
the foreseeable future these men will never have enough because of their
very extensive dependence obligations. From the point of view of a
company paying its employees, the large populations in the homelands
represent a vast "sponge" — firmly attached to their employed kinsmen —
immediately soaking up any extra funds remitted to them. One consequence
is that the company is denied the satisfaction of seeing increased levels
of remuneration being used first and foremost in the self-improvement of
its own employees.

Although the last two observations have been posed as problems in a long-term sense, they carry the advantage of bringing our attention to matters relevant to broad policy-making. In particular they remind us that any employer in a border-industry situation has to formulate some of his goals in a context which takes account of the African homelands. For the administrators of border-industries, the homelands are not the remote, relatively inconsequential entities that they are, regrettably, to an employer of migrant labour in the major conurbations. Some sort of conscious relationship with the homelands, and with processes within the homelands, is increasingly inevitable for an employer who wishes to be aware of the wider significance to his employees of various aspects of the employment situation. In other words, from the point of view of the employer, the concept of "employee" is widened to include the other world in which the employee originates — the employee being seen as more than merely an imported unit within the production process. Complementing this, the policies and planning of the employer are conceived and executed in such a way that their distant and secondary effects in the homelands become reasonably predictable and understandable. In this way the employer may hope that his policies and actions are not only immediately functional within the workplace, but are also indirectly functional (for the employment situation) within the homelands in terms of their secondary effects there upon people and processes that in turn influence the wellbeing of the industry. A very general example of this kind of feedback would be the *reputation* of an employer, insofar as it might affect the recruitment of new employees, and the quality and attitudes of those recruits. To be able to effectively plan in this broader sense (in, for example, the conception and design of incentives/rewards), management will need to become increasingly adept at estimating the effects of any particular policy in more than one context — at thinking or translating ideas across the gap between the two worlds in which migrant workers act. Increasing or maintaining the familiarity of the African Personnel Officers with the homeland life of employees, as well as bringing the former into broad decision-making processes, would be one element of such an enhanced planning ability.

With considerations of this sort in mind, we conclude by pointing out some

of the more far-reaching implications of our findings. Starting with the
simpler ones, the first of these is the finding that mobility is a
feature tending to be chronic in individuals. The view that mobility,
or the potential for it, at present derives principally from qualities
intrinsic in the individual *qua migrant,* and which he therefore imports
into the employment situation, clearly implies, in the absence of any
other major changes in administration, the need for very careful screening
and selection of employees at the recruiting stage. Consideration of the
job-histories of prospective employees, accompanied by an attempt to pin-
point the reasons for their past mobility (extrinsic vs. intrinsic factors,
for example), would of course assist the necessary decisions. Other con-
siderations might also influence the suitability of employees, depending
on the importance assigned to mobility itself as an issue. For example,
even within the category of "chronically mobile" men, a case of previous
high mobility which was rooted in personal motivation and a corresponding
career-orientation would be presumably preferable to a case resulting
from relatively undirected wanderings; and a steady turnover of reasonably
motivated workers might be quite tolerable for a period until broad policies
in personnel management are clearly defined. In other words, an evident
risk of mobility in certain prospective employees may be outweighed in
some cases by a clear potential for productive work by them, depending on
details in the organisation of production. In consideration of the job-
histories of prospective employees, it should be recalled not only that
certain factors encouraging habitual mobility of migrant workers
are "built into" their situation, but also that other aspects of possible
company policy, specifically taking account of these perennial problems,
might well reduce the effect of these "migrancy factors".

One example of this which is made relevant by our findings is the problem
of travel and personal contact between employed migrants and their dis-
tant families in the homelands. The view, outlined earlier, that monthly
return visits by migrants to their home districts represent an optimal
frequency in terms of minimised mobility suggests that a facility of
company-assisted monthly transport for migrants to key homeland areas might

well reduce labour turnover, as well as reducing a certain amount of
absenteeism. Such an arrangement would facilitate and even tend to
institutionalise the regular passage of remittances[1]), in addition to
stabilising what we consider to be a functional "balance of divided
commitment". At the same time the company would be seen to be ex-
pressing a direct concern for families and sets of interests which are
of great importance to migrants. This idea of assisted travel arrange-
ments in association with pay-days, which unfortunately carries with it
the potential for practical complications, would have to be considered
most thoroughly, and implemented, if at all, with care and foresight.
We understand that the Southern Major Sawmill has already experimented
along these lines.

Clear implications for the nature of suitable rewards and incentives,
in at least the immediate future of the industry, follow from three
distinguishable perspectives emerging from this study. Perhaps the most
directly relevant of these to the organisation of jobs is the finding
that many employees — certainly not only mobile employees — are not
"future-minded" in their perceptions of their employment in the sense
of being career-oriented or progress-oriented. Involvement with work
seems to be seen in relatively ad hoc or temporary terms. This short
term view of things is one aspect of a fundamentally instrumental atti-
tude to employment — as opposed to an involvement rooted in personal
motivation. In such a situation, the utility of long-term rewards as
incentives is severely limited. We refer to rewards such as the de-
ferred gratification implicit in job-satisfaction, or rewards such as
promotion and increasing responsibility which, so to speak, take time to
mature. With long-term rewards thus tending to be assigned low relevance,
effective rewards are limited to immediate remuneration: cash wages or

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1) Itself an index of stability.

remuneration in kind. And as we have pointed out in earlier reports
on local Minimum Living Levels, employees emphatically prefer to be
paid by wages; or, rather than in kind, in the equivalent cash. This
is another constraining factor which is likely to remain for the fore-
seeable future. Undoubtedly related to the essentially detached and
instrumental approach to employment evident among most migrants is the
set of attitudes, extant among *all* mobile employees, which we have
identified as the "mercenary orientation". Common to these attitudes
is the idea of the *wage* as the supreme criterion of a good job. Implicit
in adoption of this orientation is a recognition of the limited opportunities
for other satisfactions in the whole employment situation, as well as a lack
of any real "cultural" commitment to industrial production. To state it
rather extremely perhaps, the work is from the start conceived of as
alien and intrinsically unrewarding — like prostitution, so to speak,
only undertaken for and only made worthwhile by the maximum available
cash income.[1] The "mercenary orientation" is a palpable manifestation
of the fact that most true migrants feel that all they have really come
into industry to work for is to earn cash — the less involvement and
responsibility there need be, so much the better. In this view then,
albeit extremely stated, cash wages as the only exportable reward become
by far the most significant incentive. The third relevant perspective

1) It is particularly relevant to note here that in terms of morale, the
mercenary orientation is a fragile disposition, largely because of
its entirely unsatisfactory basis for job-satisfaction. It is easy
to appreciate that when income fails to meet expectations, then the
mercenary orientation, as a prostitution of ability devoid of in-
trinsic involvement with work, very readily transforms or collapses
into a condition of devastated morale.

This argument is important, as it is one way in which poor morale
in the employment situation may be fairly directly traced to the
predicament of the migrant worker.

to which considerations of this kind inevitably lead us, is the two-
culture approach applied broadly to this study by us and introduced in
our theoretical outline (para. 1.3, p.12).   If migrant workers
are men of two worlds, earning in one culture and spending in another
(or spending for another), then the most effective remuneration an em-
ployer can supply needs to be "translatable" between cultures. It should
have value in the migrants' alternative society. Cash, as an almost
abstract money-substance whose value is not culturally defined, is a
fully "translatable" reward in this sense. Of the various rewards which
industrial employment can offer, cash more than being merely portable is
the one with the greatest cross-cultural persistence of value. Compared
with other rewards such as seniority or responsibility in the job,
which have most of their significance within the employment situation,
cash is not devalued when considered in an alternative frame of reference.
At the present state of this border-industry, then, migrant employees
for various reasons clearly place a premium on and respond most posi-
tively to rewards which are portable, immediate, not intrinsic to the
work situation, and of universal value. For the great majority of em-
ployees, therefore, effective and appropriate rewards and incentives are
currently limited to cash wages.

It should be noted that these comments are not in any way intended to
undermine the importance of certain intangible day-to-day rewards in the
workplace, such as opportunities for independent work or self-esteem,
nor the value of cultivating a taste for involvement with work and motivational
rewards among a minority of more committed senior and skilled employees.
They do however indicate what is of importance to many employees in the
long run.

