

VOLUME THREE NUMBER TWO

SPRING 1985 (86)

# INDICATOR

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THE BAROMETER OF SOCIAL TRENDS

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# POLITICAL

M O N I T O R

INDICATOR  
SOUTH AFRICA

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Vigilante squads converge on a crowd who have just set a house alight in Umlazi township in Durban. Fatal incidents of intra-opposition factionalism in Natal and the Eastern Cape are a startling feature of the unrest.

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# THE GOVERNMENT REFORM AGENDA

By Prof Lawrence Schlemmer

**N**egotiation and the politics of compromise are the talk of the day in South Africa. A significant threshold has been crossed with the meeting of certain captains of industry and exiled black nationalists in Lusaka in mid-September, followed by similar talks involving Opposition Leader Dr F van Zyl Slabbert and other PFP parliamentarians. Beyond the rhetoric, these probing contacts are irrefutably watershed events in the country's history of conflict between white and black nationalisms.

*Prof Schlemmer considers the key features of the radically different frameworks for negotiation put forward by government and black political activists. In a climate of unrealistically high expectations, he cautions that once begun, the hard process of bargaining will be drawn out and tortuous, requiring compromise, commitment and responsible leadership from participants.*

It has rapidly become part of the conventional wisdom in and about South Africa that stability, and hence faith in the economy, can only be restored by negotiation between the South African government and legitimate black leaders. Only a few days ago the US Secretary of State repeated this injunction, calling on the South African government to negotiate with Nelson Mandela and the ANC. Enlightened conservatives, liberals, most of large-scale industry and the international community perceive this as the only meaningful step towards the solution of the country's problems.

Furthermore, even the South African government has committed itself to something which it has termed negotiation and has established a 'forum' - associated with the special Cabinet Committee on the constitution - in order to provide a location for such talks. However, very little negotiation has actually taken place yet, though the State President went some way towards attempting to provide a framework for negotiation at the Cape Congress of the National Party (see below).

In long-range anticipation of negotiations of some kind, some very prominent white South Africans from industry and the media have held talks with Mr Oliver Tambo and others representing the ANC in Zambia. One of their motives was to attempt to narrow the distance between the ANC and the white South African establishment, as a prelude to negotiation.

In short, the concept of negotiation has come to be seen as the fundamental cure for our country's ills. A very substantial proportion of South Africa and the concerned West have pinned their hopes and expectations on this process. This assessment is manifestly correct and it is very necessary that a process of negotiation be encouraged. It is exceedingly naive,

*The meeting of industrialists and ANC leaders in Lusaka was meant to narrow the distance between the white establishment and exiled black nationalists*

*Although the talks might be a prelude to negotiation, the process itself will be drawn out and not offer any magical solution to the country's ills*

*African leaders have responded negatively to the government's position on initial power-sharing and negotiation through various forums*

*Government is insistent that any new constitution must ensure that the white voting constituency has equal voting status with other units*

*Supporters of the East Rand African People's Organisation (ERAPO), a UDF affiliate, hoist high a banner proclaiming one of the demands of the Freedom Charter. A funeral rally for unrest victims, KwaThema (Springs), July 1985.*

however, to anticipate that thorough-going negotiation could commence soon, or that its benefits will not be mixed.

### Factors Impeding Negotiation

A large number of issues and problems make negotiation involving a range of credible leaders unlikely at this stage. The impediments are present on both sides:

#### The South African Government:

- **An unacceptable framework.**

For quite a while now, the State President and Minister Heunis have been clearly unwilling to declare their negotiating position. Very recently at the Cape Congress of the National Party, however, the State President publicly endorsed the concept of 'power sharing' on matters of common concern between groups, and spelt out a constitutional framework amounting to a form of race federation. The State President has also offered to accommodate Africans on the President's Council in order to assist in constitutional investigations.

All reactions from African leaders and spokesmen to this framework were negative. Chief Buthelezi called the statements 'bitterly disappointing'. The United Democratic Front considered that they showed lack of sensitivity to the feelings and aspirations of African people. Azapo (the Azanian People's Organisation) characterised the statement as paying mere lip service to equal voting rights and common citizenship. Dr Motlana of the Soweto Civic Association called the statements a waste of precious time. The black press followed a line largely similar to these reactions.

Quite clearly then, the government, even at a time when the pressure on it to make concessions is greater than ever before, seems unable to offer a framework for negotiation which will entice black leaders to the negotiating table.

- **The limits of constitutional reform.**

The problem of establishing a framework for negotiation is the tip of an iceberg of a larger problem. It is a political truism to say that no political leader in full control of the institutions of government is likely to enter negotiations which will lead to a relinquishing of power. The National Party does not intend handing over power. At best it intends sharing power. This means that the present government will always act to protect the position of its powerbase - the white electorate, which as the government sees it, cannot be allowed to become a political minority. Therefore, all else being equal, any constitution to which the government will agree must ensure that the white voting constituency as a constitutional unit has at least equal status with other constitutional units, which means a separate identification of the white voter.

The broad constitutional framework proposed by the State President at the Cape Congress is precisely along these lines. Within the boundaries of the Republic of South Africa (excluding the independent homelands which will be linked to South Africa in a confederal structure), political units will be identified at the regional (non-independent homelands)







Cecil Sols / Atrapax

and local (black townships or combinations of black urban areas) levels. These will all be represented centrally in a 'general affairs' chamber, in which power will be *shared* on matters of common concern. The basic equation in this race-federation will not be numbers but groups and regions. Presumably negotiation could affect the terms of power sharing, the demarcation of regions and the mechanisms of representation, but would not undermine the principle of separate representation according to race.

For reasons which will be discussed presently, this framework will be perceived by the black political elite as a cosmetic variation on 'apartheid'. This is not necessarily objectively true, since the power sharing could be equitable and effective in promoting social and economic justice. Perceptions are what count in politics, however, and the way it is perceived dooms it from the start.

● **Pressures to negotiate are not overwhelming.**

The state may be facing an internal crisis at the moment and may be under extreme pressure from the international banking community, western governments and black popular protest and demonstrations, but it is very far from capitulation. On the prospect of a siege economy, the Governor of the Reserve Bank said last week in the *Financial Mail*, 'Well, we will survive. But it will not be fun. ... If we have to go into a siege economy we will have to make the best of a bad situation ...'. These are not sentiments of helplessness and despair.

The latest riots in the townships have dragged on for 15 months, leaving over 700 dead, but the security agencies have not felt compelled to use automatic weapons or sharp ammunition except in atypical incidents like the Langa tragedy in the Eastern Cape. The coercive sanctions on demonstrations could be hugely increased without the deployment of more personnel. New riot technology is also being developed which could alter present patterns and enhance the present containment of the township unrest.

The state is thus far from being compelled by township dissidents and exile forces to negotiate a 'settlement'. It is, at best, willing to negotiate in order to increase the credibility of government and to reduce the economic and human costs of social control.

● **The effects of negotiation on unrest.**

The government has been insistent that black leaders coming to the negotiating table should declare themselves to be opposed to violence. One consideration in this matter is that the release of imprisoned ANC leaders will undoubtedly lead to a welling of near-unbridled aspirations and hope for majority rule among Africans. As the cold, hard realities of a long drawn-out negotiating process dawn, the country could be plunged into the most violent conflict of its entire history. Great reliance would have to be placed in the unproven capacity of African leaders to calm the townships. Some of these leaders may be sorely tempted, on the other hand, to strengthen their negotiating position by doing exactly the opposite.

● **Fears of the reactions of conservative white voters.**

Political negotiation is more often than not accompanied by rhetoric aimed at softening the

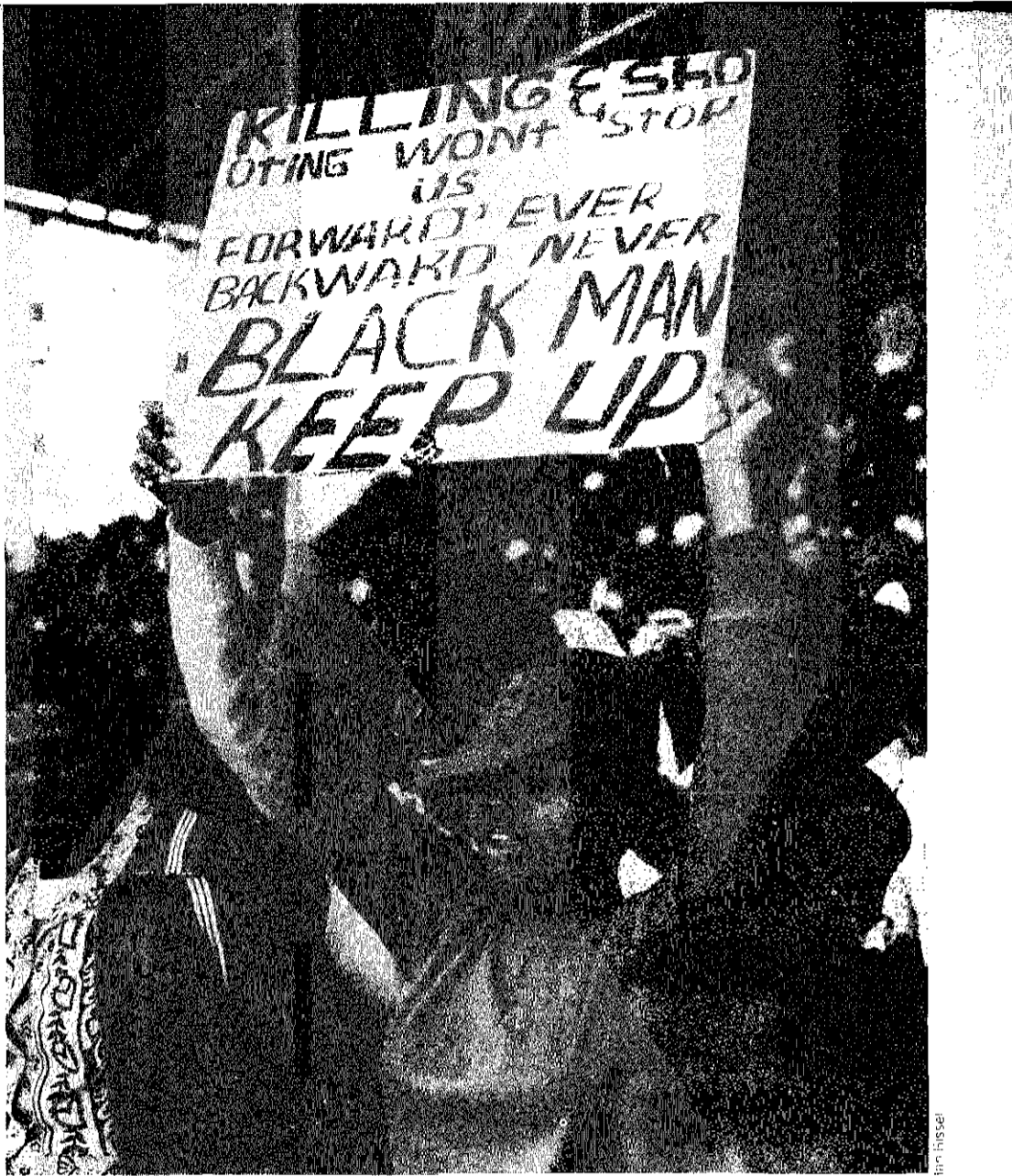
*A familiar township scene since October 1985 - the security forces keep watch on a crowd. The pressure of popular protest over 12 months has not seriously tested the state's coercive powers.*

*The 'race-federation' proposed by the State President at the Cape Congress comprises ethnic groups and geographical regions*

*The government is far from being compelled by township dissidents and exile forces to capitulate or negotiate a settlement*

**NEGOTIATION POLITICS**

A worker's placard at a protest meeting reflects the radicalised mood prevailing in many black communities. Even after more than 700 unrest fatalities, the political rebellion in the townships has not lost momentum.



The eventual release of imprisoned ANC leaders during the negotiation process will undoubtedly further heighten black expectations of change

With the UDF and National Forum vying for popular support, socialist rhetoric has filtered down to the rank-and-file in the townships

opposition, and it is seldom conciliatory (the real conciliation takes place behind closed doors). The media will so dramatise the rhetoric that white voters will all be drawn into an active and anxious interest in the process, and they will not enjoy it. A recent Markinor Gallup Poll (September 1985) found that only 32 percent of Afrikaners in major urban areas (the least conservative group) unambiguously supported the prospect of a fourth house of parliament for Africans. Faced with growing anxieties among its own supporters the government will have to use its own rhetoric of reassurance. It could be touch and go whether the negotiating process will survive the surrounding rhetoric.

#### The African Participants:

Problems arising within the context of prospective African participation in negotiations are no less discouraging:

- **Expectations beyond negotiation.**

In the past two years a dramatic process of radicalisation has taken place in the black communities, in part as a consequence of the emergence of strong competition for popular support between the UDF, the National Forum grouping (Azapo, Azasm) and Inkatha. Socialist rhetoric has never been more fashionable than in the past few months and it is penetrating to the rank-and-file, whether they understand the concepts or not. The recent poll by Mark Orkin in conjunction with Research Surveys (Pty) Ltd, showed a majority (77 percent) of Africans in urban areas in favour of socialism (albeit presented highly idealistically in the wording of the question). It also showed that, when associated with the policies of the ANC, UDF, Azapo and the PAC (Pan African Congress), a no-compromise position of one-man one-vote in a unitary system was endorsed by some 80 percent of urban Africans.

The current unrest, the consequent prominence of the ANC and the rhetorical position of no compromise taken by the UDF in reaction to the tricameral parliament have all combined to produce a mood of well-nigh boundless expectation. The hard grind of difficult negotiations are hardly what the politicised African community expects or wants in



the present phase of politics. The current fervour is to replace the system, not negotiate with it.

• **Lack of organisation.**

Negotiation implies compromise. In order to compromise, a political leader has to feel secure about his or her political base, or has to be able to take proposed negotiating positions back into an organisation to test their acceptability.

Neither of these conditions exist, with the exception of Inkatha. The ANC has obviously not had the freedom to establish community-based organisation of a normal kind. The UDF is a coalition of 600 organisations united largely by opposition to the government and sentiment, and hence it has a very diffuse internal structure. Some leaders (spokespeople) like Bishop Tutu and the Reverend Boesak are charismatic leaders apparently without access to lines of communication with an organised constituency at mass level (unless one regards the Churches as political organisations, which is highly problematic).

The result of this could easily be that among the more obvious participants in a negotiating process, only the Inkatha leadership, or the emergent trade union leadership (if it participates) could engage in political 'horse-trading'. The other political groupings, who have built reputations on the mobilisation of sentiment, would understandably feel highly vulnerable if they had to adopt positions of compromise.

• **The rejection of group-based compromise.**

Along with the difficulties for compromise politics suggested above, a further difficulty exists. As already argued, the National Party bottom line would be the maintenance of a coherent power base in the white constituency, which implies group-based politics. Black intelligentsia appear to have an extreme aversion to ethnic, group-based politics, among other reasons because it implies for them a rejection of their dignity and worth as human beings. The overwhelming aspiration is to gain the fullest possible social acceptance as fellow citizens and any group-based politics, no matter how much power is shared, contradicts this desire. The chances of creative compromises across this divide of political needs are slim indeed.

## The Need for Catalysts

If the arguments presented above hold, then the two major contending parties - white government and current black leadership, are really too far apart to negotiate fruitfully. Yet the politics of negotiation, including the ANC, are absolutely vital to ensure development towards organic stability.

Historical precedent suggests that when the government has tried everything and failed to contain unrest, and when the economy is crippled and African communities have become exhausted by constant turmoil, real negotiation will commence. This is an unacceptable prospect. Not only will it take years for the economy to be rebuilt but possibly tens or hundreds of thousands of lives will have been lost. Furthermore, the stage will be set for a pathological white right-wing counter-reaction which will start the destruction of human life and property anew. This future is to be avoided at all costs.

Catalysts are required to add new dimensions to the current political situation in order to bridge the gaps and to open opportunities for joint participation between the government and African leaders.

One such catalyst may well be the Convention Alliance initiated by the PFP, Inkatha and other interests. At least this initiative can provide an alternative forum in which some African and white leadership can begin to face the realities of negotiation politics jointly. Hopefully the Alliance will be able to either broaden its base or draw external parties on both the African and white side into negotiation 'exercises'. More generally, it will be able to promote the value of negotiation and political give and take.

## An Alternative Framework

What is also required, however, is a framework which is itself at least a compromise between 'group-based' and 'open' politics. One option, which has been argued before in Indicator SA, is that certain *regions* be allowed the opportunity to establish negotiations on a more open basis, with a view to the eventual representation at the centre simply as constituencies, without reference to race (see Indicator SA Vol2 No4). Other possibilities for creative alternative options should also be formulated and debated.

The months and years to come in South Africa will test society's capacity to develop solutions to well nigh insurmountable problems to the hilt. Needless to say, we must be willing to accept this challenge. An Irish radical, William O'Brien once said that the one good thing about violence is that it ensures a hearing for moderation. This is the challenge today. *UPA*

*In order to negotiate and compromise, political leaders must feel they have a secure constituency and test out offers and counter-offers*

*Political groupings mobilised around rhetoric rather than solid organisation become vulnerable if they adopt positions of compromise*

*It would appear that the two major contending parties, white government and black intelligentsia, are too far apart for fruitful negotiations at present*

*To break the deadlock, a framework is needed which will offer a compromise between ethnic group-based, regional and 'open' politics*

# Rebellion in the last outpost

## THE NATAL RIOTS

By Zilondile Gwala

*Civil unrest has simmered in Greater Durban's townships since the outbreak of an intense week-long spate of rioting in early August. In a similar pattern to other affected regions, a period of furious upheaval has subsided into sustained conflict between disaffected youth and residents, the security forces, and vigilantes. A feud between members of UDF civic and student affiliates, on the one hand, and Inkatha supporters, on the other, has found deadly expression in petrol-bomb attacks on rivals' properties, abduction and assault, and ugly street confrontations.*

*Special correspondent, Zilondile Gwala, investigates the linkages between localised protest and the broader political rebellion taking place in African townships nationwide. Gwala offers an explanation for the comparative delay and short duration of the riots in Natal, while testing the two theories most commonly advanced to explain such regional features. The author debates these at length - the supposed moderating influence exerted by Inkatha's principle of 'non-violence'; and the KwaZulu administration's flexible stand on potential conflict issues such as rents and influx control. The accompanying chronology was collated from press reports and 35 eye-witness accounts of the riots submitted by township residents.*



Elly Prinsloo





On the evening of 1 August 1985, a human rights lawyer, Mrs N V Mxenge was shot and killed by unknown assassins outside her house in Umlazi. Victoria Mxenge was an instructing attorney for the defence team in the Pietermaritzburg treason trial, involving 16 leaders of the United Democratic Front (UDF). Four days later, the Azanian Students Organisation (AZASO) and the Congress of South African Students (COSAS) distributed pamphlets calling for a week-long stayaway from school to observe a mourning period for Mrs Mxenge. Monday, 5 August, was to be the beginning of a week of intense unrest (see chronology) in Durban's African townships, unequalled since the Cato Manor riots of 1949.

Together with the call for a stayaway from school, shops in the townships were ordered to close as well. Although some commercial vehicles were attacked and looted on the first two days, the full fury of the riots was really experienced between Wednesday to Friday. Initially, a political motive was clearly discernable in the youth rioters' choice of targets - township administration offices (including those run by the KwaZulu government) and the property of alleged informers were all burnt down. Also, all bottle-stores and shops declared to be owned by corporations, non-African businessmen and African traders uncooperative as to community and welfare activities, were looted and then destroyed.

Although this short period of rage was predominantly political in nature, events were coloured by a criminal dimension later in the week. By the time that concentrated rioting had abated on midday on Thursday, 7 August, mobs had vented their frustration through the looting and burning of shops, businesses and

trading amenities. By Sunday at the end of the week's unrest, at least 67 people were dead, victims of the fiercest riots experienced in South Africa over the last 12 months of civil strife.

There are conflicting reports regarding what actually brought the rioting to an end. The police and the army had been active in the townships since Wednesday and the presence of non-uniformed vigilantes in KwaMashu was reported on Thursday. In Umlazi, it was only on Saturday afternoon that the first busloads of amabutho (vigilantes) entered the various units in the township. By the weekend, a combined police, army and Inkatha operation was visible on the streets.

