SPECIAL REPORT

PERS 352 A STUDY OF SOUTH AFRICAN STRIKE DATA : 1960 - 1982

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The co-operation of members of the Department of Manpower is gratefully acknowledged. Without their assistance this report would not have been possible.

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SUMMARY

This report deals with the analysis and study of South African strike data for the period 1960 - 1982. It is based on information reported by companies to the Department of Manpower on Form L.R.33. Data for this study are standardised by reference to the Economically Active Population and Numbers Employed. A series of computer-based graphs representing some of the data on strike activity, with comments on them, is provided. Recommendations on further research possibilities are presented.

INTRODUCTION

South Africa has a developing economy and, as such, has a need for increased productivity from all its resources. Improving the effectiveness of human resources forms part of the NIPR's research objective. As a consequence, the NIPR has an interest in factors such as strikes, which can cause longer or shorter-term breakdowns in production. In order to investigate the phenomenon of strikes in South Africa, the NIPR, by special permission from the Department of Manpower, obtained information from Form L.R.33* allowing it to make a comparative study relating to strike activity in South Africa dating from 1960 onwards. This made possible analyses of various aspects of strike activity in South Africa. Such analyses contribute to an historical perspective of one aspect of industrial relations in South Africa. It also serves as a source from which possible trends, tendencies and group fluctuations can be determined and to the possible establishment of a data bank relating to strikes.

THE REPORT

This report consists of two parts (A and B).

Part A consists of a description of the data on file. Part B consists of a series of computer-based graphical analyses (containing information from 1960 - 1982), with some comments on the presented analyses.

The analyses presented are by no means intended to be exhaustive. They must rather be interpreted as a reference source reflecting the possibilities for further research and analysis presented by the availability of strike data.

* This is the form on which employees are required to report strikes.

PART A

1. SOURCE OF STRIKE DATA

There is a legal obligation for employers in South Africa to report "discontinuance of work" caused by, or as a result of, disputes. Such incidences are noted on prescribed Form L.R.33, and are then submitted to, and maintained by, the Department of Manpower. Divisional Inspectors of Manpower are also required to forward reports of labour unrest experienced by employers in their region to the Head Office of the Department of Manpower in Pretoria. Should the Divisional Inspectors hear of strikes which have not been officially reported, the Inspectors would then initiate a report in consultation with the employer concerned. Such reports are maintained on file at the Department of Manpower, and are used as the source of data by the NIPR. It is considered that the Department of Manpower reports represent a reliable and complete source of available strike data.

Individual employers cannot be identified from the abstracted data.

1.1 Basis of the NIPR Report

Eleven classifications of data were chosen to form the basis of the NIPR report. These allow a meaningful aggregation of the strike data.

Additional data were, however, required to produce analyses of a standardised nature to allow for international and longitudinal comparison. The source of such additional data, namely the Consumer Price Index, Numbers Employed, and the Economically Active Population, will be discussed in some detail.

1.2 Classification of Data

1.2.1 Date of Strike

This was recorded by month and year.

1.2.2 Industry

Eight categories were used:

1) Mining.
2) Materials manufacture.
3) Construction.
4) Industrial equipment manufacture and supply.
5) Consumer goods manufacture.
6) Distribution.
7) Service industries.
8) Municipalities.

1.2.3 Area

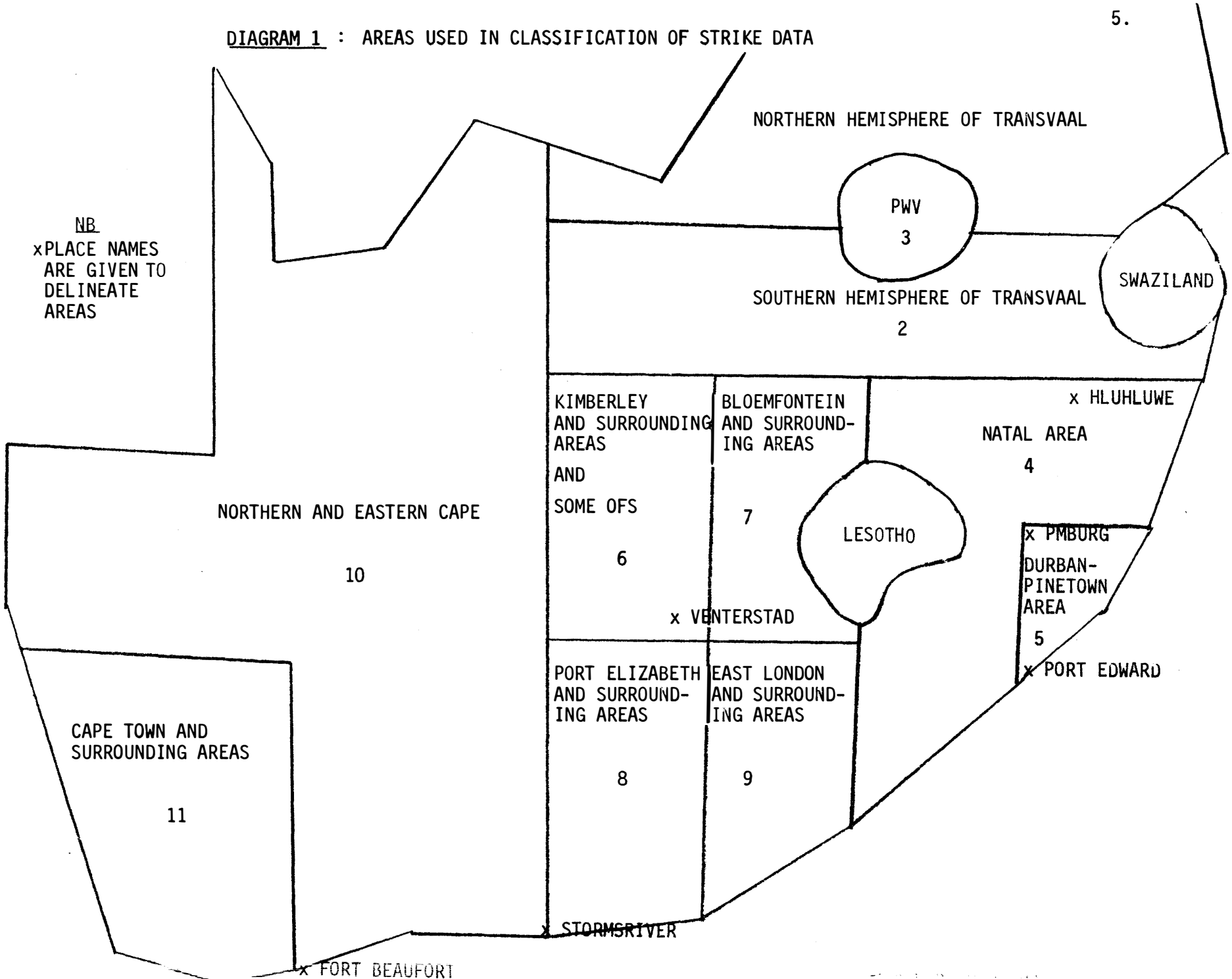
Eleven areas were chosen, as indicated in Diagram 1.

1) Northern Transvaal.
2) Southern Transvaal.
3) Pretoria/Witwatersrand/Vereeniging.
4) Natal.
5) Durban/Pinetown.
6) Kimberley and surroundings and some OFS.
7) Bloemfontein and surroundings.
8) Port Elizabeth and surroundings.
9) East London and surroundings.
10) Northern and Eastern Cape.
11) Cape Town and surroundings.

1.2.4 Strike or Stoppage

There is a legal difference between a strike and a work stoppage. When there is a cessation of work in support of worker demands, it is said to be 'strike'; a work stoppage occurs when no specific demands are made by labour or their representatives. The term 'strike' is used to include both strikes and work stoppages in this report.

DIAGRAM 1 : AREAS USED IN CLASSIFICATION OF STRIKE DATA



1.2.5 **Cause of Strike**

Breakdowns are given for the eight most important causes, which are:

* Wages.
* Payments (excluding demands related to specific wage levels).
* Working conditions.
* Dismissals.
* Communication.
* Retention of Pensions.
* Recognition.
* Sympathy.
* Other causes.
* Unknown.

1.2.6 **Result of Strike**

The categories indicate the achievement of objectives.

1) Yes.
2) Partially.
3) No.
4) No demands.
5) Unknown.

1.2.7 Termination

This refers to whether or not the strike resulted in termination of employment.

1) No.
2) Yes.
3) Unknown.

1.2.8 Wage Loss (in Rands)

The reports submitted to the Department of Manpower indicate the gross loss in wages incurred by strikers. There are, however, cases where the employees were paid their wages for the time spent striking, such amounts are not reflected in the figures used for this study. The wage loss incurred by strikers whose employment was terminated is reflected up to the time of job termination. (A measure of the costs of a strike to both the striker and employer requires analysis of each individual strike. This does not form part of the present study.)

1.2.9 Number of Strikers - Male

This is recorded according to the following population groups.

1) White.
2) Black.
3) Asian.
4) Coloured.

1.2.10 Number of Strikers - Female

This is recorded according to the following population groups.

1) White.
2) Black.
3) Asian.
4) Coloured.

1.2.11 Man-hours Lost

The man-hours lost due to strike activity are recorded by population groups.

1) White.
2) Black.
3) Asian.
4) Coloured.

1.3 Additional Data

In order to obtain meaningful statistics for longitudinal and international comparison, it is necessary to standardise the data relating to strikes. The Consumer Price Index is used to standardise the wage loss in real terms expressed in Rands.

Population figures are required to compute the rate at which a certain factor, e.g. number of strikes, occurs per thousand of the population. The populations selected were:

a) Economically Active Population.
b) Numbers Employed less domestic and agricultural workers.

Domestic and agricultural workers were excluded because they do not fall under existing industrial legislation dealing with strikes in South Africa and are generally omitted from international statistics.

1.3.1 **Consumer Price Index (CPI)***

This has been recomputed annually with 1982 as the base year. The CPI was obtained from Central Statistical Services.

$$\frac{\text{CPI FOR YEAR N}}{\text{CPI FOR 1982}} \times 100$$

---

* For the purpose of this study the "All Income Groups" CPI was chosen. It was accepted that this index could be related to low, middle, and high income groups, and would avoid making subjective judgements regarding income and production groupings. Monthly CPI figures were not used because of the longitudinal nature of the study which is based on annual figures.

The annual gross wages lost for the period of the present study can be converted to 1982 prices, by applying the following formula:

$$\frac{\text{WAGES LOST FOR YEAR N}}{\text{CPI FOR YEAR N AT 1982=100}} \times 100$$

It is important in view of the extended period of the data to have annual wages lost in real terms.

1.3.2 Population Figures

During the period covered by the study there have been territorial changes in South Africa, caused by the emergence of the independent and National States, e.g. Transkei. Population and labour statistics produced by the Republic's Central Statistical Services exclude information relating to National States when such States are granted independence. Failure to take this into account would erroneously inflate any standardised strike data. The manner in which this problem is dealt with is discussed in Section 1.3.2.2

The employment figures produced by Central Statistical Services are not adequate for this study. As a consequence, an alternative source of population and employment statistics was required. Such source was identified in figures supplied by Du Toit.* Du Toit's statistics are complete up to and including 1977. The methods used to extend those statistics to subsequent years in this report are discussed in 1.3.2.1, determination of the 'Economically Active Population (EAP)', and in 1.3.2.2, 'Numbers Employed'.

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* 'Mannekragbenutting as Onderdeel van die Ekonomiese Ontwikkelingsprogram.' Published in Manpower Utilization, P J D du Toit (Ed.).

1.3.2.1 Economically Active Population (EAP)

The general definition of a country's Economically Active Population is "The total of employed persons and of unemployed persons". (ILO, 1980, p.3.) This figure is a measure of the size of the labour force of that country. Figures supplied by Du Toit were used for the period up to and including 1978. These figures were extended to subsequent years according to the following formulae (given for 1979, Whites).

(i) Factor PP,0,424 represents the proportion of the total population which is economically active. This varies according to race, and when multiplied by the population size gives the size of the Economically Active Population for each race group. This was obtained for 1979 onwards by extrapolation of the figures given by Du Toit.

$$PPX4420000^{(1)} \times \frac{4485000^{(2)}}{4442000^{(3)}} = 1\ 892\ 000^{(4)}$$

(1) Du Toit's 1978 population figure.
(2) Central Statistical Service's 1979 mid-year estimate of population.
(3) Central Statistical Service's 1978 mid-year estimate of population.
(4) Given to nearest thousand.

The 1980 figure is obtained by replacing in (1), (2), (3) and (4) the 1978, 1979 figures by those for 1970 and 1980, and so on.

(iii) This computation was performed separately for each race group.

The Economically Active Population of the four race groups, when added together, represents the total Economically Active Population of the Republic of South Africa, including the independent National States.

1.3.2.2 **Numbers Employed (domestic and agricultural workers excluded)**

The Economically Active Population is useful for general comparative purposes. The Numbers Employed (domestic and agricultural workers excluded) is a more accurate measure of a population's industrial and commercial activity.

Du Toit's figures for Numbers Employed were used up to 1978, and extended for the years following. Numbers employed in various sectors of the economy, according to race, were identified. The employment figures (as distinct from the population figures used in Section 1.3.2.1) for sectors other than domestic and agricultural, were added together. This gives an estimate of the Numbers Employed in, for instance, each race and sex group.

These figures were extended after 1978 as follows:

(a)

$$\text{DU TOIT'S 1978 EMPLOYMENT FIGURE} \times \frac{\text{CENTRAL STATISTICAL SERVICES 2nd QUARTER 1979 EMPLOYMENT FIGURE}}{\text{CENTRAL STATISTICAL SERVICES 2nd QUARTER 1979 EMPLOYMENT FIGURE}}$$

This computation was performed separately for each race group.

(b) The TOTAL NUMBERS EMPLOYED (domestic and agricultural workers excluded) is the sum of the numbers employed of the four population groups.

(c) In this report RSA means Republic of South Africa in terms of its internationally recognised boundaries.

1.3.3 Comment

Although these figures are derived progressively they provide a means of standardising the strike data with more accurate estimates of Population, Economically Active Populations, and Numbers Employed. The extrapolations are, however, heavily dependent on the estimates of the rate of change derived from the Central Statistical Service figures.

PART B

1. COMMENTS

Strikes are a much publicised and a strongly emotive aspect of Industrial Relations. They can be interpreted as:

(a) as a reflection of a country's industrial relations in general;
(b) as the visible aspect of industrial relations;
(c) as an event occurring at a point in time;
(d) as part of a process, the culmination of which is the strike
(e) as a breakdown in employer/employee relationships;
(f) as part of the negotiating process;
(g) as a reflection of trust in so far as the striking employee expects a continuation of employment after discussions/negotiations, or strike action.
(h) as a display of power;
(i) as an alternative to other forms of protest, such as quitting, sabotage, material wastage, or restricting output.

Analysis of strike activities allows some quantification of a country's industrial relations. Differences however exist in the requirements for strike reporting in different countries. Creigh, Donaldson and Hawthorn (1982), discussing the statistical information provided by twenty non-communist, industrialised countries, indicate such differences. France, for instance, has no minimum criteria for defining a strike. West Germany is the only one of those

countries where it is obligatory to report strikes. For the United States the minimum criteria are six workers or more on strike one full day or shift. In South Africa there are also no minimum criteria; a strike involving three employees for ten minutes was, for instance, reported in 1982.

Such differences in basic information limit international comparisons.

A weakness observed in much of the available strike literature is the use of averages computed ove a number of years. This can distort impressions since the average can vary greatly with the period over which it is computed.

Part B of this report consists of a series of graphs. To the best of our knowledge this is the first time that detailed information on strikes in south Africa over an extended period has been published in this way.

The graphs show strike activity annually over 22 years within different sectors of the labour population and the economy.

PLEASE NOTE:

In the following graphs

1) ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE POPULATION is abbreviated to 'EAP'.

2) NUMBERS EMPLOYED (domestic and agricultural workers excluded) is represented by 'EMPLOYED'.