A recurrent and seemingly disturbing finding we have encountered is that
the employment situation in the sawmills appears to selectively "filter"
out certain employee types in what could appear to be an unexpected
manner. To recall it briefly, while individuals who show signs of initia-
tive and a potential for independent motivation tend, by resigning, to be
lost via labour turnover, individuals without initiative tend to accumulate

in the workforce. This process is clearly a reflection of lesser processes and opportunities within the employment situation. It *may*, we might add, actually represent part of a favourable equilibrium process. But with due consideration for the future, the company needs to decide on the desirability of this process by deciding on the desirability or appropriateness of each of these two broad types of employee. This in turn largely has to be assessed in terms of the range of jobs and career-structures which will be found in the company's operations in the future. One key determinant will undoubtedly be the company's decision as to whether to develop production by re-organised labour-intensive means or by mechanisation. The two policies would be found to generate entirely different labour needs, both in terms of skills and numbers. The present manufacturing arrangements are labour-intensive, and it may be frankly admitted that with about 60 per cent of sawmill jobs being unskilled and routine, and many of the remainder requiring minimal skills and decision-making, the opportunities for exercising real initiative in jobs and for employees to develop an independent motivation rooted in intrinsic job-satisfactions are extremely limited. Given some of the observations we have just made about the needs, outlook and meagre industrial commitment of typical migrants, this limited depth of a majority of jobs, may, it could be argued, be entirely appropriate. If management do not intend to mechanise operations — and there are arguments in this connection to which we shall refer shortly — then a pool of labour without excessive ambition or job-expectations is probably quite tolerable, and even functional. An undemanding type of manual worker, responding fairly predictably to straightforward pay incentives, would in fact be needed in large numbers below a certain minority of skilled jobs. Such a worker would feel little frustration within simple jobs which are not particularly amenable to enrichment. In this sense employees with little initiative need not be regarded as a liability. Under the present circumstances it would appear, then, that informed and sensitive personnel-administrative skills, rather than increasingly sophisticated, trained and ambitious industrial workforces, are the means to sustained and efficient production — in other words, skilled and effective use of

present human resources, rather than a search for new resources —
whether human or mechanical.

Nevertheless, we are, up to a point here, discussing an extreme and
hypothetical case, and in fact the observed preferential turnover of
employees with greater initiative must represent some loss to the
company, even in a labour-intensive situation. Regardless of the
technology of production, modernisation of supervision and experimenta-
tion with new modes of administration in the workplace will inevitably
require in some numbers a new mould of employee — adaptable, enter-
prising, and psychologically competent to innovate and take certain
risks alone. This utilisation of new ability will of course be required
primarily in supervisory and organising jobs. If in addition, increased
mechanisation of production to whatever degree is envisaged, then the
observed selectivity of the turnover must be viewed with definite con-
cern, as it would be likely to lead to a situation in which at all levels
of responsibility a wholly unsuitable workforce — conservative,
traditionalist and habituated — might be expected to adapt to radically
different jobs requiring unattainable new orientations and abilities.

Until such time as a re-organised and modernised series of work pro-
cesses — whether labour-intensive or relatively mechanised — might
begin to generate opportunities for intrinsic satisfactions which would
automatically retain the more ambitious type of employee who is currently
mobile, such an employee-type would have to be actively encouraged or
constrained to remain in employment while the desired changes and career-
structures evolved. In other words, the company would need to take
steps to consciously assemble the necessary new elements of a more
dynamic workforce. As we have learned, the overall rate of labour turn-
over is at present low, but it is sufficient to gradually change the
composition of the workforce. A new and imposed selectivity within the
extant turnover process is conceivable, which would use labour turnover
to favourably alter the composition of the workforce — in effect to assemble
functional proportions of different employee-types. Our study suggests

at least two appropriate ways in which this selectivity might operate.
The first, as we have in fact indicated, is clearly in the induction
process when new employees are recruited. However, our earlier
suggestion of avoiding the employment of "chronic resigner" types may
now be seen as over-simplified, and need not fully apply. We have
found that good morale is strongly associated with mobility, so that to
unthinkingly reject certain mobility-prone individuals would be to waste
certain attributes with useful potential. Given that a process of re-
organisation of the workforce was under way, then the problem of
converting good morale from a force for enterprise manifested in mobility
to a force for enterprise manifested in commitment and motivation would
in any case have to be confronted. If this transformation was judged to
be achievable and useful, then it would be worthwhile for the company to
risk inducting new men with a history of mobility, particularly if that
mobility had been a manifestation of initiative and boldness.

Another way in which a favourable selectivity might be imposed, especially
with regard to jobs performed under supervision, relates to the observed
importance of the charge-hands in the process of employee integration.
Both in assessing our own findings and in citing Orpen we have, earlier,
noted that the charge-hands represent probably the most important human
contact-point linking employees with the social working environment. The
stability of employees within the company is influenced very much by the
extent to which they satisfactorily relate to their charge-hands, and
one important consequence of this is that changing the type of persons
appointed as charge-hands will directly influence the selectivity at work
in the turnover process. Appointing as charge-hands a radically different
type of individual (in respect of age, education, attitudes, or indigenous
status, for example) could be expected to eventually result in corres-
pondingly different types from among the intake of new employees being
"stabilised" and remaining in their jobs. This is an important obser-
vation, as it implies that redesigning a workforce should begin with a
consideration and adjustment of the nature, position and role of charge-
hands. Virtually all labour turnover is taking place among junior-level

supervised workers, and in the sense that the charge-hand is a very stressed part of the employee's working environment, an almost "natural selection" of employees would follow upon adjustments initially made only among these supervisors. Judging or researching which type of charge-hand "selects" which type of subordinate workers remains a practical task.

Other, less general means of changing the composition of the workforce may suggest themselves to local managements, and should be explored, but any types of particularistic adjustments should be carefully assessed and examined for unintended side-effects before they are executed. On the whole, the general moulding of natural or extant processes in the labour force is less likely to generate startling or dysfunctional consequences than the heavy-handed manipulation of what may only be symptoms and surface-effects.

We have considered the prospect of plans intended to change the response of employees to the total employment situation. In this context the Flowers and Hughes (1973) model of labour turnover also has implications which have particular relevance for the job-tenure of new recruits in the period immediately following their induction. The relevant aim of management is to try to speedily assess the potential of each new recruit before he becomes too deeply embedded in the workforce (we acknowledge that this may not necessarily be easy); adjustments or replacements may then be made frankly and with a minimum of dislocation. In terms of the model we may safely make two generalisations:

1. Workers entering new employment are most likely to commence with a) minimal inertia within their situation, but with b)an attitude of neutrality in respect of job satisfaction. In diagrammatic terms this initial state is as follows:

```
        INERTIA
◄───────────────────────────o──────────►

                          EJECTION
───────────────────────o──────────────►

◄──────                       ──────────►
job                                  job
satisfaction              dissatisfaction
```
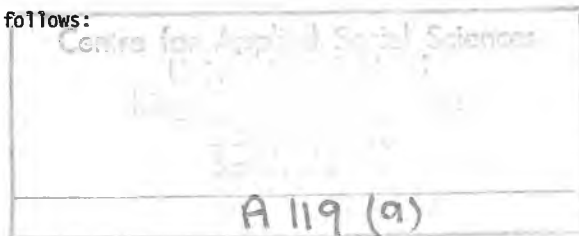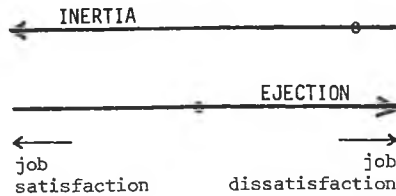
2. With the passage of time inertia is, by its very nature, more than
    likely to steadily increase — in fact growing inertia is almost
    inevitable. Job satisfaction, on the other hand, may develop in
    either direction. However, without certain motivational preconditions
    one must admitthat the employee's job-satisfaction is likely to
    remain neutral or deteriorate.

