

**LABOUR CONTROL:
MANAGERIAL STRATEGIES
IN THE NAMIBIAN MINING SECTOR
1970 - 1985.**

ALASTAIR MACFARLANE

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ABSTRACT

LABOUR CONTROL: MANAGERIAL STRATEGIES IN THE NAMIBIAN MINING SECTOR, 1970-1985.

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This thesis seeks to establish and explain the nature of managerial strategies of labour control adopted in a major Namibian mine between 1970 and 1985, a period of significant political, economic and social change. The study makes two particular contributions; firstly to labour process theory; and secondly, to the development of a Namibian historiography which, as a result of colonial control, is just beginning to emerge.

The theoretical direction of the study is informed by contemporary discussion within the labour process debate, a major aspect of which concerns managerial strategies of labour control. Theoretical development in this area has been based almost exclusively on research generated within developed, western nations. The detailed case study material presented in this study facilitates the assessment of the theory outside this context.

Whilst generally supporting the contemporary position of the theory, the study concludes that some modifications are required. Most notably, the influence of the state on managerial strategies of labour control has been underestimated in previous studies.

The research is based on interpretative empirical work undertaken in Namibia between 1983 and 1985.

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INTRODUCTION

In 1985 Namibia remained Africa's last colony with South Africa continuing to govern the territory. Despite international condemnation and United Nations resolutions calling for independence, the colonial administration imposed the South African model of apartheid up to the late 1970s when internal and international pressure forced a change of strategy. However, rather than concede independence and black majority government the administration imposed an internal political solution in an effort to satisfy both the international community and their own strategic and economic needs.

The solution retained the essence of the apartheid structures, with the continuation of separate ethnic government and ultimate authority remaining with South Africa, but allowed a 'liberalisation' of racial divisions through the repeal of most of the 'petty' apartheid legislation.

Whilst such changes were politically unacceptable to the Namibian majority and the international community, they heralded South African acceptance for the first time that

change had to take place. In retrospect they can also be seen as the beginning of a slow process of South African movement towards acceptance of the independence process under UN auspices.

Despite political inadequacy, the internal solution brought with it some significant changes within the political economy and social structure which had a major impact on corporate management of labour inside the country. Not only were the coercive state policies of labour control no longer available for use by the employer but the repeal of the 'petty' apartheid legislation removed legal constraints on employment and opened up opportunities for the employment of blacks.

This period of significant political, economic and social change provides the context within which this study sets out to establish and explain managerial strategies of labour control. For this purpose the period of the study was defined between 1970 and 1985 and the mining industry, the most important sector in the Namibian economy, was selected as the focus for the research. One mine, Rossing Uranium Limited (RUL), was selected for extensive empirical attention.

The direction of the study was informed by the emerging theoretical discussion generated within the labour process debate, one major aspect of which was managerial strategies of labour control. Within the debate theoretical development had been based predominantly on knowledge generated from empirical studies of corporate activity within developed, western nations. This study aimed to apply this theory in a context outside the western world where political, economic and social structures were both very different and rapidly changing.

Hence, the study aims to make two particular contributions. Firstly, to the contemporary debate within the labour process; and secondly, to the development of Namibian historiography which, as a result of colonial control, is only just beginning to develop.

The thesis is separated into three major sections. Section A provides a range of background material necessary to an understanding of the context and development of the study. Chapter 1 develops the theoretical framework from which the research drew its direction whilst Chapter 2 considers the development of the study and includes a discussion of the strategic approach adopted and the process and methods used, as well as the particular difficulties confronted.

The following three chapters of Section A provide essential historical and background material. Chapter 3 develops an outline of the political history of the country; Chapter 4 discusses economic structure and the position and importance of the mining sector within the economy; and Chapter 5 discusses structures of labour control in the early period as well as labour organisation and resistance.

Section B contains the empirical material relating to the Rossing mine in four major chapters. The first three chapters follow the chronological development of the mine, mapping managerial strategies of labour control and providing explanations for their development. The final chapter considers the position of women in these developments. This is dealt with separately to draw attention to the particular way in which women were both excluded from and used in employment, and the discrimination to which they were subjected, as well as the way in which they were used in the construction of a new social order at the mine. Supporting material to this chapter is found in Appendix 1 which provides a discussion of the history, performance and production process of the Rossing mine.

Section C contains two chapters which draw together the empirical material and the theoretical arguments. Chapter 10 considers the major factors which explain the adoption of the particular strategies of labour control at the Rossing mine while the final chapter concludes the study relating the empirical findings to the theoretical arguments detailed in Chapter 1.

SECTION A

CHAPTER 1

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The initial approach to this study was informed by the developments taking place within the labour process debate in the early 1980s. The debate was inspired by the publication in 1974 of Braverman's 'Labor and Monopoly Capitalism' which sought to retrieve and update Marx's critiques of the capitalist labour process and encouraged studies of the workplace to be located in the context of the political economy of class relations.

In restating many of the essential features of Marx's theory Braverman chose to emphasise three main elements under monopoly capitalism. Firstly, the need for capital to transform purchased labour power into labour for profitable production. Secondly, that within the new and distinct social relations of production management emerged as the most effective means of imposing employers' will. Thirdly, that a division of labour based on systematic

subdivision of work is generalised only within capitalism.
(Thompson, 1989)

Littler (1982) has argued that Braverman's main contribution was to 'smash through the academic barriers and offer the potential for the birth of a new, integrated approach to the study and history of work'. In this respect, by 1983, Salaman was able to claim that labour process theory had begun to 'radically restructure the individual and collective agenda of Industrial Sociology'.
(Thompson, 1989)

The intervening years have seen numerous empirical and historical studies undertaken to test the central and related themes of Braverman's thesis. These in turn have led to a series of critical reviews which have questioned both the validity and purpose of labour process theory. Today, as Thompson (1990) argues, 'It is now common ground that such theory is in crisis'. Harsher critics claim it has outlived its usefulness, Storey (1985) for example, comments that 'the catalogue of ammendments and criticisms' render it 'holed and patched beyond repair'. Whether the latter is indeed the case remains a question of continuing debate. (see Littler, Thompson, Edwards and Wardell, all 1990)

However, as Morgan and Hooper (1987) argue

Whether it is dead, alive or merely resting hardly seems a serious question for sociological enquiry. What is more important is whether, through the debates which have occurred since Braverman's original contribution, a more adequate understanding of the determinants of the labour process have developed.

On the latter issue there is at least some consensus. Labour process theory has served to reinvigorate industrial sociology and has generated a body of empirical and theoretical knowledge on a variety of inter-related issues the value of which is generally accepted even by its critics.

Littler (1990) argues that the debate now consists of three core areas which although overlapping represent the major currents in the debate:

- 1) Deskilling and the attempt to construct a satisfactory model of skill changes.
- 2) The attempt to construct a satisfactory model of capitalist labour markets.
- 3) Questions concerning managerial strategy and control.

It is the last of these areas that has been of particular importance to this study. The following discussion considers the early ideas, the criticisms they have attracted and the modifications and additions the theory

has undergone in this area. There are six major areas of debate regarding managerial strategy and control.

1. Braverman (1974) contends that 'the essential function of management in industrial capitalism (is) control over the labour process' for the purpose of extracting surplus labour from workers since this is the source of profit. To achieve this Taylorist forms of work organisation are adopted which facilitate the separation of the conception from the execution of tasks where conception is concentrated within management. Taylorism is identified as the exclusive form of control able to 'render conscious and systematic the formerly unconscious tendency of capitalist production'.

A major area of criticism of Braverman emanates from his identification of Taylorism as the exclusive means of achieving managerial control. As Friedman (1977) has argued, Braverman

must be criticised for confusing one particular strategy for exercising managerial authority in the capitalist labour process with managerial authority itself.

Friedman (1977 and 1990) argues that control cannot be reduced to a single unilinear approach and proposes the parallel control possibility of 'responsible autonomy' in

addition to the essentially Taylorist 'direct control', a choice which is conceptualised in terms of strategic managerial choice. Whilst parallels may be drawn here between Friedman's simple concept and those of other writers such as McGregor's (1960) 'theory X' and 'theory Y' and Fox's (1974) 'low discretion syndrome' and 'high discretion syndrome', Friedman does advance the quality of the debate by discussing the contradictions within each strategy and the difficulty of changing strategy over short periods of time.

In contrast R Edwards (1979) identifies three forms of control- simple, technical and bureaucratic - adopted during historically distinct periods and with a tendency for management to increasingly favour the latter. Similarly, other theorists such as Burawoy (1979) have argued that there has been a general shift over recent years away from direct, coercive control towards more consensual patterns. Although expanding the range of possibilities of control these writers have nevertheless conformed to Braverman's linear conception and have consequently fallen victim to the criticism of Marxist functionalism in which one strategy or another serves the management need for control during any particular period. (Littler and Salaman, 1982)

Instead, there is an increasing acceptance of the need to consider other 'contingencies' in the development of management strategies towards labour control. (Knights and Willmott, 1990) In this respect Thompson (1990) claims there is 'a large degree of common ground, if not consensus', amongst participants in the debate there being

acknowledgement of the crucial mediating role played by markets, whether for products or labour; of the effects and significance of various forms of *worker resistance*; the need to take economic and historical contexts more seriously and more specifically than the rather broad sweep of 'monopoly capitalism'; and the significance of *gender* in shaping all major aspects of the labour process.

Thus, replacing the reduction of the dynamics of management control to one or two strategies is an acceptance of the coexistence of differing dimensions, mechanisms and levels of control that mediate particular capital-labour relations.

2. The second area concerns the degree to which control of the labour process is central to the development of managerial strategies. Certainly for Braverman control of labour was the key imperative for employers, however, such a notion has attracted considerable criticism. Wood and Kelly (1982), for example, contend that the

tendency to inflate control to the point at which it becomes the central problem of capitalist management is at variance with most analyses of capitalism..... which emphasise the pursuit of profit as the directing aim of capitalist management.

Indeed, as Thompson (1989) points out

a basic confusion is made between the *goals* of firms and managers, and the *means* of achieving them. Control is seldom relevant to the former, but essential to the latter.

Littler (1983) also acknowledges this arguing that 'capitalists are not, after all, despite the insistence of some writers, interested in control *per se*.'

Further, writers such as Littler and Salaman (1982), Kelly (1985) and Hooper and Morgan (1987) argue that there are sources of income to the industrial enterprise other than the production process. These may include 'currency speculation, cumulative acquisitions and asset stripping, commodity speculation and credit manipulations of various kinds'. (Littler, 1990) To this list Knights and Willmott (1990) add monopoly pricing, sales and marketing efforts and relocation of production to cheap labour markets.

Then of what significance is the management of the labour process to the achievement of corporate goals? Littler accepts that generally labour issues tend to be downstream

factors in corporate planning but argues that this 'will and does vary'. Similarly, Marchington and Parker (1990) accept the possibility of the elevation of labour control to central importance at certain times, sympathetically quoting Wood and Kelly (1982) who argue that such occasions can only be 'determined empirically'. Accepting Wood and Kelly's position Littler (1990) suggests a variety of factors that may promote or diminish labour centrality and argues for the important implication that 'any history of capitalist work organisation cannot be based solely on an analysis of the labour process'.

3. The third criticism is concerned with the degree of managerial rationality in the development of strategy. Many organisational case studies of British firms have shown that management are less concerned with longterm planning than they are with coping with daily crises. (Littler, 1990) For example Nichols' (1987) review of the British Institute of Management survey of manufacturing operations in the UK between 1975 and 1985 showed that few managements had identified a clear corporate strategy, set up careful monitoring procedures and carried them down to operating levels.

Nevertheless, Marchington and Parker (1990) argue that much of the labour process literature, and indeed contributions from other traditions, makes the implicit

assumption of an unrealistic degree of managerial rationality and power. In this they claim the support of a number of writers. For example, Wood (1982), in criticising not just Braverman but also R Edwards and Friedman, argues that

they still present management as omniscient, conspiratorial, and able, at least for a period of time, to get its own way - that is, to solve its problem of control.

Similarly, Storey (1985) argues that

both management scientists and Bravermanites alike have tended to attribute an exaggerated degree of rationality to management action. In reality much of it is misguided, self-interested, half-hearted, short-term and inchoate.

Marchington and Parker (1990) argue that the problem is to some extent one of definition. In an attempt to clarify this they propose four main criteria; *intention*, *proactivity* rather than reactivity, *long-term* rather than short-term concern and an *integrative* view as key dimensions. In addition, rejecting the notion that strategic decisions are the sole prerogative of corporate headquarters, they argue that the *subject matter* will vary depending on the level at which decisions are made and who is involved.

Support for some elements of this definition come from Friedman (1990) who comments

Of course there are a huge number of decisions which managers take concerning work organisation and workers. Nevertheless some decisions are more fundamental than others - first because they have more long-term consequences in that they are harder to change and involve heavy cost-commitments, and second, because they have a wide or general effect on many different activities which managers influence.

In other ways, however, Marchington and Parker's definition appears overly reliant on the views of management scientists such as Chandler (1962), implying a degree of foresight and structure unacceptable to other writers. Friedman (1990), for example, comments that 'Strategies are about intentions and these may not be coherent, conscious or successful'. Both Thompson (1989) and Littler (1990) concur with this view, Littler concluding that strategy refers to the *modus operandi* of managing labour in which

Choices have to be made within a set of constraints and if these choices fall within a certain pattern, we are entitled to talk about 'managerial strategy'.

As Thompson (1990) concludes,

A range of opinion (Child, 1985; Friedman, 1987; Edwards 1990) asserts that the critics have set the criteria so stringently that the burden of proof is impossible to meet.

4. Closely related to the above discussion, the fourth criticism relates to the relationship between management strategy, implementation and outcome. Early theorists are criticised for assuming that strategies, once formulated would be unproblematically converted into practice. This is clearly not the case as Littler (1990) bluntly argues

The question of the gap between intended strategy and realised outcome is relatively straightforward. To follow a strategy does not imply success. Equally clearly, a researcher cannot infer the successful implementation of a managerial strategy from a simple statement of policy.

Child (1985) makes the additional point that a strategic intention cannot be inferred from particular work conditions at the point of production. Firstly, because strategies that are unspecific towards the labour process, but directed towards outcomes such as product quality, new markets or financial control systems, will still have consequences for it. Secondly, because the process of translation of strategic intention into practice is influenced at a variety of levels by human action; both of management and workers individually and/or struggles between the two.

Marchington and Parker (1990) suggest three sets of ways in which managers may resist or modify the implementation of strategy; opposition within management due to

functional or hierarchical conflict; partial or imprecise implementation as a means of creating some discretion in their relations with subordinates; and 'by acts of omission rather than commission' where practices develop without managerial intent.

Similarly, workers act to constrain the implementation of managerial strategy and, like managers, do not always behave in a fully conscious or rational manner. Thompson and McHughes (1990) argue that 'observation reveals a clear pattern of operation of occupational and job controls, strategies of closure aimed at excluding competitors, often women'. In addition, Braverman (1974) has been widely criticised for ignoring the importance of worker resistance in modifying or rejecting management strategies. (see for example Thompson 1983; Thompson and McHughes, 1990; and Wood and Kelly, 1982)

A variety of forms of conflict and resistance emanate from the exploitative nature of the relationship between capital and labour. Whilst strikes are the most manifest form of resistance to management action they are less frequently used than the media would have us believe. (Hyman, 1977) Other forms of resistance include sabotage and working to rule or 'without common sense'. (Marchington and Parker, 1990) These represent overt and collective expressions, however, resistance may also be

expressed covertly and individually, for example, in labour turnover, absenteeism and sickness as well as sabotage.

5. Worker resistance based on working to rule raises a further criticism of early labour process theory over which Thompson (1989) argues 'A great deal of consensus has developed among more recent writers'. This is the extent to which employers remain dependant on and workers are prepared to commit their cooperation in the production process.

The imprecision in the labour contract, which is illustrated through the ability of workers to disrupt production whilst at the same time working to rule, illustrates what Cressey and MacInnes (1980) have referred to as the 'two-fold nature' of the capital-labour relation.

Developing this argument Thompson (1990) contends that capitalism cannot rely wholly on control or coercion. As a result 'at some level workers' cooperation, creativity and productive powers, and consent must be engaged and mobilised'. Hence, 'Cooperation and the generation of consent are systematically built into the capitalist labour process'.

However, while the importance of consent in the labour process is now generally accepted, there is still a lack of clarity of the concept and understanding of its relative importance. Thompson (1989), for example, proposes the need for

the theoretical development of an analysis which can distinguish between structures of control and consent, and therefore provide a framework for understanding what determines the boundaries between them.

Related to this is the question of why workers are prepared to actively cooperate in the labour process and hence contribute to their own exploitation. Cressey and MacInnes (1980) argue that whilst workers may resist their own subordination, they are at the same time tied to their employment. Similarly, Littler and Salaman (1984) argue that

while having opposed interests, workers and employers have shared interests: in the success of their products, in competitive advantage, ultimately in the success of 'their' firm.

There are three different approaches to the explanation; the first claims that consent is generated from within the labour process; the second argues that its existence is, in addition, dependent upon factors external to the labour process; and the third argues that external factors alone

are responsible, not only for consent, but for all social relations within production.

Burawoy (1979) subscribes to the first contention arguing strongly for an interpretation of consent which locates it firmly in the workplace.

Consent is produced and reproduced on the shopfloor and is not dependent on legitimacy drummed into people's heads in schools or on character formation in the family. Even in the marginal situations where imported consciousness does shape behaviour, its specific impact is determined by the worker's specific position in the production process.

Thompson (1989), representing the second and more widely accepted view, accepts that whilst 'consent must be reproduced within the labour process', Burawoy's view is 'clearly wrong' sympathetically quoting the Brighton Labour Process Group (1977) who argue

But this does not mean that the relation can be generated and sustained wholly within the workplace: rather it is reproduced within the social formation as a whole.

Indeed, for some years sociologists have claimed that factors external to the workplace can have a strong influence. (see for example Goldthorpe and Lockwood et al, 1968; Willis, 1977; Pollert, 1981)

Thus, the attitudes, values and beliefs workers bring with them into the workplace are important factors in understanding their behaviour at work. Nowhere is this more clearly illustrated than in some of the more recent feminist studies. (see for example Pollert, 1981; Cavendish, 1982; Cockburn, 1983; Bradley 1989; West, 1982 and 1990)

Thompson and Bannon (1985) sum up this view.

Workers are compelled into acts of resistance while actively participating in the workings of the capitalist labour process. Conflict and cooperation are not entirely different phenomena, one inherent in capitalist production, the other externally induced false consciousness. They are produced, in part by the same process. The result is a continuum of possible and overlapping worker responses, from resistance to accommodation on temporary common objectives, to compliance with the greater power of capital, and consent to production practices.

Nevertheless, recent writers such as Littler (1990) and Thompson (1989 and 1990) have argued that there has so far been an inadequate development of analysis in this area. Littler (1990), for example, claims 'there is a lack of vocabulary for concepts for discussing ideological relationships', whilst Thompson (1989) argues for a

more sophisticated means of understanding the way values and practices are internalised *beneath* the surface consciousness of workers.

6. The third approach to the explanation of consent, that factors external to the workplace are responsible for all social relations within production, takes the discussion into a related but distinct area of debate. This has been concisely summarised by Hyman (1987)

How far is the control of the labour process and its environing conditions to be understood as a *process* of continually evolving management design; as the outcome of the established *structure* of social relations within production; or as the consequence of a complex of institutions and determinations at the societal level? How far, indeed, are these alternative rather than complementary explanations?

Clearly such a discussion poses the question of the boundaries of labour process theory and its relation to more general social theories, a question as yet unsettled. (see for example Thompson 1989 and 1990; Littler, 1990; Edwards, 1990; and Wardell, 1990)

However, as Littler (1990) explains,

Part of the point here is that the nature of wage labour and the control relationship is not set by any management strategy, however conscious or sophisticated, but by action at the level of the state.

A number of writers within the labour process tradition have drawn attention to the role of the state in structuring the labour process. (see for example Littler, 1982; Littler and Salaman, 1982 and 1984; Burawoy, 1979)

Outside the labour process debate the importance of the state has been accepted for some years, not least in Southern Africa. (see for example Cohen et al, 1979; Sandbrook and Cohen, 1975; Van Onselen, 1976; Wolpe, 1972)

However, like other influences, the precise impact of the state can only be established empirically in relation to a particular labour process. In the context of this study the state's impact is of crucial importance in understanding strategies of managerial control.

In summarising the contemporary position of the debate on managerial strategies of labour control it is valuable to quote at length from Thompson and McHughs' (1990) recent publication in which they comment

a degree of common ground emerges. Product and labour markets, worker resistance and a range of other external and internal factors are recognised as mediating control strategies and shaping power relations in the frontier of control between capital and labour. The variations in strategy that result are not random but reflect the fundamental tension we have talked of between management's need to control and discipline whilst engaging workers' commitment and co-operation. Strategies therefore contain inherent contradictions. (Storey, 1985; Hyman, 1987) These are enhanced by the difficulty of harmonising the different managerial functions, sites of intervention and decision-making, that include technology, social organisation of labour and relations with the representative bodies of employees. Hyman notes that 'there is no "one best way" of managing these contradictions, only different routes to partial failure'. (1987:30) Management of large organisations are therefore likely to try combinations of control strategies and practices appropriate to particular environments or sections of the workforce.

The labour process debate has provided a valuable contribution to the understanding of strategies of managerial control at the workplace and the context within which these develop. However, labour process theorists have not been alone in their interest in managerial behaviour and recently writers from within the industrial relations tradition have made contributions in the area. It is worth reviewing the point at which these debates have arrived.

Fox (1966), the best known of the early writers, was the first to draw attention to the importance of managerial ideology in explaining behaviour in industrial relations outlining two, now well known and contrasting managerial frames of reference; unitary and pluralist. Later expanding his proposals Fox (1974) developed six different patterns of management-employee relations which resulted from a combination of unitarism and pluralism held by the different parties. More recently his work has provided the basis for the development of ideas concerning management styles much of which has been developed by John Purcell and his colleagues.

Purcell and Sissons (1983) adapted Fox's categories to create five ideal-typical styles of industrial relations management. In seeking explanations for the different

styles adopted by management in a number of large corporations they suggest a variety of factors are of importance. The nature of the business, the technology, the presence of key personalities at a critical stage in the company's development and the product market were isolated as significant factors in 'forcing change on management'.

However, despite isolating these factors Purcell and Sissons (1983) conclude

The ebbs and flows in approaches to the management of industrial relations discussed in this section indicate that the search for definite statements is a hazardous exercise.

Nevertheless, Purcell (1987) returned to the question of ideal-type management styles refining his approach by replacing Fox's dimensions of unitarism and pluralism with the categories of individualism and collectivism. Individualism being the extent to which employees are treated as a resource whilst collectivism is defined as 'the recognition by management of the collective interests of groups of employees in the decision-making process'. Unlike the first model, both dimensions can develop at the same time, consequently the typology is represented as a graph.

However, despite the refinements, as Marchington and Parker (1990) conclude

it is rather less certain (however) that there have been any conceptual changes to the model between the two articles.

In the same article Purcell attempts to develop a more precise definition of 'style' proposing that its study 'is not an analysis of outcomes but of originating philosophies and policies which influence action'. He excludes 'Pragmatic, reactive responses to labour problems' from his definition and argues that it is ubiquitous and continuous and

implies the existence of a distinctive set of guiding principles, written or otherwise, which set parameters to and signposts for management action in the way employees are treated and particular events handled. Management style is therefore akin to business policy and its strategic derivatives.

Purcell concludes that

It is worth remembering that the aim is not a comprehensive theory of management's dealings with employees but rather an attempt to explain why some companies often appear to have a distinctive approach to the way they manage employees even after the influence of markets, technology and other environmental factors are taken into account. Once we recognise that modern companies are capable of making strategic business choices we must allow for preferences to exist in the way employees are managed, albeit in constrained circumstances, but we cannot assume that all companies have a management style.

Such a conception is difficult to tie down in practical terms. In particular it is difficult to understand how management style can exist independently of markets, technology and other environmental factors. Indeed, in their earlier article Purcell and Sissons argue that such factors are important in explaining differences in style.

In addition, as Marchington and Parker (1990) comment, Purcell's definition 'seems unduly restrictive since it excludes the opportunistic style; it is also confusing in that it tends to conflate strategy with culture and style'.

Furthermore, as argued earlier, typologies of the sort developed by Purcell are constraining. As Hyman (1987) argues, the diversity of management action is likely to be far greater than such typologies recognise.

Such theories have tended to be drawn from large quantitative studies. However, as Marchington and Parker (1990) conclude in their recent assessment of change in labour relations in Britain in the 1980s

despite the trend towards quantitative surveys, there is no substitute for detailed, qualitative investigations of shopfloor practice.

Whilst the discussion of management style is useful in drawing attention to a subjectivity in the choice of strategy in the management of labour, the criticisms directed at it are reminiscent of those attracted by the early writers in the labour process tradition. The conclusion is also the same; the form, content and historical development in the labour process must be established empirically.

CHAPTER 2

RESEARCH STRATEGY, PROCESS AND METHODS

1. Research Strategy

The research presented a number of problems in terms of strategy and approach. In particular the distance from Namibia and the very sensitive political situation inside the country made it impossible at the outset to assess the possibility of entering the country to carry out research or indeed gaining access to the mining companies, considered crucial to the success of the project. Hence, it was not possible at the outset to plan a clear research strategy.

As a consequence a 'snowball' approach was adopted in which strategic decisions were made as each research possibility and constraint was clarified. This required a high degree of flexibility to be built into the strategy. However, in such circumstances the approach was both practical and realistic. Further, it reflected the reality of the growth of sociological knowledge. Edward

Shils, for example, writing in 1957 on the basis of his own research experience, argued

The earlier view of the steady progress from particular facts to general theories has now been replaced by the more sophisticated image of a hypothesis, derived from a general theory, being tested by a systematic scrutiny of particular facts: then the theory is either disconfirmed by the facts and is replaced by one more adequate to them or the hypothesis and corresponding theory are confirmed and the problem is settled. There are variations and complications of this latter schema but in all essentials this account is correct. It sees the relationship as an orderly process of truth. But in reality nothing could be less truthful than this picture of scientific growth.

The growth of knowledge is a disorderly movement. It is full of instances of things known and things overlooked, unexpected emergencies, and discoveries of long-known facts and hypotheses which in the time of their original discovery had no fitting articulation and which found articulation only after a considerable time.

Burgess (1984) also argues that a central feature of the researchers' work involves 'monitoring the research process and the research design' which 'will be continually modified and developed by the researcher throughout the project'.

A further factor preventing the development of a clear strategy at the outset was that the theoretical framework for the study was drawn from a rapidly developing contemporary debate which had advanced significantly by the end of the research period. (see Chapter 1)

Nevertheless, the dynamic process outlined above is also true for the relationship between facts, concepts, theories and problems as Bulmer (1984) argues, quoting Blumer (1954) to illustrate his point

Theory, inquiry and empirical fact are interwoven in a texture of operation with theory guiding inquiry, inquiry seeking and isolating facts, and facts effecting theory. The fruitfulness of their interplay is the means by which an empirical science develops.

The dynamic interplay in the research process illustrated in the commentaries of these writers graphically describes the reality of this research. As the project proceeded so the research problem became refined and redefined, the theory developed increasing clarity, the research strategy unfolded and the choice of research methods became clear.

However, as Burgess (1982) notes, in addition to influencing the research strategy, the problem chosen for the focus of research also has an influence on the appropriate choice of research methods. Hence, the definition of the problem to focus on one major Namibian mine rendered a case study approach using interpretative methods most appropriate.

The research problem required methods of data collection which offered a means of understanding and explaining

social action at the mine. This required access to sensitive and intangible issues such as power, status, behaviour, attitudes, and motivation as well as interaction, language and quality of communication. Interpretative methods offered a means of access to such important areas facilitating the captivation of a richness, colour and depth of data which conveys graphic detail in the actors' accounts of social structure and process around the workplace. Such data would have been impossible to collect using quantitative methods and was essential in the explanation of the theoretical issues discussed in Chapter 1.

Further, the definition of the research problem over the period 1970 to 1985 required the use of historical data collection. Much of this material, for the same reasons as stated above, was gained using qualitative methods, although a substantial amount of documentation was also collected. This material was essential to an understanding of the contemporary position of the mine. As Pitt (1972) argues,

the field researcher is in danger of misrepresenting the present if historical sources are ignored.

Such an argument is particularly pertinent in the context of Namibia whose relatively short but turbulent colonial history cannot be ignored in an explanatory account of any social phenomenon. (see Chapter 3)

Interpretative methods are not, of course, without their problems as a means of data collection. Such problems have been discussed at length elsewhere (see for example Bechhofer, 1967 and 1973) and it is not necessary to reiterate such well trodden ground here. However, it is worth clarifying one issue of particular practical relevance, that of the selection of sources of data which are relevant for the study and those which are not.

It is useful to make the distinction here between idiographic and nomothetic models of explanation for human behaviour. The former refers to 'explanation through the enumeration of the very many, perhaps unique, considerations that lie behind a given action'. (Babbie, 1983) By contrast the nomothetic model, adopted in this research,

does not involve an exhaustive enumeration of all the considerations that result in a *particular* action or event. Rather it consciously seeks to discover those considerations which are most important in explaining general classes of action or event.

Hence, on the basis of the research problem, theoretical understanding and empirical consciousness, informed choices are made. Whilst the process is difficult to manage in practice since it is not always clear what the 'right' choice is, such ambiguity can also be an advantage. Firstly, in that factors which may have been rejected initially as irrelevant may later be found to be of significance; secondly, that the researcher becomes sensitive to the context within which the phenomena exist, facilitating a richer and more meaningful explanation.

Accepting both the strengths and limitations of all methods of social research a strategy was adopted which utilised a combination of methods, a widely adopted approach known as triangulation, whose basic feature is the combination of two or more research methods. Bulmer (1984) explains the benefits of such an approach.

When a hypothesis can survive the confrontation of a series of complementary methods of testing, it contains a degree of validity unattainable by a hypothesis tested with the more constricted framework of a single method.

The methods utilised in this research and in the context of the case study approach, were participant observation, in-depth and semi-structured interviews, oral life histories and the collection of documentation.

2. Research Process and Methods

An initial literature search revealed that in the area of contemporary labour relations in Namibia little published work of any value existed. Notable exceptions were the interpretative anthropological work of Robert Gordon (1977) and the historical work of Richard Moorsom (1973, 1977, 1978, 1979, 1980 and 1982) which focused on the period prior to 1972. Although both Gordon's and Moorsom's work provided valuable background data, they were of limited specific relevance to the study of the managerial control of the labour process in a large, corporate mining company in the late 1970s and 1980s.

Other existing academic literature focused on macro economic or historical studies of the country whilst a plethora of literature was available from government administration and various supporting organisations and the liberation movement.

It was clear that gaining access to the mine was imperative for the viability of the research. Rossing Uranium Limited's parent company, Rio Tinto Zinc, has a head office in London. This was contacted but was of little assistance providing general public relations materials but maintaining that its individual mines

operated autonomously and that access would have to be negotiated directly with them.

At the same time contacts had been established amongst the Namibian community living in Britain and organisations supporting or campaigning on their behalf. Whilst these contacts were of little value in terms of the content of the research, they acted as 'gatekeepers', providing the credentials and contacts necessary in later gaining access to the black community inside Namibia.

After some effort sufficient research funding was raised to finance a research trip to Namibia. This was the first of two such trips, each lasting three months, and was taken during the summer of 1983.

A number of practical and personal problems had to be confronted in carrying out the fieldwork in Namibia. The experience of entering an alien, and potentially hostile, culture as an outsider, however assiduous the preparation, is a very isolating one. Evans-Pritchard (1973) described his experience as feeling a 'double marginal man, alienated from both worlds' whilst Malinowski's (1922) description of his first research trip captures a similar trauma to that of the author's arrival in Namibia.

Imagine yourself suddenly set down by all your gear, alone on a tropical beach close to a native village, while the launch or dingy which has brought you sails away out of site. Since you take up your abode in the compound of some neighbouring white man, trader or missionary, you have nothing to do, but to start at once on your ethnographic work. Imagine further that you are a beginner, without previous experience, with nothing to guide you and no one to help you. For the white man is temporarily absent, or else unable or unwilling to waste any of his time on you. This exactly describes my first initiation into fieldwork on the south coast of New Guinea.

Insight into a further problem of this research is provided by Punch (1986) in his discussion of the politics and ethics of fieldwork. He perceptively comments

The researcher has to learn to sustain relationships with people with whom one might not usually mix (as in Fielding's 1982 study of the right wing National Front in Britain), and to exploit his emotional involvement with them for data; for, all the time, one is continually exercising the "most fundamental technique of all - *alleviating suspicion* (Wax, 1971, p 79; my emphasis). In essence one has to learn to inveigle one's way into the life of a group, build up contacts with key actors, and retain one's emotional balance continually in order not to spoil acceptance and also to keep on collecting research material.

The practical difficulties of the fieldwork in Namibia were compounded by the issues outlined above. Moreover, it was necessary to gain access to two major groups, blacks and whites, where acceptance by one group would normally preclude acceptance by the other in an

environment charged not only by micropolitics but civil war and a sophisticated security police structure.

Such a situation required the delicate handling of relationships and presentation of 'self' in different ways to different people. Indeed, in one day it was not unusual to be using a semi-structured interview with a company representative, a less structured interview with a community representative and an in-depth, life history approach with black workers in their traditional homes in the black townships or homelands. It is not only management of the interview which is at issue here but the manner in which researchers present themselves and the values they project.

As Ditton (1977) comments, participant observation continually raises such questions since it is inevitably 'interactionally deceitful'. This is not only a practical problem but also one of ethical choice. Punch (1986) argues that such dilemmas and ambivalences are inevitable in fieldwork and correctly proposes that they have to be situationally resolved since they are virtually impossible to resolve in advance. However, in the context of this research more than most, the researcher's problem was not only the collection of data but the effective management of relationships which, if inappropriately handled, would

not only have constrained the data collected but quite possibly have significant personal consequences for the researcher.

The research progressed on the basis of network sampling which involved following up contacts provided by 'gatekeepers' in Britain. In addition, new contacts were established where appropriate and possible, either for their individual value and/or to facilitate access into new networks.

During this first trip some 8,500 kilometres were travelled throughout Namibia and over 300 contacts made with politicians and political activists, Government representatives, businessmen, industrialists, company executives, workers, lawyers, community workers, teachers, academics and students, doctors, nurses, church leaders and journalists. As a result over 100 interviews were conducted.

Whilst direct access to the Rossing mine proved to be impossible at this stage, approximately 15 hours of interviews were conducted with the public relations manager at their head offices in Windhoek. In addition, access into the black community was established and a wide

range of workers were interviewed, many of whom were, or had recently been, employed at RUL.

Relevant documentation was also collected from a variety of sources including Government departments and the State Archives.

By the end of the research trip a substantial amount of data had been collected and contacts established. Whilst access to the mine had not been achieved, establishing credibility and a good relationship with mine representatives was central to the next stage of the research process.

On returning to Britain Rossing Uranium Limited was approached directly through their public relations manager in Windhoek and a positive response to a request for a future research visit to the mine was received. A period of two months access to the mine was agreed and on this basis further research funds were attracted. The second research trip was arranged for the summer of 1985.

As was originally anticipated, access to the mine was fundamental to the success of the project and the fieldwork, which in the event lasted nine weeks, provided extensive data of central importance to the project.

Located within the Personnel Division at Rossing the author rapidly became accepted as a member of the almost exclusively white management. A company flat was allocated, company transport to and from the mine utilised, a Rossing uniform worn and within two weeks a vacant office was allocated for the purpose of the research. In addition photocopying and other office facilities were made available as was transport around the mine.

Access to any part of the mine was permitted and, with the exception of initial introductions to divisional managers and some departmental heads, contacts with members of staff were left to the researcher to arrange.

Using the initial introductions, additional contacts were made on a network basis and new contacts made where it was considered the individuals could contribute to the study. There were three major criteria in this respect; managers who played an important role in the construction and implementation of strategy, managers who had been at the mine for a long period and had knowledge of its development, and managers or staff who were able to comment on the way in which strategy was applied.

Within the mine, no formal or explicit constraints to the research were expressed. Nevertheless, there existed informal and implicit boundaries to the contacts that could be made with employees, especially blacks, without the researcher's credibility being threatened. For example, while it was acceptable to talk to staff who were members of the consultative committee system, some of whom were quite outspoken and some black, it would have been viewed as suspicious to have spoken openly to other staff who were outspoken but not within the company's formal structures of communication.

The issues of 'presentation' and credibility were particularly important here. Hence, contacts made amongst black workers during the previous research trip were developed and extended outside the mine and out of sight of white mine management. As a result, relationships with black research subjects extended well beyond the workplace. This was also true with whites who expected the researcher to socialise regularly. The extension of the research setting to include the domestic and social spheres facilitated access into the sensitive areas of attitudes, beliefs and values and was an inevitable consequence of the choice of research strategy. However, this highlighted a further element to the ethical question, the legitimate boundaries of research activity.

The interactive research methods utilised - participant observation, semi-structured interviews, in-depth interviews and life histories - generated a wealth and depth of data concerning contemporary and historical social action in and around the mine. In practice, however, it was impossible to view the research methods as distinct techniques of data collection. Rather, they became facets of the researcher's behaviour adopted at different moments in the relationship with the research subjects and an integral part of appropriate 'presentation'.

Data accumulated by interactive research methods was supplemented by the collection of company documentation. One particular source which it had been impossible to identify or access from outside the mine, proved central to the success of the historical element of the research and was only revealed as the result of a chance comment by a manager some three weeks after arrival at Rossing. This was a company archive, maintained on the mine site which, although not containing complete records, retained some valuable materials from the earlier periods. Free access to the archive along with the photocopying facility, explains the bulk of some 20 kilogrammes of documentary materials returned to the UK at the end of the research trip.

The quantity and richness of materials to which the researcher gained access could not have been anticipated at the outset of the research. The consequent analysis was a painstaking process of sifting, categorisation, coding, assessment, cross checking, reflection and finally, reporting. The quality and extent of the data explains the greater than normal volume of the empirical chapters and appendices which are retained, not only as supporting materials for the explanation of the research problem, but as a contribution to an emerging Namibian historiography.

CHAPTER 3

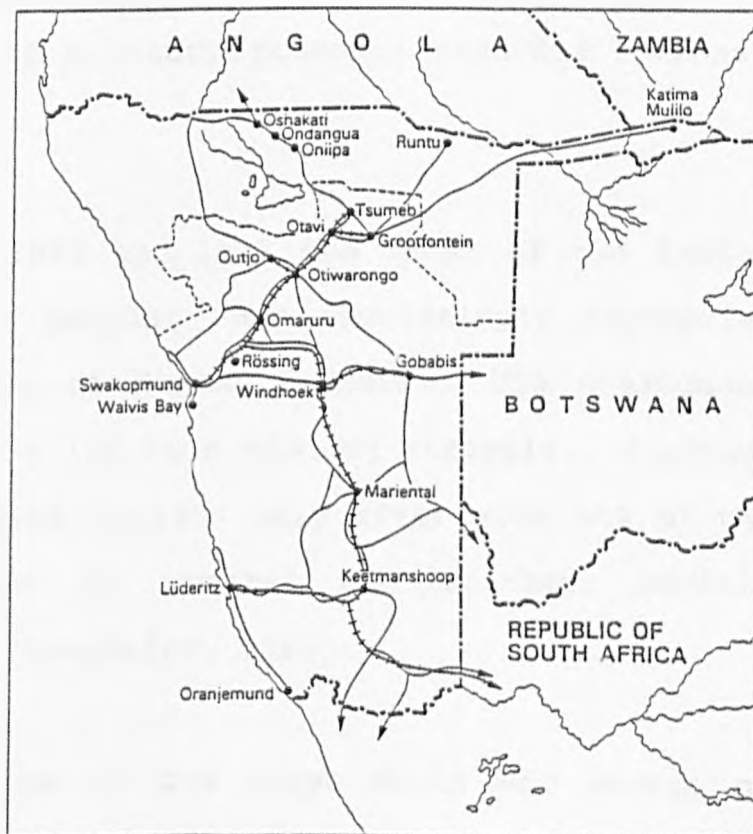
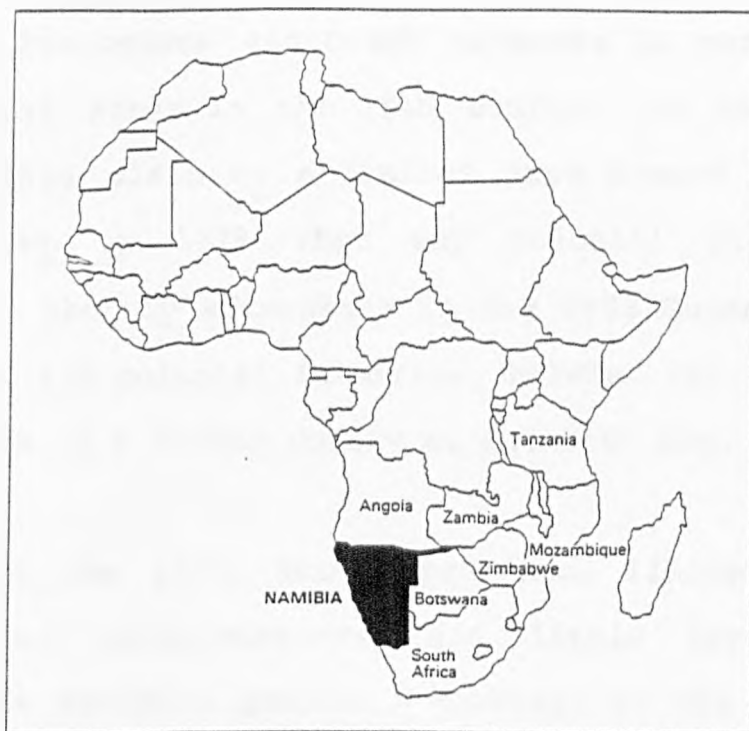
THE POLITICAL HISTORY OF NAMIBIA

Namibia is situated in the south-west corner of Africa. Covering an area of some 824,269 square kilometres it is almost four times the size of the United Kingdom. It shares extensive borders with Angola in the north, Botswana to the east and South Africa to the south and touches both Zambia and Zimbabwe at the extreme tip of the Caprivi Strip, its western border lying on the coast of the Atlantic Ocean. (see Figure 3.1) It is sparsely populated with an estimated 1,597,500 inhabitants in 1985 of whom only some 85,000 were white. (UNIN, 1986)

Topographically the country is divided into three distinct regions; the Namib Desert which runs the length of the country in the coastal region varying in width from 80 to 130 kilometres; the Central Plateau region which encompasses over half the total area of Namibia, rises to between 1,000 and 2,000 metres above sea level and consists mainly of savannah and bush; and the Kalahari Desert lying on the eastern side of the country. (Kiljunen, 1981)

FIGURE 3.1

MAP OF NAMIBIA



Namibia's colonial history began later than most. Although Portuguese and Dutch presence is recorded along the coastal areas in the 18th century, it was not until Britain laid claim to a limited area around the port of Walvis Bay in 1878 that any colonial authority was imposed. Shortly afterwards in May 1883 Germany, seeking to expand its colonial interests, hoisted its flag for the first time in a German colony at Luderitz Bay.

Throughout the 1880s German presence, limited to only a handful of administrators, had little impact on the indigenous Namibian people. However, in the early 1890s the appointment of an Imperial Commissioner and an increasing military presence heralded increasing colonial activity.

Between 1893 and 1903 the lands of the indigenous Herero and Nama peoples were increasingly expropriated for the occupation of German farmers. The consequent resentment eventually led to a violent struggle. Fighting started in 1904 ending in 1907 only after some 60% of the indigenous population of central and southern Namibia had been killed. (Drechsler, 1980)

At the end of the First World War German colonies were mandated under the League of Nations system. The mandate for Namibia was given to Britain who delegated it to the

Union of South Africa with the major duty 'to promote to the utmost the material and moral well-being and the social progress of the inhabitants of the territory'. (UNIN, 1986)

South Africa cooperated with the system in letter, if not in spirit (see Chapter 4), up to the end of the Second World War when the League of Nations was replaced by the United Nations (UN). The UN placed all mandated territories under the Trusteeship system which was concerned to lead them to independence in the shortest possible time. However, South Africa refused to comply with the new scheme, challenging the legal status of the United Nations as the successor to the League of Nations.

Despite repeated appeals from the UN, South Africa refused to initiate independence proceedings and continued to administer Namibia. As a result, in 1966 the UN assumed direct legal responsibility for the territory exercised through the United Nations Council for Namibia. Such an arrangement was confirmed by the UN Security Council in 1969 and when South Africa refused to withdraw its administration the UN declared that all decisions taken by them on behalf of Namibia were illegal. The validity of this decision was upheld in 1971 by the International Court of Justice. However, these rulings have meant

little in practice with South African continuing to govern Namibia up to 1985.

In 1915, under South African administration, Namibians who had lost their lands under German rule had hoped to regain them. However, this was not to happen. Indeed, land which they had continued to occupy under German rule was also expropriated. The Smuts Government aimed to consolidate its position in the territory by encouraging German farmers to stay and inviting South Africans to settle. As First (1963) reports, the colonial administration provided white settlers with the best agricultural land as well as

generous loan terms, granted them remission on rent arrears, built dams, bored for water, advanced capital for stock. Vast loan amounts were never recovered and were cheerfully discounted.

Following the German example, South Africa did not expropriate land in the northern regions (where at the time some 85% of the indigenous population lived) fearing the military strength of the Ovambo kings and regarding their land as less suitable for white settlement. (Moorsom, 1982) However, by 1926 all the economically viable farming land in central and southern Namibia had been allocated to white farmers, forcing Namibians to live in economically non-viable areas and creating pools of

cheap black labour for white-owned business. (see Chapters 4 and 5)

Politically, the Germans had initiated the process of white self-government in Namibia. Although this was still in rudimentary form when South Africa took over, it was further developed during the first 10 years of their administration. In 1925 the South West Africa Constitution Act gave limited political power within a whites-only legislative assembly although African affairs, police and defence remained the responsibility of South Africa. While some tension developed between the white German and South African settler communities following the entry of South Africa into the war in 1939, the two groups remained united in defending their position over the African majority.

The rise of the National Party to power in South Africa in 1948, followed only two years later by a similar success in Namibia, saw the structures of modern apartheid begin to take shape. With the intention of destroying popular institutions in order to facilitate political control of the indigenous people, the South African administration had experimented with various forms of administrative arrangements. (see for example Du Pisani, 1985; Moorsom, 1973; Moleah, 1983; Serfontein, 1976; Totemeyer, 1978; UNIN, 1986)

However, the most significant, and the basis for contemporary structures, was modelled on the report of the Commission of Enquiry into the Affairs of South West Africa, the Odendaal Commission, which reported in December 1963. The Commission provided a comprehensive plan for the fragmentation of Namibia into a series of self-governing 'homelands' for Africans, each envisaged as a separate state with separate citizenship. The plan was implemented under the Development of Self-Government for Native Nations in South West Africa Act in 1968 which established the homelands with legislative assemblies and executive councils although key powers remained with South Africa.

The Odendaal Commission institutionalised the position of blacks whose homelands were concentrated in the poorest and economically non-viable rural areas while whites occupied the richer farming areas and the urban centres to which the indigenous population now had no legal right of residence. A legal structure was constructed to support the system, in particular residence controls enshrined in the 'pass laws' forced the majority to live in the homelands in the northern regions although many others lived in the homelands of the central and southern areas.

This is not to say there has been no resistance to the apartheid structures imposed by South Africa. Opposition

to the colonial rule which began in the German era has continued. Resistance has taken a number of forms, in particular through workers' action (see chapter 5), the opposition of all except the Afrikaner Churches inside Namibia and the development of oppositional political parties, most notably the South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO) which since 1966 has been engaged in an armed struggle against South African rule.

In the early 1970s internal opposition and international action combined to subject South Africa to extreme pressure to withdraw from Namibia. Inside the country the contract workers' strike of 1971-2 (see chapter 5), increasingly overt political opposition and the infiltration of SWAPO fighters demanded the increasing commitment of military resources by the South African Government. Externally, following the ruling of the International Court of Justice in 1971, non-aligned countries began to exert pressure on the Western nations at the UN to adopt sanctions against South Africa. Furthermore, the Portuguese coup of 1974 led to rapid independence for Portugal's colonies under radical governments and, with the increasing pressure for independence in Zimbabwe, the strategic importance of Southern Africa was becoming clear to the West as well as to South Africa in terms of its own security.

In the light of these developments the South African Government initiated another scheme for an internal political settlement convening a conference of eleven ethnic groups at the Turnhalle in Windhoek in September 1975. A declaration made some two weeks later outlined the intention as South African-style bantustan regionalism with a three-tier ethnic government and ultimate *de facto* white control through its ability to veto all decisions. (CIIR, 1986) The United Nations responded by adopting its Resolution 385 calling for 'free elections under the supervision and control of the UN to be held for the whole of Namibia as one political entity'. (UNIN, 1986)

Nevertheless, in March 1977 the Turnhalle Conference published its interim constitution. Despite international diplomatic pressure and the adoption of UN Resolution 435 - the UN Independence Plan - as well as active internal political opposition and significantly raised expectations for independence, the South African Government adopted what was in essence the Turnhalle constitution in 1980.

In an effort to increase the credibility of the internal settlement the repeal of most 'petty' apartheid legislation was effected between 1977 and 1979. Notably legislation which prevented blacks and coloureds from living in white residential urban areas was removed as were the Immortality Act and the Mixed Marriages Act. In

addition, the 'pass laws' which had constrained the right of movement and residence of blacks were repealed and equal pay was introduced for all groups in state employment. (du Pisani, 1986)

Furthermore, legislation consistent with some of the recommendations of the Weir Commission in South Africa were introduced to control the development of black trade unions, although none existed at the time. (see chapter 5)

Nevertheless, the ethnic homeland policy remained in tact, enshrined in the new structures of 'government', and South Africa remained in overall control taking direct charge of such areas as internal security and foreign policy and retaining the right of veto over all other national decisions. Furthermore, whilst the removal of the petty apartheid legislation allowed freedom of movement and opened up previously white residential areas to blacks and coloureds, the major areas of education and health remained under ethnic administration, seriously constraining equality of opportunity. In addition, emergency security measures were introduced which provided for long periods of detention without trial and were used almost exclusively to suppress SWAPO political activity.

The development of the internal dispensation attracted opposition from groups supporting the UN Independence Plan

as well as conservative whites who objected to the greater freedom given to blacks. This internal opposition, along with continuing international condemnation, led the South African Government to dissolve the arrangement in January 1983 and look for an alternative solution.

In mid-1983 a Council of State was formed to discuss a constitutional framework. However, this was replaced later in the year by the Multi-Party Conference, consisting of six political parties but excluding SWAPO (believed to represent the majority of Namibians) and others unwilling to cooperate in anything less than independence under UN supervision.

In 1985 Namibia remained Africa's last colony. South Africa continues to seek an internal settlement whilst anti-colonial groups, backed by the international community, demand the implementation of the independence process under UN Resolution 435.

The political structures institutionalised under the Odendaal Plan and carried forward under the successive administrative structures have achieved South Africa's objectives in three distinct ways: firstly, white hegemony has been maintained; secondly, the development of black nationalism has been delayed; and thirdly a pool of cheap black labour for the development of white-owned

interests has been provided. (Moleah, 1983; Totemeyer, 1978; UNIN, 1986)

The next chapter focuses on Namibian political economy, outlining the economic structure and showing how colonial administration has influenced its development to suit the specific needs of South Africa. The mining sector is given particular attention.

CHAPTER 4

MINING IN THE POLITICAL ECONOMY

Initial European contact over a century ago began to restructure the Namibian economy, however, its particular contemporary form is largely the consequence of the last three decades. It is characterised by a major division between 'a rapidly growing, technically modern, relatively high productivity European export and export support sector' and a 'residual African sector (which) accounts for almost half of the labour force and up to three-quarters of the population while generating only 2% of the territorial product'. (Green and Kiljunen, 1981)

The economic division is also clearly reflected in the geographical distribution of population institutionalised under colonial structures. (see Chapter 3) The modern capitalist sector is concentrated in the European areas and the pre-capitalist residual sector in the black homelands. European areas include not only the urban centres but approximately half of the rural land which is allocated to white ranches, including some 90% of the central and southern regions. (Kiljunen, 1981) The

northern region and the remaining areas in the southern and central regions are allocated as black homelands in which the majority of blacks have been forced to live through residence controls. (Although these controls were removed in the late 1970s the distribution of population and economic structure changed very little up to 1985 - see Chapter 3)

The racial divisions imposed under South African administration have ensured that the modern and residual sectors are interlocked to the benefit of the former; in particular through the employment of cheap labour. The supply of black labour has been guaranteed through the homeland strategy which has concentrated the black population in areas where the quality of land is so poor and productivity so low that it cannot provide subsistence. Blacks are therefore forced to work in the modern sector to supplement their income. The effect is for the residual sector to subsidise the modern sector

by providing part subsistence and a dumping ground for dependents of workers who can then be housed in prison-like compounds or farm shacks and pay wages less than those necessary for family subsistence. (Green and Kiljunen, 1981)

The Namibian economy is externally orientated and has been constructed to satisfy the needs of South Africa. High tariffs and tight exchange controls have been imposed by

South Africa with the objective of maintaining Namibia as a captive market and ensuring that surplus flows to the Republic and no further without South Africa's consent.

As Green and Kiljunen (1981) argue,

the colonial territory of Namibia can save foreign exchange by providing goods which would otherwise be imported from abroad (eg fish and fish-meal), earn foreign exchange from its natural resource-based exports to the outside world (metals, diamonds, fish, beer, karakul), provide a captive market for metropolitan exports of consumer goods (eg maize) and production inputs (eg mining machinery, construction materials) and provide a flow of surplus to the metropolitan economy from settlers, residents, firms and/or taxes. Beyond that it is of no interest and if it competes with metropolitan production it must be deterred (eg dairying) or subjected to controls (eg cattle).

The majority of Namibia's imports and exports are through South Africa. Of imports, 90% are from South Africa with 60-75% of South African origin. This has inflated the price of imported goods and limited the development of a domestic manufacturing sector while subsidies paid for maize production in South Africa have contributed to a maize deficit. The effect of exporting through South Africa, little of which remains in the metropole, is to transfer income to the South African transport system and merchandising operations.