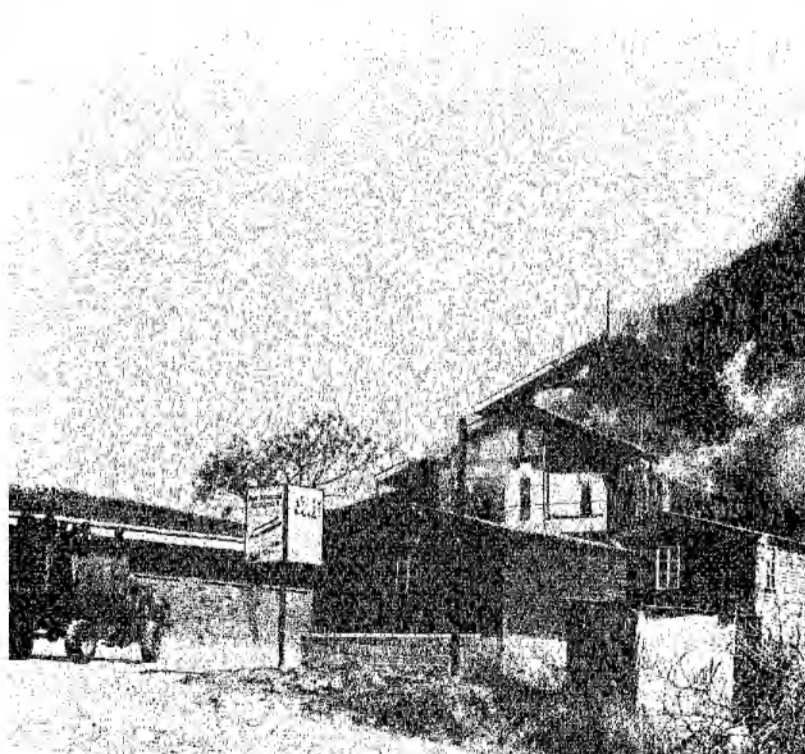
### Theory of Protest

Unlike the unrest in other regions since August 1984, the major townships in Natal, such as Umlazi and KwaMashu in Durban, Madadeni/Osizweni in Newcastle, and Mpumalanga in Hammarsdale, had not been affected by any large scale rioting until recently. In contrast, smaller townships, particularly those falling within the administration of the Natalia Development Board - Sibongile in Dundee, Thembelihle in Glencoe - had been exposed to rioting as recently as April 1985. In addition, Chesterville and Lamontville in Durban, Hambanathi near Tongaat and Sobantu in Pietermaritzburg had experienced unrest over 1983/84. Also, townships falling within the KwaZulu administration, in the Empangeni district, have recently come through a protracted bus boycott (see Urban Monitor: p16/20).

What is common to all the situations of unrest has been the resistance by African people

*The assassination of Victoria Mxenge plunged Durban's townships into a week of intense rioting, among the worst seen over the course of nationwide unrest since September 1984. From left to right: David Gasa, chairman of the Umlazi Residents Association, addresses a 5 000 strong audience at a memorial service for Mrs Mxenge, held on 7 August (see chronology); UDF affiliate, Umlazi Youth League members at the meeting, who clashed with Inkatha supporters during the riots; security force patrol near burning shop at Inanda, where violence spilled over into Indian areas; Mr Wellington Sabelo, a member of the KwaZulu legislature, at the head of a vigilante force, part of the raging conflict since August.*

## TOWNSHIP UNREST



**Until August, the relative calm in Natal was often attributed to either the moderating presence of Inkatha or the absence of specific triggers**

**Once localised protests break out, participants often come to see the political linkages of issues and identify with actors elsewhere**

**Black people locate their problems with rent and transport hikes, and education, as products of their exclusion from political power**

**The nature of the protest movement in Natal is complicated by the presence of Inkatha, interceding between black communities and the authorities**

throughout the country to some aspects of government policy in the domains of local administration, rent, transport and education. To explain the relative calm prevailing in Natal until August 1985, two hypotheses have been advanced:

- that the presence of Inkatha, a strong political mobilisation movement, exerted a moderating influence on Natal politics, or
- that the relative calm in Natal was not due to any ideological influences but rather to the absence of specific fuse situations.

Generally, discontent turns into protest and unrest when the actors in the drama are conscientised into viewing such discontent as having its source in politics. In South Africa, the political links in the issues of rent, transport and education are self-evident. Apartheid prescribes not only where black people may live and work, but also the education they may have access to. What precipitates specific instances of protest are definite 'fuse' situations. Once they are lit, localised protests similar to those experienced elsewhere tend to break out and emerging actors become willing to identify with actors elsewhere.

Gurr (1970) postulates that the potential for violence varies with the intensity and scope of what he terms 'relative deprivation'. This is defined as the discrepancy between value expectations - the goods and conditions which people feel they are entitled to - and value capabilities - the goods and conditions they are able to attain. Gagliano (1979) introduces further preconditions for protest behaviour in general:

- the discontent should have a local cause or context
- participants usually have a social history of protest action
- there is generally a crisis in the legitimacy of the government or the group in control.

### Issues Behind Unrest

The main issues behind the unrest in African townships concern the sharing of power within the broader South African context. Participants in the protest movement seek inclusion in the general definition of South Africanism. They view hikes in rent, transport and problems with schooling as products of both their powerlessness and exclusion. Their immediate demands are for inclusion in the greater municipal administration, the creation of a single educational system and the subsidisation of transport (since Africans live far away from places of work through government policy). These concrete demands stem from various ideological discourses - non-racialism, liberation and equality as expressed in the charterist (UDF), worker (trade unions) and black consciousness (National Forum) movements.

Natal has experienced all three manifestations of the protest movement, through protests against rent increases, and bus and school boycotts. However, the twelve-month delay in the outbreak of rioting and the relatively short

duration of large scale violence are distinctive features here compared to the rest of the country. Secondly, the intervention of Inkatha has given the protest movement a different character in Natal.

Nationally, none of the broadly based organisations such as the UDF, the National Forum and Inkatha have been prepared to participate in local council elections. The exception to the rule are Natal's townships, where candidates in local elections have largely campaigned as individuals, albeit on an Inkatha ticket. This has immeasurably complicated the nature of the protest movement in Natal by introducing a third dimension to the relationship between protesting communities and the structures of power.

Since the protests of 1976, black incumbents of local government have been targeted by extra-parliamentary groups. In Natal, where town councillors are also often Inkatha members, opposition to these constitutional initiatives have brought the protestors into a head-on collision with Inkatha, which has a sizeable following here. Instead of the usual polarisation between black dissidents and the government - as represented by the township administration and the police - there is an inverted triangle in Natal, consisting of an organised mass base and two apexes, the police and Inkatha.

### Legitimacy of Town Councils

The present struggle for political influence in most African townships is between extra-parliamentary organisations and the town councils, backed up by the police, development boards and homeland administrations. However, in Umlazi and KwaMashu, and all other townships within the KwaZulu administration, the issues of rent and service charges have not precipitated unrest. There is a flat service charge of R3,40 per month and there have been no rent increases in the past two years, and rent is only R9,30 per month. This has mostly distanced Natal's township councils from daily irritations and consequently, apathy rather than resentment prevails in these communities.

Nevertheless, with election polls for members of these town councils at about 10 percent, they definitely do not command any significant measure of legitimacy. Simultaneously though, there is no pronounced illegitimacy. At worst people regard them as 'clowns', who have entered the business for material personal gain such as access to business sites and transport undertakings in the form of taxis. Such regional variations have surely been a blunting factor in relation to the impact of the national protest movement and political culture on Natal.

Lamontville township is a different case as it is administered by the Natalia Development Board. Since 1982, protests against increased bus fares, and rent and tariff hikes of 63 percent (to an average of R40 per month) have sparked off trouble here. This was aggravated by the murder of community leader Harrison





Dube, an act for which the mayor of Lamontville, Moonlight Gasa, was later given a long prison sentence for complicity therein.

Indian vigilantes are given a crash course in handling shotguns at Duffs Road near KwaMashu, after clashes with African rioters; Indian refugees evacuate from Inanda.

The Lamontville protests were directed not only at the Durban Corporation and the Port Natal Administration Board, but at the Community Council as well. This development brought the relationship of individual councillors with Inkatha into the picture. Although Inkatha and the Joint Rent Action Committee (JORAC) - a body formed by the residents to fight rents - had originally cooperated in fighting rent hikes, JORAC's affiliation to the UDF and the proposed incorporation of the township into KwaZulu heightened opposition enmities. Today, the original conflict between township residents and state has gravitated into intra-community skirmishes between Inkatha and the UDF (as represented by JORAC) and the Lamontville Youth Movement.

### Less Radical Political Culture

The larger townships in Natal fall within a homeland administration, which has mediated between the people and government. With significantly different rent structures, these townships have experienced less unrest than the townships under the development boards. Just as the recent unrest was of a shorter duration in Durban's KwaZulu administered townships, there has been less protracted rioting in Mabopane and Garankua (Bophuthatswana), and Mdantsane (Ciskei).

What constitutes political culture, especially those elements which when missing contribute to discontent and protest action? Sears and McConahy (in Gagiano 1979) averred that riot participants are not only disaffected in general but are particularly disaffected from local government. A cursory glance at the situation in the townships reveals that the material sources of disaffection are:

- financial problems arising from an increase in rents, service charges, transport fares and widespread unemployment

## Chronology

### THE CONTEXT AND COURSE OF THE NATAL RIOTS

Issues and Events, July/October 1985

With Eye-Witness Accounts from Township Residents  
Indicator SA Research

#### SIMMERING BUILDUP TO UNREST

18 July 1985

60/90 percent of workers observe stayaway in Pietermaritzburg, to protest dismissal of 975 workers from BTR Sarmcol at nearby Howick, after MAWU recognition dispute. Incidents of stoning and arson reoccur in Mpophomeni (Howick) — where consumer boycott launched in May continues — and break out in townships surrounding PMB.

21/30 July

Sporadic outbursts of violence in Lamontville and KwaMashu (DBN) continue, with petrol-bomb attacks on properties amid conflict between Inkatha supporters from SJ Smith Hostel and JORAC/UDF affiliate members in townships. Schools closed in Madadeni (Newcastle) after pupils boycott.

1/4 August

Mrs Victoria Mxenge, lawyer and treasurer of Release Mandela Committee, is murdered by 4 unknown assassins. Police disperse 150 workers at Mpophomeni and arrest 31 students after protest march in downtown Durban. Grenade attack on home of Amichand Rajbansi, chairman of House of Delegates.

'UDF members and schoolchildren from all over Natal gathered outside her home, screaming "Who killed our brave mother?" Later, they started stoning and burning down the houses of "servants" of the state.'

## NATAL'S WEEK OF RAGE. 5/11 AUGUST

### Monday, 5 August

Principals agree to meet pupils' demands and close schools throughout Durban's townships, to observe week-long mourning period for Mrs Mxenge. Confrontations occur at Vukuzakhe and Ogwini schools over principals' refusal to close. Boycotts of schools at Imbali and Northdale (PMB) and Mpophomeni to protest Emergency, ongoing treason trial of UDF leaders and Sarmcol dismissals.

*'These communities appear to be quiet and contented, but deep down in their hearts, attitudes are tense needing a spark to set things aflame - the State of Emergency and Mrs Mxenge's assassination.'*

Mobs stone PUTCO buses and police vans, loot shops and delivery vehicles, and attack administrative offices in KwaMashu, Umlazi, Lamontville and Chesterville townships.

*'Crowds attacked vans identified as belonging to the white bosses, all vehicles bearing company identities or ND number-plates.'*

### Tuesday, 6 August

The violence escalates — a mortuary in Umlazi is gutted, homes of black policemen and councillors are petrol-bombed, and a shopping complex in KwaMashu is destroyed. The riots spill over to adjoining Indian areas in Phoenix and Inanda, where African shackdwellers attack shops and homes. At night, street barricades are erected to hamper police movement. Buses and vehicles are stoned in PMB townships.

*'The spontaneity of the uprising had no pre-planned programme or strategy to be followed - it is always hoped that leadership will harness the misdirected anger before the situation reaches anarchy.'*

### Wednesday, 7 August

Buses, cars and taxis are stoned as youths urge workers to observe stayaway. Spar shopping complex in Umlazi is partially destroyed, other shops and KwaZulu administrative buildings are burnt, and Ogwini school (still open) is attacked. Unrest breaks out in Clermont (Pinetown) and informal settlements of Ntunzuma and Malukazi, where 6 people are killed.

*'Political Anger is like tossing a petrol-bomb in a casspir. Vandalism is finding a goldmine through looting a brother's shop or house.'*

Up until now, security forces mostly use teargas and baton charges to contain riots — In Umlazi, at about 1pm, the first live shots are heard and 4 teenagers die. More than 500 Indians evacuate from Inanda after 20 homes are burnt, taking refuge in Phoenix's Greenbury Hall.

*'Unemployed youths who have nothing to do during the day always join political protests and turn them to their own course by looting shops.'*

## MXEMGE MEMORIAL SERVICE— The Umlazi Cinema Incident

The worst violence of 3 days of furious rioting occurs on Wednesday night. A large group of amabutho — vigilantes in traditional warrior dress — allegedly from the Lindelani shack settlement near Inanda, arrive, smash windscreens and puncture the tyres of cars parked nearby. They invade the memorial service and attack the audience with spears and knobkerries, killing between 13/17 people and injuring more than 100. *'Some township men felt threatened and decided to take their sticks, spears and axes to the service... they were tired of being ruled by "the kids".'*

### Thursday, 8 August

Mobs, consisting of youth and adults, destroy other shops in Spar complex in Umlazi, and engage in skirmishes with security force patrols and vigilantes. Dispersed by teargas, they regroup in other sections of the townships. Near KwaMashu, civil defence units evacuate several hundred Indians after 10 of their shops and 30 houses are burnt in Duffs Road. Death toll rises to 38 with at least 100 arrests.

*'Inanda Indians whose shops were burnt and looted were not victims of race friction, but attacked because they were traders - black businessmen suffered as much in the townships.'*

### Friday, 9 August

Security forces and heavily armed Indian vigilantes clash with rioters. African vigilantes, organised by local Inkatha branches, conduct house-to-house searches for looted goods and activists. Police later acknowledge responsibility for 37 out of a total of 67 riot deaths; the others are victims of vigilantes and opposition in-fighting. *'The chaos and violence that resulted from this otherwise peaceful stayaway was seen by most observers as an age-old feud between Inkatha and the UDF.'*

300 Africans from the Bhambayi shack settlement storm the Gandhi Settlement at Phoenix, stoning and looting buildings. In despair, Indian vigilantes destroy remaining property. *'The Indians were a scapegoat for black anger - their property was destroyed because it is believed that they are all in the tricameral government.'*

### Weekend, 10/11 August

The rioting subsides as UDF affiliates form crisis committee and Inkatha holds peace rally in Inanda. Busloads of amabutho from all over Natal (evident from numberplates) enter townships, patrol streets and continue house searches. Clashes between Indian and African residents occur around Inanda and KwaMashu. In Edendale township (PMB), mobs stone black policemen's houses and destroy beerhall.

*'The violence of the past week seems to have meaning but lacked direction, as an immature or under-developed struggle for black liberation.'*

Death toll rises to 67 people, including 4 Indian victims, with 1000 injuries and 500 arrests. Altogether, 180 businesses have been destroyed in Umlazi, KwaMashu and Inanda; with total damage at R25m. 40 000 Mourners attend funeral of Victoria Mxenge in Kingwilliamstown, where she is buried alongside her husband, Griffiths Mxenge, a former ANC member also assassinated in Durban, November 1981.

## THE AFTERMATH: AN UNEASY CALM

### 12/31 August

Sporadic stone-throwing and petrol-bomb incidents in Durban's townships, but funerals of unrest victims over weekend of 17/18th are quiet. Police detain 9 local UDF leaders among others, and charge 11 Indian vigilantes with murder. Unrest simmers in Imbali (PMB) as Howick consumer boycott is extended to Pietermaritzburg.

Amabutho led by KwaZulu MP Sabelo (see picture) harass mourners at further unrest funerals over weekend of 24/25th. Inkatha Secretary-General Oscar Dhlomo tells UDF to ignore Sabelo's warning that all their supporters should be out of Umlazi by end August. Brief resurgence of unrest especially in Clermont, where administrative building, beerhall and vehicles are burnt; and also in Umlazi, Lamontville.

### 2/15 September

Schools close temporarily as boycott picks up momentum throughout Durban's townships. Sporadic violence with daily clashes between police, vigilantes and youths. Rival supporters burn down several homes of local UDF/Inkatha leaders — UDF activist and unionist, Mr Mokoena, is dragged from home and murdered.

Unrest continues in Mpophomeni where one person is killed and 4 injured in police shooting. In nearby PMB, church delegates at interdenominational conference over 10/12th ratify call by Bishop Tutu for national 'prayaway' for peace. Inkatha endorses call for 9 October.

### 16/27 September

An uneasy calm reigns, with occasional outbreak of unrest in Umlazi and Lamontville, where delivery vehicles and properties are attacked. From 20th, boycotts at 3 schools in Clermont to demand release of pupils arrested during disturbances. FOSATU launches national consumer boycott in Natal. Additional court interdicts restrain police from assaulting unrest detainees and order release of other Diakonia and ECC activists.

### 28/29 September

After Shaka Day rally in Umlazi, Inkatha supporters clash with youth and township residents in Lamontville, leaving 7 dead and 12 injured. Army camp is set up in township after weekend.

### Acronyms

FOSATU Federation of South African Trade Unions  
JORAC Joint Rent Action Committee  
MAWU Metal and Allied Workers Union  
UDF United Democratic Front



- absence or lack of security due to legal impediments to home ownership
- inconvenience and prosecution due to the application of influx control regulations
- a lack of adequate amenities and resource both financial and physical
- no access to an adequate social security system.

While all the above 'fuse' issues exist in Natal, they are on a smaller scale than in the rest of the country. Perhaps the lower levels of community resentment produced thereby might account for both the delay and the short duration of unrest in this region. For instance, there is more flexibility with regard to home ownership in the townships within the KwaZulu administration, and influx control regulations are not as rigidly enforced. Also, rents are not as serious a problem in townships which fall under homeland administrations, thus easing the financial burden and dampening opposition to the town councils.

At the ideological level, disaffection with material conditions has resulted in the radicalisation of the youth and a rejection of the apartheid system. Also, a growing sympathy among adults is evidenced by the cooperation between the radical youth and the civic organisations in African townships, sometimes including worker organisations. Despite having a relatively less radicalised political culture, Natal does not have a moderate political ideology as such. The brutality arising from the ashes of the recent unrest indicates a political climate which nurtures extreme elements. Houses have been petrol bombed, there have been physical assaults on people at funerals and memorial services (see chronology), and factional killings and street violence.

## Inkatha and Opposition

To summarise, the political profile of townships in Natal is complicated by the presence of a mass-based organisation, Inkatha, which functions within the establishment, with official status. Not only is Inkatha a populist movement, it also controls the KwaZulu Legislative Assembly and, consequently, the KwaZulu government as well. Thus there is intense competition for political influence between extra-parliamentary organisations and Inkatha.

In South Africa, the problems that any black interventionist organisation such as Inkatha will encounter in the process of 'mediation' is that the ideological root causes of protest and unrest lie in an area beyond its ambit of influence. In a context of increased polarisation, the consequences of this role are both predictable and inevitable:

- A popular image of apparent 'collaboration' with the security forces in fighting what is perceived as a just cause. The destruction of black property and lives is seen as abhorrent by most township residents irrespective of political affiliation, but if any group is seen to be siding

with the police in punishing the alleged perpetrators, different issues are raised.


- The ensuing intra-black violence and destruction is counter-productive. Instead of opposing the external source of popular dissatisfaction, activists on either side compete to settle old scores.

In a space of two months since the Natal riots began, a number of homes belonging to alleged 'agitators' of the recent violence have been burnt down, people have been killed, injured or maimed, and property has been destroyed. Peace has not returned to Durban's townships. As in the Eastern Cape earlier this year, this leaves the people of Natal caught between two equally frightening forces: the forces of resistance and opposition factionalism and the forces of containment.

## Conclusion

The local township councils both within the KwaZulu administration and the Natalia Development Board have been very ineffective in defusing or channeling situations of protest and unrest. On the other hand, Inkatha's intervention has been effective only through the use of force to dampen the rioting and not as a 'moderating force' at the ideological level, in terms of the first hypothesis (see above).

Firstly, unrest and protest erupted on a scale large enough to cause great concern, despite Inkatha's ideology of non-violence. Secondly, the destruction of property belonging to the KwaZulu administration indirectly affects Inkatha because of the official relationship between Inkatha and the KwaZulu administration. Thirdly, vigilantes recruited by the local leadership of Inkatha have consisted mostly of groups from outside the township, ie men from the hostels and the surrounding informal settlements. Such actions might temporarily prevent the youth from taking to the streets, but it has not succeeded in converting them to the opposite ideology.

On the contrary, judging by current developments in Umlazi, KwaMashu and Clermont - where sporadic school boycotts appear to be the order of the day - the same political pattern is developing as in Lamontville. The immediate terrain of conflict has shifted from the domain of apartheid to a struggle for power among the victims of apartheid. In this volatile situation, specific 'fuses' such as rents or influx control may not be as visible in Natal's townships vis-à-vis the rest of the country in terms of the second hypothesis discussed earlier. Be this as it may, the assassination of Victoria Mxenge and subsequent events have demonstrated that localised triggers can unleash a groundswell of popular rebellion, which is ultimately inseparable from the national situation. 

### Sources

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*In Lamontville, clashes between residents and the community council over rent increases has brought UDF affiliates into conflict with Inkatha*

*The shorter duration of the Natal riots is accountable to less community experience of influx control and other issues in KwaZulu's townships*

*Inkatha's intervention in the riots was successful at the coercive level, but not as a 'moderating' ideological force as such*

*The immediate terrain of conflict has shifted from the domain of apartheid to a factional struggle for power among its victims*

# 'JUST THE USUAL SUNDAY SPORTS?'

## THE CONTROVERSY OVER METHODS OF RIOT CONTROL

RIOT CONTROL

Since September 1984, the riot death toll has steadily climbed beyond 750 African civilians during more than twelve months of civil unrest, passing the estimated 700 riot fatalities in the 1976/77 period. Considering the massive number of unrest deaths, the range of tough security actions self-evidently encompasses more than simply 'riot control' to impose law and order where crowds become unruly. At times, their role has become more one of containment or internal counter-insurgency in a political context of widespread township rebellion, which has also involved the frontline participation of the defence force.