Indeed, even with these motivational preconditions present, the employee
may not immediately discover whether his job satisfies him or not. What
an employer particularly needs to avoid is a situation in which the em-
ployee has been in employment long enough to have developed a great deal
of inertia, but without having realised any job-satisfaction. This latter
state of the model,


```
                       INERTIA
◄──────────────────────────────────────

                      EJECTING
──────────────────────────────o───────►
```
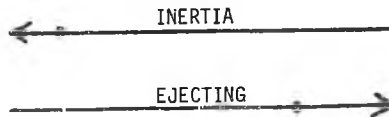
which was referred to in our theoretical discussion (p. 19), is likely to
represent a serious problem — an "apathetic" or clearly dissatisfied
employee who will not leave the job, because of great inertia. The clear
implication of this scenario for the recruitment of new workers by the
company is that the employment situation should be arranged in such a way
that the job-satisfaction (or job-dissatisfaction) of a new employee should

be able to manifest itself as soon as possible. The new employee should
be able to discover within a minimum of time whether or not his job
motivates him or not, before he develops much inertia — which in many
respects is a function of elapsed time. Similarly, his observable moti-
vation should be carefully monitored if possible by the employer during
an initial trial period of employment. Conversely, measures might be
adopted which would minimise the development of personal inertia during
this period. In this sense the company need not actually strive to
establish, for example, the kind of social integration of the worker
into the workplace which comprises part of inertia, during the early
stages of a worker's employment. Yet another consideration is as follows.
One of the principal components of inertia currently contributed by the
company is the range of various "company benefits" which employees receive,
such as rations, accommodation of various types, the services of a social
worker, and so on. One seemingly harsh implication of the Flowers and
Hughes model, therefore, is that the withholding of eligibility for
certain benefits from new employees would reduce the incidence of the
problematic state illustrated above, by retarding the development of
inertia and hence allowing new employees to assess the true nature of
their jobs in relatively "unbiased" conditions. However, in pointing this out
we are certainly not advocating the imposition of needless hardship upon
people who already suffer collectively from much poverty and underemploy-
ment, but offering perhaps a model for some sort of analagous strategy.
Clearly, the preceding argument is somew at theoretical and idealised, but
nevertheless its implications should be considered seriously by the company.
It is more applicable to the minority of skilled jobs which have the poten-
tial of offering some job-satisfaction. The one general principle upon
which our reasoning at this point is based is that inertia, as the term is
used by Flowers and Hughes, is all very well as long as employees remain
motivated; but if and when motivation dissipates, then inertia becomes a
great hindrance. With this perspective, turnover may be seen as quite
tolerable among short-service employees if it represents a desirable
selectivity at work.

The withholding from new employees of certain benefits would also be

consistent with an attitude expressed to us by many of the men. This is
the simple desire for some sort of recognition of seniority and long
service in employment, independent of the job performed. It is obviously
related to the custom in traditional society that older men are particu-
larly respected and accorded status because of their age and experience.
Limiting benefits among "junior" (short-service) employees is certainly
not the appropriate policy for satisfying this broad need, but it would
not, we would point out, as an aspect of some other policy offend the
values of those men concerned with recognition of seniority.

It seems inevitable that companies establishing border-industry operations
will increasingly have to identify with the regions which supply their
labour — if only in the first place for the sake of enhanced labour re-
lations. We have already alluded, for example, to the advantages of a
favourable image of the company in the sending area. From these premises
it follows almost inevitably that further development of the employment
centres should continue to be labour-intensive rather than highly
mechanised. Manpower is the most abundant and under-exploited resource
which the homeland areas possess. It may be argued that labour-intensive
further development of the border-industries will (1) for the time being
help minimise the type of social dysphoria in the homelands that would in-
evitably follow from increased unemployment, (2) as a by-product help
maintain favourable relations between the homelands
and "White" South Africa, and (3) most important of all, remain consistent
with sound social and macro-economic perspectives on development in the
third world generally. Employers in border industries would do well to
acknowledge that, although they are probably directed by a head office in
a large and advanced industrial conurbation, they themselves are operating
in what is to all intents and purposes part of the third world. They may
fruitfully picture themselves not merely as outposts of western industrial
manufacturing technology (and methods), but alternatively as important
agents of change in the heart of a developing territory. Thus in an earlier
report (Allen and Schlemmer, 1975) to the sponsoring company we cited certain

observations by ILO (International Labour Office) experts on the timber industry globally, as follows:

Little information is available ... (on effects of technical progress) ... from developing countries. Where machines help to open up forests, they are a useful means of improving the economy and creating new job opportunities. But in many cases, it is doubtful whether mechanisation is economically or socially justified.

All too often, machines are introduced without calculating operating costs and labour input or comparing them with normal operations. Where such calculations are done, they normally only relate to inefficient manual work with primitive tools and methods and neglect completely the possibility of improved labour-intensive work. This, for instance, is the case where replacing axes used for timber felling and cross-cutting by power saws without trying to introduce hand-saws which, if of the right design and properly maintained, will at low wage levels in most cases be more economic, provide more jobs and save foreign exchange spent on the purchase of machines, spare parts and fuel.

In view of the increasing number of jobless in the rural areas of developing countries, these problems are now better under-stood than formerly, when technology used to be transferred unthinkingly from the industrialised to the developing world.[1)]

These views reflect the growing acknowledgement by enlightened development planners of the significance of what is known as Alternative Technology or Appropriate Technology (AT). British economist E.F. Schumacher, one of the pioneers of the concept, gave a working definition of Alternative/ Appropriate Technology for the third world as being a technology which would employ many people, be gentle in its use of scarce resources, and serve the human person instead of making him the servant of machines. More specific definitions are ventured by more specialised users of the concept: "In terms of available resources, appropriate technologies are intensive in the use of the abundant factor, labour; economical in the

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1) General Report of the Second Tripartite Technical Meeting For The Timber Industry, Geneva: *Recent Developments and Progress In The Timber Industry,* International Labour Office, Geneva, 1973.

use of scarce factors, capital and *highly trained personnel;* and
intensive in the use of domestically produced inputs."[1] (Italic
ours) And according to Morawetz (1974), "Appropriate technology may
be defined as the set of techniques which make optimum use of available
resources in a given environment. For each process or project, it is
the technology which maximises social welfare if factor prices are
shadow priced."

However, the adoption of AT does not imply an unthinking return to
primitive technology.[2] For the conditions prevailing in most of the
third world an appropriate technology will be one that is "vastly
superior to the primitive technology of bygone ages but at the same time
much simpler, cheaper and freer than the super-technology of the rich.
One can also call it self-help technology ... a technology to which
everyone can gain admittance and which is not reserved to those rich
and powerful" (Schumacher). Rather than throw out modern technology, AT
depends on a selective and frugal use of it.

In one sense, some of the company's sawmills are already good examples of
AT in that their main sources of mechanical and electrical power are large
steam-engines which are fuelled entirely by local waste timber. Until
quite recently these mills were, for their power needs, independent of the
centralized state electricity supply.

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1) U.S. Agency for International Development.

2) However it must be acknowledged that these formulations of AT do
   imply a certain redefinition of economic efficiency. Traditionally,
   economic efficiency has been viewed as producing maximum output
   with minimum input or cost. Evaluating the appropriateness of
   technology emphasizes how production occurs and the consequent
   implications for the quality of the physical environment and the
   life of the individual.

But in general the idea of the "appropriateness" of this or that tech-
nology acknowledges not only considerations of the scarcity of certain
forms of energy and resources, but also the place of indigenous definitions
of situations and the subjective needs and values of local populations.
There is, in other words, a social component. Local people have a right
to be consulted on matters which will have far-reaching effects on their
individual lives and on their broader social and economic opportunities.
Indeed, localisation is another important aspect of AT. A consultant to
the World Bank and the U.N. on technology and science policy, W.N. Ellis,
notes that an important motivation for switching to low-cost labour-
intensive technologies like AT is independence. Thus,

> ... *one of the most profound impact of AT will be the radical*
> *change in attitudes among the peoples of the world when they*
> *realize that they can be self-reliant ... the realization that*
> *for the first time many people will be able to choose how they*
> *want to live, without having to depend on large, impersonal*
> *technologies ... The third world is playing a growing role in*
> *developing AT and is beginning to recognise that the transfer*
> *of highly sophisticated technologies can hinder as well as*
> *assist their economic development. Production technologies,*
> *in the traditional sense, can be inimical to third world*
> *economic growth even in the terms of the old economic order.*
> *Now these nations are searching for ways to make themselves*
> *self-reliant; ways for their people to participate in design*
> *and production as well as in use.* (Ellis, an interview, 1977)

Thinking and planning in terms of AT is consistent, then, with independence,
decentralization, and localisation. Localisation means not only the con-
scious use of local resources and locally-defined needs in shaping policy,
but also a feeling of independence in the sense of freedom from uniformity.
Particular contextual conditions are taken very much into account:
development, whether of whole communities or of industrial production,
may mean different things in different situations. Consequently we would
suggest that planning for the company's dispersed rural branches/
subsidiaries should not necessarily feel bound by rigid models or notions
of a uniform process of development to be applied everywhere.