As a result of this external orientation, since the 1960s, some two-thirds of gross domestic product (GDP) has been exported. (Although this dropped in the late 1970s and early 1980s due to the world recession and consequent worsening of terms of external trade, the underlying trend has remained.) Of this some 90% is represented by primary sector production - uncut diamonds, raw metals, uranium oxide, unprocessed karakul pelts, wool, live cattle, processed meats, tinned fish, fish-meal and oil. Further, with few exceptions, Namibian consumption, production inputs, construction material, machinery and equipment demand is met by South African imports, making up around 85% of Namibia's needs. (Thomas, 1978; Green and Kiljunen, 1981; UNIN, 1986)

Thus, the Namibian economy represents a stereotype, as UNIN (1986) conclude

A more extreme case of producing what is not consumed and consuming what is not produced is hard to imagine in a territory with substantial size, resource diversity and territorial demand.

Investment into the Namibian economy is equally external in origin. Some 90% of productive investment is foreign with just under half originating from South Africa and the remainder coming from bank loans and multinational corporations outside the Republic. South Africa has

deliberately attracted foreign investors by offering generous incentives including low tax rates, profitable depreciation rights and free exportation of revenues as well as raw materials without restriction and a cheap and ready supply of labour.

When GDP is compared with gross national product (GNP - defined as GDP less net income accruing to nationals of another country) the nature of the economy is clearly seen. In general, developing countries experience GNP smaller than GDP 'because they are net borrowers, net hosts of foreign equity capital and net users (at least in total wage/salary bill terms) of expatriate personnel who make substantial remittances'. (UNIN, 1986) However, in Namibia's case the difference has been much greater than would be expected especially since the late 1970s when the economy has been severely depressed as a result of the slump in export demand. (see Table 4.1)

As the United Nations Institute for Namibia (1986) explain,

TABLE 4.1

DOMESTIC AND NATIONAL PRODUCT, 1946-83 (R million)

Year	GDP	GNP	GNP as % GDP
1946	22.2	20.4	92
1950	61.0	46.4	76
1954	107.2	74.4	70
1956	141.6	85.1	60
1958	121.3	83.2	69
1962	146.7	104.1	71
1969	368.9	278.0	75
1977	1135.0	710.0	63
1983	2000.0	1320-1400	80-84

Note: Methods of estimating factor payments for remittances vary. 1946-62 data are comparable with each other and probably roughly comparable with 1977 and 1983. 1969 is apparently on a basis likely to increase the GNP/GDP ratio by at least 5%.

SOURCE: UNITED NATIONS INSTITUTE FOR NAMIBIA, 1985.

The reasons for this pattern are quite clear. First the mineral sector is dominated by foreign (largely South African and British) corporations which receive and remit high profits except in recession years. The same is true of fishing. Second, unincorporated business surpluses and the salary bill largely go to resident expatriates and white settlers who tend to save/invest in their 'home' countries (dominantly South Africa) not Namibia.

It is clear from the above discussion that the Namibian economy is dominated by primary sector activity, notably mining and agriculture and fishing. (see Table 4.2) Mining has accounted for about 30% of GDP since the early 1970s and has been a crucial element; it is discussed in more detail below.

Together agriculture and fishing contributed around one-sixth of GDP throughout the 1970s but fell to between 8-10% in 1983. However, in 1977 they accounted for around 60% of employment of the economically active population.

Fishing was badly hit in the late 1970s by recurrent overfishing and contributed only 2% of GDP in 1977 and a slightly lower proportion of employment. Ecomically, the most significant area of agriculture and fishing is commercial farming, which centres on about 6,500 European units specialising in cattle and karakul sheep production. In 1977 these accounted for about 12% of GDP and 11% of employment.

TABLE 4.2

GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT OF NAMIBIA 1920-83

(R million)

Year	GDP	Agriculture and Fishing	Mining	Manufacturing	Construction	Public utilities	Transport and communication	Trade and housing	General government	Other services
1920	13.0	1.7	7.6	0.3	0.1	NA	(0.8)	(0.8)	(0.8)	0.8
1925	10.6	1.3	5.1	0.5	0.1	NA	(0.8)	(0.8)	0.8	1.2
1929	13.0	1.9	5.3	0.6	0.3	NA	(1.1)	(1.1)	1.0	1.8
1930	9.8	0.5	4.3	0.6	0.2	NA	(0.8)	(0.8)	1.1	1.5
1933	3.8	0.7	NA	0.5	0.1	NA	(0.4)	(0.4)	0.6	1.2
1935	3.4	3.9	1.0	0.4	0.1	NA	(0.5)	(0.5)	0.7	1.1
1940	10.4	5.1	0.4	0.5	0.1	NA	(0.8)	(0.9)	1.0	1.7
1945	19.8	9.0	2.6	0.8	0.5	NA	(1.6)	(1.7)	1.5	2.1
1946	22.2	6.4	5.8	1.6	*	**	1.6	2.4	2.1	2.3
1950	61.0	20.8	20.1	3.4	*	**	3.7	4.6	4.0	4.4
1954	107.2	32.2	35.8	7.5	*	**	5.4	10.0	7.6	8.7
1956	141.6	33.5	60.0	8.7	*	**	6.7	12.6	9.3	10.8
1958	121.3	23.3	42.9	14.1	*	**	6.1	11.0	11.5	12.4
1960	122.0	13.2	49.4	14.9	*	**	8.5	8.5	13.7	13.8
1960	141.6	21.1	47.9	12.7	4.0	1.4	12.2	15.8	8.8	17.6
1962	146.7	35.2	47.3	14.2	*	**	10.7	9.7	15.1	14.5
1965	213.9	42.8	99.7	(12.0)	(5.0)	-	(12.0)	(12.0)	(15.0)	(15.0)
1970	379.4	60.7	115.1	35.8	14.8	3.9	26.7	45.5	30.1	46.8
1970	373.1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1970	338.8	49.7	105.1	15.6	18.0	3.5	25.7	47.1	30.6	43.5
1972	455.5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1974	572.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1975	643.0	111.5	174.2	32.6	33.4	7.8	38.0	101.2	58.1	86.5
1975	755.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1975	825.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1977	882.0	112.0	389.0	40.0	42.0	15.0	52.0	119.0	75.0	107.0
1977	1335.0	210.0	365.0	85.0	60.0	15.0	60.0	135.0	70.0	135.0
1983	1709.0	127.0	473.0	90.0	61.0	61.0	97.0	241.0	327.0	215.0
1983	2000.0	202.0	483.0	125.0	102.0	71.0	130.0	270.0	352.0	265.0

Notes: NA = Not available

* = Separate breakdown not available but included in manufacturing

** = Separate breakdown not available but included in other services

() = Figures in brackets are interpolated.

Different figures for the same year are from different sources and are not necessarily comparable due to variations in the procedures and coverage.

SOURCE: United Nations Institute for Namibia, 1985.

African agricultural production contributed less than 2% of GDP but accounted for 46% of employment in 1977. However, this is misleading since, as noted earlier, very few African households can subsist on their own production. (Green and Kiljunen, 1981; UNIN, 1986)

The secondary sector, consisting of manufacturing, construction, electricity and water, together contribute about one-seventh of GDP and provide around 6% of employment. However, as Green and Kiljunen (1981) explain,

they are almost as dependent on exports as the primary sector because the bulk of manufacturing value added is fish and meat processing for export, the major users of electricity and water are the export sectors and supporting services, and the major markets for construction are the export firms and the state.

As has already been shown, South African policy has seriously constrained the development of the manufacturing sector which contributed only about 5% to GDP throughout the 1970s and 1980s. (UNIN, 1986)

The tertiary or service sector accounts for approximately 35% of GDP and around 28% of employment. However, domestic service is included here and accounts for a large proportion of employment although a small part of GDP. When domestic employment is excluded, services accounted

for only 13% of employment but 34% of GDP in 1977. (Green and Kiljunen, 1981)

These aggregate figures conceal the nature of the tertiary sector and its consumers, the majority being consumed by export orientated activity in the European sector. Similarly, public services are consumed predominantly by Europeans. As Green and Kiljunen (1981) argue,

Those available to Africans, some primary education and a very limited amount of technical and secondary education, some health services (especially in towns and at work places), a limited number of urban houses and a larger number of prison-like single worker contract labour compounds, are basically inputs into the European sector labour force..... Other expenditure 'for' Africans, appointed 'chiefs' and 'Homeland' governments and their 'homeguards', administrators and police, sham development authorities (at best creating a coterie of dependent shopkeepers and officials) are more accurately characterised as expenditures 'on' Africans ie on holding them down.

Growth in the Namibian economy was rapid between 1945 and 1965, slowed between 1965 and 1970, stagnated between 1970 and 1977 and fell in real terms thereafter. (Green and Kiljunen, 1981; Thomas, 1978; UNIN, 1986) Accounting for the rise in population from just over one million in 1970 to 1.25 million in 1977 and an estimated 1.5 million in 1985, UNIN (1986) calculate per capita output to have risen from R930 to R1,350 between 1977 and 1983. However, they argue that

at constant 1977 prices output per capita fell over a fifth from about R930 to R690. In terms of capacity to purchase the goods and services used by Namibia the fall was higher - over 30%.

Such a situation is chronic, nevertheless it does not account for the inequality of distribution of wealth in Namibia which creates abject poverty for the black majority and relative wealth for the white minority who represent less than 10% of the population. Indeed, as UNIN (1986) argue, 'Namibia in 1977 may well have had the most unequally distributed income in the world'.

Blacks and coloureds, whilst accounting for over 90% of the population and 85% of the employed in the modern sector, received only about one-eighth of GDP in 1977. Ratios of black to white income vary between 1:25 in the rural areas and 1:12 in the urban centres. However, some inequality amongst blacks also exists as a result of the adoption of a strategy by both South Africa and certain large employers to buy black support.

This strategy was initiated by South Africa in the late 1970s with the introduction of equal pay in the state sector and the removal of the 'petty' apartheid legislation. (see Chapter 3) The consequence has been the development of a black 'elite' estimated to represent some 10-15% of black households. Nevertheless, this group are

estimated to attract an average household income well below that of whites which in 1985 was estimated to be R20,000 for whites, R6,000 for the black 'elite' and R1,000 for the mass of the black population. (UNIN, 1986)

The Mining Sector

Long before colonial contact Namibians were mining and working metals. Particularly in the northern regions iron and copper, worked into implements or ornaments, were an important part of the integrated pre-colonial local economy. However, with colonial contact and exposure to European trade the traditional local economy disintegrated. New and mass-produced goods were introduced which directly competed with or replaced traditional goods, new and additional external demands disrupted traditional production patterns, and 'debt' was created.

Rumours of the existence of gold and diamonds saw European traders entering Namibia in search of mining rights in the early colonial period. However, despite concessions passing from small prospectors to larger syndicates financed by Germany, Britain and South Africa early this century, initial success was limited.

From 1907, and only after substantial investment, the Tsumeb Mine began commercial activity generating meaningful profits from copper and lead production. (see Appendix 2) However, it was not until the following year, with the discovery of diamonds on the coast, that the breakthrough came for the colonial administration. (see Appendix 3) The exploitation of the diamond fields demanded little investment, the process requiring only shovels and brooms and a large number of black workers. Indeed, so profitable was the activity that by '1913 sales ran at R4.5 million, of which only R100,000 had to be paid to the 3,000 workmen'. (CIIR, 1983)

Mining production was interrupted by the first world war following which German mining interests were transferred to South Africa. Nevertheless, with the opening of some additional small mines in the post-war period, mining dominated the economy up to the late 1920s, contributing approximately a third of GDP. (Krogh, 1960)

The depression of the 1930s saw Namibia's two largest mines, Consolidated Diamond Mines (CDM) and the Tsumeb Corporation Limited (TCL) close from 1932 until 1935 and 1937 respectively. While some smaller mines remained operational throughout, mining contribution to GDP dropped from 40% in 1929 to nil in 1934 and only 11% in 1939. Nevertheless, the CIIR (1983) argue that

official figures suggest that from 1932 to 1936 between a quarter and a half of GDP was sent abroad. At times the sector even repatriated more than the value of its production.

Mining activity remained limited throughout the second world war accounting for 11% of GDP in 1944, the same as in 1939. However, the post-war boom raised the contribution of mining to 26% in 1949 and 33% in 1954 (Krogh, 1960) and saw CDM and Tsumeb invest heavily in their production processes. In the early post-war period some two-thirds of mineral income came from diamonds with output of just under 250,000 carats in the late 1940s, this had risen to one million carats in 1962 and over 1 million carats by 1966. Tsumeb's production also rose with twice as much ore mined on average in the twenty years following the second world war as in the peak pre-war years. (CIIR, 1983)

The 1970s saw another boom in Namibian mineral production led by international demand. In 1970 mineral sales were R120 million (see Table 4.3) of which around half is accounted for by diamonds and a quarter by copper. The value of sales rose more than sixfold in the following decade mainly as a result of the rapid rise in diamond prices and the opening of the Rossing mine by Rossing Uranium Limited. (see Appendix 1)

TABLE 4.3

WHO BENEFITS FROM MINING: BASED ON OFFICIAL SOUTH AFRICAN DATA (R MILLION)

	Average 1974-8 (%)	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981
Value of sales	(100)	120	106	143	244	212	225	302	582	677	774	870	627
implied input costs	(32)												
Gross value added		105	86	117	187	164	163	205	349	531	579	633	409
Depreciation	(4)	5	5	6	7	9	12	17	21	25	29	32	39
Net operating surplus (before tax after depreciation)	(47)	76	54	98	149	112	98	115	235	411	444	468	215
Payment of workers	(17)	24	26	29	32	43	53	73	93	94	106	133	155
Value of fixed capital (year end)		73	74	79	89	137	243	323	378	440	464	544	570

SOURCE: United Nations Institute for Namibia, 1985

The success of the economy continued to be highly dependant on the fortunes of the mining industry as indeed it had in previous decades. Based on official South African statistics (which probably underestimate the position) mining accounted for between 26% and 33% of GDP throughout the 1970s and up to 1982. (see Table 4.4) Whilst from 1980 the contribution fell as world recession hit mineral demand and mining revenues, by 1985 there were signs that the fortunes of the sector were again improving. (UNIN, 1986)

Not only is the economy heavily reliant on mining but the sector is itself highly dependant on three major operators. The contemporary mining industry can be divided into four sectors: diamonds, uranium, metals and industrial minerals. Except for the last category each sector is dominated by one major operator with CDM controlling all diamond production, RUL operating the only uranium mine and TCL dominating the production of metals, mainly lead, copper and zinc. These three organisations account for the major proportion of national mineral sales. For example, in 1981 diamonds produced by CDM accounted for over 33% of national sales, uranium accounted for over 44% and TCL sales accounted for some 14%. (see Table 4.5) Between them these three organisations accounted for between 25% and 30% of Namibian GDP throughout the 1970s and early 1980s.

TABLE 4.4

THE GROWING IMPORTANCE OF MINING IN THE 1970s
(OFFICIAL SOUTH AFRICAN STATISTICS)

	Rand million, 1975 Constant Prices												
	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	(1982)
Total Namibian GDP	560	563	568	533	567	629	647	680	685	693	678	695	(684)
of which:													
Mining and Quarrying	172	160	153	156	151	161	165	223	227	224	215	194	(180)
Mining %	31%	28%	27%	28%	27%	26%	26%	33%	33%	32%	32%	28%	(26%)

NOTE: 1982 figures derived by applying real growth rates as given in the Administrator General's 1983 Budget speech.

SOURCE: Catholic Institute for International Relations, 1983.

TABLE 4.5

VALUE OF MINERAL SALES

	(Rand million)					
Mineral	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	(1982)
Diamond	354	418	383	399	210	(180)
Uranium	123	136	229	291	279	(413)
Copper	48.2	53.9	69.6	69.8	55.6	n.a.
Lead	20.5	24.3	32.8	32.7	23.4	n.a.
Zinc	11.2	9.5	11.7	8.2	12.6	n.a.
Other minerals (1)	24.4	35.5	48.3	69.8	47.0	n.a.
Total value						
excluding uranium	459	541	545	579	348	n.a.
including uranium	582	677	774	870	627	n.a.

Note

1. At some stage, salt production at Walvis Bay, equivalent to about R3m. p.a., will have been excluded from the Namibian figures.

SOURCE: Catholic Institute for International Relations, 1983.

Mining production was, from the beginning, orientated to the world markets into which all production was sold. In the early period, as today, most mining inputs were imported and little supporting local industry was stimulated. Investment has been provided almost exclusively from outside the country which has led to a substantial outflow of wealth, largely to South Africa, in the form of profits, dividends, interest payments, capital transfers and remittances. Indeed, as Green and Kiljunen (1981) conclude, it is the mining sector which accounts for the bulk of the significant divergence between GNP and GDP.

Furthermore, while substantial profits have accrued to overseas ownership (see Table 4.3), the revenues which have remained inside the country have made a major contribution to the financial success of the colonial administration, particularly through the contribution of tax revenues, licence fees and state royalties and the construction of infrastructure. Such a contribution has served to reinforce the presence and pattern of colonial exploitation.

The Odendaal Commission reported in 1964 that between 1943 and 1962 CDM made R369 million profit of which over 37% was paid out as dividends and more than 28% as tax. Similarly, Tsumeb made R140 million profit between 1946

and 1961 and paid out over 65% as dividends and a further 24% as tax.

More recently the CIIR (1983) have estimated that in the mid-1970s around a third of mining sales were paid out for inputs, transport and services, the majority of which would have been purchased from abroad. Further, 'a full half of the income was taken as profit' from which substantial sums were paid to the South African government by way of tax. Throughout the 1970s and up to the downturn in world trade in the early 1980s

mines were providing directly at least one-third and sometimes one-half of the government's revenue, and more if indirect taxes such as customs duties on imported mine inputs are included. (CIIR, 1983)

Taxes from diamond sales have been most significant having made up almost all tax revenues from mining throughout the 1970s and 1980s. Whilst RUL began to make significant profits in the late 1970s, the generous tax laws required no charge to be made until the full capital cost of the mine had been repaid from profits, this was not achieved until 1983.

In addition to the significant proportion of mining revenues which accrue overseas or to the South African government as tax, white employees, many of whom are

expatriates and are amongst the highest paid in the country, transfer a proportion of their earnings outside the country.

It is clear that the benefits deriving from the mining industry to black Namibians are small. (see Table 4.5) Despite the high tax revenues it must be remembered that Namibians have no say in how taxes are spent. Indeed, as was suggested earlier, much government expenditure must be seen as 'on' Africans rather than 'for' them. Furthermore, with such high proportions of sales accounted for by inputs, tax and profits and expatriate wages, the CIIR (1983) conclude that

Perhaps 5% of the value of mineral sales ended directly in the hands of black Namibians in 1977.

Although mining has never been a large employment sector, early mining methods were highly labour intensive. However, investment in the post-war period, and particularly from the 1960s, led to mechanisation of mining operations and the adoption of more sophisticated production and processing techniques. As a consequence, employment in the sector dropped in relation to output. In 1977 mining accounted for only around 18,000, or 4.5% of the 399,000 workforce. (UNIN, 1986) Probably largely due to the recession, employment is reported to have

fallen further by 1983 to 16,195. (Windhoek Observer, 22.6.1985)

It is clear that the mining industry, and particularly the three major mines which dominate the sector, have played an important role in the construction and maintenance of the colonial economy. Their attraction of and payments to foreign investors, as well as contributions to South African revenues have been highly significant in this respect.

Crucial to colonial success in the mining sector specifically, and the economy more generally, has been South Africa's willingness to ensure the provision of a suitable and adequate supply of labour. The next chapter considers the way in which the colonial economy has structured, controlled and managed black labour to achieve this end. It also considers labour organisation and resistance in response to its exploitation by the South African administration.

CHAPTER 5

LABOUR CONTROL, RESISTANCE AND ORGANISATION.

The dependence of the colonial economy on black labour created the need for a system which ensured an adequate supply of subdued labour of a suitable fitness and ability to be allocated to white employers at low cost. Such a system was not formalised until 1926 under South African administration, however, in reality it began much earlier under German occupation. The following extract from the proceedings of the German Governor's Council in April 1910 illustrates the point.

The land at present available in our colony is suitable for European settlement. We cannot carry out this settlement, however, without additional labour. This must be provided by the natives and we must train them for it. Our policies will therefore be those of masters. We shall make people realise that we people are the masters of the country, and the natives the servants whose welfare depends on the advantage of their masters. (Bley, 1971)

Indeed, Goldblatt (1971) summarises the situation of Namibian workers on the eve of South African conquest as: *sequestration* of almost all pasturage and stock of the Namibians in the "Police Zone" (the central and southern regions); *immobilization* of all Namibian workers by a pass system; *indenture* of Namibian workers, enforced by criminal sanctions, especially flogging by both police and employers with a frequency and severity that shocked even contemporary white South African commentators.

South Africa did not bring Namibians the relief they anticipated. (see Chapter 3) Despite a brief period of uncertainty immediately following the first world war during which blacks downed tools to return to their pre-1907 communal pastures, the willingness of the South African regime to tolerate such a state of affairs did not last long.

The new administration's policy hardened as it established its hold on the territory. White employers were backed against black workers and for a temporary period German compulsory labour laws were re-enforced. Following the rejection of Namibian claims for the return of their land, mass eviction of 'squatters' from 'Crown land' and 'Government farms' was enforced.

Consistent complaints by white settlers of an acute shortage of native labour were met with the adoption of the reserves policy which was administered

by a standard version of colonial indirect rule: restored state-controlled chiefships and headmanships supervised by magistrates, "Welfare Officers" and resident commissioners. Chiefships and headmanships, the institutions of the pre-colonial ruling class, were derogated and bureaucratised into low-echelon functionaries of the colonial administration in both reserves and locations, helping maintain law and order. (Gottschalk, 1978)

These functionaries were charged with the responsibility of ensuring a flow of migrant labour from the reserves for which purpose their bureaucratic powers were given the force of law. This was achieved through a web of legislation enshrined in criminal law which closely followed recent similar legislation in South Africa. The following constituted the core of the overlapping legal network.

1. The Suppression of Vagrancy and Idleness Proclamation, 1920, made it a crime for Namibians to be 'wandering abroad' in the homelands if they were 'idle or vagrant' and without a 'visible' means of support where

Only ten or more large stock, over forty small stock or a certificate of employment were "visible" to the South African magistracy. (Gottschalk, 1978)

Those convicted under this decree were hired out to employers for hard labour.

2. The Master and Servants Proclamation, 1920, made it a crime, while under contract, to leave or change employers without permission. All black workers, including white-collar and professionals, were required to sign a contract which effectively indentured their labour.

3. The Natives (Urban Areas) Proclamation, 1924, and the Curfew Regulations Proclamation, 1922, controlled the movement of Namibians into white towns. Under these decrees any Namibian unable to prove they were employed, or the dependant of an employed person, could be ordered to leave the area and not return.

4. The Pass Laws Proclamation of 1922 and 1928 made it a crime for any Namibian to be outside a reserve for whatever purpose without the relevant pass. A Windhoek advocate commented on the Pass Laws

over and above everything, the Government has the power at its own discretion, to remove any native, from the highest to the lowest, whether within or outside the Police Zone, from any place to any other place within the Territory, without any right of interference by the courts of the country. (Goldblatt, 1971)

The later tightening of the pass laws in South Africa in 1945 and 1952 were also introduced in Namibia.

Having been forced into work, blacks were not to have a free choice of occupation being confronted with racial discrimination in the labour market. The restriction of the colour bar prevented employment of Namibians in many higher paid skilled jobs which were defined by law as whites only and even where these legal provisions did not apply management prerogative had the same effect.

However, as the economy grew there developed a shortfall in the number of whites available for higher grade work. Hence the racial category of 'coloured' was constructed. This created a small group, members of which were exempted from the pass laws and were allowed access to the semi-skilled and other middle range employment grades. (SWAPO, 1981)

During the early period, before the full force of the homelands policy and its legislative support had taken effect, bureaucratic pressures proved inadequate to force blacks into paid employment and Namibians in significant numbers continued their pastoral and cultivator existences. Additional incentives were necessary and, as a result taxation and consumerism, were introduced simultaneously to reduce Namibian income and raise cash

expenditure. Game laws were stringently enforced and a drastic increase in tax on hunting dogs was introduced to reduce the viability of self-sufficiency.

At the same time shops were opened, even in the remotest of reserves, with the express purpose of creating a materialism for which the necessary cash could only be gained through migrant labour. The latter policy was aimed particularly at chiefs and headmen in order to increase their demands for presents from their subjects, further increasing the latters' cash requirements.

A further influence was the introduction of Christianity whose effect, although slight in the 1920s, had an increasing impact. As Moorsom (1980) argues

In the early 1920s the impact of evangelical Christianity, reflected in the inculcation of the work ethic, the costs of church maintenance and new cash essentials (such as clothes compulsory under the Finnish Mission) was still slight, albeit increasing.

Elsewhere, Moorsom (1977), reflecting on both the impact of the church and the development of peasant cash needs, comments that European clothing had been adopted within two generations of colonial occupation.

From the 1930s the forceful implementation of legislation saw a continuing programme of evictions from government

and settler lands as well as expulsions of urban poor and unemployed. Thus, the black population were further concentrated in the homelands, exacerbating the pressure of an expanding population on a static land area and rendering the homelands policy sufficient, on its own, to ensure migrant labour.

Underpinning the migrant labour system was the official definition of 'contract labour' imposed on Namibians through the Native Labour Regulations (Mines and Works) Proclamation of 1917 and the later Extra-Territorial and Northern Natives Control Proclamation of 1935. Enforced by criminal sanction, it represented a contract of indenture, usually for 12 or 18 months, prescribed by Administrator's decree. Only male workers were employed under contract and were prohibited from being accompanied by their wives or families. Required to live in cramped and basic employer or government-controlled compounds, they were even prohibited visits from their wives.

Moorsom (1980) argues that the barring of Ovambo women from wage labour through migration was

a product of ideological practice within the peasant unit and of political prescription by capitalists and by capitalist and non-capitalist states.

Hence patriarchy intervened in the application of colonial control to doubly discriminate against Namibian women. Denied the opportunity of wage labour, black women were concentrated in the homelands to carry out their reproductive role in addition to the agricultural role of marginal food production to contribute to the costs of social reproduction. As Moorsom (1979) comments, 'By imprisoning women in the reserves, capitalists could fix wages at little above the subsistence needs of the individual workers'.

A core objective of the contract labour system was to avoid wage competition between employers. The South African administration colluded with employers to achieve this convening conferences of mine-owners in 1923 and 1925 during which agreements were reached on recruitment procedures for all employers.

Recruitment was to be administered by two separate recruiting organisations, each recruiting from different homeland areas, one for employers in the north of the country and the other for employers in the south. Established in 1926 the two organisations, known as the South West Africa Native Labour Association (SWANLA), represented the only lawful channels through which residents of the reserves could obtain work and acted as wage-fixing cartels to minimise the wages of blacks. The

two organisations merged in 1943, retaining the same name and becoming responsible for administering contract labour throughout the whole country.

The multiple pressures on homeland residents forced them to seek employment through SWANLA recruiting stations. Here they were required to sign a standard contract, medically examined, categorised into three grades of physical fitness, which determined eligibility for different job categories, and allocated to an employer. Such allocations were the prerogative of recruitment agency functionaries, indeed, recruits endeavouring to influence their allocation to an employer, or their terms and conditions of employment, were frequently assaulted. (Ndadi, 1974)

Having entered contract labour workers were subjected to the full force of the law which was imposed by a series of state, company and homeland enforcement agencies or 'police'. In addition to legal enforcement there is significant evidence of illegal floggings and beatings of workers by 'police' and employers which was widespread in the early period and continued into the 1970s. (Gottschalk, 1978)

By the late 1930s approximately 7,500 workers from the northern regions were absent for most of the year working

on contract. However, the critical turning point for migration came later. By the 1950s Ovamboland had become a net importer of food and, from this time onwards, about 30% of Ovambo men have been on contract at any one time. (Moorsom, 1979) Thomas (1978) estimates that in the late 1970s some 50,000 Namibians were employed under the contract system.

Some Namibians were allowed to become permanent residents with their families in separate black 'locations' of urban centres where a stable workforce was required by white employers. However, blacks could only qualify to stay in towns by

being born and residing there continuously, by working there continuously for 15 years or for a single employer for 10 years, and without being convicted of any crime more serious than a minor pass offence, or by being the wife, unmarried daughter of minor son of a qualifying worker. (SWAPO, 1981)

Nevertheless, unemployment from redundancy or sacking, changing jobs or a few days illness could lead to forced removal to one of the homelands.

Unlike contract workers, permanent workers were unable to gain part of their subsistence from agricultural production. Consequently, although wages for men were slightly higher in the towns, women members of the

household frequently entered wage labour to supplement family income and were encouraged to do so by white demands. Even in this situation women were severely constrained in their occupational choice, most being confined to low paid domestic work for white 'madams'. (for a discussion of women's subordination in the colonial economy see Allison, 1984; Amathila, 1976; Hishongwa, 1983; Swapo Women's Solidarity Campaign, 1984)

Whilst terms and conditions of employment were notoriously bad for black workers, conditions varied between industries and employers. (see for example Gordon, 1977; Ndadi, 1974; SALB, 1978; Troup, 1950.) Ndadi reports farming to have had the worst conditions and while conditions in the more advanced sectors of mining, manufacturing and public services were better, workers were subjected to long hours of routine labour with autocratic management under basic conditions.

Reaction, Resistance and Organisation

Reaction and resistance of black workers to their exploitation in the colonial economy takes a number of forms. Gordon (1977) provides a valuable insight into the black-white relationship at the workplace. Gordon argues that it is a prerequisite for blacks to 'stay out of

trouble'. This is done by abiding by the rules of 'etiquette' which defines whites as superior to blacks and requires blacks to show respect and deference and to do as they are told, or at least pretend to do so. As Gordon comments, 'In the black-white interaction Blacks are 'Yes-men' par excellence'. He continues

Etiquette at the black-white interface is seen as callous, abnormal and in need of constant monitoring as against the human and natural relations amongst whites. The migrants are aware that every degrading ceremonial act on their part provides moral unction to the white world view and perpetuates the stereotype that the whites have of them. They feel, however, that they are forced to accept the *status quo* in order to make money for, in the work environment of the mine, it is being skilled at the social graces which counts.

However, Gordon (1977) argues that etiquette is not only used to stay out of trouble but also for manipulation. Blacks collude to project a stereotype of laziness and stupidity through which they gain 'space' to influence the pace and method of work and generally promote their own interests. In particular etiquette is used to achieve patronage with whites. Such patronage is important since it can achieve favours such as gifts and sponsorship as well as overlooking irregularities and petty theft. Further, it can ensure support in any interaction with the police or other state agencies.

Gordon (1977) concludes this early work commenting

The critical problem facing the migrant workers is derived from their powerlessness. Both as individuals and as a group, the workers believe that given their present circumstances they cannot influence the institutions which subordinate them.

Such a conclusion, however, denies the reality of black migrant workers' opposition and consciousness. As Van Onselen (1978) argues, labour resistance has traditionally been measured by the presence or absence of organisations which articulate worker interests. However, drawing on his study of the Rhodesian mining industry, he argues that, despite a lack of formal organisation, African workers had a well-developed and demonstrable self-awareness of their position as exploited workers from the very early years of capitalist industry and concludes

it is inadequate to gauge this worker consciousness through the relative absence of overt industrial action aimed at securing improvements through readily identifiable organisations with articulate leadership. Rather, it should be sought in worker strategy in the context of the overall functioning of the political economy and in day-to-day responses in the work situation.

Gordon (1978) in his later writing appears to have moved ground towards such a position accepting worker consciousness and proposing its populist nature in which workers define their position more in terms of the wider political economy than in industrial relations and develop an underground resistance movement. He usefully develops

the notion of 'brotherhood' which serves to delineate a distinct moral universe for blacks and provides the main organisational framework for the underground resistance network.

Reflecting on etiquette and patronage he illustrates the strength of 'brotherhood' explaining

a black worker who is deemed by his fellow workers to have established too intimate ties with his patrons runs the risk of being ostracised and labelled a 'stooge' or a 'sell-out'. To avoid such ostracisation requires considerable manoeuvring and social investment in the ethic of 'brotherhood' to demonstrate that one still subscribes to it and that ones bona fides are still acceptable.

Following Van Onselen's position and accepting Gordon's empirical work (but rejecting his theoretical analysis), Moorsom (1973, 1975, 1977, 1978, 1979 and 1980) argues for the development of class consciousness amongst migrant workers. He illustrates the systematic, but frequently individual, exploitation of the weakpoints of the contract labour system by Namibian migrant workers, commenting that

Such informal action embraced not only evasion of the law to escape or evade the worst employers or to seek higher wages, but also partial confrontations in the production process itself, ranging from individual self-assertion against small-scale masters to go-slows or disruption on the factory production line. (1977)

Moorsom (1977) argues that informal resistance is both an appropriate and effective mode of defensive labour action under such a repressive system in which stable leadership at the point of production is denied through high levels of labour turnover, and any effective institutional resistance is met with employer and/or state suppression. He concludes

It is misleading (also) to characterize such acts of resistance, often restricted to individuals or small groups, in isolation. Both evasion and resistance assumed a strong and general basis of solidarity, and the former an efficient communications network. And the very institutionalisation of labour controls induced the verbal transmission of common tactics and accepted standards of reciprocity.

In a later publication Moorsom (1979) distinguishes three levels of social consciousness amongst contract workers; occupational, trade unionist and political. These provide a valuable insight into worker response to colonial exploitation.

Occupational consciousness represents contract workers' attempts to 'humanize the rigid industrial routine imposed on their alienated labour', an analysis which owes much to the empirical work of Gordon's 1977 study. Moorsom argues that occupational consciousness is central to tactics for beating the system whose success 'depends on a shared acceptance of the norms of solidarity'. Brotherhood

becomes the medium through which solidarity is expressed. However, as Moorsom argues, brotherhood can operate well beyond the boundaries of a single workplace or compound to become class-based in character, offering the potential for class mobilisation on broader issues.

Trade union consciousness is usually taken to be reflected through formal labour organisation, as discussed above. However, before the late 1970s, when the law was changed (see Chapter 3), multi-racial or black trade unions were denied any legal rights or protection. Nevertheless, a number of black and multi-racial unions developed throughout the colonial period, the most recent of which was the National Union of Namibian Workers (NUNW), a SWAPO-affiliated organisation which operated for a short period in the late 1970s. Whilst they achieved some local success, each was destroyed by physical and legal attacks by the state and employers. (see for example Gordon, 1975; Moorsom, 1979; Ndadi, 1974; SWAPO, 1981)

The key lesson of these experiences was that western-style trade unionism was easily destroyed and was, therefore, of limited strategic value. Indeed, up to 1985 no multi-racial trade unions had been registered since the legislative changes of the late 1970s. (In June 1986 the Rossing Mineworkers Union, the first multi-racial union,

was registered although it took almost two years to gain recognition from the mine.)

This is not to say that collective labour action has not been a feature of black resistance. Gordon (1975) reports a strike as early as 1893 and numerous others are recorded in the early period of colonisation by other writers. Between 1950 and 1970 Gordon (1975) counted 43 'collective actions' in one local newspaper alone and SWAPO (1981) reported 'at least 70 strikes, some of them involving hundreds of workers, between June 1973 and June 1975'.

Analysing a number of these strikes Moorsom (1979) concludes that

A striking feature of these campaigns is the extent to which rank and file and leadership could and did call upon 'brotherhood' solidarity and tactical experience; where class interests intervened strongly and the tactical situation was appropriate, the contradiction between open confrontation and 'avoiding trouble' became more apparent than real.

Three additional strategic factors are clear from the study. Firstly, it is apparent that workers adopted a diffuse leadership structure to avoid vulnerability to victimisation of formal leadership. Secondly, they had a clear and realistic understanding of the extent of their bargaining power and adjusted their demands accordingly. Finally, the compounds were seen as an integral part of

working life and part of the same system of exploitation. They provided an opportunity for communication amongst blacks from different workplaces and formed an essential aspect of grassroots organisation and mobilisation as well as supporting various illicit activities to 'beat the system' such as pass-dodging.

The third level of social consciousness discussed by Moorsom (1979) is at the level of political action. The overt and integral relationship between state institutions and workplace structures made contract workers 'quick to perceive the necessity for political struggle against the contract system when organisers first took the issue to the rank-and-file in the early 1950s'.

Returning with a broadened experience from military service during the second world war, contract workers began to petition the United Nations on their plight and mass meetings were held in Ovamboland. In 1957 the first initiative was taken to form a national organisation and in early 1959 the Ovambo People's Organisation (OPO) was launched in Namibia.

The OPO's primary objective was the abolition of the contract labour system and its organisation and structure were predominantly based in the compounds of the mines and

towns. Police harassment and employer repression severely limited public activity and formal organisation, thus the informal networks afforded by the compounds were fully utilised to develop collective consciousness and solidarity, although communication between centres was more difficult. (Ndadi, 1974) As Moorsom (1979) comments,

OPO was akin to a national general union of contract workers, though the political implications of its attack on oppression under contract labour also gave it a broader political focus.

Following a year of struggle without tangible gain and the realisation that the contract labour system was only a part of a broader system of colonial exploitation, the Ovambo People's Organisation was transformed into the South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO), a broad, national coalition of anti-colonial groups. SWAPO became the leading force for liberation in Namibia and continued its struggle on a number of fronts throughout the following decades. (see Chapter 3)

SWAPO provided the medium through which Namibian workers' resistance and organisation was channelled. As Moorsom (1979) argues

workers retained access to an ongoing tradition of revolutionary thinking and experience, to organisational and communications resources, and to leadership, particularly at the grass-roots level.

Sustained labour activity continued throughout the 1960s achieving a substantial degree of autonomy in the large compounds. Tighter pass controls from the end of 1970 and the 1971 ruling of the International Court of Justice (see Chapter 3) led to an escalation of anti-colonial political activity in every quarter precipitating a nation-wide strike of contract workers in late 1971.

Despite extreme state repression the strike achieved spectacular success with well over half the workers in the Police Zone and over 70% of those employed outside joining the strike. Ovambos were repatriated to their homelands, however, the authorities later doubted the wisdom of this step when the sudden return of thousands of discontented workers aroused a popular feeling of solidarity.

The precise linkage between the political structures and the strike are obscure although they clearly existed. As Moorsom (1979) argues, preparations were carefully laid in which the working relationship between organisers and SWAPO at the branch level were close. However, it remained an autonomous struggle in which workers retained the initiative with the specific objective of ending the contract labour system.

Nevertheless, various accounts show the strike to have been part of a broader and calculated political campaign,

the mass response to which is testimony to the militant consciousness of workers. (see for example Cronje and Cronje, 1979; Douwes Dekker et al, 1975; Gottschalk, 1978; Moorsom, 1977, 1978, 1979; Ndadi, 1974; SWAPO, 1983)

For practical and ideological reasons the South African administration could not accede to most of the strikers' demands. Following discussions between the South African administration, white employers and the Ovambo 'Government', (from which the strikers representatives were excluded), SWANLA was replaced by the Ovambo authorities which became responsible for the recruitment and distribution of contract workers.

A few minor changes were made to the contract but the major demands of the strikers were rejected, most notably: freedom of movement throughout the country; the right for worker's families to accompany them to the place of work; the right to seek suitable work for themselves; and higher pay. As previously, work had to be accepted at the labour bureau on a take-it-or-leave-it basis and bargaining, especially over wages, was proscribed.

The contract labour system remained unchanged until the late 1970s when much of the petty apartheid legislation was removed (see Chapter 3) allowing freedom of movement and employment other than through the labour bureau.

Nevertheless, in 1985 the system remained essentially in tact with many employers, particularly mines and farms isolated from the urban centres, continuing to employ Namibians on contract.

SECTION B

MANAGEMENT STRATEGY AND LABOUR CONTROL

AT THE ROSSING MINE: INTRODUCTION

The Rossing Mine is owned and operated by Rossing Uranium Limited (RUL) which was established in 1970. RUL has a complex company structure in which Rio Tinto Zinc (RTZ) holds 46.5% and the South African Government 13.2% of equity shareholding. However, the South African Government has the controlling interest through its ownership of the majority of shares with voting rights. (for a detailed discussion of RUL see Appendix 1)

RTZ initiated the development of the Rossing mine when it began to take an interest in the area in 1966. Four years earlier RTZ had been formed out of a merger between two British mining organisations, both with international mining interests. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s RTZ adopted an expansionist policy growing rapidly to become one of the largest multinational mining organisations in the world with interests in almost every metal and fuel.

In 1980 its international interests extended throughout Europe, Australia, Papua New Guinea, Canada, North and South America, Southern Africa and Asia. (RTZ, 1981)

The Rossing mine, the largest uranium mine in the world, is located in the centre of the Namib Desert some 70 kilometres north east of the coastal town of Swakopmund. Its construction began in 1974 although substantial surveying and planning had been carried out beforehand.

Commercial production was planned to begin in 1976 with full annual production of 5,000 tonnes of uranium oxide in 1977. However, whilst initial commercial production began on time, design problems prevented Rossing achieving full production as planned. The operating difficulties required major alterations and additions which were put in hand in 1976 adding some \$100 million to the cost of the mine. As a result of the modification programme full production was not achieved until 1979. Senior management changes and efforts to drastically reduce operating costs suggest this was a period of acute financial crisis.

However, with the technical problems overcome and demand for Rossing's uranium at a peak, production for 1980 and 1981 was above rated production but the following year

demand began to fall resulting in a decline in production each year to only 85% capacity in 1985. (see Table A1.1)

Rossing's production is marketed through Rio Tinto South Africa Pty Limited who sell uranium on longterm contracts of between 10 and 20 years, often agreed long periods in advance and at prices well above those on the spot market. The relative stability in the product market resulting from this arrangement has provided significant managerial advantage. This has been reflected in the financial performance of the company which, having recovered most, if not all, its capital costs by 1983, contributed some £134.5 million to RTZ's profits between 1978 and 1985. (see Table A1.2 and Appendix 1 for a full discussion of production and financial performance)

Three distinct phases can be isolated in Rossing's development up to 1985 and can be characterised as

Phase 1 - Feasibility to Initial Production, 1966 - 1977

Phase 2 - Production and Profitability, 1978 - 1982

Phase 3 - Consolidation and Rationalisation, 1982 - 1985

Chapters 6, 7 and 8 trace each of these phases to illustrate the importance of managerial strategies of labour control and how they were developed to meet the particular needs of mine management. Chapter 9 considers the important position of women in Rossing's strategy of labour control throughout the whole period.

Note: Numerical references in brackets refer to unpublished company materials listed at the end of Section B, pp360-365. Full details of unpublished company documentation are provided in the bibliography, pp454-458.

CHAPTER 6

MANAGEMENT STRATEGY AND LABOUR CONTROL AT THE ROSSING MINE PHASE 1: FEASIBILITY TO INITIAL PRODUCTION, 1966-1977.

The first phase of Rossing's development was characterised by a kind of pioneering or 'voortrekker' approach by mine management. The imperative was initially to prove the viability of the ore body and subsequently to bring to reality its productive capacity in the harsh and inhospitable terrain of the Namib Desert. Although the rationality of capitalist organisation and activity were foremost for RTZ management, at mine level the primary concern during this period was more with the technical aspects of construction and processing - "making the thing work" as one manager explained - than with the planned and rational pursuit of profit.

One manager, who had been associated with the mine since 1976, claimed that before 1978 the company had no idea what their cashflow was nor their commitments to suppliers. He commented, "the general manager was too busy trying to get the plant to work". Another manager, referring to Rio Tinto Management Services, who were responsible for managing the construction and

commissioning process, explained that the process "was organised in Johannesburg without bothering to come to see the situation here".

Furthermore, it seems that RTZ is a highly decentralised organisation and that, in the absence of any cashflow by which performance could be measured, mine management operated relatively autonomously during this phase. As a consequence financial control featured as a low priority. However, there was clearly a limit to RTZ's willingness to allow Rossing to operate in this way, as evidenced by phase 2 of the mine's development.

Whilst Phase 1 includes a relatively long and significant period for the mine's development, in terms of management strategy and industrial relations the phase was little different at the end than at the beginning. Although numbers employed rose rapidly over the early period, employment conditions and social relations at the workplace remained characteristic of those in South Africa. (see Chapter 5) Employment was of two types; whites or staff as they were termed, who held all managerial, supervisory, technical and skilled positions; and blacks and coloureds termed dayrates, who were employed as labourers and semi-skilled workers.

Wages were on separate scales and significantly lower for blacks and coloureds than for whites. Black employees were effectively excluded from receiving non-wage benefits such as pensions and medical aid, accommodation for blacks was mainly in ethnically segregated compounds for single men only whilst for whites family housing was provided in Swakopmund, food was provided separately for each group. Indeed, the total apparatus of apartheid which characterised South African and Namibian society was to be found reflected in the organisation of the Rossing mine.

Moreover, with a white Namibian general manager until 1976 and a large proportion of the exclusively white management and foremen coming from South Africa, racism was not only enshrined in workplace structures but prevalent and accepted in workplace relations.

Employment numbers at the outset of surveying in 1966 were around 100, however, this rose rapidly with the sinking of the prospect shaft and the commissioning of a pilot plant. In 1969 there were 928 dayrate employees on the payroll, this had grown by the commencement of commissioning in June 1976 to 1,108 and by December 1977 there were 2,182.

Whilst employment numbers for white staff are not available for the earlier period there were 768 in December 1977. It is reasonable to assume that a similar

ratio of staff to day rate employees (26% of total employment) existed previously.

In respect of employment of dayrate staff an internal report completed in early 1978 is illuminating. (1) The report acknowledges that

nearly 1,000 or over 40% of dayrate employees are therefore in the labourer or assistant category which is an indication that the South African attitude of engaging large numbers of cheap-labour employees has insinuated itself into Rossing.

This fact was confirmed by the sight of numerous dayrate employees standing in groups talking, sitting and even sleeping in various parts of the site.

Strangely, the report goes on to contradict itself on the cost of labourers

Labourers are not cheap at Rossing. Apart from a capital lock-up of a costly house (with betterment), there is an annual minimum wage of R1,546 plus at least 20% or R309 for pension, medical, leave, transportation and other costs, 24% or R371 for overtime (December average 48.6% on normal - assume half productive), and R1,500 per annum for food, making at least R3,700 per annum in all for the lowest paid employee, or an average of about R4,000 for the majority of dayrates.

According to these figures, at the May 1977 exchange rate of R1.49 to £1, the total cost of the typical dayrate employee for one year was just under £2,700. However, a closer examination of conditions and employment costs for these employees suggests that even this low figure is

significantly overstated and that management strategy was in reality closer to the former statement than to the latter as the following discussion illustrates.

Pay, Grading and Social Relations

During 1976 Urwick International, a British-based firm of management consultants completed a major job evaluation and wage and salary restructuring programme. As a result the total personnel complement was raised to 2,400 and an '8-grade wage structure for day rate employees and a new 16-grade salary structure for staff.....reflecting the range of skills and responsibilities available' was introduced. (RTZ, 1977)

This last comment masks the true relationship of staff and dayrate employment at Rossing. The Urwick structure established grades AA to HH, where AA is a labourer and HH is an artisan. However, 38% of dayrate employees were employed in the lowest two grades and over 81% in the lowest four grades. (see Table 6.1)

Furthermore, there were no black and only six coloured employees (these being low grade clerks) in the staff grades and no white employees in the dayrate grades.

TABLE 6.1

ROSSING URANIUM LIMITED

SALARY AND WAGES SCALES, MAY 1977

	Group	Hourly Rate (cents)		Monthly Pay (Rands)		Number of employees			
		(1) Min.	(1) Max.	(2) Min.	(2) Max.	Blacks	Coloureds	Whites	Total
DAY	AA	66	66	136	136	263	0	0	263
	BB	66	76	136	157	225	158	0	383
	CC	76	86	157	178	315	68	0	383
	DD	86	100	178	206	194	162	0	356
RATE	EE	100	115	206	237	33	65	0	98
	FF	120	140	248	289	62	116	0	178
	GG	160	190	330	392	5	26	0	31
	HH	270	270	557	557	0	10	0	10
						1097	605	0	1702
SALA- RIED STAFF	1			300	380	0	1	17	18
	2			320	410	0	0	13	13
	3			355	470	0	0	28	28
	4			405	540	0	0	46	46
	5			465	620	0	1	98	99
	6			535	710	0	0	34	34
	7			610	810	0	4	194	198
	8			700	930	0	0	100	100
	9			800	1070	0	0	83	83
	10			920	1225	0	0	19	19
	11			1050	1400	0	0	9	9
	12 & above			-	-	0		33	33
						0	6	674	680
						1097	611	674	2382

1. During probationary period of maximum three months this is 10c lower for new employees.
2. Includes holiday pay.
3. The above figures represent the rate paid for working a basic 197 hours per month. (Overtime is paid additionally.)

SOURCE: RTZ, 1977

In the year prior to restructuring all white workers and a single coloured employee had been categorised as salaried staff whilst no white and all black employees fell in the dayrate category. (RTZ, 1976) Thus, the new Urwick structure changed the relationship between black and white employees and dayrate and staff grades very little.

In the absence of a free labour market for black employees, from 1974 RUL used the Poverty Datum Line (PDL) and Household Subsistence Level (HSL), calculated by the South African-based Institute of Planning and Research, as a standard against which to establish pay. RTZ explained

While the PDL is strictly individual and different for every household, the HSL is for a hypothetical family and is regarded as a practical guideline to commerce and industry in determining wage levels. The HSL for the lowest paid black employee, which was calculated for the family of an adult man, an adult woman and four children of varying ages (in Swakopmund), was R136.52 per month in October 1976, a rise of 9.1% over the October 1975 figure.....The adjusted HSL for the Rossing area is R134.32, which reflects the lower rentals for company housing. (RTZ, 1977)

This method of calculating wages for black employees was used by many of the larger companies in South Africa. Implicit in the approach is the acceptance of the status quo in terms of both the absolute living standards of blacks and their standards relative to white employees.

Rossing clearly accepted both of these factors and in January 1977 set minimum monthly pay for a black employee at R136, just slightly above subsistence level for the average family. However, with inflation hovering around 10%, the HSL was out of date by the time of its introduction and, since wage rates were set for a one year period, by December 1977 minimum pay was well below the subsistence level.

Pay and conditions for white employees was established in relation to a competitive package within a free labour market. There is no reliable data regarding staff salaries during the early period of this phase. However, some indication is provided by Rogers (1978) in her interviews with black Rossing employees in late 1976, shortly before the introduction of the Urwick structure.

Black workers claimed that their wages were falling in relation to those of coloureds and whites. Black workers are divided into three classes, the lowest (contract and foreign labourers) earning between 24 and 60 cents per hour, the middle class from 45 cents to R1 per hour and the senior class from 60 cents to R1.50 per hour. The whites, however get between R2.60 and R5.00 per hour, with some whites in management earning R1,500 to R2,000 per month.

In 1977 the new Urwick pay scales for dayrate employees ranged between R136 and R557 for a standard 197 hours per month including holiday pay. For salaried staff the range was R300 to R1400 for the same standard month. Salaries

for grade 12 and above were not disclosed. However, assuming they rose on a similar incremental basis as grades 1 to 11, the top salary would have been of the order of R2,500 per month. There were 33 people in grades 12 and above. (see Table 6.1)

Analysis of these figures shows that the 81% of dayrate employees who fell within the lowest four grades earned a maximum of R206 a month. Among the salaried workers the picture was very different. Over 65% were in grade 7 and above, earning between R610 and R2,500 per month. Taking the mid-point of the salary range for each grade, the average monthly pay for black dayrates was R257 or £172, whilst for staff in grades 1 to 11 the average was R696 or £467, almost two and three quarter times higher.

The basis of personnel allocation into specific grades was, as in South Africa, clearly influenced by race. Whilst RTZ claimed the Urwick International system was based on the 'range of skills and responsibilities available', this is highly dubious for black and coloured employees although it may have been an important criteria for white professional and managerial staff. Rogers (1978) again provides some insights in this respect.

Many of the whites, moreover, are unskilled labourers, but still earn more than skilled blacks and many times the pay of unskilled blacks. One worker commented "The highest paid black man I know receives R350 per month.....but the lowest paid white man I know receives R370 per month".

Interviews conducted in January 1977 and reported in the South African Labour Bulletin (SALB, 1978) included black respondents who either had worked or were employed at Rossing and provide additional insight into work structures.

One respondent commented on the large number of employees from Europe, particularly Britain, France and America, most of whom were in technical jobs. However, most of the whites were South African as the respondent explained

All the officers today, they're only boers.....mostly foremen. There is great dissatisfaction that they are whites, especially migrants that's coming from abroad. And because a Boer boy is being made captain or foreman. But (such a person) knows nothing about the job. He has failed his Standard Eight and he's coming there, he's promoted and they give him a large sum of money. The man who knows how to work with machinery and so on under him is being mishandled every time by such a boss.

In some departments I think you'll find more foremen there than workers. We get supervisors, assistant supervisors, foremen, chargehand - don't know what kind of a job is a chargehand doing! - assistant foreman, then.....I don't know.

On the company's wage policy a Rossing employee explained that a new worker's

starting grade when he's looking for an ordinary kind of a job - what they call a labourer starting on the AB grade - its approximately 48 cents per hour. When he's looking for a skilled job - for instance, a guy like me, I completed my matric, and my starting grade was 69 cents per hour. After approximately 6 or 7 months they gave me an increase, and it was 96 cents an hour, and my present rate is R1.03 per hour.

One of the few blacks in Namibia to have been educated to University level related the discrimination which led to his disadvantage compared to qualified whites

They started me on R1.32 because I was doing my BSc two this year. After three months I wanted to ask for an increment. They told me I was not doing the job suitable for an increment; while I'm not given the job I can do.

Such discrimination was corroborated by a report of the 'Dayrate Task Force' set up by Rossing senior management in August 1976 to investigate individual and group grievances of dayrate workers. This reported that Damaras with matriculation were paid much less than whites with matriculation although the subjects taken were different, blacks generally not having taken mathematics and science.

(2)

As Rogers (1978) concludes

Skill, in fact, appears to have little to do with wage scales, which are determined more by race, "ethnic groups", and political views.

The last two points are particularly important when it comes to wage increases. As the SALB (1978) explains

In the complete absence of any collective bargaining institutions, workers get wage increases either through unilateral, across-the-board decisions by management, or by discreet bargaining with their immediate supervisors.