The participants in the following debate focus on riot control in the closely defined sense - police intervention to quell volatile crowd demonstrations which might degenerate into violent confrontations. In a brief interview, the SAP's Major General Wandrag, and in subsequent commentary, Helmoed Heitman, discuss those physical factors impinging on riot control methods, which are peculiar to South African conditions compared to Western Europe. In response, Dr Simon Baynham takes issue with their argument on the supposedly unique nature of the police's operational environment here, and argues for the politics of negotiation instead of coercion.



\*Two days after the declaration of a state of emergency, Major-General Wandrag (interviewed below) stated that earlier police reports which contained a more detailed breakdown of unrest incidents 'give the impression that the whole world is on fire, instead of just the usual Sunday sports' (NM: 24/7/85).

Neil Victor/Arago



## THE POLICE PERSPECTIVE

Major-General Bert Wandrag, Chief of the Special Counter-Insurgency Unit,  
talks to Journalist Johan Botha

In the recent unrest, a lack of understanding of the police's handling of the current situation has come strongly to the fore. Major General Wandrag considers the circumstances which have given rise to police action, in order to place the sensitive question of riot control in perspective.

In recently published commentaries, both Major General Wandrag and security force analyst, Mr Helmoed-Römer Heitman have concentrated chiefly on four factors connected with riot control:

- the proportion of rioters to police
- the terrain
- the climate
- the degree of violence of rioters.

### Inappropriate Comparisons

Although South Africa is often accused of being a police state, the Republic's police force is in reality too small. In most western countries where the police control riots, their numbers are often the same or very close to those of the rioters. 'In South Africa this is completely impossible', according to Wandrag. 'In the riots in Soweto in 1976, it wasn't unusual for groups of twenty to fifty policemen to try to control crowds of up to two thousand rioters.'

On the question of terrain, he comments, 'In Europe, most riots and uprisings occur in heavily built-up areas with comparatively narrow streets, which are surrounded by high buildings. The movements and conduct of rioters are highly restricted by these circumstances. Rioters can thus not easily avoid the application and effect of teargas, water cannons and batons. The police can, however, also use this kind of terrain to control the rioters so that they divide into smaller groups, and can thus be more easily dealt with.'

In South Africa, riots occur primarily in African township areas: big open spaces where the small police unit can easily be avoided. 'Rioters here seldom occur in one big group. They will rather divide into twenty smaller groups and descend on twenty different places and create disturbances', says

Wandrag.

'Another problem is the composition of the crowds of rioters. Usually the instigators and agitators will keep themselves in the middle or right behind the crowd and egg the crowd on from there. Innocent people are then often caught up and pulled into such a crowd. These days women — often pregnant women — and children form the front ranks of the rioters. On the egging on of the agitators they are then among the first to throw stones.'

### Other Special Factors

With regard to climate, Wandrag comments: 'South Africa's relatively high temperature accelerates the spreading of tearsmoke and often wind causes the tearsmoke to spread even faster. As a result of the high temperature it is very difficult for the police to always wear full riot equipment.'

Without this equipment, the police are highly vulnerable. Fire-resistant clothing, helmets, boots and shields are all that can protect the policeman against stones, bricks and petrol bombs. The degree of violence in South Africa differs vastly from that overseas. 'It seldom happens that policemen overseas are seriously injured, let alone killed by rioters. In South Africa, not only are policemen sometimes attacked, but often innocent motorists and pedestrians', says Wandrag.

The police are thus often compelled to evaluate a situation quickly and to control and put an end to it as effectively as possible. 'The provocation of police units in the unrest areas is also often so severe that the police must possess unshakeable discipline to ignore it, or not to react to it', says Wandrag.

He believes, however, that the South African Police's doctrines, procedures and tactics are by no means perfect. 'Every police force in the world makes mistakes', he acknowledges. What gives Wandrag cause for grave concern, however, is that rioters are more increasingly making use of sharp ammunition and fire bombs — the so-called Molotov cocktails — against the police.

\* Excerpts from an interview published in *Rapport*, with kind permission.

*Although South Africa is often accused of being a police state, the Republic's police force is in reality seriously undermanned*

*Unlike built-up European cities, the townships have big open spaces where rioters easily avoid teargas, water cannons and baton charges*

*The police must possess unshakeable discipline to ignore the severe provocation of police units in the unrest areas*

RIOT CONTROL

## A MILITARY HISTORIAN'S PERSPECTIVE

Helmoed-Römer Heitman, Author of the Recently Published Study,  
'The South African War Machine'

Recent unrest and rioting has again highlighted the lack of understanding that permeates much of the published and private comment on police action. While it is only natural to be concerned at the deaths that have resulted, it is necessary to look at the circumstances governing police actions.

The South African Police's (SAP) riot control

doctrine, procedures and tactics do not vary much from generally accepted international norms. Their application is, however, governed by local conditions and circumstances as it will be in any country. Even the much maligned switch or sjambok is not unique to South Africa — it sees much use in both India and Pakistan, where it is known as a lathi and is deemed a very



*Under South African circumstances, most non-violent or minimal violence, riot control and dispersal methods become unworkable or even suicidal*

effective and humane tool for the dispersal of unruly crowds.

South Africa is a seriously under-policed country, with not many more police in the entire country than New York City alone finds necessary to maintain law and order. Whereas in most western countries, the police elements seeking to control a riot can usually at least come close to matching the rioters in numbers and can quite often even outnumber them, the SAP is almost always grossly outnumbered.

Under such circumstances, most non-violent or minimum violence control or dispersal measures become at best unworkable and at worst suicidal. A 50-man platoon can perhaps still link arms and block or push a mob of 200 or 300 with some hope of achieving something or even make a useful attempt to disperse them by means of a baton charge. When the mob grows into the upper hundreds, any such approach becomes a definite non-starter.

### Methods Foiled

The problem is aggravated by the terrain over which most of this action takes place. In South Africa, most of the rioting has taken place in very open suburbs of generally single-storey houses set in gardens — albeit small — along relatively wide streets and often with open areas nearby. The effects of this terrain are manifold, one of the most critical being that a small police detachment can readily be avoided or outflanked and perhaps surrounded with possibly disastrous results for their safety.

*Army personnel look on as vigilantes patrol through the Gandhi Settlement at the height of the Durban riots in August 1985.*



Similarly, the open nature of the terrain renders teargas and water cannon relatively ineffective, as the former disperses too quickly and the latter — clumsy and short-ranged at the best of times — is too easily avoided. Baton rounds, too, are affected in their usefulness and pushing or baton charging the mob is simply not a practical proposition, quite regardless of the question of numbers. Finally, the lack of high-pressure water mains severely limits the usefulness of water cannons by making the process of refilling their tanks very slow.

The salutary effect of shotguns and rifles is also diminished, as the fall of someone hit by either is not as immediately or dramatically noticeable to others in the mob as it would be in a more crowded environment. In other circumstances, the shooting of an identified ringleader or a particularly active rioter can have a remarkable 'cooling down' effect on a mob.

Water cannons, contrary to popular belief, do not rely solely or even primarily on a powerful water jet knocking rioters off their feet. While this is useful at close range — albeit not without its dangers to life and limb — it is more the acute discomfort, in the average European climate, of being very thoroughly and continually wetted by a high pressure jet that cools the ardour of a mob's front ranks. In the African context, our climate tends to negate all effects bar the actual knock-down power of the water jet.

Another climate-related consideration is that our relatively high temperatures make it difficult for personnel engaged in riot control duties to employ a full set of protective equipment. Such equipment — helmet and visor, padded and flame-resistant clothing, gloves and boots, steel toe-capped boots, perspex shields, etc — offers a good measure of protection against most thrown projectiles and against being hit with a stick or similar weapon. This protection allows the police to adopt a more passive and reactive posture towards mob violence aimed at them. It also brings with it, however, problems of rapid tiring, reduced vision and potential heat exhaustion. These factors are naturally aggravated by hot weather and open terrain which requires considerable and often rapid movement.

### The Stand-off Approach

Without such equipment, personnel employed in riot control are frighteningly vulnerable to serious injury or even death at the hands of the amorphous and anonymous mob. Also, there can be no question of allowing the mob to close with the police. As a result, stand-off methods have to be employed which are of necessity generally more violent than contact methods — viz 'rubber bullet' versus truncheon or switch.

Then too, the menacing aspect of suitably designed and coloured protective clothing — dark overcoats and helmets, dark perspex



shields and visors — what one might call the 'Darth Vader effect' — is also lost. Police in short-sleeved shirts do not compare.

This brings the argument to a final point. Whereas rioters in Europe are often violent towards police falling in their hands, they rarely kill or even go so far as to inflict potentially fatal injuries. This has hardly been the case in South Africa, where mobs have gone much further than killing the occasional policeman and have killed — often in a most gruesome fashion — passing civilians. Close contact measures are immediately rendered unusable, except where the police have sufficient numbers to guarantee against being outflanked or surrounded or having their formation broken up. Under any other circumstances there would be too great a risk of one or more policemen being seized by the mob and, quite probably, killed.

## Conclusion

No riot is in any way acceptable, quite simply because it almost inevitably visits some measure of violence on the persons or property of people who have nothing to do

with the riot or the dissatisfaction behind it. A demonstration, legal or otherwise, may be one thing; a riot is something very different indeed. When rioters then go so far as to threaten the lives of innocent parties, the situation becomes one which cannot be tolerated under any circumstances.

The police are thus faced with a situation in which they must seek to control and end such outbreaks of public violence as quickly and effectively as possible. Unfortunately, various circumstances, some of which have been discussed above, conspire to make 'ideal' riot control well-nigh impracticable in South Africa today. Had we three times the police force we *might* see fewer fatal casualties.

This entire argument is not to say that the South African Police cannot improve their riot control doctrine, procedures and tactics. Every police force in the world can do that and does so on an ongoing basis, as does the SAP. On the other hand, there are basic realities which the SAP cannot escape and which set unhappy parameters to its actions. These must be borne in mind when we read press reports of public violence in our suburbs and the resultant police action.

\* Excerpted from *Frontline*, with kind permission.

High temperatures locally make it difficult for riot squads to wear protective clothing and equipment

A demonstration — legal or otherwise — is very different to a riot situation

## A CRITIC'S RESPONSE TO HEITMAN AND WANDRAG

### Undermanned Police and the Domino Effect

By Dr Simon Baynham, Department of Political Studies, University of Cape Town

'The general effect of violence is to polarize moderate opinion towards the extremes. Why else should urban guerillas use it? Why else should the security forces be trained to bend over backwards to avoid it?' (Richard Clutterbuck, *Protest and the Urban Guerilla*)

None of the major points made by Wandrag and Heitman can be lightly dismissed because they do, in fact, have a distinct bearing on riot control in South African conditions. Nevertheless, this does not mean their argument can be permitted to go unchallenged. To some extent, they do not tell the whole story. For as with the plea that SAP behaviour must be viewed within a framework that stresses local idiosyncracies (whether arithmetical, topological, atmospheric or anthropological), these verisimilitudes must also be viewed in perspective. They, too, need to be qualified.

## Police Numbers

In the first place, if the police force is too small (as it most clearly is) to carry out its 'normal' duties relating to the prevention and detection of crime — let alone its responsibilities in the anti-riot role — a finger must be pointed at the authorities who have allowed such a situation to arise. With barely two policemen for every thousand people (the recognised western standard averages seven or eight per thousand), the emphasis has shifted from the visible neighbourhood policeman to anonymous patrols by small and heavily-armed squads.

One catastrophic result of this has been

frequent over-reaction on the part of (very often) young, under-trained and frightened men who simply do not have the numbers, means or disposition to tackle rioting crowds through the phased use of force. This, in turn, has had a second knock-on or domino effect in that it has led to the introduction of a Defence Force presence in the townships much earlier than would otherwise have been the case. As I argued in the previous edition of *Indicator SA Political Monitor* (Vol 3 No 1), the maintenance of law and public order should be a police matter.

The premature deployment of military units is thus the *direct consequence* of the government's irresponsible and myopic failure to provide a police force adequate in size, training and attitude, to the requirements and aspiration of all South Africa's peoples. Had a more long-sighted policy been implemented, the costs would not have been (and are still not) prohibitive and the long-term benefits would be legion.

## Township Geography

The second point, that relating to terrain, would also present fewer difficulties if police numbers were bolstered, but it must be said that it is easier to reinforce beleaguered policemen in compact metropolitan areas

Heavily armed police squads have replaced the visible neighbourhood patrol

A police force inadequate in size, training and attitude has led to the premature deployment of the military

*Contingency planning might ensure that hostile crowds do not isolate security personnel, who then bypass the early stages of riot control*

*The major Achilles' heel of Wandrag and Heitman's argument concerns the local climate - elsewhere, police riot kit has been adapted to suit hot weather*

*No country enjoys perfect conditions for pacifying volatile crowds*

*If the impasse is to be broken, the security forces must apply the principle of minimum force while using the draconian Emergency powers*

(Belfast, Mexico City, New York) than in countries where the population is more widely dispersed such as here. The geography of the township makes the police highly susceptible to the danger of being surrounded, cut off and annihilated, a point articulated by several police witnesses at the Kannemeyer Inquiry.

According to Wandrag, 'most non-violent or minimally-violent control . . . is ineffective in the township context'. By this, he presumably means resort to the early stages in the arsenal of escalation: a show of force including anti-riot drills, a well-timed sjambok or baton charge and the use of fire hoses and incapacitating chemical agents such as teargas.

Better foresight and contingency planning to ensure that security force personnel are not, for instance, isolated by hostile crowds — and thus 'forced' to by-pass the first rungs in the escalation of violence to avoid physical contact — are also needed. Happily, there has been some evidence that the SAP is not immune to such imperatives. The Lingelihle township funerals (when Matthew Goniwe and three other murdered community leaders were buried) are a case in point. On that occasion, everything pointed to high-level planning under the direction of a general from Pretoria, in order to avoid another Langa incident.

### Local Climate

But the major Achilles' heel in the Heitman/Wandrag position relates to their third point, the weather. It is simply not good enough to state that climatic conditions here make the employment of full protective equipment difficult. Of course it is difficult (and it is not always hot) but this has not prevented the use of such sartorial safeguards at the height of summer in Chicago, Lisbon or Rome. In these and other much warmer states (eg India, Malaysia and Jamaica) kit has been adapted to suit local conditions. Surely it is not beyond the capabilities of Armscor to devote some of its resources to the development of light-weight clothing and defensive weaponry.

However, one point relating to temperature that both articles fail to point out — and one emphasised by the theoretical and empirical literature on crowd psychology — is that heat promotes the emotional suggestibility of a crowd. People who are normally quite law-abiding can commit acts which are totally out of character if they get caught up in a crowd.

### Violence Levels

On their fourth and final point, Heitman and Wandrag at first appear to be on firmer ground. The sickeningly brutal deaths of many of the rioters' victims in South Africa give European riots, by contrast, the appearance of a girl guides' picnic.

But violent demonstrations in the western hemisphere rarely reflect the deep-seated

alienation experienced by blacks in the grim urban ghettos of the platteland. This explains the chillingly wide extent of 'anomic' or 'mindless' violence here, though it is not meant to condone mob violence while solely criticising the police. All those who genuinely desire a peaceful transformation of this deeply divided society must insist that every perpetrator of violence is held accountable for his actions.

Towards the end of his article, Heitman states that a variety of circumstances thus combine to make 'ideal' riot control almost impossible in South African conditions. In response, it should be stressed that no country has perfect conditions for pacifying crowds — and urban riots in European cities present their own mix of special difficulties.

Under present emergency law regulations, the *mechanical* process of containing rampaging crowds has been facilitated by the increased authority granted to SAP, Defence Force, railways police and prisons service personnel. But if the present impasse is to be negotiated, and tensions defused, the security forces must juxtapose these draconian powers with a conciliatory and non-confrontationist posture in which the principle of minimum force is strictly applied.

### Improved Policies

A tall order indeed and one which requires firm direction from the highest political authorities and a tight and accountable chain of command from the top brass to the lowest constable. In short, instruments of coercion need to provide much-needed evidence — often in the face of the greatest provocation — that their purpose is to restore stability and peace rather than to intimidate the population. And peace, as everyone knows, cannot be imposed by force of arms alone. In this regard, public confidence could be immediately improved by:

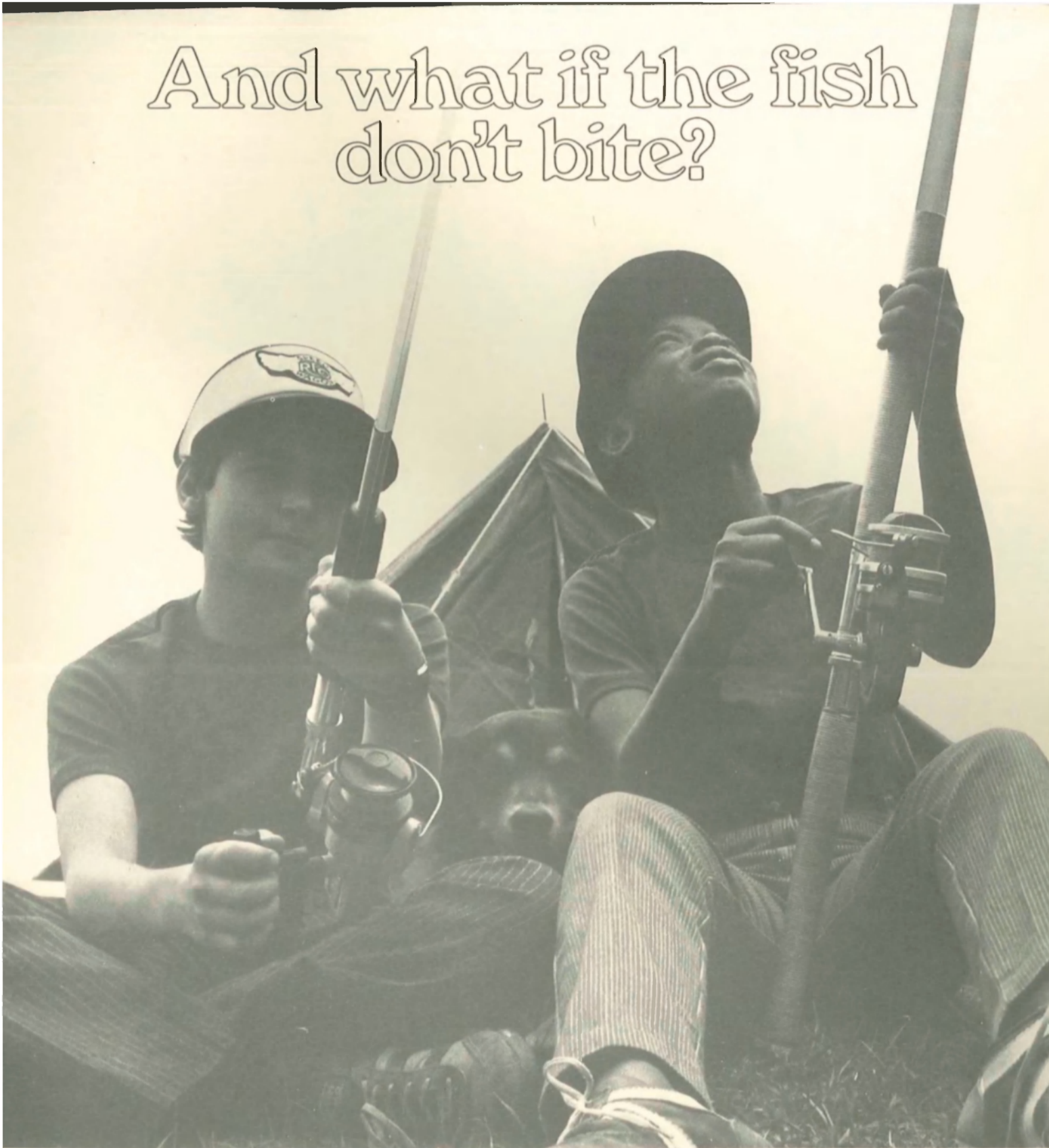
- Implementation of an independent quasi-judicial body to investigate police irregularities.
- Early efforts to enlarge the size of the SAP and to upgrade the quality, training and attitude of recruits.
- Investigating the possibility of creating a new paramilitary unit along European lines, one independent of the SADF and the police.
- Timely and accurate information about the unrest in order to end dangerous rumour-mongering and uncertainty.

At the same time, the cycle of violence must be broken by instituting appropriate action relating to genuine national negotiations and the abandonment of discriminatory legislation. Only then will reforms relating to the size, composition and methods of the police have any significance; only then will the SAP be seen as the people's police; only then will the Defence Force be able to revert to its primary role of external defence: *Res ipsa loquitur*. **IPM**

*The author wishes to thank UCT's Research Committee for financial support received in the preparation of this article.*



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# ECONOMIC

M O N I T O R

INDICATOR VOL.3 No2

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The future of the migrant labour system is inextricably linked to the kind of influx control reform in the pipeline. The consequences for rural development and urban growth after controls go are the subject of speculative debate.