To reintroduce an earlier point, we consider that the border-industries,

and particularly the more rurally situated border-industries, have an
important part to play in the development of the homeland areas, and
that such development has, in turn, great significance in the context
of industrial development generally — and hence in the context of the
associated question of urbanisation. As a rule, in any economy really
large-scale production can only take place in an urban setting, but in
typical third world conditions,

> *As we see it, the greatest task is to redress the balance*
> *between rural life and city life, by going into the rural*
> *areas with appropriate technologies of self-help so as to*
> *foster hope and self-reliance. If the breakdown of rural*
> *life continues there is no way out ... I have often said*
> *to friends of mine in developing countries, countries*
> *which are called thus but stubbornly refuse to develop,*
> *that the cause of their country's misery is not backward-*
> *ness but* decay, the decay *of the rural structure.[1]*
> *... The task then is to bring into existence millions of*
> *new workplaces in the rural areas and small towns ...*
> *workplaces have to be created in the areas where the*
> *people are living now, and not primarily in metropolitan*
> *areas into which they tend to migrate.* (Schumacher, 1974)

With this sort of perspective the border-industries clearly could have an
important intermediate role. Increasing identification with the home-
lands on the part of the border-industries, already suggested by us,
might be expected to encourage progressive Africanisation of more senior
jobs, and increasing localisation of certain of the companies' activities.
These are processes which would in turn naturally encourage adaptation
of both production methods and personnel administration to local con-
ditions. These may seem startling suggestions to the traditionally-
oriented industrialist, but in the long-term view there may be little
ultimate advantage in importing at considerable expense into situations
such as that studied here, a highly western technology of production and
a highly western organisation of the working personnel, if these are

1) Schumacher in *Enterprise* (1969).

arguably inappropriate: — technically fragile in the local environment
(and remoteness from urban centres), and socially alien to the indigenous
workforce. If appropriate technology is acknowledged as an important
possibility in the rural operations of the company, then the emergence of
what might be termed "appropriate administration" is also to be hoped for:
the evolution of locally designed and partially indigenous patterns of
work. Local management should feel free to experiment in this regard;
and local employees should be consulted as to what forms of appropriate/
alternative administration would best harmonise with their needs. Such
suitable arrangements as might be devised regionally would aim only to
become effective locally, and not necessarily to conform to grand models
exported from distant and different situations. In this connection,
Berger, introducing a discussion of social change in developing countries,
presents a set of "Twenty-Five Theses", from which the following are
selected:

1.
The world today is divided into ideological camps. The
adherents of each tell us with great assurance where we're
at and what we should do about it. We should not believe
any of them. [1]

12.
Policies for social change are typically made by cliques of
politicians and intellectuals with claims to superior in-
sights. These claims are typically spurious.

14.
Every human being knows his own world better than any outsider
(including the expert who makes policy).

15.
Those who are the objects of policy should have the opportunity
to participate not only in specific decisions but in the
definitions of the situation on which these decisions are
based. This may be called cognitive participation.

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1) "Such debunking is not an end in itself. Rather, it opens up new
avenues of understanding and policy." (Berger)

132.

19.
Human beings have the right to live in a meaningful
world. An assessment of the costs of policy must also
include a *calculus of meaning.*

20.
*Modernity exacts a high price on the level of meaning.
Those who are unwilling to pay this price must be taken
with utmost seriousness, and* not *be dismissed as 'back-
ward' or 'irrational'.*

21.
*The viability of modern societies, be it in the West or
in the Third World, will largely hinge on their capacity
to create institutional arrangements that take account of
the counter-modernizing resistances.*

(Berger, 1977)

To certain readers Berger's Theses may seem somewhat utopian, but his book
is addressed directly to theorists and practitioners of development in the
third world, and his professed purpose, based upon considerable practical
experience, is to take practical steps toward what he calls a "hard-nosed
utopianism." In particular, the last two assertions quoted above remind
us that the border-industries in the situation here studied do not in fact
employ modern or urbanised populations; and this recollection returns us
to one of the central themes in the predicament of the typical oscillating
migrant worker: — his participation in "two worlds" but his sense of
certainty and completeness in neither.

The title of this report is also intended to reflect the underlying im-
portance of this theme. We have, as the reader will recall, discussed at
certain points the "commitment" of migrant workers to aspects of industrial
society. In so doing, we have been concerned with the ultimate need to
maintain productive workforces in a developing border industry. This
report has assumed, rather than demonstrated, the connection between in-
dustrial commitment on the part of the individual and sustained personal
motivation to work, or involvement with work "as a career"; but we have
encountered nothing to cause us to doubt this relationship. True
industrial commitment, we have suggested, is a fragile and multidimensional

relationship, made up of a variety of strands ranging from relatively crude economic relations to relatively subtle "ideological" allegiances. The latter do not necessarily accompany the former. Thus the possibility of an employee's well-developed "inertia" within an employment situation need not imply his strong commitment to it. Consequently a disposition approaching full "industrial commitment" among rurally-born African oscillating migrants, is probably rare and certainly not inevitable. The other side of the coin is ambivalence — which is not simply a limited commitment but a divided commitment. As Mayer (1962) has pointed out, "Taking Africa as a whole there are millions of people who migrate every year from rural homes to centres of employment in towns and mining areas, and nearby as many streaming back again to their old homes ... instead of settling down, people circulate; the question is what makes them circulate ... even in the Federation, where the government is *not* officially committed to perpetuating labour migrancy, Africans apparently feel insecure in town." So even where migrants are relatively free to settle where they wish, they adjust only partially to the new realities of urban life or industrial employment; they not surprisingly feel a divided allegiance between the world in which they have spent their formative years and the newer world in which has more recently offered them certain strategic advantages. Partly as a result of their migrations, they also find themselves unable to *fully* subscribe to the values of either. They feel fully committed in neither world, and in this sense ambivalence means not only divided allegiance between two situations, but conflicting attitudes toward and within each individual situation. In these terms, then, an oscillating migrant never achieves a satisfactory accommodation of conflicting forces or needs, no matter what stage of the cycle of movements he may have reached. For this reason and others we consider that in addition to the conventional and by now elaborated "push-pull" models, an ambivalence-centred conception of labour migration is an important one, representing a qualitative change in thinking, and as such yielding opportunities for new levels of analysis and appreciation. While a push-pull model can, somewhat misleadingly, tend to concentrate on the quantification and hence the *balancing out* of various forces, as measured moreover among

large populations, an ambivalence-centred concept of labour migration by definition recognises the inherently irreconcilable nature of the conflicting forces and feelings acting on the individual migrant — and the stresses which must result. Even the simplest model of ambivalence has to involve at least two qualitatively distinct variables or dimensions which, although possibly acting on a common object (the individual person, for example), necessarily cannot act on each other. Conventional models of labour migration as a rule enumerate various "push" and "pull" forces, but give little consideration to exactly how these forces manifest themselves in an individual — and ultimately affect that individual. In fact, push-pull models encourage the study of forces rather than people. All too often, as a result of considering the pressures on migrant populations *en masse* it is somehow implied that they are, by virtue of their movements and dual participation in economic activities, rather ingeniously solving certain macrostructural socio-economic problems. From our own experience it is doubtful whether migrating between two fundamentally contrasting arenas of activity is, in subjective psychological terms, the rewarding or quasi-entrepreneurial experience that such a view would suggest — particularly when, as is the case here, the migration is originally prompted by poverty and related problems. We prefer to emphasise that from the point of view of the affected individuals migration amounts to a dividing, confusing and ultimately stressful predicament which accordingly takes its toll in a human "calculus of meaning", rather than the implementation of a clever strategy. For those concerned with the management, stabilisation and motivation of migrant employees, the incompatible states of ambivalence and commitment are key concepts in understanding that predicament.

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APPENDIX   A.

5.

INFORMATION FROM GROUP-INTERVIEWS RELEVANT TO LABOUR TURNOVER

A considerable portion of the information collected for this broad study of the Timber Industry derives from group-interviews, systematically undertaken among representative groups of employees at all the centres of employment. At each centre at least two groups of approximately eight selected participants each were co-interviewed by trained African fieldworkers introducing a standardised series of topics for discussion. Group-interviewing was arranged to take place in an informal, communal atmosphere, which was encouraged by the provision of food, beer and cigarettes. The partially directed conversations which resulted were recorded by tape-recorder.

Although at the time of group-interviewing no specific provisions were made to investigate labour turnover in great detail, we have here extracted from certain group-interviews information and selected passages concerning what we consider to be TURNOVER-RELATED FACTORS. Examples of turnover-related factors, as the reader will presently recognise, include:

1. Rural or Urban affinities, among employees.
2. The presence or absence of Company-provided accommodation at the workplace.
3. Competition, among local populations, for jobs.
4. Availability of alternative local employment.
5. Wage-levels of other local employers.
6. Interpersonal conflict-situations in the workplace.
7. Various cumulative dissatisfiers in working conditions. (Hygiene defects)
8. The "Mercenary Orientation" among employees (an outlook in which money is seen as the sole criterion of a good job).
9. The "pipeline phenomenon",,suspected to apply mainly to the most skilled jobs.

10. The degree of *docility* among compound-dwellers — a condition
which appears to grow out of a type of psychological dependence
on the employer (involving abdication of initiative to the em-
ployer) on the part of compound-dwellers, stemming in turn from
their initial *residential* dependence upon the employer.