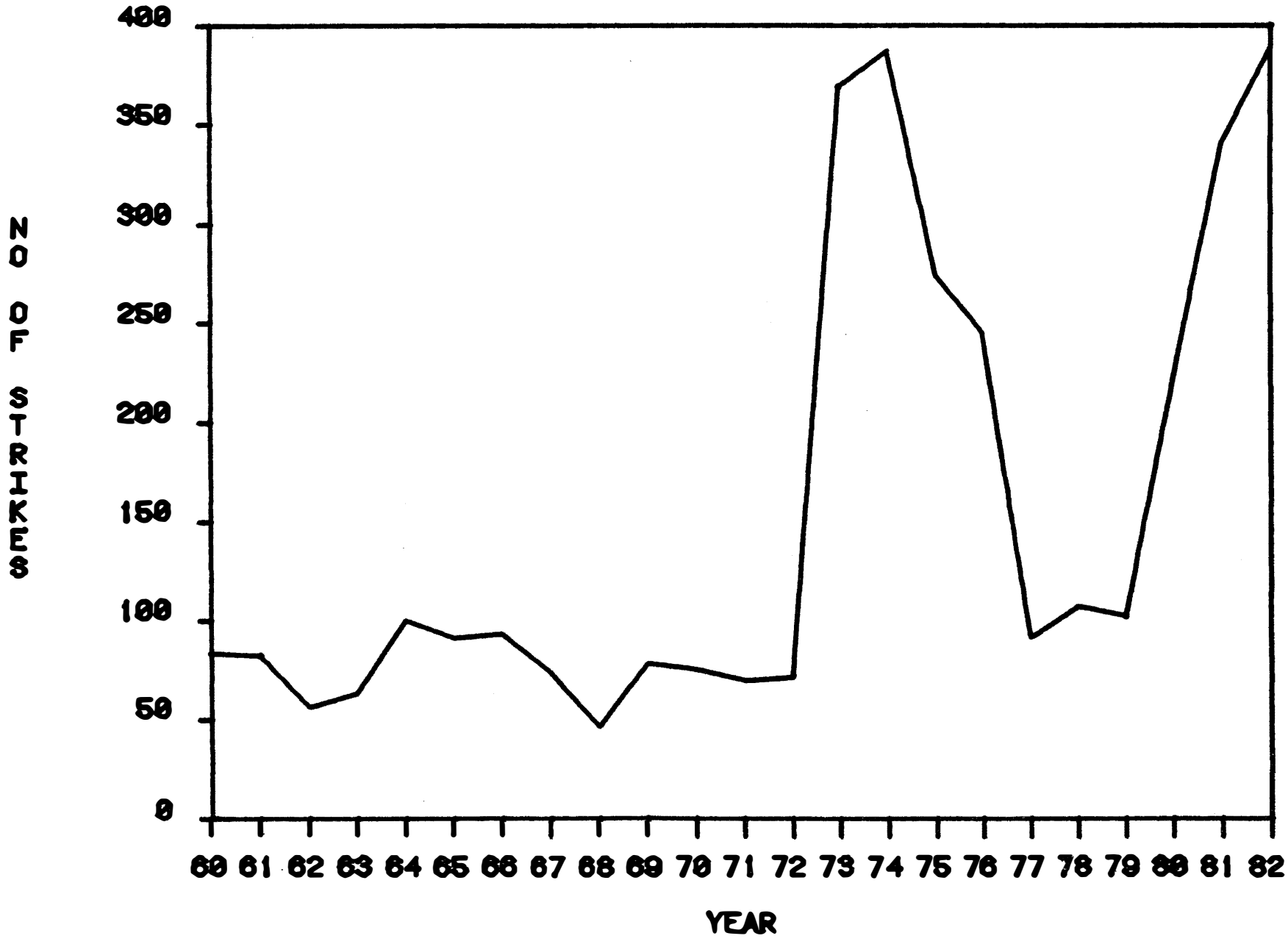
GRAPHS 1, 2, 3 : NUMBER OF STRIKES AND STRIKERS IN RSA (1960 - 1982)

These graphs supply the following information:

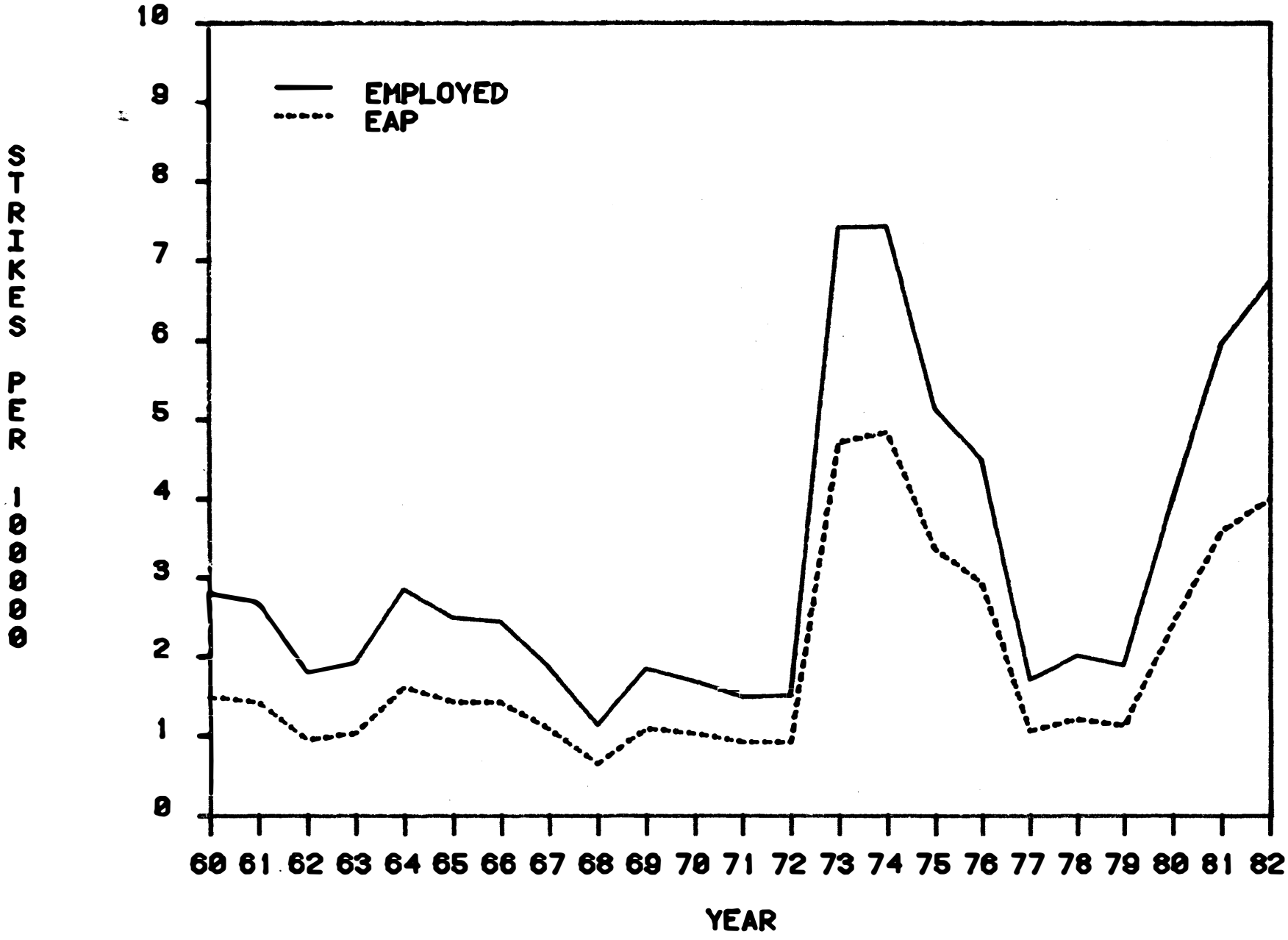
Graph 1 - Strikes per year.
Graph 2 - Number of strikes (standardised).
Graph 3 - Number of strikers (standardised).

Graph 1 indicates that there were more strikes in 1982 than during any other year in this study. However, the standardised strike incidence for 1982 is less than that for 1973/74 (Graph 2). The number of strikers (standardised) is greater, indicating that on average strikes involved more strikers in 1982 than in the earlier years (Graph 3).

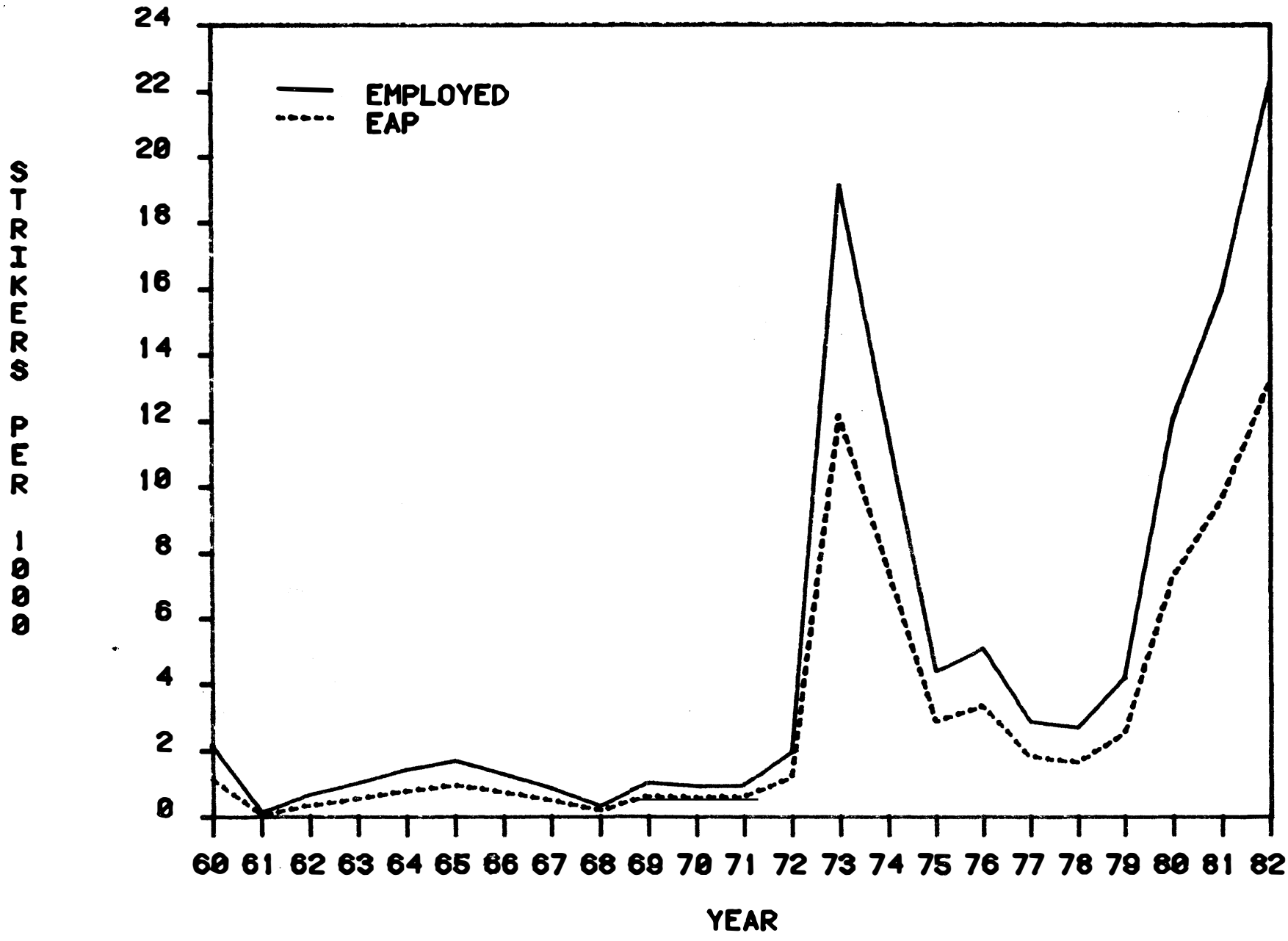
GRAPH 1 - **STRIKES PER YEAR**



GRAPH 2 - **STRIKES IN RSA PER 100000**



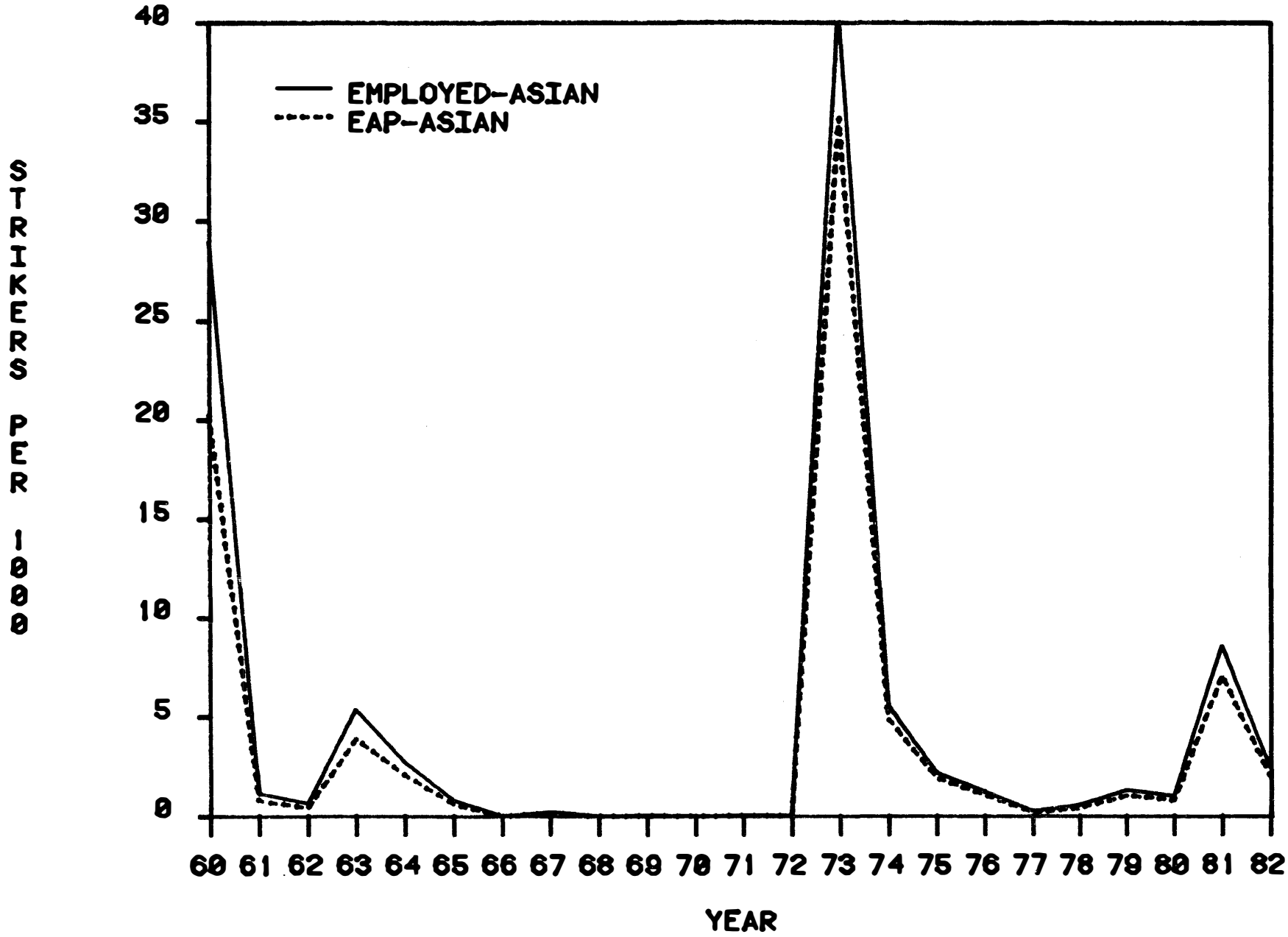
GRAPH 3 - **STRIKERS IN RSA PER 1000**



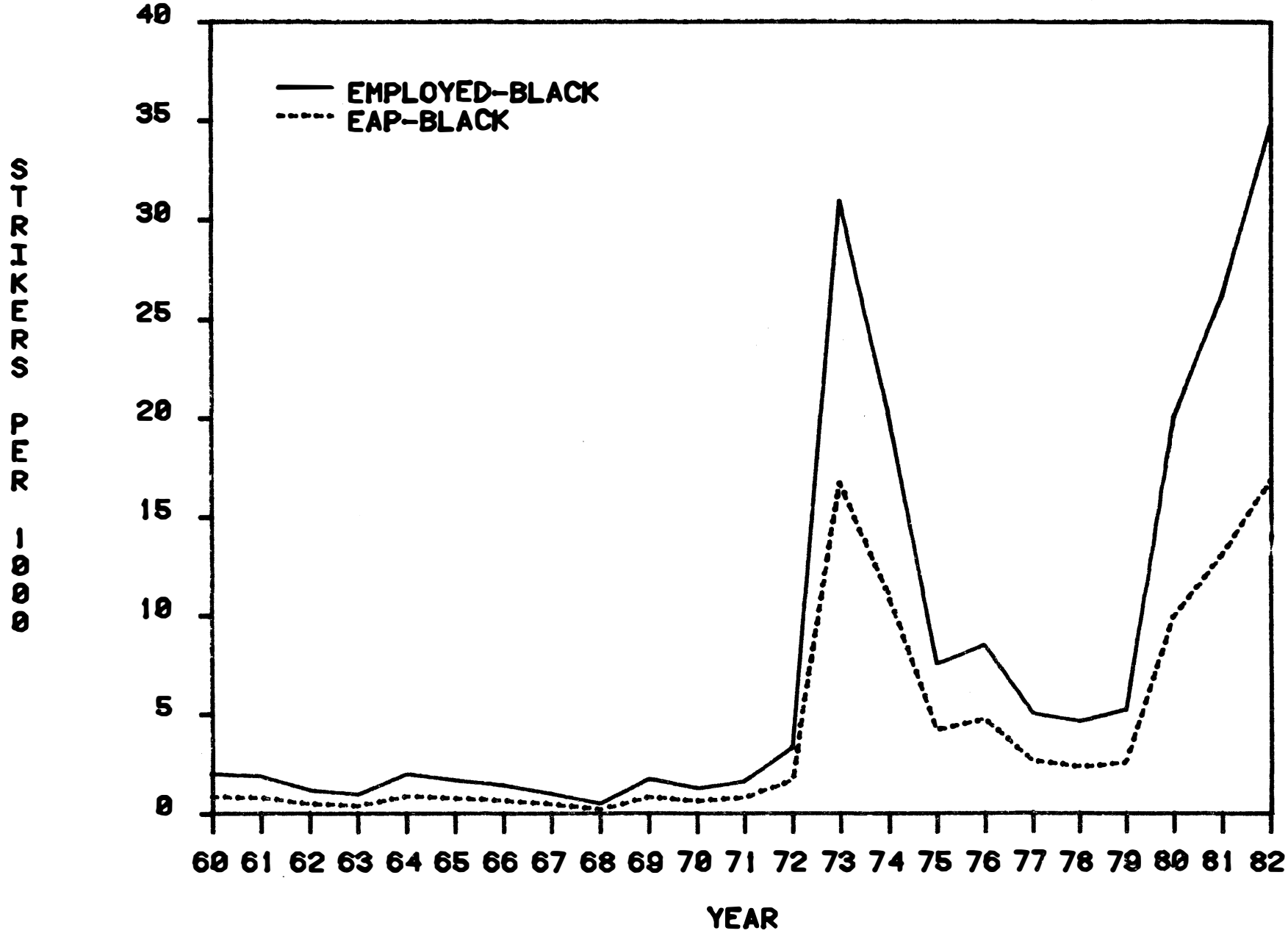
GRAPHS 4, 5, 6, 7 : COMPARISON - STRIKERS PER POPULATION GROUP

There are marked differences in strike behaviour between the four racial groups over the period, reflecting the differential effects of industrial legislation and organisation. The involvement of Black workers in the 1973 strikes in Natal stands out clearly. The very great increase in the numbers of Blacks involved in strikes following the legislation changes since 1979 is also apparent. Strike data in 1973, 1974 and from 1979 onwards is dominated by strike behaviour of Black workers. Noteworthy also is the large increase in strikes among Coloured workers over the same period.