- 1 *Removing Influx Control: A Few Predictions of Consequence*
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- 13 *Economic Stabilisation or the Instability of Free Markets*





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## Prognosis

# REMOVING INFLUX CONTROL

*A Few Predictions of Consequence*

By Prof Jill Nattrass, Head of the Development Studies Unit  
at the University of Natal



Passes for jobs. Migrant workers show necessary documentation for urban employment in 'white' South Africa.

**P**rof Jill Nattrass examines some of the myths and dire predictions surrounding the removal of influx control, and outlines several positive effects this move would in fact have. Among other consequences, she discusses the additional job opportunities created by a growing urban population, the reduced cost of providing public sector services in urban rather than rural areas, and an improvement in the quality of life of urban dwellers. Nattrass concludes, therefore, that influx control should be removed, not only on moral and political grounds, but on grounds of economic reason as well.



*Inequalities in South Africa have spatial, racial and economic aspects - influx control is one of the factors that causes these to interact*

*Increasing control over black population movement has limited their access to areas of economic opportunity and re-inforced the unequal distribution of income*

*The myth of 'the preferred rural lifestyle' reflects not the truth but the effectiveness with which black communities have been hidden from public view*

*Studies suggest that roughly half of rural families would move to town once conditions were favourable for such a move*

Influx control, a legal institution universally hated by African people in South Africa, and applying only to them, seems set to go in the near future. It seems worthwhile to examine the likely implications of the removal of the influx control laws in some detail, as it has been variously argued that the removal of the system will:

- result in a general degradation of urban living conditions
- increase the rate of economic development of Africans
- improve African lifestyles, or alternatively,
- decrease African standards of living through increasing levels of unemployment.

### Influx Control and Income Inequality

South Africa is a land of tremendous inequalities — inequalities that have spatial, racial and economic aspects. Influx control is one of the factors that causes these three aspects to interact and to reinforce one another.

Spatially, the South African economy is concentrated in the four major metropolitan regions, which are themselves completely dominated by the economic activity in the largest complex, the Witwatersrand area. Population concentrations on the other hand, have historically been located in the rural areas, particularly those on the eastern seaboard. The development of the modern South African economy has been accompanied throughout by increasing levels of controls over black population movements. These controls were present in the early days of the Cape and extended with the development of the diamond and gold mining industries and the foundation of the manufacturing sector. The present system was finally refined over the period following the election of the National Party to power in 1948.

A century of economic growth in this mould has resulted in the present situation, in which average white incomes per head are some ten times greater than those of Africans. Within the black group, urban African incomes per head are six to eight times greater than those in rural areas. In these circumstances, influx control is clearly a mechanism that limits the access of the poor to areas of economic opportunity and by doing so, it re-inforces the unequal distribution of income.

### Influx Control and Black Poverty

It is often argued that the removal of influx control will generate a massive inflow of people to the cities and that the inevitable outcome will be the growth of urban unemployment and poverty. Inherent in this argument is a view of rural lifestyles that suggests that living conditions in African rural areas are considerably better than those that will result from the flow of people to the cities. However, this is in fact not so, as studies have shown that the overpopulation of these rural areas, coupled with the almost total lack of productive employment opportunities, has generated a situation in which average per capita income levels there range from a low of R70 per year, to a high of between R400 to R500 per annum.

On the other hand a migrant to the town — who is unable to find work or lodgings and is forced to live in an informal 'shack' area and to seek work in the informal sector — can expect to earn an average weekly income of between R25, if he operates as a hawker, to around R100 in the construction and entertainment sectors. If he is fortunate enough to find formal wage employment he is still better off, since even if he is unskilled, he can expect to earn over R1 500 per annum. Furthermore, the city dweller has better access to education, health care, entertainment and shopping facilities than his rural counterpart, all of which help to improve his quality of life.

Rural African lifestyles, on the other hand, are savagely hard, and the communities lack land, amenities and income. Due to the pervasive nature of the migrant labour system, they also lack manpower and normal human and social relationships. The pervasive nature of the myth of 'the preferred rural lifestyle' reflects not the truth but the effectiveness with which policies of racial separation have hidden black rural communities from public view, concealing their desperate circumstances. Far from preventing the generation of urban poverty, influx control acts to perpetuate an even deeper level of rural poverty.

Further, while the rate of urbanisation among African people would undoubtedly rise on the removal of the influx control regulations, it is by no means certain that there would be a massive immediate inflow of people into the towns. Studies that have been done of the attitudes of migrant workers and of rural families to the process of urbanisation, suggest that roughly half of the families at present in the rural areas, would move to town once conditions were favourable for such a move. The other half comprise those families who are unlikely to change their lifestyles if influx control





regulations are changed and have long term commitments to the rural areas, often through their tribal obligations (Schlemmer, Nattrass, et al, 1985).

*Rural African lifestyles are savagely hard, and the communities lack land, amenities and income. Due to the migrant labour system, they also lack manpower and normal human social relationships.*

### Influx Control and Economic Development

Far from being detrimental to economic development, urban growth is usually perceived as a force generating growth. Consequently, to the extent that the removal of the influx control system does result in an increase in the size of the urban populations, it too will help to further development. Increased numbers of town dwellers increase the size of the urban market, and the opportunities this offers will help to create some of the additional job opportunities needed by the growing population. The increased size of the multiplier in an urban area means that the possibilities for a community to pull itself up by its own bootstraps are considerably greater than is the case in a dispersed rural settlement.

There is no doubt that an increase in the inflow of people to the towns will increase the demand for social services and facilities in these areas. This, in its turn, will mean an increase in the quantity of public funds that must be directed towards the provision of the needed social overhead capital. If these funds are provided by transferring them from alternative, directly productive, resources, the short term impact of this re-allocation will be a reduction in the rate of economic growth.

However, this need not necessarily be the case. Firstly, the needed funds could be provided by additional taxation on consumption or through a re-allocation of funding already earmarked for social overhead capital to be provided in other areas. Secondly, even if there is a re-allocation of funding from productive uses, the extent of the re-allocation can be significantly reduced through the creation of an environment in which the private sector is encouraged to play a meaningful role in the provision of this investment. This could be particularly important in relation to the provision of housing where significant progress could be achieved through the stimulation of investment and employment in 'self help housing' schemes.

On the positive side, the provision of public sector services is very much less expensive and more efficient in an urban environment, from the viewpoint of construction, operation and delivery of the service. If one accepts that all South Africans have a right to a share in publicly provided services, then an increased level of urbanisation will, in fact, reduce the cost of the provision of the services in the long term rather

*To the extent that influx control results in urban growth, it will help further development by increasing the size of the urban market*



*The possibilities for an urban community to pull itself up by its own bootstraps are considerably greater than is the case in a dispersed rural settlement*

*A significant proportion of the rural population are really displaced townsmen, and their presence impedes rural development initiatives*

*Lack of demand is the prime factor limiting industrialisation - increased urbanisation will increase the size of the domestic market*



than increase them. Consequently, if urbanisation is encouraged, in the long run less capital will ultimately be diverted from productive uses for the provision of public sector services.

### Other Positive Effects

Finally, the excessively high levels of population pressure on land in African rural areas have resulted in virtual stagnation from the development viewpoint. To the extent that the removal of influx control does generate an outflow of people from these areas, it will help to ease these pressures and so will facilitate rural development. At present, over 75 percent of the people living in the rural areas of KwaZulu are only partially dependent on agricultural production for their livelihood. Other studies show that the major portion of the income of people resident in African rural areas comes from commuter earnings or migrant remittances.

It seems that a significant proportion of the rural population is using these tribal areas as a means to secure accommodation for their families, rather than as a rural base for their economic activities. These people are really displaced townsmen, and their continued presence in the rural areas arises out of the influx control measures and from a sense of insecurity often experienced by migrants in the cities and towns. Since they are not rural dwellers in the true sense of the word, it is not surprising that these people display a lack of interest in agricultural production and, in fact, impede rural development initiatives.

Urbanisation, favouring as it does the development of the nuclear family and the modernisation of family attitudes, encourages a considerably lower rate of population growth (see Indicator SA Vol3No1, Economic Monitor: p5). In South Africa, where population growth rates among African communities average between 3.5 and 4 percent per annum, any reduction must increase the chances for upgrading individual lifestyles.

### Conclusion

Studies have shown that the face of poverty in South Africa is black, female, either young or old and further, that poverty is heavily concentrated in the African rural areas. The factor linking these different aspects of poverty is the system of influx control. Influx control too has been a major factor generating the very high degree of income inequality found in South Africa.

Poverty and inequality will not be the cornerstones on which the new South African order will rest. Not only are they politically unacceptable to those groups hoping to be fully enfranchised, but both are also rapidly becoming constraints on economic development. Every study that has been done to date on the factors limiting industrialisation in South Africa has concluded that a lack of demand is the prime factor — increased urbanisation increases the size of the domestic market and will help to release this constraint. On this basis, one must conclude that not only is the system unjustifiable on moral and political grounds, but from the economic viewpoint it is also time that it was removed. **UPA**

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By Dr Merle Holden and Prof Mike McGrath  
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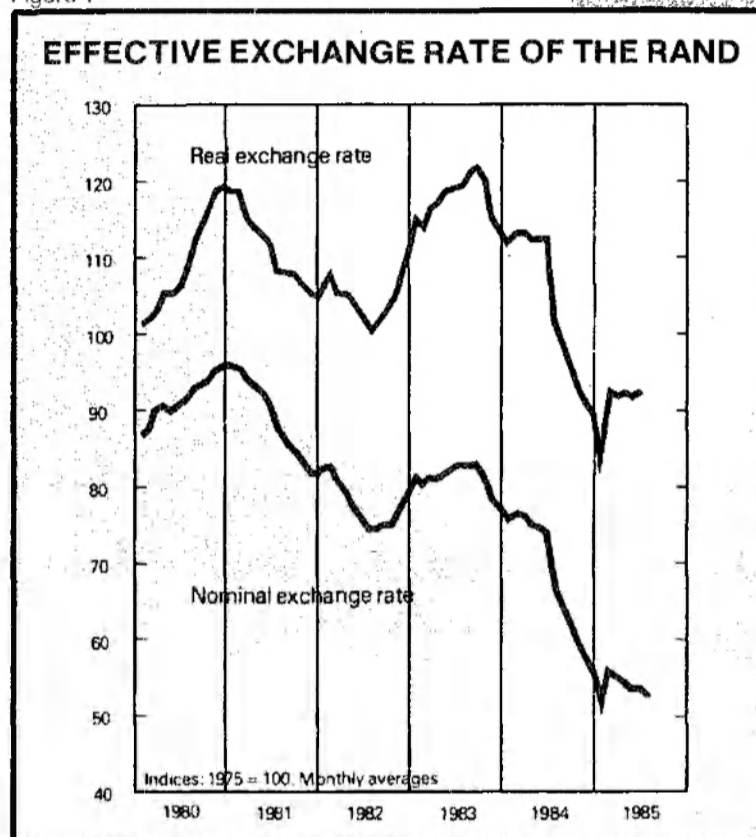
In the last quarter of 1984, the Treasury and the Reserve Bank commenced a strategy which was intended to evolve in four phases, and eventually restore the economy to a path of real growth. The first problem was seen as inflation, and the first priority was to eliminate excess demand from the economy. The levels of private sector spending, then after March 1985, public sector spending were attacked. By the second quarter of 1985 this first objective was achieved – real gross domestic expenditure had fallen 9 percent over twelve months.

In the second phase, the goal of improving the balance of payments has also now been attained, and the R1 bn deficit on the current account in 1984 transformed into a projected R5 bn surplus for 1985. In the third phase, the rate of inflation was planned to decrease, but this could only occur after the inflationary pressures – resulting from the depreciation of the rand from September 1983 – had worked through the economy. By the middle of 1985, however, the Reserve Bank felt that the inflation rate was close to its peak, and that the economy was going into the third phase.

The first three phases of this strategy were only achieved at the cost of inducing a severe recession in the economy, and it was almost inevitable that a severe backlash of social unrest would result. In the fourth phase a new cyclical upswing was planned, resulting in the achievement of higher rates of real economic growth with moderate price stability. However, the deteriorating political situation was to take its toll before this fourth phase was achieved.

In late July and August 1985, as foreign banks became increasingly reluctant to roll over their credit lines to South Africa, the rand nose dived, falling from around 53 US cents in mid-

Figure 1



July to 35 US cents on 27 August. At this stage, these pressures culminated in:

- the temporary closure of the foreign exchange and the stock markets
- the imposition of a four-month 'stand-still' on the repayment of foreign loans until 31 December 1985
- the reintroduction of a dual exchange rate system, with a financial and commercial rand.

A severe backlash of social unrest has resulted from the Reserve Bank's anti-inflationary strategy to restore economic growth

### Nominal and Real Exchange Rates

The pressures on the balance of payments are reflected in the course of the effective (ie, trade weighted) exchange rate of the rand, which is plotted in figure 1. In 1979, when the US dollar started its path of appreciation, the ability of the rand to compete with the dollar was bolstered by exchange control and a rising price of gold. However, in 1981, the average price of gold per ounce fell from 613 to 460, while the US dollar continued to appreciate. Continuing

into 1982, this resulted in a substantial depreciation of the rand in nominal terms. Apart from a sharp recovery, once again the gold price fell and the rand appreciated towards the end of the year as the dollar asserted itself once more.

During 1984 the strength of the dollar was most felt, and short-term funds moved into the US, taking advantage of real interest rate

During 1984, the strength of the dollar was felt the most and short-term funds moved into the USA



*The greater variability of the real exchange rate of the rand compared to the nominal rate must be viewed with concern*

*There would appear to be considerable scope for an appreciation of the rand through an export-led recovery, if the political climate improves*

differentials and further expected appreciations of the dollar. In South Africa, the substantial outflows of short-term capital in the fourth quarter of 1984 and the first quarter of 1985 reflected these expectations. This pressure from the capital account, coupled with the deficit on the current account during 1984, led to sharp depreciations of the rand through to the end of January 1985.

During February 1985, the dollar price of gold hit a low of \$299 an ounce, reflecting the continuing strength of the dollar. However, a combination of a surplus on the current account for the first two quarters of 1985, and the reduction in the outflow of short-term capital in the second quarter of 1985, produced a moderate recovery of the rand. This was short lived though, as the full impact of political unrest was finally felt in the foreign exchange market, and the rand crashed towards 35 US cents.

These movements in the nominal exchange rate of the rand are also mirrored to some extent in the movements of the real exchange rate of the rand (ie the nominal rate corrected for differences in relative inflation rates between South Africa and its trading partners). Figure 1 shows that the real exchange rate of the rand follows the nominal rate, but with far greater fluctuations. As the real exchange rate

influences consumption and investment decisions, the greater variability must be viewed with concern. Nevertheless, the marked real depreciation of the rand over most of 1984 has contributed to the emergence of the current account surplus on the balance of payments.

A measure of the international competitiveness of the South African economy can be provided by the purchasing power parity of the rand. The purchasing power parity theory of exchange rates asserts that movements in the exchange rate should reflect changes in relative price levels. If purchasing power parity held, real exchange rates should remain reasonably constant. This implies that on the basis of estimates of real exchange rates from 1973 to 1985, the dollar/rand rate should be approximately 71 US cents in order to maintain purchasing power parity.

Thus in relation to the present level of the commercial rand, South African producers of tradeable goods – exports, potential exports, and import substitutes – are at a substantial competitive advantage, as the commercial rand has fallen by almost 50 percent below purchasing power parity. Provided the demand for South Africa's exports does not collapse because of the pressure for sanctions, there would appear to be considerable scope for an appreciation of the rand if the political climate improves.

## Effects of Real Depreciation

*The real depreciation of the rand will affect urban black employment levels, long-term foreign borrowers and domestic prices*

The real depreciation of the rand will have the effect of attracting resources into the production of tradeable goods. In addition, shifts in the distribution of income within South Africa would also have occurred in response to the real depreciation. The rise in the price of tradeable goods relative to non-tradeable goods means that firms producing tradeables become more profitable.

Consumers of tradeable goods who experience a fall in real wages essentially end up subsidising the producers of tradeable goods. The groups which consume the largest proportion of tradeables are likely to suffer the biggest decreases in real incomes, and in South Africa these appear to be urban black communities. Expenditure studies for 1975 by the BMR and CSS show that urban black households spend 61 percent of their income on tradeables, where urban white households spend 50 percent. Rising inflation rates and stagnating real wages could reverse many of the gains made in real wages by black workers over the last decade.

The effects of a real depreciation of the rand will also be felt by those who have indulged in long term foreign borrowing. If real rates are constant, then long term foreign borrowing is relatively safe – as the capital gains made on domestic real assets resulting from inflation would offset the losses due to the exchange rate. As it is, the decline in the real rate will have imposed losses on borrowers, not only in the servicing of the debt, but also at the time of maturity.

A further unfavourable effect of the depreciating rand is its inflationary effect on prices and costs. Although there is conflicting evidence as to the extent of the feedthrough, depreciation of the exchange rate will have a greater effect on domestic prices the closer the economy is to full employment and the more the depreciation is validated by increases in the money supply. At the present time the existence of higher unemployment and slower monetary growth should temper the inflationary consequences of the depreciation.

## Prospects

The economy can now move into a period of rapid growth depending on whether:

- the South African authorities can succeed in rescheduling the economy's short term foreign debt
- the level of the economy's exports can be sustained
- the cycle of inflationary pressures has been broken
- political stability can be restored.

The South African economy has always been highly dependent on foreign capital inflows for sustaining growth in the upswing of the business cycle. For example, it has been estimated that if foreign direct private investment between 1974 and 1983 had been terminated, the growth rate of the economy would have been lowered by an average of 24

percent. The pressures for disinvestment which are gaining strength abroad, and the damage to the economy's credit rating caused by recent events, are likely to reduce the availability of foreign capital, and consequently the growth rate which the economy can attain.

If, however, the economy has to repay its short term foreign loans, this will require that domestic expenditure levels must be depressed below actual output. The level of real per capita incomes will also have to be lowered. The result will be that stimulatory policies cannot be implemented, although employment may be stimulated through the increased production of tradeables. Ultimately the stresses caused by falling real wages and economic stagnation may prove too great for the political system, leading to political and economic collapse.

*If the economy has to repay its short term foreign loans, domestic expenditure levels will have to be depressed below actual output*

## Export Performance

Growth in exports will partially ease the foreign exchange constraint on the economy's growth. Since their most recent low of R9,6 bn (annualised rate) in the third quarter of 1983, exports have risen to an annualised high of R19,7 bn in the second quarter of 1985. Over the same period export prices rose by 38 percent while export volumes increased by 50 percent. The depreciating rand certainly contributed to both the increases in export prices and volumes. However, over this period world trade expanded with growth in industrialised countries and stimulated growth in South African export volumes, particularly in mining exports.

South Africa's exports to most regions have improved markedly. During the first 6 months of 1985, exports to Europe increased by 28 percent as compared to the same period last year; a 43 percent increase to both the USA and Asia, and a 95 percent increase to Africa. Although export volumes expanded across the board, particularly large increases occurred in the exports of coal, ferro-chrome, iron ore and wool. Manufactured goods have also showed large gains, especially in mining machinery and components.

Unfortunately, despite the current excellent performance in export markets, growing international hostility towards South Africa will undoubtedly have a negative effect on the future growth of exports. SAFTO reports an increasing number of cancellations of contracts from its members, sometimes through

pressures from trade unions on overseas buyers. Goods clearly identifiable as South African are more likely to be affected than fungible raw materials produced here. Nevertheless, the pressures will cause a discreet shift in the demand for exports, and to maintain export performance and the necessary current account surplus, a relative low value of the rand will be required to maintain competitiveness.

The depreciation of the rand, which will result from pressures for reduced capital inflows or on the level of exports, will feed into an inflationary spiral if workers are able to restore the level of real wages. Any relaxations of monetary policy will accommodate inflationary wage and price increases. The prospects for the short term therefore appear to be relatively low economic growth rates coupled with an increased inflation rate. Indeed, the financial markets have reflected similar expectations as short-term interest rates have decreased in recent weeks, while long-term interest rates have risen.

The political unrest, pressures for disinvestment, loss of foreign confidence, and pressures for sanctions, are all the consequences of a political system which has now become universally unacceptable, and economic policies cannot overcome these political ills. If the capitalist economic system is to survive in South Africa, the attainment of income growth and employment growth are absolute imperatives. The apartheid system now stands firmly in their way.

*To maintain competitive export performance and the necessary current account surplus, a relatively low value of the rand will be required*

*Economic policies cannot overcome the consequences of a political system which has now become universally unacceptable*



# Capitalism in the Developing World

## A BALANCING ACT OF MARKET INCENTIVES & SELECTIVE INTERVENTION

By Aubry Dickman, Senior Economic Consultant, Anglo American Corporation

The extent of government involvement in the economies of developing nations ranges from selective intervention to the pursuit of egalitarian income redistribution. Prominent economist, Aubry Dickman, assesses the linkage of market-oriented policies and restructuring to substantial growth rates in selected developing economies, in the context of crises in the international cycle and the strains of the Third World debt burden. Through relating data on price distortions, tax burdens, export levels and GDP to economic growth, he demonstrates that capitalism and development are potent ingredients for successful democratic nation-building.

The article is an abridged version of a paper presented by Mr Dickman at a recent workshop on 'Comparative Economic Development and a New Economic Order for South Africa', convened by the Department of International Relations at the University of the Witwatersrand.