These and other related forces or factors may all affect to some degree
the rate of labour turnover in a given employment situation. Relevant
passages from recorded group-interviews which discuss these matters are
quoted below. We consider that the information and the feelings of em-
ployees conveyed in these quoted excerpts, while not necessarily affording
complete explanations or predictions of the various elements of labour
turnover, will nevertheless offer to readers already familiar with the
employment-situations concerned further useful insights into some of the
dynamics of the turnover process.

The excerpts quoted below, then, are informative rather than analytic,
demonstrating the employees' perceptions of some aspects of turnover.
However, we have, as an introduction to each section, outlined some of
the residential, migratory and geographic circumstances at each employment-
centre so as to establish at least some key variables, and so as to also
possibly assist readers who are not necessarily familiar with these
centres in making comparisons with other similar employment-situations not
covered by this study.

Forest plantation centres of employment, where rates of resignation among
members of the workforce are virtually negligible, are not described in
this selection.

5.1   NORTHERN TIMBER YARD

The Northern Timber Yard is a timber-processing and timber storage facility
employing a virtually all-male African workforce of about 120, of which
60% work in unskilled jobs. It is in an essentially urban setting, being
situated in the small industrial satellite-area of the town of Louis

Trichardt. In spite of the presence of other light industry in the vicinity there is evidence in the group-interviews of there being little alternative employment available, and certainly not of a kind that might represent an improvement in job or pay. There is, moreover, competition among the populations of the surrounding Venda areas for jobs in Louis Trichardt. Particularly among the unskilled workers, the men tend to feel trapped in their employment situation. As one man put it: "We cannot leave the job. We have to work until we die, because we are poor people."

The existing problem of Monday absenteeism at the Yard, according to theory linked with labour instability, has in fact been shown to be very largely due to practical reasons only.[1]

The attractions and implications of employment in the major cities were discussed at some length by employees. The following verbatim excerpt from a discussion of Rural or Urban preferences is typical.

INTERVIEWER: What can you choose between working here (Louis Trichardt), and in the big towns or cities? Between the border industries and big towns?
SPEAKER: I think it is better to work in the homeland towns because our homes are within reasonable distance. We can easily find out what is taking place at our homes. We can easily attend to our families. It is difficult to attend to our families from far away.
SPEAKER: In fact, many people are looking for money in Johannesburg.
SPEAKER: We would not worry if we were earning enough money.
SPEAKER: It is better to work here in the homeland because we also have various types of work here in the home towns.

Clearly, there are conflicting views.[2]

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1) See: Allen, R.D.J. and Schlemmer, L. (1975), *op. cit.*, p.35.

2) See footnote, 2), p.3.

5.2 NORTHERN SAWMILL

The Northern Sawmill is a logging, sawmilling, timber-drying, and timber
transportation centre more than thirty kilometres from Louis Trichardt,
employing an African workforce of about 225, of whom 62% are unskilled.
The sawmill is in an isolated, rural setting in forests in the
Soutpansberg. The only local alternative employers are private forest
plantations, some private farms, and the Government Sawmill "Timbadola."
Regarding jobs and remuneration, the only attractive alternative employ-
ment is at Timbadola, but this is in fact quite distant from the sawmill,
in the opposite direction from Louis Trichardt, and fairly heavily
competed for by the populations of its own adjacent areas of the Venda
homeland. The nearest urban centre to the sawmill is Louis Trichardt,
while the sawmill itself may be described as a true border industry in
that it lies only three or four kilometres from the Maelula district of
Venda. Thus geographically, this Sawmill might be a convenient staging
post in a pipeline of labour moving out of Venda and aiming for Louis
Trichardt. However in day-to-day life Louis Trichardt seems remote to
local people, as virtually no public transport is available between town
and the sawmill.

From group interviews and other data the following turnover-related in-
formation appears.

Seventy-eight per cent of the men live on-site in company accommodation,
a situation which we suspect tends to exert a stabilising effect on a work-
force. However, virtually all these men live in single quarters, irres-
pective of their true marital status.

There is regular evidence of what we have termed a mercenary orientation,
exemplified in the following excerpt from a discussion of jobs:

*INTERVIEWER: Do the members sometimes think of seeking jobs somewhere and
leave _ _ _ ?*
*SPEAKER: No, we are already condemned. Who is ready to employ a man who
has served here for more than five years?*

INTERVIEWER: What do people look for in a good job?
SPEAKER: What we like from a job is enough pay.
INTERVIEWER: Why do sometimes people say that one job is better than
another?
SPEAKER: The job is to be better only when there is money. If any job
pays enough money everybody is ready to tolerate it. I can tolerate to
work in a muddy place or in a mine — as long as I receive a good pay.

There are serious grievances concerning over-zealous charge-hands, who
are felt generally to be grossly overworking the men, and who are dis-
tinctly unpopular. Regular involuntary unpaid overtime work is reported
at this centre.

Regarding supervision and race-relations, comments by the men reveal that
White management are seen generally as without care, unsympathetic, and
of laissez-faire attitudes.

The men appear to be keenly aware of the advantages and disadvantages of
migration — both to border industries and to the major conurbations.
A common opinion appears to be that higher urban costs-of-living *outweigh*
the advantages of a higher urban wage-structure, and that it is therefore
advisable to stay in rural employment. This view may however be a
rationalisation of the desire to maintain closer links with families and
dependents.

The following verbatim excerpt from a discussion of rural/urban preferences
exemplifies this outlook:

INTERVIEWER: What is better - living in cities and working in cities or
working and staying here at the homeland?
SPEAKER: I think it is better to work in town because there is enough
pay than here at home.
INTERVIEWER: Why now do people tolerate to work here at the home?
SPEAKER: How can we enter the cities? We like going to cities but we
cannot. A person may manage to get a job at a town but fails to have a
place of accommodation.
INTERVIEWER: Would you allow me when I say that life in the country is
better than in a city?
MEMBERS: Yes, we do.
INTERVIEWER: Why do you say so?

SPEAKER: I would say that life is better here at the country than it is in cities because when I am at home my wife will inform me of any shortage at home and I would be able to buy such a thing. If I don't have any money in my coffers I would be able to borrow from my friends and co-workers, but this does not apply in cities. In city even your closest friend may leave you dying of hunger.

SPEAKER: I think it is better to work at home than in a city because we do not spend any money on transport here. The money that a worker uses to go to work daily in a city is the same money that I use to buy mealie-meal here.

INTERVIEWER: How about those city workers who are transported freely to and from their jobs?

SPEAKER: It is better working here because I will be able to see everything that is running short at my house and family. I would like to work here where it would not be difficult to bury me if I happen to die. Suppose you die at Johannesburg, this means a lot of money to escort your corpse to this country.

INTERVIEWER: Let me ask this question: Why are many people interested to work in a city?

SPEAKER: They follow the high pays because money pays are higher than here.

INTERVIEWER: Would you say that people who work in cities don't encounter the problems you have mentioned above?

SPEAKER: They encounter. They just find that the 'ways' are bright for them.

INTERVIEWER: Which 'ways' are you referring to?

SPEAKER: By this I mean that they are lucky because they were not arrested and escorted back to their homes the moment they sought for jobs in cities. I think it wouldn't be possible for me to work in a city even if I like it because I would not like to take risks of being arrested.

INTERVIEWER: What do others think about this idea?

SPEAKER: Myself, I mean a person like me, I have nowhere to go anymore. Where I am at present I feel to be satisfied. Even if I receive that cent as my wage, it is enough, as long as I buy mealie-meal for my children at month-ending. What is the use of working in a city and I receive letters from home that inform me of the shortage of food in my family. These letters may find that I have not yet earned any money. Sending the money would be very late after month-ending and my family shall have died of hunger. My wife may also decide to borrow money from other to buy some mealie-meal. When I am here at home I would see which plan to make in order to maintain my family.

INTERVIEWER: Which advice would you give to a young boy who decides working in a city?

SPEAKER: I would tell him to sit down and rest; to seek employment somewhere near his home because in a city he would be able to receive higher pay but he would not send any money here at home. He will go to work by a daily bus, pay monthly rent, pay for water, buy mealie-meal, buy relish and buy coal (fuel). But we do not pay for most things here at home. We only buy mealie-meal and if there is some money left, we buy some meat or sugar for tea.

SPEAKER: (Opposed to the fact that nothing is paid at home except to buy mealie-meal): We pay for the huts we live in; how about the annual taxes that we pay?