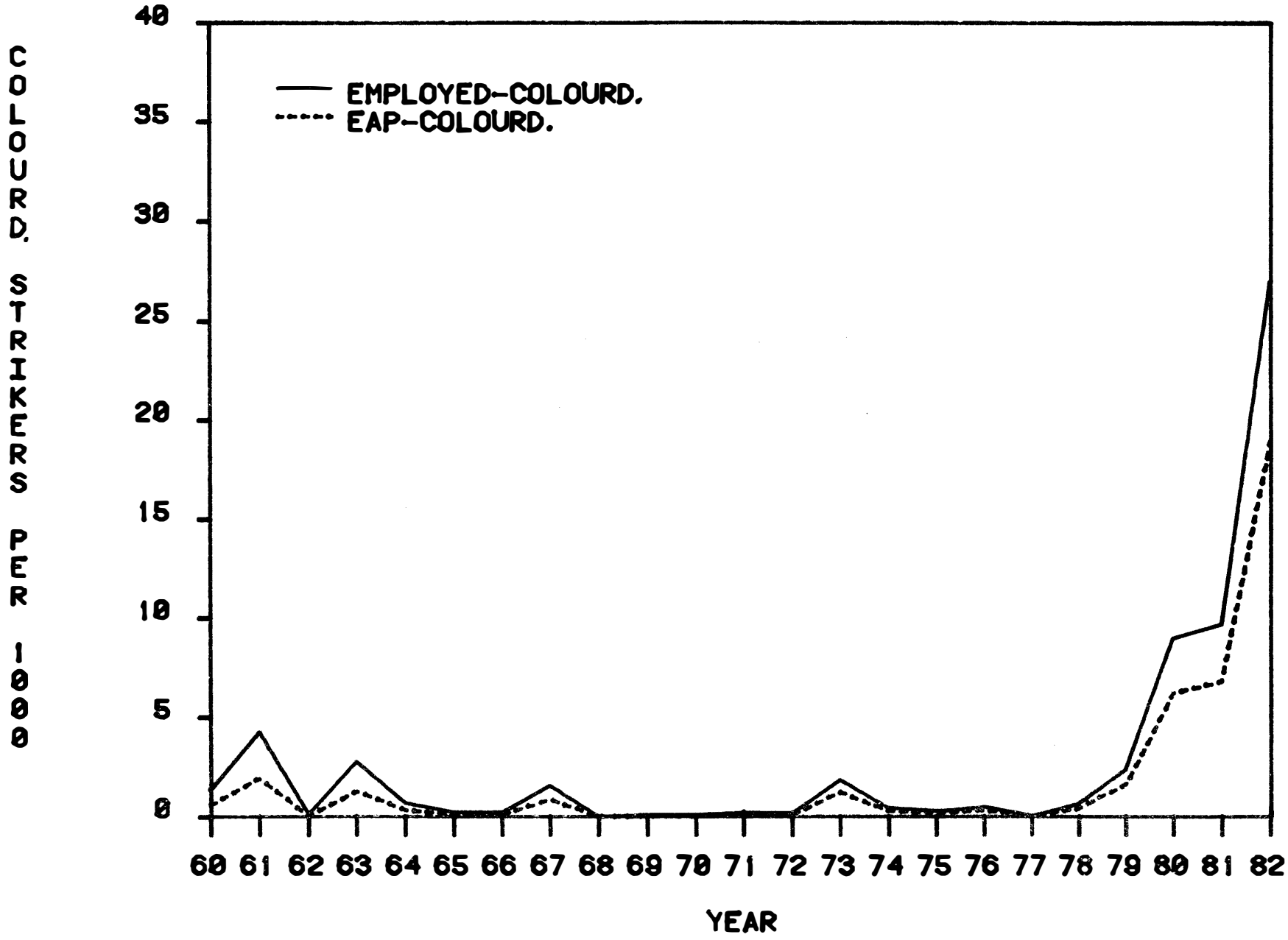
GRAPH 4 - **ASIAN STRIKERS PER 1000 ASIANS**



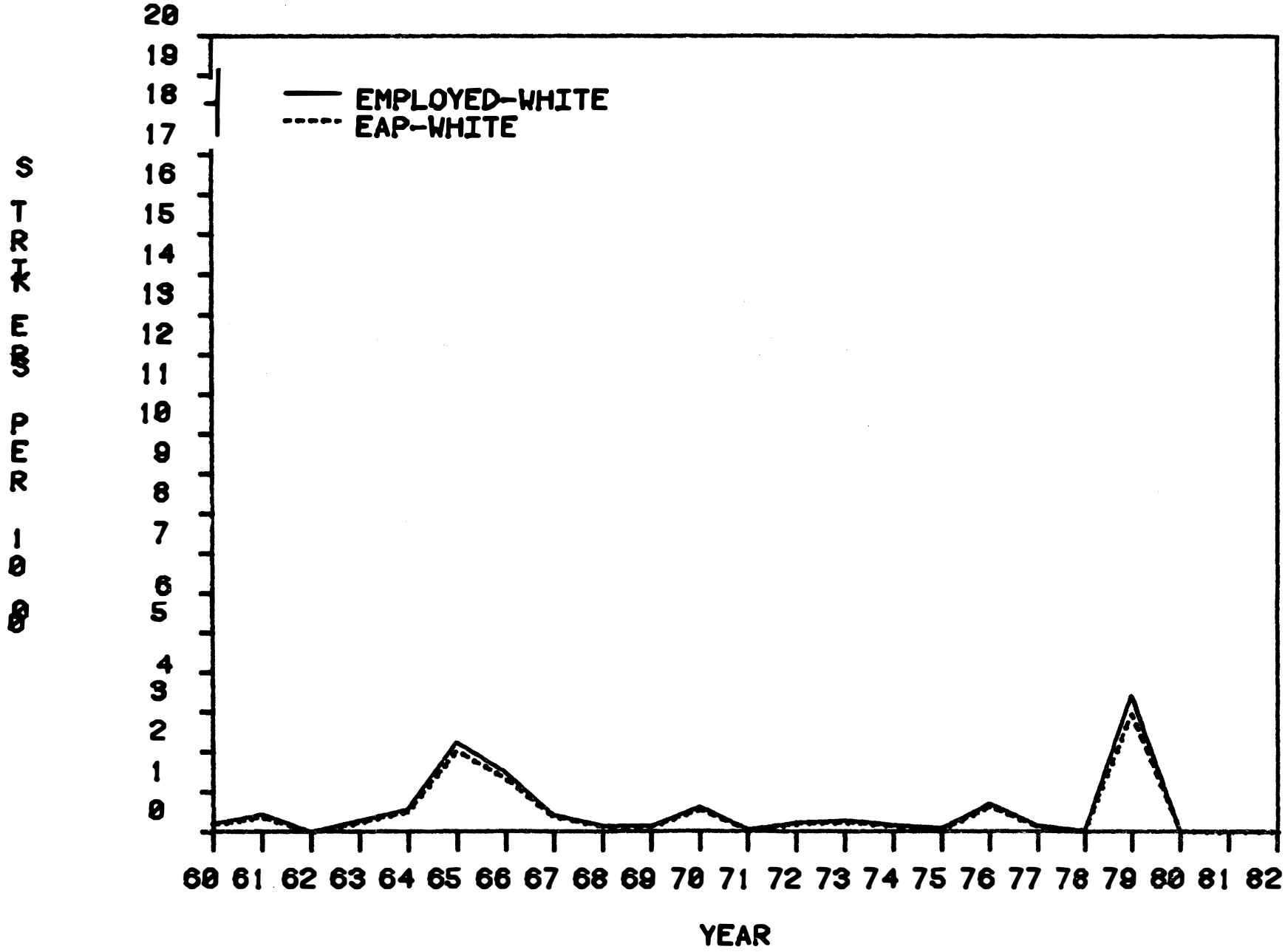
GRAPH 5 - **BLACK STRIKERS PER 1000 BLACKS**



GRAPH 6 - COLOURD. STRIKERS PER 1000 COLOURD.



GRAPH 7 - **WHITE STRIKERS PER 1000 WHITES**



GRAPHS 8 and 9 : MALE/FEMALE STRIKERS

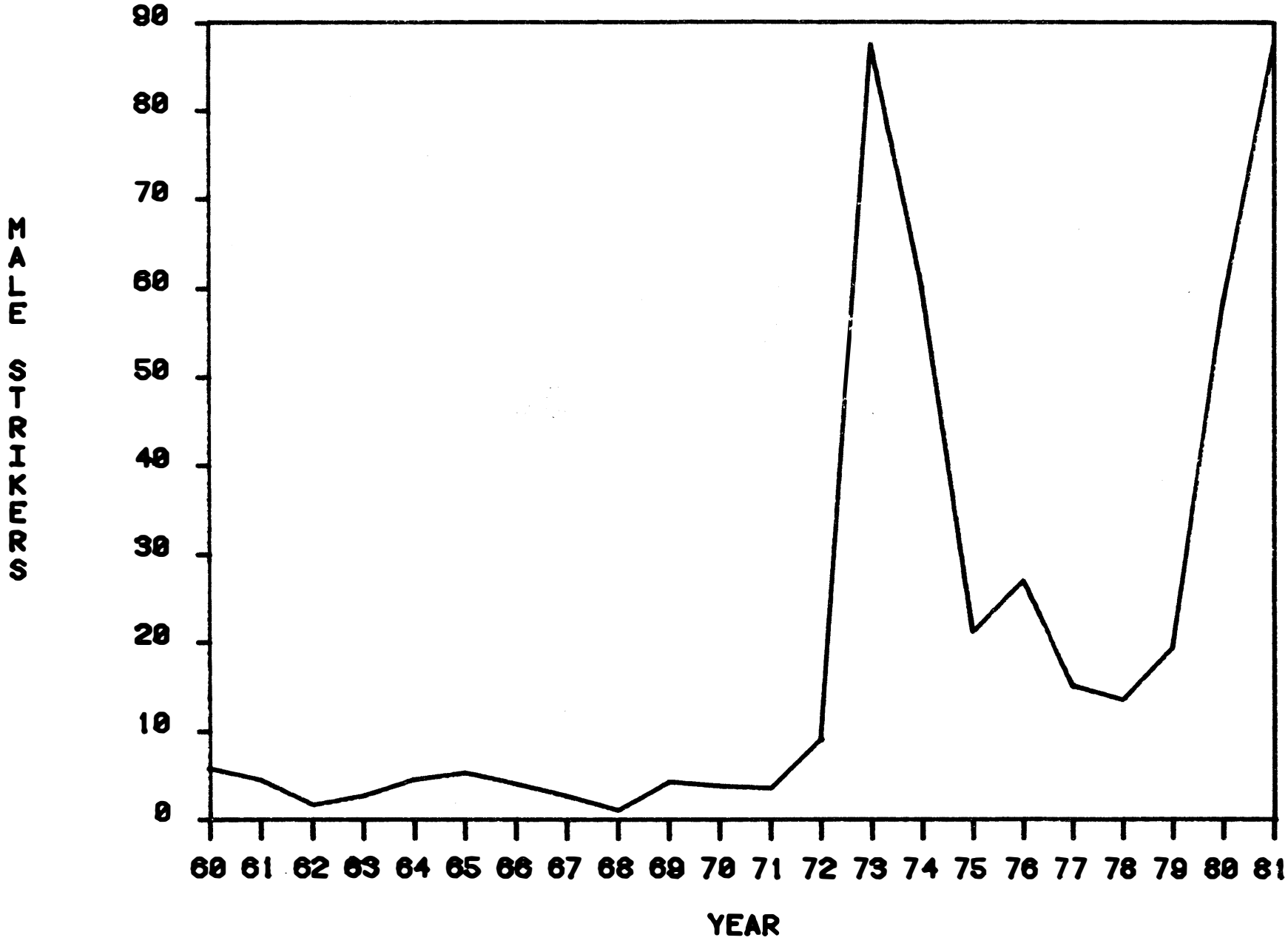
It must be noted that these graphs do not extend beyond 1981. The reason for this is that strike reports for 1982 no longer differentiate between male and female strikers.

A point of interest relates to the peaks of female strike activity for 1971, 1975 and 1980 (Graph 9). It seems that these peaks consistently occur earlier than for male strikers (Graph 8).

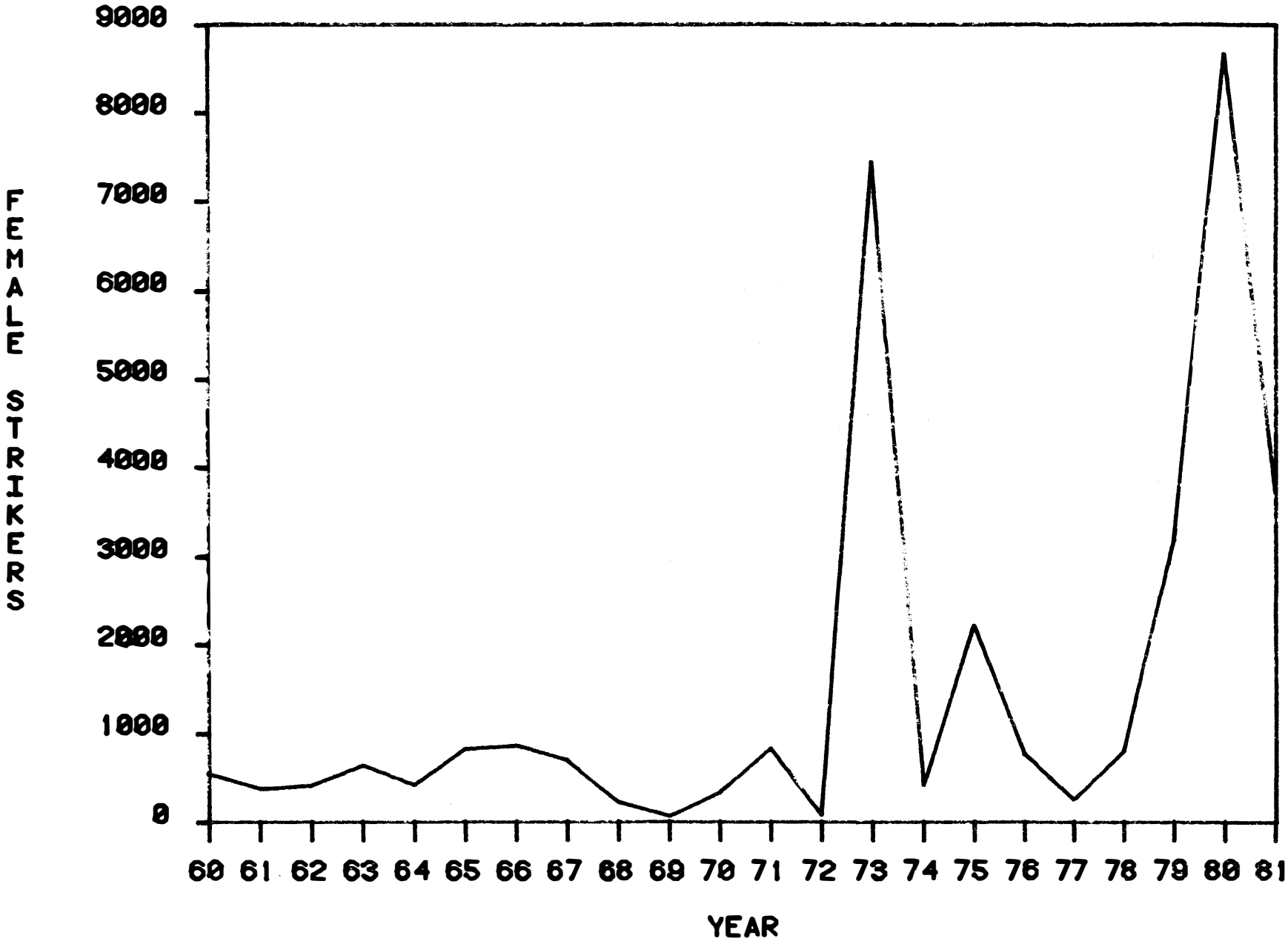
In general, male strikers outnumbered females by about 10:1.