The key to the identification of a truly capitalistic economy is its reliance on the private sector, ie on market-oriented methods

Taiwan or Singapore are testimony to the advantages of flexible policies designed to harness market forces within a particular socio-political framework

As many commentators have pointed out when considering the Far East miracle, the experience has reflected a unique controlled experiment, with politico-economic systems ranging from the Hong Kong extreme free market to the corporatism of Taiwan and South Korea. Taking this further, the relationship between governments and the corporate sector, and the role of military and other elites, will pervade an assessment of the capitalist and democratic nature of these first newly industrialised countries (NICs) in Asia.

Laissez-faire in the traditional sense is not the overriding feature of developing countries, successful or otherwise. On the contrary, rather than rely on the hidden hand, government shows its hand and plays its cards in no uncertain terms. However, the degree of government intervention ranges from economies where the role of government is largely indicative, to situations in which ministries are actively involved in trade matters (especially exports) or even where egalitarian income redistribution or land ownership programmes are pursued. The key to the identification of a truly capitalistic economy is its reliance on the private sector, that is on market-oriented methods rather than on central control or — as in certain nominally non-socialistic economies — on broad interventionist techniques that fundamentally impair market signals and economic performance.

### Asia's Newly Industrialised States

In South Korea, Larry Westphal (1982) notes that the private sector has been the principal engine of development, converting the basket case of the late 1950s into one of the most dynamic and successful developing economies, with an annual growth rate of over 8 percent during the last 24 years. The major element initiating this basically export-led achievement was the relationship between

government and business, characterised by close cooperation and selective interventions across a wide range of activities. Although strong government prodding has gone beyond the creation of market incentives, successful performance continues to be derived primarily from initiatives taken by firms acting within a decentralized system and in response to generalised incentives.

Other sectors have flourished too, largely because of private initiative in response to market forces. For instance, benign neglect of agriculture did not mean stagnation and farmers responded to newly emerging urban demand. Other areas of the non-industrial sector have also been pulled along by the development of industry, with encouragement of foreign investment — although not always consistent — also playing its part. Admittedly, Westphal cautions that the balance between selective intervention and market incentives is subtle and hard to define. This applies to any appraisal of the various developing countries, given their particular history, their heritage of social values and consequent political regimes. Yet despite the important differences in the well-springs of growth, the Korean experience is clearly relevant to other developing countries.

The dominance of special groups, and their relationship with the government, was intrinsic to the Japanese success story. It is important to recognize that in pursuing an export-led growth strategy in a harshly competitive world, and to ensure success in a relatively short time, extraordinary efforts have to be made. These conditions and objectives often involve the creation of structures which are large relative to the size of the economy, but not necessarily to those of the established and developed world. Thus Taiwan or Singapore — although a special case for geographical reasons — can be cited as testimony to the advantages of flexible policies designed to harness market forces within a particular socio-political

framework. Another unique case in some aspects is Hong Kong, at the extreme end of the market oriented spectrum.

Annual growth rates for these three pre-eminent NICs since 1960 range from almost 10 percent for Hong Kong to almost 8 percent for Singapore. This rate was maintained in the more difficult 1970-82 period, as was that for Taiwan at around 6 percent per annum. On a per capita basis, with reference to table II, South Korea, Singapore and Hong Kong have achieved annual growth rates at 7 percent or slightly above since 1960. Figures for Taiwan are not available but we may presume them to be comparable. To place matters in perspective, while South Africa's annual per capita growth rate has been only 2.1 percent since 1960, it has averaged a mere 0.9 percent per annum since 1970.

### Other Developing Countries

The literature on selected — mostly 'partially democratic' — developing countries also reveals the importance of the market-oriented approach, despite differences in the role of the state.

Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand have enjoyed above-average growth, ranging from 6 percent to nearly 8 percent per annum, and 3 percent to 6 percent on a per capita basis, between 1970-82 (see table I). Brazil, Turkey, Portugal, Greece and Spain, and indeed Malawi have done equally well or have come respectably close. Real growth and rising incomes per head, reflected in all the tangible manifestations of urban explosions and industrialisation, have occurred. The achievements of these countries are common cause and contrast with the laggards, although some of the others (including Yugoslavia, significantly) have done reasonably well. Sub-Saharan African states have been the worst hit by world recession and droughts, but also by their inability to adjust.

In fact, the question of adjustment affords us another way of assessing the significance of market-related policies and development. Not for one moment should one suggest that spectacular rates of growth are evidence of a smooth path of uninterrupted progress. On the contrary, the literature is replete with references to the cyclical — and also structural — problems encountered on the road to growth. The impact of the second oil price shock in 1979/80 and the US stagnation a few years thereafter posed major challenges. Anyone who is familiar with ongoing developments in the world economic scene will testify to the concern, at international banking and financial levels, with the way in which the NICs, broadly defined, would cope.

In a sense, many of these countries 'bought' growth at the cost of incurring insupportable debt. Certainly, one cannot deny that the best performers began to run into problems of

debt early on in the post-1973 recycling era, and have earned the distinction of being on the list of the world's largest debtor nations. Brazil, as everyone knows, tops the list at around \$100 billion and although Mexico and Argentina are next, South Korea at \$43 billion, Indonesia at \$32 billion, the Philippines at \$26 billion and Turkey at \$20 billion, follow close behind. The point is that these borrowings are relatively high in relation to GDP and particularly exports, and account for the service burden thus imposed and for the continuing anxiety about their ability to meet commitments. The same arguments apply, of course, but with a smaller international impact, to certain African and other Southern African countries.

### Adjusting to Growth Strains

The attitude to adjustment reflects the nature of the economic system and the possibility of solving short-term cyclical problems without abandoning the very basis that was responsible for initial success, that is, the market mechanism of resource allocation. Once again, for purposes of illustration, I refer to the South Korean experience. Both the World Bank and Morgan Guaranty have praised the efforts made in that country to weather the storms arising from over-ambitious spending in the late 1970s and to adapt the economy to the turbulent world of the 1980s. A quick overview of the types of policies imposed during the 1979-80 period of deep recession reveals that monetary policy was the principal restraint, with fiscal policy in a supportive role. The structuring programme was designed to improve the self-adjusting capacity of the economy through greater reliance on market-directed signals for resource allocation and private initiatives. It required:

- greater import liberalization to expose the domestic market to the rigours of competition
- domestic price deregulation, eg massive increases in petrol prices
- devaluation and a further rise in interest rates.

The cost in terms of output and employment was substantial, but vigorously competitive labour markets and the absence of trade union rigidities ensured that the momentum of the earlier wage spiral was quickly broken. It is noteworthy that after a decline of 3.6 percent in real GDP in 1980, South Korea moved back on the expansion track. Yet growth rates, which are still at around 7 percent, are tempered by continuing tight policies necessary in the circumstances.

The market-oriented approach to countering the strains and stresses of growth and the vagaries of the international cycle are reflected in the policies of the other countries under discussion, especially in Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia and Turkey, although with differing emphasis. No one denies that much remains to be done in all these

*Annual growth rates for three pre-eminent newly industrialised countries in Asia since 1960 range from around 8 to 10 percent*

*Sub-Saharan states have been worst hit by world recession and droughts, but also by their inability to adjust to cyclical problems*

*The attitude to adjustment reflects the possibility of solving short-term problems without abandoning the market mechanism of resource allocation*

*Countries that imposed a lower effective average tax burden on their populations have achieved substantially higher real growth rates*



The quality of certain types of public consumption (eg education) has aided and not retarded the expansion process in countries with high per capita growth

countries, and the cases of the Philippines and Brazil appear particularly difficult, notwithstanding mounting IMF pressure. Indeed, with Brazil in mind, Morgan Guaranty, in its latest world financial survey, is highly critical of the Latin American record as compared to that of Asia, because of a heavy reliance on trade and payments restrictions in the wake of the debt crisis. The way forward for Latin America, in the bank's view, is to forego interventionism in favour of efficiency-boosting liberalization.

Differing views may prevail as to the ability of some of the countries to survive the period of comparative austerity still needed to restore international solvency. Yet these problems are not manifested equally in the successful economies, nor is there any evidence, on balance, that they were avoided in those countries that ignored market signals. On the contrary, the debt burden of the poor performers is clearly worse, in some

cases very much so. So far, despite all the problems, capitalism and development have gone well together. It is time then, to look more rigorously into the ingredients for efficiency and growth.

## Price Distortions and Growth

In market economies prices play the pivotal role in the allocation of resources. The linkages among price distortions are complex though — some counteract, others reinforce, each other. For the purpose of this exercise, a composite index of distortions, classified as high, medium and low, was calculated for 31 developing countries, representing more than 75 percent of the population of the developing world, excluding China. The sample comprised a disparate group unconnected by geography, natural resources or degree of government activism. When set

### THE LINKAGE BETWEEN PRICE DISTORTIONS & ECONOMIC GROWTH

The 1983 World Development Report features the results of an interesting research project into price distortions, which are classified under six headings:

- **Exchange Rates**

Distortion in this respect means a failure to permit the exchange rate to reflect domestic purchasing power, thus inhibiting exports and encouraging imports.

- **Trade Restrictions**

These can lead to high and variable rates of protection which, by contributing to an overvalued exchange rate, inadvertently harm exports, particularly in agriculture. Import controls rarely achieve their intended aim of encouraging viable domestic industry and instead encourage capital-intensive projects. The distortions are compounded by high administrative burdens and 'windfall gains' to those who obtain licences (the World Bank euphemism for corruption).

- **Interest Rates**

The foregoing tendencies are exacerbated when interest rates are suppressed below market levels, and negative real returns are experienced. They penalize savers, stimulate capital outflows or excess demand for credit, including that for capital-intensive operations, and then escalate the administrative cost of financial rationing.

- **Costs of Labour**

Capital-intensive investment is also encouraged where the cost of labour is increased by unrealistic minimum wage laws and social security taxes. As noted in the 1984 World Development Report, if real wages are above the level at which those who seek work can find it, there are three solutions: unemployment must increase, inflation must rise to depress real wages or income policies are inevitable. Usually all three occur in varying forms. In industrial countries the result is stagflation, but for some developing countries the result is disaster.

- **Infrastructural Services**

When governments refuse to let the prices of essential utility services fully reflect the costs of supplying them, demand is increased for these essentially capital-hungry undertakings, and financial viability is impaired.

- **Inflation**

Most developing countries experienced double-digit inflation in the past 1973 decade, and many prior to that. Rapid and accelerating inflation undermines allocative efficiency and contributes to a growing sense of social and economic injustice, which feeds back to savings propensities and investment confidence.

## Data Base

against 1970-80 growth and other measures, it is found — not surprisingly — that distortions and growth are inversely related. In short, prices do matter for growth.

It is instructive, when looking at the summary chart encapsulating the findings, to see Malawi at the top (lowest distortions, highest growth), followed closely by Thailand, South Korea, Malaysia, the Philippines, Kenya, Indonesia and Brazil. (Singapore, Taiwan, Spain, Portugal and Greece, Zambia and Zaire were not included in this exercise.) Turkey is about half-way and then the trend deteriorates — high distortion and low growth characterise Argentina, Chile, Tanzania, Bangladesh, Nigeria too and finally, Ghana.

### Tax Burdens and Growth

One can see the advantages of a less distorted, and presumably more motivated and flexible economy in another way. In 1984, Keith Marsden of the World Bank reported on the effect of taxes on growth for a different selection of twenty countries representing almost the entire spectrum of world incomes. As demonstrated by table I, in all cases, the countries that imposed a lower effective average tax burden on their populations achieved substantially higher real rates of growth.

Again, the linkage between tax and growth is an involved one. Obviously, growth is affected by many other factors: political stability, social mores, export prices and so on. But the link is there, if only indirectly, operating through the capital, labour and product markets. (In short, lower taxes seem to be compatible with a pattern of development that raises output and reduces poverty.) The two basic mechanisms are:

- firstly, lower taxes result in higher returns to savings, investment, work and innovation, thus raising total output; and
- secondly, low-tax countries appear to have shifted resources from less productive to more productive sectors and activities by increasing the overall efficiency of resource allocation.

### Exports and Per Capita Growth

Table II provides a synoptic overview of an admittedly heterogeneous range of developing countries, ranked according to per capita growth, ie standard of living performance, in the 1970-82 period. The figures are misleading in the sense that countries with slower population growth, like Portugal, Greece and Spain, were able to do well with relatively slower GDP gains, but this does not really affect the assessment.

The overall picture is clear: from Hong Kong to Malawi, of the good performers, virtually all of these countries increased exports as a proportion of GDP. This reflects the success of outward-oriented strategies, which in

Table 1

#### • THE LINKAGES • Tax Burdens & Economic Growth

Country	Low (L) High (H) Tax	Annual GDP Growth, 1970-79
Malawi	L	6,3
Zaire	H	-0,7
Thailand	L	7,7
Zambia	H	1,5
Korea	L	10,3
Chile	H	1,9
Brazil	L	8,7
Uruguay	H	2,5
Singapore	L	8,4
New Zealand	H	2,4
Spain	L	4,4
U K	H	2,1

Table 2

#### • SELECTED GROWTH INDICATORS • For Sample of Developing Countries

	Real Per Capita Growth (% per annum)		Proportion of Exports to GDP (%)	
	1960-70	1970-82	1960	1982
Hong Kong	7,5	7,5	82*	100*
Singapore	6,5	7,0	163*	196*
Korea	6,0	6,9	3	39
Malaysia	3,7	5,7	54	51
Indonesia	1,8	5,4	13	22
Thailand	5,3	5,2	17	25
Brazil	2,6	5,2	5	9
Portugal	5,9	3,7	17	27
Philippines	2,1	3,3	11	16
Greece	6,3	3,1	9	18
Turkey	3,5	2,8	3	11
Spain	6,1	2,1	10	18
Malawi	2,1	2,1	18	21
Kenya	1,9	1,5	31	25
Tanzania	3,3	0,6	30	11
Zambia	2,4	-2,2	56	27
Zaire	1,4	-3,2	55	29
Ghana	-0,1	-3,5	28	2
South Africa	3,3	0,9	35	25

Source: World Bank Development Report, 1984 and SA Statistics

\*Very high importers.





Cedric Nunn/AFP

*A black entrepreneur in downtown Johannesburg. The South African economy has, until recently, included access to and the free utilization of resources.*

*The essential task is to pursue market-oriented policies, and allow them to work, whatever pressures are brought to bear by interest groups.*

themselves are dependent on efficient resource allocation under broad market-related policies, albeit imperfect ones. Such restructuring can be evaluated in more detail by reference to investment growth which has mostly exceeded consumption (not shown in the table). It can be inferred that the quality of certain types of public consumption (ie education) has been such as to aid and not retard the expansion process.

By contrast, the selected African countries which have lapsed further into poverty have reflected the very opposite in terms of export performance as well as consumption/investment trends arising from inappropriate, non-market policies. From Kenya to Tanzania and Mozambique with socialist philosophies, the message is as depressing as it is undeniable.

### Capitalism in South Africa

As regards South Africa, in per capita terms we have just kept our heads above water in the past twelve years, on average, but the average conceals the lamentable record since 1980. Recently, the contrast between South Africa and the fast-growing NICs, and the older developing countries, could not be more striking. Furthermore, between 1960-82 the proportion of exports has fallen, which is attributable to the familiar problems of excess consumption and mal-investment. This in itself stems from the deep seated conflicts and distortions in the South African economy, having contained within it — until recently anyhow — a whole dimension of impediments to access and the free utilization of resources, despite a professed adherence to the private enterprise system.

In the past few years, a combination of adverse circumstances and bad management predicated on unrealistic expectations, have forced us to pay a heavy price to regain equilibrium. Having for so long managed to operate a peculiar type of capitalism, we tried to make up for the sins of the past (eg through higher wages) at a time when world conditions demanded harder work and lower living standards, leaving South Africa with a legacy of uncompetitiveness with other more flexible and productive market-oriented economies. Successful transition to a comparable state of productivity cannot be easy, bearing in mind our history and our society. Yet an extraordinary process commenced at least ten years ago — at first in the financial markets, then in trade policy and with progressive momentum in the field of labour, extending now even to the ultimate sacred cows of influx control and agriculture.

At last, the South African economy too is beginning to reap the advantages of market-related adjustment measures, having rejected the specious and fundamentally debilitating route of controls. The final report of the De Kock Commission is a milestone in this direction. However, the essential task in a more hostile world environment is resolutely to pursue the right policies, and allow them to work, whatever the implications for special interest groups, whether on the side of the public sector, business or organised labour. International experience confirms that capitalism, irrespective of the particular form of democracy with which it is associated, can indeed be a remarkable force for change and development, notwithstanding the inevitable imperfections. If we wish to enjoy the full benefits, the remedy is in our own hands. **IPSA**

# THE CHOICE BEFORE US

## Economic Stabilisation or the Instability of Free Markets

By Dr Lawrence Patrick McCrystal, Chairman of the KwaNdebele Development Corporation and Director of the Industrial Development Corporation of South Africa.

*South Africa's economic Frankenstein has grown more ferocious under the influence of the sanctions initiatives of the West. The government's traditional scapegoats, the drought and the gold price, have now been joined by what is perceived as the vindictiveness of the disinvestment and sanctions lobbies.*

*To the contrary, prominent development economist Dr McCrystal, lays the blame for South Africa's poor economic performance squarely at the feet of the reactive management style of the authorities, which has resulted from their newfound belief in the ability of 'free market' forces to rectify imbalances in the economy. He argues that this country can simply not afford the free market philosophy, and that economic intervention on an ongoing basis is necessary if stabilisation is to be achieved.*

It is a fact of life that after all is said and done more has been said than done. Until recently, this has unhappily been the case with South Africa's economic policy-making.

It has always been my belief that the boldest businessman in history was Noah — he floated a company when the rest of the world was in liquidation. Some may argue that it would take even greater boldness to start a new business in South Africa today. I do not share that view given that sound economic policies are adopted.

The prevailing conventional wisdom in South Africa is that free markets are the key to economic growth and prosperity for the majority. So we should have, it is argued, free imports, freely floating foreign exchange rates, free market interest rates and generally freedom from all or most forms of government intervention in the economic affairs of the country.

If this view, which has been widely held and strongly argued in South Africa for at least the past 70 years, had been followed by our forefathers, we would today have little or no



*Unemployment rates in South Africa are high and rising — one of the legacies of pursuing a free market philosophy within a volatile economy.*



*Had free market policies been adopted in our past, South Africa would be a predominantly mining and agricultural country, with little secondary industry*

*The active promotion of the free market philosophy over the past six years has resulted in a poor record of economic performance*

*Free enterprise and free markets should not be confused - markets do need to be disciplined occasionally to restore reasonable stability*

*Authorities have fallen into the trap of reactive management and show a lack of planning which takes effect after the event*

steel industry, oil from coal plants, aluminium smelting, no Industrial Development Corporation or phosphate industry and little or no textile industry. In fact, South Africa would be a predominantly mining and agricultural country with little industrialisation, secondary industry and related activities.

### Free Market Legacy

The question now arises as to what the free market philosophy has done for South Africa in the six years that it has been actively promoted. Here are some of the 'blessings':

- The highest interest rates in the country's recorded economic history.
- A lower average rate of economic growth (on average only about 3 percent per annum) than in any similar period since reasonably reliable statistics have become available.
- A wider oscillation in the growth rate than in any adequately monitored period in our history, ie from 7.8 percent growth in gross domestic product in 1980 to negative 1.2 percent in 1982, to negative 3.2 percent in 1983.
- A rand which has depreciated to the lowest level in our history against virtually every significant currency, including the lire and the escudo. In 1984, the rand was the ninth worst performer in the world, with only a few South American and Middle East currencies being worse.
- An excessively high rate of inflation.
- Inadequate foreign reserves to repay the country's external debts.
- High and rising unemployment.
- A high and rising rate of company liquidations, leading to an increasing degree of concentration of economic power.
- A significant deterioration in the balance sheets of the vast majority of industrial concerns in the country.
- The lowest level of savings relative to Gross National Income recorded in our economic history.
- Deteriorating returns on investment in major sectors of the economy.

With such a poor record of performance, the question is: why did the government not abandon the policies that led to this situation long ago? Part of the answer lies in the fact that the government blames our current unhappy status on the after-effects of the drought, the low gold price, and the volatile international economic environment. This certainly is true in part, but the drought has been broken over much of the country while the effects of the low gold price have been absorbed by the balance of payments long before now. Other countries which are just as exposed to the volatility of the international economy as is South Africa have succeeded in stabilising their affairs.

Government policy must unhappily bear a large part of the blame for the poor state of the economy. The fact that the free market philosophy has not been abandoned can only

be explained by an apparent confusion between the concepts of 'free enterprise' and 'free markets'.

I am certainly in favour of free enterprise in the sense of freedom to start new businesses, freedom to sell one's labour in the best market, freedom to sell to whom and at what price one wishes, and so on. However, it has to be acknowledged that free markets do not necessarily tend towards an optimum position. They may in fact move even further away from it under the influence of speculation. In January this year this became evident when speculation drove the rand to 41 US cents. The fact is that markets do need to be disciplined from time to time in order to restore them to reasonable stability.

### Volatility of a Small Economy

South Africa's economy is inherently volatile, exceedingly dependent as it is upon an unpredictable gold price and even more erratic weather conditions. One would have thought that economic policy would have been designed to reduce this volatility rather than to increase it. Yet by pursuing a free market philosophy, the authorities have added to the volatility of the economy.