5.3 SOUTHERN MAJOR SAWMILL

The Southern Major Sawmill is a sawmilling, timber-drying and timber marketing centre employing about 235 African staff, of whom 61% perform unskilled work. The sawmill site is adjoined by a large accommodation compound, in which virtually all the employees live, about one-third of the men being in married quarters there. At the same time, all employees are notably   distant from their respective homeland areas, all of which are inaccessible without a day or so of travel by public transport. The sawmill is in a rural, forested setting about 16 kilometres west of the town of Tzaneen (pop. 4 800), but is situated on a main road, which carries public transport for those who can afford it. The mill is on the western edge of the Transvaal lowveld, the area which exclusively supplies its migrant labour, and it appears to be naturally oriented to-ward the major centres of the lowveld, such as Tzaneen and Phalaborwa. It lies at the foot of the Drakensberg escarpment, a natural barrier which at least symbolically lends a sense of separation from the relatively distant major conurbations of the highveld. Nevertheless there appears to be among the workforce a general knowledge, if only by hearsay, of the working life of Africans in Johannesburg. Possible alternative local employers for men at this mill would appear to be a very few private farms, another private sawmill, the Government Department of Forestry, local tea estates, and local citrus orchards (and some other fruit producers). In terms of remuneration and working conditions, apparently only the last three categories could compete favourably with this mill. As might be ex-pected, however, there is already considerable local competition for work with those alternative employers.

The group-interviews show up a generally prevalent mercenary orientation vis-a-vis employment, particularly among younger men. In discussions of the plans and aspirations of the men there is evidence of a strong, general

money-orientation in their expectations. Similarly, in discussions of
motivation on the job, and from attempts to elicit a statement of some
sort of work-ethic from the men, there is frequent evidence that most
men work purely for the remuneration.

There is agreement among the men — empirically not unjustified — that
the company gives relatively poor wages, rations and benefits compared
with certain other local employers of comparable scale. Notably, the
tea estates and citrus orchards were mentioned in this connection.
However it is known by the men that the availability of alternative jobs
is scarce, particularly for unskilled workers, and these employees are
acutely conscious that they have no savings to live off while seeking
alternative work. Challenged directly on the question of job-tenure the
men state that in spite of their various grievances they are staying on
in their jobs, hopeful of expected wage increases. This outlook is
evidently encouraged by the embryonic changes occurring in the company's
employment arrangements at the time of our study, but it may also re-
present a degree of rationalisation of the men's sense (once again) that
they are in various ways, via their weak standing, trapped in their jobs.
This situation is no doubt partly responsible for the stability of much
of the workforce, and the idea is exemplified in the following excerpt
from a discussion of job-tenure:

INTERVIEWER: Are there any disadvantages in resigning from this job?
SPEAKER: Yes, we can't just resign without having another job. Should
I leave this job today, it may take me a week, a month, a year before I
can get another job. It is best that we stick it out here because we
have no money in reserve to fall back on in case we do not get another
job.
INTERVIEWER: But what is it that makes you people work here, and not
elsewhere?
SPEAKER: Well, when I work here I earn money, and the money tells me not
to leave. Should I leave here I would have to start as a beginner else-
where for less money. When I then see other people earning more money
than myself it makes me unhappy. I know that if I remain here for another
year I will get an increase.

Under a little pressure the respondent's final explanation was not entirely
convincing. It is almost certain, for example, that he hoped or trusted,

rather than *knew*, that he would soon get an increase.

The question of Rural/Urban Affinities has to be understood on differing
levels. The men say that they are content with certain low rural *living*
standards, but that comparison of themselves with their equivalent urban
reference-group raises their *wage*-expectations. One problem in the
group-interviews in this instance is that all the invited participants
are of rural origin, and the discussion of urban conditions is necessarily
rather hypothetical for most of them. It is probably true to say of
them that *culturally* and *socially* they are fundamentally rurally-oriented,
but, that they are also strongly attracted to urban wage-structures.
According to one theoretical viewpoint on migrancy, a crucial question
has always been: which pull on the allegiance of these men has been the
stronger? We, however, consider that the situation is more fruitfully
regarded in terms of an ongoing ambivalence the elements of which cannot
properly be ever reconciled, rather than in terms of opposing "pulls"
on a single dimension which at times balance each other off (implying
temporary "equilibria"). The following excerpt is taken from the end of
a lengthy discussion of wage-levels by young, unskilled manual workers:

*INTERVIEWER: (finally confronting the group) If the White man asked you
how much should you earn, what would you say?
GROUP: (silence for a while, then confused mumbling) Seventy Rand.
(another voice) We don't know because there are certain hardships we can
tolerate here on the farms.1) But our problem arises when we hear how
much people in the towns earn. When an individual thinks of his friend
in town he realises that it is unfair that his friend should earn more,
when after all they are equal. But if we got enough money here we would
not want to go to Johannesburg. The attraction in Johannesburg is the
money they offer.*

Three observations are noteworthy at this point: First, expectations are
evidently rising. Next, the remarks just quoted amount to a clear expression

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1) i.e. In rural as opposed to urban employment.

of the opinion that if rural rewards are good enough, then relative stability in rural employment-situations is assured. This is confirmation of the simple observation that for decades poverty has quite plainly been the primal stimulus compelling rural Africans to become long-range migrant workers.

Finally, this is not the first indication we have had that the attraction of urban employment to these men appears to be rather one-dimensional. Apparently it is money alone,rather than other additional features or "attractions" of urbanism, which initially appeals to them. Of course, what is not at this stage known in respect of this type of border-industry migrants is what their attitude to an urban way of life might be after having experienced it (with steady employment) for, say, one year.

A final factor probably related to labour turnover at this mill is suggested by a number of clear indications from group-interviewees that following from certain tendencies among supervisors to abuse authority, younger employees and unskilled employees are distinctly fearful of African charge-hands.

5.4   SOUTHERN SUBSIDIARY SAWMILL

The Southern Subsidiary Sawmill is a sawmilling and timber impregnation plant, employing about one hundred men, 65 per cent of whom perform unskilled work. The sawmill, situated in barren highveld terrain, is in a rural setting remote from any towns but on the main road between Tzaneen and Pietersburg. The site lies between two Lebowa homeland areas, which are only seven or eight kilometres away, and is also overlooked by "Zion City Moriah", an exclusive African settlement comprising the headquarters of the separatist Zion Christian Church. There is no company accommodation; most of the all-male workforce commute daily the short distance from the neighbouring homeland areas of Molepo, Mothapo and Mamabolo. A small proportion live in the small local settlement itself, on land leased from the Zion Christian Church. Regarding the general geographic situation of the sawmill, the clear impression is gained that the population of this

settlement — being on the Transvaal highveld above the escarpment —
is more aware of, and in touch with, the major conurbations of the
interior: Pietersburg, Pretoria, Johannesburg, etc. Relatively few of
the *Low*veld African peoples of neighbouring regions[1] seem ever to
penetrate inward past the escarpment; but for these more local peoples
of the Lebowa homeland areas immediately West of the escarpment, i.e.
above it, this mill could geographically be a staging-post in a pipeline
of labour seeking work in or around Pietersburg (pop. 20 000). However,
with respect to the Witwatersrand as a source of employment, a reversed
flow appears to be the situation, with erstwhile migrants returning to
their home areas around this area. The following is a relevant excerpt
from the writer's fieldwork-notes of a conversation with the manager of
the Southern Subsidiary Sawmill in July 1974:

> *"RE RAND/GOLDMINES FACTION-FIGHTS:*
>
> *There has been a return of migrant male workers, from the
> Reef and Free State goldfields, to the ———— area. This
> has meant a small injection of relatively more urban-
> industrial-experienced individuals into the local community.
> They have this experience, but are said to be disillusioned
> with urban-migrant life (presumably the "faction fighting"
> was the last straw), and to be keen to return to the Molepo
> or Mamabolo homeland areas and settle. This suggests that
> they may NOW have relatively modest expectations, but they
> are nevertheless able to make comparisons between local work
> conditions and urban conditions elsewhere — especially with
> regard to employment-situations — and inform locally-tied
> men accordingly. It is estimated that about five such re-
> turned migrants have joined the ———— sawmill workforce itself
> (TOTAL 100)."*

At this point it is noteworthy that there is competition for wage-paying
jobs of any kind in this area. In fact, the sawmill is virtually the
only local employer of significant numbers. From conversations locally

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1) i.e. those from Gazankulu areas such as Giyani and Modjadji.

and from the group-interviews it is clear that a certain expectation
prevails among older men: Older men expect to have first option for the
scarce jobs at this sawmill; they expect younger men to go and seek work
in the cities.