THOUSANDS

GRAPH 8 - TOTAL NUMBER OF MALE STRIKERS



GRAPH 9 - TOTAL NUMBER OF FEMALE STRIKERS



GRAPHS 10, 11, 12, 13 : WORK-DAYS LOST

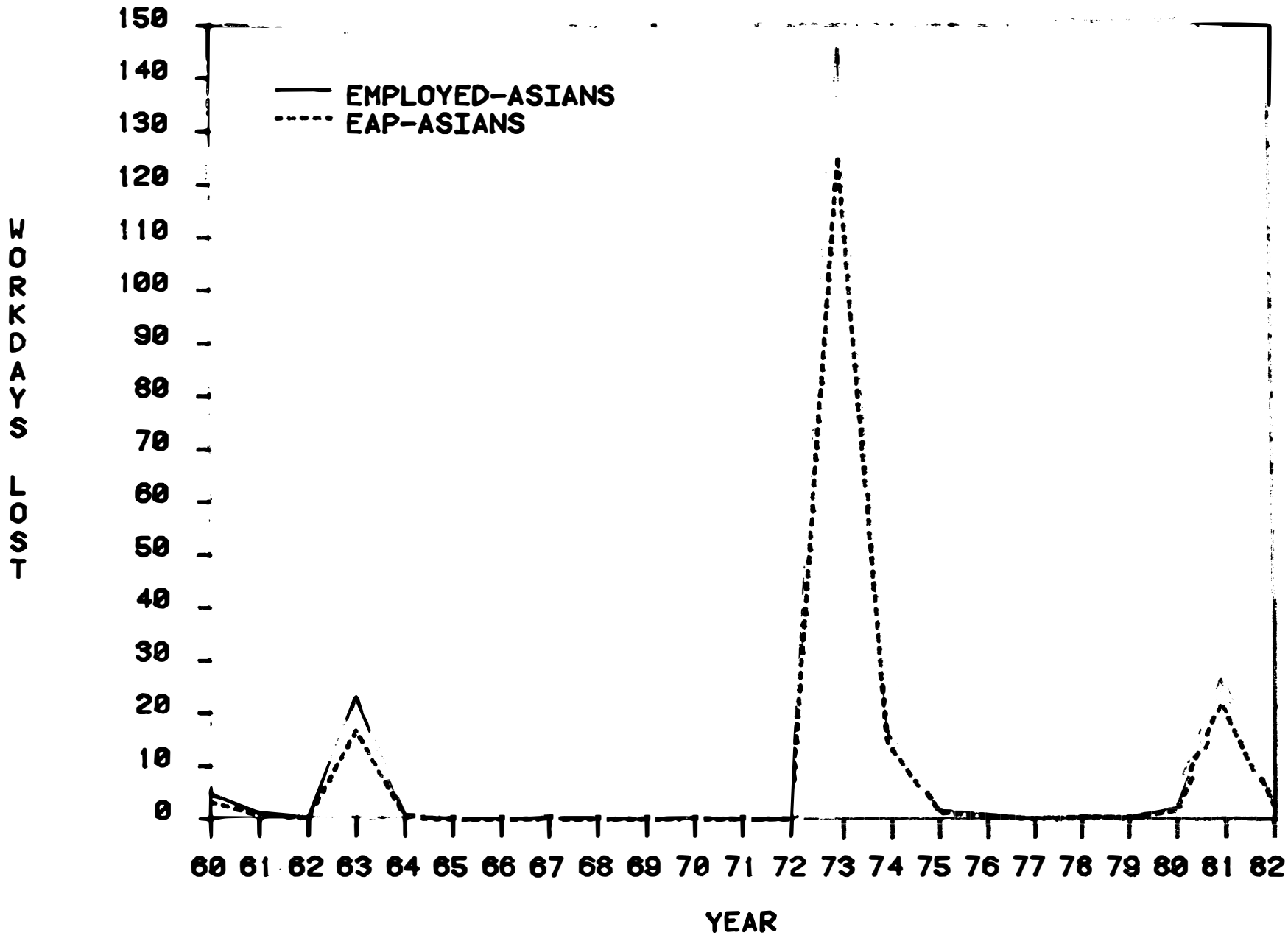
Increased poductivity is of vital importance to the economy of the Republic of South Africa. Work-days lost as a consequence of strike activity therefore need particular attention.

Graphs 10, 11, 12, 13 show important differences between the differenct race groups in terms of work-days lost.

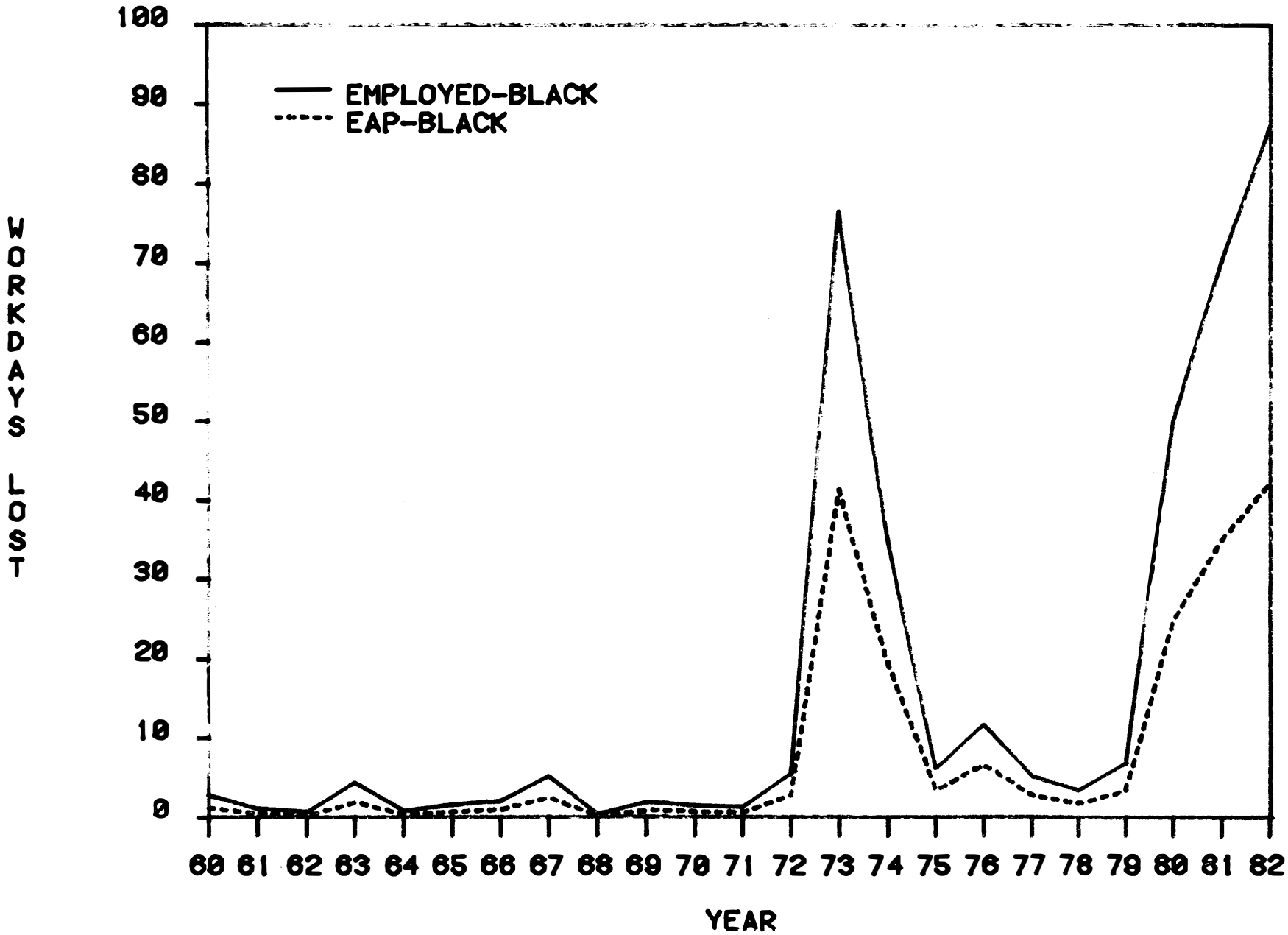
The number of work-days lost by Whites (Graph 13) is high in relation to the number of White strikers, indicating relatively longer strikes. Collective bargaining in which Whites are involved is usually centralised and institutionalised, thereby acting as a restraining influence on the propensity to strike. Strikes only occur after the means for resolving conflict have been used. White workers are also generally more disciplined and take strike action only as a last resort. They also have greater resources for sustaining a prolonged strike.

Strikes by Blacks tend to be of short duration (Graph 11). They usually occur before the means of resolving conflict have been exhausted. Blacks have smaller resources for maintaining a lengthy strike and also a greater risk of losing their jobs.

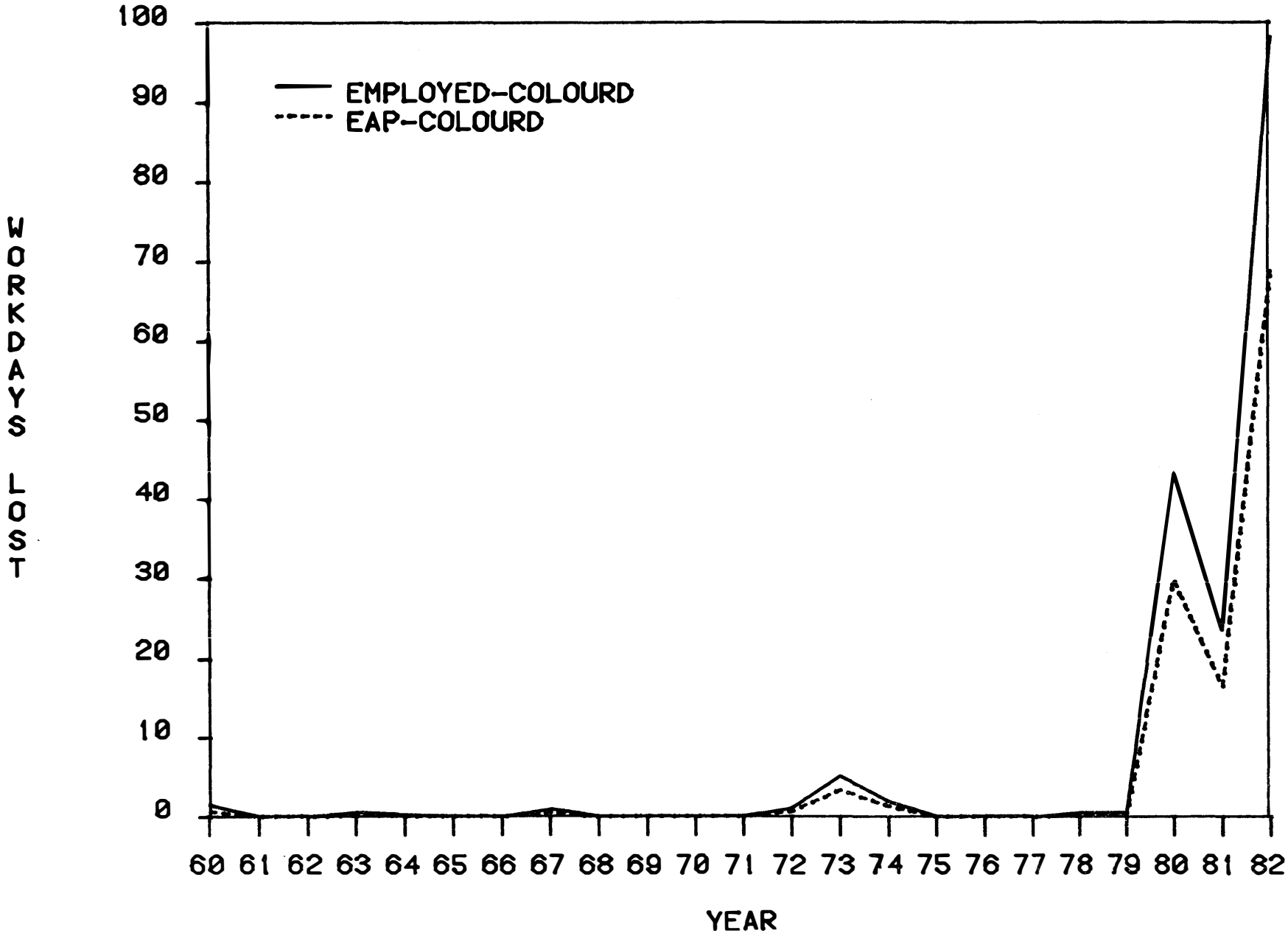
GRAPH 10 - **ASIAN WORKDAYS LOST PER 1000 ASIANS**



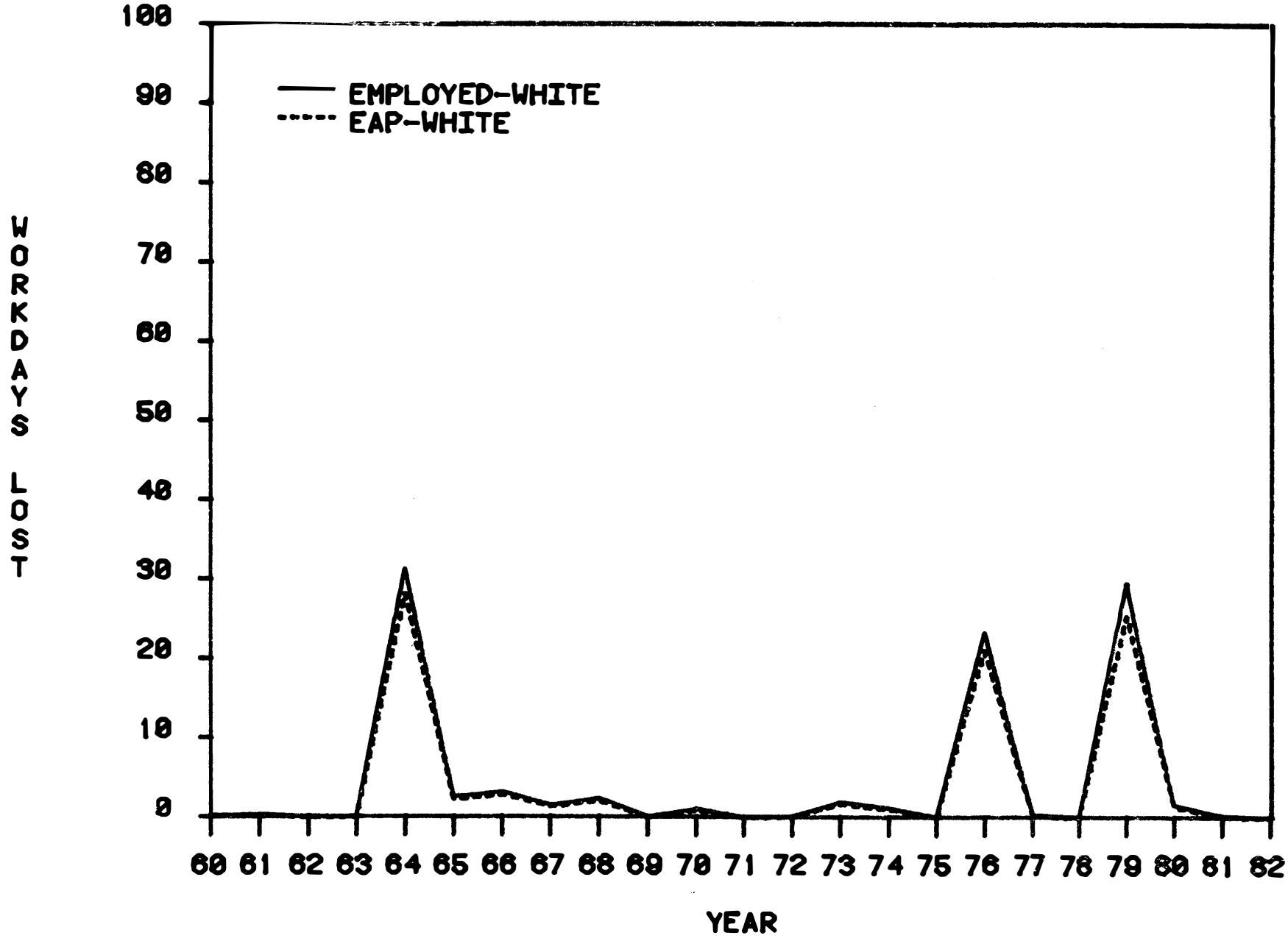
GRAPH 11 - BLACK WORKDAYS LOST PER 1000 BLACKS



GRAPH 12 - COLOURD WORKDAYS LOST PER 1000 COLOURDS



GRAPH 13 - WHITE WORKDAYS LOST PER 1000 WHITES

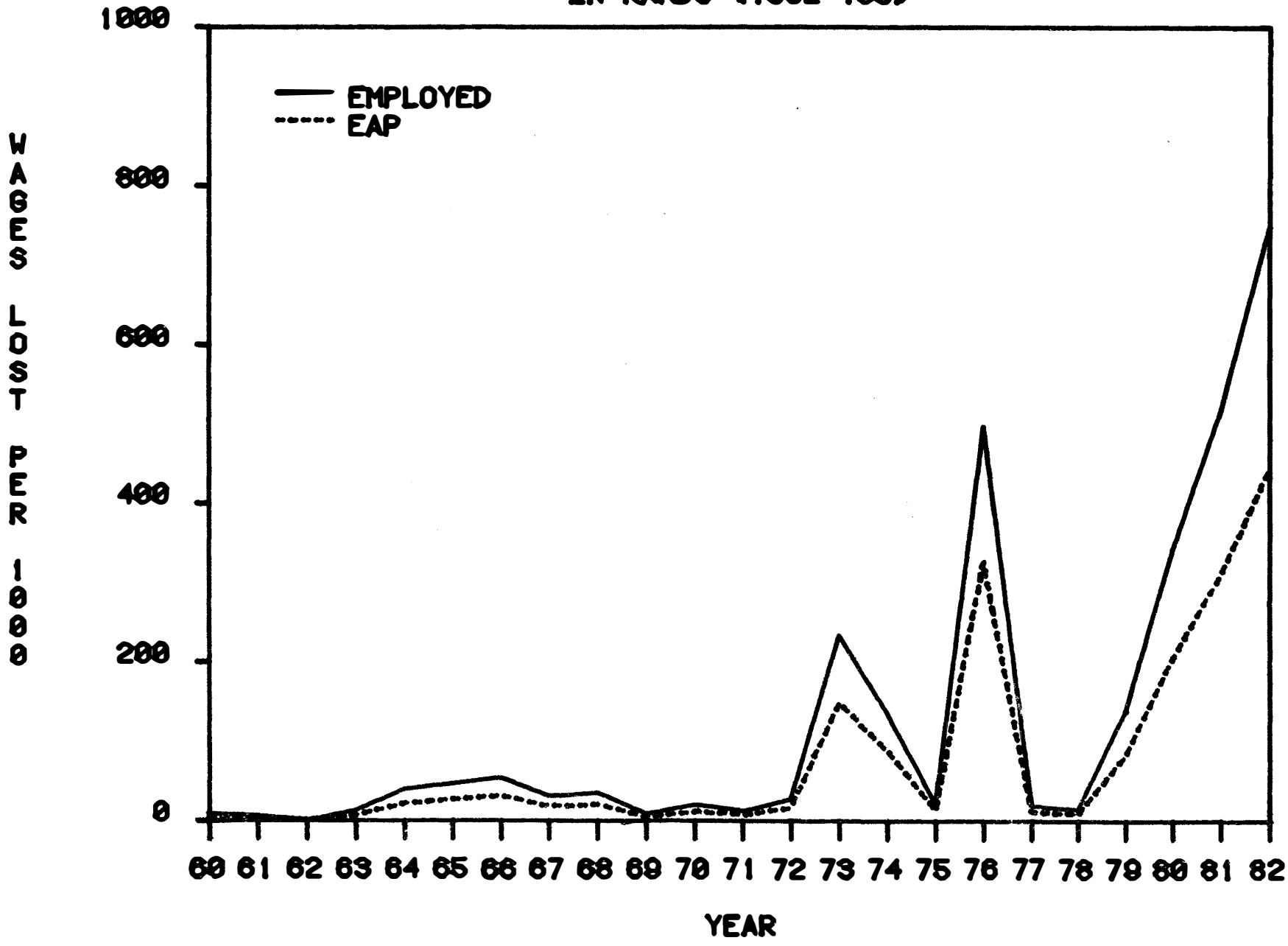


GRAPH 14 : TOTAL WAGES LOST PER 1 000 IN RANDS (1982=100)

Analysis of the preceding graphs indicates an increasing contribution of Black, Coloured, and, to some extent, Asian work groups to strike activity in the Republic of South Africa.