Support for this criticism is not hard to find. The violent swings in the foreign exchange rates of the rand, the wide fluctuations in the rate of economic growth in recent years, and the movements in interest rates have all been of critical importance to the decisions of businessmen. Their unpredictability in the past few years has had a major negative influence on investment by business.

The view that allowing markets freedom to find their own levels will necessarily enhance economic well-being has led the authorities into another trap. They have tended to wait for market forces to rectify the situation. Only upon finding that this is not always the way things go, have they taken action. As a consequence, they have unwittingly fallen into a reactive style of economic management. Reactive management, whether of a home, a business or an economy, is generally poor management because it implies a lack of planning and takes effect after the event. If one does not know where one is going, how can one expect to get there? It is only by adopting a pro-active management style that one can hope to influence the course of events in a sensible manner.

We have recently had some splendid examples of the poor decisionmaking resulting from the reactive management style adopted by the authorities. In November 1983, at a conference organised by the then Prime Minister to discuss inflation, the government was warned that consumer spending was getting out of hand and should be curbed quickly. Nothing was done until August 1984, when the spending splurge had already started to cool down. Thus our



policymakers pushed the economy down further and faster than would otherwise have been the case had they taken action sooner. Motivated by their free market philosophy, they waited for market forces to correct the situation. When this did not happen to their satisfaction, they took interventionary action but it was too late.

Another example of the negative effect of this philosophy was the speculation during last January against the rand which drove it down to 41 US cents. A little bit of discipline was imposed and the exchange rate improved 25 percent in a short space of time.

### Philosophy of the Strong

The kind of policies currently being followed are, in my view, exaggerating the trade cycle rather than dampening it as should be the case. This makes forward planning for businessmen almost impossible, introduces new volatility into the building and construction industry, and makes export-orientated investment almost impossible. One does not know from one hour to the next what the exchange rate is going to be, let alone being able to take a longer view.

How much further can the economy be allowed to deteriorate before it is realised

that South Africa is not able to afford the free market philosophy as it is currently interpreted. Mr Edward Heath, a former Prime Minister of Britain, recently remarked: 'The truth is, as history has often shown us, that unfettered market forces lead to the rich and strong getting richer and stronger, and the poor and weak, poorer and weaker, until some conflagration in society acts to restore the balance.' Must we wait for a social conflagration to put right what the free market policies have allowed to go wrong?

The free market philosophy always has been the philosophy of the strong. South Africa's economy is neither strong enough nor diversified enough to afford a virtually freely floating currency, extraordinarily high interest rates and relatively free imports, with no incomes policy of any kind.

An unshakeable faith in the ability of free markets to rectify imbalances leads to the conclusion that whatever goes wrong is purely of a cyclical nature and, given time, will correct itself. The possibility that the ills of the economy may be caused or at least aggravated by the tendency for markets to sometimes move even further from an equilibrium position apparently does not occur to those who believe that markets always operate in the best longer term

*McCrystal argues that the free market philosophy has in fact contributed to the growth of the present economic Frankenstein, and despite what the authorities believe, the free market is powerless to combat it.*

**South Africa's economy is neither strong, nor diversified enough for the free market philosophy, which has always been the philosophy of the strong**



**The effects of freer imports and high interest rates are visible, particularly in the lack of growth in investment in productive capacity**

**It has become necessary to take special steps to assist exporters by mitigating the effects of the free market philosophies**

**Markets in South Africa's circumstances do not necessarily correct all imbalances and if left free, often aggravate the situation**

**Among others, some form of income policy is necessary, a capital stabilisation account should be created and state interference in private enterprise should be reduced**

interests of the economy.

The effects of the fall in the exchange rate are already being felt, as the cost increases it has caused filter through to the consumer level. The rate of increase in consumer prices is in danger of causing an uncontrollable inflation/depreciation spiral. Ever higher rates of increases in prices may be expected to cause further depreciation of the rand, resulting in disastrous levels of inflation.

### Acceptable Intervention Policy

The effects of freer imports and high interest rates are already visible in industry, particularly in the lack of growth in investment in productive capacity, and in the concomitant deterioration of productivity levels. The lack of any form of incomes policy, even of an informal kind, is visible, in turn, in the stubbornly high level of inflation.

What is more, many manufacturers are not being really assisted by the lower exchange value of the rand, as is born out by the recent experience of, for example, the steel and engineering industries. High local interest rates and deepseated uncertainty about the rand's future make it unattractive to expand capacity to enter export markets. Consequently, instead of the floating exchange rate and freely-moving interest rates solving the problem, it has become necessary for special steps to be taken to assist exporters by mitigating the effects of the free market policies.

South Africa has few markets. Even those markets which are relatively free need to be re-orientated or disciplined on occasions. The August 1984 measures regarding consumer credit and the 1985 interventions in the rules governing the rand foreign exchange markets, bear this out.

The choice has to be made between those policies which accept this type of intervention as inevitable in the South African context, and those who see it as a temporary aberration in an otherwise free situation which must be returned to 'normal' as soon as possible. The former is pro-active; the latter reactive, its reaction usually coming too late, once it is clear that market forces will be unable to bring about the necessary correction — by which time interventionary action is usually too late.

### The Alternative: Controls

A change of attitude is necessary. It must be accepted that markets in South Africa's circumstances do not necessarily correct all imbalances and if left free, often aggravate the situation. It must also be accepted that the control of inflation is South Africa's highest stabilisation priority. For years, lip service accompanied by curiously little action has been paid to this. At long last it seems to have been accepted by government that some

form of income policy is necessary, something for which a few economists have been pleading without being heard, for years. Since government controls such a high proportion of the total salary and wage bill in South Africa, this is obviously the place to start. The government is to be congratulated for its recent, though rather belated decision to cut back on expenditure and must be encouraged by the private sector to see it through.

The floating exchange rate policy should be limited by adopting an internal stabilisation policy and not falling into the trap of using the exchange rate as a substitute. Currency flows emanating from gold and capital movements must be separated from the flows on the current account emanating from trade. A capital stabilisation account should be created and capital movements paid into or out of this. Gold earnings, which are also frequently volatile, would go into this account as well.

Quantitative controls on credit will be necessary from time to time as part of setting targets for money supply growth. This should be accepted as an integral part of stabilisation policy. Control of government spending and fiscal policies which work in tandem with monetary policy are also essential, and the promotion of competition and reduction of interference by the state in private enterprise, as distinct from 'free markets', must be part of the package.

Let it be remembered that 'free markets' imply freedom of resources to move. If resources are not free to move across borders, particularly in a case like South Africa, where the economy is small, it hinders rather than helps matters to prescribe policies which are based on the assumption that free market prices will correct the resulting imbalances. They often will not; our present situation is evidence that these imbalances can grow steadily worse.

### Clear Choice

Unhappily, if we do somehow experience a modest economic upturn in due course, the free market supporters will claim that their policies have worked. But the recession thereafter, accompanied by high inflation and a continually deteriorating rand, will probably be worse than the present one — until the inflation/depreciation spiral really does become uncontrollable. If this happens, such drastic measures will be necessary that conventional economic stabilisation policies will not be sufficient to correct the imbalance.

Sooner rather than later a clear choice is going to have to be made — economic stability with growth and a positive attitude to intervention in the economy to maintain these when necessary; or pursuit of free markets, with high volatility, greater uncertainty and lower long-term real growth.

DDA



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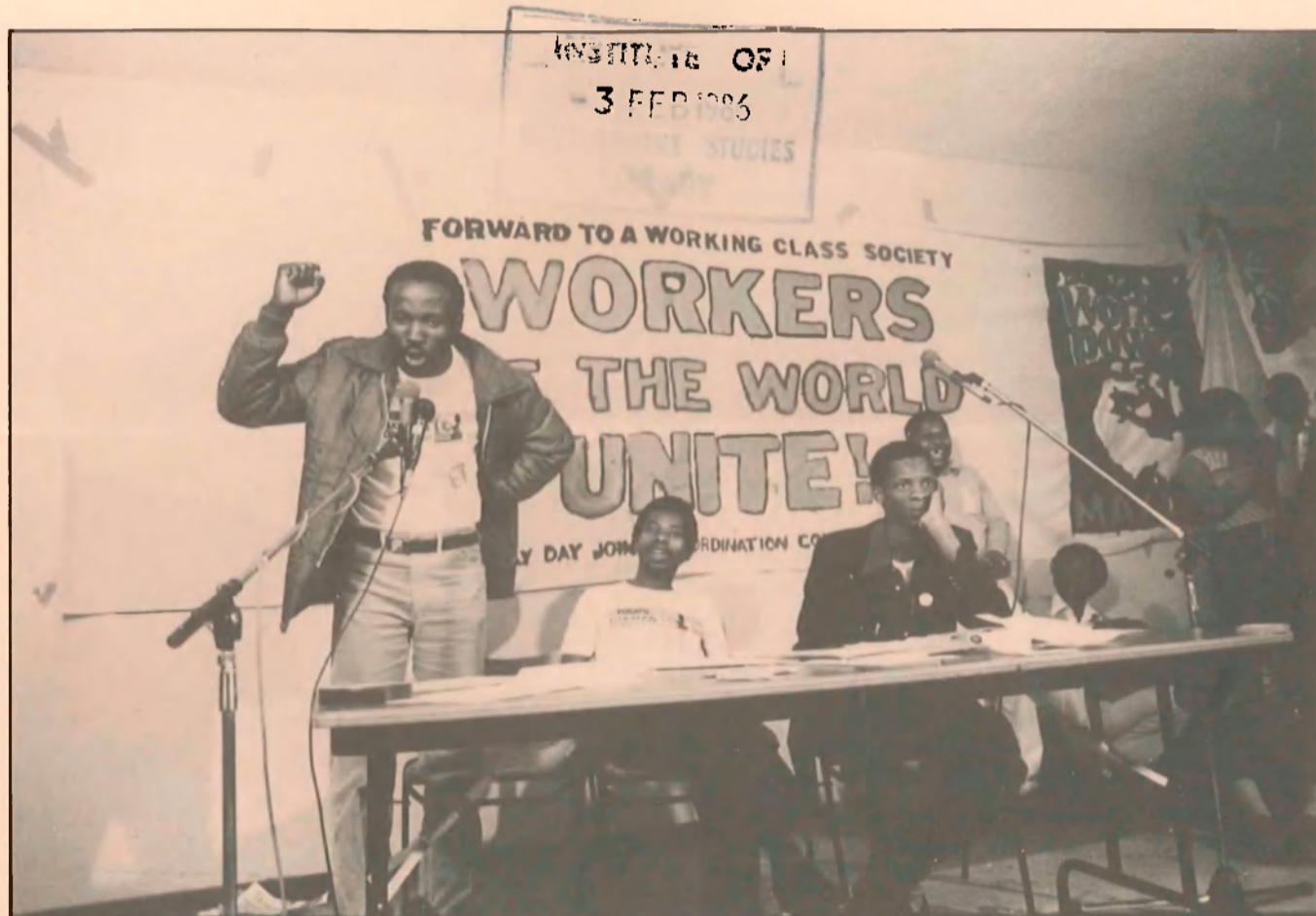


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# THE SUPER FEDERATION

## INDEPENDENT UNIONISM COMES OF AGE

*Factions & Fractions in the Post-Wiehahn Era*

*By Indicator SA Researcher Mark Bennett*

*As with other extra-parliamentary opposition in South Africa, the emergent labour movement has been chronically divided. Since the revival of 'independent' black trade unionism in the 1973 strike wave, diverse ideological tensions have dominated union politics to the extent that any form of meaningful inter-union cooperation has been limited to date.*

*Mark Bennett explores some of the important factors that prompted the emergent unions to investigate unification in the post-Wiehahn era. He comments on the key issues that emerged during continuous unity talks between 1981 and mid-1985, and illustrates the probable advantages for the unions expected to join the new 'super-federation' to be launched on 30 November 1985. Bennett concludes that the new federation will become the strongest shop-floor force in the country and is likely to develop into an articulate political voice for the black working class.*

In mid-1985, 25 emergent South African trade unions, representing more than 375 000 black workers, finally committed themselves to forming a single industrially-based federation of unions before the end of the year. Although the decision to form a new federation ended five years of complex negotiations, the talks along the difficult road to unity have exposed multiple divisions within the emergent labour movement itself.

Until quite recently it appeared that any efforts to unify would be stillborn, as delegates in unity negotiations squabbled over whether unions should participate in state-created bargaining mechanisms, the structure and financing of the proposed federation, the role of white union officials, the continued existence of general unions, inter-union rivalry and political differences. The ideal of a 'super-federation' had nearly ruptured in the process, so that in early 1985 meaningful unity appeared to be an illusion held dear by a small caucus of emergent unions, namely FOSATU, four of the major independent unions — CCAWUSA, CTMWA, FCWU, GWU — and a less enthusiastic CUSA.

The twist came in July 1985 when a group of 11 UDF aligned general (regional/community) unions unexpectedly rejoined the unity initiative — two years after they had been ejected from formal unity negotiations. Simultaneously, CUSA, the largest post-Wiehahn union confederation with 249 100 members and an original participant in unity talks, withdrew its support because of the federation's refusal to commit itself to black worker leadership, among other reasons. This decision in turn prompted CUSA's flagship and largest constituent, NUM (98 000

members), to disaffiliate and join the unity-minded unions.

### Why Unity?

Unity negotiations among the new unions have proceeded in one form or another since the growth of 'independent' black unionism after the 1973 Durban strike wave. Early attempts at forging unity led to the creation of FOSATU in 1979, but were relatively unsuccessful, as a number of ideologically diverse unions stayed out. Evidence of worker disunity continued in 1980 when CUSA was formed by some of the unions who had chosen not to join FOSATU.

Concurrent with the birth of the FOSATU and CUSA groupings, there was also a rapid growth of general community-based trade unionism. Union groupings like BAWU later spawned a multitude of other general unions — many of which were later to form an independent caucus and affiliate to the UDF. In February 1984, the process of division was further entrenched when seven emergent black unions formed AZACTU, a confederation of industrially-based unions committed to the philosophy of black consciousness.

In this chaotic period of growth and of interim alliances, union strategists, leaders and workers came to realise that a rationalisation of emergent union activities was necessary to ensure the survival and continued growth of independent — or non-party political — unionism in South Africa. The first formal meeting to discuss unity in Cape Town in August 1981 was organised by 11 unions in addition to CUSA and FOSATU affiliates. These inaugural

*Five years of union unity negotiations exposed multiple divisions within the emergent labour movement itself*

*Worker leaders realised that a rationalisation of emergent labour activities was necessary for the growth of 'independent' trade unionism*

*The general unions' insistence that unity unions should not participate in official bargaining institutions nearly collapsed the talks*

*Once established, the 'super-federation's' affiliates will poach workers from the established labour movement and from emergent union outsiders*

*Given the deteriorating conditions in African townships, the federation will consolidate a powerful industrial/political constituency*

*The new labour movement is unlikely to risk alienating workers within its ranks by formally affiliating to any political organisation*

discussions were followed over the next five years by more than 15 unity summits in various centres throughout the country (see data-base).

Some of the important factors that prompted unions to investigate unification are:

- The disruptive tactical influence of a multitude of ideologically and structurally diverse unions operating within one industry
- The schismatic tendency where a plethora of new unions haphazardly represent workers from a particular industry, geographic area, community or political constituency
- The increasingly hostile attitudes and actions of the independent homelands displayed towards emergent unions, particularly by the Ciskei
- Uncertainty over the direction and purpose of labour and related legislation, particularly the Wiehahn and Riekert reforms — viewed by many as state attempts to co-opt the activities of unions
- A political environment where a number of state reform measures continue to restrict African labour mobility (the Koornhof Bills and influx control) and exclude Africans from the central decisionmaking process (the tri-cameral parliament)
- Hardening employer attitudes resulting from a downturn in the economy. The sustained recession resulted in high unemployment, undercutting the bargaining strengths of unionised black workers, especially over wages (MacShane et al 1984: p111/112).

### Advantages of Unification

Participants in unity negotiations were aware of the potential advantages of a single industrially-based labour confederation in both the short and long term. Differences that emerged were over how it could be achieved and what form it should take.

An initial hurdle was the general unions' insistence, excluding the GWU, that unions party to unity negotiations should not be registered or participate in Industrial Councils. Some unions at the talks — particularly FOSATU affiliates, agreed that registration invited state interference in union affairs, but ultimately rejected this position arguing that as long as 'worker control' was retained it was tactically wise to participate in official bargaining mechanisms (SALB Vol8/No4: p11/12).

Another stumbling block arose over the presence of white officials within certain unions. Both CUSA and AZACTU — in contrast to the 'non-racial' stance adopted by FOSATU, the independents and UDF-aligned general unions — argued that whites had no role to play in the leadership of what were essentially black working class organisations. The apparently insurmountable problem eventually prompted both former groupings to withdraw from the talks (CUSA statement 7/8/85).

All the emergent unions believe industrial unionism is where the federation's ultimate strength will lie. Labour strategists assume that sectoral dominance will give workers far greater bargaining powers when involved in negotiations with employer organisations over wages and working conditions on an industry level. Unification will give unions broad shop-floor powerbases in 10 industrial/service sectors, namely metal, chemical, mining, automobile, textile, wood and paper, food processing, transport, building and construction, commercial and catering industries, and municipal services. Over time, should affiliates of the confederation establish control or dominance in these sectors it would give them a deeper and broader industrial power-base than any of the existing trade union confederations in South Africa (Charney 1983: p4/7).

With the divisive effects of inter-union rivalry significantly reduced, affiliates of the new federation should have a greater capacity to poach organised labour from the established labour movement and from emergent union outsiders. 'Super federation' affiliates will also have increased opportunities to recruit from the large pool of unorganised labour, including the probability of state employees (see following article by van der Merwe). Unity will also facilitate a high degree of inter-union support and solidarity. This could prove invaluable if workers involved in strike action could rely on solidarity action by members of other affiliate unions through a consumer boycott, secondary pickets or refusing to handle 'scab' products, in order to pressurise inter-management settlement of disputes.

A rationalisation of the organisational structures of affiliates of the new federation will allow unions to benefit from a larger pool of union resources. Centralisation of worker education projects, shop-steward training courses, legal resources and research programmes into issues of worker health and safety will ensure unions are better prepared for negotiations and disputes.

### The New Labour Politics

During the early 1980s, trade unions, particularly FOSATU, stayed clear of politics as they concentrated on building up membership and strengthening worker organisation. But, given the deteriorating situation in the country's black townships, together with crises in black education, medical and pension services and rising unemployment, the federation will consolidate an industrial/political constituency that will not be easy to ignore.

Initially, its political voice will probably be more of a broad 'anti-apartheid' nature — rather than uniformly distinct — as a result of the diverse political affiliations of workers in the federation. The new federation is unlikely to risk alienating workers within the same union or industrial union by formally affiliating to a political organisation. For



instance, tensions between workers with different political ties were visible when violence erupted between Inkatha and UDF groups in Natal's Lamontville and Hambanati townships in 1984, over impending incorporation into KwaZulu. In the process, FOSATU 'attempted to extract its members' from a complex and 'dangerously divisive' situation (FOSATU Annual Report 1984: p48).

Perhaps when the full impact of worker education programmes have taken effect, the federation might develop an independent political character of its own, thus circumventing the option of affiliating to any established extra-parliamentary opposition organisation, as workers demand greater political involvement by unions.

The November 1984 work stayaway in the Transvaal was an indication of the new type of political unionism likely to be adopted by unions under pressure from workers and community organisation. On the other hand, the government's detention of union leaders active in coordinating the stayaway also exposed the dangers of state repression inherent in explicit political unionism.

The federation's leadership will undoubtedly acquire a far greater degree of both international and national legitimacy as the democratically mandated representatives of a significant proportion of South Africa's population. Consequently, present dilemmas facing foreign legislators and lobbying groups over the views of South Africa's working class, especially on sensitive issues such as disinvestment and the country's reform process, will be simplified.

Unity should also result in the new federation being recognised by many international union confederations and foreign unions as the most legitimate representative of South Africa's working class. Consequently, it

should attract most of the financial and moral support that these bodies currently offer to a wide range of South African organisations. This will be particularly valuable where South African based unions become involved in disputes with multinational corporations. Evidence of the value of external labour linkages occurred when the International Union of Food Workers mobilised 183 of its affiliates to boycott Coca Cola products. The solidarity actions were designed to force a South African based franchise holder to re-employ a number of workers who were dismissed after they had struck for higher wages and union recognition (MacShane et al 1984: p138).

### Difficulties Ahead

A major problem for the federation will be how the general unions — excluding the GWU which has committed itself to organising transport and construction workers — will dismantle their regional and multi-sectoral structures into industrially-based components. General unions have in the past cut across sectoral divisions by organising as many workers as they could into single organisations (SALB Vol8/No6: p13).

Their tendency to recruit members through strike-waves and mass meetings in townships has encouraged recruits to owe allegiance to union bureaucrats rather than to the shop-floor. Many workers in general unions might have difficulty in accepting new leadership regimes when they are moved into the industrially demarcated unions. Recent splits in SAAWU showed the extent to which various groups of workers supported different factions of a regionally situated leadership.