This expectation may actually encourage tension between different age-
groups in the local community and therefore in the workforce — with
clear implications for labour turnover. From our sample it appears that
no more than 15 per cent of the mill's employees are Zionists. An as
yet unresolved question is whether or not the close presence of Zion
City Moriah makes this a relatively stable group in the workforce.

Regarding rural or urban affinities among the local population, there is
evidence from our group interviews indicating that members of the young
generation currently reaching adult age are not at all rurally-oriented.
More particularly, local employment cannot yield sufficient earnings for
young men to save lobola. These, and related aspects of rural/urban
preferences are alluded to in the excerpt quoted below from a group-
interview conducted at this mill among older employees, engaged in various
occupations throughout the sawmill. The same quoted comments reveal a
distinctly money-oriented or exclusively "mercenary" attitude to work on
the part of these men.

*INTERVIEWER: Is it true that the young people from this area who are the
same age as myself do not work in this area? (age ± 25).
SPEAKER: Yes that is true. They go to Johannesburg and other big places.
INTERVIEWER: Why is that so?
SPEAKER: Because there is more money in Johannesburg. They need the
money to buy wives. There are no more cattle left here. We are old men
and do not wish to leave the area.
INTERVIEWER: Good, now you've told me that the young people go to the
towns, because there is more money and you've also told me that you here
are too old to leave the area. But is there not another reason why you
do not work in the towns? Does something prevent you from leaving this
area and earning more money in the towns?
SPEAKER: We do not leave this area because we are working. But we are not
afraid to leave because we can work anywhere.
INTERVIEWER: When the young people return from Johannesburg and Pretoria
do they have anything to show for their labour?*

SPEAKER: Yes they do. Because some of them have taken trades which earn them more money. Our only advantage over them is that we do not have to pay for transport to and from work.
INTERVIEWER: I seem to find that the people who are from the city are more intelligent than the people who remain behind. Do you people agree?
SPEAKER: No there is no difference in intelligence. When they return from the city they are faced with the same problems as we are.
INTERVIEWER: Will those young people from the city be able to work with you here?
SPEAKER: No they will never be able to work with us. They are our children and we are old men.
INTERVIEWER: Will you be able to work with them in the city?
SPEAKER: No.
INTERVIEWER: Is that because your wife keeps you back?
SPEAKER: Partly but I also have my mother and father here.
INTERVIEWER: Do you have any brothers?
SPEAKER: Yes they have all gone to the city.
INTERVIEWER: Don't they want to work here in this area?
SPEAKER: No because I have to look after the home. They are all younger than me..
INTERVIEWER: Do any of you wish to send your children to the city?
SPEAKER: No we have no say in the matter. When our children have finished school they feel that they are educated and that there is no work to suit them here. So they all move off to the cities. I have several children for example. When they left school they did not first have a look where I was working and decide whether they would like a similar job. No - they said I was working for a Boer (Afrikaner) and left for the city. But all the young people are not the same. Some join a gambling school, others learn to drive and some steal.
INTERVIEWER: Is there something about town life which is preferable to life here? Have any of you been to the city and are able to compare?
SPEAKER: Yes, I've been to the city.
INTERVIEWER: Where do you prefer to work?
SPEAKER: I prefer to be here on the days I do not work. But I prefer the work in the city.
INTERVIEWER: Why do you prefer to work in the city?
SPEAKER: Well it is a big place.
INTERVIEWER: What do you mean?
SPEAKER: I mean the place where we live is bigger than here at home. It is only because this is our home that we tolerate it.[1]
INTERVIEWER: Where in the city did you work?
SPEAKER: In Johannesburg but that was a long time ago in 1934. Johannesburg was still a small place then. But there is no place to beat home.

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1) The group is composed of older men.

INTERVIEWER: So you prefer to live here?
SPEAKER: Yes. But the younger people move from here because they are curious to see the big cities.
INTERVIEWER: Do the young people ever send money home?
SPEAKER: No they save their money to buy a wife.
INTERVIEWER: It appears to me that the old men who have worked in the city prefer to work here. Is that correct?
SPEAKER: No we may go back some time. (Another reply) No, we'll never go back!
INTERVIEWER: Why will you never go back?
SPEAKER: Because of the high crime rate. One day I was on my way to the morning market to buy some tomatoes when I was robbed of R5,00. I then told my employer that my money had been taken and that I was without food but he did not help me.
INTERVIEWER: But you old men seem to contradict yourselves. You advise your children against going to the city but you also don't want them to work with you here. Then what do you want them to do?
SPEAKER: Our children are not all the same. My younger brother for example is a policeman in Pretoria and he has no problems. He gets plenty of money and has bought a car.
INTERVIEWER: So your brother is happy because he has a good job and sufficient money.
SPEAKER: Yes.
INTERVIEWER: If you had to work with him in Pretoria would you still be able to care for your family here?
SPEAKER. No, if I had to leave, there would be no one here to care for my family.
INTERVIEWER: So you will not go to the city for that reason.
SPEAKER: Yes, because we cannot take our whole family along either.
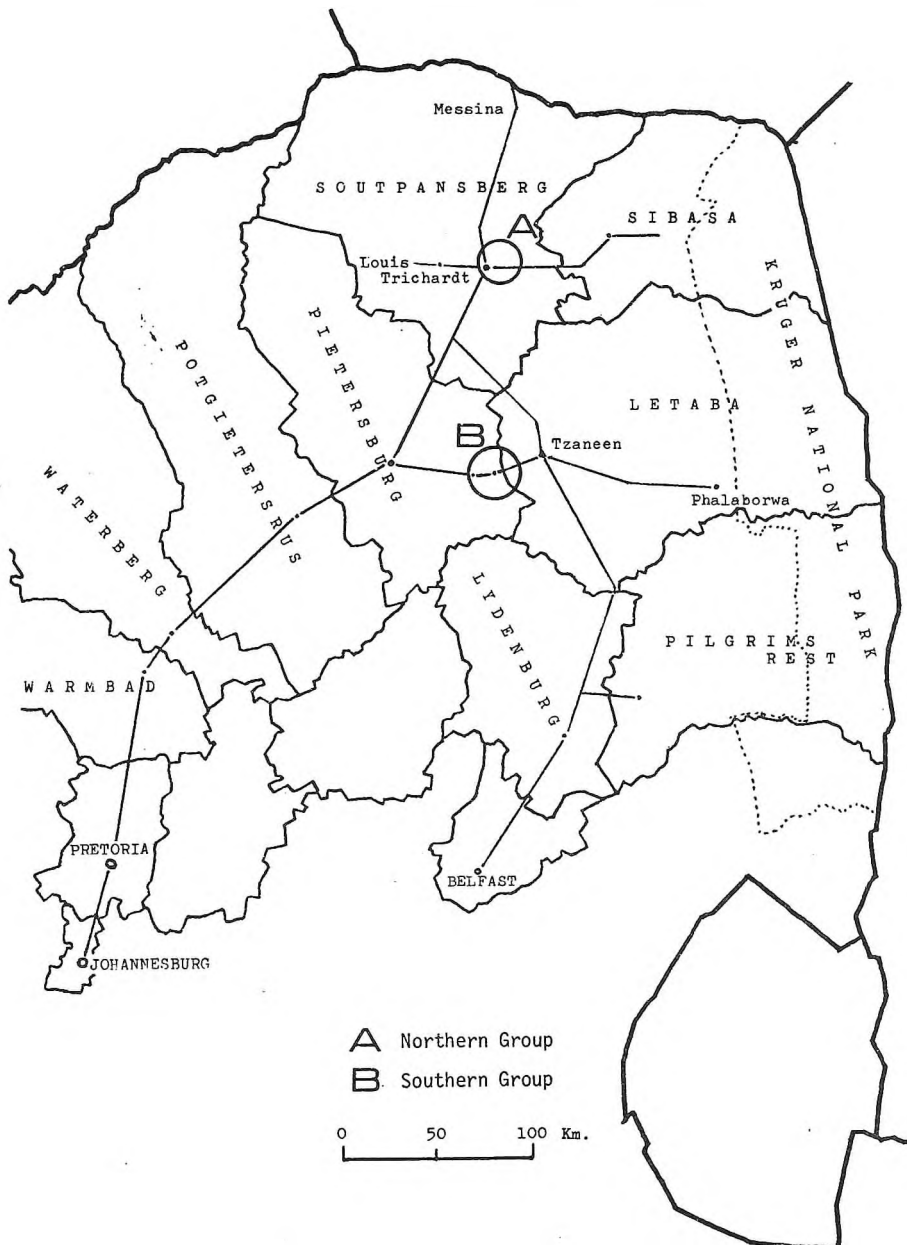
A P P E N D I X   B.

MAP I

MAGISTERIAL DISTRICTS OF THE NORTHERN TRANSVAAL, *circa* 1950

A Northern Group

B Southern Group

0   50   100 Km.