One interviewee, asked about the way in which pay increases were awarded at Rossing, commented

No.....you don't have to ask for it, perhaps the foreman with whom you're working, if he feels like giving you an increase, perhaps he is satisfied with the job you are doing for him, then he gives you an increase..... At first it depends mainly on the foreman and its apart from the annual increase which is granted by the company.

The same situation was true for promotion. If the dayrate's relationship with the foreman was good then the chances of promotion and a wage rise above the annual company rise were high; if the relationship was poor then the chances of promotion or a wage rise were remote. The foreman thus played a crucial role for the dayrate employee in the terms and quality of work available.

The relationship was a highly individualistic one in which the degree to which the black worker was able and prepared to satisfy the expectations of the white foreman dictated their position in the company. Gordon (1977) graphically captures the essence of this relationship which he argues is dependent on the ability of blacks to develop 'social graces' within the rules of 'etiquette'. (see Chapter 5)

The importance of etiquette at Rossing during this period is illustrated by a report of the Dayrate Task Force which reported significant "bullying of blacks by whites, especially Afrikaners" who "used bad language and sacked blacks for the slightest thing". (3) A number of reports on individual instances of this sort were submitted to the general manager, however, no action was taken. One such report concerned a complaint by one Phillipus Butkus

a clerk in the open pit offices who alleges that while employed as a clerk in the laboratory he was accused by Mr W Jooste, as being a communist agitator and instigator, because he refused to clean toilets. (4)

The statements made by the five parties involved clearly illustrate the importance not only of etiquette but also of employees' political views as Rogers (1978) argued. The importance of the latter is further illustrated by a Rossing worker's description of his experience on his first day of work at Rossing.

The first day when I came there, I was told that I mustn't discuss politics there at the job by the foreman. (SALB, 1978))

Gordon (1978) illustrates the relationship between etiquette and politics commenting that

the trick is to be labelled a 'good boy' by one white employer, and on that basis to try and establish ties of patronage with whites..... (for a black) To protest individually without this supportive (white) base would inevitably result in the black being labelled a 'dirty Commie' and punished accordingly.

However, as Gordon (1978) points out, the path is a tortuous one for the black employee since too close a relationship with the white employer will take the worker beyond the acceptable boundaries of 'brotherhood' and lead to their being labelled a stooge or a sell-out. (see Chapter 5) It is undoubtedly the consequence of this relationship that led Rogers (1978) to comment that at Rossing

It is alleged that most of the blacks in the senior class who earn the highest salaries are those who are working closely with the whites and are regular supporters of the South African occupation's Turnhalle talks.

Recruitment and Housing

Provision of accommodation during this period was closely associated with recruitment policy and both were influenced by the apartheid structures of the South African administration. (see Chapters 4 and 5) However, whilst the legislation restricted Rossing management's options in this respect, it did not dictate them. Thus, the legislation should be seen as a backdrop against which Rossing management made specific strategic decisions - decisions which had significant implications for the operation of the mine's industrial relations strategy.

An ideal world for Rossing would have seen the company in a local labour market well supplied with various levels of management with the appropriate technical and professional skills and expertise as well as a ready supply of artisans, semi and unskilled workers. However, none of these existed. Not only was a bouyant labour market absent from Swakopmund and its surrounds but, with the exception of unskilled employees, all of whom were black and the majority only semi-proletarianised, it was absent from Namibia.

For most qualified professional and technical staff supply only existed outside Namibia and indeed for some, outside

Southern Africa. Moreover, given the isolated and harsh nature of the mine location, the necessary infrastructure to attract and retain any of these categories, other than contract workers, was missing.

The attraction and retention of professional, technical and managerial staff was exacerbated by the continuing boom in world mining throughout the early 1970s. One manager explained "one of the major problems was the people who were in charge, anyone was grabbed off the labour market, there was terrific turnover", whilst another manager claimed "anyone who could speak Afrikaans was taken on as a foreman", as long as they were white. Approximately one third of foremen were local, one third from South Africa and one third employed from overseas.

It was no easier to attract artisans and as a result local contractors were used to carry out a substantial amount of work. In 1976 Rogers (1978) found that more than 38 different subcontracting companies were being used by Rossing.

The difficulties of attracting professional and technical staff resulted in a young and inexperienced managerial structure. As one manager commented on the period "there was a complete breakdown in organisation despite very high educational qualifications".

The beginning of this period saw only around one hundred employees on site. Some professional and technical staff were drawn from South Africa, employed through Rio Tinto Management Services in Johannesburg, with a small number coming from Namibia and the remainder drawn from other Rio Tinto Zinc mines. Black labourers, some semi-skilled but most unskilled, coming mainly from Ovamboland and recruited through SWANLA, were employed on one year contracts.

Given the legal structures it was inevitable that mine management should adopt the recruitment and employment structures existing throughout Namibian industry at the time.

Nevertheless, at the RTZ annual general meeting on 17th May 1972 Sir Val Duncan, the RTZ chairman, commented on the employment of blacks at Rossing

I am totally opposed to the contract labour system and will have nothing to do with it.....We are going to employ our labour without the contract system. We have always laid tremendous stress on settled communities with families and we intend to do just that there.....We don't have to go into the contract system. We unfortunately cannot employ any large quantity of Ovambos, because they refuse to allow their womenfolk to come down into our area. We are not prepared to employ large quantities of bachelor labour. (Cronje and Cronje, 1979)

Duncan's comments denied reality. Recruitment and employment structures at Rossing had not changed since 1966 and by 1972 over one thousand migrant workers were employed on one year contracts. A substantial proportion of these workers were from Ovambo although they included Hereros, South Africans and Malawians. (Cronje and Cronje, 1979)

There are two explanations for Sir Val Duncan's statement. The first is that international pressure on South Africa to leave Namibia was at a peak with the International Court of Justice having ruled in 1971 that its presence was illegal. His statement was an effort to placate the RTZ critics who were vociferously arguing that RTZ should withdraw from its involvement in the Rossing project.

The second, and related reason, is that whilst the final decision to go ahead with the mine was not made until the following year, it is clear that by 1972 viability was well established and that commitment to going ahead was strong. Bearing in mind that by this stage at least two contracts for the supply of uranium had been signed (see Appendix 1), that substantial sums had been invested and loan finance secured.

Although the feasibility study undertaken to assess the viability of the mine was not completed until 1973, it is

clear from Sir Val Duncan's comments that an employment strategy had already been formulated. The strategy for black employees took both account and advantage of the existing apartheid legislation which restricted blacks resident in the homelands from living as a family outside their homeland areas.

However, Rossing was a mere twelve kilometres from the Damara homeland. Thus, Sir Val Duncan's remarks referred to an intended policy of building family accommodation for Damara employees on the edge of the homeland from where they would be bussed in to the mine site for work.

As Rossing (1980) itself explains

It all started when in May 1970 Rossing held preliminary discussions with the Administrator of Namibia on the question of how and where to provide housing for the future employees of the potential uranium mine at Rossing.

A committee consisting of various government departments, nearby municipalities and Rossing took part in discussions on facilities, including housing that would be required by the mine. In February 1971 the committee recommended that the existing town of Swakopmund was suitable for housing some employees, but that a new town should be established near Arandis railway siding in Damaraland, 12 kilometres from the Rossing mine, to house the unskilled and some semi-skilled employees.

Subsequent negotiations resulted in an agreement in 1974 between the authorities and Rossing for the establishment of Arandis. Rossing undertook to construct 600 houses, together with electricity supply, water, sewerage, roads and storm-water drains, and to provide the other services and amenities - schools, public buildings and health care - which are essential to a permanent community. The authorities would refund full cost of the infrastructure and pay R3,000 towards the cost of each house. Rossing in turn agreed to pay all the additional housing costs, which were also R3,000 per house.

The 'some employees' whom it was agreed were to be housed in Swakopmund consisted white and coloured employees; black employees were to be accommodated either at the mine or at Arandis.

There were a number of significant advantages to Rossing in the adoption of such a strategy:

1. RTZ could take a moral advantage by making such statements as that made at the 1972 RTZ annual general meeting to bolster its international reputation as well as improving its image inside the country.

Despite their rejection of the International Court of Justice's 1971 ruling, a major consideration for RTZ was the political future of the country. (see Appendix 1) Whilst the feasibility study showed a payback period of only about four years (although in the event payback was not achieved until between 1983 and 1984 as a result of

the plant modifications programme), the initial assessment of the life of the mine was about 20 years. Thus, RTZ had the longer term operation of the mine to consider as well as short-term stability and profitability.

RTZ was endeavouring to finely balance the conflicting elements of their interests which meant: firstly, maintaining a good working relationship with the South African authorities, who also had a controlling interest in the company; secondly, endearing itself to the the indigenous black population who would control a future independent Namibia; and thirdly, building its image and relations in the international community.

2. Along with white and coloured employees, who were to live in Swakopmund, blacks would be living in family accommodation. The costs of such accommodation and infrastructure were relatively small. The development of Arandis was a joint venture between Rossing and the Damara Authority costing R7 million of which Rossing was liable for only R2 million. (RUL, 1980) However, there were significant benefits to the company of adopting this strategy compared with the provision of traditional compound accommodation on the mine site.

In particular the need to provide food for employees would no longer be the responsibility of the company, nor would

the provision of health care, policing and other services and infrastructure. Furthermore, creating a settled community with family presence was more likely to lead to the development of an industrial culture supportive of the mine needs. Such a development increased employee dependence since it implied the loss of traditional farming land in the homelands and the option of semi-proletarianised existence. Since dismissal from Rossing was also to mean eviction from the family home, increased industrial discipline and employee compliance would result. Moreover, although Rossing employees were paid relatively well in comparison to other employees in Namibia, they were nevertheless to pay a rent for their accommodation and services in Arandis, a cost traditionally borne by the mining company.

3. The contract labour system did not actually suit the planned operational needs of the Rossing mine. Whilst every other mine in Namibia was operated using large quantities of cheap black unskilled labour, the Rossing mine was building a highly sophisticated, capital intensive process which did not lend itself to operation by an unskilled, semi-proletarianised and transient workforce. Rather, what was required was a fully proletarianised, settled and trained workforce committed to industrial values who would be committed to employment at Rossing. As Rossing (1979) itself argues

The concept of a stable settled community at Rossing was fundamental to success in a highly capital-intensive operation.

It was argued earlier that mine management operated with a high degree of autonomy from its parent organisation. Such autonomy was not inconsistent with policy statements made by senior RTZ management at annual general meetings. Indeed, whilst it was true that plans had been laid to employ blacks on a settled family basis by 1972, mine management did not make the decision to end the use of the migrant labour system until some six years later in March 1978.

Before such a policy could be implemented the accommodation and supporting infrastructure had to be put in place. In this respect it was not until the end of 1974 that contracts for the building of Arandis were concluded. The planned development included 600 houses

each 114 square metres in extent and consisted of an entrance porch, large central family room, three bedrooms with built-in cupboards, a lounge or fourth bedroom, bathroom with toilet, kitchen/diningroom with electric cooker, back verandah with laundry facilities and storeroom. (RUL, 1980)

Leisure facilities were also planned to include a soccer field, athletics track, grandstand and changingroom, netball fields and tennis court.

The houses became progressively ready for occupation between June 1975 and December 1976. In mid-1975 Rossing agreed to build, on behalf of the Damara Authority, a medical clinic, a primary school for 500 pupils, administration offices and eighteen houses for government officials and businessmen. A police station and magistrates court were built by the government authorities and a development corporation agreed to finance the construction of a shopping centre incorporating two general dealers, a liquor store and a baker. The Catholic community decided to build a church. (RUL, 1980)

Thus, it was not until some four years after Sir Val Duncan's announcement that the first houses for the families of black employees became available. However, even then the mine continued to employ the 'large quantities of bachelor labour' that Sir Val had denied were employed in 1972. With only 600 houses in Arandis and some 1,097 black and 605 coloured employees, many of whom had to be accommodated on a single basis due to a shortage of housing in Tamariskia, the coloured suburb of Swakopmund, there remained well over 1,000 employees accommodated in single-status compounds with no prospect of being offered family accommodation.

By this stage, however, Sir Val Duncan had made another bold assertion at the 1975 RTZ annual general meeting held in May.

.....I should be very surprised if (Arandis) isn't by far the best African township in Southern Africa by the time its finished.....Now we believe that all these races working with us will have tremendously high standards, their amenities will be first class.....I expect that we will in fact have these people working with us in a harmonious manner, with a very good, bouyant wage policy, splendid living conditions.....we are really so far as possible naturally trying to look at people without feelings of colour about it. (Cronje and Cronje, 1979.)

The reality was rather different. Five camps had been set up adjacent to the mine to accommodate the growing number of employees early in the period. These camps were racially and ethnically segregated to accommodate single male whites, Coloureds, Ovambos, Hereros and Xhosas. As late as 1977 Rogers (1978) reported

a reliable source calls the workers' quarters the worst in Namibia. Each room is shared by about sixteen workers, sometimes as many as twenty. In the Coloured camp, each room is shared by only four workers, and in the European quarters each worker has his own room. The general facilities are equally discriminatory, with furniture, cupboards and bedding provided for the whites but not for the black workers. The toilets are also quite different; the blacks' toilet is just one long open building, with no privacy at all.

One Rossing worker described the living conditions in the black quarters as follows

The living conditions are very bad, especially in the Ovambo compound. There are a lot of people in the room, maybe ten of those double beds.....maybe two at a - maybe four at a double bed. (SALB, 1978)

In addition the facilities for blacks in the compounds were sparse. A management inspection of facilities and conditions in the black compounds, carried out as late as 1978, reported a complete lack of sport and organised events or facilities other than volleyball. (5)

Claims by workers concerning their living conditions were far from exaggerated. At the May 1977 RTZ annual general meeting the new chairman, Sir Mark Turner, accepted criticisms of 'appalling' housing conditions at Rossing arguing that they were being rectified. (Cronje and Cronje, 1979)

Even though the new houses in Arandis were ready for occupation from June 1975 they were slow to be occupied. RTZ themselves reported that the first families moved in during May 1976 and at the beginning of 1977 only 302 of the 600 houses were occupied by families whilst there were '194 single status employees occupy a further 42 houses' (RTZ, 1977) leaving 256 houses empty.

Since only Damaras could live in Arandis at the time this suggests only 496 were employed leaving some 1,206 black

and coloured workers housed elsewhere. Of these 163 coloureds were accommodated in new houses in Tamariskia leaving 1,043 black and coloured employees who, at the beginning of 1977, continued to be accommodated as single men in appalling compound accommodation on the mine site. Similar figures are confirmed in the report of a BBC television team who visited the mine in early 1977. (Cronje and Cronje, 1979)

Rossing had been faced with a problem of recruiting greater numbers of employees than had been originally anticipated. As RTZ (1977) reported

The technical problems at the mine have resulted in a temporary increase in the number of Rossing employees black, white and coloured and, in addition, the task of training and acclimatising the local people to an industrial life-style has proved more difficult than originally foreseen.

Consequently, black workers with some industrial experience from the north are being employed and living on single status.

Migrant workers from Ovambo and Kavango had been employed since the beginning of surveying work in 1966. Since both Tsumeb and CDM as well as smaller Namibian mines employed their black employees on contract from the northern regions, Rossing was far more likely to find workers conversant with the expectations of an industrial

lifestyle and with developed industrial skills in the northern homelands than in Damaraland.

The lack of industrial experience and discipline amongst Damaras proved more problematic than had been anticipated and threw Rossing's accommodation and recruitment strategy into disarray. The policy to employ blacks on a permanent settled basis had led management to develop Arandis with the intention of employing Damaras. However, since only Damaras could live in Arandis RUL was unable to provide family accommodation to Ovambos and Kavangos who, it now transpired, best suited the needs of the mine. This was reflected in the company's inability to fill the houses in Arandis, as discussed above, and led RUL to conclude an agreement with the Damaraland Government at the end of December 1977 for Arandis housing to be open to all black employees.

Furthermore, the desire to employ fewer Damaras was influenced by a strike of residents of Arandis in November 1976 (see below) following which there was a drop in Damara employment from around 700 in late 1976 (SALB, 1978) to 496 in early 1977.

In Swakopmund housing for whites progressed more rapidly than for coloured employees. By 1977 449 families and 123 single people were accommodated in company housing in

Vineta, a white suburb of Swakopmund. The accommodation consisted of 'three-bedroomed detached houses and two-bedroomed duplex flats for families, and single accommodation'. (RTZ, 1977)

In addition some white employees had either purchased or rented their own accommodation for which they received a monthly housing allowance from Rossing. However, there was still a shortfall in provision which was being provided for through the purchase of a motel, later to become the Rossing Country Club, which provided temporary accommodation both in rooms and the siting of mobile homes and caravans in the grounds. As a result of the provisions made in Swakopmund the camp providing accommodation for white employees on the mine site was closed during 1976.

The early decision to accommodate white workers in Swakopmund was made on the basis of two main considerations. Firstly that of cost; the personnel manager claimed that the mine was established with the expectation of a much smaller white workforce. Thus, the costs of transporting these employees daily to and from Swakopmund was less than the costs of "establishing all the facilities for whites that would have been necessary, for example schools, medical facilities, entertainment etc". This may have been true even for the number of

whites that were eventually employed, 674 in 1977. (RTZ, 1977) Secondly, it was felt that in order to attract and retain professionally and technically qualified white employees and their families they needed to be offered residence in a community developed beyond that of mining employees alone.

The reasons for the accommodation of coloureds in Swakopmund were similar to those for white employees. Coloured employees numbered 611 in 1977. They enjoyed greater freedoms than did black Namibians and had tended to occupy semi-skilled and skilled positions. (see Chapter 5) Rossing required workers of higher skills and it was important that employment was made attractive to this group. Having said this, the financial costs of the provision of the separate facilities required by law on the mine site made their accommodation in Swakopmund and their transportation a more attractive financial proposition.

Nevertheless, the provision of family housing for coloured employees was of lower priority than the provision for whites. By early 1977 only 163 out of a planned 246 houses had been built, despite the fact that there were only 63 fewer coloured than white employees. The remaining 448 coloured workers remained employed on single status and were accommodated at the mine camp.

Other Features of Employment

Closely related to the provision of accommodation is the provision of food. Although traditionally provided within the remuneration package, a charge for the provision of food to employees living in single accommodation was, like accommodation, deducted directly from wages at what Rossing claim was a subsidised rate. However, it is unlikely that mining management knew what the costs of provision of food and accommodation were. Such calculations were not made until 1977 when RTZ (1977) reported

Single status dayrate employees provided with board and accommodation pay R20.00 per month. The monthly cost to the company of providing three meals per day per person is R63.00 (R86.70 including service and labour) or R42.00 (R68.10 including service and labour) according to the employees preferred diet.

However, the level of subsidy is misleading. Here 'preferred diet' refers to the differential provision of food for black and white employees which for blacks, despite paying the same charge was, like their accommodation, extremely poor. Rogers (1978) concludes that the food provision was a major problem for black employees and that

they have no choice and no variety in their diet: maize porridge, meat, bread and lemons or apples. The whites on the other hand have a selection of different food items to choose from, including cool drinks and deserts.

Once again the poor quality of food for black workers is corroborated by the 'Dayrate Task Force'. Having visited Arandis, "which was then considered to be the kaffir location and was built on an apartheid basis by the government", and seen the breakfast served in the dining hall, one member held discussions with a group of approximately 20 Damara single residents. The subsequent report described the poor condition of the kitchens, the "disgusting" quality of the food and the "bullying of the black residents by Afrikaners". (6)

Such bad feeling resulted from what black employees considered to be the 'poor quality and high cost' of the food, that in November 1976 it became the focus of a strike by residents of Arandis. (SALB, 1978)

The strike was the first on record at Rossing. There is no evidence that the general strike of 1971/2 was joined by any Rossing employees (see Chapter 5) perhaps because the mine was isolated from the main centres of industrial employment.

However, the absence of strike activity up to 1976 is by no means an indication of the satisfaction of black workers with their employment conditions. As discussed in Chapter 5, the expression of dissatisfaction at work under the repressive conditions of the apartheid structure, tended to manifest itself in more covert forms.

The strike in 1976 started on 18th November when the Damara residents of Arandis, who accounted for about 700 of the 1,700 strong black workforce, refused to work following complaints about the quality and cost of food. The Guardian reported the strike on 23rd November claiming that workers were paying just under one fifth of their average monthly wage on food, whether eaten or not. (Cronje and Cronje, 1979)

Like many such actions the strike focused on one tangible issue although it was an expression of more general dissatisfaction. A related complaint was that workers were unable to eat the food for which they had paid because long and irregular hours of work prevented them attending the dining hall during the limited mealtimes. (SALB, 1978) In addition, the general manager claimed that workers whose families had moved to Arandis had objected to a rule forbidding them taking food home from the canteen. Pay also seems to have been an issue as does the provision of medical care. (Cronje and Cronje, 1979)

Furthermore, typical of labour action in the Namibia (see Chapter 5), the strike was not planned, as one striker reported

There was dissatisfaction concerning conditions of employment. The main thing was actually food - the meals we got and the salaries we were granted. It wasn't a planned thing, it wasn't scheduled before.....it just came spontaneously. (SALB, p 40)

On 20th November the Guardian reported that eight truckloads of South African riot police had been moved into the mine as a back-up to Rossing's own security police 'in case of trouble'. However, the South African Police were not deployed despite an initially hostile response to the strike by RTZ's general manager for external relations and public relations in Southern Africa, Mr Fred Stiglingh, who said that following unsuccessful attempts to negotiate, the Damara workers would be replaced or dismissed if they did not return to work. (Cronje and Cronje, 1979)

Three days later the Guardian reported Stiglingh, in marked contrast to his earlier comments, as saying 'as far as he was concerned, the men were free to strike and he was quite prepared to talk to them about their greivances'. (Cronje and Cronje, 1979) This change of heart reflected an increasing RTZ sensitivity to international criticism at a time of growing international

interest in Namibia. Nevertheless, despite the strike lasting five days and the workers returning to work only after eliciting a promise to improve the food, no meaningful improvements were made. (SALB, 1978)

We have already seen that following the strike, between late 1976 and early 1977, the number of Damaras employed fell sharply. Although Rossing explained this change of employment policy in rather different terms (see page 132), they were accused after the strike of adopting a policy of 'attempting to combat worker militancy by playing off various ethnic groups against each other', a strategy implicit in the structures of apartheid and manipulated by management. (SALB, 1978) Such a charge is supported by Rossing employees interviewed a few weeks after the strike, one of whom commented

If (a work-seeker) is a Damara-speaking guy, then it was usually in the beginning easier for him to get appointed. But nowadays it isn't. Perhaps it is due to the recent happenings..... I can take statistics: from each group of 30 people (ie Damaras) who come down to get appointment, there is only three or five who nowadays get jobs. But normally it was - if, for example, 15 Ovambo guys and 20 Damaran-speaking guys come and apply for jobs, the situation was such that the majority of the Ovambo-speaking guys were turned down and the Damaras were employed. But nowadays the situation is vice versa. The Damara-speaking groups at Arandis - the employers, they fear that these people will somehow in the near future have another strike.....

.....they know that those recruits are aware of their bargaining power. They have proved that their power was effective, they can use it again. I think it is the main reason why (they replaced) some of the Damaras, to get a balance. All the people living at Arandis - if they strike again then there is a balance. The other group at the compounds can go and work in their place. (SALB, 1978)

Thus, a compelling explanation for the change in employment pattern was the effort to minimise potential industrial disruption by adopting 'divide and rule' tactics amongst the various black ethnic groups. Indeed, the company can claim some success in this respect. As one Rossing employee commented following the 1976 strike

The fact is that the people do realise what power they have got in themselves - even up there in Arandis. In comparison with the people staying in the camps, it's a small group they have in Arandis, but they do realise that power. But the one thing which according to me isn't good is that they (ie workers in the compounds) just see them as an ethnic group. That isn't good. They just refer to them as 'Damaras' and that isn't very good, that's hurting. (SALB, 1978)

Further evidence of company success in this respect is provided by an incident some 18 months earlier when serious fighting broke out between Ovambos and a group of Xhosa workers. Some fifteen people were reported seriously injured and police, assisted by special South African mobile army units from Walvis Bay military base, were used to quosh the unrest. Full-scale violence was

reported to have started when one or more people died in clashes between rival groups of workers.

According to a white Rossing employee, the Ovambo workers had been taunted by the Xhosa workers who were making derisory remarks. The Ovambos claimed that the Xhosa workers had been brought into Namibia 'to take the bread from their mouths'. (Cronje and Cronje, 1979) As the Cronjes comment, 'Whatever the immediate reasons, the clash had its roots in the accentuation of ethnic differences under apartheid policies', the effect of which was to encourage inter group rivalry and inhibit the development of workforce cohesion which could oppose managerial control.

An aggravating factor in such outbursts was undoubtedly the conditions under which black employees lived in the Rossing camps. These were exacerbated by the likelihood of intrusion, without warning and at any time, by the police.

Compound raids were essential for the effective enforcement of the pass laws and other apartheid legislation (see Chapter 5) and were regular occurrences in the Rossing camps. Rossing management blamed much of the destructive behaviour of the compound residents on 'illegals' and through their own security police

maintained a close relationship with the South African Police.

It is instructive to consider two company reports concerning 'illegals' which, although emanating from phase two of Rossing's development, are nevertheless enlightening for the earlier period. The first is a report of a visit by a Rossing manager to the Ovambo compound an extract from which throws some light on the company approach to the illegal camp residents.

The inspections which were taking place sporadically in the township were inflammatory and not thought to be a suitable way of controlling the illegals in the area. The practice of making small forays and picking up one or two illegals, and using dogs in the township, were creating aggravation, frustration amongst residents, and would sooner or later probably lead to an incident or an outbreak. The control on hostels as understood and practiced in other areas was that of a thorough and complete inspection once every few months where a total cleanout was made, and then the residents were left unharassed for a period until the next inspection. (7)

The second report provides some insight into the response of camp residents to the company policy for the control of 'illegals' and was written by a Namibian anthropologist, Dr Beatrice Sandelowsky. Sandelowsky was commissioned by the mine to carry out a research programme to establish reasons for the existence of certain personnel problems, notably 'illegal residence, absenteeism and accommodation', and to suggest measures to 'alleviate if

not solve the difficulties'. The eighth report contains the following comments.

The conflict that gave rise to the stone throwing event at A-Camp (Ovambo) with the subsequent pillaging and destruction of property some weeks ago demarcated clearly the boundaries around certain groups. It showed up a feeling of solidarity in the population of A-Camp which includes the 'illegals'. A strong stand was taken against 'security', 'the mine' and the SAP (South African Police) in that order. The bonds of 'brotherhood' between the 'illegals' and the workers at A-Camp were illustrated by: a) 'illegals' denying that they knew or were related to anyone in A-Camp; b) workers at the camp defending the 'illegals' and contributing money to get those that were arrested out of custody. (8)

Sandelowsky's comments illustrate the cohesion that developed amongst camp residents. As Gordon (1978) argues 'Brotherhood stresses helping one's fellow brother particularly in the face of white oppression and above all never informing on one's brothers'. The existence of 'brotherhood' and the collective explosions of destructive behaviour can be seen as a means of surviving the indignity and stress generated by the system under which blacks laboured.

If anything, control of the camps was more stringent during the earlier period. Rossing employees describe regular harrassment, police arriving drunk at the camps or sometimes early in the morning while the workers were asleep, accompanied by dogs and armed with knobkerries,

and assaulting residents for no reason. Such raids were not only a constant threat to liberty and security, but also to the material possessions which Rossing workers claimed were stolen by police during raids. Although the Ovambo compound seemed to attract greater attention than others such activity effected all black residents. (SALB, 1978)

Workers clearly understood the function of police raids, not only for the enforcement of the apartheid legislation but also for the intimidation and control of the workforce. As one Rossing worker commented

But that is to control the masses. There is a great fear that if the Ovambo-speaking group start to strike, then it will be the very great breakdown of the economy. It is what they have to do to make them fear to do anything, and to think each for himself before coming together to discuss their problems. If they have always the feeling that the police are near, the police can strike and then.....so the feeling to do something will not (enter) their minds. (SALB, 1978)

It is interesting in this respect to note that a raid on the compounds took place just a few days after the 1976 strike had ended, undoubtedly with the intention of intimidating the compound residents and discouraging them from joining the strike. Rogers (1978) described it as 'the worst raid of this kind' and reported that people were beaten up by the police and attacked by dogs.

Workplace responses of black employees to their employment conditions took many forms. Sporadic strikes, violence and the destruction of employers' property were all common, as indeed were excessive drinking, drug taking and theft. Sandelowsky's reports provide some insights in terms of the latter three factors.

It is difficult to establish precisely the extent of alcohol consumption and drug taking since these constitute, as Gordon (1978) argues, areas of the 'private culture' of the 'brotherhood screen' which 'no sociologist..... can ever hope to penetrate'. Because of this any statistics undoubtedly significantly understate the problem and dismissal statistics for abuse in these respects will further underestimate the extent of their use. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that Sandelowsky reported in 1978 that in the eight months between February and September some 20 dayrate workers were dismissed for 'alcoholism or drug abuse', representing about 1% of the workforce. (9)

Concerning theft, Sandelowsky comments regarding her investigations of Arandis and A-Camp

Theft is rife in both places. Incidents of stone throwing seem to increase. The rift between we vs the mine or simply 'others' seems to deepen.

.....Stealing seems to be the order of the day and where the stolen goods belong to a company an almost 'sportsmanship' type element seems to enter. (10)

The Security Manager reported that theft during this early period "was very high". He recalled one incident in which a company minibus was stolen and later found in Ovamboland broken down and abandoned. Another white manager who arrived at the mine in 1980 having worked in Southern Africa for some years reported "rumours throughout Southern Africa about fortunes to be made from fiddles" at Rossing during this period. Seemingly theft was not the sole prerogative of the black workforce.

One consequence of the 1976 strike was that Rossing set up liaison committees 'to provide an effective channel for communication'. (RTZ, 1977) The trend was imported from South Africa where such committees had been initiated under the recently revised 'Bantu' labour law. Questioned on their introduction a worker from Walvis Bay commented

They have started in the factories to establish works committees, liaison committees and so forth. But if you really look at it, it's just to avoid trade unions being established. The works committees and the liaison committees, they in fact do not have much power. They can only recommend, and then always it is that this matter will be taken up. But its only to postpone the problem. (SALB, 1978)

The liaison committees at Rossing comprised 12 elected members, 2 Management representatives and a chairman from management. They were to meet formally once every month with agendas distributed and minutes being kept 'to ensure action on problems and grievances'. (RTZ, 1977)

RTZ omitted to mention in their public relations material that the committees were based on the existing ethnic divisions. Furthermore, they were from the outset rejected by the workforce. As one Rossing employee explained when asked if the liaison committee representatives were elected or appointed

They are appointed. They *should* have been elected, but there was dissatisfaction. Most people rejected it, so it didn't work - so the management themselves appointed these people. (SALB, 1978)

Conditions under which employees worked at Rossing during this early period posed a serious risk to health especially for blacks who carried out all the manual work. The Loss Control Manager reported that in 1976 when he was appointed, "People were dying like flies, the accident rate was seventy per one million man hours, its now (in 1985) down to between one and two". With an estimated seven million hours worked on the mine in 1976, this suggests the number of accidents was of the order of 490 during the year. Nevertheless the Loss Control Manager

reported that the general manager "didn't care". By 1978 the accident rate had fallen to 17.7 or 114 accidents in the year. Thereafter the rate fell rapidly to just under three in 1981.

Compensation for injury was a bureaucratic and poorly administered process which led in many cases to black workers who had suffered industrial injury receiving nothing. Rogers (1978) reports that where relatives had been killed at the mine 'the family is "paid off" with a small lump sum - in one case, R400'. However, 'injured workers were often sacked without compensation or arrangements for proper treatment'. (SALB, 1978)

It has been recognised for some years that uranium miners face an increased risk of contracting cancer although it may not develop until several years after initial exposure. In most industrialised countries it is standard practice to keep a register recording miners' exposure to radium dust. No such record existed at Rossing.

Furthermore, during his visit to the mine in 1977 Sir Mark Turner expressed his "particular concern" about the high level of dust in the mine pit. This issue was pursued at the RTZ Annual General Meeting in 1977 by Dr Sue Barlowe, a medical scientist, who argued that there was "not a single uranium oxide mine in the world" which has not

recorded an abnormally high incidence of cancer of the respiratory tract among its employees. Sir Mark Turner is reported to have been "somewhat surprised" by her remarks. (Cronje and Cronje, 1979)

Despite the risks of industrial accident and illness no health care provision was made for the black workforce. Although there was a first aid station at the mine to deal with accidents, this was described by the chairperson of the 'Dayrate Task Force' as "totally inadequate". Black workers complained that there was no proper medical attention for them although the white employees had complete medical facilities in Swakopmund. (SALB, 1978) The difference in the health care provision is confirmed by RTZ (1977)

During 1976 the company provided a fully equipped and furnished Medical and Dental Centre in Swakopmund, including residential accommodation for two doctors and a dental surgeon who were prepared to transfer their practices to the town.

These facilities were for the exclusive use of white employees. The situation was rather different for black employees as the same publication illustrated in discussing the facilities at Arandis

A 120-bed hospital will be built within the next two years at an estimated cost of R2.4 million. So far the nurses' quarters and the Out-Patient Section have been completed and the latter is operating as a clinic for the residents of Arandis. (RTZ, 1977)

This left the vast majority of black workers, who lived in the camps, with no medical facilities and the residents of Arandis with only a clinic for the first four years of their residence in the township.

Furthermore, salaried staff had access to a wide variety of fringe benefits including the Northern Medical Aid Society, to which the company contributed, and a pension scheme. Whilst the 1977 RTZ Fact Sheet stated that 'Fringe benefits are the same for all employees in a salary or wage bracket, and include pension funds, life assurance and holiday bonus', this was highly misleading.

The vast majority of black workers were effectively excluded by the requirement that they complete 12 months unbroken service with the company before they became entitled to join the schemes. For most black employees 12 months was the duration of their contract before returning to their homelands. Even where workers were rehired following completion of one contract period, they were treated as starting a new contract thus precluding them from access to fringe benefits. (SALB, 1978)

This particularly effected black workers who suffered an illness which prevented them from attending work. Since they were excluded from membership of the company's medical aid scheme and the company paid no sick leave, such people had no income. As Rogers (1978) reports

If a black worker becomes ill and is likely to be away from work for more than a few days, he is sent away without pay.

Moreover, whilst membership of the pension fund and life insurance scheme was compulsory for employees in the staff grades, for black dayrates, even when they were entitled to join, it was merely optional.

Conclusion

When RTZ set up the project to assess the viability of the mine in 1966 international attention was only just beginning to be directed towards the status of Namibia. Conditions inside the country were very much under the control of the South African Government and it seemed that the status quo was likely to remain for some considerable time. The apartheid structures of South Africa were rigidly imposed and legally enforced in Namibia.

To go ahead with both initial viability assessment and the construction programme leading to commercial production RTZ had to accept that the employment of blacks was subject to the conditions dictated by the legal structures. Thus, the decision to go ahead was, in itself, a strategic choice by RTZ concerning the employment and control of the black workforce.

The preoccupation of mine management with getting the technical aspects of the mine functioning correctly diverted attention away from other longer term operational concerns, including employment strategy and even financial viability. Strategic decisions were left to RTZ who publically announced policies, which were both politically and financially motivated, long before they were able to be implemented in practice. In particular, the announcement of the development of the settled community of Arandis and the rejection of the migrant labour system were announced several years before they became reality.

At the mine the South African approach to black employment of engaging a large number of low paid, semi-proletarianised blacks on short-term contracts was adopted from the outset and continued throughout this phase. However, whilst pay was poor in comparison to that of white employees, it was good in comparison to the general level throughout Namibia.

In the degree to which there was any freedom in the labour market for black employment Rossing needed to ensure that it was able to compete on the basis of terms and conditions of employment. In particular Rossing needed to compete with Tsumeb and CDM in attracting workers from the Northern homelands who had accumulated both industrial skills and experience of an industrial lifestyle. However, whilst pay was attractive, conditions such as accommodation and food, as well as health care and safety, were no better and often worse than those provided elsewhere in Namibia.

The importance of attracting such workers was accentuated as the mine programme progressed into the 1970s. Firstly, because employment numbers grew. Secondly, as the requirement for higher skills emerged with the commencement of commercial and highly capital intensive production. Finally, as it became clear that the policy of recruiting Damaras to live in the settled community of Arandis and to become fully proletarianised workers committed to longterm employment at Rossing, had failed to meet the mine's needs in three major respects:

a) Damaras did not have the same level of industrial skills or industrial discipline as did workers from the northern homelands who had been involved to a much greater extent in the contract labour system. As a result Damaras

had proved more difficult to train and had, moreover, proved difficult to recruit in the numbers required by the mine.

b) Damaras resisted moving to Arandis with their families because this meant giving up access to farming land in the homeland and thus insecurity should they be sacked. The level of dismissal at the mine was extremely high during this period and this undermined the RTZ strategy of employing a settled workforce rather than single men.

c) Later in the period the Damara employees showed a preparedness to take strike action which led mine management to reduce their employment numbers in favour of other ethnic groups, adopting a divide and rule strategy to increase managerial control.

Within this, the processes of social control over blacks at the workplace remained much as elsewhere in Southern Africa at that time. With the collusion of the company, South African Police intimidation and oppression dictated the boundaries of worker activity. In the workplace conditions for blacks were dependant on their social skills in managing the individualistic relationships with the exclusively white management. In the compound, behaviour and social norms were worked out within the ethic of 'brotherhood' which provided a private world

through which black workers survived the degradation and oppression of the apartheid system.

Conditions for whites were dictated by the conditions of the free labour market. Pay and fringe benefits offered were amongst the best in Southern Africa in order to attract sufficient workers of the technical and professional standard required. The poorly developed infrastructure of the area posed a problem in the recruitment and retention of this group, however, and Rossing made significant and early investment in the development of an infrastructure which would provide the the expected facilities. This was both in terms of its choice of location for white accommodation as well as in the provision of facilities such as housing, medical care,, education and entertainment.

Mining management's preoccupation with the technical performance of the mine during this period had, by 1977, led to a crisis for the mine. The productivity of both black and white workers was extremely low with significant overtime being worked, theft was rife, cost control was virtually non existent and problems with production meant that by 1977 income from sales was well below expectations. It was the realisation that the mine faced a further year of negative cash flow and hence a major financial crisis that led RTZ to take the initiative which

meant drastic action being taken at the mine and heralded the beginning of phase two of its development.

CHAPTER 7

MANAGEMENT STRATEGY AND LABOUR CONTROL AT THE ROSSING MINE PHASE 2: PRODUCTION AND PROFITABILITY, 1977-1982

Despite operational and production problems, escalating costs and the international developments, RTZ had decided to continue with the Rossing project rather than pull out when, in mid 1976, it had agreed to invest a further \$100 million in the modification programme. Some \$200 million had already been invested and the further expenditure on the modification programme was an effort to resolve the production problems and achieve profitability. At the time international demand for uranium was buoyant and prices high. Thus, the further investment was a clear indication of RTZ's confidence in Rossing's capacity to return significant profits. (see Appendix 1)

The modifications and additions were not completed until the end of 1978 and delayed full production until 1979. In the meantime, 1976 saw the production of only 771 tonnes of uranium oxide whilst in 1977, the year when planned output was originally scheduled to reach mine capacity of 5,000 tonnes, output had only reached 3,042

tonnes. Production in 1978 at 3,500 tonnes, was only marginally above that of the previous year, and represented yet another failure to achieve the planned production of 4,000 tonnes.

However, by the end of 1978 the modifications were almost complete and in May 1979 Rossing had achieved its full planned production level. Worldwide demand for uranium was at a peak and Rossing was able to produce and market slightly more than its planned maximum output for the following two years. The confidence displayed by RTZ in its 1976 decision to invest further in the Rossing project had indeed paid off. Whilst Rossing had failed to achieve profitability in 1977, a small pre-tax profit of £4 million was returned in 1978 despite the disruption of the fire. From 1978 pre-tax profits rose rapidly to peak in 1982 at £91 million despite a lower volume of output. Accumulated profit for the period between 1978 and 1982 amounted to £240 million. (see Appendix 1)

The turnaround in the financial fortunes of the mine was no accident. Significant changes had taken place in 1977. These were brought about by the replacement of senior management resulting from the realisation in 1977 that the mine faced a severe, if not terminal, financial crisis.

The resulting regime introduced an entirely different management approach informed by an equally different business imperative which was, at least for the first two years, survival. The strategic approach to its achievement was to emphasise the primary importance of production. Initially, production as the primary means of providing the much needed cash flow for survival; later, with both demand and prices for uranium at a peak, production to maximise profit. This is not to say that cost control was not a concern, rather that the success of the mine during this phase lay in its ability to produce uranium, the markets for which had already been established through advance contracts. The following discussion establishes this as the major thrust of managerial strategy for this phase and examines the implications for industrial relations and labour control.

Management Strategy - The Imperatives

By early 1976 RTZ had realised that the mine was unlikely to achieve profitability without further investment. Mining management had failed to achieve planned production and, with substantial additional resources being invested, RTZ could not take the risk that this would happen again. It was at this time that changes in senior management took place. The managing director changed twice in two years,

with Craig Gibson being appointed in 1978, the chairman was replaced in 1977 by Ronnie Walker and, in little more than a year, the general manager of the mine changed twice with Gordon Freeman being appointed in August 1977.

The depth of the crisis is further indicated by the report (referred to hereafter as the 1978 Report) of a management team set up by Ronnie Walker in January 1978 with the brief to find ways of achieving 'drastic reductions in operating costs'. The brief continued

.....No margin of finance is available for contingencies. The cost study has therefore been conducted as if the mine were in a breakeven or even a loss situation facing possible closure. (11)

The Work Study Officer, Bill O'Kelly, was a major contributor to the 1978 Report. He had been employed at the mine since January 1977 on a project to "sort out their cash flow". He claimed "the accounts at that stage were diabolical" and that in early 1977 the company had no idea what their cash flow was nor their commitments to suppliers. Indeed, the 1978 Report comments that it had found it impossible to establish accurate and reliable figures for the previous year's expenditure. As O'Kelly explained, the general manager was "too busy trying to get the plant to work" to manage the financial affairs of the company.

The 1978 Report succinctly sums up the situation

The casual attitude towards budgets and performance have been an embarrassment to the Board of Directors, RTZ as managers in relation to the other Shareholders which they have introduced to the Company and to financial staff in relation to bankers. (12)

The seriousness of Rossing's position during this period is further confirmed by O'Kelly's report that in early 1977, Tony Lighterness, an employee of RTMS in Johannesburg and co-author of the 1978 Report, "went out every month for nine months to borrow R10 million; the tenth month the banks refused". In March 1978 it was calculated that "if they kept on going as they were at that time they would be bankrupt in September 1978".

Clearly, the following period was crucial to the survival of the mine. O'Kelly believed that Ronnie Walker's influence was fundamental during this period. As he commented, "the decisions made at the time were very good, the result of quick thinking to improve cashflow and save the company". One such decision was to fly the uranium oxide by air to Europe rather than shipping it thus speeding up deliveries and improving cash flow. O'Kelly went on, "this was a highly sensitive and political event and was carried out under the utmost secrecy", and concluded "it cost him (Ronnie Walker) but it saved the company".

The 1978 Report was an extensive document of over 200 pages providing a detailed analysis of the organisation and its operation. Its orientation was towards cost reduction, as O'Kelly explained "the primary objective was to stop the big wastage, stealing, contractors being paid for work not done, people not bothering to work, fraud etc". To achieve this a central objective was to influence the attitudes of Rossing employees in general and managers in particular. As the 1978 Report states

The psychological effect of a period of undisciplined and uncontrolled spending and easy hiring of personnel will be difficult to change. Probably the greatest contribution which can be made to a reduction in Rossing's costs is the development of team spirit and determination at all levels to make Rossing a lean, efficient and profitable operation. Partly for this reason it has been felt important to recommend measures to effect savings which may be small in monetary terms but will be necessary to change attitudes. One of the most important factors in a cost-reducing exercise is to make personnel cost-conscious and this will not be achieved if there are obvious areas of waste and inefficiency, even though these may not represent high cost. (13)

Cost reduction was to be achieved from two major initiatives. Firstly, the estimated R5 million additional costs in 1978 resulting from inflation were to be absorbed by each department through improved efficiencies. The second initiative was to reduce actual costs in three particular areas:

1. A reduction in the numbers of dayrate employees by '484 employees or just under 22% of the dayrate manpower establishment';
2. the reduction of overtime payments and the elimination of fraudulent claims for overtime and
3. a change to a cafeteria system for dayrate employees in which all dayrates would pay for their meals at the time of consumption, based on their choice, and would receive as compensation 'an across-the-board wage increase of R30 per month'. (14)

Estimated savings from the first recommendation amounted to just under R2 million; for overtime no specific figure was suggested but a significant reduction in the R4 million budget for both staff and dayrate employees was anticipated. The third recommendation, was expected to save R1,553,000. With these savings projected total costs for 1978 were R95 million. (15)

Despite these recommendations the major strategy adopted by management to overcome the financial crisis was to emphasise production. Although the 1978 Report accepted that 'profit and cash forecasts are highly sensitive to the achievement of production estimates' (16), its

preoccupation with cost reduction led it to ignore the importance of increased production in Rossing's recovery.

The sensitivity of profitability to production can be illustrated by reference to production and financial data. (see Appendix 1) Taking 1978 as the base year in which Rossing first made a profit of R7 million with production of 3,500 tonnes of uranium and comparing this performance with that of the following year, it is possible to calculate the contribution of production to profits once a profitable production level has been reached.

Thus, taking the additional production in 1979 over 1978 of 1,480 (4,980 less 3,500) tonnes and dividing this by the increase in profits over the same period, R57 million, we get a ratio of profit to production above the breakeven point, of R1 million profit for each additional 26 tonnes of uranium produced. Financial breakeven was achieved at a production figure slightly below that of 1978 when Rossing made a marginal profit of only R7 million. Since the mine was rated at a full production capacity of 5,000 tonnes the potential profit by increasing production to maximum over the 1977 production figure of 3,042 tonnes was 1,958 (5,000 less 3,042) divided by 26 per million rand; over R75 million.

Whilst these figures cannot account for structural financial changes between the two years (most notably inflation, increased efficiency and price increases), they nevertheless illustrate the greater strategic importance of increased production over cost reduction. In short, cost control strategies had the potential to increase profitability by around R10 million, increased production offered the potential to increase profits by over R75 million. (see Figure 7.1)

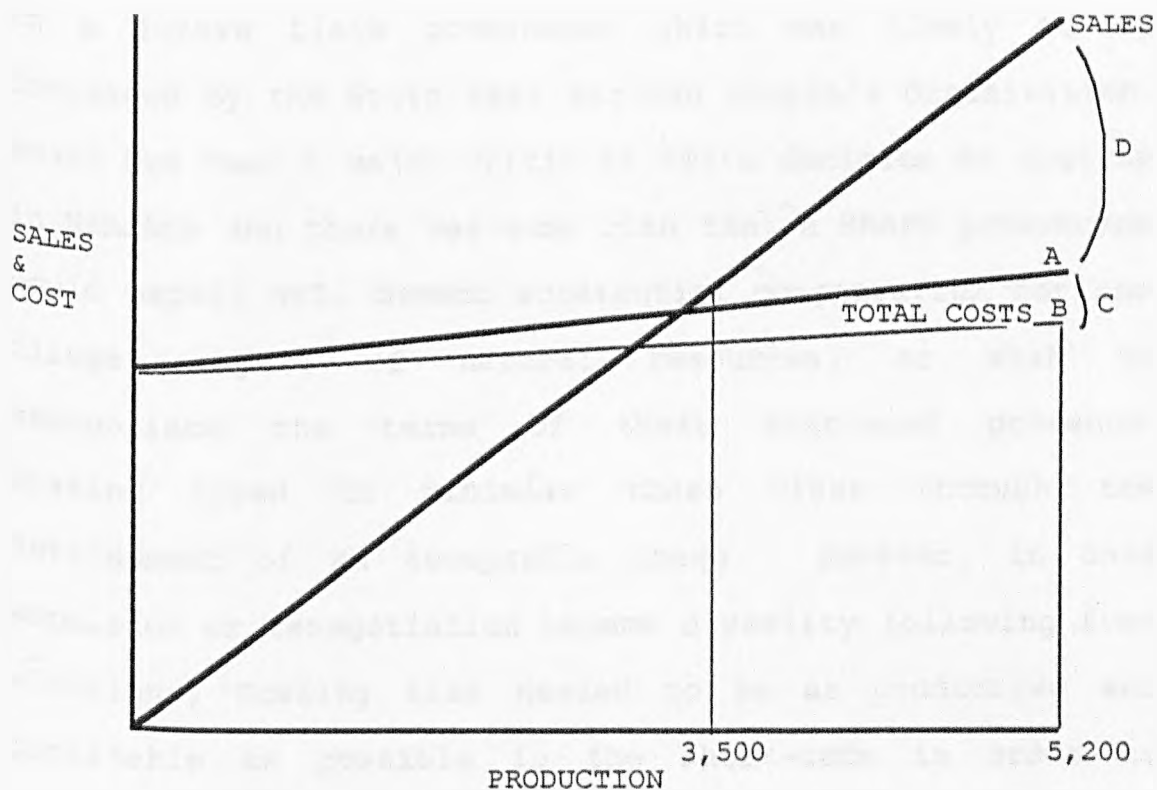
Although the financial crisis dominated management's strategic thinking it was not the only consideration. In early 1977 UN negotiations with the South African administration in Windhoek suggested the imminence of UN supervised elections. However, the Contact Group left Namibia in October 1978 having failed to gain South African commitment and two months later the South African Administrator-General of Namibia announced that 'internal' elections would go ahead without UN supervision.

The highly dubious elections saw the Democratic Turnhalle Alliance, a South African-sponsored organisation, take 41 of the 50 seats in the new Constituent Assembly. The Party then embarked on a 'liberalisation' programme during which much of the petty apartheid legislation was repealed. (see Chapter 5)

FIGURE 7.1

ROSSING URANIUM LIMITED

GRAPH SHOWING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN COSTS, SALES AND PROFIT



- A - TOTAL COSTS FOR 1977.
- B - PROJECTED REDUCED COSTS FOR 1978.
- C - INCREASE IN PROFIT RESULTING FROM AN INCREASE IN COSTS.
- D - POTENTIAL INCREASE IN PROFITS RESULTING FROM INCREASE PRODUCTION FROM 3,500 TO 5,000 TONNES P.A.

This period provided an important context within which management strategy was worked out. In the short-term three significant factors influenced Rossing management.

1. With what appeared to be impending UN supervised elections, Rossing was concerned to make itself acceptable to a future black government which was likely to be dominated by the South West African People's Organisation. SWAPO had been a major critic of RTZ's decision to operate in Namibia and there was some risk that a SWAPO government would expell RTZ, demand substantial compensation for the illegal export of natural resources, or wish to renegotiate the terms of their continued presence. Rossing hoped to minimise these risks through the development of an acceptable image. However, in case expulsion or renegotiation became a reality following free elections, Rossing also needed to be as productive and profitable as possible in the short-term in order to minimise its losses.

2. The confidence, expectations and aspirations of the workforce, and indeed the black population of Namibia, were raised significantly during 1977 and 1978. This was followed by tremendous disappointment after the failure of the negotiations in late 1978. Under such circumstances managerial control of the black workforce became a major concern and mine management realised the need to establish

a politically and morally acceptable basis to its management authority.

3. The removal of some of the apartheid legislation increased the strategic latitude available in the management of industrial relations and workforce control.

In the longer term, whilst the UN initiated process failed in 1978, it was clear that any internationally acceptable settlement would involve UN supervised elections and a SWAPO dominated government. With the life of the mine extending into the 21st century Rossing was concerned to endear itself to the Namibian population and the international community in order to help guarantee its post-election presence.

Thus, the emerging political contours in Namibia provided an important context within which Rossing management worked out its industrial relations strategy. The major managerial concern was undoubtedly economic. However, the emphasis on production was reinforced by the imperatives of the political environment.

These political concerns were underemphasised in the 1978 Report as was the importance of production, its concern being exclusively with cost reduction. Although showing some awareness of these issues, it was naive in its

assessment of what it was desirable to achieve given the economic, political and social context. The means by which social control was maintained by senior mining management during phase 2 showed greater sophistication and sensitivity to the circumstances as the following sections illustrate.

Management Strategy - A New Basis of Labour Control

The new senior management team was chosen carefully. Ronnie Walker was brought in from Rio Tinto Rhodesia where he had gained experience of the run up to independence. Similarly, Freeman had been employed at the RTZ-owned Empress Nickel Mine in Zimbabwe since 1973 and before that at the Nchanga Consolidated Copper Mines and Bancroft mine in Zambia. Not surprisingly, the new chief executive of Rossing, Craig Gibson also came from Rio Tinto Rhodesia and had extensive experience of working in Africa including 25 years in Zimbabwe.

Whilst Ronnie Walker took the major role in shaping the strategic direction of the mine, Gordon Freeman was also involved in strategic planning as well as being responsible for its day-to-day interpretation and implementation at the mine.

Freeman was a highly principled, Christian man whose philosophy showed some similarities to the early British laissez-faire managerial doctrines which emphasised individualism and self-dependence. At the same time, however, he exhibited the rather paternalistic Quaker doctrines of the same period. He was at first an active member of the local Anglican church but left claiming they were too political, having had several disagreements with the Bishop and having been accused of paternalism at a synod meeting. He believed politics should neither be the concern of the church nor Rossing. Freeman described himself as having a "building bridges" philosophy and argued

We have to be paternalistic, at times we have to decide what is good for the employee. It worries me at times, are we doing the right thing, but I hope we're fair.....we have to be dictatorial at times.

There is no doubt that Freeman felt a moral responsibility for Rossing employees. Reminiscent of Fox's (1966) unitarism, he stated "I like to think of Rossing as my family". Nevertheless, he believed that "If people take authority they should accept responsibility" and was described by one senior manager as "a strict disciplinarian".