Consequently, attempts to reconcile the past recruiting practices and styles of leadership

*Once the full impact of worker education programmes has taken effect, the federation might develop an independent political character*

*The federation will probably be recognised internationally as the most legitimate representative of the South African working class*

*NUM's decision to leave CUSA and affiliate to the 'super-federation' has ensured that the federation will be the largest union movement in South Africa.*



• UNION UNITY TALKS: 1981-1985 •

TRADE UNIONS

Date/Place	Delegates	Resolutions/Decisions/Results
1981 Aug Cape Town	11 unions, CUSA and FOSATU	Union resolutions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● to reject registration and Industrial Councils (IC)</li> <li>● to condemn anti-union attitudes of South African state and homelands</li> <li>● to foster union-unity through creation of regional solidarity committees (RSC).</li> </ul>
1982 Apr Johannesburg July Port Elizabeth	FCWU, GWU, 5 other general unions and 10 FOSATU affiliates FCWU, CTMWA, GWU, MWASA, 6 other general unions and 11 CUSA and 10 FOSATU affiliates	GWUSA/MACWUSA leave talks over registration and IC participation issues. Seven general unions demand acceptance of non-negotiable principles for unity talks to continue — worker control and shop-floor bargaining, non-racialism, non-registration, federation policy to be binding on all affiliates and participation in community issues.
1983 Apr Cape Town July Cape Town Oct Johannesburg	29 unions FCWU, CCAWUSA, CTMWA, GWU and 5 other general unions, CUSA and FOSATU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● General unions and CUSA argue unity should come from workers and demand revival of RSC.</li> <li>● FOSATU, CCAWUSA, FCWU, GWU — argue unity would in any case arise from creation of new federation which workers have mandated</li> <li>● Feasibility Committee (FC) formed to consider structures, financing and industrial demarcation of proposed federation</li> <li>● Unions agree to submit audited reports of membership and areas of organisation, but GAWU, GWUSA/MACWUSA, SAAWU and CUSA do not comply</li> <li>● FCWU and FOSATU demand creation of 'one union, one industry' and majority unions to recruit the unorganised.</li> </ul>
1984 Mar Johannesburg Mar & Apr Durban May Port Elizabeth Aug Cape Town	FCWU, CCAWUSA, CTMWA, GWU, and 3 general unions, 11 CUSA and 9 FOSATU affiliates FCWU, CCAWUSA, CTMWA, GWU, CUSA and FOSATU	GAWU, MGWUSA and SAAWU granted observer status for all future unity talks by other unity participants because of lack of commitment to industrial unionism. The former and GWUSA/MACWUSA refuse new status and walk out leaving 24 unions in talks. FC finalises constitution in August.
1985 May Germiston June Soweto June Johannesburg	40 unions, including AZACTU, CUSA, FOSATU and UDF affiliates, 9 AZACTU, 11 CUSA, 9 FOSATU and 10 UDF affiliates, CCAWUSA, CTMWA, FCWU, GWU, 9 FOSATU affiliates, CCAWUSA, CTMWA, FCWU, GWU and NUM	Due to external pressure from SACTU and ICFTU among others, unity unions send copies of draft constitution to AZACTU and UDF aligned unions, who all reject it not having participated in drafting. Further meeting of all groupings reveals an insurmountable ideological divide between unions. AZACTU and CUSA demand term 'non-racial' be replaced with term 'anti-racist'. After split in CUSA, only NUM commits itself to new federation. CUSA not invited to late June talks. In July, 13 general unions commit themselves to unity. New federation to be launched on 30 November 1985.

*Unions with substantial black constituencies and those disrupting the organisational efforts of federation affiliates will be targeted first*

within general unions with the 'disciplined' style of industrial unionism envisaged by the federation will be problematic. Worker leaders in the mainstream industrial unions committed to unity will have to be prudent in their approaches to general unions, if they want to avoid the spectre of another generation of general unions being fostered by disaffected unionists.

**Future Prospects**

To the extent that those unions committed to forming the new federation manage to carry off their ambitious plans, the direction of trade unionism and labour relations in South Africa will change, possibly dramatically. The very act of unity will prompt a number of reflexes from other trade unions and

labour groupings, which will become legitimate recruitment targets for component unions of the federation. However, the strategic, economic and political priorities of the unity unions' affiliates will influence the direction and methods of expansion. Obviously, outside unions with significant black constituencies and those considered to exert a disrupting influence on federation affiliates' organisational efforts will be targeted first of all.

**TUCSA**

TUCSA, with an equivalent 301 800 members in 45 affiliates, is likely to be a prize target for the nascent 'super-federation'. TUCSA's past reluctance to condemn state repression of the black labour movement,



and its insistence that the government should outlaw unregistered unions, has done little to enhance its conservative image. After the death of General-Secretary Arthur Grobbelaar in 1984, the organisation's caretaker leadership has set about trying to reconcile the deep divisions that exist between itself and the newer unions, in an attempt to counter potential threats posed by the emergence of a new federation.

According to the new President, Robbie Botha: 'The labour movement in South Africa is chronically divided . . . and I believe any real unity between these groupings — TUCSA included — is extremely unlikely for some time. The divides on the basis of philosophy are just too great' (Labour Mirror April 1985). Recently, a more liberalised TUCSA has condemned the death in detention of CWIU official Andries Raditsela, and the detention of other trade unionists. Nevertheless, beleaguered TUCSA unions can be expected to make greater use of legalistic defensive mechanisms such as closed-shop agreements, and their position on the National Manpower Commission to ensure survival. This balancing act runs the risk of accentuating the diverse political divisions that exist within TUCSA, and raise the probability that further member unions both to the right and left would disaffiliate. Between December 1982 and December 1984, TUCSA's membership declined by more than 120 000 through the loss of 10 affiliates for a combination of political and financial reasons (IIR Review 1984: p8).

### CUSA and General Unions

The late withdrawal of most of CUSA's affiliates (except NUM) is a bitter blow for the federation. Should the unity unions go on the offensive — rather than adopt a hands-off approach so as to entice sections of CUSA into the fold — CUSA affiliates will be hard-pressed to compete. From the inception of unity negotiations, when most CUSA unions were fully committed to unity, many of its affiliates were out-maneuvred and out-organised by competing FOSATU unions on the shop-floor. The most glaring example of this occurred when FOSATU's NAAWU virtually eradicated the presence of CUSA's UAMAWU in the country's automobile industry.

An isolated CUSA could start looking for linkages with other unions with similar philosophies and methods of organising. The black consciousness oriented AZACTU would be the obvious choice for a marriage of interests, as both movements share similar ideological beliefs in black worker leadership and control. A merger would further politicise the labour movement as a whole and unions would have to compete for political legitimacy in an industrial environment. If CUSA is forced on the defensive by the new federation, it could be obliged to resort to the expedient use of the closed-shop (Charney 1983: p7).

Although many of the smaller non-aligned unions have decided to join the new federation, the phenomenon of general unionism is unlikely to disappear completely (see above). Once the structures of the new federation are streamlined, 'retrenched' officials and organisers might well establish their 'own' unions, perhaps in league with other unions. However, given the powerbase and the massive resources available to affiliates of the federation, general unions will probably disappear in an increasingly mature atmosphere of collective bargaining.

### Conclusion

The creation of the new federation, five years after the Wiehahn reforms, will herald a new phase in the sphere of South African labour relations. Industrial relationships will change dramatically as management will have to deal with a more powerful and increasingly sophisticated labour movement.

While affiliates of the 'super-federation' can be expected to be more assertive than were the embryonic unions in the immediate post-Wiehahn era, management will now be able to negotiate with a consolidated and representative worker leadership. Thus unity will, to some extent, exert a positive stabilising influence in the management of industrial relations.

However, it is unlikely that the new labour movement's power will only be confined to the shop-floor. Over time, the federation might well become an important political spokesman and vehicle for the political aspirations of a sizeable proportion of the country's black population. If meaningful political reforms are not forthcoming, to underpin earlier labour reforms the possibility of further political demonstrations spilling over into the factory floor cannot be excluded. *IPJ*

#### ACRONYMS

<b>AZACTU</b>	Azanian Congress of Trade Unions
<b>BAWU</b>	Black Allied Workers Union
<b>CCAWUSA</b>	Commercial, Catering and Allied Workers Union of South Africa
<b>CTMWA</b>	Cape Town Municipal Workers Association
<b>CUSA</b>	Council of Unions of South Africa
<b>CWIU</b>	Chemical Workers Industrial Union
<b>FCWU</b>	Food and Canning Workers Union
<b>FOSATU</b>	Federation of South African Trade Unions
<b>GAWU</b>	General and Allied Workers Union
<b>GWU</b>	General Workers Union
<b>GWUSA</b>	General Workers Union of South Africa
<b>ICFTU</b>	International Confederation of Free Trade Unions
<b>MACWUSA</b>	Motor Assembly and Components Workers Union of South Africa
<b>MAWU</b>	Metal and Allied Workers Union
<b>MGWUSA</b>	Municipal and General Workers Union of South Africa
<b>NAAWU</b>	National Automobile and Allied Workers Union
<b>NUM</b>	National Union of Mineworkers
<b>SAAWU</b>	South African Allied Workers Union
<b>TUCSA</b>	Trade Union Council of South Africa
<b>UAMAWU</b>	United African Motor and Allied Workers Union
<b>UDF</b>	United Democratic Front

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*TUCSA, in order to reconcile the deep divisions with the emergent labour movement, is attempting to shed its conservative image*

*Should 'super-federation' affiliates go on the offensive, CUSA affiliates will be hard-pressed to compete*

*The phenomenon of general, community-based unionism will probably disappear in an increasingly sophisticated atmosphere of collective bargaining*

*Unity will exert a positive effect on industrial relations as management will be able to negotiate with a consolidated worker leadership*

**TRADE UNIONS**

# FROM TOWNSHIP TO INDUSTRIAL FRONTLINE

## *The Politics of Sound Management*

By J B Magwaza, Industrial Relations Consultant to Tongaat-Hulett Sugar Ltd

MANAGEMENT ATTITUDES

*Few facets of life in South African society have been left untouched during the turbulent course of more than twelve months of civil unrest. Events in the townships have had a dramatic impact on the workplace, with sustained rioting concentrated in the PWV and Eastern Cape industrial complexes, accompanied by sporadic outbursts of unrest in other commercial centres, such as Durban/Pietermaritzburg and the Western Cape.*

*IR Consultant JB Magwaza looks at the overlap between community and workplace or township resident and worker, illustrated by polarised racial attitudes on the shop-floor, support for stayaway strikes, and the intrusion of political factionalism into labour relations. He dismisses some instant managerial responses to these issues, but suggests that the more pragmatic, far-sighted course already being taken by other employers will do more to stabilise both social and industrial environments in the long-term.*

*White personnel managers need to come to terms with their own racial prejudices if they are to manage and reconcile black demands with white fears*

*Retrenchment programmes make yet another contribution to the growing pool of the unemployed, and indirectly, to township dissatisfaction*

In the interests of promoting sound industrial relations, the primary lesson that South African businessmen can learn from the current unrest in African townships is not to trot out simple answers in response to a complex chain of events. Management often fails to realise the dramatic impact of the ongoing unrest on labour relations and are tempted to give out pearls of wisdom which do not offer any real solution to the issues involved.

The revolutionary actions of many black people indicate the extent of their growing impatience and frustration with the status quo. In this context, some managements have obfuscated their responsibility to make important and well-timed decisions and, in doing so, have lost the opportunity to take the initiative. Consequently, in times of crisis management, there are calls on organisations to take decisions and act on these at a pace where there is not enough time to prepare the organisation to cope with changes then made. There are obvious casualties in industrial relations in such situations.

### Attitudes in the Workplace

The unrest has changed white attitudes to the extent that even those whites that once considered themselves liberal are shifting to the right of the political spectrum. As many white employees interact with black employees on a daily basis, it is not surprising that racial conflicts and antagonisms are transferred to the workplace. According to a Human Sciences Research Council survey, most of a sample of 603 white artisans and technicians in the Pretoria, Brits and Rosslyn area were opposed to black job advancement, the admission of blacks into trades and equal pay

for equal work.

Such racist attitudes, down to white resistance to mixed canteen facilities, are totally unacceptable to black workers who have always been on the receiving end of discrimination. In this regard, events in the townships demonstrate that business should try to manage and reconcile black demands with white fears. This difficult task is the primary responsibility of (mostly) white personnel managers, who will first have to come to terms with their own political beliefs, even if this means suspending ingrown racial attitudes while on the job.

In a similar manner to ordinary working people around the world, black communities have their natural human aspirations, which they try to achieve under trying and often humiliating circumstances. They seek to live on the right side of the law, but feel a deep anger largely as a result of encountering numerous racial constraints, most of which their white counterparts are not subjected to. Furthermore, for many black people, the physically insecure and socially oppressive conditions in the townships, together with the government's weak reform programmes and repressive actions, have frustrated hopes and created a grave sense of utter despair. In the words of an academic commentator, 'About half of the black population now live in absolute poverty close to an affluent first world society. At the base of township revolts lie mass poverty, hunger and suffering' (Giliomee 1985), a situation worsened by the downswing in the South African economy. Consequently, companies need to be aware that retrenchment programmes make yet another contribution to the growing pool of the unemployed, caught in the vicious poverty trap.





BRUN EISSEN

This is an accurate profile of the quality of life of the average black employee whom a personnel manager is called upon to manage in business. The current crisis has heightened racial polarisation and led to a white backlash in the larger society. In the workplace, racial identification has increased with labour relations issues coming to be seen in racial terms. The significance of the chaotic events of 1984/85 are that business decisionmakers are picking up a political price-tag in the management of industrial relations and will do so even more in the future unless they change their approaches.

experienced in Durban's townships in August this year have demonstrated the danger of relying too much on a single factor in the political equation. Perhaps the Inkatha 'theory' is valid, but it has also tended to obscure the sporadic violence seen in Hambanathi, Lamontville and other Port Natal Development Board townships, which carried the seeds of the recent outburst of unrest here. Management needs to review their habit of openly showing preference for particular organisations which represent factions of black political opinion.

*Recent events in African townships have drawn industrial and community issues together. Unionised workers are pallbearers at the funeral of unrest victims in KwaThema.*

**MANAGEMENT ATTITUDES**

**Backing Political Horses**

The events in the townships are many and varied. It is the origins, location and sequence of unrest in a specific area that lend meaning to events for management. In Natal for instance, the absence of sustained violent political protest — as witnessed by other regions — is often attributed to the existence of the disciplined Inkatha movement. Today, the local business establishment mostly goes along with the theory that a less volatile situation prevails here, because the black community appears to support a relatively moderate political movement and are more satisfied with conditions than elsewhere. In earlier times though, Inkatha was 'ikhomanasi' (communist) to Natalian management, a disregard somehow changed by the emergence of the UDF!

On the other hand, the violent riots

**Debunking Myths**

It is necessary to debunk a number of myths adhered to by many decisionmakers, encouraged by some media and state stereotypes portraying recent events in the townships. Some of those myths which shroud the truth and hamper the search for appropriate solutions are:

- The unfounded belief that the violent events in the townships and related industrial action at the workplace are the result of radical instigators who wish to see South Africa slide into a spiral of revolutionary violence. It assumes that blacks are a bunch of ignorant and spineless milksops who are a ready prey to so-called radicals, while ignoring the fact that present racial inequalities make the work of political activists easier. This common myth ignores a mass of empirical evidence, such as the 67 percent increase of support for political militance on the Witwatersrand between 1977

*The significance of the 1984/85 unrest is that management will continue to pick up a political price-tag in industrial relations*

*Management needs to respond carefully to opposition strategies developed by black communities, such as work stayaways and political stoppages*

*Black managers placed in token positions of power may be victimised in their communities if they are viewed as part of the system*

*Sound labour relations practices will suffer if management involves the security police in shop-floor witch hunts for 'instigators'*

*Many black workers think management colludes with the government for their economic exploitation and political exclusion*

and 1981 shown by the Bergstraesser and Buthelezi attitude surveys (1982).

Government and some employers saw the work of agitators in the Transvaal work stayaway of November 1984. On the other hand, many labour commentators did not accept that intimidation played a primary role. The personnel managers should make it their responsibility to convince their employers that there were other causes of the stayaway besides political agitation. Management needs to respond appropriately to such events because beleaguered black communities found the stayaway protest to be a rewarding experience and may well be tempted to use the tactic again. In the aftermath of the mass strike, employer associations lobbied successfully to obtain the release of detained trade union leaders, improving the community image of business in the process.

- There is a pervasive myth that black is turning against black in intra-community violence. This generalisation fails to acknowledge the fact that certain black 'leaders' are being targeted because they are involved in local authorities felt by many black people to be completely powerless and useless to the community. In other words, these figures are not violently attacked because they are black, but because of what they symbolise as participants in a political system that is strongly opposed. Employers should take note of the parallel of 'advanced blacks' in business organisations, the black managers or white-collar workers, some of whom are placed in token positions of power by white decisionmakers.

- The remaining myth that needs to be challenged is that there is a particular authentic black leadership, which is arbitrarily assumed by the white establishment to be the moderate faction. All of the political leaders probably have a substantial following and the different ideological beliefs of these factions cannot be simply swept aside. Businessmen should realise that the workplace is a confluence where supporters of all factions, groups and ideologies meet and interact.

At the best of times, leaders appointed from above often fail to deliver the goods in terms of getting their constituencies to accept and honour the conditions of a negotiated package. In this regard, government could undoubtedly learn a trick or two from the experience of management in industrial relations that you do not decide for employees who their representatives should be. The rent riots experienced in the Vaal Triangle in late 1984 demonstrate the much higher cost ultimately incurred by decisionmakers who choose to negotiate with an unrepresentative leadership without a proper mandate.

### Management Syndromes

The events in the townships and the subsequent crises in decisionmaking require

management to seek alternative ways to improve labour relations within business organisations. A brief overview of alternative management approaches, as currently practised, follows:

- the ostrich syndrome, whereby managers bury their heads in the sand, pretend nothing is happening or hope that problems will soon disappear leaving no landmarks
- the 'nice guy' insurance, where a manager believes that if he's nice to the guys they will never turn the barrel of a gun on him
- the divide and rule strategy, played by the opportunistic manager who robs Peter to pay Paul, or preaches one moral code and practises another
- the confrontational approach, where management goes out of its way to meet its employees head-on, looking for 'instigators' or 'intimidators' and readily involving the security police in such witch-hunts; and lastly,
- the pragmatic and integrated alternative, undoubtedly the most realistic approach. After careful analysis of the operational industrial and broader socio-political environment, management develops and implements strategies to plan for both the short and long term.

### Conclusion

South African managers are sometimes criticised for their failure to adopt a strategic management style. Too often, they appear to be busy putting out fires or are engaged in actions that result in short-term gains, with no effective guarantee for the future. In a nutshell, the time has come for South African managers to review their management styles and strategies so as to ensure long-term survival. To do this will necessitate the incorporation of social and political criteria over and above those technical, production and economic criteria traditionally used by company decisionmakers to assess the performance of business organisations.

These additional criteria are already compelling representatives of South African commerce and industry to lobby and engage with government to avert further crises and address the critical issues raised by the events in the townships over the last twelve months. Managers and employers must realise that many black employees perceive them to be in collusion with the government for their economic exploitation, through political exclusion and social deprivation. Black workers know that employers are capable of using their economic muscle to extract significant changes in government policy and actions. To counteract growing black alienation from the status quo, management must pressurise government to negotiate with relevant black leaders to work out strategies that would prevent this country from sliding into a bloody civil war.



# THE LIMITATIONS OF STRIKE STATISTICS

*Is it better  
to be approximately right  
or precisely wrong?*

By Andrew Levy, Industrial Relations Consultant

*The annual release of strike statistics by the Department of Manpower is awaited with much interest by all those intimately involved in South African labour relations. Some commentators immediately complain that data gathered underestimates and confuses diverse forms of industrial action. Indicator SA undertook a study which revealed significant discrepancies between official and independent observers' findings for the period 1982/1984 (see IPSA Issue Focus, August 1984). Leading industrial relations consultant, Andrew Levy, continues the debate. He suggests that three important methodological and statistical problem areas need to be addressed, if the infant art of strike data collection and trend analysis is to be transformed into an effective science.*

**T**he overall level of strike activity in the South African economy is an annual statistic that attracts much attention and debate. It is quoted in support of all manner of claims, usually political, which are very often at odds, both with one another and the observable facts.

In general, South Africa is poorly served in the provision and analysis of data. In the sphere of strike activity, little detailed empirical or statistical study has been done because basic data is unreliable, in limited availability and reporting is infrequent. Perhaps this is forgivable as the art is still in its infancy, yet it warrants greater scrutiny for there is a crucial need to closely monitor this aspect of societal development.

In analysing strike statistics, three statistical and methodological problem areas emerge — those of data collection, data manipulation and data interpretation. These however, are but a few of the many problems that will be encountered in an undeveloped field of study.

## Data Collection

The initial problem posed in the analysis of strike statistics is that of data collection. Two broad areas of difficulty arise — those of

classification and access. Classificatory problems are given, in that any set of definitions to facilitate analysis will establish arbitrary boundaries open to dispute.

The problems of data access are more intractable. Section 65A (1) of the Labour Relations Act (LRA) requires that where there is a discontinuance of work as a result of a dispute concerning the terms and conditions of employment of an employee or employees, the employer concerned will notify an inspector of the Department of Manpower (DOM). Annexure L.R. 33 relating to Regulation 9 prescribes the form in which the report is to be made. In other words DOM constitutes the primary source for all strike data in South Africa.