Prior to 1979, wages lost through strikes were closely related to the number of work-days lost by White workers (Graph 13). This is no longer the case, particularly as is reflected in the strike activity of Black and Coloured workers (Graphs 11, 12).

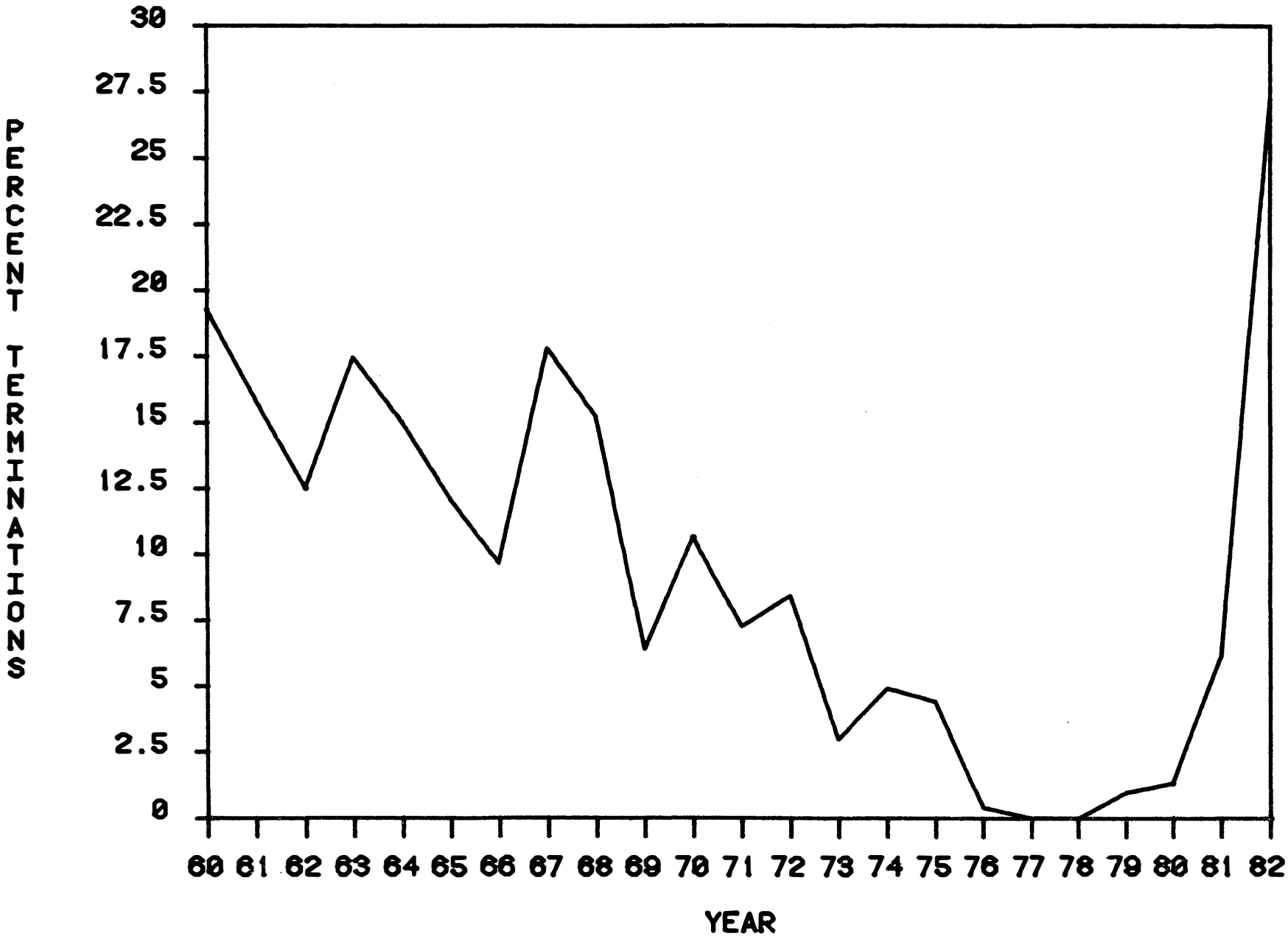
GRAPH 14 - TOTAL WAGES LOST PER 1000 IN RANDS (1982=100)



GRAPH 15 : PROPORTION OF STRIKES RESULTING IN JOB TERMINATION

The declining trend of the proportion of strikes in which dismissal took place has been sharply reversed with the increase in strikes during 1981 and 1982. This graph includes strikes caused by terminations as well as those which resulted in job loss.

GRAPH 15 - PROPORTION OF STRIKES RESULTING IN A TERMINATION

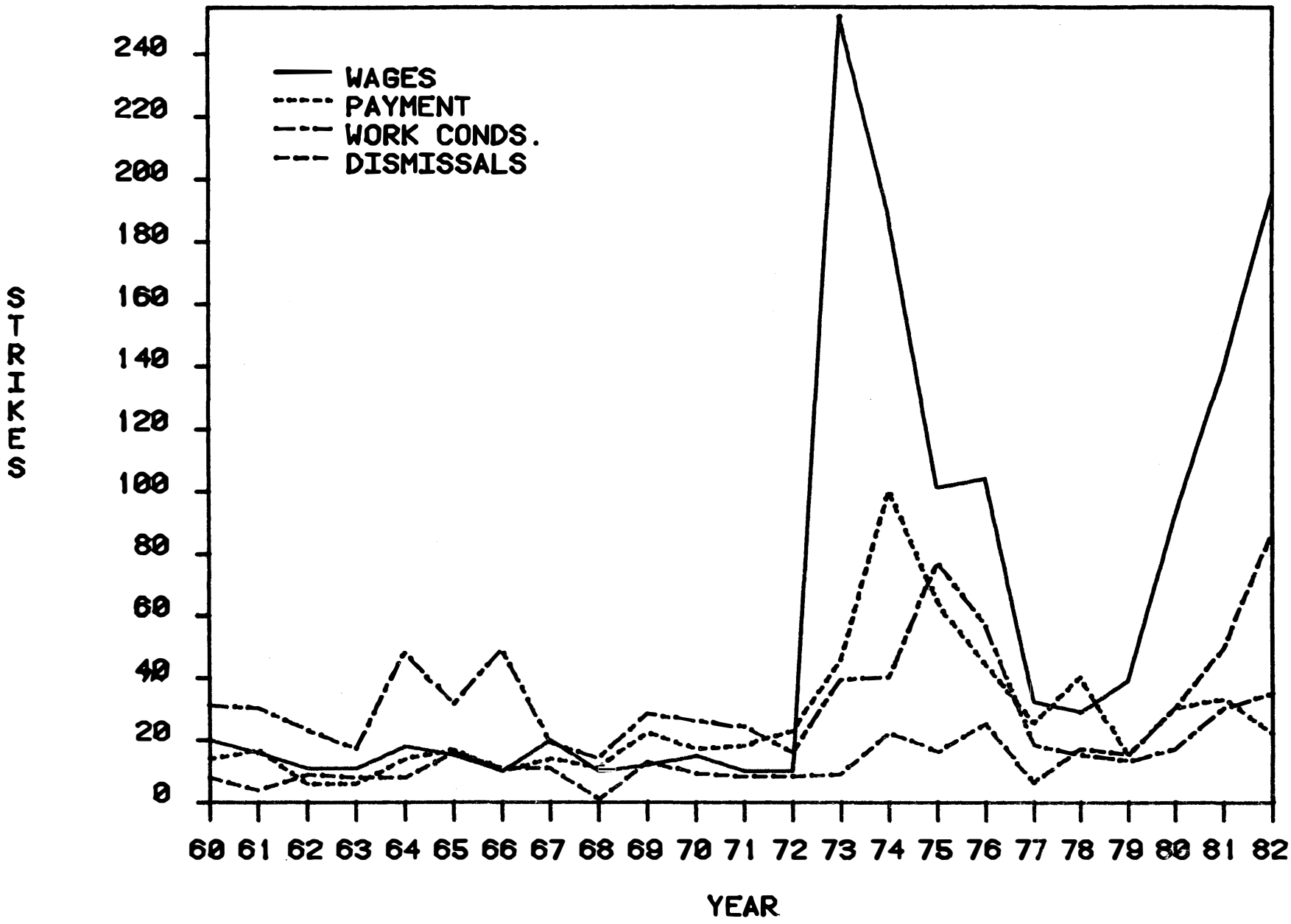


GRAPHS 16, 17, 18, 19 : STRIKES AND WORK-DAYS LOST RELATED TO CAUSE

In 1973 and after 1979 the strike behaviour of Black workers dominates the strike data. The recession in 1982 has given rise to an increasing number of strikes over dismissals. Other issues which had temporary prominence were trade union 'recognition', 'retention of pensions' and 'sympathy'. In periods of high strike activity it is apparent that 'wages' as a cause of strikes predominates. In reports where more than one cause for the strike was stated, 'wages' were usually included. 'Dismissals', including retrenchment, became the second major cause of strikes in 1982.

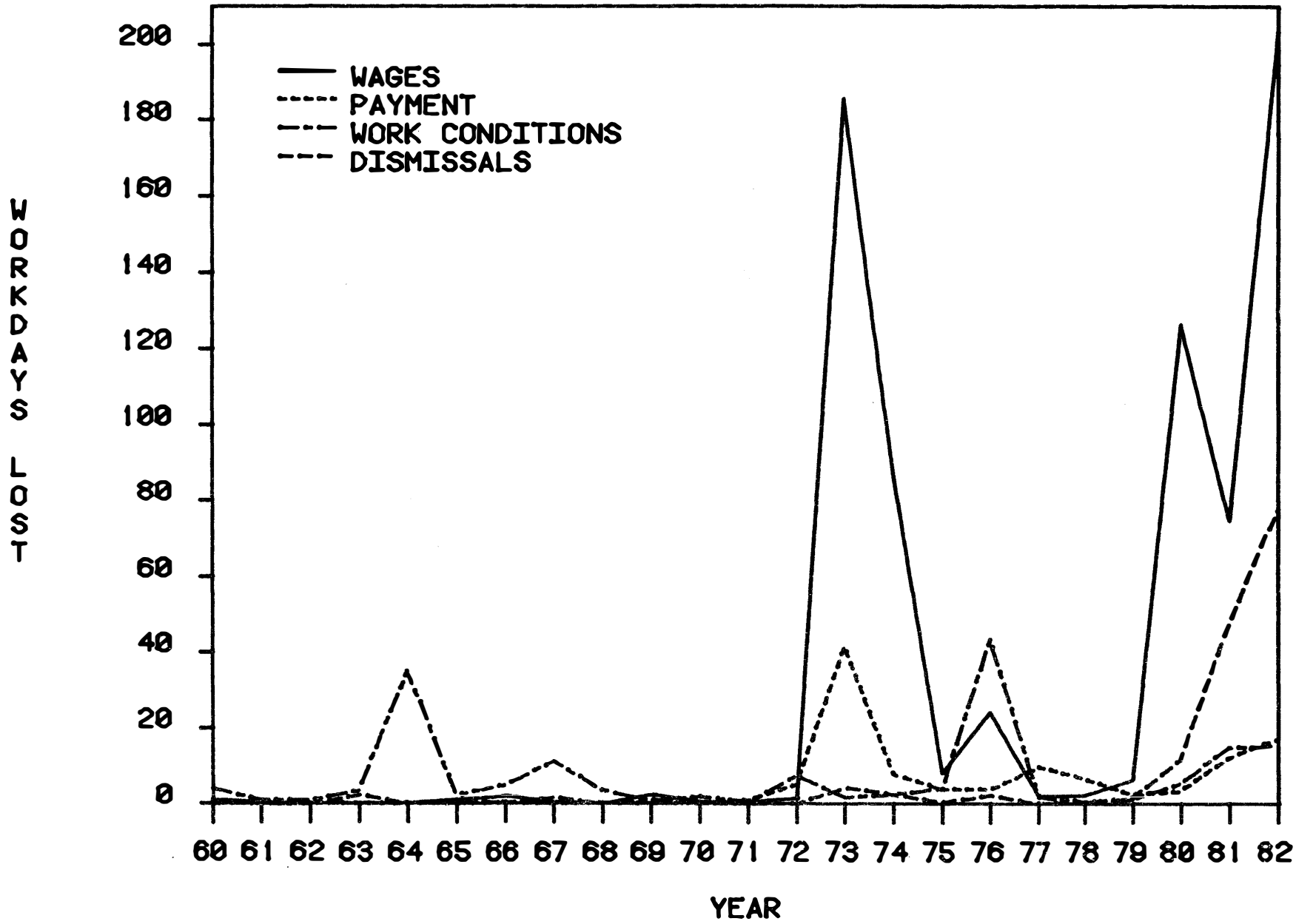
The number of work-days lost (Graphs 17, 19) was computed by dividing by 8 the number of man-hours lost. Whilst 'wages' was by far the most frequent cause of strikes in 1982 (Graph 16, 18), this is in contrast to 1981 when a more even distribution between 'wages', 'dismissals', 'retention of pensions' and 'sympathy' became evident.