Freeman claimed to "personally abhor racism", however, he accepted that "there are ethnic differences in all of us.....and these ethnic differences should, at this stage, be recognised and catered for". He believed in the principle of meritocracy arguing in his opening address to Rossing managers in November 1977

I have said that all men are not equal. Now this is true and is basically accepted by all persons. What is meant, of course, is that all men are not equal in their ability to manage or do a specific job of work and reference was not made to social equality. There is no doubt at all that although all men will accept the first premise, they will never accept that they are socially inferior. They may well accept that their culture is different and what they are looking for socially can differ from the next man, but that is as far as it will go. It is relatively easy to accept one's work limitations as these, over the years, have been accepted as a matter of training and education. On this assumption we can build a social policy which is acceptable to all groups.

Many Rossing employees referred to the paternalism of the General manager and the organisation. Some senior managers close to Freeman described the philosophy of the mine in rather more elaborate terms. The Public Relations Manager, for example, described the predominant managerial approach as both paternalistic and autocratic. The Personnel Manager described it as an "authoritarian democracy" arguing "it sounds a contradiction in terms but mining has tended to be authoritarian but we have tried to build in democracy as well". Whilst the Loss Control Manager described management as a "benevolent

dictatorship". He argued that the transition from the 1977 situation had been achieved by getting the right people in the right jobs, with "no pinko do-gooders" but progressive business people who were efficiency orientated and prepared to take decisions.

Purcell (1987) argues that style 'implies the existence of a distinctive set of guiding principles (see Chapter 1). It was the creation of such guiding principles which was a major strategic concern for Ronnie Walker. However, senior management has the capacity to interpret such principles in various ways, as Purcell (1987) acknowledges, 'In some firms underlying approaches might be radically altered as a new coalition of managers - or owners come to power'.

Whilst it is true that the particular interpretation of company employment policy and philosophy differed as each manager adopted their own idiosyncratic style, the striking feature of senior management was the degree of commonality in their approach. When appointed Freeman had surrounded himself with like-minded people, furthermore, he had been prepared, as one senior manager argued, "to throw people out" who were unable to adjust to the new values, especially those with "kaffir attitudes". Freeman joined Rossing at a time when the management style was not fixed but rather at a time when it was in its formation,

it was in this sense that he was important in the shaping of management style at Rossing. As one senior manager put it,

The impact of Gordon Freeman should not be underestimated. He has a very strong presence everywhere. An uncanny ability to put his finger on bare nerves. He has a very autocratic, paternalistic style which some people hate and he takes a lot of interest in what's going on to some people's immense annoyance.

The process of establishing a strategy of labour control began in late 1977 when Ronnie Walker brought together a group of six carefully chosen senior white Rossing managers to develop a report on Social, Manpower Development and Industrial Relations Policy (referred to hereafter as the Social Report). The policy recommendations were for immediate implementation so that the company could be seen as having 'a true non-racial policy with equal opportunity for all employees in an independent and developing multi-racial country'. (17)

Formulation of the policy had been guided by an earlier statement of social policy by Walker.

"Our aims for a new society at Rossing are:

1. Complete abandonment of racial discrimination as far as work, remuneration and conditions of service are concerned. These will be established on merit. We refer to our employees as salaried staff, days paid, men and women, and not as blacks, coloureds or whites.

2. Recognition of differences of ethnical cultural requirements, where appropriate, as far as living and social conditions are concerned.

3. Provision of married accommodation for all who wish it plus a preference for employing people who are accompanied by their families.

4. Abandonment of the practices of having employees living more than two per room in our single quarters.

5. Evaluation of our employees' potential and development of that potential by rapid and concentrated training. The importance of this aim is recognised by making one of the five senior managers (who are the only senior executives responsible directly to the General Manager) responsible solely for achieving it together with the welfare of our lowest paid employees."

Whilst developing this Policy, it was borne in mind that the needs of white employees, which in the future may become expatriate, be catered for in terms of their standards of living, education, medical facilities, etc. These must be guaranteed to ensure that a high standard of expatriate employee be attracted to Rossing to guarantee the technical and managerial skills required to keep an operation the size of Rossing a profitable mine. (18)

The committee's proposals were published in December 1977 and submitted to senior management for discussion. They contained proposals under twelve headings in sections 3-14 of the report, each of which is outlined below.

Section 3. Manpower Structure. Recommended that employees be called either 'staff employees' or 'hourly paid employees'; the former to encompass managerial, supervisory and office personnel and the latter skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled employees. The application of

a job evaluation scheme such as the Paterson Scheme was recommended for application to all jobs the objective of which was to move towards the adoption of 'a common and linked pay scale for staff and hourly paid jobs'. On this basis jobs would be graded according to the level of decision-making and relative pay scales devised which created 'avenues for advancement'.

It was accepted, however, that the move from existing to idealised pay scales would take 'up to three years to gradually rectify the anomalies'. This was essentially because it implied reductions in the wages of white employees whilst 'the Hourly Paid scale will be somewhat easier' because it implied pay increases for the majority.

Section 4. Employee Benefits. Here it was suggested that as non-white employees became more settled with their families they would see these fringe benefits as more meaningful. It recommended that a uniform Medical Aid Scheme should be applied to all employees, as should the Insurance Scheme and that a common Pension Fund be established with all employees having immediate enrolment. With respect to the pension scheme the report continued

Pension Fund Schemes are alien to indigenous non-White employees of South West Africa/Namibia and these people are, in many instances, reluctant to pay into Pension Schemes when they cannot see for themselves what monies they have accumulated. It is recommended that all employees have a Pension book or card.....to see how much he has invested.....This is proposed as a possible interim educational aide towards these people becoming familiarised with Western standards being imposed on them.

Section 5. Pay Arrangements. This recommended that as employees become more accustomed to 'Westernised conditions' they should be able to elect to have their money paid into a Building Society or Banking Account, by cheque or cash.

Section 6. Housing. Of all the issues discussed in the report housing was considered to be one of the most explosive. Recommendations had been carefully thought through 'in order to minimise disruption to whites'.

Recommendations for allocation were based on numerical calculations which allocated employees in descending grade to different categories of housing. For Swakopmund, which included Vineta, the Mobile Home Park and Tamariskia, the following criteria were applied

This will be for Senior Staff, White employees, Staff and Senior Hourly Paid employees. Housing allocation to be as follows:

1. Proposed job grading 10 and above, irrespective of race and ethnic origin, will be allocated housing according to job grading.

2. Followed by allocating housing to all White employees. This ensures that all White employees, who are required for their technical and managerial skill, are assured of housing of a standard to which they have been accustomed to in the past.

3. Housing will then be allocated to firstly, junior Staff and then artisan/overseer Hourly paid employees. These latter two categories will tend to be housed in Tamariskia.

Remaining employees, all of whom were black, were housed in Arandis. In this way the status quo was maintained, there being neither blacks allocated to traditionally white areas nor whites allocated to black or coloured areas. At the time of the report there was still a legal requirement for whites, coloureds and various black ethnic groups to be housed separately.

Section 7. Medical Facilities. Here the committee considered the current provisions to be inadequate and recommended improved facilities for both Arandis and Swakopmund residents.

Section 8. Club Facilities. The committee recommended the development of a club in Arandis with reciprocal membership facilities for the Rossing Country Club in Swakopmund. The Arandis club was to 'assist in developing our employees to the Western ways of the world'. Whilst rights of membership for the Arandis club were not mentioned, the report commented that the Country Club

'must be open to all Rossing employees bearing in mind that Whites will be employed on Hourly Paid status in the future'.

Section 9. Conditions of Employment and Policy Manual. A completely rewritten manual was recommended to eradicate 'numerous petty discrimination clauses' and to take account of the movement of some white workers into the Hourly Paid category where the existing conditions 'were not suitable to attract the skills of the these people'.

Section 10. Transport. Here the committee recommended that racial discrimination in the transportation of employees to and from the mine cease.

Section 11. Schooling. This was another extremely sensitive area to which the committee had given significant attention. Education under public provision was required by law to be racially and ethnically segregated. The report argued that the standard of schooling for whites in Swakopmund was acceptable, however, for non-whites in the area it was 'deplorable'. Recommendations were separated for Arandis and Swakopmund.

For Arandis improved and extended schooling was recommended 'for all ethnic groups, including coloureds'. The report continued

It is important that the schooling be pushed very rapidly in Arandis as this is where Rossing's future employees will be drawn from.

For Swakopmund the committee argued

It will be difficult for the Company to guarantee White only education in Swakopmund bearing in mind that with education the schools, which are currently Government controlled, may well become multi-racial. This could be acceptable provided that a zoning is applied to protect the standards enjoyed by the whites. Should the standards of the Swakopmund schooling deteriorate, after independence, the Company should bear in mind creating private schooling and look towards high school children being sent away to Boarding School.

Concerning schooling for coloureds in Tamariskia for whom there was no high school provision, the report continued

The question arises what to provide for children of employees in Tamariskia. The people in Tamariskia will, in the main, be Coloured with Black and may have to be integrated into Swakopmund Government Schools. In this event, the standards of education may well drop and the Company be forced into providing private schooling for White employees.

In the event, independence did not materialise and the DTA retained the pre-existing ethnic divisions in education. However, Government high schools were built for black and coloured Swakopmund residents.

Section 12. Manpower Development. The committee anticipated the removal of job segregation legislation and

recommended four 'avenues of development' to suit the 'varying skills and standards of education of our employees'. These were on the job training for skilled and semi-skilled employees; apprenticeships to develop employees with potential into 'higher Supervisory and Management roles; sponsored education 'for all employees showing potential in the academic field'; and career assessment and development for all employees to be carried out annually along with the annual salary increase.

Section 13. Communications and Industrial Relations. This section recommended a phased approach initially improving communications through the development of Works Communication Meetings and Housing and Welfare Communication Meetings. At the same time the development of an Industrial Relations Section was to be developed which would play a 'low key role' but would be preparing itself for what

invariably happens in society that a very strong union organisation develops to overcome shortcomings in communications with management.

Departmental Personnel Officers were later to be appointed to provide a link between Hourly Paid employees and their supervisors whilst being responsible to an Industrial Relations Officer. Their role would be to handle grievances and monitor uniformity of treatment and attend

communication meetings to help with translation, monitor undertakings and advise on uniformity of interpretations across the mine.

It was also recommended that an 'Information Sheet' be generated at management level to 'make its way down to all foremen for them to read out to their crews'. Information was similarly to 'feed back up the Management line'.

Section 14. Change House Facilities. Provision for these facilities should be improved and provided 'in centralised units for Staff and Hourly Paid employees in the work localities'. They were to be provided under three categories; the higher grades, who were exclusively white, middle grades where races would be mixed, and the lowest, exclusively black grades whose standards the committee reported 'are somewhat lower but nevertheless must be catered for'.

It was recognised that whites, especially those of lower grade, were likely to resent the new policy changes. Indeed, the committee had shown as much concern with protecting the position of whites as with developing equal opportunity for blacks and in balancing these contradictory needs the committee had gone as far as it could with respect to the former without undermining the credibility of the latter.

The new managerial philosophy was a pragmatic response to the changing social, economic and political context in which Rossing was operating. More importantly, it represented a new ideological basis on which Rossing management could continue to justify and maintain managerial authority and labour control. With a new moral basis to their ideology Rossing management sought to achieve both these aims.

However, the Social Report represented only a starting point for the construction of a new management strategy of control at the mine. Although many of the ideas were influential in the final outcome, they were subjected to further consideration by mine management and adjustment in the light of changing circumstances and the consequence of their implementation.

Management Strategy in Action

The new management strategy had to be converted into practice, however, it was recognised that this required a significant investment of senior management time and that the changes could not all be implemented at once. In particular, increasing production remained of paramount importance for the survival of the mine and energy needed

to be directed to this end. Thus a staged, tactical approach was adopted in which priorities were established and a timetable set. According to the public relations manager the general manager set the following four items as joint top priorities:

1. Produce a Social Policy Statement for Rossing.
2. Create a Corporate Image including a logo, colours etc.
3. Improve mine safety.
4. Create unity through the introduction of communications structures.

Freeman wasted no time in setting out to achieve the first of these priorities. Within three months of his appointment and before the committee had completed the Social Report he held individual meetings with his divisional managers to discuss social policy and, on 25th November 1977, wrote to them asking them to 'extend the communication of our social policy to the rest of your staff by means of a meeting, or meetings on the same lines held by myself today.' (19)

Three months later, in five consecutive weekly issues of a news-sheet introduced by Freeman shortly after his arrival

at the mine, the Social Policy was outlined in writing to employees. (see Appendix 2) The contents closely reflected those of the Social Report and provided some indication of the timetable for their introduction.

The first issue began with a general statement which outlined Rossing's commitment to 'the following aims for a new society'

1. the 'complete abandonment of racial discrimination' and the adoption of merit as the criteria for pay and conditions,
2. the recognition of 'ethnic and cultural requirements where appropriate in so far as living and social conditions are concerned',
3. 'the provision of married accommodation for all who wish it and a preference for employing people who are accompanied by their families' and
4. 'the evaluation of our employees' potential and the development of that potential by rapid and concentrated training'. (20)

The statement continued

These four basic requirements cover the whole operation of Rossing Uranium as far as we as employees are concerned, and contain within them, a wealth of change, reorganisation and acceptance of new ideas. (21)

Regarding pay, the policy stated that the existing two pay scales were to be dropped and job evaluation used to 'establish a common assessment of the worth of every job to the company' and to 'create a single wage/salary structure within which some jobs will be called Hourly Paid, and some jobs Staff'. Whilst the Paterson system had not been definitely decided upon, this decision was to be taken 'within the next couple of months'.

The second issue of the news-sheet outlined housing provision confirming its allocation on the basis of the employees 'worth to the company'. The policy outlined was in line with that in the Social Report with unskilled employees to be accommodated in Arandis, semi-skilled in Tamariskia and skilled supervisory and management employees in Swakopmund. This, however, presented immediate problems since

We do not have enough suitable accommodation to allow all married employees who wish to live in married accommodation. The provision of services in Arandis, Tamariskia and Swakopmund is not equal. We have some employees who, by virtue of their skills, would be entitled to live in Swakopmund, who are presently living in Arandis. (22)

It was accepted that the introduction of this policy would take some 'considerable time', however, by 1st September 1978 entitlement to accommodation was to be established following the completion of the job evaluation exercise. Furthermore,

Within the next three years, it is intended to eliminate altogether, the accommodation of single employees in the Rossing camps. Within the next three years, it is hoped that accommodation will be available on the basis of merit to all Rossing employees within the area to which they are entitled. (23)

The policy statement reported that construction of a club at Arandis was to be started during 1978. However, on membership the statement was ambiguous

Eventually, it is the intention that these two clubs should have reciprocal membership.....However, this must wait until facilities at Arandis have been developed to a sufficient level. (24)

Regarding medical facilities the policy stated that 'It is the intention, in the longterm, to provide equal medical facilities and services for all Rossing employees'. Whilst membership of the existing private medical aid society was open to all employees, only staff employees belonged to it. Thus, by the end of 1978 consideration was to be given to forming the company's own medical aid scheme and also the provision of medical facilities to two standards; a) free facilities for the use of all Rossing

employees and b) 'medical facilities to a higher standard' for employees prepared to contribute to a company medical aid scheme. (25)

The fourth news-sheet contained the industrial relations policy. This started with seven general statements (see Appendix 2) which

basically, lay down the principles upon which the company will operate in dealing with its employees. In practice this means establishing proper lines of communication, so that everyone can voice their opinions and concern on all matters relating to the company. And similarly, that in all cases, communication can be passed down the line so that everyone is fully aware of matters that are relevant to their position. (26)

Three communications systems were to be set up. A system of briefing groups 'to ensure that all matters relevant to employees are passed down the management line speedily and accurately'; a system of employee representative committees consisting of management and employee representatives to discuss 'all matters concerning the job and the environment at work'; and residence associations to discuss 'any problems relating to housing, transport, servicing and facilities etc'. (27)

In addition to communication the policy stated that

the company intends to reinforce its present grievance procedures, and also to review and revise, if necessary, the present disciplinary code..... It is hoped that before the end of April, all the above systems will be properly established and working. (28)

The final news-sheet was concerned to reassure whites, particularly expatriates, of their position in the company during the changes taking place in the company and the country. It commented 'management feel quite safe in assuring everybody that their particular skills are going to be needed in this country for a very long time to come'. However, the strategy was clear

Undoubtedly there is a need to develop the indigenous peoples of Namibia and as long as the skilled people assist them to develop, and in so doing develop themselves, there will always be a need for such men and women in the foreseeable future. (29)

Thus the social policy of the mine, its priorities and an outline timetable was set. In doing this Freeman had also taken account of the fourth of his priorities namely to create unity through the introduction of communications structures.

The remaining two priorities - creating a corporate image and improving safety - were also set in motion. Later in 1978 general tidying up on the mine took place with plant and equipment being painted in Rossing colours and with the Rossing logo. In September of 1978 the Fire Officer

was appointed as Safety Officer with responsibility for fire and environmental control as well as safety.

Shortly after his appointment the Safety Officer introduced the system of Loss Control the principle of which he described as "Freedom from accident or loss in any organisation is directly proportionate to the desire of the top executive and his management team to excel, and their impatience with mediocrity".

Freeman was particularly concerned about safety, not only because of the physical dangers to employees but because of the production time lost and resultant damage to mine property. The full weight of mining management was placed behind the new scheme which was linked with the move to improve the appearance of the mine. The approach adopted was to demand higher standards of performance with strict use of the disciplinary procedure where employees failed to meet such standards.

In 1978 the mine joined the National Occupational Safety Association (NOSA), a South African organisation funded through the Workmen's Compensation Committee, which set 76 safety points against which organisations were graded. As the Safety Officer argued

it's a management technique and it pays off, insurance rates go down, fire insurance goes down, premiums for health insurance go down.....it pays in cash via premiums, in welfare of employees and in stability.

The scheme was highly successful and in early 1979 Freeman commented to staff

During these past three months there have been tremendous changes in the appearance of the mine and to me it is almost miraculous the way you have moved so rapidly to transform it into how it looks today, that is - a mine of which any company or country could be proud. The housekeeping and standards of work have improved beyond all recognition and although I have never doubted that we would blossom so rapidly, I never believed that you would be able to do this quite so quickly as you have. (30)

Safety standards also improved over this period and in late 1979 the first rating of mine standards by NOSA gave it a three star rating out of a possible five stars. As Freeman commented

This is the first time we have been asked to be rated by NOSA and to get this high rating at our first attempt is extremely unusual. Our aim this year is to reach the maximum of a five star rating.....There is no doubt at all that productivity and efficiency go hand in hand with good housekeeping and awareness of the need to keep ourselves and our fellow workers safe. (31)

Development of the social policy was slower in taking effect than management had planned. It had been hoped that the three communication channels would be established

and working by the end on April 1978. However, the briefing group system was not introduced until August and the representative committees and residence associations did not materialise until the following year although the existing committees, based on the ethnically segregated camps, continued with some increased formality.

The briefing group system was established to pass information down the organisation from the general manager. As information was passed down the various layers of the organisation management were to add information which was relevant to their own briefing group. Briefing group leaders were all trained in advance of the introduction of the system and meetings were to be held monthly.

The system, as with all subsequent social policies, was introduced only after careful planning and investment of managerial time to ensure the system achieved its objectives. From the beginning the system was carefully monitored following each briefing and adjustments made where necessary. It became clear in October that briefing group leaders, particularly those in the lower managerial levels with direct contact with black employees, were not taking the system seriously. Freeman included the following comments in his brief of November 1978.

In a recent audit carried out on the success of the briefing group system I have been very dissappointed to find the lack of attention being paid to briefing groups by all briefing group leaders. I would like to state here and now that communication is a very serious business for a company such as ours, particularly where we have so many languages as we do here at Rossing, and I am very concerned that all briefing group leaders should be fully aware of the importance we place on the system of briefing groups.

It is not sufficient to adopt a carefree, haphazard approach of briefing groups. A considerable amount of effort was spent initially in designing the briefing system and providing proper training for all briefing group leaders. There is really no excuse for any briefing group leader not to do what is expected of him. (32)

It was reported at the same time that the new change houses had been provided for the three categories of employees, as recommended in the Social Report. The general manager was also able to report that the job evaluation exercise was continuing and that the amalgamation of the wage and salary scales would be completed by the end of the year. The Paterson system had been selected some months before when initial work had begun.

By December the job evaluation was complete. Furthermore, surveys of wages and salaries in South Africa and Namibia had been completed as had a comparison of the cost of living in Swakopmund, Windhoek and Johannesburg. Freeman reported that, as a result, 'we are able to create one single salary scale, with effect from 1st January 1979'

although employees were to be advised of their new grades and pay levels before Christmas. (33)

In addition, a study of the conditions of service was in progress with the intention of achieving 'one single set of conditions of employment which apply to everybody, whether they be staff or dayrate, varying only according to grade'. It was hoped that this study would be completed and ready for implementation by the middle of 1979. (34)

Up to the end of 1978 no other significant changes had taken place. Senior management had found that the changes proposed in the social policy had taken longer to implement than planned. Most significantly the representative and residence committees had not been developed, there had been no announcement on the allocation of housing and no new initiatives had been taken on employee training.

However, advances had been made in other areas of the mine. Production, although effected earlier in the year by the fire in the sulphuric acid plant, had increased and, by October, was on target for the achievement of rated production in 1979. Costs had fallen as a result of the reduction of waste and improved standards of work, safety and housekeeping. In addition the attitude change

deemed necessary by the authors of the 1978 Report had been achieved amongst management and, from the end of 1978, a formal reporting procedure was introduced which required all managers to detail operating activities and efficiencies at the end of each month.

Some progress had also been made on the significant cost savings recommended by the 1978 Report. Of the three areas, reduction in overtime, reduction in dayrate numbers and the move to a cafeteria service for dayrate employees, each had attracted some management attention.

Whilst the cafeteria service for dayrate employees had not been introduced, there had been some rationalisation. In June the Arandis dining hall was closed, forcing single residents to take their meals at the camp dining hall, and a ticket system was introduced in the camps to prevent illegal residents from taking free meals. The personnel manager claimed that, while there was only supposed to be 1,000 residents in A camp, 1,500 meals were served regularly. To enforce the new system and ensure that only employees with meal tickets entered the dining hall security was increased.

No records could be found to assess progress on overtime reduction. However, there is some evidence to suggest that the tightening up on overtime amongst dayrates began

in late 1977 - before the Report was published but undoubtedly when attention had been drawn to it. The mine maintenance manager wrote to the assistant general manager in November 1977 concerning a labour stoppage when 'some 60 or 70 Day Rate employees walked off the job'. The memorandum goes on

The subject of their complaints were the controls we are introducing to reduce overtime, and sufficient pay for the job.

With the tightening of overtime control, they fear a loss of gross earnings, and complained that basic salaries are not sufficient for them to live on. (35)

In terms of numbers employed, the 1978 Report recorded that there were 2,182 dayrate employees on 31st December 1977 with staff employment of 768. Employment on 31st December 1978 was 789 staff, an increase of 21 over the year, and 2,112 dayrates, a decrease of some 122 employees. Thus, the Report's recommendation of maintaining staff at the 1977 level had been achieved. However, the major recommendation of reducing dayrate employment by 22%, thereby effecting a saving of just under R2 million, had not been implemented.

There are three compelling explanations for this failure. Firstly, the reduction in dayrate numbers was intended to come from the lower grades while the remaining higher grade dayrates were to be trained to take on greater

responsibility thus releasing artisans to undertake higher grade work. However, whilst some training was taking place, it was not given high priority until September 1978 when a departmental head was appointed.

Secondly, the level of staff turnover was extremely high throughout the year making it difficult to reduce employment numbers whilst retaining stability given that productivity was of paramount importance. At the end of December 1978 there had been a turnover of 48.5% amongst white skilled, supervisory and managerial employees and 23.4% amongst black employees. Dismissal was also high with 29% of staff and 66.7% of dayrates who left being dismissed. (36) Staff interviewed on their departure gave the political developments, quality of supervision, poor communication, higher pay elsewhere and lack of promotion opportunities as explanations. There was also resistance to company policy on black development particularly amongst lower grade white management and foremen. (37)

Finally, employee opposition influenced management willingness to press dayrate reductions. This was particularly important given the previous two factors and the vulnerability of production to industrial stoppages. There were many changes taking place at the mine which had effected the dayrate employees, such as reductions in overtime, expectations of increased efficiency and safety

and the stricter disciplinary regime. Also with the political environment as it was, the aspirations and confidence of black workers were high and there had been a number of minor work stoppages and disruptions in the camps throughout the year to illustrate the volatility of the black workforce.

Indeed, management had taken some tentative steps to reduce dayrate numbers in April 1978 but had later withdrawn the idea under threat of strike action. During April mine management decided to reduce the dayrate compliment for all divisions and create a pool gang of the excess employees to be used in areas of the mine which required short-term labourer work. The personnel manager wrote to the liaison committees in early May, the day of a meeting to discuss the development with them and explained

The company is saving costs wherever possible eg, the sale of the company jet, the reduction in the number of motor cars, wastage of stationary, tea and coffee, etc.

One area in which money can be saved is by doing away with the use of contractors and temporary employees to do essential tasks which arise from time to time.

.....With people leaving the company in the normal manner (resignations, etc) vacancies occurring in departments will be filled by people from the central labour gang. (38)

The following day, the personnel manager wrote again to the liaison committees in the following terms

.....Following discussions with members of the Liaison Committees, it would appear that this suggestion has created a feeling of insecurity and fear amongst Rossing employees and therefore the proposal to create this central labour pool will be postponed at this stage. (39)

The dayrates were transferred back to their previous departments and assured that 'there is no question of Rossing closing down its operation'. They were informed that, whilst Rossing would continue to seek reductions in costs, 'full discussions will be held in future with the Liaison Committees and the Joint Consultative Committees, who will replace them, to ensure that management's intentions are properly appreciated by all employees'. (40)

A seventeen point report by the industrial relations officer severely criticises management performance at the liaison committee meeting. However, most important is point 13 which comments 'Management needs to decide just what role they are going to allow committees to play'. It lists varying degrees of influence committee members may be permitted to exercise ranging from none, where management's objective is purely information giving, to full negotiation commenting

Believe it or not, management found itself negotiating with the liaison committees with the latter holding as their trump card the possibility of a strike. (41)

The idea of the pool gang was never reintroduced. Later in May the personnel superintendent wrote to managers informing them that

Due to the non-operation of the "Bull Gang", all temporary labour is being recruited as needed. (42)

This was not an isolated incidence of labour resistance; four other incidents are reported by the company between late 1977 and the end of 1978. The earliest, on 27th November 1977 involved a group of '36 Hereros' who

receive 40c per hour and now demand 80c per hour after working only a few days. They threaten to strike if they don't get the money before Monday 28/11/1977 at 16h00. (43)

A handwritten note records that 'the problem sorted itself out' following the dismissal of two workers for refusing to work.

This was followed just two days later by the stoppage, referred to earlier, which involved between 60 and 70 dayrate residents of Tamariskia over reduced overtime and low pay. Related concerns were the disparity in pay, training and promotion between higher grade dayrates and the lowest staff grades and the provision of transport from Tamariskia to Swakopmund for their wives.

In mid January 1978 the security officer reported a rumour of a strike by Damara employees received from a number of sources. A number of reasons for the strike were reported; dissatisfaction with recent salary increases and meal arrangements, rumours that the price of meals was about to increase and the 'allocation of houses in Arandis to Ovambos when there was insufficient housing for Damaras'. However, the strike did not materialise. (44)

An interesting feature of this report is that it was based on information provided by black informants, almost certainly Arandis residents who were not identified 'for their own protection'. (45)

The last recorded dispute before December 1978 was that concerning the development of the pool gang discussed earlier. (46)

In addition to work stoppages workforce resistance continued, as in phase 1, to be expressed in more covert forms. Some of Dr Sandelowsky's findings were discussed in phase 1 and it is clear from this discussion that many of the phenomenon which management defined as 'personnel problems' amongst blacks before the introduction of the new philosophy, continued into 1978.

In addition, Sandelowsky reports on other aspects of workforce reaction to the new regime. However, it must be

acknowledged that her sensitivity to black behaviour was rather more traditional and conservative than that of Gordon (1977), emphasising the historical and cultural rather than the more compelling situational factors of social deprivation in the workplace and indeed, Namibian society.

The first of Sandelowsky's reports to contain data on mine employees was written in June 1978 when it was noted

The atmosphere of suspicion and uncertainty pervading the young community of RUL is at all levels reflected by the attitude to this study. Contact with so-called 'illegals' is marked by sceptical behaviour. Revealing one's name is considered dangerous. There is a lack of confidence in the authorities. (47)

Continuing this theme Sandelowsky found a widespread fear of being fired. As a result men would not bring their wives to live at the mine 'because they feel they would risk too much if the wife's residence would be given up. What would happen should they then loose their job'. (48) Furthermore, Sandelowsky commented that many employees regarded their employment as temporary. (49)

Later Sandelowsky refered to 'the element of frustration and depression which I sensed everywhere'. Indeed, of twenty five people spoken to only, two were considered 'fairly well adapted, positive and confident'. This did

not only apply to blacks. Commenting on the high level of turnover amongst whites the report suggests that they exhibited the same depression and frustration which was attributed to 'culture shock'. (50)

During the research it was found that race or ethnicity was mentioned in virtually all conversations with employees and that most people felt at a disadvantage 'on account of their own particular identity'. (51) The majority of blacks, felt that apartheid policies still applied and gave the examples of pay and promotion and housing. Most whites, by contrast, felt that 'at Rossing you are on the wrong side if you have a white skin' and that 'blacks can get away with everything' while 'a white will get kicked out if he puts one foot wrong'. A small group of mostly white staff felt that 'the policy of the mine was simply 'wrong, inconsistent or impractical'. As Sandelowsky commented 'In all three cases the mine is the big bad wolf.' (51)

Furthermore Sandelowsky reported

.....there is a widespread feeling, reaching high levels in the heirarchy that the 'mine' will drop you as soon as it is convenient for them; that there is very little recourse in case of conflict and that grievance procedures don't work. (52)

In addition, few people felt successful and only rarely did respondents feel their ambitions were recognised or acknowledged let alone rewarded. Most felt that they would only gain promotion and progress by moving to another mine. (53)

Particular attention was given to 'illegals' and, early on, Sandelowsky was to distinguish the different perceptions of mine management and black employees on this issue.

Much of this (suspicion) may stem from misunderstanding what is considered 'illegal' and by whom and what is justifiably illegal. People who have grown up in a tradition where it is customary to visit for weeks on end may find it bewildering to have this viewed as an offence. While overstaying one's welcome is a well known phenomenon members of the western cultures also are familiar with the feelings of embarrassment caused by neglect to visit where family or friends make it obligatory. (54)

Further confusion existed amongst blacks where traditional, civil and religious weddings confused the legality of marital status. In addition the question of polygamy was raised, as Sandelowsky reported

Ovambo and Herero societies are traditionally polygamous societies. Cases are recorded where a man on arrival to the mine was married to one woman, but then remarried after some time. Which woman would now be the legal resident? Confusion also exists about the law of the mine and the laws of the country as a whole. (55)

Thus, mine management's definition of an 'illegal' as essentially anyone other than employees in the single-status accommodation or anyone other than the employee or their immediate family in Arandis, differed from the employees', and even here there was no generally accepted definition although Sandelowsky reported that 'the majority of 'illegals' on the mine consist of persons who have close personal, probably kin, relationships with workers on the mine'. (56)

The intricacies of the definition were, however, academic to mine management who continued to define the 'illegals' as the major problem in Arandis and the camps, and to view them as the major instigators of undisciplined behaviour which continued throughout the year.

In September Sandelowsky made some perceptive comments regarding the impact of the new social policy on the values of black employees. Despite most regarding their employment as temporary, blacks had clearly begun to adopt the materialistic values of mining communities

Observations relating to the role money plays indicate that that is what is fast becoming the only thing that counts. That is what the market economy is all about and how it sees its profit. Unless qualitative changes take place it will probably not be long before the kind of rules and behaviour patterns develop which characterize other industrial situations. (57)

In December some related comments were made concerning housing

.....a sensitivity to material values is one factor developing in all. Mining communities on the whole are very position and status conscious. Houses and motor cars are the most important markers in this field and now and again we have observed people beginning to make comparisons between eg houses in Arandis and houses in Tamariskia or even within Vineta. Here the question is whether Rossing will follow the model of strict social stratification which can be observed in many other mining communities or whether values other than financial are going to colour the issue. Will it be possible for someone to develop prestige and status and yet stay in the simplest house in Arandis? (58)

This last question was a significant dilemma and a real contradiction for Rossing in the implementation of its new social dispensation. The apartheid legislation restricting residence was still in place. Thus, whilst it had been possible, although illegal, to move a small number of Ovambo employees and their families into Arandis, it was not possible to move black employees into Tamariskia nor coloured employees into Swakopmund. This factor accounts for the delay in RUL addressing the issue of housing allocation.

Nevertheless, it would seem that the new social dispensation, based as it was on meritocracy and material values, was already beginning to have its desired effect with signs of black community stratification based on class becoming apparent. However, the contradiction of

operating such a system of stratification at the mine whilst Namibian society remained stratified on race, even after the repeal of some of the apartheid legislation, was to continue to constrain and complicate the implementation of the Rossing strategy.

Nowhere were such contradictions more explicit than in Arandis and the camps. As Sandelowsky commented

The picture of social attitudes and norms developing at Arandis and A Camp is discouraging. Theft is rife in both places. Incidents of stone throwing seem to increase. The rift between we vs the mine or simply 'others' seems to deepen. There are no signs of mechanisms for conflict resolution developing. (59)

However, such actions were not well understood by Sandelowsky as expressions of resistance against both mine and state. A clear insight is provided in this respect from company correspondence regarding an incident in A camp on 23rd October 1978 when a 'trespasser' had been arrested in a manner 'offensive to the residents of the township'. During the ensuing disturbance cash had been stolen, the liquor store cleared out and SAP and Rossing security and their vehicles stoned. In addition some dayrates had refused to work. (60)

A security report of a meeting attended by over 200 residents to discuss the incident reports that grievances

against individual members of Rossing Security were discussed and that the meeting decided to speak to the general manager to have one of them discharged while two others were to be attacked. In addition, the following discussion is reported to have taken place

Freedom will be achieved on 30th December 1979 (sic) and it is for that reason that the security and SAP did not shoot them on Sunday night (22/11/78). They must now exert pressure before Sam Njoma and his team arrives and when these people arrive then Rossing mine will already have been freed by means of using stones and clubs.....

They also mentioned that the old (liaison) committee didn't do anything because they were elected by the Boers and not by the Nation (implying Ovambo). This is the reason why the new committee must know a lot about the politics of the land in other words Namibia and that the law that they will make will show that the people are on the way to freedom. These people must always attend SWAPO meetings to become conversant in what to say and by this method all members in the Camp will know where North, South, East and West is.

In other words they will know a lot of people not known by others. SWAPO songs were sung whilst the black power sign was given and Sam Njoma was praised instead of God. They also want to talk to the English and not the Boers. It is an English mine and they understand each other. In future they will diminish the security team to about 10 or 20. I left at about 21h00. I understand that the meeting continued until about 05h00 and that SWAPO songs were continually sung. (61)

The events outlined here give a flavour of the motivations and aspirations of the black Namibian workers. For them there was no separation between work at the mine, life in the camps and the social and political context within which they lived. Their actions were both an attempt to

exert some control over their working lives and an expression of political defiance.

Mine management, on the other hand, defined such behaviour as undisciplined and uncivilised requiring remedial treatment or expulsion. Such an approach was clearly set out by the general manager after meeting with representatives of A camp following this incident.

Obviously, the aim is to provide good facilities for all our employees and encourage a Rossing identity, inside which they will be prepared to accept our disciplinary code. I believe, with encouragement, this can be achieved for the majority, but where a man will not accept civilised constraints, then the disciplinary procedure must be applied to either correct him, or ultimately dispense with his services, if correction is not possible. (62)

By the end of 1978 the social policy set out by Rossing at the end of 1977 had made some progress but less had been achieved than planned earlier in the year. There had been a preoccupation with getting the mine operating correctly and with tightening standards of work, quality and safety through the imposition of a disciplined regime. In addition, senior management had underestimated the implications of the dramatic changes implicit in the new social dispensation and had failed to understand some of the barriers it posed.

Mine management had also failed to appreciate the level of politicisation amongst the black workforce and their aspirations in relation to the developing national events. Given this situation it is not surprising that of 2,000 employees, all but about 40 black and coloured workers, went on strike just before Christmas.

The dispute began on the evening of 20th December 1978, sparked off when workers received individual notification of their new grade and pay resulting from the Paterson job evaluation exercise, effective on 1st January 1979. Although work continued the following morning, black workers refused to accept their envelopes and the afternoon shift refused to work. The following morning the day shift in the open pit arrived but, after an hour, walked out of the mine in a coordinated action encouraging others to join them. The strike lasted until 28th December when between 85% and 90% of employees returned to work. Despite the apparent disaffection amongst some white workers, it is indicative of the depth of racial divisions in the mine that no whites joined the strike.

(63)

The Strike

Rossing management was by no means unprepared for a strike. In June 1978 the internal auditor had distributed a document, signed by the general manager, laying out a procedure to be adopted in such an event. (64) Moreover, based on security information, the general manager had written to divisional managers in late November pointing out that the external wing of SWAPO were seeking a nationwide strike during the week of the internal elections in early December and instructing them to attend a meeting to discuss internal security. (65)

The same memorandum suggested that 'a written fully comprehensive security scheme' was required based on three types of alert: 'a) when it is suspected that civil unrest may occur, b) when strike action or minor civil unrest is occurring and c) when the unrest is to such a stage that strong counter measures are required'. In this latter respect a report on the 'mobilisation of Rossing Commandos and Rossing auxilliary police' was requested as well as the consideration of plans for maintaining production during such periods for which it was assumed only white employees would be at work. (66)

On the same day a 'Security Scheme' was distributed, all copies of which were to be destroyed, the objective of which was 'To establish and maintain a state of preparedness for Civil or Labour or Terrorist attack against the mine'. (67)

The report made it clear that Rossing had a paramilitary force at its disposal drawing on security employees, security department auxiliaries and a 'Swakopmund Commando - Industrial Protection Unit' consisting of some '24 men'. It was also clear that the company maintained an arsenal containing automatic sub-machine guns, automatic and semi-automatic rifles, 12 bore semi-automatic shotguns, pistols and revolvers as well as teargas shells, grenades and launchers. (68)

Company documentation of the strike illustrates the degree to which security informants in each of the communities were used to report on community and individuals' activities. The company also clearly had a well established relationship with the SAP and the security forces who provided a profile of Arthur Pickering, the chair of the strikers' representatives (an active member of SWAPO and the recently re-emerging National Union of Namibian Workers) which detailed his publications, speeches and activities throughout Namibia. The SAP also arrested four of the strikers' representatives on 28th

December, when they had returned to work, on suspicion of being involved in a bomb blast in Swakopmund.

The strike, however, was a peaceful affair and none of the paramilitary elements of the contingency plan were put into use. Plans laid for the maintenance of production using only white employees were implemented and the personnel manager claimed "morale amongst whites was very high". Pay for those people who remained at work was raised to triple time for the duration of the strike. One white worker commented

In 1978 when the blacks went on strike in the open pit they marched from the pit collecting blacks from sections on the way to the entrance. The whites cheered and clapped but they didn't join them..... people came out of the offices to drive Wabcos. I was working about 18 hours a day, I never had such a great time in all my life.

As the personnel manager commented the whites said "OK if that's the way you want it we'll show you". Such comments conflicted with the social policy of the mine and it is clear that the strike both re-emphasised and heightened the racial divide. (69)

Nevertheless, the strike highlighted the dependency of the mine on its black and coloured workforce. As one manager reported after the strike

Although the mine operated without loss of production for a period of one week, this could not have been continued indefinitely and I think that the ability of the European staff to operate the mine for a long period has been over-estimated. (70)

Black demands focused on four issues.

1. A basic minimum wage of R175 per month for all workers.
2. Wage increases for all black workers of 22% on existing wages.
3. That no worker in the strike be victimised.
4. That full wages be paid for those workers involved in the strike.

Thus, whilst the action was partially motivated by political aspirations, the demands of the strikers were purely economic.

Following threats of dismissal if there was not a return to work, strikers' representatives met with management on 26th December. Having spent some hours considering the strikers' demands management were conciliatory. They expressed sympathy with many of the problems raised and a willingness to negotiate if blacks returned to work. However, management made one concession, to establish a

committee of management and employee representatives to 'investigate discrimination in working conditions and differential wage rates'. (71)

On 28th December the majority of black workers returned to work. During the following three weeks management conceded a rise in the minimum pay from R160 to R175 and reconsideration of some employees' grading resulting from the introduction of the Paterson system. However, this latter point was to be dealt with individually by management. There was no concession to the demand that strikers should be paid for the time they were on strike but there was to be joint monitoring by management and an employee representative of any cases of discipline since the strike.

Furthermore, the general manager reported his intention of forming a 'number of committees': liaison committees to facilitate an 'exchange of views between management and workers'; the discrimination committee as mentioned above; a channel through which dismissed workers could be provided with a hearing; and a means of 'getting closer to the workfront' where 'a person could go along with a problem and know that the other person would listen'. (72)

At the same meeting two employee representatives reported on the attitude of white foremen towards returned black

strikers which was 'building up a great deal of anxiety in them' and that 'if things went on like this he did not exclude the possibility of bloody confrontation in the next few months'. It is also noteworthy that

Mr Pickering said that he wished to remind management that they were dealing with a new generation of blacks who were on the threshold of independence and who would not tolerate these things. (73)

Mine management spent considerable time and effort analysing the strike, the motivations of the black employees and the lessons to be learned. The management consensus was initially that the strike was politically inspired, however, the reflections of management some two months later suggest a view that in addition to the political dimension there was some management responsibility. It was accepted that management provided the communication channels for giving feedback and the discussion of changes taking place, that management failed to grasp the political initiative by making a worthwhile improvement to the wages of the lowest paid workers and that the distinction between staff and hourly paid had been inadequately thought out. This last point was perceptively put by one manager.

We should strive for the creation of a strong, middle class, non European group, which will take some of the sting out of the "underprivileged" platform. However, this can only be achieved by good recruiting, and a vigorous training programme. (75)

Reflecting on the 1978 strike the personnel manager described it as a "watershed in the development of the company" explaining that "the whole black - white thing quietened down, it got rid of the frustration". However, as the personnel manager reported, there was an increased urgency and intensive management activity throughout 1979 to ensure that the outstanding problems referred to above were dealt with and that the Rossing social policy was carried forward.

In October 1979 the personnel manager was able to write to the assistant general manager reporting that 'during the course of 1979 there have been no further labour disputes' following the introduction of a number of measures

- a) the elimination of discrimination between Black and White by the consolidation of wage rates into one scale.
- b) the elimination of discrimination between Black and White by the elimination of dayrate and staff conditions and the substitution of monthly paid and hourly paid conditions based on the grade of employee and not the type of work that is being done
- c) We have implemented a disciplinary code which formalises disciplinary procedures, is better understood by the employees and guarantees a fair hearing to all parties involved.
- d) We have eliminated racial discrimination in housing by basing housing allocations solely on the man's job grade. This has resulted in the movement of Coloured and Black employees into areas previously regarded as White.

- e) We have amalgamated the total recruiting department on the Mine and thus eliminated another area of accusations of discrimination. (76)

The personnel manager also reported that the representative and residential committees had been established with elections held in September producing a 60% poll. Further, the Paterson system had been consolidated early in 1979 and two committees established, one to agree job grades up to, but not including, grade 14 and an arbitration committee for referral where the grading committee could not agree.

In addition to these developments, divisional personnel officers (DPO) were appointed in April 1979, as recommended in the Social Report. They were to provide two of the services proposed by the general manager following the strike; to act as independents, responsible to the industrial relations officer, to whom employees could go for advice and to whom they could appeal over grievances or discipline. Indeed, initially the latter took up much of the DPO's time. (78)

However, these were not the only functions of the DPOs. They were an important component of the training function, especially in encouraging junior management to accept the new dispensation in their relationship with black employees, an important element of which was the new

disciplinary code. They were also, as Freeman had proposed, the means of management 'getting closer to the workfront'. (79)

The discrimination committee promised by Freeman during the December dispute was set up in February 1979. Their brief was 'to investigate all company policies and practices pertaining directly to the work environment and over which the company has a controlled influence'. However, the committee accepted that 'Due to existing Government legislation preventing full racial integration, aspects outside the work area concerning housing, hospitalisation, schooling etc., would not be discussed in committee.' (80)

Given the committee's highly constrained terms of reference it is not surprising that the final report of the committee concludes

The Company's policy was found to be non-racial with equal opportunity for all races. (81)

Whilst the committee reported that 'cases of alleged racial discriminatory practices were investigated and found to be valid' the general manager in an address to employees explained these in the following manner,

What has come up, however, is that there are a number of areas of dissatisfaction which are blamed on racial discrimination but on investigation are found not to be discriminatory but due to poor administration or misunderstanding. (82)

Whilst discrimination had been removed from company policies inside the mine, it continued to exist both in areas associated with the mine outside mine premises, such as the provision of housing, as well as inside the mine in the manner in which policies were implemented. As the discrimination committee argued

The disciplinary code in itself is seen to be discriminatory in that the discipline is meted out by the white supervisor to the non-white worker. With the non-white worker being the majority of the workforce, it is seen to be discriminatory. (83)

The committee commented that petty discrimination 'is probably one of the biggest areas causing dis-harmony between the racial groups' and recommended 'that more emphasis should be placed on propaganda and on induction of new employees on the non-racial policy of the company'. (84) Nevertheless, petty discrimination clearly continued to exist at a significant level. Numerous illustrations of such incidents exist one of which records the views of a Black Workers' Committee

There is a so called "Racial Discrimination Committee" which to our minds is really unnecessary. They have come across no racial discrimination in company policy. Who is management trying to bluff?.....

For the last three months people have been victimised for every minor offence without them being given a chance to prove their case.....

The approach to black workers by the white foremen is completely negative. We urge management to look into this matter with the utmost urgency. People are becoming more aggressive towards the white foremen every day and this could only lead to a bloody conflict sooner or later.....They talk about another strike out of frustration as management seems not to be sincere in their efforts to solve the problems. (85)

In March 1979 the personnel manager commented on a paper submitted to the discrimination committee by a black employee representative. These comments are both perceptive yet naive, indicating the rift of understanding between management and the black workforce

From the remarks in this paper, it would appear to me that the problem that we are facing which is put to us as one of racial discrimination is more generally a complete misunderstanding of the system of work and reward in an industrial situation. There is no appreciation of the connection between the "Mine" as an entity and the man's own well being. There appears to be a strongly placed conception here that the mine is a fount of all wealth and is exploiting the soil of the country and expropriating large amounts of money and doling out very small amounts to the employees. He does not appear to grasp the conception of a large number of people working together for mutual benefit. Under these circumstances, with the majority of White employees being outsiders and having skills beyond the reach of the present generation of non-White Rossing employees, I think it is understandable that they see everything as a straightforward discriminatory system designed to exclude them from all the benefits. The task of putting across the error of this conception is immense, but I feel that it is something that we must constantly push in Induction Courses through the Rossing News and so on and I would welcome your views as to the best ways of going about educating all our non-white employees in basic business systems.

I think the major problem is that we have to convince them that their not being allowed to do a job is as much a question of their inability to do that job as it is a question of our unwillingness to give them the opportunity. (86)

Up to early 1979 senior management had endeavoured to construct a new moral basis for its authority through the introduction of non-racial employment structures and the development amongst employees of disciplined behaviour supportive of a 'lean, efficient and profitable operation'. The personnel manager's comments, however, indicate a realisation that the success of the new social dispensation required the addition of a qualitatively different dimension, indeed, one faced by managers in 19th century Britain, as Salaman argues

The first priority with the new factory workforce was to encourage the employees to develop 'appropriate' and 'responsible' attitudes towards work regulation and discipline, and towards the new form of employment relationship based on the cash nexus. (Salaman, 1981)

Much of this behaviour seemed to have been achieved amongst black employees at Rossing. Improved time keeping, efficiency, work standards, waste and safety were testimony to the success of the phase 2 regime in moving blacks towards the behaviour expected of an industrialised workforce. However, whilst behaviour had changed, underlying attitudes had not. Black workers had accepted the imposition of the new behaviour and performance

standards laid down by management only because the alternative was to be disciplined and ultimately dismissed. The beliefs, values and attitudes of the industrialised worker, which make such behaviour intrinsically desirable because of potential rewards rather than necessary because of sanctions, had not been adopted. In short, management had so far failed to fully incorporate blacks into the 'modern rationality' of the industrial enterprise.

As Sandelowsky had reported only three months earlier

In talking to dayrate people some roles are described fairly clearly and easily while others have great difficulty in deciding which are the most important aspects of their roles or jobs. One observation which is being made concerns the ability to read and write and literally understand what is being said. Much is done by imitating rather than by actually understanding, although there is the effort to obscure this, because it is dangerous to show that you do not understand. You might lose your job! (87)

The longterm success of the Rossing strategy, based as it was on the movement from racial stratification to that of class, necessitated black advancement into the middle and managerial strata. This could only be achieved with the incorporation of blacks and much of the development that took place in industrial relations over the following period was concerned to develop the necessary skills, attitudes and values to achieve this.

The communications and committee structures, all involving employee representation, were an important part of the process of incorporation. They allowed management to project an image of fairness and involvement despite representation being minor and the system itself non-negotiable.

Most important were the consultative committees. Tremendous emphasis and publicity were given to the committee elections and, with both line managers and DPOs 'encouraging' black employees to vote, the company was soon able to consistently claim close to a 100% poll despite the cynical views of some employees. One DPO reported that there was little confidence in the system amongst blacks; it was often difficult to get nominations and employees were often 'encouraged' to put their names forward for nomination by their line managers. Fear of victimisation led to nominations and explained the high vote.

Senior management had defined the level of employee involvement as consultation. It was clear that negotiation was not acceptable and discussion of pay and conditions was explicitly excluded. As the terms of reference stated

The consultative system shall function in a complementary role to trade union(s) recognised by the Company and shall not be utilised as an alternative for such unions. (88)

There was no recognised trade union representation at the mine until 1987. However, Rossing management had endeavoured to reduce the feelings of insecurity and impermanence reported by Sandelowsky by introducing a no redundancy policy.

The concern to provide the consultative committees with a high credibility profile led management to invest in lengthy training programmes for managers and employee representatives. As one member of the Rossing Council (membership of which was drawn from each divisional committee to represent the whole company) said "We're well indoctrinated at the beginning, for example we're told we're not a trade union but only an organisation to give feedback to higher management and to distribute information from higher management. In addition, employee attitudes towards the committees were continuously monitored with remedial action being taken where necessary.

Despite the constitution, on occasions management came close to negotiating over some employment conditions of marginal importance. Frequently these concerned what the

personnel manager referred to as 'issues of privilege not of right'. Indeed, some managers acknowledged that they made concessions in such areas in order to maintain the credibility of the committees and their representatives.

Training was not only important in conditioning the activities of the consultative committees, its importance went far beyond this. It had been acknowledged in 1977 that 'the evaluation of employee's potential, and development of that potential by rapid and concentrated training is of prime importance' and reported that 'a special training centre is in the course of erection'. (RTZ, 1977) However, despite a training officer being appointed during late 1978 little development took place until 1979. Development was rapid; by 1982 there were some 40 fulltime, permanent training staff and an expenditure of some R40 million per annum.

Training represented a major plank in the efforts of the company to incorporate blacks through the development of their attitudes, values and skills. Between 1979 and 1982 the company developed the following nine major areas of training activity.

1. Aptitude tests were given to all hourly paid recruits to assess their suitability and potential for employment and training. Literacy was also established as a basic

requirement, preferably in English (which had been adopted as the language of the mine).

Such tests were considered to be unnecessary for staff who, being almost all white, held qualifications which were deemed to indicate their ability and potential. Given the mine's need for few unskilled and large numbers of semi-skilled workers, but the difficulty of recruiting semi-skilled workers, it was necessary to employ unskilled workers assessed to have potential and to train them. During this period the personnel manager claimed Rossing had "raped the country of semi-skilled workers".

In fact, testing was not only for 'aptitude' but for a range of potential qualities including for example, adjustment to white authority, ability to fit into western culture and leadership. Thus, management were psychologically screening applicants to employ not only those who possessed the necessary skill potential, but also those most likely to adjust to the regime of the mine in a way that would facilitate incorporation and allow them to progress.

The sophistication of such testing increased over the following period. At the end of 1982 the training department reported for that year

1,261 people took 6,032 (psychometric) tests, an average of 5 tests each. 23 different tests were administered. 597 people were tested for initial selection whilst 304 were school visitors and 360 were employees being tested for promotional, transfer, or career counselling purposes.

Early in 1983 we should be in a position to use the computer to update norms based on ethnic and educational variables. This will greatly facilitate the now overdue validation of a number of our test batteries.

With the acquisition of a Registered Psychologist on the staff a number of 'C' level tests will be added to our battery in 1983. (89)

2. During 1979 a major exercise was initiated to establish career paths and training for all semi-skilled, exclusively black and coloured, employees. By the end of the year

training has started in some seventeen areas covering personnel, administration, engineering, metallurgy and mining.....1980 will see the majority of semi-skilled employees well trained to do the work expected of them, with opportunities available for advancement on merit. (RTZ, 1980)

By the end of 1982 the mine was able to claim that training was being given in 64 areas and that the training was 'maintained at about 85% completion', the maximum it was likely to achieve due to employee turnover. The programme was well established, as the training department reported 'It is pleasing to see that generally it is a way of life in most areas with the foreman in control and managing it well'. (90)

This training was important for three reasons. Firstly, to increase efficiency and productivity. As well as increasing the standards and speed of work, the objective was to train blacks to take on the lower grade work of artisans, thus releasing them to carry out higher grade work, reducing their numbers and hence lowering the cost of production.

Secondly, the eventual substitution of white artisans by blacks. Whites were expensive to recruit and retain, however, blacks, coming from within the Namibian labour market, were a cheaper source of this labour power.

Thirdly, for the successful incorporation of blacks at the mine. Management needed to develop blacks into the higher grades, as already argued. However, as the personnel manager stated, there could be no "tokenism"; blacks had to be able to carry out the job to which they were promoted otherwise the system of meritocracy would break down as would efficiency.

It was therefore essential to develop the skills of blacks. It was also essential for blacks to see that management were prepared to provide training to facilitate their promotion and progress and improve their position and status within the mine and the community. The

development of such aspirations tied black employees to the mine, its structure and its values.