TABLE 16.

TOTAL POPULATIONS OF PRINCIPAL TOWNS AND
VILLAGES OF THE NORTH-EASTERN TRANSVAAL, 1970*

Region of Northern Group:

Messina	11 914
Louis Trichardt	8 816
Sibasa (Makwarela)	659

Region of Southern Group:

Pietersburg	20 000
Phalaborwa	7 543
Tzaneen	4 727
Duiwelskloof	1 412
Haenertsburg	268

* Source: Population Census, 1970, Department of Statistics, Pretoria.

MAP II

BANTU HOMELAND AREAS OF THE NORTHERN TRANSVAAL, 1972

o *Pretoria*

o *Johannesburg*

⋮⋮⋮⋮   LEBOWA
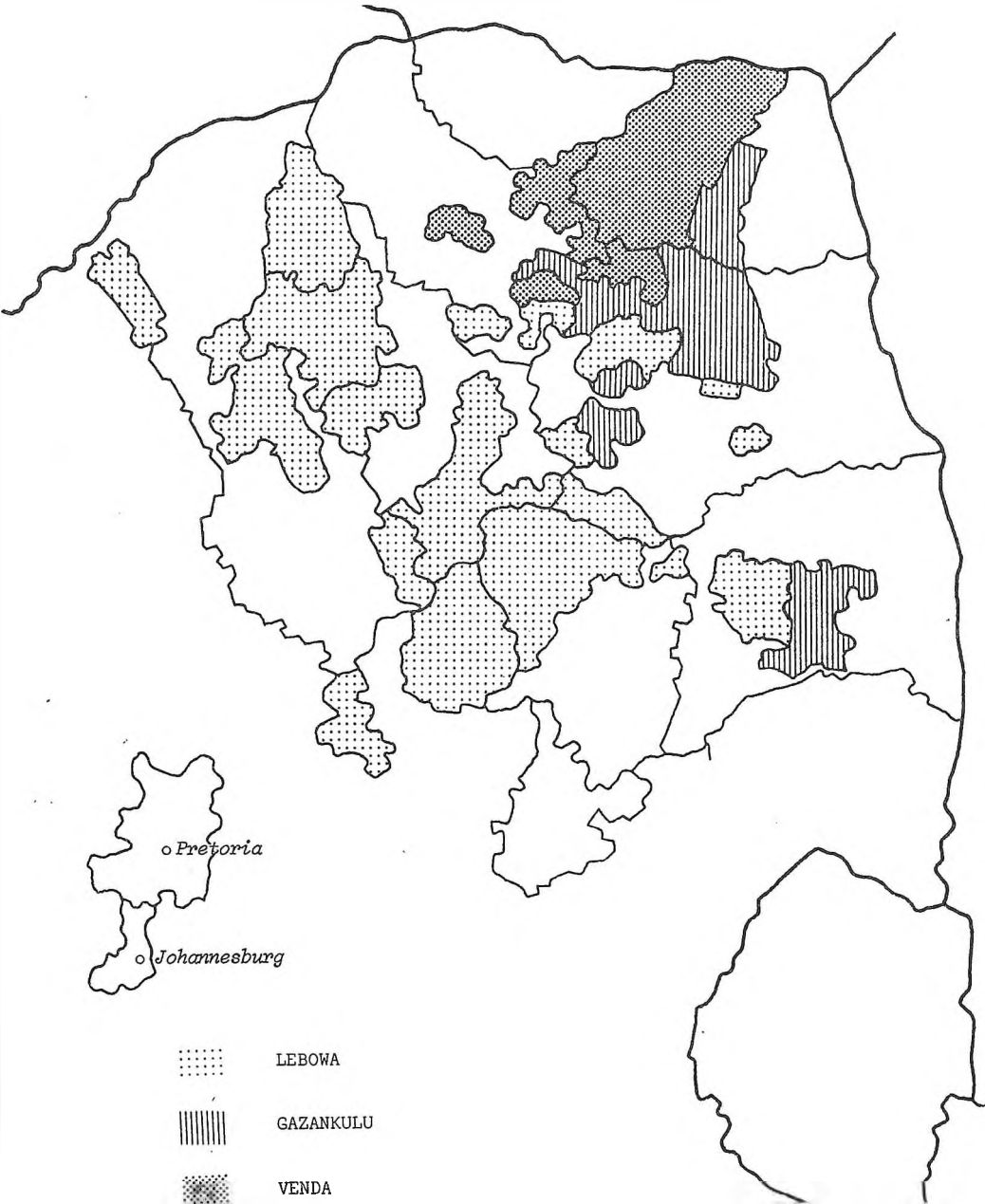
|||||||| GAZANKULU

▓▓▓   VENDA

MAP III

R.S.A. MAGISTERIAL DISTRICTS AND BANTU HOMELAND MAGISTERIAL DISTRICTS OF THE NORTHERN TRANSVAAL, 1972

L	LEBOWA
G	GAZANKULU
V	VENDA

Refer also to Table
of population densities

TABLE 17.

BLACK POPULATION DENSITIES OF R.S.A. MAGISTERIAL DISTRICTS OF THE NORTHERN TRANSVAAL, 1970**

MAP SYMBOL	DISTRICT	(WHITES)	BLACKS	APPROX. km²	POPULATION/ km²
M	Messina	(3 699)	18 873	5 076	3,72
S	Soutpansberg	(7 445)	59 478	8 173*	7,28
P	Pietersburg	(20 713)	48 565	4 964	9,78
LE	Letaba	(17 497)	66 261	5 571*	11,89
LY	Lydenburg	(5 956)	39 161	5 728	6,84
PR	Pilgrim's Rest	(5 856)	58 415	6 542*	8,93
	AVERAGE		290 753	36 054	8,06

NOTE: Map-symbols indicated in this and subsequent tables of population-densities refer to the areas demarcated in Map III.

** Based on Population Census, 1970, Department of Statistics, Pretoria.

* Excluding unpopulated area occupied by Kruger National Park.

TABLE 18.

BLACK POPULATION DENSITIES OF LEBOWA HOMELAND DISTRICTS, 1970*

MAP SYMBOL	DISTRICT	(WHITES)	BLACKS	APPROX. km^2	POPULATION/ km^2
L1	Bochum	(41)	46 109	2 230	20,70
L2	Bolobedu	(4)	80 176	1 022	78,45
L3	Konekwena	(61)	132 533	2 908	45,58
L4	Mapulaneng	(373)	61 839	1 524	40,58
L5	Mogodomo	(221)	125 118	2 916	42,98
L6	Mokerong	(292)	166 223	5 239	31,78
L7	Moutse	(137)	66 552	986	67,50
L8	Maphuno	(63)	48 664	1 188	40,96
L9	Nebo	(213)	130 866	2 694	48,58
L10	Phalaborwa	(31)	20 038	372	53,87
L11	Sekgosese	(17)	45 737	762	60,02
L12	Sekhukhuneland	(1 230)	160 557	3 418	46,97
	LEBOWA AVERAGE:		1 084 412	25 259	42,93

* Based on Department of Statistics, *op.cit.*

TABLE 19.

BLACK POPULATION DENSITIES OF GAZANKULU HOMELAND DISTRICTS, 1970*

MAP SYMBOL	DISTRICT	(WHITES)	BLACKS	APPROX. km^2	POPULATION/ km^2
G1	Giyani	(210)	91 960	3 831	24,00
G2	Malamulele	(-)	62 352	1 246	50,04
G3	Mhala	(97)	63 455	1 654	38,36
G4	Ritavi	(91)	49 649	917	54,14
	GAZANKULU AVERAGE:		2 67 416	7 648	35,02

TABLE 20.

BLACK POPULATION DENSITIES OF VENDA HOMELAND DISTRICTS, 1970*

MAP SYMBOL	DISTRICT	(WHITES)	BLACKS	APPROX. km^2	POPULATION/ km^2
V1	Sibasa	(501)	142 065	5 160	27,53
V2	Vuwani	(101)	65 717	1 023	64,24
V3	Hamakhado	(5)	56 740	1 710	33,18
	VENDA AVERAGE:		264 522	7 893	33,51

* Based on Department of Statistics, *op.cit.*

TABLE 21.

GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION OF BANTU HOMELAND NATIONALS, 1970*

	IN "OWN HOMELAND"	IN "R.S.A. REGIONS"	IN OTHER HOMELANDS
"Lebowa nationals"	48,2%	44,2%	7,6%
"Gazankulu nationals"	31,7%	46,6%	21,7%
"Venda nationals"	66,8%	29,7%	3,5%

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* Based on Department of Statistics, *op.cit.*