GRAPH 16 - STRIKES PER CAUSE
WAGES, PAYMENT, WORKING CONDITIONS, DISMISSALS

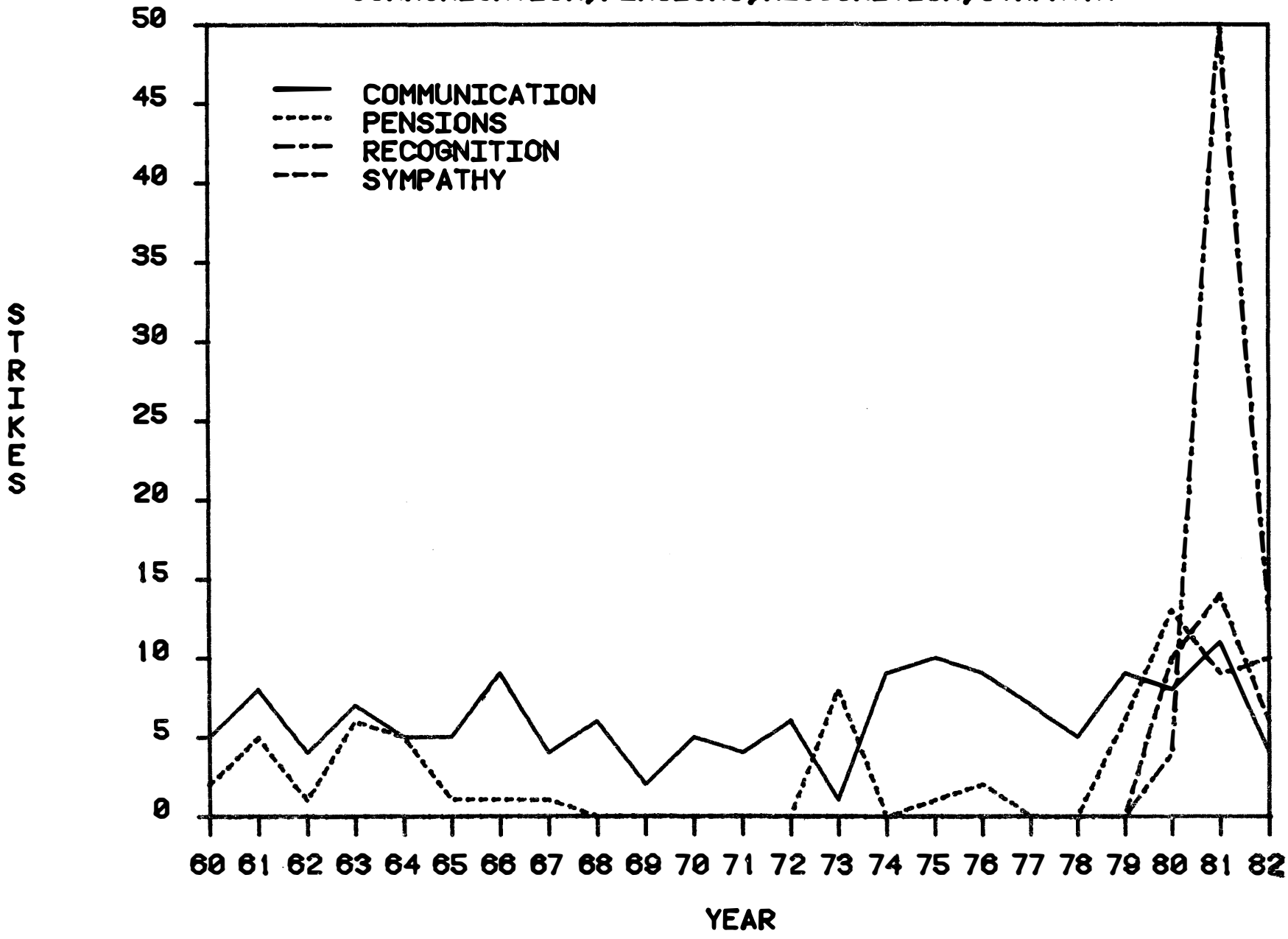


THOUSANDS

GRAPH 17 - WORKDAYS LOST PER CAUSE
WAGES, PAYMENTS, WORKING CONDITIONS, DISMISSALS

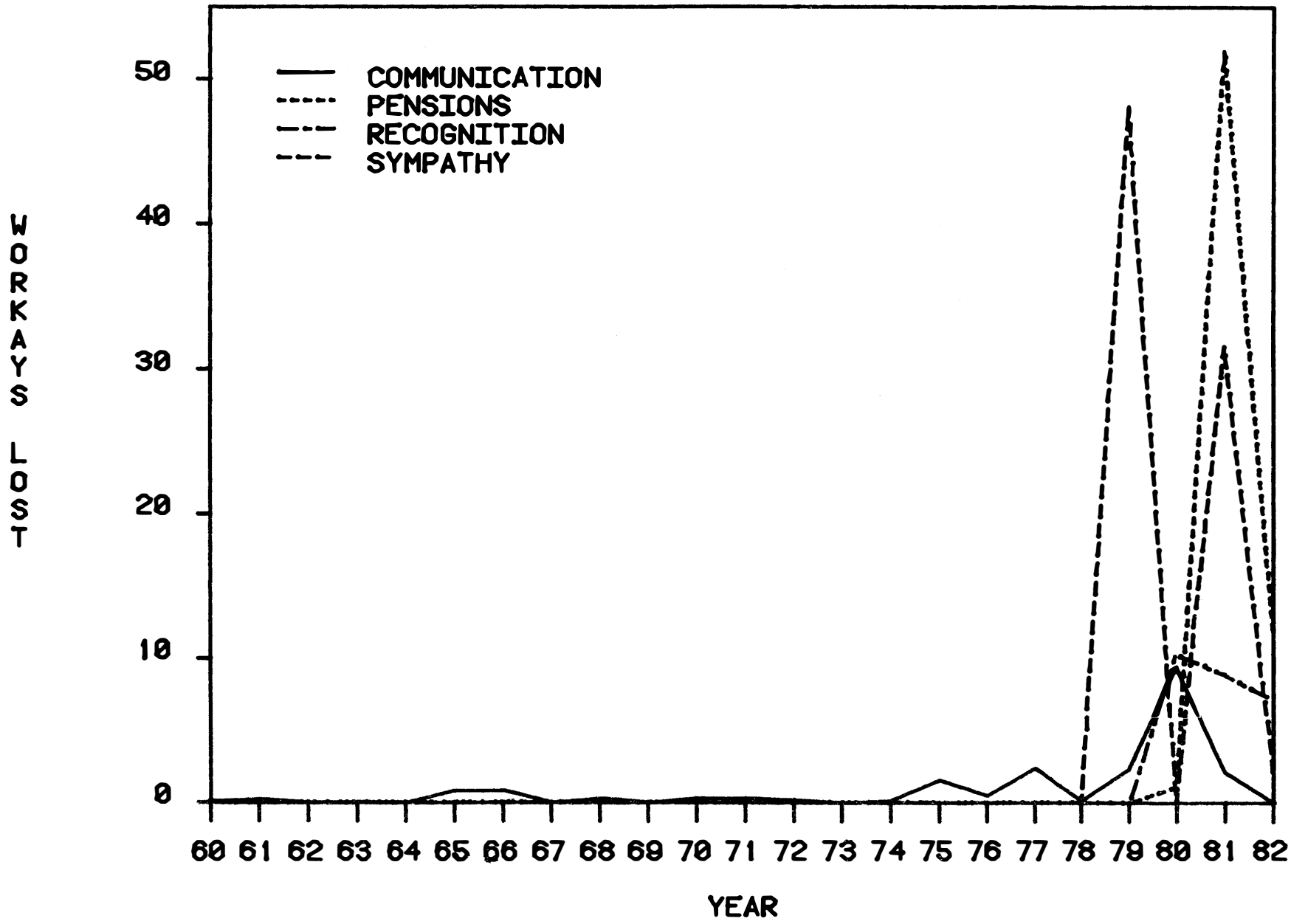


GRAPH 18 - STRIKES PER CAUSE
COMMUNICATION, PENSIONS, RECOGNITION, SYMPATHY



THOUSANDS

GRAPH 19 - WORKDAYS LOST PER CAUSE
COMMUNICATION, PENSIONS, RECOGNITION, SYMPATHY



GRAPHS 20, 21, 22, 23 : STRIKES PER AREA

Graph 20 - Strikes in four areas: N.Transvaal, S.Transvaal, Natal, N. & E.Cape.
Graph 21 - Strikes in four areas: Kimberley, Bloemfontein, East London, Cape Town.
Graph 22 - Strikes in three areas: PWV, Durban/Pinetown, Port Elizabeth/Uitenhage.
Graph 23 - Strikers per area: PWV, Durban/Pinetown, Port Elizabeth/Uitenhage.

Strike activity within different industrial areas is presented in Graphs 20 - 23.

Graph 20 There have been relatively few strikes in these four largely rural areas. The largest number occured in the N.Transvaal. The peaks in strike aactivity in this area do not coincide with those in PWV area (Graph 23). This difference between the two Transvaal areas is probably a reflection of the differing nature of economic activity in the Transvaal outside the PWV area.

Graph 21 This shows that the number of strikes in the smaller urban areas was low, but tended to follow the pattern of the major urban areas, except that the decline in 1982 was greater. This is particularly true of East London, where strikes have been at a higher level since 1973 than previously. There is no consistent order in which strikes were experienced in each area.

Graph 22 indicates clearly that strikes have been experienced in the PWV area in the years since 1960. In the last three strike cycles (viz. 1968/72/81) the peak in strikes experienced in the PWV area seems to have been following that for the Durban/Pinetown area one year later. The highest incidence of strikes in the PWV area was in 1974. A point of note is that the incidence of strikes in the Port Elizabeth/Uitenhage area from 1960 to 1979 was relatively low, but has increased considerably since 1979.

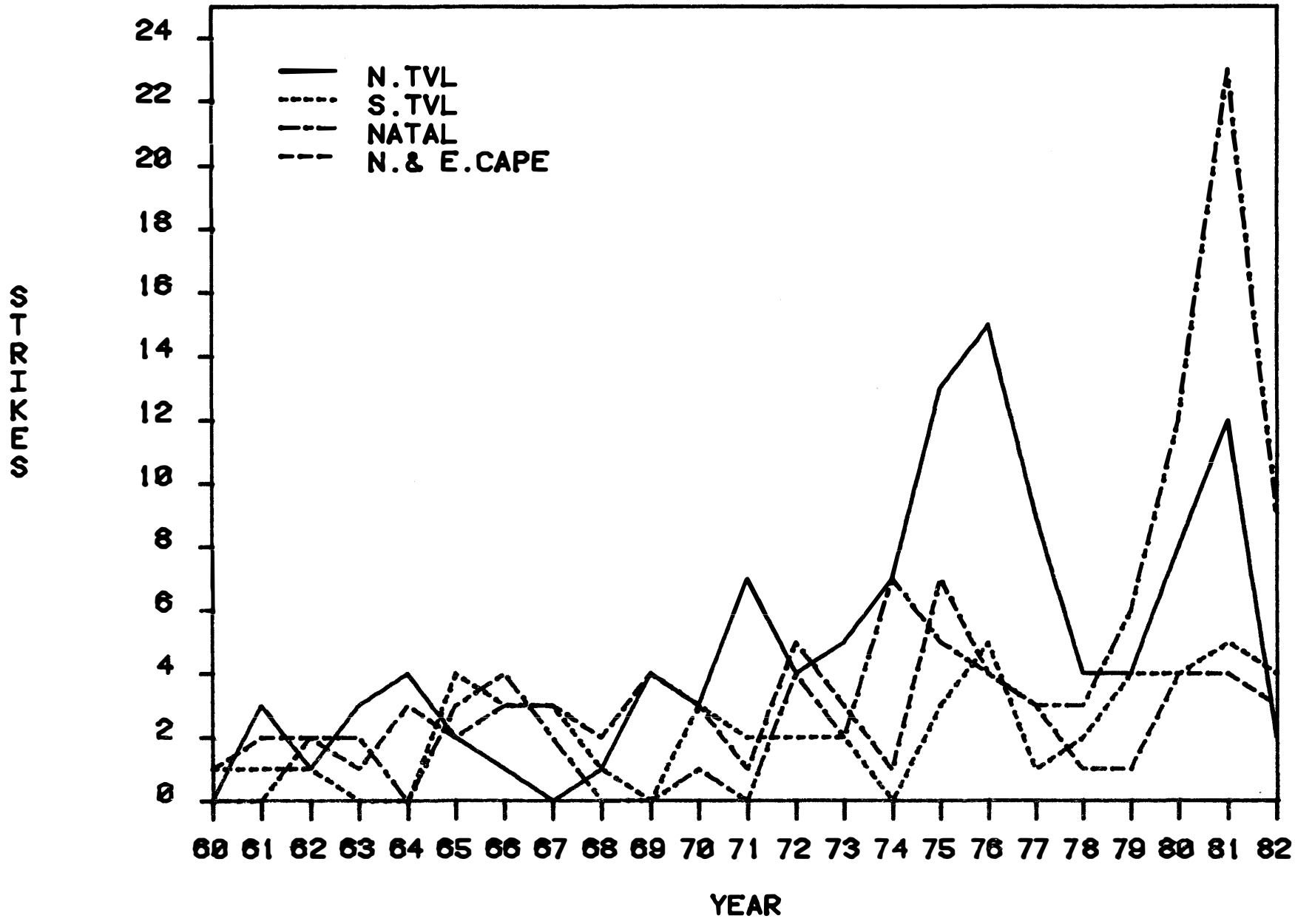
In looking at the four graphs, the number of strikes experienced in the three major industrial areas represented 88% of all strikes occurring during 1982.

The number of strikes decreased in all but two areas in 1982. The exceptions were:

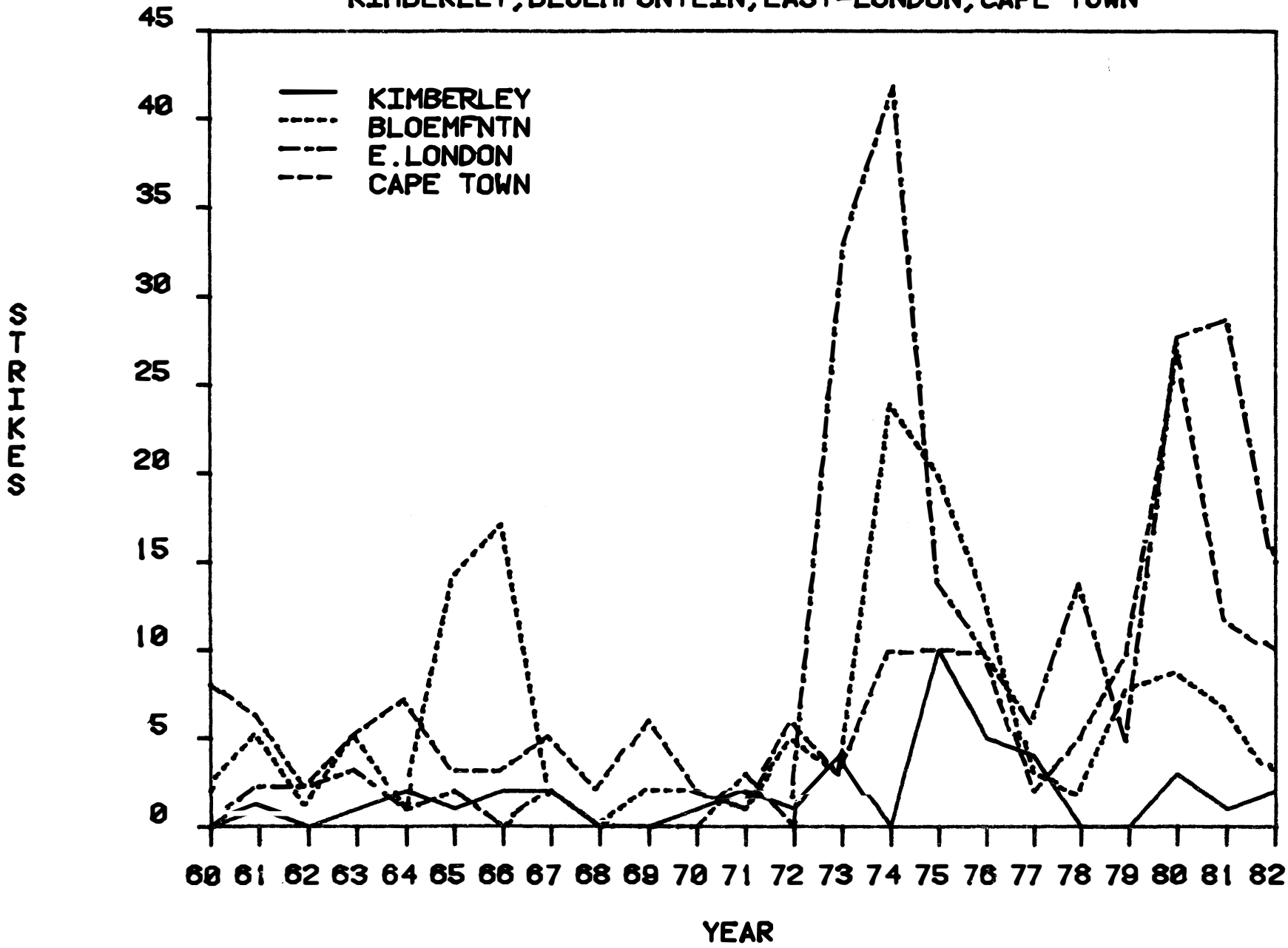
(a) Kimberley: increased from 1 to 2;
(b) PWV : increased from 91 to 206.

There was a reduction in the number of strikes in the Port Elizabeth/Uitenhage area, namely from 78 to 61. This latter observation highlights the error inherent in equating the incidence of strikes with actual strike activity. The number of strikers in the PWV area (Graph 23) was only marginally greater than the number of strikers included in the Port Elizabeth/Uitenhage area. This indicates that though fewer, the strikes in the Port Elizabeth/Uitenhage area (predominently vehicle manufacturing - 1982) were on average much larger than those occurring in the PWV area. As can be seen in Graph 24, the number of work-days lost per strike also increased when compared to 1981, indicating larger strikes.