3. A Cadetship Scheme had been established during 1978 'the purpose of which is to identify, sponsor and develop people for future supervisory and management levels'. (RTZ, 1980) Cadets undertook a one year training programme with the mine before being sponsored to attend courses of practical value to the mine at university or technical college. In 1982 areas of study included engineering, mining, computer science and personnel with the first cadets expected to graduate in 1984. By the end of 1982 there were 33 studying of which 19 were white and 14 black.

Company policy was to recruit only Namibians for this scheme, with the exception of the "sons" of employees. In addition, black Namibians were preferred to whites since, as the public relations manager explained, "Independence is coming sometime soon and there is a tendency for whites to move out at independence". The company preferred to send cadets to British or American colleges and universities rather than South African despite the higher cost since the "attitude is more conducive to the company philosophy".

The major constraint on the recruitment of blacks into this scheme was the poor quality of state education available to them. Even where they had achieved matriculation, their subjects usually excluded maths and science subjects essential for the types of programmes into which the cadets were being recruited. Furthermore, there was a preference amongst blacks not to be sponsored by companies, and especially Rossing, in continuing their education since this meant being tied to employment with the organisation on completion. This was both a political and a practical consideration.

The major objective of the cadet scheme for the mine was to develop a number of Namibian, preferably black, middle managers who would be able to work their way up the organisation to replace expatriate managers in senior positions as they left.

4. Apprenticeship schemes were introduced during 1978 to develop artisan skills such as electricians, boilermakers, fitters, turners and mechanics. Recruits were chosen from the 'high flyers' about to matriculate from schools in Namibia and were expected to qualify within three or four years. Ten apprentices started their training in 1978, however, the intake had more than doubled to 22 in 1982 'making a total of 67 undergoing training in one of six trades'. (RTZ, 1982)

Recruitment was a lengthy process. At the end of each school year all pupils about to matriculate in Namibia were invited to the mine. In 1982

A total of 304 students visited the mine this year. These were preceded by our visits to the schools. We now have good communication with all the schools but will have to continue to work at keeping this level of interest up. (91)

The same recruitment preference applied to the recruitment of apprentices as for cadets, as did the same constraints. Similar to the cadet scheme but at a lower level, the objective of the apprenticeship scheme was to ensure a sufficient supply of skilled and committed Namibian artisans, preferably black, who would be able to carry out the skilled work of the mine and eventually move into foreman positions.

5. Supervisory and Management training was also developed during 1979 which included leadership, supervisory, introductory management and management development programmes. However, perhaps the most notable introduction was an 'Interaction Management Programme' which all foremen and section heads attended. The programme was designed to address the tensions which existed between first line managers all of whom were white and many of whom were Afrikaners, and their black subordinates. As one DPO commented

This challenged the pre-existing relationship between (black) workers and supervisors, I can't tell you how strange it was.....The company took a lot of old timers and put them through the Interaction Management Course.....it convinced them what they were doing was wrong.....

6. The idea proposed by the personnel manager of 'educating all non-white employees in basic business systems' (92) was developed under the title Basic Business Concepts. The most overt programme in its attempts to integrate black employees into industrial values, its objective was

to spell to the employees the financial constraints within which Rossing must operate and the contribution that can be made by all employees to the realisation of the Company's goals and employee benefits accruing therefrom. (93)

One member of the personnel department described the course in more terse terms as "propaganda". Its contents covered all aspects of capitalist activity including raising capital, investment, competition, efficiency, income and expenditure and profit and loss.

The programme was attended by some 1,500 grade 1-8 employees over the period up to 1982 when the intention was to develop a higher level course for employees of grade 9 and above in the early part of 1983. (94)

7. Also started in 1979 literacy and language training provided training in English Literacy up to Standard 6, Afrikaans Literacy for employees who were totally illiterate and Afrikaans Language for English-speaking employees.

During 1982 a programme of testing all grades 1-8 for literacy was initiated. The tests indicated

that 38% are almost totally illiterate whilst another 45% are semi-literate and 17% literate. This highlights the enormous literacy problem amongst our grade 1 - 8 employees. (95)

The seriousness with which Rossing viewed illiteracy as a constraint on employee effectiveness was indicated by employees' release from work to attend English literacy classes up to standard 6, the level at which 'functional literacy' for the requirements of the mine were considered to have been achieved.

8. In 1979 Rossing began to sponsor employees to study by correspondence. The company reimbursed the cost of a course on its successful completion if it was considered relevant to the employee's work. In 1979 'a number' of employees were taking advantage of the scheme. By 1980 this had risen to 87 studying for courses between Standard

8 and Degree level and by 1982 the numbers enrolled had reached 208. (RTZ, 1979, 1980, 1982)

9. Finally, Rossing provided bursaries to employees and the dependants of employees for study at school and university. In 1979 five bursaries had been awarded with a further five employees receiving travel assistance and study loans. By 1982 the numbers had increased to 33 children of employees and 25 employees receiving bursaries. (RTZ, 1979, 1982) No racial breakdown is provided although it is likely that they went mostly to whites because of the poor quality of black education. The cost of the scheme in 1982 was R35,000 when the training department reported that 'the results are now coming in'. (96)

Outside the mine the company had developed the Rossing Foundation to provide education and training to predominantly black Namibians as its major investment in building its public image in Namibia. The Foundation was launched in August 1978 on

the premise that the most urgent need of the country is greater educational opportunity for its people - not necessarily formal education, but education in a broad and largely informal sense. The Foundation's principal area of expenditure was on an adult education centre situated between the black and coloured areas in Windhoek. The centre cost R1.2 million to build and some R400,000 a year to run in 1982. (RUL, 1980)

The Foundation administered formal education classes for those over 18 years, practical training, rural development programmes, health education, developed various projects and provided scholarships to study abroad at post graduate level.

The developments which took place following the 1978 strike laid the foundation of the employment structure up to the mid 1980s. Changes were both dramatic and successful in restructuring the previous dispensation. Claims of racial discrimination continued, however, as the public relations manager explained, once the discrimination committee "faded away" these were treated as individual problems to be dealt with through the grievance procedure rather than collective issues to be raised as common complaints. Indeed, only the consultative committees existed as a channel for the expression of common employee concerns and, even here, the terms of reference severely limited the scope for such discussions.

Overall, Rossing was highly successful in individualising its relationship with its employees and in tying them into the meritocracy. Its success in this respect is indicated by the absence of any collective labour action after 1978.

Three factors assisted the implementation of Rossing's strategy. Firstly, the high level of unemployment which was exacerbated by the removal of the petty apartheid legislation. The latter developments led to a significant movement of blacks into the urban areas. Indeed, mining security reported an increase in the number of 'illegals' in the camps as well as an influx of work seekers into the general vicinity at that time. The high incidence of unemployment acted to encourage compliance amongst the black workforce.

Secondly, the prospect of independence receded throughout 1979 as it became clear that South Africa had no intention of making any concessions to the UN sponsored peace initiative. As the prospect of independence receded so did the political confidence of the black workforce who became more resigned to the continuance of South African administration and white, expatriate Rossing management.

Finally, Rossing had achieved its rated production in May 1979 moving it into a highly profitable phase. Thus, whilst mining management continued to make efforts to improve its efficiency, concerns regarding the viability of the mine were removed releasing time and energy to be expended on the introduction of the social policy.

Employment numbers for dayrate and staff, and equivalent grades following the introduction of Paterson, are shown in Table 7.1 and Figures 7.2 and 7.3. It is difficult to determine a trend prior to 1980 when employment levels stabilised for the remainder of the phase. For dayrate staff numbers remained stable for 1978 and increased by about 13% in 1979, remaining relatively stable thereafter.

The unwillingness on the part of mining management to reduce dayrate numbers during 1978 has already been discussed, however, the 1979 increase is explained by two main developments. Firstly, the increase in production which took place from 3,500 tonnes in 1979 to 5,250 in 1980. Secondly, the very high labour turnover during 1978-1979 amongst the almost exclusively white skilled employees who also proved difficult to recruit and retain.

Whilst the latter was a problem for management, it also presented an opportunity to move quickly towards the policy of recruiting blacks with the potential to be trained to take over the lower grade work of artisans, as outlined above. One particular example in this respect, recommended in the 1978 Report, was the replacement of white artisans operating ore-moving machinery in the open pit.

TABLE 7.1

ROSSING URANIUM LIMITED

EMPLOYMENT NUMBERS, 1977-1982

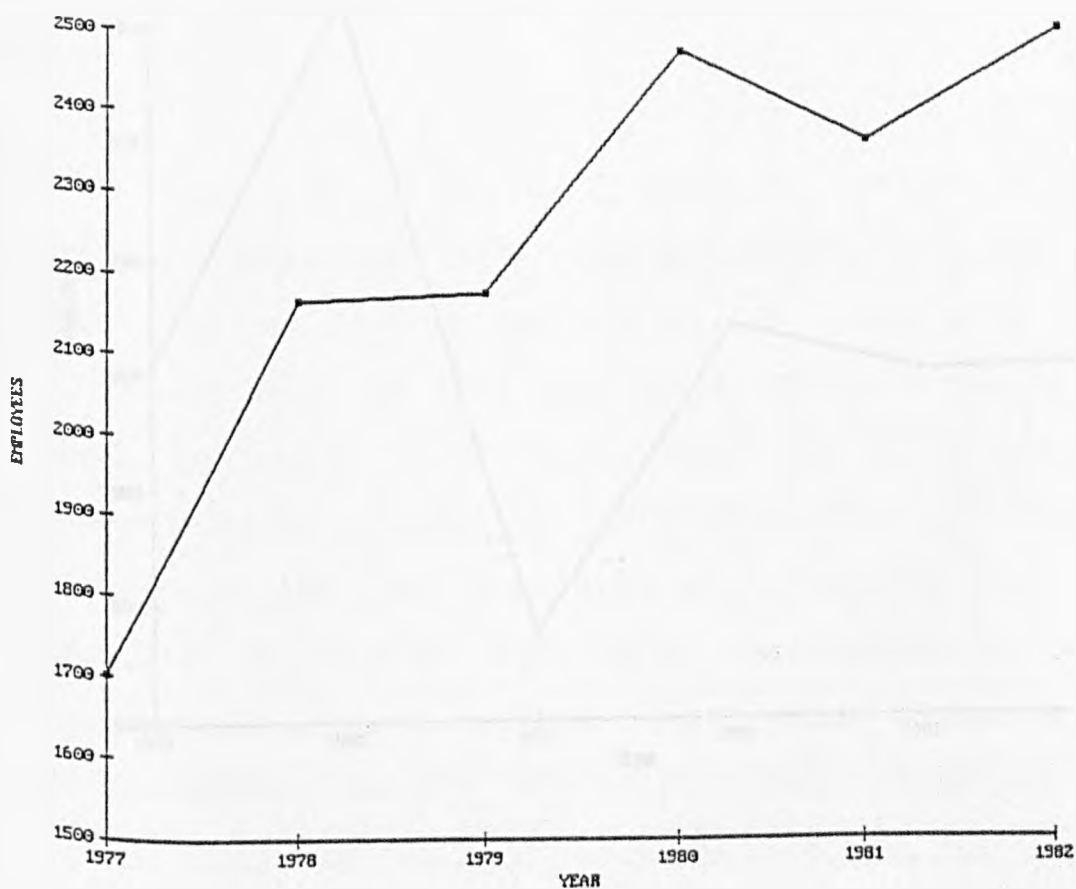
JANUARY/ YEAR	GRADES 1-9 (AA-HH)	10-14	14-18	TOTAL
1977	1702	605	75	2382
1978	2163	760	75	2998
1979	2173	487	87	2747
1980	2466	619	59	3144
1981	2357	599	80	3036
1982	2496	602	100	3198

SOURCE: RTZ Fact Sheet, May, 1977-1982.

FIGURE 7.2

ROSSING URANIUM LIMITED

EMPLOYMENT: PATERSON GRADES 1 -9 (AA-HH), 1977-1982.

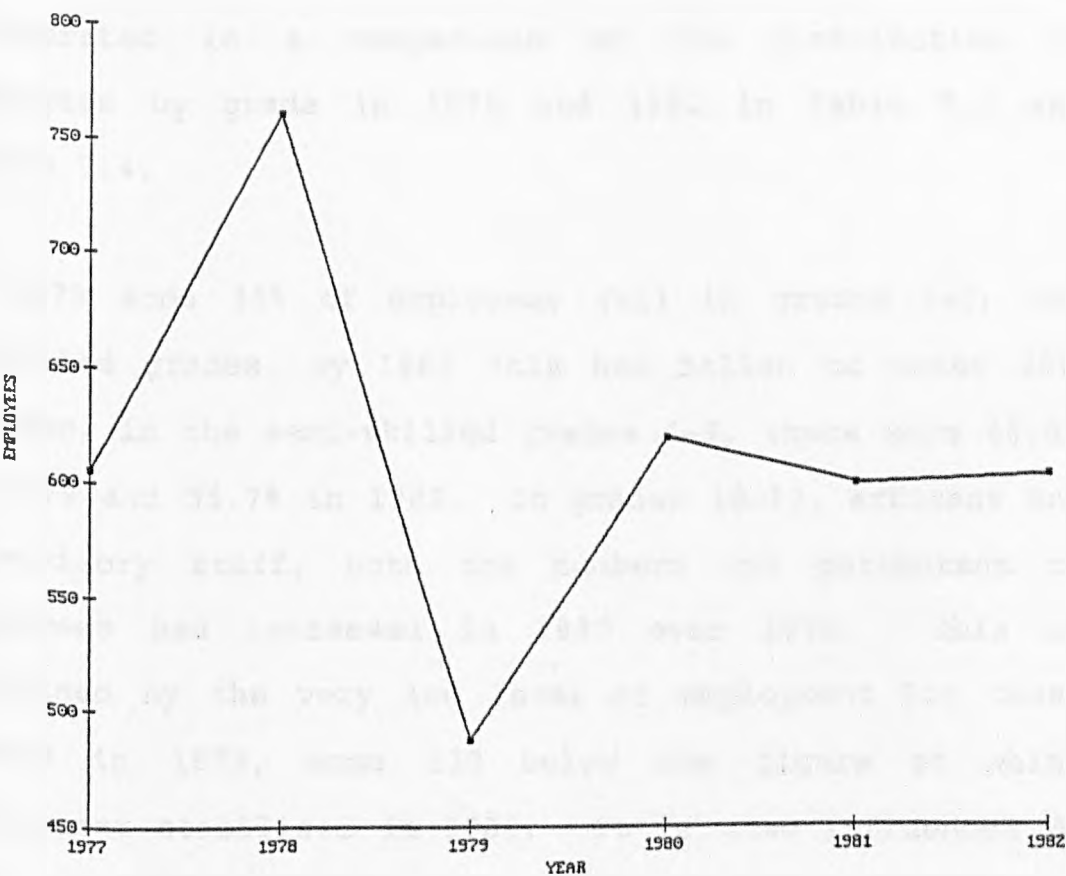


SOURCE: RTZ FACT SHEETS, 1977-1982.

FIGURE 7.3

ROSSING URANIUM LIMITED

EMPLOYMENT: PATERSON GRADES 10-13 (AA-HH), 1977-1982



SOURCE: RTZ FACT SHEETS, 1977-1982.

Thus, the increasing numbers of grades 1-9 throughout 1979 was a response to both the difficulty of recruitment and retention of grades 10-13 as well as economic and political considerations.

The replacement of artisans by semi-skilled workers is illustrated in a comparison of the distribution of employees by grade in 1979 and 1982 in Table 7.2 and Figure 7.4.

In 1979 some 35% of employees fell in grades 1-3, the unskilled grades, by 1982 this had fallen to under 25%. However, in the semi-skilled grades 4-9, there were 46.8% in 1979 and 55.7% in 1982. In grades 10-13, artisans and supervisory staff, both the numbers and percentage of employees had increased in 1982 over 1979. This is explained by the very low level of employment for these grades in 1979, some 120 below the figure at which employment stabilised in 1980. It is also influenced by the increased numbers of professional personnel and training staff as well as artisans employed to replace contractors.

TABLE 7.2

ROSSING URANIUM LIMITED

COMPARISON OF EMPLOYEE GRADE DISTRIBUTION
AT THE ROSSING MINE, MAY 1979 AND MAY 1982
FOR GRADES 1-13

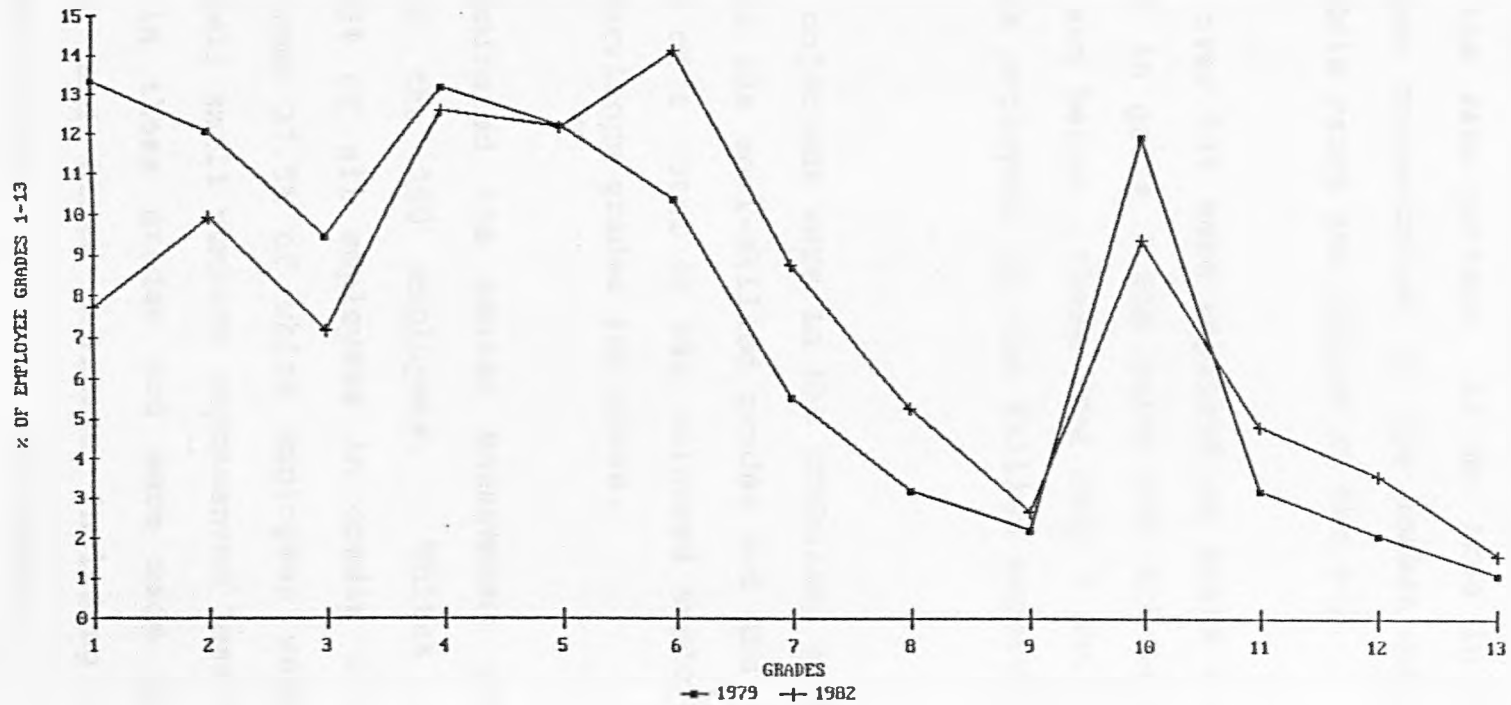
GRADE	1979 EMPLOYEES	%	1982 EMPLOYEES	%
1	355	13.34	239	7.71
2	321	12.07	308	9.94
3	252	9.47	222	7.17
4	351	13.20	391	12.62
5	325	12.22	378	12.20
6	277	10.41	439	14.17
7	148	5.56	272	8.78
8	85	3.20	164	5.29
9	59	2.22	83	2.68
10	318	11.95	292	9.43
11	85	3.20	150	4.84
12	55	2.07	111	3.58
13	29	1.10	49	1.58
TOTALS	2660	100	3098	100

SOURCE: RTZ Fact Sheets, 1979 and 1982.

FIGURE 7.4

ROSSING URANIUM LIMITED

COMPARISON OF EMPLOYEE GRADE DISTRIBUTION MAY '79 - MAY '82 FOR GRADES 1-13.



SOURCE: RTZ FACT SHEETS, 1979 AND 1982.

Table 7.3 and Figure 7.5 show the racial distribution of employees in May 1982. It is apparent that the 1982 figures illustrate the same pattern as was true in 1977 with blacks employees concentrated in the lowest grades, coloureds in the middle range and whites at the top.

Of black employees over 92% were employed in grade 6 and below with some 60% in grade 4 and below and 41% in the unskilled grades 3 and below. There were only 8 out of a total of 1,712 black employees in the skilled supervisory grades and above.

Whilst only 10% of coloureds were in the unskilled grades, over 82% fell within the semi-skilled grades 4-9 and less than 9%, or 47 out of a total of 595 coloured employees, were in skilled supervisory grades and above.

White employees dominated the senior management grades representing 96 of the 100 employees. Whites also represented over 92% of all employees in grades 10 and above. Although some 27.5% of white employees were in grade 9 or below their small numbers represented less than 10% of employees in these grades and were made up of apprentices, cadets and other trainees including some young people working during their school holidays.

TABLE 7.3

ROSSING URANIUM LIMITED

DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYEES BY RACE AND GRADE MAY 1982

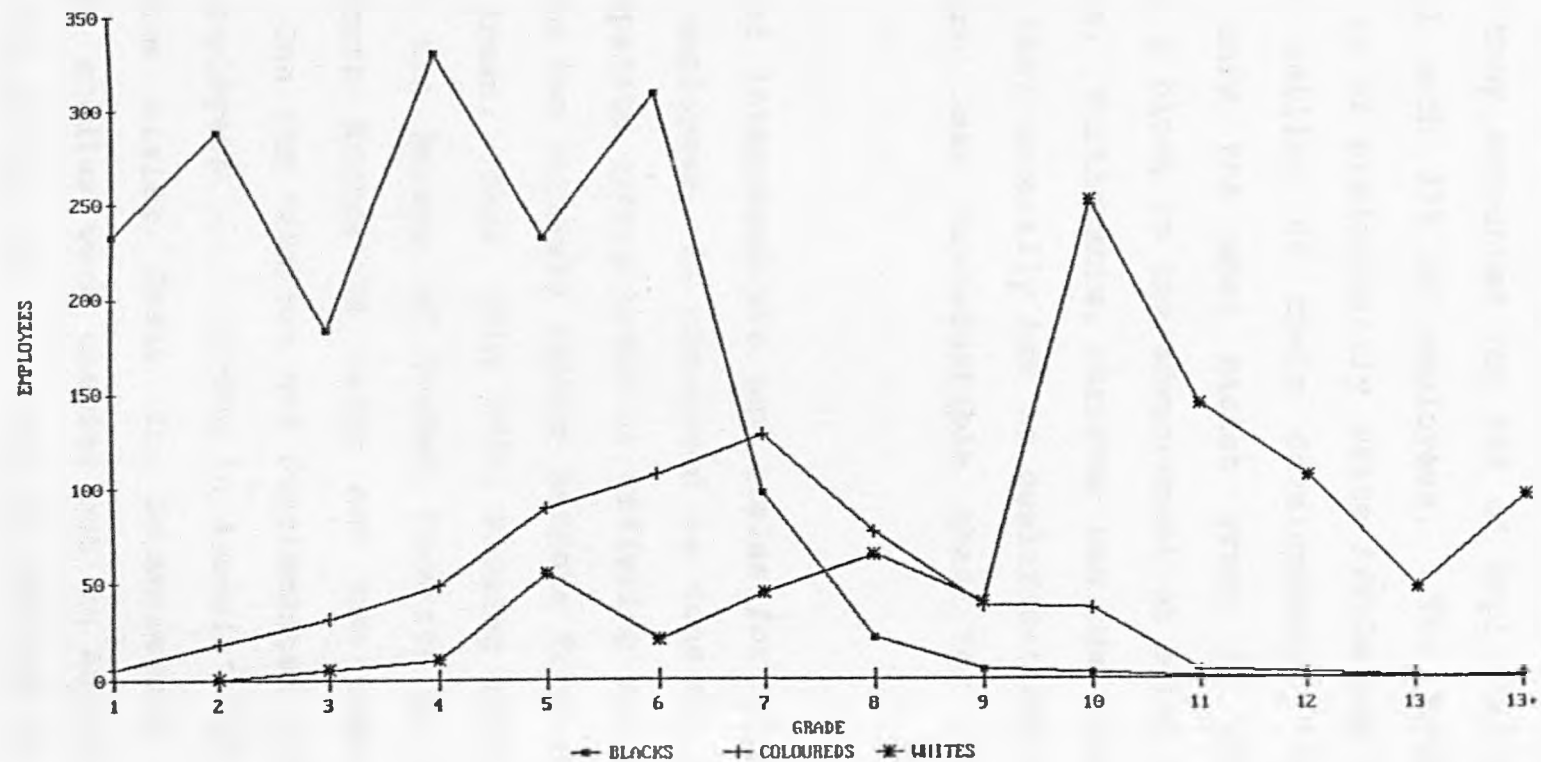
GRADE	EMPLOYEES BLACK EMPLOYED	% BLACK	COLOURED EMPLOYED	% COLOURED	WHITE EMPLOYED	% WHITE
1	233	13.60	6	1.0	-	-
2	288	16.80	19	3.2	1	0.1
3	184	10.70	32	5.4	6	0.7
4	331	19.30	49	8.2	11	1.2
5	233	13.60	90	15.1	55	6.2
6	310	18.10	108	18.2	21	2.4
7	98	5.70	129	21.7	45	5.1
8	22	1.30	77	12.9	65	7.3
9	5	0.30	38	6.4	40	4.5
10	3	0.20	37	6.2	252	28.3
11	1	0.06	4	0.7	145	16.3
12	1	0.06	3	0.5	107	12.0
13	1	0.06	1	0.2	47	5.3
CONFIDENTIAL GRADES	2	0.12	2	0.3	96	10.8
TOTALS	1712	100	595	100	891	100

SOURCE: RTZ Fact Sheet, May 1982.

FIGURE 7.5

ROSSING URANIUM LIMITED

DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYEES BY RACE AND GRADE AT MAY 1982



SOURCE: RTZ FACT SHEETS, 1982.

Another characteristic of white employment was their concentration in the foreman and assistant foreman grades 9-12. Whilst in grade 9 whites accounted for just under 50%, in grade 10 they accounted for 86% of employees and grades 11 and 12 each 97% of employees. The foreman grades were made up of predominantly white Afrikaners who had reached the ceiling of their development. They represented not only the most racist group of white managers but also a block to the advancement of black and coloured employees. Furthermore, turnover was low amongst this group since they generally had no qualifications and their skills were less transferrable than for other qualified whites.

Whilst Rossing had integrated the pay scales for dayrate and hourly paid employees, it continued to consider pay levels for two separate groups based on differing criteria and reflecting the two separate labour markets from which they were being drawn. Thus, from 1979, Rossing employed the services of the Bureau of Market Research at the University of South Africa to carry out two separate annual surveys. One for 'Minimum and Supplemented Living Levels of Black Employees..... Living in Arandis' and the other 'Comparative Living Costs in Johannesburg and Swakopmund'. The studies were carried out in August in preparation for the annual pay increase in January of the following year.

The Minimum Living Level (MLL) was defined as 'lowest sum possible on which a specific size of household can live in our existing social set-up', whilst the Supplemented Living Level (SLL) 'can best be described as an attempt at determining a modest low-level standard of living'. (98) The 1979 survey concluded that for 'all households' the MLL was R171.90 and the SLL was R236.28. Rossing set its minimum pay for 1980 at R202, approximately half way between the MLL and the SLL. (RTZ, 1980)

The labour market for unskilled staff consisted of black Namibians of which there was a ready supply; pay generally in the economy was very low for this group. Rossing, however, was attempting to establish an objective basis for the pay of the lower grades which would allow it to achieve its political motive of being seen as a good employer whilst at the same time not inflating its wages costs unnecessarily.

Pay for grades 4-6 reflected a national labour market of black and coloured semi-skilled workers. Labour supply was more limited in this market and competition greater, although more limited than for higher grades, and this was reflected in better terms and conditions of employment.

Grades 7 and above were seen to have progressively wider employment opportunities. Thus, for these grades Rossing

adopted a strategy of offering a payment package within the highest 25% of mining houses in Southern Africa to ensure they could attract and retain good quality staff. The high rates were also a recognition that Swakopmund offered fewer amenities than available elsewhere in Southern Africa. Nevertheless, mine management, along with other large employers in the country, endeavoured to reduce employer competition by maintaining 'no poaching' agreements for skilled staff. As the personnel manager explained, this meant that, where the employee of another large employer approached Rossing for a job, before an offer of employment was made, the "permission" of the current employer was sought.

In 1980 the difference in the labour markets was reflected clearly with a wide range of pay between grades 1 and 13. On minimum pay rates a grade 13 employee earned over five times the salary of a grade 1 employee. Furthermore, above grade 6 the range of pay within grades increased markedly. For example, the difference between the minimum for grade 1 and grade 6 is only R172, whilst the difference between the minimums for grades 8 and 13 is R522, some three times as much. (RTZ, 1980)

Thus, whilst grading was based on the Paterson system and pay based on assessments of the labour markets, it is not difficult to understand why black employees felt aggrieved

at their comparative positions and why they continued to claim that the company was discriminatory.

Indeed, by 1982 the differential had increased. The MLL and SLL for 1981 were R209 and R288 respectively. Minimum pay set for January 1982 was R250, still approximately half way between the two. However, minimum pay for grade 13 had increased to over 5 times that for grade 1 and the difference between the minimums of grades 1 and 6 and 8 and 13 had risen to over 3 times as much as the former. (RTZ, 1982,)

Moreover, the pay range for each of the grades above grade 6 had been expanded, further increasing the pay differential between grades 1-6 and those in the higher grades. For example, the maximum for a grade 13 in 1982 was almost eight times the maximum salary for a grade 1 whilst in 1980 it had been just over five times the value. (RTZ, 1982) Such changes are not explained by the application of across the board percentage pay increases. The result was that the majority of black employees were being paid even less than they were in 1980 in relation to the pay of higher, predominantly white grades.

Labour market competition was also reflected in turnover of employees which had remained high particularly for whites. During 1978 turnover was recorded at 48.5% for

white employees and 23.4% for black and coloured employees. Some improvement for both white and non-white employees was experienced in 1979 at 27.5% for the former group and 18% for the latter around which it stabilised for the remainder of the phase.

Nevertheless, such high turnover presented significant problems of continuity and stability. In addition it was of particular concern in the higher grades since recruitment was difficult and expensive. Whilst turnover amongst blacks and coloureds was also disruptive it was lower amongst this group and there was a ready supply of applicants to replace the leavers although its effect was to limit the effectiveness of training and related strategies.

Sandelowsky's studies continued throughout 1979 and, in addition, a series of staff seminars were held to discuss the mine. Sandelowsky was unable to attract a mixed race audience to any of the eight seminars held and noted that they were 'marked by a lack of genuinely friendly personal contacts' between blacks and whites. In addition, ethnocentrism was a regular theme of the seminars, a number of black discussion groups commenting that 'in spite of its liberal approach to race relations the management of the mine was nevertheless ethnocentric in its running of the mine'. (99)

Nevertheless, Sandelowsky was able to report some 'improvement' in employee attitudes. At the end of 1979 report on the the Heavy Vehicle Maintenance section commented

Some fifteen months ago I would have described the attitude of most workers towards the company (usually referred to as 'management') as negative. This seems to be changing. Many improvements were mentioned ranging from better food to better communication. Although the effectiveness of the discrimination committee and even the DPOs was doubted by some, it was agreed that simply the establishment of such instances helped to promote better understanding..... In contrast to a general feeling of hopelessness - disinterest in doing anything because it wouldn't help anyway - we detected not only the interest of the observers awakening, but a keenness of participating in new processes. (100)

In the final report of December 1979 Sandelowsky concludes that a 'general feeling' existed that significant changes had come about in 1979, much more so than in previous years. Whilst some of the innovations could have been more effective, it was felt that 'the intentions were genuine and that with continued effort conditions would continue to improve'. Regarding the introduction of the Paterson system and the integration of black and white pay scales the report comments

The fact that the new grade system had put a number of blacks and browns in the ranks of staff contributed to making the we/they boundary less sharp. This boundary used to coincide with the black/white boundary as well as with the supervisor and subordinate boundary. The attitude towards supervisors and possibly also the supervisors themselves had changed. (101)

Not only was there no further collective action following the strike, but destructive behaviour in the camps quietened down. Company initiatives undoubtedly influenced this, as did the high levels of unemployment and the developing political context. However, also of significance was a 'completely new approach' towards camp residents introduced early in 1979 and outlined by the personnel manager in the following terms

The problem of discipline is a difficult one and it is obvious from our recent experiences that we have not yet convinced the residents of Rossing Township A that the company has the right and the intention to impose proper discipline in the camp and that we intend to maintain it in a proper condition. The illegal residents are undoubtedly a major contributory factor to the lack of discipline in the camp and again I feel that we must by our actions, demonstrate that we intend to maintain discipline at an acceptably humane level and that the people themselves will benefit by the application of this discipline. I would agree that attempting to discipline people for offences actually within the camp could lead to inflammatory situations that are undesirable and therefore, Mr Oosthuizen should note the time and nature of the offence and arrange for the enquiry to be held on mine property. In this way the man can be approached individually and we are not faced with the mob situation. (102)

This was a clear reversal of a policy outlined by the personnel manager less than four months earlier when, although still blaming 'illegals' for the 'majority of our problems in A camp', he had argued with the general manager for a far more relaxed system of control. (103) Now, however, with the full backing of the general

manager, and despite some resistance from the divisional managers, the stricter regime was imposed. (104)

Plans were made in early 1979 to upgrade the camp accommodation and to reduce the numbers in the camps by increasing the amount of available single accommodation in Arandis. At the same time contractors staff were to be moved to a separate and upgraded camp. The transfers took place in September 1979 and both accommodation and facilities for residents were much improved as a result.

In addition, the catering contractor was changed in mid 1979 and later in the year the cafeteria system recommended by the 1978 Report was introduced along with the recommended pay-as-you-eat system. These changes generated improved food quality and significant savings.

Two factors had so far constrained the development of a housing policy as recommended by the Social Report. Firstly, legislation which required the segregation of different racial groups and secondly, the lack of housing stock.

However, in 1979 Rossing management entered into discussions with the Swakopmund municipality to seek approval for racial integration in housing in Swakopmund, as the public relations manager explained, "other changes

were taking place and it was clear the law was going to change" on housing. The result was a 'tacit agreement' with the local authority that no prosecutions would be brought against either the company or individuals. As a result Rossing implemented its integrated housing policy allocating Arandis to grades 1-5, Tamariskia to grades 6 and 7 and grade 8 and above to Swakopmund despite its illegality until the following year.

Nevertheless, the housing shortage remained a problem. The 600 houses in Arandis were upgraded in 1979 and a further 100 new houses of a higher standard added along with further community amenities. The following year a further 70 houses were built as well as accommodation for single employees. In total this provided some 770 houses plus accommodation for approximately 200 single employees.

However, in 1980 there were some 1,536 black and coloured employees in these grades 1-5, therefore only 50% could be offered family accommodation. By 1982 the numbers in these grades had dropped slightly to 1,465, and although another 100 single units and 100 houses were being planned, accommodation was still being provided in the camps despite the Rossing policy of giving preference to married applicants and the provision of married accommodation to all employees.

Similarly, the housing policy allocated accommodation in Tamariskia to grades 6 and 7 in which there were some 711 employees but only 243 family homes. In Swakopmund family housing consisted 574 units with approximately 860 employees falling into grades 8 and above allocated to these houses. Some additional accommodation was available at the motel purchased by Rossing for eventual use as a club and there was also some single accommodation available for single employees. In addition, there was also the possibility that some of those entitled to live in Swakopmund would purchase their own houses.

The quantity of housing was constrained only by the willingness of Rossing to invest capital in its development although the availability in each area was influenced by the priorities set by the company. Given finite resources the company chose to give priority to housing for higher grades in the short-term since the difficulty of recruiting these staff was being aggravated by the company's inability to offer adequate accommodation. Lower grade blacks and coloureds by comparison, were not difficult to recruit and in most cases expected to live as single people.

Indeed, by April 1981 there were only about a hundred too few housing units in Tamariskia and Swakopmund whilst Arandis remained understocked by an estimated 380 units

based on the assumption that '50% of our Ovambo employees will choose to remain on a single basis'. (105) Whilst the company policy was to have the same number of houses as employees, this was not achieved until late in 1984.

The new housing policy changed racial housing distribution very little. There were some 15 blacks and 89 coloureds entitled to move into Swakopmund and some 335 blacks entitled to move into Tamariskia. However, two factors constrained the impact of the change of policy.

Firstly, the low availability of houses and a preference given to higher grades on the waiting list. Since most of those entitled to move were in the lowest of the grade ranges they were given low priority.

Secondly, the housing policy made it clear that no one was under any obligation to move house. Indeed, there was some reluctance on the part of both coloureds and blacks to leave their communities; this was so especially for blacks whose children were provided with comparatively good, company-supported education in Arandis but would have to attend the very poor State schools had they moved to Swakopmund.

The personnel manager claimed that the criteria for the new housing policy was "purely mathematical" based on the

number of houses available and the numbers in each grade. Whilst it is clear that numerical criteria were important, it is also clear that some account was taken of the preferences of racial groups, indeed, it would also have been unacceptable for whites to be moved into traditionally coloured or black areas. However, it is not clear whether the decision was also influenced by negative preferences, in particular a preference not to move a large number of black employees into previously white areas. If this were not the case it is difficult to understand why such comments as the following should be made in the housing report.

by putting the cut off for Swakopmund for grade 6 potentially around 132 Blacks could qualify for Swakopmund accommodation. (106)

Indeed, one ex-senior manager in the personnel division at the time claimed that the introduction of housing allowances, paid to employees by way of compensation if they remained in houses allocated for grades lower than their own, was designed as an incentive to blacks to stay out of the white areas. Further, those blacks and coloureds who decided to move to accommodation in white areas found themselves concentrated in one suburb within a very limited number of streets.

The personnel manager argued that Rossing committed a tremendous amount of time and care in thinking through the implications of their policies for the Swakopmund community; he did not accept that racial issues were a constraint. Nevertheless, the ex-senior manager left his employment with Rossing due to his dislike of the "unprincipled pragmatism (of the personnel manager) which at times cut across established principles".

Conclusion

By 1976 RTZ had realised that the mine was unlikely to achieve profitability without further investment. International demand for uranium was high and was expected to remain so, hence the decision was taken to invest a further \$100 million. With such significant investment it was essential to minimise the risk of failure and consequently senior Rossing management, having failed in the past to achieve targeted production, were replaced.

Management at all levels at the mine had been extremely lax and costs had been uncontrolled. Indeed, the mine was in a 'make or break' period. The new regime had to address these issues quickly but also needed to respond to the rapidly developing political environment in which independence appeared imminent, aspirations of the black

population were increasing and some of the apartheid legislation had been removed.

Two major and influential reports were produced. The Report on Organisation, Procedures and Cost Structures of the Rossing Mine gave detailed recommendations for cost reductions. Savings of some R10 million on operating costs were projected, however, as important was the objective of changing employee attitudes.

Despite the substantial potential cost savings outlined in the report the major strategy adopted by management for overcoming the financial crisis was to emphasise increased production. Productive capacity of the mine had yet to be reached and, with its production all sold on advance contracts, Rossing stood to gain over R75 million a year by achieving full rated production. Whilst some cost reduction did take place and the change of attitude amongst employees became an important focus of the new management strategy, a major attack on cost cutting would have diverted energy away from increasing production and may have jeopardised its achievement.

The second report developed a Social, Manpower Development and Industrial Relations Policy which made detailed and wide-ranging recommendations for a new social dispensation in employer-employee relations. Many of its

recommendations were adopted by the new mining management team and a new social policy representing an entirely new approach to the management of the mine was published in early 1978.

Abandoning racial discrimination, the new dispensation was a pragmatic response to the changing socio-political environment and the developing needs of the mine and sought to develop a completely new moral base to managerial authority and control using merit or class, as the basis of stratification.

The style adopted was one of autocratic paternalism, an acceptance of management's moral responsibility for its employees whilst at the same time demanding from them self-dependence and self-discipline. Relationships with employees became individualised and employees drawn into what management portrayed as a unitary community in which the interests of all were served by management, and management knew best. Indeed, mining management demanded the adoption of 'civilised' western values whilst, for those unable to accept such a transition, discipline was harshly imposed.

It was in the company's interest to move away from the employment of a large number of unskilled black employees returning low productivity towards the development of an

efficient, skilled and committed black workforce. To achieve this it was important to incorporate the black workforce into the values of the new dispensation. Hence, pay scales for whites and blacks were integrated, conditions and housing standardised and training provided as a means of providing the opportunity for blacks to move into higher grades and achieve higher status. In addition, improved communication and involvement was developed. However, despite these changes, racial distribution within the employment heirarchy changed very little.

The response of employees to the new values was rapid. Improved time keeping, efficiency, work standards, safety and reduced waste were indications of this. However, the strike in 1978 and its consequences suggest that incorporation of black workers into the 'modern rationality' had not been achieved early on. Rather there was a tacit acceptance of the new regime with blacks accepting the authority of management only because of their dependence on them for employment. Such dependence did not remove black political opposition to white domination nor the basic conflict of interests in the employment relationship.

Racial distribution in the company heirarchy changed little during the phase and for black workers, at least in

the early period, there was no distinction between the structures of work and those of society in which they lived. In this respect the major strike in December 1978 was an expression of both political defiance and an attempt to exert some control over the new frontiers of managerial control. However, black worker resistance also continued to be expressed in the more traditional, covert and indirect ways, as in phase 1.

Later, as the new dispensation began to take full effect, there was evidence of a change of attitude amongst black employees and a reduction in 'destructive' behaviour. At work more 'positive' attitudes towards the company were recorded whilst in the social environment 'civilised', industrial and materialistic values were being adopted. Indeed, by 1981 the personnel manager was able to report on Ovambo workers, considered the most traditionally cohesive and politically oppositional group,

It would appear that for the first time we have seen a break in the usual monolithic approach of Ovambo employees to the Company and it would seem that we appear to be getting through to a number of our Ovambo employees who are prepared to accept the company's honest intentions in trying to improve our relations with them. (108)

In fact, whilst the adoption by blacks of 'civilised' western and industrial values appeared to have progressed significantly both in the work and social environments by

the end of period, the degree of incorporation of blacks into the organisation was questionable. The socio-political environment placed non-white workers in political opposition to the white dominated mine regime. The strength of such opposition was yet to be tested.

There were no further industrial stoppages after the 1978 strike, full rated production had been achieved in early 1979 and been surpassed for each of the two successive years. By the end of 1982, despite reduced production, profits had reached R158 million. Efficiency and productivity had been substantially improved, not by a strategy of cost cutting but by the adoption of a strategy which involved substantial investment of managerial energy in the development of a new industrial rationality which, if it had not been willingly embraced by employees, had been imposed by paternalistic but pragmatic, businessmen.

CHAPTER 8

MANAGEMENT STRATEGY AND LABOUR CONTROL AT THE ROSSING MINE PHASE 3: CONSOLIDATION AND RATIONALISATION, 1982-1985.

The strategic approach adopted by mining management at the beginning of phase 2 had led to an emphasis on the rapid maximisation of output at the same time as the adoption of the new Rossing social policy. The social policy saw the development of a new moral basis to managerial authority, one built on social differentiation by class rather than race. An important precondition for the effective development of this was the adoption by blacks of 'civilised' social and industrial values which were not only encouraged but imposed under the authoritarian paternalism of management. The changes implied in the move to the new social dispensation were dramatic both for the organisation and for the employees, however, by the end of the period a considerable amount of managerial success had been achieved.

Considerable financial success had also been achieved. Whilst 1978, the first full year of the new dispensation, had seen only a marginal profit, subsequent years up to

1982 saw profitability rise substantially. In 1982 Rossing returned a pre-tax profit of R158 million and accounted for over 25% of RTZ group profits. (see Appendix 1 for a full discussion of production and profitability)

However, the signs of a downturn in the financial fortunes of the mine were already beginning to be seen. Production in 1981 was marginally down on the previous year and in 1982 a further reduction in output brought production down to just below the rated capacity of the mine and to below 1979 levels. Production fell marginally in each of the subsequent two years and then markedly in 1985 when it was approximately 4,250 tonnes, only 85% of rated capacity.

The reduction in production was directly due to an over-estimation during the 1970s of the future world demand for uranium and hence an over supply in the world market. This is indicated by the sharp fall in the short-term 'spot' price for uranium which rose well above the Rossing contract price in 1976 but by 1982 is estimated to have been around \$17 per pound in comparison with the Rossing price of around \$35 per pound. (CIIR, 1983)

This over-estimation is also indicated by the cancellation by RTZ of plans to expand the capacity of the mine by 20% in 1982 which were being discussed as late as 1979. (109)

Indeed, far from being faced with the management of expansion Rossing was faced with an over supplied market and falling prices. However, while demand for its product dropped, it is unlikely that Rossing was forced to reduce its sale price. The conclusion of a contract between RTZ and Taiwan in 1983, for what was almost certain to be Namibian uranium, at a price of approximately \$37 per pound indicates the ability of the company to maintain its prices for longterm contracts. (CIIR, 1983)

Two further factors influenced the profitability of the mine. High inflation in the South African economy of between 12 and 14% throughout the period and, related to this, the substantial drop in the value of the South African rand against other major currencies, in particular the US dollar, in which Rossing's sales are denoted, and the pound, in which RTZ profits accrued. In 1982 the decline in value was 9% over the previous year against the dollar. In 1983 the average exchange rate for the rand was 1.11 to a dollar and 1.69 to a pound; by the end of 1985 this had increased to 2.29 to the dollar and 3.36 to the pound. As a result, between 1983 and 1985 Rossing's sales more than doubled their unit value. (see Table 8.1)

The effect of the decline in the value of the rand was threefold.

TABLE 8.1

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AVERAGE ANNUAL CURRENCY VALUES

FINANCIAL YEAR	RAND:\$	\$:£	R:\$
1983	1.11	1.52	1.69
1984	1.46	1.34	1.95
1985	2.24	1.3	2.91
1986	2.29	1.47	3.36

SOURCE: RTZ Annual reports

- a) It raised the price of imports thus raising operating costs since the majority of mining equipment and some consumables were imported.
- b) It raised the value of sales in local currency since worldwide sales were denoted in US dollars.
- c) The value of profits attributable to RTZ were reduced as a result of the devaluation against the pound.

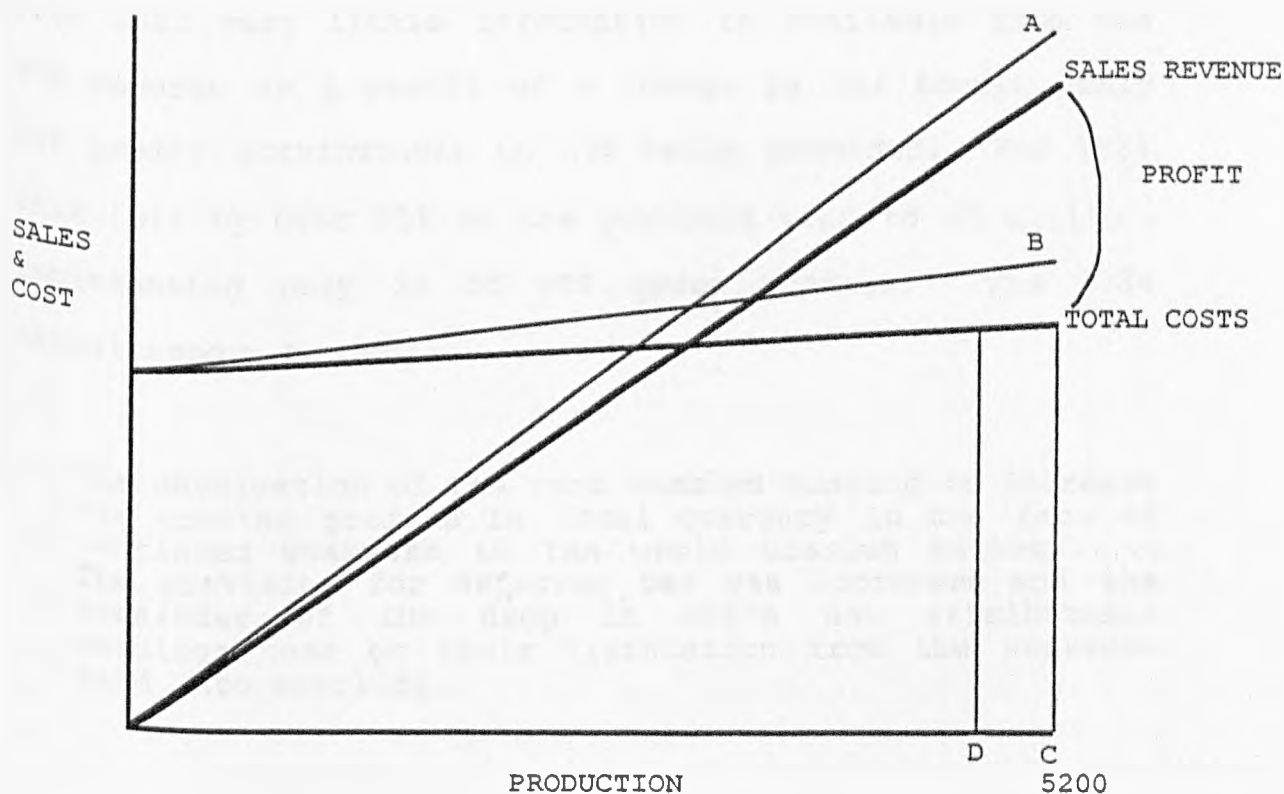
The effect of local inflation was to increase operating costs through the higher price of purchases in the local economy. The effect of these changes in Rossing's costs and sales on profitability are illustrated in Figure 8.1.

Whilst in 1982 the RTZ annual report commented that Rossing's turnover and earnings were 'significantly higher than in 1981 largely due to the lower value of the rand', and despite the rand devaluation, the picture had changed substantially by the end of the following year. Pre-tax profits were down to £63 million, only £15 million of which was attributable to RTZ. The contribution to RTZ group profits, which had been 25.8% the year before was only 7.4% for 1983 and turnover had reduced from £218 million in 1982 to £170 million in 1983.

FIGURE 8.1

ROSSING URANIUM LIMITED

GRAPH SHOWING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN COST, SALES AND PROFIT AND THE EFFECT OF A REDUCTION IN SALE PRICE, REDUCED VOLUME OF SALES (PRODUCTION) AND INCREASED OPERATING COSTS



- A - EFFECT OF AN INCREASE IN SALES PRICE.
- B - EFFECT OF INCREASED OPERATING COSTS, THROUGH HIGHER COST OF IMPORTS AND LOCAL PRICE INFLATION.
- C - REDUCED PROFITS DUE TO A DROP IN PRODUCTION (SALES) IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A AND B (PROFIT) AT POINTS C, SALES IN 1980, AND D, LOWER SALES IN SUBSEQUENT YEARS.

Further, an increased taxation liability, resulting from Rossing reaching a full tax paying position had reduced attributable profits. As the 1983 annual report commented 'Profits in 1983 were substantailly below 1982 levels as a result of reduced sales and an increased tax charge'.

From 1983 very little information is available from the RTZ reports as a result of a change in its format, only net profit attributable to RTZ being provided. For 1984 this fell by over 50% on the previous year to £7 million, representing only 3% of RTZ group profits. The 1984 annual report comments

The devaluation of the rand enabled Rossing to increase its trading profits in local currency in the face of continued weakness in the world uranium market..... The provision for deferred tax was increased and the remainder of the drop in RTZ's net attributable earnings came on their translation from the weakened rand into sterling.

It was not until the following year that the mine showed a recovery in performance with net profit attributable to RTZ rising to £26.5 million, accounting for 10% of group profits. The RTZ annual report makes no comment on the performance other than a reference to the achievement of the mine in increasing efficiency and productivity. Whilst these undoubtedly contributed to the results, the largest single factor was the change in the value of the

rand against the dollar from an average for 1984 of R1.95 to R2.91 in 1985. This profit was despite the substantial fall in output discussed above. Thus, whilst performance had improved, the financial fortunes of the mine were highly dependent on uncontrollable, external factors throughout the phase.

Given the bleak outlook for uranium demand, the inflationary pressures on production costs and the devaluation of the rand resulting in substantially reduced attributable profits, the position of the mine had to be radically reassessed in 1981-2. RTZ's continued interest in the mine had to be justified in terms of economic benefit and it was in this context that mining management turned its attention to minimising the effects of the developments. Since exchange rates, sales volume and sales price were uncontrollable, Rossing management's only option for influencing financial performance was cost control.

The approach was unequivocally outlined by two senior metallurgical managers, one of whom was to later become general manager

Because of the remote location the mine must support a complete infrastructure of employee housing, workshops, transportation, hospital etc. With the operation also being very low grade/high volume and capital intensive it can be expected that any production decrease would severely impact on unit production costs. To exacerbate this situation has been the high local inflation rates (12 - 14%) persisting in South Africa. The necessity for Rossing to continue the level of support services and welfare that have already been established means that unit costs can only be maintained by increasing process efficiency and productivity of manpower. The key to this goal is through technical innovation and this has been translated into good cost control as is indicated by figure 3 which shows that unit cost increases since 1981 have been limited to 1% per annum. (Kessler and Knoetze, 1985)

Figure 3 referred to in the passage above is reproduced in Figure 8.2.

It is clear from this statement that Rossing management considered it impractical to reduce its social expenditure. Indeed, having spent five years developing its social policy and provision it would have been impossible to gain any significant savings from direct reductions in this area without undermining its established objectives and managerial credibility in the mine as well as outside.

Thus, an increase in efficiency became the major strategic thrust of mining management during this phase to which there were two strands; a) technical innovation and b) increased productivity of manpower.

FIGURE 8.2

ROSSING URANIUM LIMITED

RISE IN UNIT COSTS 1977 - 1984



SOURCE: KESSLER & KNOETZE, 1985

Regarding technical innovation a number of developments took place. The reduction of fresh water consumption had been addressed in phase 2 but was given further attention in this phase as a means of reducing costs and increasing the recovery rate of uranium.

By 1983, however, the RTZ annual report reflected an increasing concern with operating costs and technical innovation

Operating performance continued to improve and unit costs increased by much less than the local rate of inflation. The main technical development was the installation of a centralised process control system, the commissioning of which will be completed by 1984.

The following year further developments were reported

Operating costs were successfully contained despite a high rate of inflation. The main achievements in this regard were the commissioning of a centralised process control system in the metallurgical plant, the use of cheaper and more effective explosives, greatly reduced consumption of sulphuric acid to the point where the mine is almost independent of imported acid, and enhanced productivity.

The 1985 annual report recorded further savings in water consumption, self-sufficiency in sulphuric acid production and the commencement of the installation of an electrified trolley assist system of truck haulage from the open pit.

Although technical innovation was clearly important Kessler and Knoetze ignored two important human elements in the construction of the new strategy. Firstly, the co-operation of the workforce, or at least their compliance, in the process of innovation; secondly, the need for employee acceptance of increased work rates as the workforce contracted as well as the reorganisation of work which both implied.

A contraction in the workforce was achieved through both the introduction of technical innovation as well as the intensification of work using such policies as increased flexibility through 'cross training', reorganisation and work redesign. In addition, mining management eliminated a number of individual employees returning low productivity whilst being careful to avoid the use of redundancy.

Whilst few direct savings were made in the quality of social provision, savings were made indirectly through the reduced quantity of provision for the smaller workforce. The following sections examine the implementation of the new strategy.

Strategy in Action

The managerial approach to the new set of imperatives followed the approach of the 1978 Report on cost reduction produced in early 1978. (see Chapter 6) One of the contributors to the report described the period from 1982 to 1985 as being a period of labour reduction. He explained there was relative ease in achieving this because "there was plenty of slack", in terms of high numbers and low productivity, and the mine was functioning effectively by then in terms of technical processes, the standard of work and attitudes of employees.

During phase 2 mining management had chosen not to reduce the number of black employees, however, the situation in 1982 was very different. In particular, the economics of operation had become far less beneficial. In addition, due to the success of the social policies throughout phase 2, the volatility of the black workforce had been reduced and compliance increased. Further, by 1982 Rossing was confident about its position at independence whilst the likelihood of an early settlement on independence had receded.

Overall, the latitude for mining management to adopt a cost cutting approach towards labour was far greater than

it had been in phase 2. In February 1982 the general manager outlined the new company imperative to employees.

Although 1981 went well due to a great deal of work, this coming year will be more difficult. The metal market throughout the world is in a depressed state and the uranium market is no exception. The demand is limited and therefore the only way we can contain increasing costs is for us to improve our own personal productivity and mine and treat our ore with increasing efficiency..... Inflation is running throughout South Africa at 15% and if it continues at the same rate in 1982 it means that all goods that we import such as acid, pyrite, machinery, vehicles, foodstuffs etc. will increase this year by a similar amount. This shows you very clearly the need to combat wasteful expenditure and ensure that our company remains strong in terms of world mining companies. You can all help considerably in our efforts to curtail costs by thinking twice before ordering stores and ensuring that when you do order, what is ordered is the correct thing and is needed. (110)

In May the same year the general manager informed the workforce that 'our cost cutting campaigns must increase even more" (111) and in November, at the same time as praising staff for their efforts, he reported that 'we will have to tighten our belts even further in 1983'.

(112) Indeed, throughout the phase virtually every month the general manager's brief contained an update on production and expenditure along with an exhortation to employees to further improve productivity and cut costs.

In September 1983 Freeman reported that, despite the high inflation rate, costs for that year had risen by only 3% as a result of the efficiency programme. (113) The

following month he outlined the plan for 1984 which was to 'hold our costs of production for next year to virtually the same level as this year'. (114) In January 1984 he outlined the approach in more detail.

If anything the uranium market is worse and we need to further reduce costs and seek ways and means of becoming more efficient. This is the secret of how to stay in business. So my message to you has not changed. There is no doubt, and many of you often point them out to me, that there are areas where there appears to be expenditure which can be considered a luxury and other areas where there is a need for more efficient operation. We will be taking these one by one this year, doing a thorough study to decide how best to trim them or improve efficiency. Presently we have just commenced a study on transport as we appear to have far too many vehicles travelling back and forth between the mine and Swakopmund. Additionally we wish to look at salvage materials, inside and outside courses, and all those areas where the expense is large and the value is sometimes doubtful. I would ask supervisors to discuss this question and see if you can come up with any good ideas which we can look at, either on a sectional, divisional or mine basis. With your continued trust in management I believe we will endure the tough times ahead until the metal and energy market revives. (115)

By November the planned reductions in operating costs had been achieved and the well established strategy was merely to be repeated for 1985 as the general manager reported

The finishing touches are being made to the 1985 Operating Plan and I am pleased to say that it is intended that the cost of producing uranium will not be higher than in 1984. I am confident that this will be achieved with your support and it is indeed a remarkable achievement, especially when one considers that the cost of production has been kept at the same level since 1982, despite ever increasing cost in chemicals and commodities and the fact that each year we have been able to give salary increases. This could not have been possible without your continued support and constant striving for efficiency. There will not be any dramatic changes next year but a mere continuation of the path we are presently on. Each person needs to look at his own productivity and always be prepared to lend a hand to his mates. I am sure that you must be as pleased as I am that we can go into 1985 as confident as we did into 1984. (116)

The more relaxed language in which the 1985 plan for further reductions was announced was a reflection of the degree to which a cost cutting 'culture' had been instilled and accepted at the mine and the success it had achieved. The January 1985 brief explained the position.

The year just passed was probably the most successful year we have had in terms of meeting production and cost targets. It was also a year of outstanding technological advancement and many of our plans came together during this period. We saw the introduction of new explosives in the open pit, Centralised Process Control, decentralisation of computer technology, maintenance of our stock holding, environmental seepage models which can tell us the effect of our dams and air blown dust year by year into the future, the introduction of computerised planned maintenance and many other highly innovative and worthwhile developments..... We will continue to follow the same path and although the majority of our restructuring is now complete we will still attempt to further optimise our operation which by mid year should in all probability be at optimum in terms of the number of employees for our output. (117)

The following month a 40% price increase in oil products raised projected costs by some R5 million for the year. As a result a number of minor cost saving activities were implemented and some major longterm cost saving plans initiated, the largest of which was the electrification of ore haul trucks at a capital cost of some R13 million and an estimated payback period of two years.

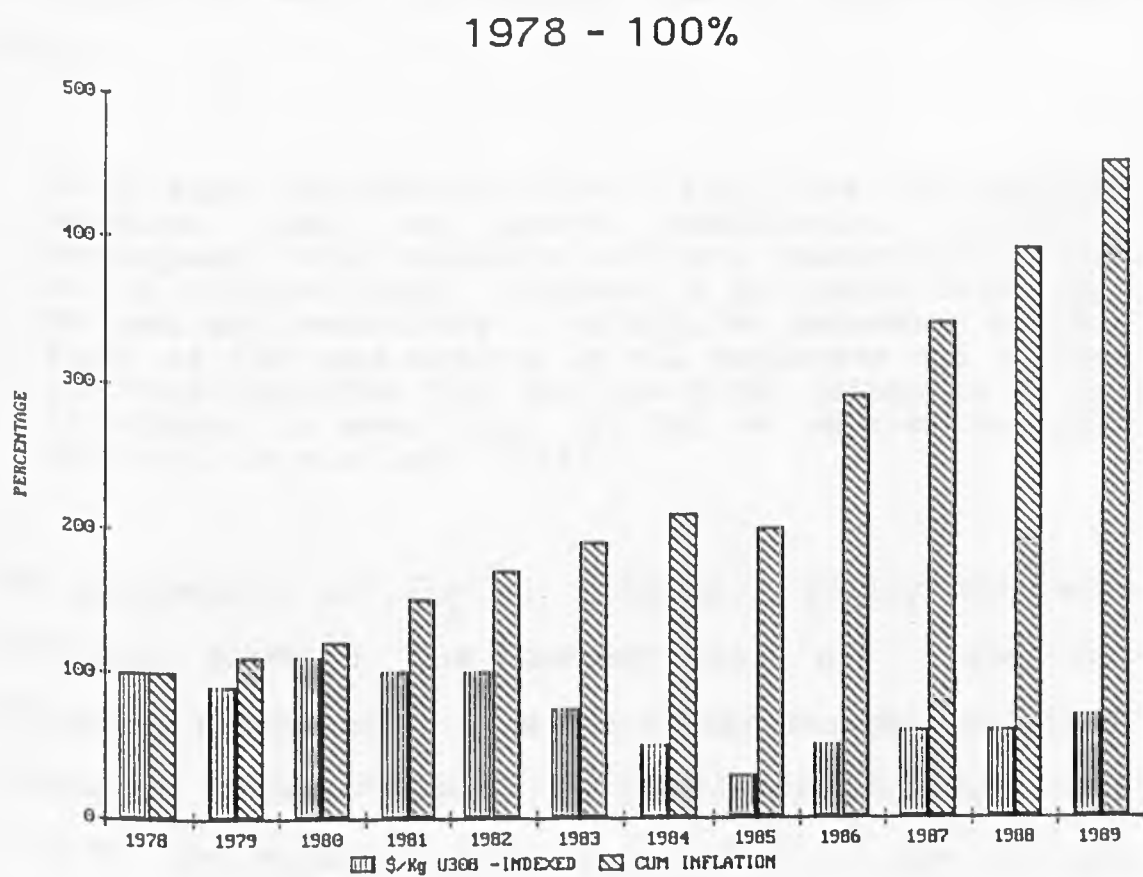
In April the general manager reported that costs in the first quarter were over target as a result of the price increases. However, by July he was able to report that costs were below plan, a position which was maintained throughout the remainder of the year although production had also dropped to its lowest level as a result of further reduced uranium demand on the world market.

Clearly, tremendous success had been achieved in holding down costs and increasing productivity in the three years from 1982. Unit cost increases had risen on average by only 1% per annum since 1981 whilst inflation had resulted in cost increases of around 60% in the same period. (see Figure 8.3)

FIGURE 8.3

ROSSING URANIUM LIMITED

UNIT COST VS CUMULATIVE INFLATION



SOURCE: ROSSING URANIUM LIMITED, 1989.

Mining management capitalised on its investment in the social policies it had introduced in the previous phase and the incorporation or capitulation it had achieved amongst the workforce. Maintaining its autocratic paternalism management refused to diminish its expenditure in respect of social provision. As the general manager argued

It is also true that we have a high level of employee benefits such as sports assistance, community development, club subsidies and many others which could be cut to save costs. However, I am loathe to do this nor see any reason why it should be necessary at this stage as they are enjoyed by all employees and whereas in other countries they are the first things to be cut in efforts to save money, as far as we are concerned they will be the last. (118)

The maintenance of the no redundancy policy was also important although the company had not ruled out redundancy as an option. As one senior manager explained, management projected the number of resignations from 1982 to 1987 (the estimated date of an upturn in the fortunes of the mine) which showed that they could achieve their targeted reduction in numbers employed by 1985/6. Thus, "it was not necessary to use redundancy so long as the MD was willing to bear the additional costs of a slower and more gradual reduction than could have been achieved via redundancy". Clearly the MD was prepared to do this, however, as the same manager argued, the dollar/rand exchange rate was in favour of Rossing at the time and

"carried the mine through a difficult period". Had the exchange rate not been as beneficial redundancy may well have been the chosen route. The personnel manager put it more bluntly, "the profits existed, therefore no redundancy".

In addition to retaining the social policy of phase 2, Rossing continued to give comparatively good wage increases at the beginning of each year. For 1983 the increase was approximately the level of inflation whilst in 1984 pay was increased across the board by 8%. For 1983 the general manager commented to employees

Because we had such a good year and because I am confident that you will face up to and meet the new challenges of 1983 the company has been able to give good pay increases again this year. (119)

Whilst for 1984 he commented

Because of your success in achieving all targets that we set for you and because we have had industrial harmony all year through, your Board of Directors have agreed to good salary increases which although not as high as last year, are certainly higher than the majority of mining companies are awarding. (120)

At the end of 1984 the pay increases for 1985 were reported to be 'better even than last year', (121) 'which is management's way of thanking you and appreciating your contribution'. (122) Thus, although wages had increased

at below the rate of inflation throughout the period, they nevertheless compared well with other companies in Namibia, and mining companies throughout Southern Africa. They were clearly seen by management as a part of the strategy for encouraging cooperation or compliance for its efficiency programme.

The structure of pay had changed little at the end of this phase from that described in 1982 with differentials much the same. Labour turnover, however, had reduced steadily amongst all grades reflecting the diminishing employment opportunities in each of the national, regional and international labour markets. During 1985 turnover amongst grades 1-6 was only 5.9% whilst in grades 7-13 it was 11.9%. (123) Although not directly comparable, this contrasts clearly with 18% amongst black and coloured employees and 28% amongst white employees in 1981.

Whilst expounding the need to reduce operating costs, management were careful to ensure that this did not have a negative influence on employees. The general manager regularly informed workers of the success of the mine in comparison to other mines and praised them for their efforts. In addition, the cost cutting exercise was projected in the more positive context of a challenge. For example in May 1984 the general manager reported

I am really impressed with the way you have responded to the call for increased efficiency and what is encouraging is that everyone I have spoken to appears to enjoy and thrive on the challenge. (124)

Another element of the creation of the positive challenge was the use of the suggestion scheme which became emphasised during phase 3. In February 1982 the general manager reminded staff of the scheme

I would also remind you that the suggestion scheme is open to all persons who have reasonable suggestions on how to do a job more efficiently or more safely. Last year there were a number of awards given to men who thought up good ideas and were prepared to submit them to the suggestion award panel. You will also recall that at the end of the year the best suggestions were given additional prizes and one man even won a motor car. So start thinking and let us have your ideas. (125)

By November 1983 even greater weight was placed on the scheme, the general manager claiming that it 'is an important part of our overall programme to reduce costs and become more efficient' and that 'the suggestions you make have saved the company a great deal of money'. (126) During 1984 the scheme received 'more suggestions than in any previous year'. However, the general manager reported that

only a relative few of our employees come forward with suggestions and I would put the challenge to all of you that, as you go about your normal duties, you must see plenty of opportunities where you believe something can be done more effectively, more safely or more cheaply. (127)

In exchange for the maintenance of the social policies, the no redundancy policy and the comparatively good pay increases, mining management expected employees to respond to the needs of the mine by adopting the efficiency culture. Such adoption was more apparent amongst the higher grade white employees where the integration into company attitudes had been most successful. (It is interesting to note in this respect that the majority of suggestions were submitted by the higher grade and mainly white employees.)

For lower grade black employees incorporation was more doubtful and there was a lower level of commitment to the efficiency culture. For them acceptance was not through a willing and whole-hearted commitment, rather the reality of the alternative, to join the large numbers of unemployed and to forego a lifestyle that would be difficult, if not impossible, to match elsewhere, tempered any tendency there may have been to overtly resist or express their opposition. Indeed, as has been shown, turnover amongst black and coloured employees had fallen dramatically to under 6% by the end of 1985. (128)

Mining management maintained its willingness to discipline and to dismiss employees who were either unwilling or unable to respond to the increased demands placed on them and as late as 1985 14% of labour turnover was accounted

for by people 'asked to leave the company because they have consistently refused to abide by company rules and regulations'. (129)

In terms of reductions in the workforce there were 3,198 employees at the mine in January 1982. By December 1985 this had reduced to 2,496, a reduction of some 702 or 22%. (Table 8.2 and Figure 8.4) Not only had there been a reduction in the numbers employed but additional work had been taken on through the absorption of work previously carried out by contractors. For example the general manager reported in 1984, 'in mine and engineering maintenance a lot of work previously done by contractors is now being done by our own employees without any increase in labour'. (130)

Even reductions in employee numbers and the resultant intensification of work was conveyed as a challenge by the general manager. In August 1985 he commented

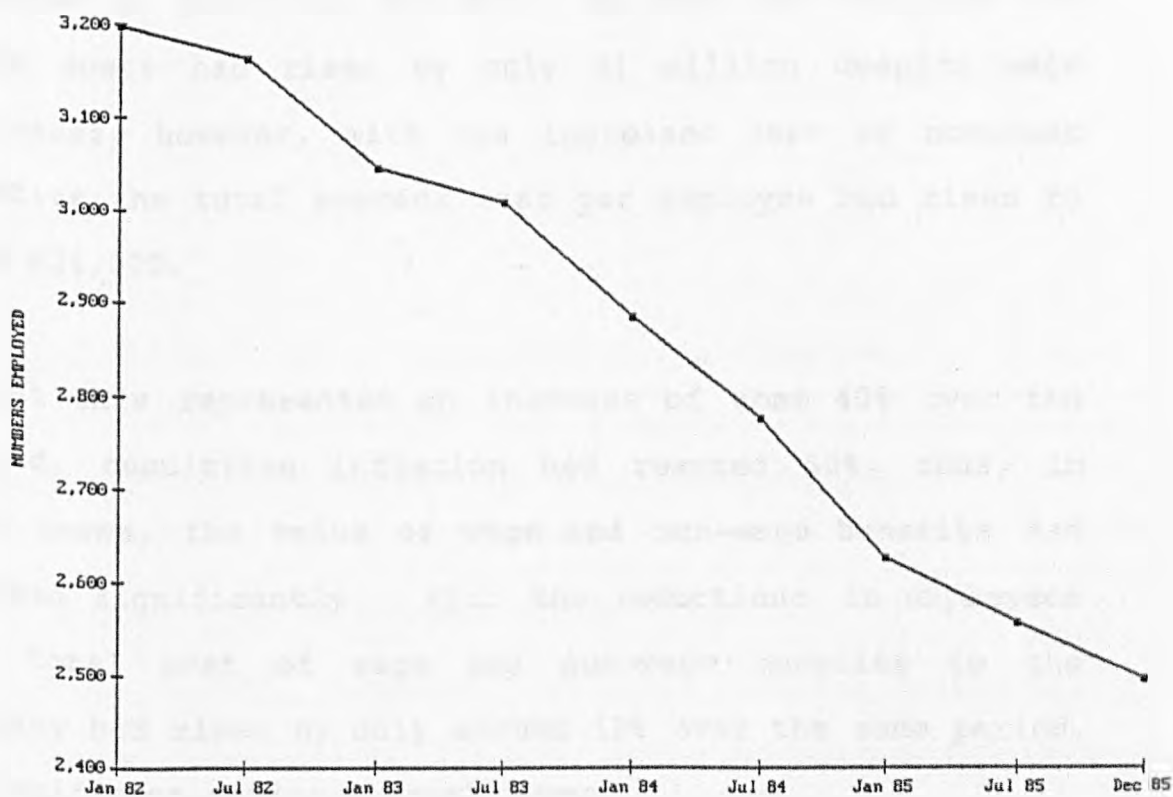
TABLE 8.2

ROSSING URANIUM LIMITED
EMPLOYEE NUMBERS JAN. 1982 - DEC. 1985

January	1982	3,198
July	1982	3,163
January	1983	3,045
July	1983	3,007
January	1984	2,884
July	1984	2,777
January	1985	2,627
July	1985	2,557
December	1985	2,496

FIGURE 8.4

REDUCTION IN NUMBERS EMPLOYED, JAN 1982 - DEC 1985



SOURCE: Personnel Department, Month End Reports, 1982-1985

Today we have less employees on the mine than ever before, to be exact 2,557, whereas two years ago there were over 3,100 and that is not counting the many contractors who used to be on site. This shows the additional responsibility that each one of us has to bear in keeping conditions at the optimum level all the time. It also means that our job content has in many instances changed and that there may be structures and ways of doing the job which are new, but exciting and require us to remain on our toes. (131)

Regarding the direct costs of employment, the personnel manager reported that these amounted to approximately R40 million in 1982 with indirect costs amounting to some R14 million. (132) This gave a total average cost per employee of just over R17,000. By 1985 the salaries and wages costs had risen by only R1 million despite wage increases, however, with the increased cost of non-cash benefits the total average cost per employee had risen to some R24,000.

Whilst this represented an increase of some 40% over the period, cumulative inflation had reached 60%, thus, in real terms, the value of wage and non-wage benefits had dropped significantly. With the reductions in employees the total cost of wage and non-wage benefits to the company had risen by only around 13% over the same period, a significant saving in real terms.

The reduction in employment was carefully managed through a committee set up in late 1982 when it was recognised

that central organisation was required to manage the process. However, this was not the only objective of the committee. Management had realised that despite the investment in training, few blacks had progressed into the higher grades of the organisation. (see below) They were concerned to avoid any reduction in the opportunities of Namibians, and especially black Namibians, in the process of increasing efficiency. This was both for political and economic reasons as outlined in phase 2. Indeed, mining management sought to use the employee reductions as a means of improving the opportunities for existing blacks.

The process was managed through the development of a five year plan which had two elements; a manpower plan, concerned only with the numbers employed, and a development plan. The latter was described by the manpower officer as "basically a Namibianisation plan which, although it does include everyone born inside the country, is more concerned with black advancement".

The manpower plan was based on an assessment of how far employment numbers could be reduced. These estimates created an 'establishment' which was updated annually and became the annual targeted reduction.

Work study played an important role in this process supporting managers who the head of work study described

as "being under a lot of pressure to reduce staff". However, he reported that, unlike his experience in other organisations, Rossing managers were very willing to co-operate with him largely because of the pressure they were under and the ability of work study to find the required savings.

Managers relied on the 'objectivity' of work study to distance themselves from the responsibility of increasing work intensity whilst at the same time accepting the senior management requirement that they should do so. Even as late as 1985 the work study department reported having a long list of requests to investigate areas where it was felt economies could be made. In mid 1985 the head of work study claimed that there was still low productivity in some areas and that a further reduction of some 200 employees could be made.

Much of the credibility and influence of the work study department came from senior management who saw work study as a valuable means of 'objectively' increasing work rates in the same way as job evaluation had been used to 'objectively' differentiate grades of employment. Indeed, the personnel manager himself had originally been a work study officer and saw this potential clearly.

The development of Namibianisation plan was constructed by the training manager. The approach was to pinpoint any black Namibians who were thought to have the potential to be promoted in the next 3-5 years and provide them with the necessary training opportunities. Thus, the plan enabled the projection of black advancement into higher grades over the plan period. This element of the 5 year plan, however, took a secondary role to the reductions in employment and by 1985 any programme for Namibianisation was, at best, ad hoc.

The personnel manager claimed that the manpower plan was never intended to concern itself with the advancement of Namibians, arguing "When the plan was drawn up it was for manpower numbers regardless of origin". Contemporary policy towards employment, he claimed, was "promotion from within" with preference being given to a Namibian rather than an expatriate "all else being equal". He would not entertain "tokenism", the policy was "to promote the best man for the job". There was no target date for specific occupations or sectors of the workforce to be Namibianised rather, he claimed, it was "an ongoing process..... as opportunities occur I massage the organisation" to accommodate Namibians of appropriate ability through transfer and promotion. However, promotions were only made where a vacancy existed in the establishment.

As the manpower officer explained, there was a conflict between Namibianisation and rationalisation which was "dealt with in different ways in different areas", some managers being more prepared to go over establishment than others in order to recruit good Namibians. Most resistance had come from the 'Afrikaner foremen' particularly in the semi-skilled operator training programmes over which they had control.

Apart from the conflict between the Namibianisation and rationalisation programmes there were difficulties in the training and advancement process. The manpower officer explained that the plan was warped initially by many supervisors saying that their black Namibian employees had the potential to be promoted. However, since the mine would only promote where there was a vacancy this led to frustration when adequately trained and qualified staff could not be offered a suitable job. This situation was worst in grades 1-8 but existed in the higher grades also.

Furthermore, the company had adopted a policy of requiring a post-matriculation degree for anyone being appointed to the confidential grades. As the manpower officer explained, whilst this "was not a deliberate policy for the purpose, but a convenient excuse, not to promote Afrikaners" who had no formal education but were in the

lower managerial grades, "it also created a frustrating blockage for good people (blacks) with no qualifications".

The mine provided few opportunities for employees wanting to study for a degree. Indeed, in 1985 the manpower officer reported that in the last six years only two coloured Namibians had completed their studies on the Rossing sponsored studentship programme whilst the senior recruitment manager reported that "the studentship programme has been of very little significance..... really this is a contribution to the country not the company".

The industrial relations manager, the highest grade black employee at the mine, was rather more critical of the Namibianisation process arguing that the policy had been given little serious attention within the organisation. In particular, the policy had not been publicised below the second tier of senior management because the personnel manager "thought there would be revolution" with people believing that blacks were being given greater opportunity than whites.

He cited one example of a manager who refused to recruit two well-educated black Namibians with degrees on the basis that they were "over-qualified". He claimed that such actions made "a farce of the Namibianisation process"

where the employment of Namibians is left to individual managers who will not take the responsibility of positive action in the face of an ambiguous policy.

Such a view was supported by an ex-senior personnel manager who claimed that Namibianisation had never been a particularly important policy to the company who had paid lipservice to it, especially at the lower management levels.

Thus, the activities of the manpower committee were concerned more with the administration of the employment reduction than with the advancement of black Namibians. The major reductions in manpower were achieved through the "management of vacancies", by questioning the need and by transferring people out of areas where they were over establishment into areas where "real" vacancies existed.

In October 1983 the general manager informed staff of the policy and activities of the manpower committee

This year I froze all recruiting except to replace men or women who had special skills which could not be obtained from inside the company either by transfer or by training. You will recall me having mentioned this on a number of occasions and saying that increasing efficiency basically means having less men to do the same amount of work..... To reduce labour by filling the vacancies created by terminations is very difficult. It requires us to identify the area from which a man is going to leave, find another Rossing man who has the potential to replace him and train him, if necessary to fill that position. Obviously not everybody is either trainable or necessarily wishes to do the job which is offered to him.

The function of the Manpower Committee under the Personnel Manager is to consider all these vacancies and ensure how they are best filled and I would make it clear that certain employees have been and will be asked to do jobs that they might not like nor for which they were initially employed. There is, however, no alternative to this and I am sure that you will all accept the necessity of it if we are to avoid declaring redundancies. (133)

These changes effected mainly non-managerial and, therefore, almost exclusively non-white employees and were implemented under compulsion, managerial authoritarianism being expressed in rather more overt terms than usual. However, in addition to management's preparedness to use the disciplinary procedure, employees were also encouraged to respond to the mine's need for the benefits it would offer them for training and promotion. In May 1984, for example, the general manager reported

You are all aware of our policy to attempt non-replacement if and when employees leave the mine. This policy has worked very well for the last year and is often welcomed as it means in many instances that training is accelerated and promotions are made from within to fill vacancies when they occur. (134)

Whilst employee reductions were achieved predominantly through the "management of vacancies", reductions were achieved in other ways also, both formally and informally. Two formal ways of reducing staff through terminating employment other than by redundancy or discipline were adopted; retirement on grounds of ill-health and termination with compensation for disability.

As the work study manager explained, "from 1977 the company was carrying people who were not doing a days work but the company was too busy making money to look at reducing staff". Between 1982 and 1984 they realised there were a number of people on light duties due to ill-health, although he claimed the manpower committee were very concerned not to use retirement and disability to reduce staff.

Despite this claim, between April 1984 and December 1985 28 employees were terminated under the provisions of the pension scheme for ill-health and between July 1983 and December 1985 25 were terminated with compensation for disability. Whilst before July 1983, only one person had been terminated for disability and prior to April 1984 there had been no retirements on grounds of ill-health.

The work study officer also denied that dismissal through discipline was used as a means of reducing employment numbers. Undoubtedly this was true as far as formal policy is concerned, however, as he also acknowledged, managers were under tremendous pressure to reduce employment. As a result they became more willing to utilise the disciplinary and dismissal provisions to achieve their targeted reductions.

Indeed, two divisional personnel officers reported that the cutbacks had increased managerial willingness to use the disciplinary policy. One DPO argued

natural wastage creates an incentive to use the disciplinary code, there is a clash of ideas between the portrayal of the concerned company and achieving the reductions in staffing levels. Also when the section is under complement the supervisor is less willing to use the disciplinary code and more willing to be lenient.

The "management of vacancies" discussed so far was merely a means of facilitating an increase in work intensity whilst doing the same job. An associated way of increasing the intensity was through reorganisation of work. Whilst managers took some initiatives in this respect the work study department was responsible for carrying out method studies and providing advice on reorganisation which involved both job redesign and cross training. Although impossible to quantify the importance

of these techniques in the overall employee reductions it is clear that management viewed them as crucially inter-related in their achievement.

The work study officer provided a number of examples of drastic reductions achieved through the redesign of work procedures, one of which, in the rotascoop workshop, had resulted in a reduction from 27 to 3 employees. Another example involved similar principles of reorganisation and led to a reduction of employment although it was initiated by substantial potential savings elsewhere as the general manager explained in his brief of 28th May 1985

The Mining and Metallurgical Divisions have worked out together a method of operation that results in the primary crushers and all the conveyor belts running for only five days out of the seven and in the plant three, instead of four, rod mills are now mainly used as a matter of routine. This has resulted in a reduction in the demand for electrical power which saves us more than half a million Rand a year.

Closely associated with work reorganisation was cross training, which the work study officer explained "was an important technique both for creating staff reductions and improving on the flexibility of the workforce". Whilst he argued that experts were still needed for more skilled and intricate work, cross training was used, for example, between the traditional work of fitters, electricians, boilermakers and turners. For example "a turner or fitter

does not need an electrician to disconnect a power supply" and "an example of the wastage caused by such divisions is the recent case of a welder in the open pit maintenance, only 30% of his time was spent welding and the remaining 70% of his time was spent helping the fitter".

The work study officer explained that many of the divisions between the different disciplines were imported and built up by expatriate employees. However, whilst claiming to have always been a "union man" he argued "there is no problem with cross training here, there aren't any unions".

Employees were also informed that management themselves were not immune from the efficiency programme although reductions were small compared to those of lower grade workers. (see below) The general manager, for example reported in late 1982 that

There are two organisational changes planned which will add to greater efficiency in the new year. The first one is that the acid plant and the recovery section will be incorporated under one superintendant, Mr Joachim Bierberg, who will report directly to the metallurgical manager..... Secondly, the instrumentation section and electrical departments are to merge. (136)

The second major strand to increasing efficiency, through new technology, was introduced for a variety of different purposes throughout the mine but invariably reduced labour requirements. As the personnel manager commented in 1985, "technology and its introduction at Rossing was both a means of reducing staff and increasing efficiency..... the objective is always to reduce unit costs". Similarly, the personnel superintendent argued "people get more expensive every year, machines get cheaper"

However, it must be acknowledged that new technology was not always introduced as a means of directly reducing costs, for example the divisional mining manager, in relation to the introduction of new computers for the modelling of the mine plan, argued that "computers don't save people they allow you to make better decisions and therefore plans".

At the simplest level work study was involved in the introduction of new technology, usually associated with efficiency in organisation design. The work study officer explained that the initial stage to method study was to first check if the work can be eradicated altogether, if this is not possible then ways would be sought to reduce the frequency of the work.

He gave two examples. Firstly, he had recommended fitting tungsten carbide instead of steel tips to the teeth of the shovel buckets which reduced the frequency of renewal to one fifth the previous level. Secondly, his department was in the process of studying the substantial time taken to renew rubber washers in the toilet cisterns of Rossing-owned houses which he had calculated only lasted five months. He argued that if he could not find a suitable and longer-lasting alternative he would "set about getting one made".

At the other end of the scale a sophisticated, and unique centralised computer control system for metallurgical operations (CPC) was introduced during 1984 at a cost of just under R2 million. The project was justified on the basis of

efficiency improvements in terms of uranium recovery and consumable usage as well as reduced manpower (which) would give a payback period of 2 years. (Kesler and Knoetze, 1985)

The superintendent of the control network claimed that in the original justification over 50% of the savings were expected to be made on manpower and although the expected payback was two years it was in fact achieved in one. Only five months after the installation Kesler and Knoetze

claimed that 'All organisational changes have been implemented and significant manpower reductions are already evident'.

The majority of the Rossing developments during phase 3 implied reskilling, as opposed to deskilling, of the remaining workforce. It has already been argued that the nature of the production process at Rossing relied on the employment of skilled and semi-skilled rather than large numbers of unskilled employees. Cross training extended skills, as did providing training for those being transferred to fill vacancies in different areas, and hence increased both the efficiency and flexibility of employees. The introduction of the CPC and similar new technology had a rather more dramatic but nevertheless similar effect. Kessler and Knoetze (1985) clearly illustrate the point.

As the central process control would be a radical change to operating procedures..... The skills required by the shift controller were assessed to include complete plant familiarity, analytical ability, good communications, adaptive to new technology, 'helicopter' ability, leadership skills and high stress tolerance.

The central training department were called upon to run assessment centres as an aid to identify the most suitable candidates for the position. After the selection of the initial personnel they joined the team to assist in the design of the system. It was realised that not all were fully experienced for the position and so intensive technical and process training and personal development courses in analytical troubleshooting, situational leadership, stress management etc were tailored for them.

The introduction of more efficient and technologically advanced systems gave greater responsibility and autonomy to employees and thus increased the managerial dependence on employee cooperation. Unlike the introduction of office technology which was also introduced at Rossing and which led to increased control, devaluation and deskilling of some office employment (see the discussion on women's employment below), the new systems in mine operations increased the potential for employees to disrupt production. Control was not implicit in the technology itself as on a production line. The bureaucratised work structures of incorporation and coercion introduced in phase 2 continued unchanged, however, their success became even more crucial to the successful control of the workforce and mine production.

The policies adopted in relation to the workforce during this period not surprisingly had an influence on the grade distribution, as Table 8.3 shows. A striking change took place in this respect with numbers of unskilled employed falling by almost 50% between 1982 and 1985 and dropping as a proportion of the total workforce from 22% to 14%. At the same time the numbers employed in the semi-skilled grades 4-8 reduced by under 15% and increased as a proportion of total employment from 53% to 56%.

TABLE 8.3

ROSSING URANIUM LIMITED
EMPLOYMENT BY BANDED GRADE AT YEAR END, 1982 - 1985

	GRADES							
	1-3 No.	%	4-8 No.	%	9-11 No.	%	12+ No.	%
1982	680	22	1,674	53	540	17	261	8
1983	546	18	1,636	55	539	18	264	9
1984	444	16	1,555	56	521	19	263	9
1985	351	14	1,427	56	503	20	261	10

SOURCE: Personnel Department, Month End Reports 1982-1985

Furthermore, first line management and supervisory grades 9-11, which had shown a marginal decrease during the previous phase, reduced in number by only 7% and increased from 17% to 20% of total employment. In addition, middle and senior management grades 12 and above showed virtually no change in numbers but increased as a proportion from 8% to 10% as a result of the reduced numbers employed.

Thus, the unskilled grades had taken a significant reduction whilst the semi-skilled, supervisory and managerial grades had grown in relative terms. Clearly there had been a meaningful redistribution of grades upwards amongst the remaining employees over the period.

This reflected the increasingly sophisticated technology of the mine and the level of training and skill required to operate it as well as the significant intensification of work in grades 1-8 and the unwillingness of mining management to continue to employ workers only able to carry out low skilled, light duties.

In terms of racial distribution some changes took place. Table 8.4 shows that the overall proportions of black, coloured and white employees in the workforce changed only marginally between 1982 and 1985 with black employment increasing by 2% to 55%, coloured employment by 1% to 19% and white employment reducing by 3%.

TABLE 8.4

ROSSING URANIUM LIMITED
EMPLOYMENT BY RACE AND BANDED GRADE AT YEAR END 1982-1985

	GRADE						TOTAL FOR RACIAL GROUPS				% TOTAL OF WORKFORCE
	1-3 No.	%	4-8 No.	%	9-11 No.	%	12+ No.	%	No.	%	
<u>1982</u>											
BLACK	627	37.0	1,047	62.0	9	0.5	2	0.1	1,685	100	53
COLOURED	38	6.5	448	77.0	93	16.0	3	0.5	582	100	19
WHITE	15	1.5	179	20.0	438	49.0	256	29.0	888	100	28
<u>1983</u>											
BLACK	511	32.0	1,077	67.0	15	1.0	2	0.1	1,605	100	54
COLOURED	25	4.5	408	74.5	111	20.5	3	0.5	547	100	18
WHITE	10	1.0	151	18.0	413	50.0	259	31.0	833	100	28
<u>1984</u>											
BLACK	416	28.0	1,057	70.0	28	2.0	2	0.1	1,503	100	54
COLOURED	19	3.5	371	71.0	124	24.0	7	1.0	521	100	19
WHITE	9	1.0	127	17.0	369	49.0	254	33.0	759	100	27
<u>1985</u>											
BLACK	331	24.0	1,017	73.0	37	2.5	4	0.3	1,389	100	55
COLOURED	16	3.5	321	67.0	135	28.0	9	2.0	481	100	19
WHITE	4	0.5	89	13.0	331	49.0	248	37.0	672	100	26

SOURCE: Personnel Department, Month End Reports, 1982-1985

Black employment in the unskilled grades reduced as a proportion of total black employment in each of the years from 37% in 1982 to 24% in 1985. The redistribution for blacks was into the semi-skilled grades, however, while in 1982 99% of blacks were employed in grade 8 or below, this had reduced by only 2% three years later.

In 1982 there was only 11 black employees above grade 9 only two of whom were above grade 12. By 1985, only 41 employees out of 1,389 were in grade 9 or above and of these, 29 were in grade 10 and only one in the confidential grades.

A similar pattern, but skewed one grade band upwards, was to be found for coloured employees. In 1982 83.5% of coloureds were employed in grade 8 or below, by 1985 this had reduced to 70.5%. Employment in the grade band 9-11 had increased from 16% to 28% in the same period and accounted for the reduction in the lower grades. However, the numbers involved were relatively small. In 1982 there were 93 coloured employees in grades 9-11 and this had risen by only 42 in 1985. In addition coloureds in grade 12 and above had only risen from 3 to 9 employees.

Mining management continued to be dominated by whites. Indeed, the position had become more extreme in this respect. In 1982 78% of whites were employed in grade 9

and above, by 1985 this had risen to 86%, 37% of whom were in the confidential grades. Of the total numbers in grades 12 and above whites accounted for 95% in 1985 compared with 98% in 1982 with only 13 non-whites holding such responsibility, only two of whom were in the confidential grades.

The reductions in employment and associated transfers and training had led to some promotion out of the lowest grades for blacks and from semi-skilled into skilled and supervisory grades for coloureds. However, the low commitment to Namibianisation was particularly clear amongst managerial grades where mining management remained firmly under the control of white, mainly expatriate staff.

The extent and quality of social provision by the company continued unchanged throughout the period although savings were made as a result of the fewer employees. Housing provision was one in which financial savings were significant. The personnel manager claimed that in 1983 the company had allocated enough capital to build a further 50 houses but they were not built since it was calculated that, as a result of the staff economies, there would be sufficient housing within about two years to accommodate the entire, reduced workforce.

Not only were savings made through the reduced capital expenditure and lower maintenance costs but the company was also able to cheapen the provision as the grade structure changed. Two factors influenced this. Firstly, as the number of unskilled employees reduced and semi-skilled grades rose this increased the number of employees entitled to accommodation in Tamariskia and left a potential excess of housing in Arandis.

Secondly, as promotions took place there was a reluctance on the part of some blacks to move from Arandis into Tamariskia. There were a number of reasons for this; the weather was often cold and damp in Swakopmund in comparison to the hot, dry desert climate of Arandis; a community spirit had developed amongst Arandis residents and leaving this and established friends in exchange for a white-dominated town antagonistic to blacks was not an attractive proposition to some; and the education provided for blacks in Swakopmund was both of poorer quality and provided in Afrikaans rather than the preferred English, as was the case in Arandis. Indeed, by 1985 some 200 of the 900 Arandis houses were occupied by employees entitled to Tamariskia or Vineta housing.

The personnel manager viewed the latter situation as fortuitous given the former. Indeed, the company had deliberately encouraged such a state of affairs by

deciding not to force anyone to move into higher grade housing when they were promoted and paying a housing allowance to compensate them for living in accommodation of a lower grade than that to which they were entitled. The extent of the preference to remain in Arandis meant that the problem of houses standing vacant in the township whilst there was an excess demand for the more expensive Vineta housing, did not arise until the end of 1984.

The personnel manager explained the objective of keeping all company houses occupied or "if they are going to be vacant let them be in Vineta where they have a higher market value". Further savings resulted from this policy because of the much shorter distance of transportation of employees to the mine from Arandis than from Swakopmund.

However, by the end of 1984 there were some 40 houses vacant in Arandis and this precipitated a housing policy review which adjusted the grade allocation so as to reduce the problem. Indeed, during 1985, as a result of the changes in the housing policy, the number of vacant houses in Vineta increased whilst the numbers vacant in Tamariskia and Arandis reduced.

The industrial relations manager reported that the review generated some heated discussions amongst senior

management not because of the changed grading allocation but because the proposed policy included the removal of the option of a rent allowance where an employee refused a company house and chose instead to rent their own accommodation privately. In this way whites had in the past avoided living in Tamariskia housing, a traditionally coloured area, but would be under greater pressure to accept such housing in the future. The same situation did not arise in Arandis since there were no whites in grades low enough to attract housing allocation in this area.

In fact only two white employees, both female divorcees, stood to lose their rental allowance if they did not accept company housing in Tamariskia. The industrial relations officer reported that "some thought there would be uproar" including the general manager and at least three other senior managers in personnel. However, he argued that "this was the company policy and we should stick to it" and, taking the personnel manager with him, they eventually managed to convince those who had originally disagreed.

In the event "it was not an issue for the workforce" who accepted it. The situation was discussed with the two women, both of whom stood to receive improved accommodation. One of the two, who had one child, refused to move arguing, as the industrial relations manager

recalled, "I am not a racist or anything but I'm a Swakopmunder"; the other, with three children accepted the company house and moved in during June 1985, "settled in quickly and seemed very happy".

Despite the changes taking place at the mine there had been no incidents of collective industrial action and individual expressions of resistance such as labour turnover and desertions, which were carefully monitored by the mine, had reduced over the period.

Other indications, however, suggest that these should not be interpreted as expressions of satisfaction with work experience. Indeed, the drop in labour turnover was more a reflection of the tightening of the labour market as a result of the recession in the economy generally and depression in mining more specifically.

It was suggested in earlier phases that resistance was frequently expressed covertly rather than overtly. However, the latitude for more traditional and covert expressions such as destruction of company property, low rates of productivity, drinking and drug-taking which had been prevalent throughout phase 1 and the early part of phase 2, had been removed or at least severely limited

through the work relations implicit in the new dispensation.

Nevertheless, evidence of disaffection and dissatisfaction was apparent in phase 3. Of the more visible expressions theft remained rampant, the head of security claiming in 1985 that 30 cases a month were reported. Other expressions, however, were less visible.

Perhaps most important as an indication of the degree to which management had failed to incorporate black employees into the Rossing 'family' were the frequent expressions of low commitment to the organisation. As a black community and housing officer in Arandis commented, "the main characteristic of Arandis is the transient nature of the residents' view of the place"; nobody thought of themselves as being at Rossing in the longterm, viewing their stay as temporary, as indeed had been the case in earlier phases.

Typically, one resident claimed that "Arandis people do not see their future lying with Rossing" whilst another, a black truck driver who had worked at the mine for ten years, commented that he only intended to stay at the mine long enough to build himself a farm in his homeland. Whilst such a scenario was probably unrealistic it

nevertheless indicated the low level of commitment to Rossing.

A black DPO supported the prevalence of this instrumental view as did other residents of Arandis, claiming that it was widespread amongst all age groups. Even the older and more senior male workers still saw their time as temporary and looked forward to leaving the mine when they were 45-50 years old to take up farming in the homelands. Some of this group lived as single people at the mine but had a family on a farm in one of the homelands, whilst others lived with their family in Arandis and, like the employee quoted above, intended to return to their homeland to take up farming.

The community and housing officer reported that younger black males used Rossing as a means of "getting rich quick". Most had become very materialistic and bought cars, furniture, televisions, videos, dishwashers etc as well as saving money to plough back into their farms. This was especially true of Ovambos, many of whom lived in single quarters but had families in Ovambo. These men tended to buy large trucks and take many of their possessions back to the homeland.

The industrial relations manager also argued that Arandis residents had become very materialistic and that this was

a consequence of the change "from traditional values to modern industrialised values". Clearly, however, the company had failed to fully proletarianise the black workforce many of whom retained, or aspired to, an alternative means of support in their homeland.

Associated with this was the widespread feeling of insecurity amongst blacks. Termination for disability or retirement on grounds of ill-health were widely seen as a means of reducing employment as was the greater willingness to use the disciplinary procedure.

Blacks had little confidence in the grievance or disciplinary procedures because they believed their fate lay with the foreman. Black employees commented that discrimination did exist on the mine despite the non-racial policies. As one black employee commented, "Mr Freeman is not coming down to tell the Boer supervisor".

One DPO argued "People believe that if their foreman doesn't like them they can be fired at any time". Whilst management claimed that no one could be fired without a valid reason, the reality was rather different for blacks. The DPO commented that "It is not true that the code operates as it is written down. Afrikaners on the shop floor are discriminatory. They are the worst but also

some German and English-speaking people, mainly at foreman level, are discriminatory".

He believed that the DPOs had little influence in representing black employees in grievance and disciplinary cases and that "People are scared to take up grievances because they know the foreman will victimise them." He also argued that "Transfers and promotions are a subjective thing, only if the foreman likes you and and you have been a good boy will you get it". Such a view was expressed widely by black employees and reflected how little interpersonal relationships between 'black boy and white boss' had changed since phase 1, despite the structural changes of the new dispensation. Success for a black employee still required the skills of 'etiquette'.

Extracts from a letter written by black senior operators in the metallurgical processing area to their manager during 1984 graphically conveys the feelings of black employees generally.

.....we came to the conclusion that some of the shift foremen misled you by keeping silent about the good and only reveal the bad things we do on our shift. By doing so you only protect them and in the process make us more unhappy than you would realise.

Lets have a look at some incidents which we would like to express with the best intention.

1. The general foremen have no manner of discipline over or against his subordinates, he is not interested in their problems or welfare.

2. He always treats his subordinates with "I will have you fired or I will give you a misconduct". In other words he does not listen to what you have to say.
3. When we have family problems eg illness or death, the general foreman does not want to listen as he is not interested. You have to virtually beg on your knees before you are granted a day or two leave.
4. We are now overloaded with responsibilities which was previously done by the shift foreman. We would now like to know what use a shift foreman is on a shift. We cannot discuss our problems with them as they would only refer one to the general foreman.
5. The workers are no longer happy in their job they just sit and wait when they will be paid. This makes them very unhappy which could lead to workers injuring themselves as they do things which they usually don't do and they are constantly afraid of losing their job.
6. It often happens that when you have a problem one will not go to the general foreman as he shows no interest and only accepts the shift foreman's word as the truth. This is why workers would bypass the general foreman and rather approach the department head.
7. We have three white senior operators and they enjoy all the benefits as they call the general foremen and shift foremen on their first names. When we blacks do likewise we are taken to the general foreman where we face harsh words. (137)

Not only was there reduced security of employment but, as the fourth item in the above letter suggests, there was increased work pressure and responsibility.

As a result of this insecurity many people had wanted to purchase their houses from Rossing; if they were to lose their jobs they would at least know that they would not

also lose their homes "and could work elsewhere or start a business" as one Arandis resident explained. However, the company refused.

Blacks recognised the controlling power of the housing provision, as one employee put it "the people move into company houses and then the company has a grip on you". Another Arandis resident perceptively outlined the dilemma.

The system discourages commitment to another house, to land or a farm; Rossing say they want the family of the employee to live happily in company houses. So many people have brought down their wives and have lost access to accommodation and land elsewhere..... The people are on a treadmill, they can't move from Rossing until they have an alternative home but it is very difficult to organise this while they are in Arandis, therefore they must send their wives. But if their wives are away for more than three months then the husband must give back his house and move into single quarters.

Furthermore, during the earlier phases, when an employee left Rossing the company provided transport back to the area from which the employee had come. In early 1983 the company withdrew this 'priviledge' and in 1985 Rossing would only transport belongings to the mine but not back again.

The increased work demands had led to the emergence of a growing incidence of stress related disorders diagnosed by

the mine doctor and the clinical psychologist and head of training. The latter claimed that he had detected a "feeling of fatigue and despondency across the mine" although he reported that the higher grades were not effected by this "since they want and enjoy the stimulation of change; as long as they can plan for this change they like the excitement".

He explained that lower grades had experienced many changes with reorganisations, the introduction of new technology and the cutbacks in employment over which they had no influence. Lower level, and implicitly black and coloured employees, "do not like change and feel threatened and insecure" although he accepted that "this has taken place in an environment of insecurity, of reducing numbers and despite stated policy of no redundancy, workers don't believe it".

There was reported to be substantial heavy drinking amongst the Arandis residents, some drug taking and a higher incidence of smoking amongst black and coloured than white employees. Whilst it is impossible to relate these directly to stress, the community and housing officer reported depression amongst some black employees which was "usually work-related".

Such stress-related disorders were not diagnosed as a physical or psychological illness by doctors and therefore there was no understanding or sympathy with their condition amongst mining management. Because they were not accepted as 'ill' many blacks sought help from their traditional witchdoctors, however, because they had not been diagnosed as 'ill' mining management would not allow time off for the purpose despite the fact that, as the community officer explained, they would benefit psychologically. Such people often 'went AWOL', taking time off without permission, for which they were then disciplined or dismissed.

The head of training also explained that people suffering from stress-related disorders could not be terminated with compensation for disability nor could they be retired on grounds of ill-health. The most likely result was that they would be dismissed for failing to achieve adequate performance.

At the centre of Rossing's communication policy was the consultative committee structure. Employee views on the committee structure ranged from apathetic to hostile. Even white representatives on the Rossing Council were scathing about its value and achievements.

One DPO explained that blacks do not have much confidence in the system whilst a white representative on the council commented "there is a negative attitude amongst the electorate". A typical comment from both the black electorate and representatives was that "the system is bullshit".

Employees of all races stood for election as representatives not because they had any faith in the system but because of pressure from their foremen or managers. Even the white chairperson of the staff side of the council claimed to have been "coerced into it". He explained

the DPOs come round looking for nominations, they go to the foremen and ask for nominations and the foreman says OK these are the nominations. The threat behind it is otherwise you won't get any more overtime.

The same process was described by black representatives and indeed by the electorate as far as voting was concerned.

Further, few representatives stood for a second term. Most explained that they became very frustrated with the system and their inability to influence management who "had all the answers". Indeed, in mid 1985 the staff

representatives on the Rossing Council had discussed the prospect of handing in their resignations *en masse*.

Representatives explained that once elected there was "subtle victimisation" if an issue which reflected badly or went against the wishes of their manager or foreman was taken up. For example, they would be treated more harshly than others, given the less desirable tasks and not offered the opportunity of overtime.

Such a situation was reported by all races, however, it was recognised as being worse for the lower grades. A coloured representative explained "Many people in the lower grades don't have the ability to find out what's going on or to talk to their managers..... They have a fear of authority and fear for their jobs".

Similarly, it was recognised that the lower grade workers especially were unlikely to make complaints or refer grievances through the committee. Such references could not remain anonymous and employees feared victimisation from their foremen. One white representative commented that "I have seen a lot of cases where, for example, a black is afraid to ask a foreman in case he shouts and screams at him, especially Afrikaner foremen".

Few representatives thought the employees gained anything out of the system and no one believed anything significant had been conceded by management. One white representative argued it is "a very, very clever set up by management which achieves a lot for management but achieves very little for employees". Whilst another perceptively commented

If I was in management it's an excellent way of getting feedback from a PR point of view and if it doesn't work then whose fault is it? You elected the representatives. It's all so glossy on the outside but when you get down to it nothing changes.

There was an important contradiction for management in the effective operation of the consultative committees within the overall management employment strategy: whilst the consultative system was there to facilitate the expression of collective employee views, at the same time management had sought to individualise the employment relationship.

One coloured representative explained the situation. Frequently issues were raised in the committees which, although raised through individual experiences, were issues of policy which had broader significance and in which the workforce collectively held an interest. He gave the example of charges for medical treatment which are levied every time a doctor is seen even when a patient has to return for treatment for the same ailment. Company

policy was that anyone unable to pay could approach the company individually.

However, the issue was raised collectively in the consultative process, the representative arguing that it was appropriate to establish some policy guidelines in such cases as "the pregnant woman, the guy with five kids or the person with a chronic illness". The personnel manager claimed it was an individual issue and when asked if he would be willing to deal with a thousand such individual situations replied "yes".

As the employee representative argued,

the issue started out as a group complaint but they managed to split it down into individual complaints..... management always ask for specifics, for examples, then they say its an individual problem that should be taken to the manager or DPO.

Such issues brought into stark relief the difficulty management faced in maintaining some credibility for the consultative structures and the futility for employees in engaging in the process.

Conclusion

Throughout phase 3 employment structures and relations continued with the social policies and dispensation established in phase 2. However, the economic imperative for mining management had changed dramatically during 1982 as a result of the reduced demand for uranium. The mine had moved from a position in which its major strategic focus for success had been production into a period in which success, and indeed survival, could only be assured through significant improvements in efficiency and thus reduced costs of production.

Strategy in the latter respect focussed on two areas; increased productivity of labour and improved process efficiency through technical innovation. Both implied substantial reductions in the workforce.

Mining management were highly successful in both these strategic directions. Between 1982 and 1985 the workforce reduced by 22% and the overall increase in costs of production were limited to 1% per annum despite cumulative inflation of around 60%, substantial increases in the cost of oil products and the substantial reduction in the value of the rand which, although improving the value of sales, increased the cost of imported consumables, equipment and machinery.

The reduced workforce and increasingly sophisticated technology emphasised the need for training and a grading structure which reflected the mine's needs for skilled and semi-skilled employees rather than unskilled workers. As a result there was a redistribution of black and coloured workers into grade bands directly above those in which they had previously been concentrated. However, despite a manpower plan to develop the Namibian workforce, this redistribution did not involve any meaningful movement of blacks or coloureds into managerial grades which remained virtually unchanged both in terms of numbers and their domination by whites. Indeed, the commitment to 'Namibianisation' was overshadowed by the need to manage the reductions in the workforce.