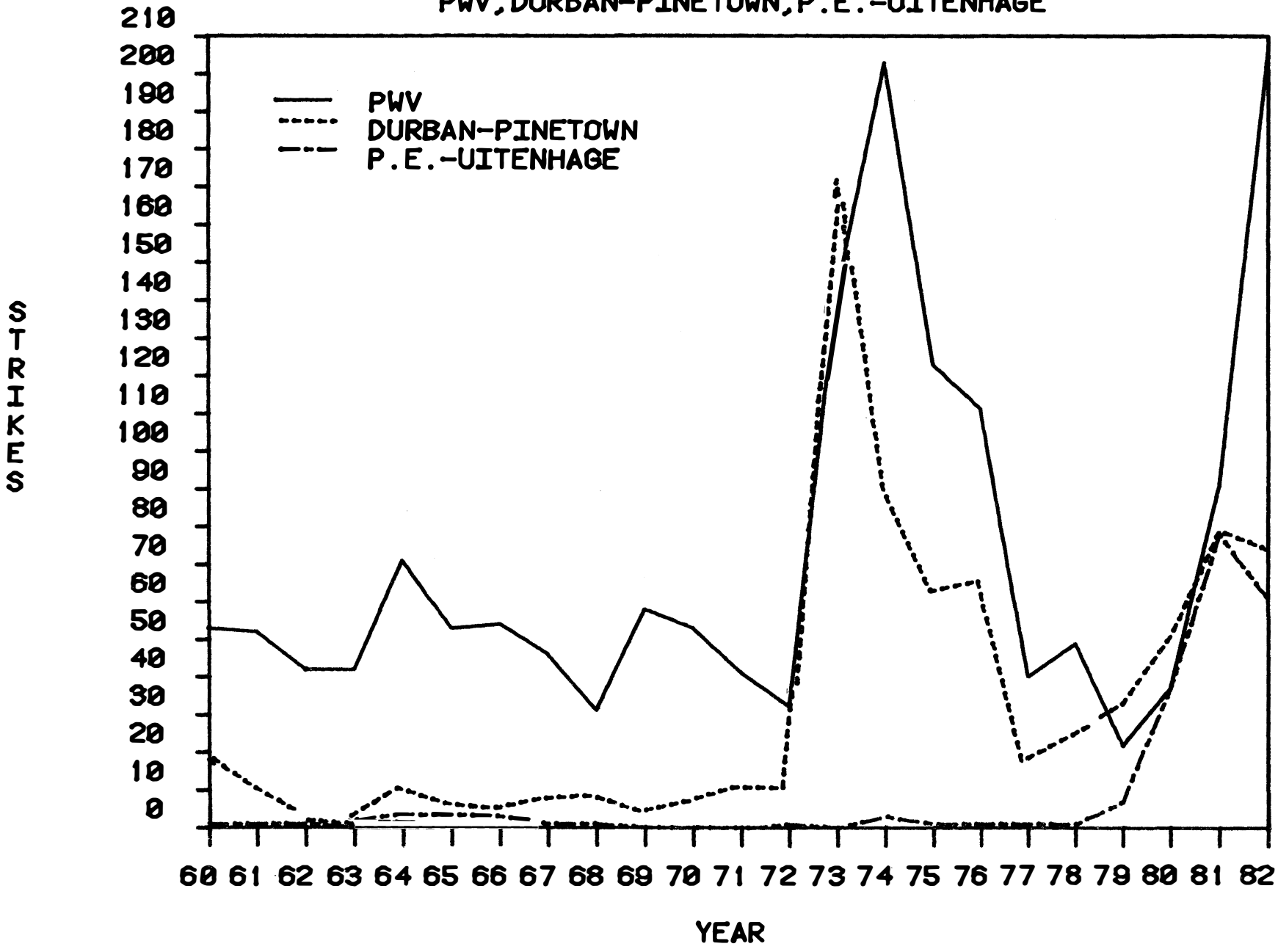
GRAPH 20 - STRIKES IN FOUR AREAS
N.TRANSVAAL, S.TRANSVAAL, NATAL, N.&E.CAPE



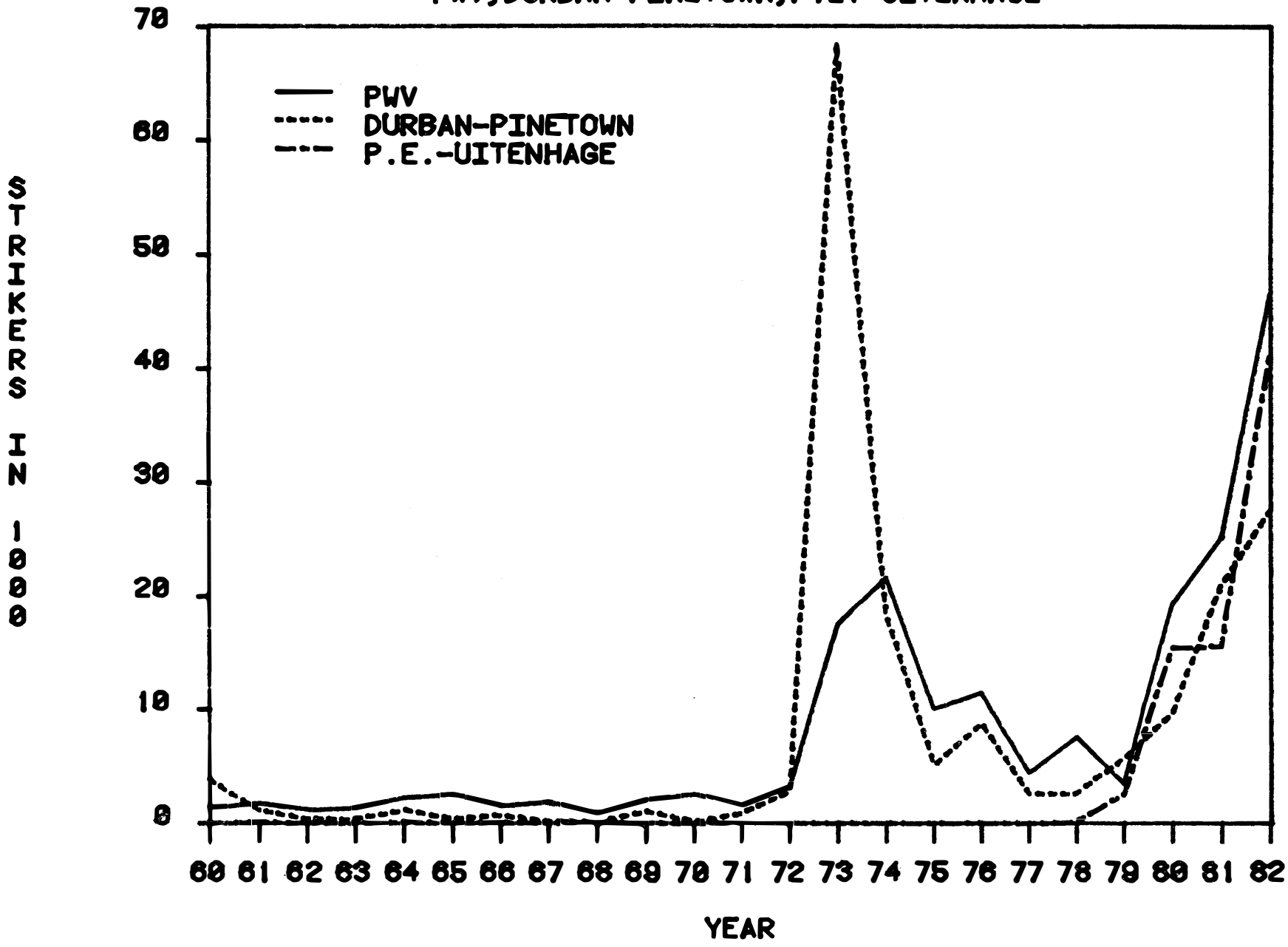
GRAPH 21 - STRIKES IN FOUR AREAS
KIMBERLEY, BLOEMFONTEIN, EAST-LONDON, CAPE TOWN



GRAPH 22 - STRIKES IN THREE AREAS
PWV, DURBAN-PINETOWN, P.E.-UITENHAGE



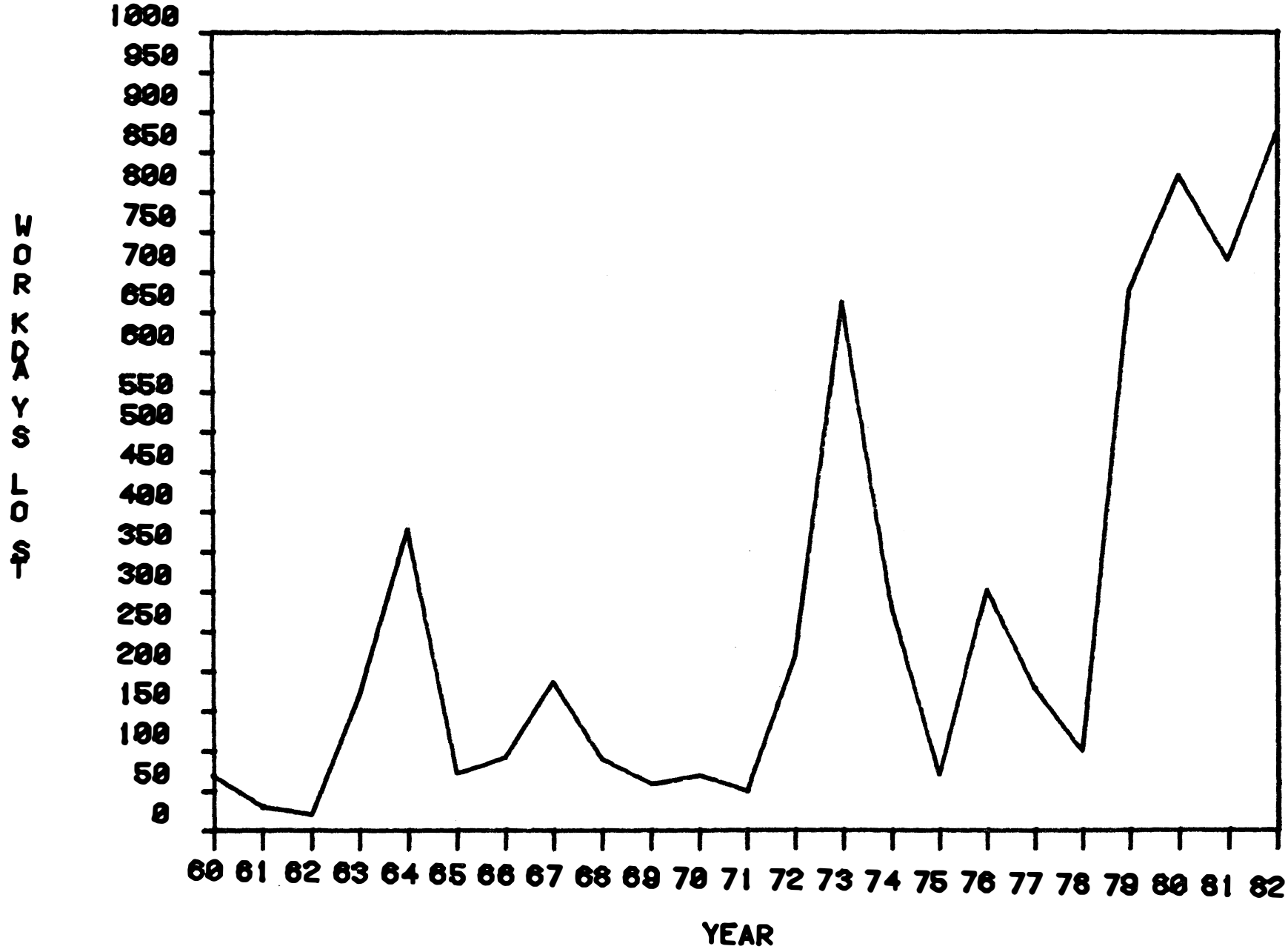
GRAPH 23 - STRIKERS PER AREA
PWV, DURBAN-PINETOWN, P.E.-UITENHAGE



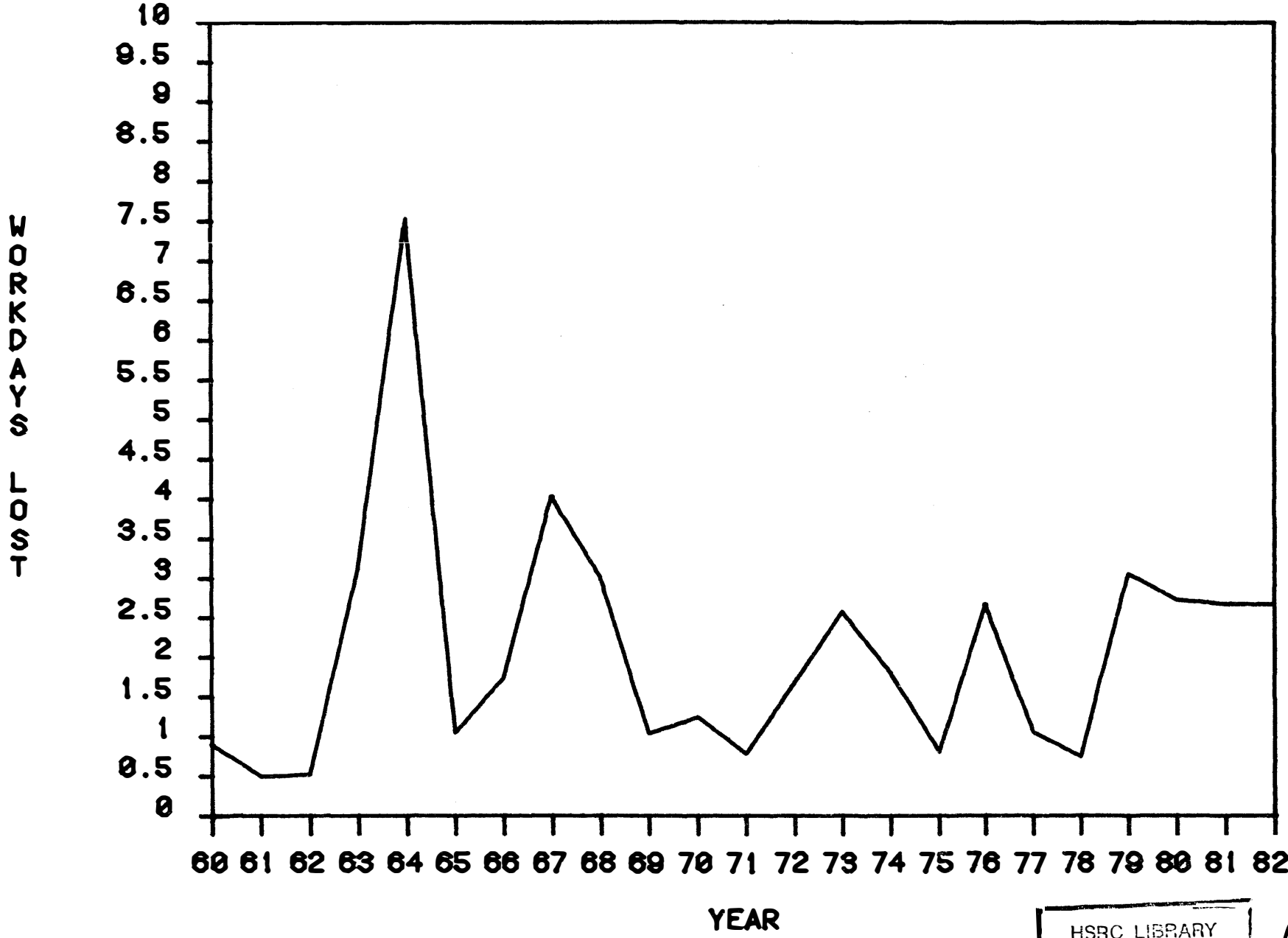
GRAPHS 24, 25, 26 : PROFILE OF STRIKES - 1982

It is possible to give a profile of average strikes. Strikes in 1982 are involving more workers, onaverage 330 (Graph 26), and a greater number of work-days lost, 870 compared with 70 in 1960, (Graph 24). Strikes were most probably because of wages but other issues such as retrenchment were rising in importance (Graph 17). Whilst each striker lost about 2,5 days work (compared with 0,9 in 1960 (Graph 25)) with a loss in wages incurred as a result of the strike of thirty-four rands.