The effect of the employee reductions and the introduction of new technology for most blacks and coloureds was to increase the pressure of work through work intensification and increased responsibility. In exchange mining management recommitted itself to a no redundancy policy achieving reductions through the "management of vacancies", the maintenance of social provision as established in phase 2 and pay increases which, although not keeping up with inflation, were far better than most received throughout Southern Africa during the period.

However, the use of the disciplinary procedure was maintained to ensure that those who were unwilling or unable to maintain the standards expected were removed from the workforce. Indeed, the company was not prepared to employ people unable to carry out the greater intensity of work due to ill-health or disability and such people were either pensioned off on a reduced income or terminated with compensation.

It was argued in phase 2 that management strategy sought to incorporate employees, particularly blacks, through the bureaucratised employment relationship of the new dispensation. Those who were not prepared to subordinate themselves to this new means of managerial control had the alternative of voluntarily leaving the company or being subjected to the coercion of the disciplinary system which offered the prospect of dismissal and consequent eviction from their homes.

The options remained the same throughout phase 3. However, the employment relationship became, if anything, more coercive in the face of financial stringency as well as mining management's increased confidence in its position at independence. Further, the economy generally, and mining specifically, suffered a depression which limited employment opportunities and thus the prospect of finding alternative employment elsewhere.

Inside the mine the company policies of 'communication' were not considered a useful means of expression by employees. This was particularly so for blacks and coloureds who found the paternalistic individualism of management patronising and unyielding and feared victimisation from their foremen and supervisors with whom many continued to experience the old apartheid 'boss-black' relationship. The latitude for non-white employees to express their dissatisfaction and disaffection were, therefore, severely constrained both inside and outside the mine.

Feelings of insecurity were widespread amongst black and coloured employees and there was a clear understanding of the vulnerability of their positions and dependence on the mine. Many blacks in particular retained connections with their homelands where they either held, or aspired to hold, farming land.

In such a situation it was not surprising that management were able to claim that the period had seen no industrial disharmony and that measures of dissatisfaction such as labour turnover and desertion had reduced. Such compliance, however, was less a result of the successful incorporation of the majority of workers into the Rossing 'family' or to their commitment to the efficiency culture, than the coercive policies of mining management, the lack

of alternatives to maintaining their lifestyle and what Storey referred to as 'the cajoling hand of unemployment'. (1985)

CHAPTER 9

MANAGEMENT STRATEGY AND LABOUR CONTROL AT THE ROSSING MINE: THE ROLE OF WOMEN.

There are two senses in which women must be viewed as a distinct element of management's strategic control over social relations at the mine. Firstly, in terms of their employment, and secondly, as a means of establishing social stability amongst the male workforce. These are discussed separately below.

Employment

No company data exists concerning women's employment for the early period. Indeed, whilst from phase 2 employment statistics included substantial data regarding the employment and behaviour of the workforce by ethnic group, not even a numerical record of women's employment was kept until June 1980. Furthermore, it is indicative of the low importance attached to the employment of women that no reference to their employment was found in any of the archival documents examined for phase 1 and only few references in the later phases.

During phase 1 women played very little part at the mine. The mining environment was very much a "man's world" as one manager explained and the few women who were employed were white, holding secretarial or clerical positions in the administrative and personnel areas, thus fulfilling the traditional gender employment roles of the industrialised world. In most cases women employees were related to white male employees, usually as spouses.

In the South African-influenced Namibian economy black men had carried out work such as cooking, cleaning, including housework, and low grade clerical work which had tended to be categorised as women's work in western societies. This was true particularly in industries where the contract labour system, involving the employment of exclusively black males, was used and where the workplace was isolated from urban areas and homelands in which black women resided.

This was true for Rossing throughout phase 1. However, a wages office employee reported a "definite increase" in the employment of women from 1979, the beginning of phase 2. Nevertheless, in June 1980 when statistics of women's employment were first reported, there were only 173 women employees. This had only risen to 203 by December 1985 (see Table 9.1) although at the same time the size of the

workforce had reduced and this represented an increase as a proportion of the total from 5.5% to 8%.

It is difficult to establish definitive employment trends with such small numbers, however, there are some indications of the way in which women were used in employment. In particular it is interesting to note the employment trend by race. (see Table 9.1) Between June 1980 and December 1985 the number of coloured women employed almost doubled and the number of black women more than tripled whilst white women's employment fell by some 27%.

A more detailed picture is discernable by examining the distribution of employment by grade and race. (see Table 9.2) This shows that few women were employed in the unskilled grades 1-3 throughout the period. Most employment for women fell in the semi-skilled grades 4-9 in 1980, however, by 1985 employment had extended into grades 10 and 11 with employment for all women showing improvement in grade over the period.

TABLE 9.1

ROSSING URANIUM LIMITED
WOMEN'S EMPLOYMENT BY RACE, 1980-1985

	WHITE	COLOURED	BLACK	TOTAL
JUNE 1980	116	46	11	173
DEC 1980	111	56	13	180
JUNE 1981	117	70	14	201
DEC 1981	113	68	15	196
JUNE 1982	120	76	20	216
DEC 1982	108	80	20	208
JUNE 1983	102	81	32	215
DEC 1983	95	85	34	214
JUNE 1984	97	82	36	215
DEC 1984	85	85	36	206
JUNE 1985	86	81	36	203
DEC 1985	85	83	35	203

SOURCE: Personnel Department, Month End Reports,
June 1980 - December 1985.

TABLE 9.2

ROSSING URANIUM LIMITED
WOMENS EMPLOYMENT BY RACE AND GRADE, 1980-1985

GRADE	JUNE 1980			DEC 1980			JUNE 1981			DEC 1981			JUNE 1982			DEC 1982			JUNE 1983			DEC 1983			JUNE 1984			DEC 1984			JUNE 1985			DEC 1985		
	W	C	B	W	C	B	W	C	B	W	C	B	W	C	B	W	C	B	W	C	B	W	C	B	W	C	B	W	C	B	W	C	B	W	C	B
1	-	4	6	-	4	4	-	5	4	-	5	3	-	5	5	-	4	5	1	7	10	-	3	9	-	3	8	-	3	7	-	3	5	-	3	5
2	-	6	2	-	6	3	-	8	4	-	6	5	-	6	4	-	6	4	-	6	4	-	4	6	-	2	6	-	3	6	-	3	6	-	4	6
3	1	4	1	-	5	-	-	6	1	-	4	1	-	2	1	-	1	1	-	-	1	-	2	-	-	2	-	-	2	-	-	2	1	-	2	1
4	2	12	-	3	12	3	4	10	3	-	8	2	-	12	4	-	15	3	1	10	6	1	14	7	-	15	8	-	14	9	-	10	7	-	11	7
5	18	13	1	19	18	1	20	24	1	19	19	2	17	16	3	12	16	5	8	18	5	5	21	5	8	20	4	7	19	5	5	16	6	3	13	5
6	28	5	-	15	6	-	17	10	-	10	13	-	13	16	-	13	15	-	8	15	1	7	16	1	4	9	1	3	9	1	4	9	1	5	10	1
7	16	1	-	23	3	-	27	3	-	32	6	-	29	8	-	29	9	-	35	8	-	33	9	-	31	15	-	26	15	-	27	18	1	26	20	-
8	17	-	-	19	-	-	18	1	-	17	1	1	20	4	1	15	6	-	13	9	1	11	8	1	11	8	1	13	9	1	11	11	1	10	10	3
9	22	1	1	16	2	2	16	3	1	15	6	1	18	5	-	16	2	-	12	2	1	12	2	1	11	3	2	7	5	1	7	3	-	9	4	-
10	5	-	-	7	-	-	9	-	-	11	-	-	14	2	2	15	6	2	13	5	2	15	5	3	19	4	5	16	5	4	16	4	6	19	4	5
11	4	-	-	5	-	-	4	-	-	4	-	-	3	-	-	4	-	-	8	1	-	6	1	-	6	1	-	7	1	1	9	1	1	7	1	1
12	2	-	-	3	-	-	2	-	-	4	-	-	5	-	-	2	-	-	2	-	1	3	-	1	4	-	1	4	-	1	5	1	1	5	1	1
13	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	2	-	-	1	-	-	2	-	-	3	-	-	2	-	-	2	-	-	1	-	-

KEY: W = White
C = Coloured
B = Black

SOURCE: Personnel Department Month End Reports, June 1980 - December 1985.

Relating this to race, women's employment reflected the general pattern on the mine with whites concentrated in the higher grades, blacks in the lower grades and coloureds in the middle grades. Of those women employed in the unskilled grades all, with the exception of one in 1980, were black or coloured whilst in the higher grades the majority were white.

Further, the public relations manager reported that there were no women in the confidential grades in 1983. However, by 1985 one woman had been appointed into the confidential grades, the head of public relations at the mine and the wife of the divisional manager in metallurgy.

Such a pattern of employment for women is hardly surprising given the patriarchal and conservative society in which the mine was located. Patriarchy was an established principle within the social systems of both the traditional sector and the modern sector where women remained unable to own property. In addition, the attitudes of mining management to the employment of women were far from supportive, even during phase 3.

Whilst Rossing had committed itself to 'a true non-racial policy with equal opportunity for all employees.....' in which 'We refer to our employees as salaried staff, days paid, men and women.....', equal opportunity for women

was not seen as an issue nor a principle to which management was committed. (138)

In 1983 the public affairs manager outlined the Rossing policy towards the employment of women claiming that it was company policy not to discriminate against women. At the same time there was high unemployment in Namibia and "the company is not pushing to employ women in traditionally male occupations..... this will in any case develop as time passes but the particular position in the country does not warrant it".

He further explained that women at the mine tend to be employed in areas such as secretarial, nursing, and computer operation. Although one young woman had been employed on a student scheme to study engineering, she had been the only female employee in any of the professional mining areas and had left after failing to pass her second year. Nevertheless, she had been featured in one of the glossy Rossing public relations magazines.

A similar negative attitude towards women's employment was expressed by the personnel manager in 1985 who argued that "after independence the major thrust will be employment for men". Regarding employment for black women specifically he claimed that this was not seen as a priority or even an issue and that the only specific area

where black women had been employed on the mine was "thick, black women in computer programming".

During a journalists' visit to the mine in 1986 the attitude of the management was further expounded when the newly promoted personnel manager was quoted as claiming that 'Although Rossing was an equal opportunity employer, the majority of jobs at the mine could only be done by men'. (Namibian, 4.7.1986)

One senior recruitment officer explained that there was significant sex discrimination in recruitment. However, this discrimination was not direct and overt, as he explained, "they do not discriminate by saying we want a man or a woman for this job but in practice this happens".

Much of the expansion of black women's employment in grades 4 and above is explained by the development throughout phase 2 of a community and welfare department in Arandis, which required the employment of housing, community and social workers, and medical facilities, which required the employment of nursing and support staff. In 1983 the public relations manager explained, however, that the demand had not been high for black women since the mine's needs were for more skilled women.

Whilst a number of coloured women from the South African Cape had been employed as higher grade nurses and in semi-skilled clerical and secretarial grades, he explained that "senior secretarial positions required a good command of English" and for this reason there were no non-whites in these positions. However, the mine had started its own secretarial training course which was piloted 'with two young ladies' in 1982. The Training Department year end report for 1982 commented

They have both passed the course well and are doing well subsequently on the job. This confirms our ability to develop good potential local girls to become secretaries.

The public affairs manager also explained that "it makes sense to employ the wife of a mine employee..... it leads to a satisfactory situation". Such a "satisfactory situation" was not only the case with wives but also where any other member of a household became a mine employee, reportedly a commonplace occurrence in the later period.

The benefits of such a situation for the mine were clearly understood by one black couple both of whom were employed by Rossing. Firstly, the mine only has to provide one house instead of accommodation for two, the higher the grade of the employees the greater the saving. Secondly, the mine exerts "double control" over the household, for

example, both have to find new employment if they want to move areas. Thirdly, household members represent a ready supply of cheap labour in the sense that recruitment costs are minor and they are drawn from the local labour market where expectations in terms of pay and conditions are lower than in wider labour markets.

Apart from this, and despite the relatively small numbers, women's employment appeared to have been used for a variety of strategic purposes. Firstly, women had been used to fill posts previously held by men. In some cases black and coloured women were employed to carry out semi-skilled work at a time when the mine was finding it difficult to employ enough semi-skilled men. Frequently the work women had taken on, such as clerical and personnel, was subsequently downgraded. Two trends are discernible here, firstly, women were drawn on as a labour reserve where recruitment was tight and secondly, women were used to cheapen the costs of certain types of work and consequently lower the cost of production.

Another example of the way in which women were used to cheapen the cost of labour was given by the public relations manager. He explained that coloured nursing sisters in occupational health were carrying out diagnostic work normally carried out by doctors. This, he claimed, reflected firstly a shortage of doctors, and

secondly "a more efficient system". As he explained, "the fewer the doctors the better".

A related but separate strategy was to replace some white women employees with black and coloured women. This took place at the lower secretarial and some clerical grades, as well as amongst telephonists. It was also pronounced in the new area of data processing where white women were initially employed as 'punchgirls'. They were later replaced, however, as quoted earlier, by "thick black women". Such changes were associated with the training of 'good potential local girls' and the subsequent downgrading of the work category. In addition, this both reflected the deskilling impact of computer technology in some administrative areas of work and the way in which, within women's work as within men's, race remained an important characteristic of the segmentation of labour.

Whilst women were considered appropriate for only certain jobs at the mine, terms and conditions of service were standard for all employees and were applied equally with the two significant exceptions of maternity leave and the provision of housing and related services.

When the conditions of service were formalised at the beginning of October 1979, the policy which had applied

throughout phase 1 regarding pregnancy was retained. This stated simply

All pregnant employees will terminate their services with the company not later than eight months after the beginning of the pregnancy.

Employees whose services are terminated for reasons of pregnancy will be permitted to re-apply for employment at a date to be agreed upon between the employee and her departmental head.

It is not company policy to allow employees to take unpaid leave at the time of birth.

Thus, women who became pregnant had no security of employment let alone maternity pay. This clearly reflected the importance of women's employment to the mine at the time.

However, as the employment pattern changed and women of higher grades were employed, the mine became more dependant on women in certain areas, most notably personnel and administration. In addition, the women employees themselves became more articulate in their criticism of the maternity provisions. Hence, in October 1982 the company adopted a new policy which, whilst making some minor concessions, continued to reflect the lack of management commitment to sexual equality and the relative marginality of women's employment.

The conditions of service, which remained unchanged up to 1985, stated

Rossing recognises the special circumstances surrounding the termination of employment as a result of pregnancy and therefore is prepared to grant maternity assistance.

Nevertheless, four qualifying conditions were established which required the employee to normally have:

1. Completed 18 months service at the commencement of the eighth month of pregnancy.
2. An acceptable level of performance recorded.
3. No valid disciplinary record.
4. Guaranteed to return to work within three months of the date of confinement.

The satisfaction of such constraining conditions hardly established a woman's right to 'maternity assistance' which in any case only consisted of unpaid leave and even that only once all paid leave had been taken. Furthermore, the company retained the right to delay the return of the employee for up to a month and would not guarantee a return to the same grade let alone the same position.

In addition, the conditions of service harshly treated unmarried mothers or wives living separately from their husbands. The Conditions of Service stated

Employees who have lived in single quarters will be required to vacate their accommodation prior to confinement. Should they resume employment, they will be required to find their own alternative accommodation

for which they would receive 'a single status housing allowance in accordance with their grade'.

The provision of housing had discriminated against women from the early period. In April 1979 a divisional personnel officer drew attention to the fact that

married women employees whose husbands do not work for RUL are penalised in comparison to married men employees and unmarried employees in the following manner:

1. They receive no housing subsidy.
 2. They receive no Munciple Services subsidy
 3. They may not belong to the company medical scheme.
- (139)

Hand written comments on the memorandum by the recipient suggest that women could join the medical scheme, however their acceptance was conditional, 'provided they are the breadwinner and their husband is not employed and have

(sic) access to a medical scheme'. This was the same for single women.

The notion of 'breadwinner' was also the discriminating factor in the provision of housing and municipale services, which included local services tax and some water and electricity provision. The handwritten notes commented in respect of the first two comments contained in the memorandum

1. Correct, they are employed as single status employees - their husband is the breadwinner.
2. No - why should they? (140)

Apparently dissatisfied with the response to his memorandum the divisional personnel manager wrote to the personnel manager on the same subject in May 1979. He was concerned about three categories of employee:

1. Married women employees whose husbands do not work for RUL.
2. Widows, widowers and divorced people with dependents (either new or existing employees who get into this situation).
3. Unmarried employees who support family ie widowed mother etc. (141)

Each was discriminated against because they were not provided with housing and subsidised municipale services

which he argued 'are included in the conditions of service and are in fact mentioned in all advertisements placed for vacancies'. (142)

The housing policy written in the early part of phase 2 was put into practice during mid-1979. This provided a facility for the last two categories referred to in the divisional personnel manager's letter, by way of providing an allowance where the employee chose to privately rent accommodation rather than live in single company accommodation.

However, the policy was quite clear that the allowances were being made available only 'While Rossing is short of housing' and not because management felt any moral obligation to treat these categories of employee equally. Indeed, the allowances were still based on their entitlement to accommodation as single people and the policy made it explicit that 'married employees who return to single status are not entitled to married accommodation' and 'single employees with dependant children are not entitled to company accommodation, or allowances other than as single status employees'. (143)

For women employees with husbands who do not work for Rossing, the company continued to argue that, since they were not the 'breadwinner' in the family they were not

entitled to either married accommodation or housing allowances. The divisional personnel manager calculated in his memorandum that a woman employee with a husband who did not work for Rossing could lose a benefit of up to R275 value which a male, married employee with a wife who did not work for Rossing would receive.

Nevertheless, the housing policy remained unchanged until the end of 1984 when the company began to have a surplus of housing. Although the 'breadwinner' argument remained for women with husbands not employed by Rossing, the company decided to make housing available to two of the other categories of employee. As the general manager reported to the Rossing Council in late 1984

In the past divorced, or widowed employees with dependant children living at home have not been eligible for company married accommodation. Because of the improvement in the availability of housing, it is now possible for the company to offer these people company accommodation in the area of their entitlement. Each of these people will be notified individually within the next few months when such accommodation becomes available. Once again, should they refuse to accept company accommodation, then any rental allowance that they have been enjoying will be withdrawn. (144)

The policy change only effected two existing employees, both divorced white women with children, who were forced to chose between moving into company housing in Tamariskia or remaining in privately rented accommodation but lose their housing allowance.

The following year, a further concession was made to the discriminatory treatment of women when 'lady employees living with non-Rossing employees whose husbands receive no assistance with housing' were offered company housing. The general manager again reported the changes to the Rossing council along with those introduced the previous year concluding

I think it is fair to say that these two measures were popular with employees and we are presently examining the last problem area, which will be considerably more difficult to solve, and that is the question of single lady employees with dependent children. (145)

It is not clear why this latter category should be any more difficult to solve than widowed, divorced or separated employees with children other than that the general manager considered such women immoral. However, no report had been presented by the end of 1985.

Social Stability

For white Rossing employees it had been assumed from the beginning of mining activity that, if they were married, their families would join them. This was not the case for black and coloured employees whose employment was initially on a single basis regardless of marital status. However, early on Rossing management realised that the contract labour system did not suit its labour needs and that

The concept of a stable settled community at Rossing was fundamental to success in a highly capital intensive operation. (RUL, 1979)

It was this concept that led to the development of Arandis during phase 1. The presence of the wives of black employees, living as a nuclear family in Rossing housing, was fundamental to the success of the project. In this way a settled black community was created in which 'civilised' western social and industrial values developed. A material lifestyle was adopted which created a dependency on mine employment, reducing labour turnover and allowing mining management to maximise the value of training investment. In addition, the company avoided social costs such as the provision of meals and the social problems associated with a large number of single men

living together. The latter was one of the major social problems faced by management for which wives were used as the main solution. Nevertheless, it was some time before such problems were eradicated.

Black women had been allowed to visit the mine since early in the developmemnt of the mine. Sandelowsky provided an insight into the position for women in 1979

The accommodation at B-Camp, not far from the residential quarters for single men (A-Camp), was meant to be used as a guest house for visitors to the men at A-Camp. The Administrative Authorities had apparently planned it mainly for the legally married wives of workers. Such a visit should provide the wives with the opportunity to see the area in which their husbands were working and living and might help them to make up their minds about moving to Rossing with their families. Should they decide to join their husbands their new home would, however, be a house in Arandis.
(146)

However, the men could also get permission for other women relatives to visit. Although passes were required, they were not difficult to obtain, and whilst the maximum stay was three months, women only had to 'spend one or two nights outside the B-camp' before being able to return for a further three month period. (147)

It is clear that the men did not use B-Camp for its intended purpose as Sandelowsky reports

The reputation of the women living in B-Camp is poor. A number of men from A-Village said they would not like their first wives (ie their legally married wives) to stay there for that reason. Most of the women staying there are second wives or sweethearts or women who were in trouble. Many women who were kicked out of the single quarters in Arandis went to B-Village. Those men who want their legally married wives to come and see what life at the mine would be like, try to arrange accommodation with friends in Arandis. (148)

The personnel manager explained the situation in rather more terse terms describing the activities in B-Camp as "trade".

Whilst Arandis may have been better in some areas there were others where it was not. The single quarters and houses which were used at that time to house single black male employees in particular were reported by the black community officer to be similar to B-Camp and Sandelowsky commented that 'At Arandis alcoholism seems to be more widespread among women than among men'. (149)

The community officer explained that the company had accepted the traditional marriage and a man was therefore able to obtain a house in Arandis on this basis, even though he may have another wife in one of the homelands. Other women then came to stay, brewed beer and turned the house into a brothel.

Even in 1983 a social worker explained the same process. "Girls" came to Arandis "because it is a nice place to live, to get a man and a house". The men used the opportunity to get out of single quarters and get a house by "declaring a bogus marriage". However, the men were often unfaithful, dropping the original woman and taking up with another one, especially when the first became pregnant. As the community worker explained "some women are just wandering about from one relationship to another".

The community and social workers claimed that this situation was purely "an Arandis problem" and were critical of the company policy in this respect. The community worker argued that it was because the company accepted the traditional marriage that women are exploited and went on "here houses are just dished out, I think to satisfy the workers. They (management) don't worry about the community or social impact".

Rossing management cannot be held directly responsible for the behaviour of the black male workforce. Nevertheless, the context within which the exploitation of women operated was their responsibility. The contract labour system is renown for its destructive influence on family relationships, nevertheless management chose to use it during phase 1 of the mine's development and continued to

employ large numbers of men on a single basis throughout phase 2 because insufficient family housing was available, largely as a result of lack of investment.

Further, whilst it was desirable within this context that relatives should be allowed to visit single male employees, the company chose to impose little control over the process. The situation described by Sandelowsky where a woman could be thrown out of the single quarters in Arandis and move immediately to B-Camp amounts to a tacit support of "trade". Indeed, whilst there is no firm evidence to support such a notion in this case, employers throughout the world have been known to supply prostitutes to men isolated from their families and women for long periods.

In addition, the willingness of the company to accept the traditional marriage, as their own community and social workers argued, suggested that they had little concern for the implications for women in Arandis, nor for the social consequences. Indeed, this was an area where the clash of traditional and modern cultures and the contradictions in Rossing policy were particularly obvious.

The facilities provided for wives visiting their spouses at the mine and staying in Camp-B were basic. Sandelowsky reported

The quarters consist of small bedrooms with bath and toilet facilities shared by a number of people. There are no cooking facilities and shopping facilities are limited to one small General Dealer shop between A-Village and B-Village. Every visitor is entitled to one meal a day from the mine caterers. There is no transport to B-Village and visitors depend on being given a ride or walking. (150)

The lack of anything but the most basic of facilities led to boredom on the part of the women residents. Sandelowsky again captures the lifestyle

Talking to the women who stay in B-Village, one gets the impression that they do not enjoy their stay there particularly. One reason for not wanting to stay there for any length of time is the lack of transport. Should you fall ill you are stranded. Another reason is boredom. Since there are no cooking facilities housework is limited by the small rooms and the lack of household utensils. Visitors do not bring such items as sewing machines or material for making baskets. So there is little else to do but to sit and chat. (151)

Similarly, wives who came to live in Arandis in the early period found the experience difficult to cope with. It was a new town with little for women to do. Community facilities were not provided until new buildings were completed in 1979 when a community worker was employed and classes in sewing, cooking and typing began. These were later extended to include needlework, machine knitting, advanced cooking, homemaking, toy making, traditional crafts and a gardening club. (RTZ, 1984)

However, later in the year Sandelowsky observed

A comment which forces itself upon the observer time and again is the one with regard to the general policy on the development of the town, Arandis and the residential areas of Rossing employees. A mining company such as RUL in Southern Africa has the choice of utilising labour on a migratory basis or persuading people (by the conditions they offer) to leave their traditional homes and to settle in a new environment where employment is offered. In the case of Rossing the latter course was taken. This means that on the average two or three dependents for every worker on the mine will move to a new home. When it was suggested that occupations such as secondary industries be created or encouraged for these people it was pointed out that in 20 or 30 years time the mine might not be offering any employment any more. But by then a whole generation will have grown up in Arandis. If the point of view of hard profit making is taken, then an attitude of "apres moi le deluge" could be taken. Then it could be argued that the opportunities offered by the present mining situation should be used to develop industries which in due course could become self-supporting. (152)

In the early 1980s Rossing set up a small clothing manufacturing company which employed around 20 women and was later converted into a profit-making co-operative enterprise. The co-operative supplied overalls and bedlinen to Rossing at low cost in exchange for its investment in equipment. However, the main purpose of the co-operative was to provide some employment for the wives of Rossing employees, although management had employed a coloured male manager.

With regard to the development of other secondary industries the community worker reported in 1985 that Rossing was prepared to give support to the development of secondary business in Arandis. However, such support was

limited and little enthusiasm had been invested in the development. At that time no significant businesses had developed other than the shops and garage included in the development of the town and even these the personnel manager referred to as "back garden businesses", offering very limited employment opportunities.

The lack of secondary business was particularly important for women residents of Arandis who were not only limited in their social activities but also had very few opportunities for employment. The problem was further compounded by the lack of any public transport facilities to Swakopmund, the mine having refused to make such a provision.

Conclusion.

Throughout the development of the mine management's approach and attitude to women's employment had been one of ambivalence. Generally the employment of women had not been seen as appropriate, the exceptions being either where men were not available or where labour market segmentation had labelled work as women's.

Women were generally employed in lower grade, low status, semi-skilled work which offered little prospect of

advancement and promotion. In addition, within work labelled as women's, there was a further segmentation by race, as amongst men's employment, with white women taking the higher grade positions and black women the lower grades.

Finally, in terms of conditions, only in the latter period did management make some minor concessions to requests for maternity provision and in housing begin to address the discriminatory assumptions concerning the concept of 'breadwinner' and take account of women's responsibilities with respect to the family.

Outside employment mine management had viewed the presence of employees' wives as crucial to the success of their strategy of developing a settled workforce at the mine. For this purpose Arandis had been conceived as the dormitory town in which black employees and their families would settle, adopting the 'civilised' western social and industrial values which would lead to higher levels of employee commitment and dependency.

Indeed, from 1975 this was progressively the case as housing became available and the camps were closed down. In the meantime, while there were large numbers of single male employees housed in the camps, and later at Arandis,

the presence of women whom management knew were prostitutes was tolerated, if not tacitly encouraged.

Arandis was in the absolute sense a mining town and the degree to which it remained so was largely a function of the willingness of the mine to invest in the development of secondary industry. Whilst the company invested in the activities of the community centre to ensure employees' wives made the transition from traditional peasant society to the behaviour and values expected of a wife in a modern industrial society, Rossing's commitments stopped here. This lack of commitment left women trapped in Arandis with little meaningful activity and led to what the community and social worker described as "boredom and depression".

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SECTION C

CHAPTER 10

MANAGERIAL STRATEGIES OF LABOUR CONTROL: ROSSING IN PERSPECTIVE.

The previous section detailed the development of the Rossing mine between 1970 and 1985, paying particular attention to the imperatives which led management to adopt specific strategies for labour control and the consequences of their implementation. Various particular factors, or 'contingencies' as Knights and Willmott (1990) called them, can be detected as important in explaining the adoption of these strategies. In this respect Thompson (1990) refers to the 'crucial mediating role' of economic and historical contexts, labour and product markets, worker resistance and gender. (see Chapter 1)

These and other factors are isolated and discussed in this chapter. Whilst they are all inter-related, for the benefit of clarity each factor is addressed individually with the 'macro' contexts of history, political economy

and social structure discussed first, followed by factors more specific to Rossing's operation.

1. The Macro-Context.

The macro-context is a significant factor in understanding the development of managerial strategies of labour control. The political history of Namibian colonisation and the resultant political economy provide powerful evidence of state influence in the construction of the social relations of production.

Of key importance was the fragmentation of the population, initially under German rule, later institutionalised under South African control. The supporting legal structure and the willingness of South Africa to suppress opposition ensured that white hegemony was maintained, black nationalism delayed and the supply of cheap black labour to white-owned business ensured. (see Chapter 3)

The South African administration saw significant political and economic benefit to be gained from the development of a modern sector in Namibia. (see Chapter 4) Hence, from early on it was prepared to offer financial and organisational incentives to colonial immigrants. Apart from grants and tax incentives the administration provided

resources for the development of the infrastructure as well as a bureaucracy for colonial administration to ensure the stability of the colonial structures and the safety of settlers.

Further, not only did South Africa take direct responsibility for the enforcement of apartheid laws which forced black Namibians into poverty and hence contract labour in the modern sector, it also established the only legal channels through which residents of the homelands could obtain work. Moreover, SWANLA, the agency through which this was administered, operated as a wage fixing cartel eliminating wage competition between employers and minimising the wages of blacks. (see Chapter 5)

When later, under the administration of the Turnhalle Conference, much of the petty apartheid legislation was repealed, the opportunity to move towards racially integrated employment structures became a possibility and managerial latitude in its choice of labour control was thereby broadened. This is not to say that the macro-structures dictated the strategic choice of management. Indeed, it will be argued that the precise response to the greater opportunities for managerial control was influenced by a variety of other factors.

Nevertheless, prior to 'liberalisation' Rossing adopted the South African employment model in which large numbers of unskilled and some semi-skilled black migrant labourers were employed on contract whilst whites occupied the skilled, professional and managerial grades. The racial differentiation was not only reflected in grade but also in terms and conditions of employment. (see Chapter 5) The clear influence of the state in facilitating a change in control strategy through 'liberalisation' suggests that the influence of the state is a factor in labour process theory to which inadequate weight and analysis has been given to date.

Further state influence is found in the South African control of the Namibian economy. Namibia was tied closely to the South African economy not only through trade but also the use of the South African currency. Hence, the management of the South African economy effected Namibian business. This became particularly clear in the late 1970s when the weakness of the economy became apparent with inflation rising rapidly, closely followed in the early 1980s by the significant devaluation of the Rand.

The weakness of the South African economy was closely tied to its international political isolation and its foreign policy in southern Africa where it had committed substantial resources to military activity. The effect of

this devaluation at Rossing was to increase local profits, thus reducing pressure to achieve economies and mitigating the possibility of redundancies. (see Chapter 8)

Social differentiation by race and ethnicity in Namibia was clearly the result of deliberate policy on the part of the colonial administration. However, any significant differentiation by class in the black population did not develop until the late 1970s.

Up to the implementation of the Odendaal Plan in 1964 black advancement into professional and commercial employment was impossible. Although the development of self-governing homelands provided some opportunities in this respect with the new administrative bureaucracies being rapidly dominated by a 'dynamic modernising elite' rather than the traditional leaders as had been planned, such advancement remained within the ethnic structures. (Totemeyer, 1978)

It was not until 'liberalisation' in the late 1970s that a black business and professional group penetrated the modern sector. The process was aided by the return from exile of some qualified blacks as well as the departure of white skilled labour and by 1978 it was estimated that blacks represented between 5-10% of the business,

administrative and professional positions in Namibia.
(UNIN, 1978)

The development of a black middle class was a deliberate policy on the part of the South African administration who supported the 'liberalisation' process by providing equal pay and conditions within the public sector bureaucracies. It was hoped that this black middle class would 'collaborate with whites' and 'act as a bulwark against mass (Black) unrest'. (Abrahams, 1983) Nevertheless, whilst some blacks were allowed to advance into these employment areas, an important limiting factor was that educational provision remained within the ethnic structures, continuing to provide poor quality education for blacks. State policy in this respect had a major impact on the labour market. (see below)

Differentiation was also achieved through gender where patriarchy was not only a feature of the modern sector but of traditional social systems. However, patriarchy intervened in the colonial structures to proscribe the employment of black women from the homelands and thus to discriminate doubly against them. (see Chapter 5)

Thus, it is clear that the policies of the State had a significant impact on all aspects of political, economic and social structure and that it represents a major factor

in explaining managerial strategies of labour control throughout the period. The precise nature of that impact can be seen more clearly in an examination of the contingency factors more closely related to operational considerations.

2. The Economics of Production.

Crucial to the viability of Rossing's operation were state subsidies available to them through the very generous tax laws. Most important during the period was Rossing's recovery from profits of the full cost of building the mine before becoming liable to pay tax; a factor which was important in their initial viability assessment.

Most importantly as a consideration of the economics of production, however, is the nature of the product market. A number of writers have drawn attention to this factor as one of the most important in explaining strategies of labour control (see for example Marchington and Parker, 1990) and its importance for Rossing reinforces this argument.

Rossing's product was sold on longterm contracts at fixed prices through another RTZ subsidiary. This provided a degree of stability unusual in private industry and

facilitated longterm planning with mining management clear about their income over a five year period. It has been shown that in phase 2 the major imperative was to increase production since advance sales provided the opportunity to substantially increase profits. Once maximum production had been achieved, however, and demand began to fall below capacity, mining management turned its attention during phase 3 to increased efficiency as the only area in which it could exert influence over profits.

It has been shown that such considerations significantly influenced labour control strategies. (see Chapter 7 and 8) Indeed, the financial stability and foresight afforded by the management of the product market allowed Rossing management to carefully plan and implement its social policy throughout phases 2 and 3 and plan its social expenditure to match available finance.

3. Technology and Production Systems.

Labour process theory has drawn attention to the inadequacy of earlier theories on the influence of technology at the workplace which assumed both the neutrality of science and technology and a determinism in its choice by management. Any notion of the embodiment of social purpose in production systems or the impact of workplace conflict on technological change has been denied by such writers. (see for example Argyle, 1972; Blauner 1964; Sayles, 1958; Woodward, 1965).

Accepting the corrective to such arguments it is important to distinguish in what sense technology is a 'contingency' and in what sense it represents strategic managerial choice. At the level of political economy it is clear that the development of science and technology is the result of research and development directed at particular issues defined as problematic within the social formation. Whilst this may also be true at the level of the company, where development work is directed towards specific operational 'problems', the organisation will also look outside for technology and systems which may be seen to offer solutions. In the latter sense the development of technology is beyond the control of individual management

and represents a 'contingency' although the decision to purchase the technology remains a managerial choice.

In this sense technology as a 'contingency' can be seen to have influenced managerial strategy in two distinct categories. Firstly, through the structure and nature of the production process and secondly, through the introduction of new technology by way of equipment and systems to solve particular operational 'problems'. Whilst both are the product of managerial choice, because significant investment in the production process is made at a particular point in time it tends to have historical consequences beyond those of the latter category.

Early decisions concerning the nature of the Rossing production system both influenced and were influenced by the employment pattern which, as we have already seen, was itself influenced by state intervention. Similarly, the state's construction of the political economy aimed to satisfy the needs of white settlers and a major consideration in this was their labour requirements.

Rossing chose to adopt a high technology production process to maximise the economic viability of the low grade ore body. This again was influenced by, and had consequences for, its financial and operational structures

as well as the employment structure as shown in Chapters 6,7 and 8.

The second category of technological influence, the introduction of equipment and systems into existing production processes, reflects a variety of managerial strategies for the improvement of operations. Up to phase three little effort was made to improve the technology and systems which, in any case, were already highly sophisticated and only a few years old. Throughout phase 3 Rossing used new equipment and systems predominantly to increase process efficiency and reduce unit costs as a means of minimising the effect of reduced product demand on profits. This was achieved through improvements in decision-making and control of production processes as well as the deskilling (and therefore down grading) of work and the reduction of employees. Even where new equipment and systems were not introduced with the specific objective of reducing labour or skill this was frequently a consequence, as was increased control. (see Chapter 8)

Whilst some mining operations would have responded to the imperatives of phase three using selective mining, reducing costs by mining only the richer and more accessible ore reserves, this was not a strategy available

to Rossing due to the nature of the ore body and its open pit operation.

It is clear that the availability of technology, equipment and systems influenced the strategic managerial approach in different ways at different times. However, as argued earlier, the purchase of equipment or the development of new systems requires the initiative of management who seek solutions to particular issues which they define as problematic. Hence, production processes are at the same time a reflection of available technology and strategic management choices which are closely tied to other imperatives at the workplace such as the product market, labour market and worker resistance.

4. The Labour Market.

It has already been established that through state policy the labour market was differentiated by race up to the late 1970s when 'liberalisation' allowed the development of a black middle class to move into skilled, managerial and professional employment. Gender differentiation was also a characteristic of the patriarchal nature of traditional and colonial structures throughout the period which acted to discriminate against women.

Early employment strategy at the Rossing mine utilised the traditional South African model using large numbers of black unskilled employees on contract with whites making up the skilled, professional, supervisory and managerial grades. However, even before the initial viability study for the mine was completed in 1973, it was clear that such a structure did not satisfy the particular needs of the proposed capital-intensive mining operation and that RTZ had made plans to implement an employment strategy which manipulated the labour market and contemporary political position to its own ends. (see Chapter 6) This was implemented throughout the latter stages of phase one and phase two during which the development of a settled community of trained, semi-skilled, black, permanent staff living in the nearby Damara homeland was established.

This strategy not only required investment in the construction of the town and its infrastructure, but also the training of blacks to develop the required industrial skills as well as 'civilised' western industrial and social values. However, the contradictions in such a system posed greater problems than Rossing management had anticipated and the mine continued to employ large numbers of single, black workers from the northern homelands into the early 1980s.

In early 1978, shortly after the internal political developments led to the establishment of the Turnhalle Conference heralding the beginning of the period of 'liberalisation', Rossing adopted a new social dispensation which rejected racial differentiation in favour of meritocracy and adopted integrated terms and conditions of employment for all employees. This re-emphasised the need for investment in social provision, training and social conditioning which Rossing confronted with renewed vigour. However, such a strategic change, as Friedman (1990) has noted, is not easy to achieve in the short-term and the amount of managerial effort committed to its implementation is testimony to the contradictions it embraced, not least of which was between the meritocratic principles of the mine and the continuing apartheid structures of Namibian society.

It is clear then that in the construction of its strategy of labour control the labour market had a fundamental impact and that of particular importance were geographical location, skills availability, comparative attractiveness of employment, degree of proletarianisation and differentiation by race, class and gender.

5. Labour Resistance.

The importance of labour resistance to the construction and successful implementation of managerial strategies of labour control was established in Chapter 1. It was also argued that management may themselves resist or modify the implementation of strategy.

In the latter respect Rossing experienced some managerial opposition to the development of racial equality in employment structures and social provision, especially at the lower levels where the structure was dominated by white Afrikaners. Further, senior management made concessions to this opposition even where it contradicted their stated policy. For example, Rossing tempered the implementation of its localisation strategy and manipulated its housing policy to render them more acceptable to their white supervisory and managerial workforce.

Further, despite non-racial company policies, black workers reported that they experienced a high level of racial discrimination, particularly amongst white first line managers. This group were crucial to the implementation of company policy since it was they who dictated such issues as work allocation, overtime,

discipline, training opportunities and promotion; they also exerted a powerful influence on the quality of blacks' working lives. It was this relationship to which blacks responded by using informal forms of resistance, most notable of which was 'etiquette' as a means of 'avoiding trouble', gaining 'space' to influence the pace and method of work and generally promoting their own interests through patronage with the white boss. (Gordon, 1977; see Chapter 5)

Such informal forms of resistance were characteristic of Rossing's early development and were not limited to the use of 'etiquette' but extended to destruction and theft of company property, manipulation of company and especially hostel regulations, high levels of labour turnover and absenteeism as well as drinking and drug-taking. Although such acts of resistance were frequently taken by small groups or individuals, as Moorsom (1977) argues, they nevertheless 'assumed a strong general basis of solidarity', expressed in the ethic of 'brotherhood', which rendered such activity not just individual expressions of black resistance to managerial control but a collective and political expression of resistance to white domination. (see Chapter 5)

However, at Rossing the degree to which blacks were allowed to indulge in such informal, covert forms of

resistance diminished as the bureaucratised relationship of the new dispensation sought to incorporate them and constrain and formalise the relationship between blacks and white bosses. (see Chapters 7 and 8) Indeed, the new industrial work structures left progressively less space for individual manipulation, by blacks or whites.

As a result of the constraints imposed on more traditional forms of resistance workers began to engage in collective action. A number of work stoppages took place the largest and last of which occurred in 1978-9. This was met by Rossing management with renewed efforts of incorporation, establishing formal channels of communication, grievance and discipline which sought to further formalise and individualise the employment relationship. By the end of phase 3 the lack of any further collective resistance suggested managerial success in this respect.

However, a number of other factors had influenced the apparent black subordination. The increasingly coercive managerial position adopted throughout phase 3 had coincided with a sharp increase in black unemployment and an increasing managerial confidence in its position at independence. At the same time black aspirations and hopes of independence had diminished.

Nevertheless, whilst the developments in the political economy acted to suppress worker action and managerial efforts had changed the nature of collective black resistance, they had not eliminated it. During 1985 black activists began to form the first multi-racial trade union in the country specifically for Rossing employees. The Rossing Mine Workers Union was registered as a trade union with the state authorities in June the following year and immediately entered into negotiations for recognition.

This discussion illustrates the important impact of labour resistance on managerial strategies of labour control. Whilst Rossing moved from the traditional pattern of control implicit in the South African employment structures and towards a bureaucratic model of control, its shape, like the traditional model, both influenced and was influenced by the nature of worker resistance.

6. Management Preference.

The final 'contingency' important in explaining the particular form of managerial strategies of labour control is that of management preference. Management style was discussed in Chapter 5 and, despite the criticisms of contemporary theory in this respect, the existence of managerial preference was accepted as important in explaining a subjectivity in the particular choice of labour control strategies.

At Rossing strategic choice has been shown to have been influenced not only by the political and economic concerns of the macro-context but also by the adoption of a policy of social responsibility by the parent company in the face of growing international criticism of its activities. Further, the general manager, appointed to represent corporate interests at a critical time in the mine's history, was shown to have had a major impact both on the construction of the strategy and on the manner of its translation into action. His appointment accounted for the adoption of a particular managerial style at the mine described by senior managers as 'benevolent dictatorship' or 'autocratic paternalism'.

Thus, the existence of a preference in managerial style was influenced at three levels; parent company, corporate and operational. The parent organisation was important in imposing an element of operational style and a stylistic preference was also observable at the Rossing company level particularly through the early influence of its chairman Ronnie Walker. However, most important for labour control strategy was the operational level influence of the general manager who, once appointed, operated with a high degree of autonomy from parent or corporate structures allowing him to impose a clear set of values into the managerial strategy and practices of labour control.

Such an understanding of management provides an important insight into the choice of particular strategies of labour control made even after the other factors are taken into account.

Conclusion.

This chapter has reflected on the detailed case study of the Rossing mine in order to expose the most important factors in explaining managerial strategies of labour control. These were found to be the 'macro' factors of Namibian history, political economy and social structure, the economics of production, technology and production systems, the labour market, worker resistance and managerial preference.

In isolating these particular factors it is worth reiterating the argument set out in Chapter 2 that they do not represent an exhaustive list of influences. Rather, these represent the most important factors in the explanation of managerial action with regard to labour control.

For the sake of clarity of presentation, and in order to show their individual impact, each factor was discussed separately. However, this provides a false impression of reality where management are, in fact, confronted with numerous factors to be taken into account in constructing strategy, some of which, as was shown above and throughout Chapters 6,7,8 and 9, impose contradictory pressures.

It is impossible to provide a general hierarchy for the relative importance of each criterion since, not only is this specific to the particular circumstances of the case study, but it is specific to each decision at a particular time. Nevertheless, it does appear that in the Rossing context, the influence of the state can be seen as being greater than has been suggested previously, particularly in studies of the developed capitalist nations where state influence has tended to be taken for granted.

CHAPTER 11

CONCLUSION.

The focus of this research has been to establish and explain the nature of managerial strategies of labour control adopted in a Namibian mine during a period of significant political, social and economic change between 1970 and 1985. The study makes two particular contributions; firstly, to the contemporary debate within the labour process, as summarised below; secondly, to the development of a Namibian historiography which, as a result of colonial control, is just beginning to emerge. Indeed, there are no existing studies comparable to this work and, for this reason, the empirical material presented here represents a unique archival resource.

The theoretical direction of the study is informed by the emerging debates concerning industrial relations and the labour process, one major strand of which is managerial strategy and control. Within this the theory has been refined on the basis of an increasing body of empirical knowledge which has focused almost exclusively on organisations in the developed, western world.

The detailed case study material presented in this work has facilitated an assessment of these theoretical issues in a context outside the western world where political, economic and social structures were both very different and in transition. In this respect the findings of this research generally support the contemporary theory detailed in Chapter 1. However, the following discussion, which relates the empirical findings to the theory, suggests modifications in some areas.

The first issue discussed in Chapter 1 concerned the development of strategies of managerial control under monopoly capitalism. It was argued that there is no single unilinear approach or tendency to management control as Braverman and some later writers had contended and that such a view offered a simplistic determinism in which management authority is assumed to operate in the absence of any contextual pressures or opposition.

This study provides clear support for the view that management strategies must be seen in the context of a number of 'contingencies' which influence its particular form. In this respect Chapter 10 discusses the influence of the historical, political, social and economic contexts, economics of production including the product market, technology and the production system, the labour market, labour resistance and management preference on the

specific choice of strategies of labour control. (The influence of the state as a major 'contingency' factor is of particular importance and is dealt with later in the chapter.)

These factors are shown to have confronted management with numerous and often contradictory pressures which were reflected in the coexistence of differing dimensions, mechanisms and levels of strategy constructed for the purpose of labour control at different times throughout the period.

The empirical material also supports the contention that management find it difficult to change from one strategy of labour control to another over short periods of time and that the development of contradictions within each of the particular strategies of labour control are inevitable. For example, in the use of 'etiquette' by blacks especially in the early periods, the shortage of skilled workers, the difficulty of moving its black workforce to full proletarianisation and their adoption of 'civilised' western industrial and social values, and the later development of trade unionism following the adoption of more highly bureaucratised structures of control after 'liberalisation'.

The second theoretical area of discussion argued that control of the labour process was not in itself an objective of capitalist activity. Rather, control is a means of achieving the end of profit. However, it was accepted that the importance of labour control in the strategic approach to achieving this end will vary and, although generally remaining a downstream factor, at times it may become of central importance to corporate success.

The empirical material here supports the notion of such a variation in the importance of labour control to general management strategy. Labour control was of increasing importance throughout the 1970s. This was due to a number of factors; increasing product demand, shortage of semi-skilled and skilled labour, the introduction of new technology, the developing political situation, the rising political aspirations of the black population and their increasing political and industrial militancy.

The impact was felt particularly strongly as a result of the development of the highly sophisticated technological production and processing system, the consequent adoption of the new social dispensation and the high level of political and industrial resistance at a time when the company was experiencing real financial problems and needed to maximise output. (see Chapter 7)

As the company moved into the 1980s they were met with a different set of circumstances; world recession, inflation, diminishing product demand, high unemployment amongst blacks, lower levels of labour turnover, depressed political expectations and reduced industrial militancy. Under such circumstances labour control reduced in importance as, firstly, the major strategic imperative became to minimise the effects of the recession on corporate financial performance; and secondly, the lower levels of militancy resulting from political and economic depression made the imposition of employee reductions, efficiencies and work intensification less problematic for management. Indeed, only when the worst of the recession was over did trade union activity begin to develop.

The third area of theoretical debate was concerned to define the level of rationality necessary within management action for it to be referred to as 'strategy'. The definition adopted here was one in which the criteria were less stringently set than some writers had demanded.

Nevertheless, Rossing strategy was carefully constructed, decisions only being made after full managerial discussion and planning. Further, the different levels of strategic planning at parent organisation, corporate and mine level were integrated, coherent and carefully translated into action in an effort to achieve the desired end.

The formulation of strategy does not, however, imply that it will be unproblematically translated into action and the desired outcome achieved. This is due particularly to resistance by management and labour. In respect of the former, for example, at Rossing first line management continued to use their remaining autonomy under the new non-racial dispensation to discriminate against blacks, leading blacks to claim the system remained racist.

With regard to labour resistance the case study illustrates a variety of forms, formal and informal, covert and overt. For example, the power of 'etiquette' in limiting black productivity (see Chapter 6) and the threatened strike by blacks over intended labour reductions through the introduction of a pool gang in early 1978 (following which management withdrew not only from the specific action but from any more general and significant reductions in the black labour force) illustrates the power and resilience of labour resistance, even where political repression is extreme. (see Chapter 7) However, as Thompson and McHughes argue, workers' action is not always fully conscious or rational and the inter-group rivalry amongst black Rossing workers during the early period is one example of this. (see Chapter 6)

Despite the existence of labour resistance, implicit within the employment relationship is a degree of labour

cooperation. Thompson (1990) argues that 'at some level' consent must be mobilised although the boundaries between control and consent have so far been inadequately theorised.

This study illustrates that, even under the early South African model of employment where repressive state control combined with the despotism of white management to force blacks into paid employment, consent existed. Its extent or 'level', however, was minimal and only explained through systematic state elimination of any alternative means of achieving subsistence; without work blacks were unable to support themselves and their families. Under such circumstances coercion was the major source of labour control.

Consent in the later period was very different, where the full force of company and managerial resources were used to instil the new 'civilised' industrial and social values into the black workforce. Whilst there remained an element of consent generated from material desire and security, much of mining management's efforts were directed at a different level of consent, that of ideological control.

The extent of their success in this respect is difficult to assess precisely; as Littler (1990) argues there is a

lack of vocabulary for concepts for discussing ideological relationships. However, whilst some blacks were able to see how some of their colleagues, especially the low number of higher grades, had been 'bought' by the organisation, having adopted new and different values and aspirations, nowhere was the limit of company success more clear than in the widespread black view of their employment at the mine as temporary and their primary commitment to their homeland ties. (see Chapter 8)

Two further factors suggest that managerial success in achieving ideological control was far from complete. Firstly, their need to continue to impose a strict disciplinary regime with dismissal remaining commonplace into the mid-1980s. Secondly, the development of trade unionism from 1985 with an estimated membership of over 90% of blacks by the following year. Indeed, the continuing 'autocratic paternalism' of Rossing management implied the maintainance of the structures of coercion for labour control although its relationship with cooperative structures was undoubtedly more balanced than in the early period. (see Chapter 8)

This discussion also relates to the question of how far the control of the labour process 'is not set by any management strategy..... but by action at the level of the state'. (Littler, 1990) The empirical material

presented in this study shows that the state significantly influenced the balance of coercive and cooperative control structures available to management and in this sense represented a major factor in the construction of managerial strategies of labour control at the mine.

Up to the late 1970s state-imposed structures dictated the nature of the labour market and social structure through racial categorisation and control. Implicit in these structures was a coercive political control which was imposed on both social and industrial spheres of blacks' lives. (see Chapter 5) In the workplace these influenced a wide range of managerial action including not only employment conditions but also the provision of accommodation and other social facilities. (see Chapter 6)

Following state removal of the petty apartheid legislation in the late 1970s Rossing's labour control strategy changed dramatically with the adoption of non-racial terms and conditions of employment, the extension of training facilities for blacks, the possibility of permanent family housing in traditionally white areas for higher grade blacks and the commitment of substantial funds to black educational development. Gender differentiation, however, continued. (see Chapter 9)

It is clear that the strategic direction in which the mine moved throughout the period of the study was that intended by the state where a slow movement from social differentiation based on race to one based on class was planned. (see Chapter 5) Such state influence is more clearly discernable where, as in Namibia during the period of this study, state policies change. This is likely to be the case during the current phase of restructuring in Eastern Europe. However, where such change is not taking place the influence of the state, although less apparent, is no less real. This study strongly suggests that the influence of the state on managerial strategies of labour control has been under-emphasised in previous studies of the labour process.

Nevertheless, it would be inaccurate to suggest that management is of little consequence in the face of state influence. The important point here is that whilst the state provides a crucial context within which companies operate and which shapes the general strategic direction, other contingencies more closely related to the specific operational imperatives of the organisation (see p389 above) influence the precise nature of the control strategy at any particular point in time. Thus, whilst the particular labour control strategies at Rossing resulted from contingencies closely related to the operational imperatives of the mine, there was a clear

strategic movement in the general direction dictated by the state.

The final area of theoretical debate concerned discussion generated within industrial relation, most notably the concept of management 'style'. It was argued that Purcell's (1987) definition of style was useful in drawing attention to a subjectivity in the choice of strategy in the management of labour but that his definition is conceptually confusing and his model over-restrictive of the diversity of management action. (see pp24-27)

In this study managerial preference was included as a 'contingency' distinct from but not independent of other contingency factors and was found to be important in explaining strategic choice. (see Chapter 10) The data clearly illustrates the existence of a stylistic preference at senior managerial level, the importance of which, along with and in relation to other contingencies, was found to be adjusted to accommodate the achievement of corporate goals.

However, the importance of managerial preference and its ability to constitute a management style was shown to be dependent on the ability of individuals within the organisation to influence the way in which employees were managed. Thus, the creation of a management style was

more to do with the values and beliefs, or the managerial ideologies (Fox, 1966 and 1974) of those in positions of power and the processes by which such preferences were integrated into organisational activity, than Purcell's (1987) definition of style as 'akin to business policy and its strategic derivatives' which tends to reify managerial preference and its influence.

Further, the study illustrates the diversity and fineness in management style which is not adequately explained on the two-dimensional model developed by Purcell (1987). In this respect the study does not support the general development of typologies of management style which are found to be too crude to represent adequately the diversity of management action in the control of labour.

The major contribution of the literature on management style is, therefore, the introduction of the notion of managerial preference in the construction of strategies of labour control. This study illustrates the impact of this factor on such strategic decision-making and suggests that it should be viewed as a specific contingency within the labour process literature.