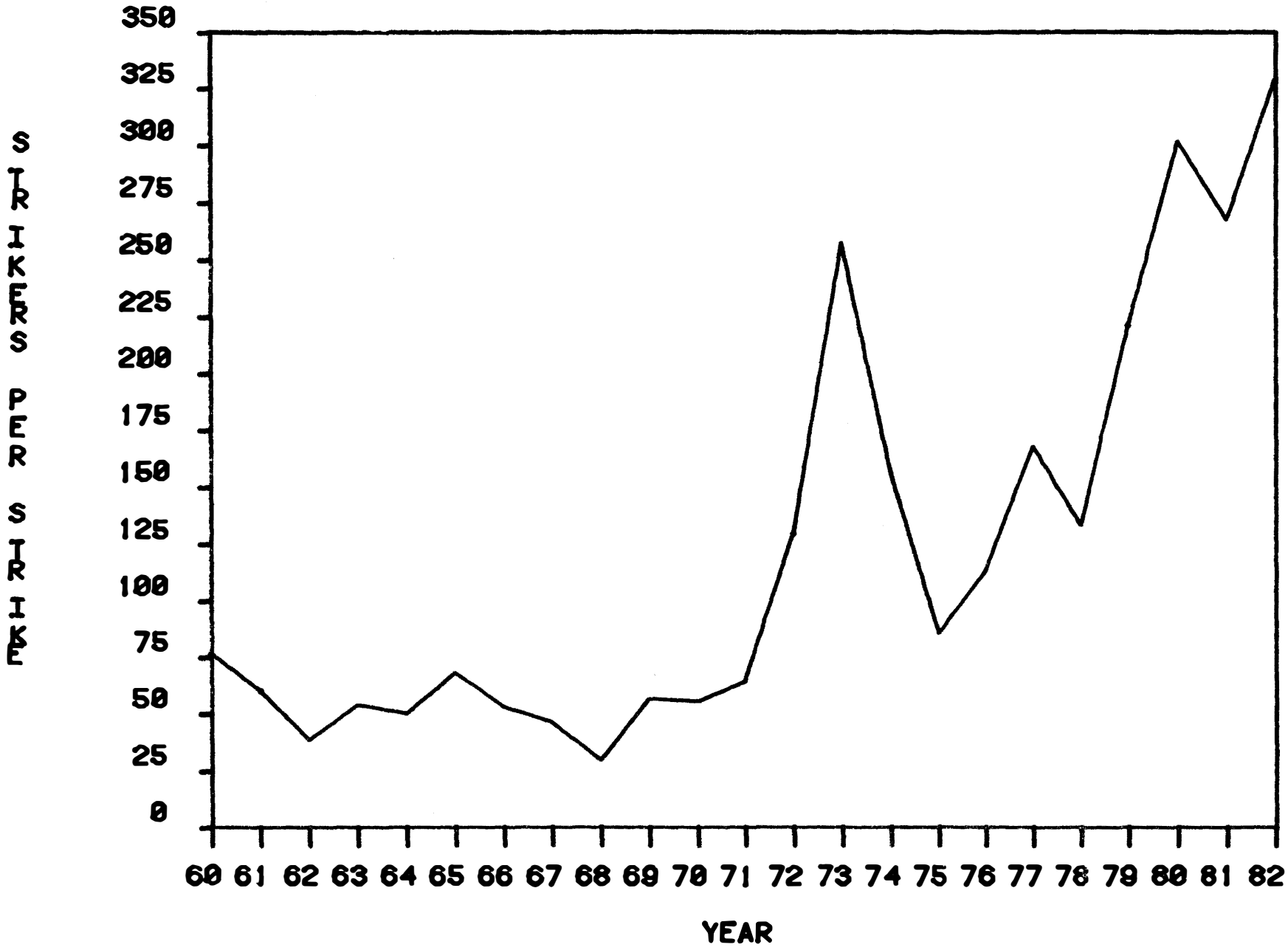
GRAPH 24 - WORKDAYS LOST PER STRIKE



GRAPH 25 - **WORKDAYS LOST PER STRIKER**



GRAPH 26 - **NUMBER OF STRIKERS PER STRIKE**

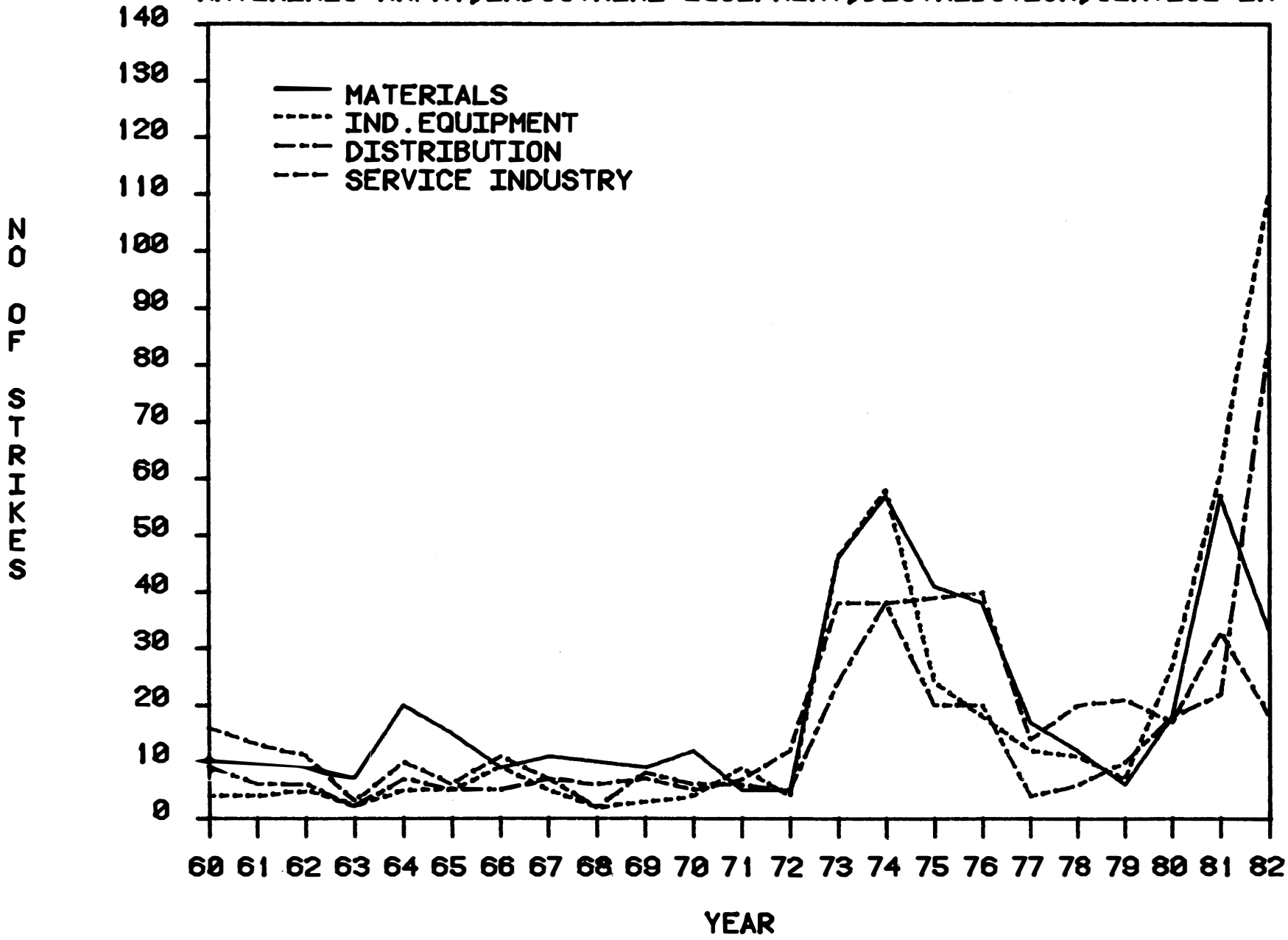


GRAPHS 27, 28 : STRIKES BY INDUSTRY

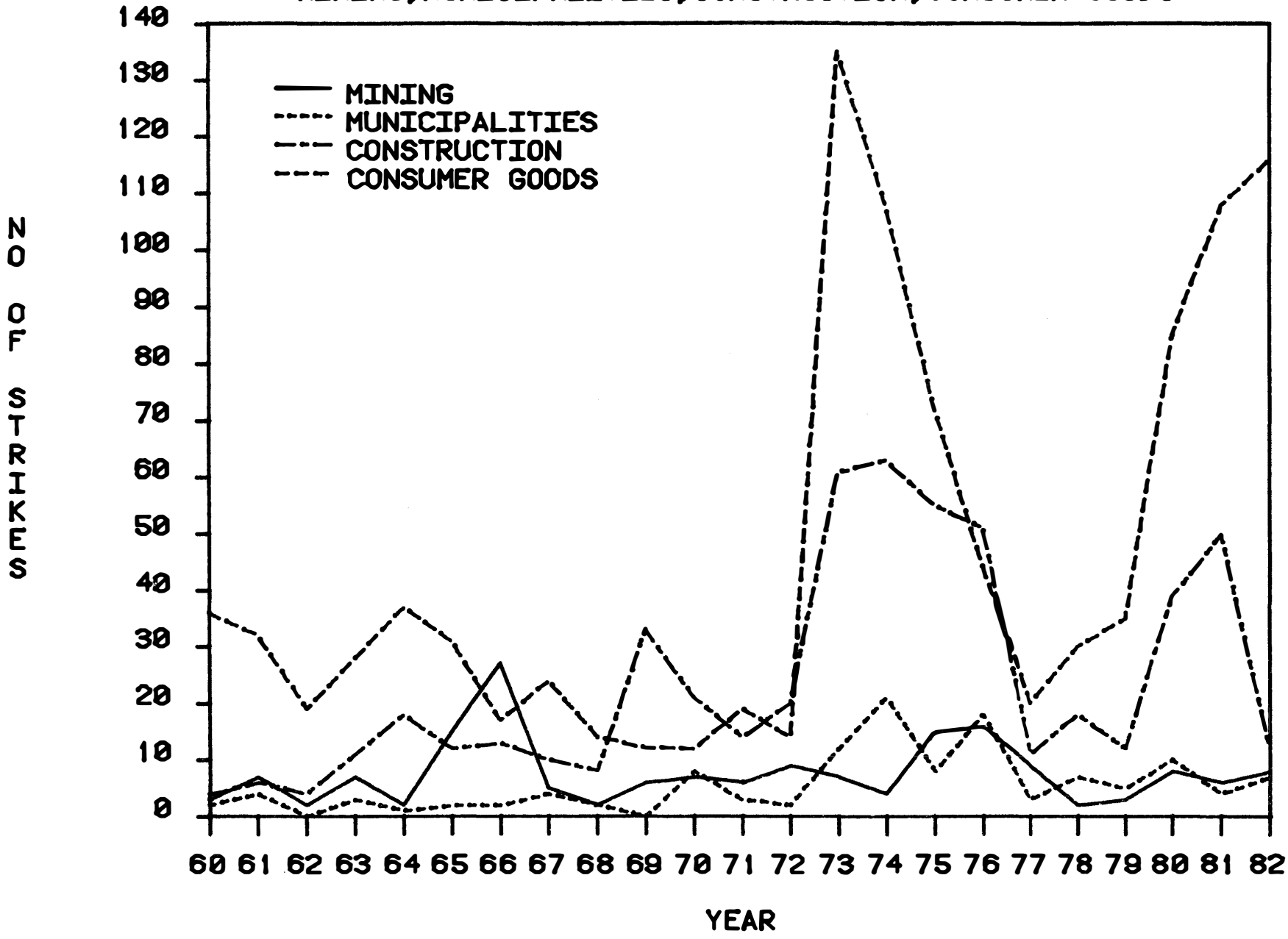
Graphs 27 and 28 reflect strikes in eight industrial groups.

Three industries, 'Consumer Goods', 'Industrial Equipment', and 'Distribution' experienced 311 of the 389 reported strikes in 1982. Except in 1969 and 1972, the number of strikes was found to be greatest in the Consumer Goods groups - which includes motor vehicle manufacturers. Strikes in these areas increased to a greater extent in times of generally high strike activity. In 1982 the greatest increase, in both percentage and absolute terms, was in strikes in Distribution. This appears to have coincided with union attempts to gain employer recognition. By the very nature of the distributive organisations, strikes tended to occur in more than one branch of the same employer. These multiple strikes were reported separately for each branch, as is required by law.

GRAPH 27 - STRIKES PER INDUSTRY
MATERIALS MNFR.,INDUSTRIAL EQUIPMENT,DISTRIBUTION,SERVICE IN



GRAPH 28 - STRIKES PER INDUSTRY
MINING, MUNICIPALITIES, CONSTRUCTION, CONSUMER GOODS



GRAPH 29 : RATE OF INCREASE IN CONSUMER PRICE INDEX

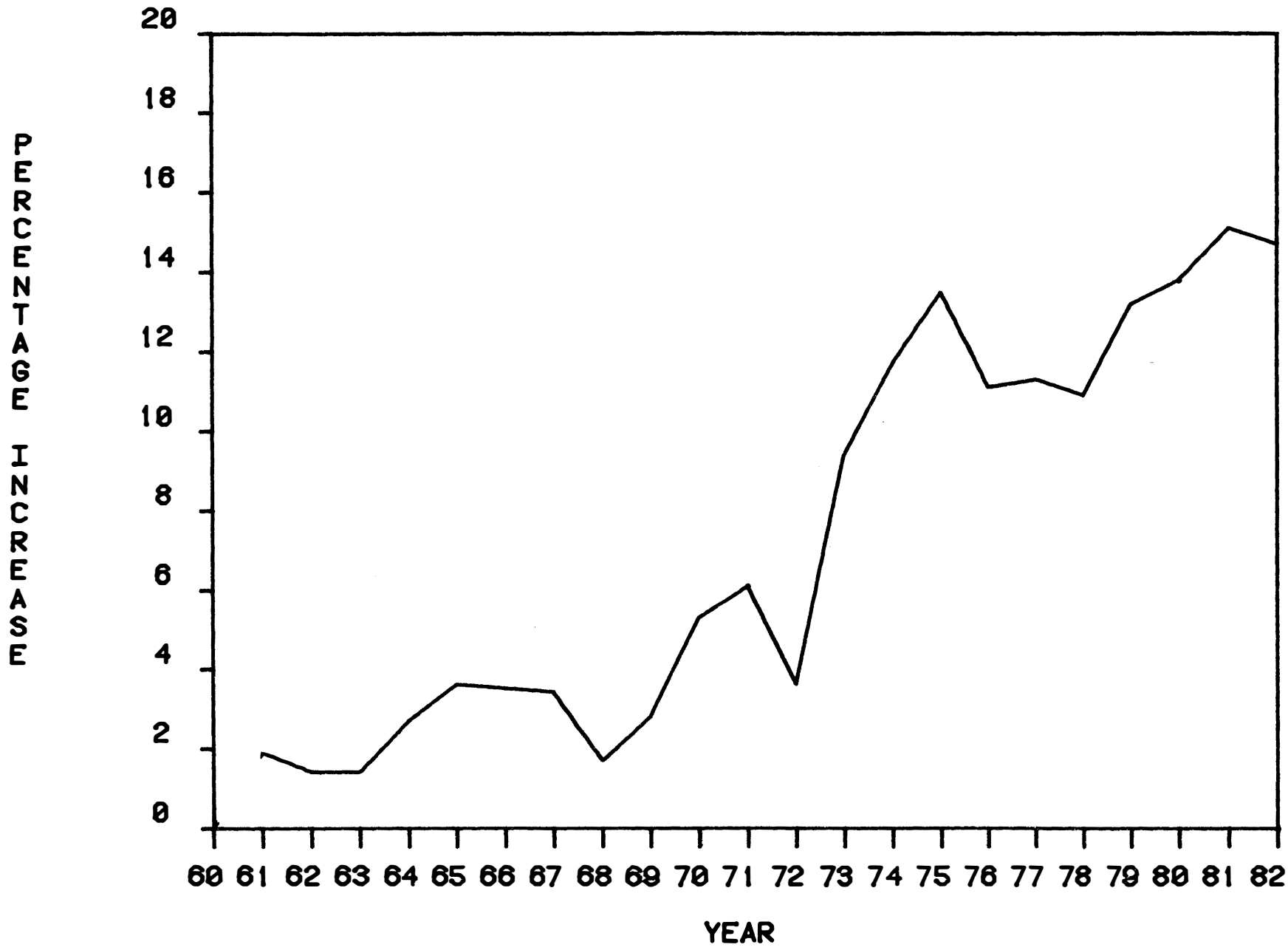
(Graph 29 can be removed and placed over the other graphs for comparisons.)

Those years in which there is an acceleration in the rate of increase in the Consumer Price Index are associated with an increase in strike activity. This can be seen in:

Graph 1	strikes per year
Graph 31	standardised work-days lost
Graph 22	strikes in three areas.

It would appear that employees become used to a certain level of spending power and only when inflation accelerates that it becomes a factor associated with strikes. If it is accepted that strike activity is a reflection of industrial relations, then the policy implication must be that it is not the rate of inflation which should be considered but the rate of change in inflation.

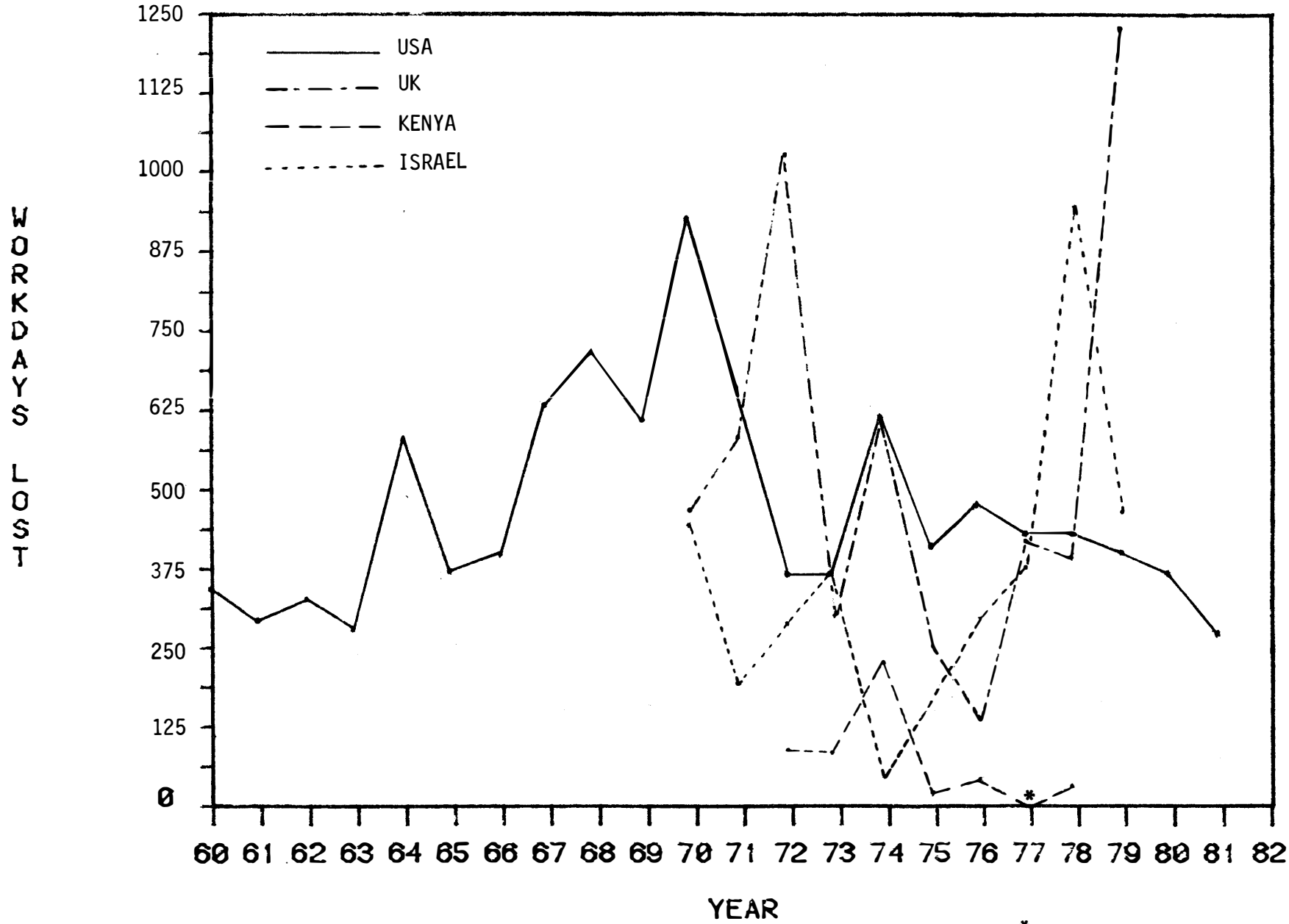
GRAPH 29 - **RATE OF INCREASE IN CONSUMER PRICE INDEX**



GRAPH 30 : WORK-DAYS LOST PER THOUSAND EMPLOYED (excluding agricultural) IN FOUR COUNTRIES (USA, UK, KENYA, ISRAEL)

An observation from this graph is the very variable nature of strike activity in these four countries. In this respect there is a similarity with the situation in South Africa. An obvious difference is that strike activity is at a far higher level in Israel, the United Kingdom and the United States of America than in South Africa. There is, unfortunately, a dearth of data relating to strike activity in countries in Africa which would enable further comparisons of strike activity to be made.

GRAPH 30 - **WORKDAYS LOST PER** 1 000 EMPLOYED
(EXCLUDING AGRICULTURAL) IN FOUR COUNTRIES



* Missing information

CONCLUSIONS

This report allows for a long-term overview of strike activity in South Africa with data standardised for employment and for population.

It has been shown that strike activity in 1982, measured in work-days lost per thousand, was the highest since 1960. This level was, however, only half of that recorded for the years 1970 - 1979 for, for instance, Japan, and about the same as for the Netherlands in 1978. Striking is becoming a more frequent aspect of industrial relations in South Africa. The incidence of strikes is however low in comparison to international data on strikes. This may be due to South African differences in the legal framework within which industrial relations are conducted, to the extent to which workers are organised, to a societal disinclination to enter into strikes or to a permanent, large pool of unemployed labour.

The question of earnings is, not surprisingly, the most commonly voiced reason for striking. However, specific issues resulting in strikes can be identified (for example, retention of pensions).

RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations which arise from this study relate primarily to future research possibilities. It is recommended that:

(i) the data already obtained and reported on in this study be kept up to date (i.e. strike data bank be developed);

(ii) a current source of demographic data be developed to allow standardisation of strike data for comparative purposes;

(iii) parallel research be carried out to determine the attitudes to, and opinions about, striking held by members of different groups;

(iv) further analysis be carried out on the data reported in this study to provide more information on the level and fluctuations in strike activity of the different population groups in various industries and areas;

(v) parallel research be carried out to determine the economic, psychological and sociological factors associated with striking.

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