Overall, the empirical material in this study shows the management of the labour process to be organic, constantly evolving and responding to a range of internal and

external factors which are themselves dynamic. Within this context strategic choice is made in an effort to mediate the need to control labour whilst at the same time gaining commitment and cooperation. However, success in this respect is never fully achieved and the research supports Hyman's (1987) assertion that such strategies contain inherent contradictions for which there is no one best way of management, only 'different routes to partial failure'.

This study provides an indication of the future direction for industrial relations in Namibia. Within the modern sector Rossing remains at the forefront. However, other large corporate organisations, as well as the public sector, have moved in the general direction of non-racial, meritocratic and bureaucratised employment structures. Further, multi-racial trade union activity has developed in a number of industries in the modern sector including banking and financial services, food processing, retailing, transport and construction as well as public services.

For Rossing, and companies with similar employment structures, Namibian independence is unlikely to bring with it any significant changes. Indeed, in comparison to the many, mainly smaller, more traditionally managed organisations, employment structures such as those adopted

at Rossing are likely to represent a model for an independent government which most employers could not be expected to achieve in the short-term.

In summary, this study has contributed to the debate on managerial strategies of labour control within the labour process debate and, whilst generally supporting the contemporary position of the debate, suggests some modifications, most notably that the influence of the state on managerial strategies of labour control has been under-emphasised in previous studies. Additionally, a contribution has been made to Namibian historiography generally and to Namibian corporate history more specifically.

APPENDIX 1

THE ROSSING MINE:

HISTORY, PERFORMANCE AND PROCESS.

The Rossing Mine is the world's largest uranium mine whose production makes Namibia the fifth largest producer of uranium after the USA, USSR, South Africa and Canada. It consists a vast open pit operation covering over five square kilometres and is situated in the Namib Desert some 70 kilometers northeast of Swakopmund, the main coastal town in Namibia, itself only some thirty five kilometers from the disputed Walvis Bay territory containing Namibia's only deep water port.

The Namib is a far from ideal location for a mine. The area has a desert climate being dry and at times dusty with temperatures ranging from 5 degrees centigrade to 40 degrees centigrade. In addition, although rainfall is infrequent and averages only 30mm/year, it is of high intensity and short duration causing the danger of flooding and explaining wild variations in humidity of between 5% and 80%. (Mining Magazine, 1978).

Reports of the existence of radioactive substances in the area date back to 1921 when it was recognised that uranium oxide was present in some of the geological formations. The most significant discovery, however, came in 1928 when the Louws, a husband and wife team, conducted autoradiographic tests which convinced them that a significant radioactive mineral deposit existed somewhere in the vicinity. (World Mining, 1979) The Louws set about attracting a major mining company to invest in the project but it was not until the 1960s, when RTZ was formed, that they achieved any success.

In 1962 RTZ was created by the merger of two British companies; the Rio Tinto Company and the Consolidated Zinc Corporation. Neither had shown any interest in the Rossing project prior to the merger, however, when approached in 1966 RTZ was interested. This change of heart was influenced by a number of factors. Firstly, RTZ had by this time accumulated significant experience in operating in undeveloped, remote and harsh locations, including Southern Africa, and this had increased their confidence in their ability to operate viably under such conditions.

Secondly, there had been dramatic improvements in mining techniques and technology together with the accumulation of specific expertise in uranium mining. This led to

greater confidence within the Company that the mining of a low grade uranium ore body using capital intensive, open pit techniques was viable. As World Mining reported in 1979

The RTZ group has a powerful capacity in this respect. It has demonstrated this capacity at such giant open pits as Hamersley, Bougainville, Lornex and Palabora. The group could draw on the experience acquired in these operations (and eventually many of the personnel, too) to plan and design the first uranium mine of this type. It was this proven capability which gave RTZ the confidence to proceed into the unknown with Rossing.

The third, and probably most important reason for the change of heart, was a clear view of the developing worldwide demand for uranium and increasing confidence in a recovery from the stagnation in demand that had resulted from the nuclear energy boom of the 1950s. (RUL, 1979)

Survey work began in September 1966 after the exploration manager, John Berning (later to become a Rossing Director), had negotiated an option of six years duration on behalf of Rio Tinto Management Services Pty Limited. (RTZ, 1979) Intensive surveying work took place between September 1966 and March 1973. Recovery of uranium was tested in a 100-ton-per-day pilot plant which indicated the existence of a very large, low grade deposit, amenable to mining by low-cost, open-pit methods and to the

adoption of relatively simple extractive metallurgy.
(Mining Magazine, 1978)

The predominant primary uranium mineral in the Rossing uranium deposit was found to be uranite, the bulk of the economic mineralisation of which is contained in granitic alaskite, a material which is highly abrasive and later proved a substantial problem in the design of the mining and metallurgical processes. The quality of the uranite is highly variable and although the alaskite is widely spread in the region the limits of the proposed pit operation were drawn against an assessment of the extent of the body which was sufficiently rich to support economic exploitation. (Economic Geology, 1976)

South Africa has imposed on Namibia the provisions of the 1948 South Africa Atomic Energy Act. This prohibits the disclosure of any information concerning uranium and explains the lack of data concerning Rossing's mining activity. The life expectancy of the mine is not published, however, the general opinion of managers at the mine is that production is guaranteed beyond the year 2000 although the original projections suggested reserves would last up to that date.

Such an assessment is confirmed in the submissions of expert witnesses to the United Nations Council for

Namibia, Hearings on Namibian Uranium held in July 1980. These suggested that reserves ranged from 100,000 metric tons of uranium oxide, about 25 years of production at the 1980 rate of extraction, to 180,000 metric tons, enough for about 40 years of mining life. In retrospect the latter figure would seem to be the more accurate assessment. Indeed, one manager reported in 1985 that a mining plan existed to the year 2012.

In 1970 Rossing Uranium Limited was formed although a comprehensive feasibility study was not completed until May 1973. (RUL, 1979) The decision to go ahead was made in August 1973 with mine preparation and plant construction planned to commence in October 1974. Commissioning of the plant and initial production of uranium was scheduled for July 1976 at a development cost of R300 million. The objective was to reach full design capacity of 5,000 tonnes/year of uranium oxide by 1977. As World Mining reported in January 1979

The decision to develop, Rossing was not just a gamble that has paid off. When an investment of several hundred million dollars is involved there is no gambling. The decision was the result of carefully calculated engineering and financial analysis. Because no one had ever mined a uranium deposit of Rossing's type and size, because no one had ever attempted to process such a low grade, primary uranium ore at the enormous throughput rate planned, there were certainly obscure areas in the engineering projections. With no models for comparison the only way to prove that Rossing was feasible was to go ahead and make it work. In other words the incomplete numerical calculations that said the project appeared to be possible were underpinned by an unshakeable confidence and vision that said it would work, come what may.

Undoubtedly this 'unshakeable confidence', at least as far as RTZ were concerned, was as much to do with the bouyancy of the international demand for uranium as it was to do with engineering ability. As Rossing Uranium Limited reported in 1979

In the wake of the international oil crisis, an energy-hungry world developed a growing appetite for uranium, imposing fresh demands on existing and evolving mines. During the design phase at Rossing, a decision was taken to step up capacity from 2,500 tonnes/year to 5,000 tonnes/ year of uranium oxide. This decision was prompted by the conclusion of further contracts many of them with new customers.

The nature of the demand for uranium at that time was such that contracts for the supply of the material were, and still are, signed well in advance of their supply. Such contracts were being sought well in advance of the decision to go ahead with the mine development and as part

of the feasibility study, as Rossing explain in the same article

Meanwhile, moves were afoot to secure contracts and capital finance for the establishment of a mine, which it was realised would be a giant undertaking even by the standards of the 1970s..... The United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority became the first customer of Rossing by signing a 'contingent' contract which contained an option to supply uranium from another source if it (RTZ) subsequently decided not to go ahead with the mine. Later, contracts with other industrial countries were entered into, on the basis of a negotiated world market price - the first time this concept had been used to fix prices for uranium.'

It would seem in fact that there were two contracts concluded with the British Government through the United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority and its purchasing agency British Nuclear Fuels. The first contract, signed in March 1968, was for the supply of 6,000 tonnes of uranium oxide. Details of the second contract are less clear due to the controversy surrounding the subject that developed around that time (see Roberts, 1980 for a full discussion), however, it would seem that the contract for the supply of a further 1,500 tonnes of uranium oxide was concluded sometime in 1970. Roberts (1980) claims that it was the second contract with the British Government which was the turning point in the viability of the Rossing mine. As he explains

In order to secure the huge sums needed to finance the specialised technology, RTZ therefore had to convince potential investors of the future demand for Rossing uranium - and this meant a substantial long-term contract..... It was this second advance contract that secured the necessary loan finance required, and signalled the go-ahead for Rossing's operations to begin.

It seems the terms of the supply of uranium to the British Government were extremely favourable. The original price was \$9.50 a pound which, although renegotiated to \$13 in September 1976, was still very attractive compared to the contemporary world price of some \$40 a pound. Nevertheless, Roberts (1980) calculates that at the revised price the British purchase of its contracted 7,500 tonnes brought a return to RTZ of approximately \$224 million (£150 million).

The controversy surrounding the Rossing mine and its contracts is linked to the international status of Namibia. In 1966, the very year RTZ began its explorations in Namibia, the United Nations General Assembly terminated the League of Nations Mandate. Further steps had been taken to revoke South Africa's involvement in Namibia before the decision was taken to develop the mine and before the contracts were signed with the British Government. (see Chapter 3)

In addition, on 13th December 1974 the United Nations Decree No 1 for the Protection of the Natural Resources in Namibia was established making it illegal for natural resources to be mined, processed or exported without the permission of the UN Council for Namibia. Thus, the operation of the Rossing mine, from the time it was set up, and the British Government's purchase of Namibian uranium were illegal under international law.

Whilst the British contracts may have been formative in the decision to go ahead with the development of the mine and were the earliest of the long-term contracts to be signed for the supply of uranium, they are by no means the only contracts to have been concluded. Other countries known to have entered into similar contracts are Japan, the Federal Republic of Germany and France (UNIN, 1986) and the Catholic Institute for International Relations include Taiwan as a probable customer. (CIIR, 1983)

As a result of UN Decree No 1, four American oil companies abandoned their exploration leases and American Metal Climax, which owned 29.6% of the Tsumeb Corporation began to take steps towards disinvesting in Namibia. The American and West German Governments attempted to persuade their companies to have no further dealings with the illegal South African administration in Namibia.

However, the British position was, and has remained very different. Under both Labour and Conservative governments little effort has been made to encourage British companies to divest their interests in Namibia and successive governments have failed to make any effort to terminate the uranium contracts. Indeed, the British contracts were rescheduled when RUL encountered problems in achieving their anticipated production targets between 1976 and 1979 and the contract has since been renewed for a further undisclosed period. (UNIN, 1986) As Rossing itself explains

During 1977 and 1978, some rescheduling of product deliveries was necessary. This was achieved with the cooperation and understanding of the company's customers. (Rossing, 1979)

Rio Tinto Zinc has a poor international reputation on human rights to which the issues associated with the development of the Rossing mine have contributed significantly. One organisation which has made RTZ a focus of a continuing campaign against the excesses of British multinational corporations describes RTZ as having

....earned itself an unenviable reputation throughout the world for its violations of indigenous land, manipulation of governments, disavowal of international law, implicit support for repugnant regimes, and general contempt for its critics. (Partizans, 1985)

Such criticisms of RTZ and its subsidiaries have made the organisation extremely sensitive to its international reputation. RTZ has responded by countering such criticisms through the development of sophisticated public relations as well as with efforts at the operations level to project the image of a good and caring employer.

This has been visible not least at the Rossing mine where the effects of enlightened self-interest have been particularly noticable since the late 1970s. The Rossing mine is a particularly sensitive issue; firstly, because of the controversy surrounding the nuclear industry and secondly, because of its location in a country occupied illegally by South Africa. As World Mining put it in January 1979, 'Uranium is a sensitive subject. Uranium and South Africa together are explosive'.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the managerial policies and practices at the mine were ever cognisant of, and sensitive to, the international controversy surrounding the existence of the mine, as is illustrated in Chapter 7.

When in 1970 Rossing Uranium Limited was established the circumstances surrounding its operations were already a controversial issue. Rossing is financed by a 2:1 loan to equity ratio. The two major equity holders are Rio Tinto

Zinc, with 46.5 per cent, and South Africa's Industrial Development Corporation (IDC), with 13.2 per cent. The West German Urangesellschaft group was initially associated with the development, but withdrew in 1972 following the International Court of Justice ruling. (see Chapter 3)

It seems that RTZ allocated equity interests to the Industrial Development Corporation of South Africa, General Mining and Finance and its own subsidiary, Rio Algom in return for loans. Total and General Mining and Finance reveal loan facilities to Rossing in their annual accounts, however, it is not possible to be definitive concerning the sources of loan finance since this is unpublished information proscribed under the South Africa Atomic Energy Act.

The complete list of equity holders is as follows:

Rio Tinto Zinc Corporation (UK)	46.5%
Industrial Development Corporation (SA)	13.2%
(100% owned by the South African Govt)	
Rio Algom Mines Ltd (Canada)	10.0%
(51.3% owned by RTZ)	

Total (France)	10.0%
(100% owned by Compagnie Francaise des Petroles)	
General Mining and Finance Corporation (SA)	6.8%
(62.5% owned by Federale Mynbou)	
Others	13.5%

Despite the complex company structure, Rossing is an RTZ operation in terms of management which is exercised through Rio Tinto South Africa Pty Ltd. However, this ownership conceals the fact that the Industrial Development Corporation, owned entirely by the South African Government, has legal control over Rossing Uranium Ltd. The RTZ annual report and accounts for 1980 reveal that the group's holding of shares in Rossing carry only 26.5 per cent of the voting rights, having reduced to this figure from 1972 when RTZ held 36.8 per cent.

The discrepancy between equity shareholdings and voting rights arises because there are three categories of shares; A, B and C. RTZ's disclosed holdings are in two of these categories only, namely B and C, and it must be assumed, therefore, that a majority of the total voting rights are exercised by the IDC alone or by the IDC and General Mining and Finance. Pressed on this point the Chairman of RTZ stated at the 1977 annual general meeting of the company that RTZ had an effective veto right on

decisions by the 'A' shareholders, but claimed that this had never been exercised.

In 1985 South Africa's Administrator-General in Namibia announced that the controlling 'A' shares in Rossing had been transferred to SWA/Namibia and payment for them was being negotiated. He implied that the 'A' shares were negligible in number and said that SWA/Namibia would negotiate to take over the rest of the IDC shares as well. However, so long as South Africa occupies Namibia, the Administrator General's assertions are meaningless since the IDC shares could not devolve upon a non-existent sovereign state. (UNIN, 1986)

Thus, with adequate financial backing and guaranteed long-term contracts, and in spite of the controversy surrounding its existence, Rossing embarked on the first stages of the development of the vast mining complex.

Development and Performance of the Mine

Following the decision to go ahead with the development of the mine in August 1973, progress was rapid. Detailed engineering of the plant was undertaken by a partnership of a US company, Western Knapp, and a UK company, Davey Power Gas, who had been jointly appointed as principal design and construction managers in 1971. The partnership was also to supervise construction and coordinate the work of the various contractors and sub-contractors.

Rio Tinto Management Services South Africa Pty Ltd, who had prepared the mine plans in their Johannesburg offices, were also involved in the construction of Rossing, managing a number of contracts outside the scope of Western Knapp/Davy Power Gas. These included mine service facilities, initial site preparation, the building of the accommodation and other facilities for workers, road and rail links and power supply.

In July 1974, construction started with the pouring of concrete for the vast mine workshops and in March 1976 the mine began operation, producing its first ammonium diurate (yellow cake) in June of that year. (Rossing, 1979)

However, production was by no means trouble-free. The core of the problem was the high abrasivity of the granitic alaskite ore. Whilst this had been recognised in the pilot plant, the provisions made to cope with it in the design of the full scale plant were inadequate. The ore and waste rock ground away metal and moving parts on engineering equipment causing excessive maintenance and breakdown preventing steady production from being achieved. In general the wear rate due to abrasivity was two to three times higher than at other big, open pit mines operating in hard ore conditions. (World Mining, 1979)

In the processing plant this was particularly troublesome leading to quite unacceptable uranium recovery rates for the Company. Indeed, in the early stages of operation so much uranium ended up in the waste solutions dumped in the tailings pond, that the pond represented a sizeable uranium ore body which was later subjected to completely separate recovery processing.

A further, but less serious, setback was the need to abandon plans to selectively develop underground mining of pockets of relatively high grade ore, as a result of geological conditions which made the structure and safety of the shaft unreliable. The objective was to achieve a greater throughput in the early stages by compensating for

large quantities of below average grade ore, which needed to be stripped from the surface. However, a more selective approach to mining in the open pit was adopted as a means of assuring reduced grade fluctuations in the ore delivered to the processing plant. (World Mining, 1979)

As a result of these problems Rossing was forced to replan the plant and renegotiate their supply contracts. (Roberts, 1980) By mid 1976 Rossing had completed detailed designs for a series of major alterations and additions to the plant, costing \$100 million which were put in hand immediately. (Rossing, 1979)

The technical problems proved to be so great that at the same time as announcing the alterations the company announced that full production of 5,000 tonnes, scheduled for 1977, would now be delayed for some 18 months. (World Mining, 1979)

The problems were far greater than RTZ was prepared to openly admit. This was evidenced by some significant changes of senior personnel. In 1976 John Berning, who had been associated with Rossing since the prospecting years and was appointed its first general manager in 1970, left the organisation to be succeeded by Rich Hughs.

Little more than a year later, in August 1977 Hughs was to leave Rossing to be replaced by Gordon Freeman.

During the same period changes were also taking place at managing director and chairman levels. Ed Hunt, who was appointed managing director of RUL in April 1970, was replaced by Al Leroy in June 1976. Leroy stayed at Rossing for under two years before being replaced by Craig Gibson. Dr P Rousseau, appointed as chairman of RUL in 1972 was succeeded by Ronnie Walker in April 1977. Both Ronnie Walker and Gordon Freeman subsequently held their positions for 8 years whilst Craig Gibson was promoted after over four years service. These three major appointments at Rossing were made within a year of each other.

This period as one of crisis for RUL is confirmed by the commissioning in 1977 of a wide-ranging analysis of Rossing's performance and activities. Reported in March 1978, the brief for the study was 'to recommend drastic reductions in operating costs'. (see Chapter 7)

The problems at Rossing were serious. However, despite the management concerns and the fact that capital costs had risen dramatically to over £165 million, the RUL chairman, Ronnie Walker, was publicly projecting a brave face insisting that 'it was still a viable entity' and that the

mine would be earning its living 'in a meaningful way by 1980'. (Roberts, 1980)

Despite this overt optimism the general manager reported that there were significant reservations concerning the viability of the mine amongst senior management at the time of the 1976 modifications. Indeed, not only were there the direct financial costs of this programme but also the political implications of going ahead following the rulings within the United Nations and the International Court of Justice.

However, in 1975, under questioning at the Rio Tinto Zinc annual general meeting, Sir Val Duncan, RTZ chairman, had rejected the authority of the United Nations to administer Namibia and on the question of UN Decree No 1 stated

I am not prepared to fail to deliver to the United Kingdom and others under a contract solemnly entered into for the provision of uranium from South West Africa. I am therefore not prepared to take any notice of what the United Nations say about that If that involves disagreement with some of the resolutions in the United Nations, I regret that, but that is their problem, and I say that to you quite clearly. (Roberts, 1980)

The high-handedness expressed here masked the concerns of the company and the considerable potential financial gains which underpinned the increased financial investment and controversial political position - projected profits

were high and sufficiently high in the short-term to justify the risk.

Amidst the confidence displayed in the decision to proceed with the construction and modification programme, and just four days after the optimistic announcement made by Ronnie Walker, the mine was thrown back into disarray. At midnight on 24th May 1978 one of the two sections of the solvent extraction plant was destroyed by fire. (World Mining, 1979)

The resulting damage caused production planned for 1978 to be reduced by as much as 20% and ended all hope of reaching the output target of 4,000 tonnes of uranium oxide for that year. Whilst the fire was not sufficiently disastrous to warrant a serious reappraisal of mine viability, it was nevertheless a significant setback which once again forced the renegotiation of the uranium contract with British Nuclear Fuels. (Roberts, 1980)

By the end of 1976, the year in which Rossing was planned to meet full production of 5,000 tonnes, the amount of uranium oxide actually produced was a mere 771 tonnes. (see Table A1.1)

However, production was significantly increased the following year and by mid 1978 Rossing was able to confidently predict that the company would achieve a positive cash flow the following year. (SA Mining & Engineering Journal, 1978) The 1978 RTZ annual report commented that the plant modification programme had been virtually completed as had repairs to the solvent extraction lines.

The capital replacement cost and revenue loss resulting from the fire were covered by insurance and although production in 1978 was only slightly up on the 1977 figure, Rossing made a profit for the year. Indeed, Rossing sales accounted for about half of the increase in RTZ group sales for the year.

Rossing's full annual planned production level of 5,000 tonnes was achieved in May 1979. By 1980 the RTZ annual report was able to comment that none of the technical problems of previous years had occurred. Indeed 1980 and 1981 saw production above the rated output level, however, these were followed by a slow decline in production to 85% capacity in 1985 resulting from a fall in demand for uranium and an oversupply in the world market.

TABLE A1.1

ROSSING URANIUM LIMITED

URANIUM PRODUCTION, 1976-1985

Year	Uranium Oxide (tonnes)
-----	-----
1976	771
1977	3042
1978	3500
1979	4980
1980	5250
1981	5160
1982	4910
1983	4800
1984	4750
1985	4250

SOURCES: 1976 - RUL, 1979.
1977 1977 - 1982, MURRAY, 1983
1983 1983 - 1985 RUL 1989.

Rossing has shown a significant growth pattern both in relation to profitability and contributions made to RTZ.

In 1982 Rossing made a record profit of £91 million, a 45% increase over 1981 and the third successive year in which there was a significant increase in profitability. (see Table A1.2) However, profits were boosted by the decline in the value of the Rand by an overall 9% against the dollar in which Rossing's sales are denoted. This resulted in higher local earnings than the previous year despite lower production and higher costs.

Thereafter profitability fell although the accounts for 1985, despite providing less information, suggest something of a recovery in terms of profit attributable to RTZ. By 1985 Rossing had contributed some £134.5 million to RTZ profits since 1978.

Increasing profitability also reflects the higher sales value of the uranium oxide produced due to contractual price escalation clauses. In 1982 the value of Rossing's sales was £218 million, a 30% increase over 1981 despite the lower volume of output. Rossing's sales are all made under long-term contracts of between 10 and 20 years duration which have enabled it to secure prices well above those prevailing on the spot market for uranium.

TABLE A1.2

ROSSING URANIUM LIMITED

FINANCIAL DATA, FOR YEAR END 31ST DECEMBER, 1978-1985

Date	Turnover	Pre-tax Profit	Net Attributable Profit to RTZ			
	£	Rand	£	%	£	%
1978	-	7m	4m	-	2m	-
1979	-	64m	37m	-	10m	-
1980	161m	98m	54m	10.7	21m	13.6
1981	158m	109m	63m	18.1	21m	17.0
1982	218m	158m	91m	26.8	32m	25.8
1983	170m	112m	63m	10.9	15m	7.4
1984	-	-	-	-	7m	3.0
1985	-	-	-	-	26.5m	10.0

SOURCES: 1978-1982 MURRAY, 1983
1983-1985, RTZ ANNUAL REPORTS

In addition the CIIR (1983) suggests that Rossing is able to charge a premium of some \$5 to \$7 a pound for its uranium as a result of the absence of any clauses contained in its sales contracts which limit the use of the uranium to non-military purposes. Such conditions are imposed by many of the alternative large suppliers.

An indication of prices paid is provided by Murray in a discussion in 1983 of the new RTZ contract for the supply of what is likely to be Namibian uranium to Taiwan up to the year 2005. He calculates that the uranium contract value worked out at \$37 per pound. This was a significantly higher rate than the spot market price at the time of under \$20 per pound. (Murray, 1983)

Although RTZ records earnings by Rossing as pre-tax profits, until the 1983/4 tax year the mine was not liable to company tax in Namibia. This resulted from the write-off provision which enables capital expenditure incurred in development to be set against the tax liability. Murray (1983) suggests that most of the loans made to Rossing were repaid out of operating profits by 1982. However, UNIN (1986) defines the situation more boldly suggesting that 'By 1983 the company had recovered its cost totalling \$380 million'.

Precise information concerning the destination of purchases of uranium from the Rossing mine is proscribed under the South African legislation. However, the CIIR (1983) pieced together details of what is known of existing and future contracts. This illustrates the longterm nature of the contracts and the consequent stability established for the mine. (see Table A1.3)

The Production Process

Most of the RTZ Group companies mining operations are large-scale, capital intensive projects using open-cut mining methods. Extracted by shovels whose buckets could easily swallow a car, and hauled by dump trucks which dwarf their drivers, ore is crushed and converted into concentrates at the mine site before being shipped to customer's smelters around the world. (RTZ, 1981)

The mining and metallurgical operations at the Rossing Mine are no exception to the general characteristics described above. The open pit at Rossing is a vast hole in the ground which in 1985 was being mined at bench level 14, a depth of around 200 metres.

TABLE A1.3

ROSSING URANIUM LIMITED

KNOWN AND POSSIBLE URANIUM CONTRACTS

Customer	Country	Country Processing	Amount (tons)	When the contract expires
British Nuclear Fuels Ltd (CEBG)	UK	UK	7500 ¹	1984
Comurhex	France	France	11000	Not to be renewed late 1980s
Veba	West Germany	Netherlands		?
Urangesellschaft	West Germany	Netherlands	6140	?
Kansai Electric Power Corporation	Japan	?USA, Canada	8200	1986
Other Japanese ²	Japan	?USA, Canada	23000	?
Taiwan Power Corporation ³	Taiwan	Netherlands	4000	?2005

Notes

1. RTZ in 1981 stated that additional amounts would be supplied.
2. Kansai and two other Japanese firms have contracts for around 23000 tons of uranium from South Africa, including from Rio Tinto South Africa. It is assumed by Massachusetts Institute of Technology (1983) that these are in fact from Rossing.
3. Ruurd Huisman and David de Beer (1983) reported this contract with RTZ starting in 1990. They argue that Rossing must be the prospective source, although the RTZ group does also have uranium in the USA.

SOURCE: CATHOLIC INSTITUTE FOR INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, 1983.

It is anticipated that the pit will reach bench level 35 at a depth of some 435 metres when it will measure some three kilometers in length and over one kilometer across.

The scale of the mining operation is illustrated by the fact that the equivalent of a 100-truck goods train loaded with rock leaves the open pit every 20 minutes, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. (RUL, 1985) This represents around 5.5 million tonnes of material per month, only some 25% of which is delivered into the primary crushers, the beginning of the metallurgical process. (World Mining, 1979)

The Rossing mining process is a highly sophisticated operation and advanced mine planning and grade control procedures which use computer graphics to optimise operation have been developed. Long and short-term plans are designed and progress relative to the plans is closely monitored. In addition the influence of operational and financial factors such as new technology and changes in the exchange rate or input costs are closely monitored to predict their influence and plan any necessary action.

A number of mining plans of differing detail are prepared. A five year plan, updated in the middle of each year, is approved annually by the board of directors for the period from the following December. On the basis of this a one

year 'operating plan' is developed in which targets and responsibilities are allocated over a rolling three month period. This is further detailed to a one month and then a highly detailed day-by-day plan.

Studies are constantly being carried out to obtain operational improvements. For example, in 1985 some R3 million was spent on testing blasting techniques. A major motivation for this expenditure, in addition to reducing the costs of production, is to find ways of lengthening the life of the mine. (World Mining, 1979)

On the basis of the mine plan holes are drilled in preparation for blasting the rock prior to its removal. Because of the erratic distribution of uranium bearing ore in the pit blasting practice is designed to minimise the movement of the rock. After an area has been blasted different ore grades are marked out using colour coded tape. Ore is loaded by electrically driven loaders with 15 cubic yard shovel heads into 150 tonne haul trucks and each truckload is radiometrically scanned to establish ore grade.

On the basis of ore grade the haul truck is sent to the primary crushers, a stock pile or the waste dump. The aggregate grade of the ore delivered to the primary crushers must be constant otherwise metallurgical

processing cannot be optimised. Thus, haul truck loads must be mixed to achieve this.

Rossing engineers are not allowed to discuss the ore grades, however, World Mining in 1979 ventured to make some estimates in this respect

if we assume that what is called medium grade ore is approximately the mine average grade (estimated above at 0.8 pound or 0.36 kilogramme per ton) then a guess would put this ore type as anything between 0.3 and 0.4 kilogramme, or say about 0.7 to 0.9 pound per ton. This would define high grade ore as anything above 0.4 kilogramme or 0.9 pound per ton..... Going down the scale, low grade ore would be below 0.3 kilogramme or 0.7 pound per ton but above some lower cutoff figure which defines stockpile.

These estimates are confirmed by figures extracted from the Rossing year end Mining Division Reports which show mean annual radiometric scan readings of between 0.336 and 0.359 kilogrammes per ton for the period 1979 to 1984.

Ore of economic grade passes through a sophisticated and complex metallurgical process which begins with two stages of crushing and a milling process to reduce the ore to a size small enough for the uranium to be exposed to processing.

Uranium is removed from the resulting slurry through leaching in sulphuric acid, ferric sulphate and manganese

dioxide. This 'pregnant' solution is then passed through a complex ion exchange process following which ammonia is added to precipitate ammonium diurate. The solution is thickened and recovered on heated rotating drum filters as a yellow paste - yellow cake. The yellow cake is dried and calcined in furnaces leaving uranium oxide of a very pure, high grade.

The control of the production process is fundamental to the success of the mine. The latest equipment is used to plan, monitor and record the process throughout its operation. One indication of this was the installation in 1984 of a R2 million centralised computer control system which facilitates the control of the entire metallurgical operations from one location.

The isolated location of the mine has lead to a management policy of near self-sufficiency in virtually every respect. This includes on-site analytical laboratories which handle over 25,000 samples a month and use a wide range of sophisticated analytical techniques. The Rossing workshops are capable of carrying out practically all mechanical and electrical repairs. Rossing also makes its own sulphuric acid for leaching and processing. Although the mine draws power from the state electricity standby power is available via four 1.7 megawatt diesel generators. Water is also taken from the national supply,

however, as has already been mentioned, Rossing has reduced its fresh water consumption by almost 50% since 1979.

Despite the political controversy and financial uncertainty, in the space of only four years from the start of construction Rossing had begun to return a meaningful profit to its parent organisations. Within a further two years it had become one of the most sophisticated and profitable mines in Southern Africa making substantial returns to its owners and an important contribution to the Namibian economy. The particular context and history of the mine's development, as well as its importance in the economy, make the study of the social relations of production throughout this period an interesting and important task.

APPENDIX 2

RÖSSING: SOCIAL POLICY

There has been a lot of discussion around Rössing recently about the Company's social policy. The time has now come to explain in some detail what that social policy is, and what the programme is for its implementation. It will not be possible to go into great detail in these pages, but a sufficiently detailed outline can be given so that everyone is aware of what is happening.

Rössing's social policy can be summed up in the following aims for a new society:

1. The complete abandonment of racial discrimination as far as work, remuneration and conditions of service are concerned. These will be established on merit only. We will refer to our employees as staff or hourly paid, men and women: not as Damara, English, Ovambo, Afrikaans, Herero, etc.
2. The recognition of differences of ethnic and cultural requirements where appropriate, in so far as living and social conditions are concerned.
3. The provision of married accommodation for all who wish it, and a preference for employing people who are accompanied by their families.
4. The evaluation of our employees potential and the development of that potential by rapid and concentrated training.

These four basic requirements cover the whole operation of Rössing uranium as far as we as employees are concerned, and contain within them, a wealth of change, re-organisation and acceptance of new ideas.

Obviously, it is impossible to explain in a few words, everything these statements mean. In the next few editions of Rössing News I will attempt to outline where we go from here.

Take the first statement. Traditionally, in this part of the world, conditions of service, remuneration, and what work can be done, have been established on the basis of colour and race, and not on merit. In Rössing, the elimination of this situation will mean a

change for all our employees, and we intend to come to a new agreement on the provision of housing, provision of transport, and other facilities. This is a change in the way we do things.

cont. next column

Rates and Method of Payment

At the moment, we have two groups of employees, Day Rate and Staff employees.

Within these, separate payment scales were determined by a system known as job evaluation, and a different job evaluation system was used for Day Rate, to that used for Staff. To meet Rössing's social policy, we must establish a common assessment of the worth of every job to the Company, and then determine how this work value is going to be paid. The most obvious solution is to agree on a common job evaluation system for all jobs within the Company. Not an easy step. Originally, two job evaluation systems were used because the nature of the jobs at the top of the Company are very much different to the nature of the jobs at the bottom. Now Rössing is investigating the possibility of using the 'Patterson Plan' to evaluate all jobs by one system.

If the Patterson (or some other) system is adopted, we will still be faced with the problems of equating worth and pay in some areas, and when we amalgamate the two pay scales, there are likely to be some changes. Some employees will gain, and theoretically, other employees should lose. It is not the Company's intention, however, that any employees presently employed should lose. Any changes which mean a re-evaluation of a job downwards, will only be applied to future employees, and not present employees.

It is hoped that within the next couple of months, we can decide on a job evaluation system, whether it be the Patterson Plan, or any other, and to apply this system to all jobs throughout the Company. This will create a single wage/salary structure within which some jobs will be called Hourly Paid, and some jobs Staff.

This cannot be hurried, as the effects upon both the Company and individuals will be profound. No changes will be proposed or made until the effects on everybody have been considered.

As you can see, the problems facing Rössing are many. We can best solve them if we work together and we can only work together by communicating with each other. I would therefore ask you to make full use of the existing communication methods to put forward your views and your fears, so that the Company is at all times aware of the problems and feelings of everybody.

TO BE CONTINUED NEXT WEEK...

HOUSING POLICY

STAFF PERSONNEL OFFICE-NEW LOCATION

Please note that Staff Personnel will be moving out to the mine on Friday 10th March. The new Personnel office will be situated behind the Admin Block. A further notification with regard to telephone numbers will be issued in due course.

NUWE PERSONEELKANTOOR

Neem asseblief kennis dat die Personeelkantoor Vrydag 10 Maart myn toe skuif. Die nuwe personeelkantoor sal agter die Administrasie Blok wees en 'n verdere kennisgewing met betrekking tot telefoonnummers sal mettertyd uitgereik word.

VACANCY FOR CONFIDENTIAL SECRETARY

This is a senior secretarial position which requires poise, intelligence, capable of working without constant supervision fully bilingual, and at least five years experience as a senior secretary. A knowledge of German will be an advantage.

The successful applicant will have a thorough command of shorthand. She will be responsible to the Administration Manager and will be involved in a broad spectrum of top level secretarial work.

Applicants should reply to Andre Matore or Pat Keaton.

WELCOME TO RÖSSING

S. Dettle

Asst. Foreman Boilermaker
Hobbies: Photography

P. Wollner

Motor mechanic
Hobbies: Camping, scuba diving

Miss M. Grell

Asst. Caterer

H. de Haas

Asst. Foreman Electrical

Mrs M.A. Houghrey

Senior Accounts Clerk
Hobbies: Reading, squash and gym

Mrs N.M. Quan

Senior Creditors Clerk

G.H. Bignell

Asst. Foreman Fitter and Turner
Hobbies: Mechanics

W.C.D. Smith

Asst. Foreman Fitter
Hobbies: Squash, fishing and scuba diving.

RÖSSING: SOCIAL POLICY N°2 HOUSING

1. We will provide accommodation to all our employees who so require it as soon as possible.

2. Housing will be provided on the basis of merit.

Last week, we looked at a common pay scale for all Rössing employees; each man being rewarded according to his worth to the Company, and not according to any other measure. Provision of housing will be on the same basis.

At the moment, the Company provides accommodation in a number of areas: the Rössing townships, Arandis, Tamariskia, Swakopmund, and Swakopmund Location. Previously, housing was provided on the basis of racial group and colour, and not on merit. Rössing Uranium will now provide housing solely on merit. Unskilled employees will be accommodated in Arandis. Semi-skilled employees will be accommodated in Tamariskia, and skilled supervisory and management employees will be accommodated in Swakopmund.

This presents some immediate practical problems. We do not have enough suitable accommodation to allow all married employees who wish to live in married accommodation. The provision of services in Arandis, Tamariskia and Swakopmund is not equal. We have some employees who, by virtue of their skills, would be entitled to live in Swakopmund, who are presently living in Arandis.

There is no easy and immediate solution to the problems, which are governed by a number of factors. No present employee will be asked to leave his present accommodation as a result of any regrading which may occur during the establishment of the common wage/salary scale. At the same time, people are forced to live in accommodation to which they are not entitled, but in which they do not choose to live.

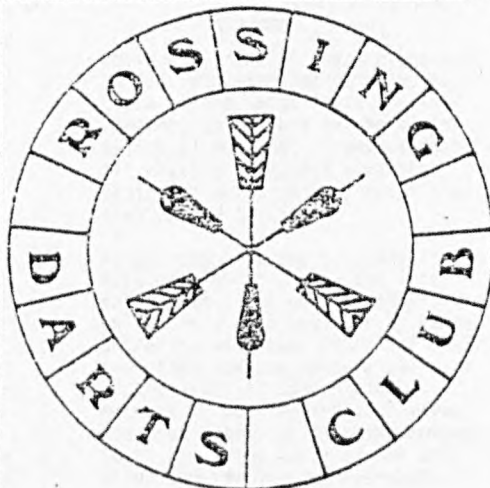
Whilst working towards the goal of the social policy, we must accept that this will take considerable

time and will only be done at a pace which is seen to be within the capabilities of the Company, and within the best interests of the majority of its employees.

By the 1st September 1978, it is hoped to determine which job grades will be entitled to accommodation in each area. Within the next three years, it is intended to eliminate altogether the accommodation of single employees in the Rössing camps. Within the next three years, it is hoped that accommodation will be available on the basis of merit to all Rössing employees within the area to which they are entitled.

Please remember that all these problems face all of us, and we can only solve them by working and communicating together. Please use all existing communication channels to make your views and fears known.

Stem Afrikaanse weergawe van Sosiale Beleid op Bladsy 6



RÖSSING DARTS NEWS

LAST WEDNESDAY EVENING RÖSSING "B" LOST TO GOLF BY 3 POINTS TO 3.
NEXT WEDNESDAY RÖSSING "A" PLAY MERMAID "B" AND RÖSSING "B" PLAY S.A.P. "A", BOTH GAMES BEING PLAYED AT RÖSSING COUNTRY CLUB.
LEAGUE PRACTICE AS USUAL EVERY TUESDAY NIGHT.

—o—o—



SAFETY SPOT

The pleasures you hope to enjoy tomorrow are completely dependant on the safety measures you employ today.

RÖSSING COUNTRY CLUB

BOWLING CLUB

As can be seen by our heading we are proud to announce our acceptance as a subsidiary of the Rössing Country Club. The green has been laid out & is now awaiting the planting of grass.

The Walvis Bay Namib Park Bowling Club has extended an open invitation to all Bowlers & beginners to make use of their green on Saturday afternoons at 2.15 pm and Sunday Mornings at 9.15 am.

The beauty of Bowls for beginners is that they are accepted into playing teams from the word go and in this manner learn the game firsthand besides having an enjoyable morning or afternoon.

Those desirous of going to Walvis and not knowing the location of the green please contact New Mansfield, Bill Vickers or Alf Butcher.

The Bowling world is a friendly one and our first invitation has come from the Trueman Club to visit them over a weekend sometime towards the end of April, more of this in our next news.

TENNIS

The Mexican Hat Tournament played last Saturday was enjoyed by all present. Winners were:

Ladies : Mrs Yvonne Steyn
Men : Mr Bruce Outrayne

Social Tennis as usual on Saturdays

18th March : Duty Member: L. Irwin
Tea Duty: L. Irwin

25th March : Duty Member: G. Freeman
Tea Duty: L. Freeman

On Sunday, 19th, the Uis Mine Club will be with us to play a 'friendly'.

Squash meeting

There will be a meeting to elect a committee for the Squash Club Section of the Rössing Country Club. The meeting will be held in the lounge of the Country Club on Thursday 30 March, 1978.

Time: 19h30

RÖSSING: SOCIAL POLICY Nº 3

Social Facilities

Clubs

We, as a company, accept that employees will be housed according to grade in two general areas, i.e. Swakopmund, (Viretta, Tamariskia), and Arandis (Rössing). Because of the geographic separation of these two areas, it is not possible to provide common social facilities for all employees. Instead, we develop two separate recreational areas, and in this instance, the company's plans are as follows:

The Rössing Country Club together with the present facilities which exist in Swakopmund, will be developed to meet the needs of the residents of Swakopmund, Viretta and Tamariskia. It will be open to all employee residents of Swakopmund and all Rössing staff employees. All sporting facilities, as they develop, will remain part of the main club, but the various sporting and other sections will be encouraged to aid in the development of their own facilities and events.

At the moment, the squash court is almost completed. A bowling green is planned, tennis courts exist, a rugby field and soccer field are being constructed, and a number of other developments are on the books.

During 1978, construction will begin on an Arandis Club complex, with a beerhall, communal club, and a sporting and social club, both being developed. The beerhall will be in the nature of a free facility to everyone, and the social and sporting club will be developed along the same lines as the Rössing Country Club, i.e. membership fees being charged. The club will be open to all Arandis residents and Rössing Hourly Paid employees.

Eventually, it is the intention that these two clubs should have reciprocal membership, with all employees of Rössing being free to use each club. However, this must wait until facilities at Arandis have been developed to a sufficient level.

Medical Facilities

At present, medical facilities for Rössing employees are provided by a number of different sources in three different areas.

Within the mine itself, the facilities are provided by and run by the company, with a well equipped first aid station, fully trained staff, etc. In Arandis, there is a Government clinic meeting the needs of Arandis and Rössing residents. In Swakopmund, there is the Antonius Hospital, Nursing Home and the Bismarck Centre.

It is the company's intention to provide adequate medical facilities for all its employees, but obviously the provision of such facilities is very expensive, and as far as possible, Government assistance is being used.

Membership of the Northern Medical Aid Society is open to all Rössing employees, but generally, only staff employees belong to it. Free medical attention is provided for Hourly Paid employees, but not their dependents. It is the intention, in the long term, to provide equal medical facilities and services for all Rössing employees, and by the end of 1978, consideration will have been given to:

- (a) Forming the company's own medical aid society.
- (b) Provision of medical facilities to two standards -
 - (i) Medical facilities free for the use of all Rössing employees.
 - (ii) Medical facilities to a higher standard, which may be used by Rössing employees who are prepared to contribute to a medical aid scheme run by the company.

Obviously, none of these plans can be put into practice quickly, because of the large costs involved. However, it is part of the social policy of Rössing, to ensure that all Rössing employees have the choice of which medical facilities they choose to use.

As you can see, the problems facing Rössing are many. We can best solve them if we work together, and we can only work together by communicating with each other. I would therefore ask you to make full use of the existing communication methods to put forward your views and your fears, so that the company is at all times aware of the problems and feelings of everybody.



SAFETY SPOT

A safe worker is a good worker, and a good worker is an asset to the Mining Industry.



ERONGO BUTCHERY	SPECIALS
FILLET	R2.75
ROLLED BEEF	R1.90
SILVERSIDE	R1.70
OXTAIL	R .85
TENDERISED STEAK	R1.70
RUMP STEAK	R1.70

TENNIS

On Saturday our tennis club entertained the U16 Mine tennis club in a friendly match. Our team was as follows:

- Graham Louw and Lynn Freeman.
- Gordon Freeman and Yvonne Lou.
- Norman Trethoway and Yvonne Steyn.
- Bruce Durrayne and Leslie G. Lile.
- Bill Vos and Gordon Freeman.
- Betty Steyn and Yvonne Lou.

Unfortunately Gordon Louw had to retire after one match, with a bad cold. The match was a very close affair, and played really well. The pressure was on the Rössing team, and the Rössing team scored their last victory, winning the match by 111 games to 100. The match was a very close one, and the Rössing team had to play a very close game. The match was a very close one, and the Rössing team had to play a very close game. The match was a very close one, and the Rössing team had to play a very close game.

1st - G. Louw
2nd - G. Freeman
3rd - G. Freeman
4th - G. Freeman
5th - G. Freeman
6th - G. Freeman
7th - G. Freeman
8th - G. Freeman
9th - G. Freeman
10th - G. Freeman



Smile. Today is the first day of the rest of your life.

BINGO
NITE
(IN THE LADIES SECTION)
TUE 28 MAR
20 H 00.
LAST MEETING EVER
R100-00 PAID OUT IN PRIZES
SHOWBALL NOW
R21-00
THE MORE YOU ENJOY OF
THE MORE THE PRIZES -
"BINGO"

RÖSSING: SOCIAL POLICY

Industrial Relations :

It is extremely important that any company establishes strong guidelines for its approach in the industrial relations field, and Rössing has already done so.

The Rössing industrial relations policy is as follows :

1. Rössing accepts the desirability of a written industrial relations policy, to confirm its commitments to sound industrial relations practices.
2. Rössing reaffirms its intention to establish a company, which provides job security and progression based on merit for employees.
3. Rössing believes that all employees have a responsibility for, and a vested interest in, the continued profitability and well-being of the company.
4. Rössing will develop and maintain effective channels of management employee communications.
5. Rössing will foster consultation with employees on all relevant matters affecting employee interest, by means of employee representative systems.
6. Rössing will operate disciplinary and grievance procedures which are fair and just, in the belief that these are in the mutual interest of both the company and its employees.
7. Rössing will develop and maintain employee remuneration practices, which differentiate solely on the basis of job demands and individual merit.

These statements, basically, lay down the principles upon which the company will operate in dealing with its employees. In practice, this means establishing proper lines of communication, so that everyone can voice their opinions and concern on all matters relating to the company. And similarly, that in all cases, communication can be passed down the line so that everyone is fully aware of matters that are relevant to their position.

In order to achieve this, three communications systems will be set up.

1. **Area of interest groups** will be established to ensure that all matters relevant to employees are passed down the management line speedily and accurately.

CONT. NEXT COLUMN

2. A system of employee representative committees is being developed to operate within the plant and at these committee meetings, it is hoped that all matters concerning the job and the environment at work will be discussed between representatives of management and representatives of employees.

3. It is intended to establish residence associations in the areas in which Rössing employees presently live, and these associations will be formed to discuss with company representatives, any problems relating to housing, transport, servicing and facilities, etc.

In addition to these communication channels, the company intend to reinforce its present grievance procedures, and also to review and revise, if necessary, the present disciplinary code.

On March the 9th, a seminar was held at the Rössing Country Club for the Divisional Managers and General Manager, attended by a representative from the Institute of Industrial Relations, at which the basic principles of the company's industrial relations policy were established.

These details, you see before you.

The practicalities and the systems of working are now being discussed and will in future be discussed with members of management staff, all members of management, representatives of liaison committees, etc

It is hoped that before the end of April, all the above systems will be properly established and working.

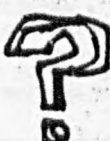
Please remember that it is in the interests of everyone in the company to ensure the above.

As you can see, the problems facing Rössing are many. We can best solve them if we work together and we can only work together by communicating with each other. I would therefore ask you to make full use of the existing communication methods to put forward your views and your fears, so that the company is at all times aware of the problems and feelings of everybody.

NEXT WEEK IN AFRIKAANS

NEXT WEEK:

OUR COMPETITION



CALEDONIAN SOCIETY



INVITE YOU TO
A CEILIDH

ON SATURDAY, 1 APRIL 1978 AT
AT THE RÖSSING COUNTRY CLUB

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The evening will consist of Scottish reel dancing, led by the Caledonian Society dancers, singing led by the Caledonian Society singers and piping by Jim Campbell and Hamish Smith. There will also be modern dances played to disco or organ.

Tickets will cost R2.00 per person and will include supper, i.e. Scotch Broth, Forfar Bridie, Gatoake Snacks, Short Bread and a large whisky (or sherry) as you go in.



Tickets may be booked at Ext 468 - Linda Murrell

IT'S NEVER TOO LATE!



RÖSSING STARS AND DESERT CHIEFS
COMPETE

IN AN INTERESTING SOCCER TOURNAMENT AT ARANDIS OVER THE EASTER WEEK-END, RÖSSING STARS AND DESERT CHIEFS BOTH EMERGED WITH HONOURS. RÖSSING STARS WON ON THE FIRST OCCASION AND DESERT CHIEFS ON THE SECOND. OTHER TEAMS TO COMPETE WERE MINI COBRAS, AND MAROKO SWALLOWS.

THERE WAS A SPORT MANLIKE SPIRIT ON THE FIELD AND THE CROWD BEHAVED WELL.

JOB SECURITY AT ROSSING

With Rossing going through the transition from a development to an industrial production stage and, additionally, with the transfer of the mines to being administered by the Government, the Government is concerned that employees will be worried about their future. This concern is particularly so for those employees who have been in the country for a long time and who have been part of the world and who have been developing with the country. The Government is aware of this and is taking steps to ensure that the employees are not worried about their future. The Government is aware of the fact that the employees are not worried about their future and are not worried about their future.

There is no way that the Government can ensure that the employees are not worried about their future. The Government is aware of the fact that the employees are not worried about their future and are not worried about their future. The Government is aware of the fact that the employees are not worried about their future and are not worried about their future. The Government is aware of the fact that the employees are not worried about their future and are not worried about their future.

The Government is aware of the fact that the employees are not worried about their future and are not worried about their future. The Government is aware of the fact that the employees are not worried about their future and are not worried about their future. The Government is aware of the fact that the employees are not worried about their future and are not worried about their future. The Government is aware of the fact that the employees are not worried about their future and are not worried about their future.

Undoubtedly there is a need to develop the indigenous peoples of Namibia and as long as the skilled people assist them to develop, and in so doing developing themselves, there will always be a need for men and women in the foreseeable future.

Rossing is the largest producer of uranium in the world and it is vital for both the free world and this country that this mine succeeds. This is indisputable fact and therefore although it is impossible to predict what sort of a Government this country will have in the future, one thing is certain and that is - they will wish to retain the present level of skill of Rossing employees.

DIE LUTHERSE GEMEENTE VAN ARANDIS

DIE LUTHERSE GEMEENTE VAN ARANDIS IS 'N TAK VAN DIE EVANGELIESE LUTHERSE KERK VAN SUIDWES AFRIKA/ NAMIBIA. DIE LEIER VAN DIE GEMEENTE IS PASTOOR FESTUS NAHOLC.

ELKE SONDAG WORD DIE KERN IN DIE DRY CLEANERS GEROU GESOU OMDAT DIE KERK NIE 'N ORDENTLIKE KERK-GEBOU HET NIE. DIE PLEKKIE IS TAANLIK KLEIN VOP DIE GEMEENTE EN DIT KAN SO VOL WORD DAT DIE KINSE NAAR BUTERLAND MOET SIT EN LUISTER. DIT WORD VERWAS DAT DIE GEMEENTE 'N ORDENTLIKE KERK-GEBOU BOWENHOUT SAL KRY. 'N FOR VAN DIE LEWENERS VAN ARANDIS IS LUTHERSE.

DIE GEMEENTE IS SKAARS 3 JAAR OUD EN DIT HET AL DIE VOLGENDE GEBIEDENSGROEP VERWAG WAT LUDDELE LENER TOT DIE VERBODENDE VAN DIE KROON VAN ODE. DAAR IS DIE WINKEL FRANK, WOUT WINKEL, WINKEL KROON EN DIE LUTHERSE.

NIERDIE GROEP IS VERBODENDE OP DIAMONDESE WERK IN DIE ARANDIS GEMEENSAP TE VERBID.

DIE ARANDIS GEMEENSAP BENIET SANS BAIE. DAAROM KRY ONS BAIE GANS GROEP WAARVAN DIE BASUN KROON ONDER LEIDING VAN MNR. J. FRANCIS DIE MEES POPULER IS.

PASTOOR F. NAHOLC DE WUIS IN ARANDIS BUCK BA. SY SITTHANIE WORD AS GEMEENTE KANTOOR DEBUEN.

A LOOK UNDER ANTARCTICA'S ICE

The Ross Ice Shelf, about the size of Spain, has long intrigued scientists. "There is hardly any place in the earth's atmosphere which rivals the isolation and uniqueness of the Ross Ice Shelf, - not even the abyssal trenches or underground caverns," says scientist John Clough. Ice is 1380' (420 m) thick in this remote area. To penetrate this ice, scientists recently brought to Antarctica a drill that generates a supersonic jet of hot gas. Using this, they drilled a hole through the ice into the 'Lost world' of the sea below. What is it like at the bottom of the ice-covered sea? To find out, scientists lowered a television camera and a light through the hole to the sunless sea floor, about 660 feet (200 m) below the ice shelf. The camera revealed that the sea bottom was apparently paved with sediment - covered small angular stones. Was there any signs of life?

Yes, two crustaceans - like sea creatures passed in view of the camera. There were other indications of life, such as tracks and burrows on the sea floor. "That indicates a rich bottom dwelling community of organisms," said D. Anderson, chief scientist for polar programmes of the National Science Foundation. W.E.T

WIN
R20

see our
cost reduction
logo competition

PAGE 11

Sam Cohen LIBRARY

Situated at the corner of Kalour-Windheim and Windhoek Street (opposite Steentras Garage), the entrance is in Windhoek Street. It is open daily from 9 - 11, 15 - 18 and on Saturday 9 - 10. On a Thursday evening it is also open from 10 - 11h. It is not a public library but scientific which means that all books, periodicals and old newspapers etc. can only be used in the reading room and are not loanable. The valuable Ferdinand-Stich-Africana-Collection is housed in the library which contains many books of the old explorers of Southern Africa (Andersson, Baines, Campell, Livingston etc). Others are of natural science, historical and ethnological interest. All members of the public are welcome to make use of the library it is not necessary to be a member of our Society. The use of the library is free of charge.

YOUTH CLUB ACTIVITY

karate

The Youth Club have started Karate lessons. The lessons are on a Monday and Wednesday between 19h00 and 20h00. This is open to anyone and if interested, please contact Nina Guzman at 4906 or Connie Ibbetson at 4877. The lessons cost R1.00 for juniors and R6.00 for seniors per month.

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