The immediate limitations of this procedure are obvious. The complete reliance on the employer submitting the return means that there is no corroborative base for the data. Furthermore, the recording of the strike is dependant on the employer both knowing of and fulfilling his statutory obligation. Neither of these outcomes is by any means certain. These shortcomings in strike monitoring are not unique to South Africa and are well recognised in academic writing on the subject (see Jackson 1980: Ch8).

*DOM, the primary source for strike data, relies both on the employer knowing of and fulfilling the statutory obligation to notify the DOM inspectorate of a strike*

**INDUSTRIAL CONFLICT**

Fourteen thousand workers attend funeral of Andries Raditsela, a Chemical Workers Industrial Union official. Mass work stayaways such as these are not officially recorded.



Employers need not report other forms of industrial action besides actual work-stoppages or strikes related to a dispute over employment terms and conditions

As a result, strike statistics cannot be regarded as a complete measure of total industrial conflict in society

**Conflicting Strike Definitions**

A number of other difficulties arise. Firstly, the employer is only required to notify a DOM inspector when there is a 'discontinuance of work'. Thus for a strike to be recorded, work must actually stop. This requirement is at odds with the complete definition of the term 'strike' given in Section 1 of the LRA, which comprehends not only a withdrawal of labour, but also a go-slow and arguably, an overtime ban. For example, a strike would not be recorded if employees refused to comply with a contractual obligation to work overtime in order to compel an employer to follow or desist from a particular course of action.

A second difficulty arises in that the strike is merely one of a range of alternative types of industrial actions available to employees — all of which are now being regularly experienced by employers. Whilst these actions in certain circumstances do constitute a strike in the legal sense (ie where the definition of 'strike' in Section 1 is satisfied), nevertheless, they may not be classified as a 'discontinuance of work' as required in the strike report form. Hence it seems that employers need not, and presumably therefore do not report other forms of industrial actions besides actual stoppages.

A further limitation on the complete reportage of work stoppages again arises from the narrow definition of a strike in Section 65A of the LRA. In this section, the stoppage of work must relate to a dispute over the terms and conditions of employment. Thus in terms of this requirement, political strikes, and possibly sympathy strikes, are excluded from DOM's strike count. While the latter are infrequent and less of a problem at present, this loophole means that mass work stayaways, such as those to mark the funerals of Andries

Raditsela and Neil Aggett, are not officially recorded.

Whether politically motivated industrial actions should be recorded as part of the catch-all measurement is debatable. Many other countries do include the so-called political strike in their strike statistics. However, to the extent that such actions denote worker commitment to trade unionism, solidarity or organisation, data is once again limited.

Consequently, strike statistics should not, whatever their state of completeness, be regarded as a complete measure of total industrial conflict in society. Furthermore, if they do not reflect all kinds of industrial action, then neither do they reflect all work stoppages. With all these limitations, how complete is our data base?

Estimates of strike activity in the United Kingdom, carried out by the Warwick Group in 1977-1978, indicated that only 62 percent of stoppages occurring in manufacturing industry were probably recorded (Brown 1981: p97). Because no such study has been carried out in South Africa, there is no researched basis for assessing the magnitude of the shortfall. However, two separate estimates (Levy/Viviers) unsubstantiated by strict research both suggest that the shortfall in South Africa might be of a similar magnitude to the Warwick estimate.

For instance, on a similar note, the accompanying data base illustrates the wide discrepancy between the number of strikes recorded by selected independent labour monitors and figures released by DOM (see Howe 1984: p8/13).

**Data Manipulation**

Strike data is recorded and presented by DOM in terms of industrial sector, causes,



region, the number of employees involved, and man days and estimated wages lost. Almost inevitably therefore, before any data manipulation can take place, one encounters problems of aggregation and classification.

The manner in which some classificatory conventions are defined make it difficult to relate strike data on a meaningful basis, either to everyday labour relations or, perhaps more importantly, to the structure of the union movement. For example, DOM figures examine strikes in the 'manufacturing' sector yet they make no distinction between say the chemical, metal, paper and motor sectors, all of which have vigorous unions. Some form of strike reporting which would enable analysis to align specific industrial sectors with union presence would be far more valuable.

The manner in which industries are

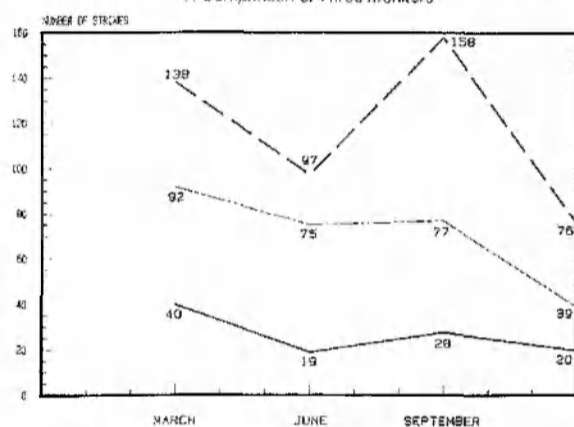
demarcated and classified will render a great differentiation in results and comparable analysis. This is clearly illustrated if one compares DOM's nine sectoral categorisations with the 11 divisions produced by one independent industrial relations consultancy.

The definition and determination of the exact causes of strikes is even more problematic. Strikes are generally accepted to be multi-causal phenomena. Issues and demands may differ from the original trigger incident, compelling the analyst to make a choice of principal causes. The very act of choice may well once again introduce a subjective bias (Galambos and Evans 1973: p5). The pie-charts (see box) demonstrate how differing frameworks for the classification of specific triggers can affect the overall picture of strike issues.

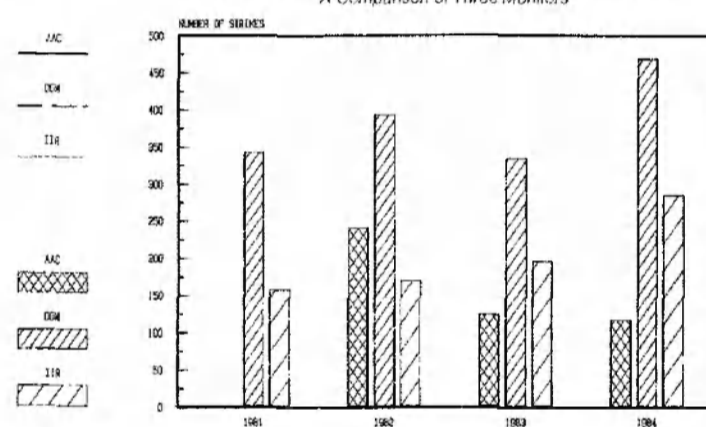
*DOM's sectoral categorisations of strike data unfortunately do not enable analysts to align specific industrial sectors with union presence*

## Data Base

• QUARTERLY STRIKE COUNT — 1984 •  
A Comparison of Three Monitors



• ANNUAL STRIKE COUNT 1981-1984 •  
A Comparison of Three Monitors

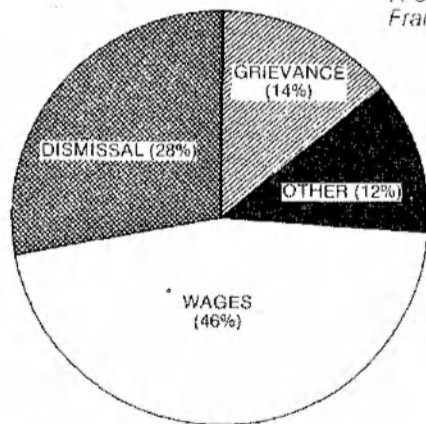


**FOOTNOTES** 1 The DOM figures are obtained from primary sources: reports on strike actions that management are legally obliged to submit (see text)  
2 Both AAC and IIR obtain their figures from secondary sources, ie newspaper reports  
3 AAC has no recorded statistics for the number of strikes in 1981

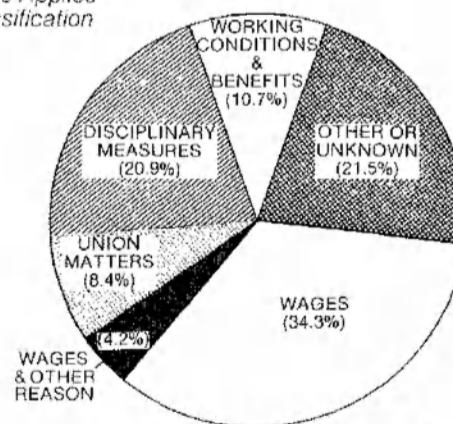
**SOURCES** AAC Quarterly Reviews of Industrial Relations 1982-1984 AAC Industrial Relations Department, Johannesburg  
DOM and National Manpower Commission Reports, 1983 & 1984  
IIR Annual Reviews of Industrial Relations in South Africa, 1982-1984, Johannesburg

**ACRONYMS**  
AAC Anglo American Corporation  
DOM Department of Manpower  
IIR Institute for Industrial Relations

• STRIKE TRIGGERS 1983-1984 •  
A Comparison of Two Applied Frameworks for Classification



(1) ANDREW LEVY & ASSOCIATES



(2) DEPARTMENT OF MANPOWER

**SOURCES** DOM and National Manpower Commission Reports, 1984  
Industrial Relations Data (IRD) Annual Reports on Labour Relations in South Africa, 1984 & 1985

*Differing frameworks for the classification of specific triggers affect the overall picture of strike issues and also introduces a subjective bias*

*Because strikes correlate more to political instability and union growth than the trade cycle, it is more helpful to view strike statistics in this context*

*Percentage movements for the number of strikes from year to year do not indicate a trend, but merely describe whether there have been more or less observations*

*Caution is warranted in the absence of an index taking account of fluctuations in the number of workers employed in industry and the growth and spread of unionisation*

Finally, there is the problem of monitoring the length of a strike. Strikers in the Fattis and Monis dispute were fired on the first day, but the union maintained action and pressure for more than seven months before settlement was reached. How should the analyst calculate and incorporate the man-days lost over this period into strike data on average strike duration?

### Other Arithmetic Issues

Once these difficulties have been considered, some arithmetic/statistical problems need to be addressed. The simplest are those that relate to the agglomeration of data and the data derived from the primary employer returns. For example, it appears that DOM's figure for the average length of a work stoppage is obtained by dividing the number of man-days lost by the number of stoppages. Whether or not a simple calculation like this is the optimal method of indicating this data is questionable. Some form of statistical frequency distribution might yield more reliable, less distorted results.

More meaningful data 'manipulation' would involve the examination of strike distribution between industries, as well as duration and frequency. Here the introduction of an index, which would allow for changes in union strengths and industry size to be comprehended, would facilitate proper comparisons to be made.

### Data Interpretation

A meaningful interpretation of strike data — as opposed to a mere arithmetic description — requires an acceptable theory to explain why and how strikes occur, substantiated by a satisfactory test to show that the data has a secular trend and is not merely random. In other words, for data to be correctly interpreted, it needs to be judged against certain theoretical projections and tested over time to determine whether or not an alleged trend exists.

In South Africa, apart from one unsubstantiated suggestion that strikes can be explained by 'a combined index of the company's industrial relations policy; worker commitment to unionism and commitment to freedom of association by line management' (Douwes Dekker 1985), there have been no theories to explain the incidence of strikes. It is generally accepted that strikes correlate less with the trade cycle and more to political instability and union growth (Edwards 1983: p218). Consequently, it is probably more helpful to view strike statistics in the context of these relationships until such time as more research has been done, especially in the South African context.

In the absence of any specific tests for randomness, it is impossible to say whether or not a time trend exists for South African strike data. If one accepts the argument that strike action correlates positively with rapid

union growth and/or political instability, then it may be inferred that the series will show an identifiable trend over time. In order for any tests to be even moderately accurate, however, a period of at least 15 years would need to be examined, which in turn highlights another difficulty.

It seems fair to assume that the current strike action being experienced in South Africa is not entirely unrelated to the growth and development of black trade unions since the Durban strikes of 1973. If this is true, then the distinction between the pre- and post-Wichahn periods are so stark as to render the strike data over both periods almost incomparable. Of the post-Wichahn data itself, the sample size is so small that the normal tests would be almost completely unreliable.

Percentage movements for the number of strikes from year to year, often quoted by the press and parliamentarians alike as indicating a trend, clearly do no such thing. Instead they merely describe whether or not there have been more or less observations.

### Conclusion

In an absolute or scientific sense, strike statistics as currently presented in South Africa reveal little else than an imperfect annual total of what has caught the official recordist's eye. In the absence of an index constructed to take account of fluctuations in the number of workers employed in industry, and the growth and spread of unionisation, comparisons of strike statistics between one year and the next must be approached with caution. Equally, the inference of long-term trends from short-term data is statistically unacceptable.

The dilemma is simply this: In the absence of the grail of perfection, does one say nothing, or should one, working with the realities of the real world, risk a 'quick and dirty'?

It is probably true that informed comment is better than no comment at all — discounting the positive dangers of uninformed, clearly biased or self-serving comment. Serious labour analysts are unlikely to make sweeping claims for their data's accuracy, completeness or infallibility, or to advance conclusions or predictions on anything other than the most tentative basis. While the current situation is no substitute for serious academic research and analysis, until such time as the more fundamental problems are addressed, it is probably better to be approximately right than precisely wrong.

IPSA

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In an unstable political environment, township conflicts often spill over onto the shop-floor. Port Elizabeth automobile workers halt work for fifteen minutes to protest Langa shootings.

IP-BUSO

# ENVIRONMENTAL SCANNING OR THE QUICK FIX?

A MULTI-DIMENSIONAL MODEL FOR INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

By Professor Roux van der Merwe, Industrial Relations Unit,  
University of Port Elizabeth

*How do economic factors, from inflation rates to employment and productivity levels, interact with political variables such as the traditional white worker lobby and emergent black worker power, affecting the stances adopted by employer and employee representatives engaged in collective bargaining? Why do trade unions perform an unavoidable political role in South Africa, forcing management to consider worker demands and issues located in township struggle rather than workplace dynamics?*

*Through discussing these linkages, prominent labour commentator, Roux van der Merwe demonstrates the emerging art of environmental scanning in industrial relations, while warning that beyond the blackboard lies the most unpredictable variable of all: the actual behaviour of human participants. Drawing on the recent experience of rapid unionisation in the Eastern Cape crucible, he applies a model for environmental scanning which attempts to neither overload nor overly simplify the diverse political, socio-economic and immediate operational variables which impact on the collective bargaining process.*

Industrial relations operate in a complex environment wherein socio-economic, political and behavioural variables interact and impinge on the actors at centre stage in the workplace. There are no ready made equations to incorporate this mix of diverse factors into the decisionmaking process, especially as they may vary materially with changing circumstances over a very broad front. However, the prudent manager or trade unionist might need to 'scan' the surrounding environment at any given time, in order to make the best possible assessment of the current state of play and short-term future trends.

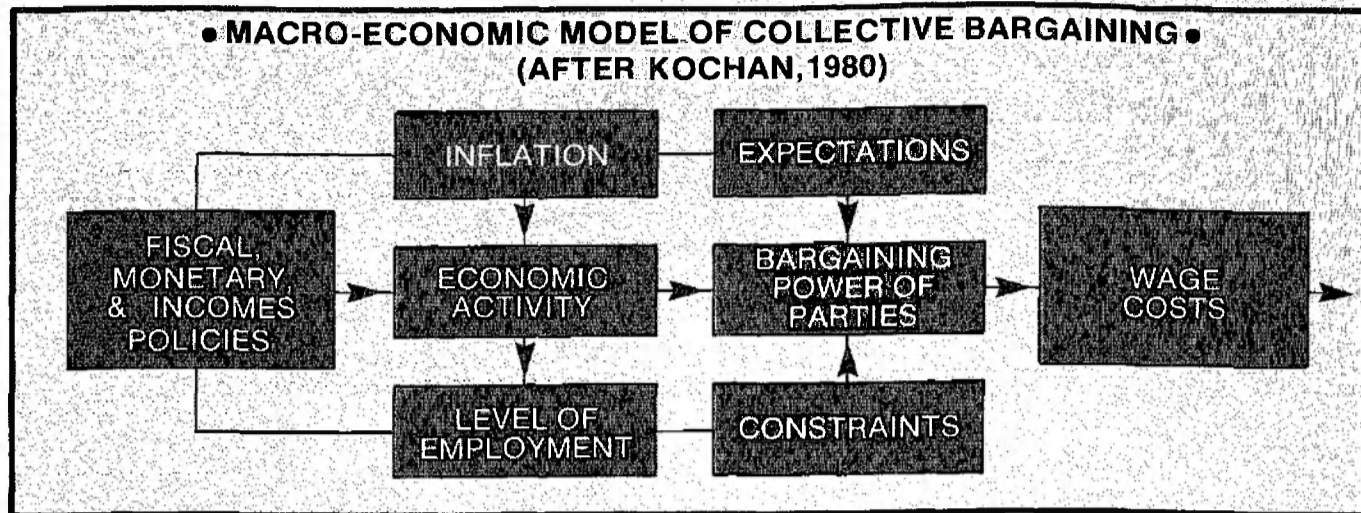
What are some of the important economic variables which need to be considered in a scanning exercise? The following model (see diagram) sets out from an economic perspective to systematically assess some of the macro and micro-economic issues. It will

quickly become apparent that the use of the term, economic, does not imply that other factors should be excluded from analysis. Also, the apparent logic of this model should be treated with caution because of the role played by unpredictable variables, such as the behaviour of human participants.

Very briefly, state fiscal and monetary policy is presented as a driving force in the economic system, with direct consequences in terms of economic activity, inflation and employment levels. These factors will then impinge on the collective bargaining arena, where expectations and constraints interact to influence the bargaining power of both employer and employee. The outcome of this power reality affects wage and other service costs, which in turn feed back into the economy at various points. A few macro-economic issues arising from the model are offered to illustrate the linkages with the practice of industrial relations:

*Prudent managers and trade unionists should 'scan' the socio-economic and political environment to assess the impact of short-term trends on their activities*

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING



*A rapid see-saw of economic growth and stagnation results in a complex interplay between economic and human behaviour in industrial relations*

*Ratchetting occurs when wage demands do not go down as readily in a downswing as they rise in an upturn of the business cycle*

*Calls on unions to moderate inflationary wage demands ignore the fact that only sixteen percent of workers are unionised*

**(1) State Policy and the Business Cycle**

In South Africa, the impact of state policy on the economy has become sharply evident during 1985. In an attempt to bring inflation under control, monetary policy is restrictive, resulting in a downward trend in economic activity and an increasing level of unemployment. To compound these effects, high taxation inhibits consumption and further restricts the availability of jobs, pushing the economy as a whole into deeper recession. Yet just four years ago, quite the contrary applied, with a buoyant economy and a high level of business confidence.

The rapid see-saw of growth and stagnation in the current decade demonstrates the complex nature of the interplay between economic and human behavioural issues in industrial relations. The Eastern Cape experience is instructive in this instance, for the patterns set in this vanguard area all too frequently reappear in the other major industrial areas (van der Merwe 1983): 'The motor industry in 1981 was characterised by a buoyant market with consumer demand at a high level. This demand was relatively price-inelastic — consumers continued to buy, even against rising prices . . . The emergent trade unions applied their muscle to demands for much higher wages. Clearly, employers were vulnerable, with industrial relations departments under pressure from production and sales divisions to avoid a work stoppage. Demands were conceded.

'Economically, this was a rational decision, but psychologically it established a new level of expectations. This, plus a continued high rate of inflation, was to result in a sustained level of wage demands . . . even after the economy began to visibly deteriorate'.

The preceding example is useful as it illustrates an important behavioural constraint affecting formal economic theory — that wage demands (and wages) do not go down as readily in a downturn as they rise in an upturn of the business cycle. While trade unions are also affected by a downturn, they are normally successful in putting a floor to wages, which do not respond by falling until the market 'clears'. If increases do not keep pace with high inflation, real wages do diminish, but in the absence of a union, such a decrease would be much greater. The process has aptly been described as

'ratchetting', whereby wages rise rapidly during an upturn in the business cycle, but are then held (or advanced more slowly) to a level which becomes the base for wage demands in the next upturn.

**(2) Wages, Inflation and Productivity**

Clearly, wage inflation is exacerbated by ratchetting, especially in the current South African situation where prices have continued to rise unabated during the economic downturn. A strong 'catch-up' effect on the upturn has been observed for some years, with wage increases consistently outpacing productivity. Given the circular effect of inflation on wage demands, it is not possible to separate cause and effect, but either way the consequences are serious. The process could be brought under some measure of control, but only if inflationary expectations are curbed.

Nevertheless, the important caveat about the impact of wages on inflation is that it is all too easy to see wage demands as a primary cause of inflation. Some managers readily call for trade unions to moderate their demands for increases for the good of all. However, the central role in inflation of state monetary policy and spending has correctly received more prominence in recent years. If it is borne in mind that the unionised sector accounts for no more than 16 percent of total employment, the possible extent of its influence is placed in perspective.

**(3) Incomes Policy**

Although it is not practised in South Africa at present, the possibility of an incomes policy should be considered as an economic alternative. In recent years, the singular lack of success of such policies in Britain and the USA has cast considerable doubt on the presumed wage/inflation linkage. In effect, income restraints, from voluntary adherence to statutory provisions which limit wage increases to a set percentage below the inflation rate, become wage restraints. Wage earners tend to bear the brunt of these forms of incomes policy, whereas profits, rents and interest rates are less affected.

On the other hand, income restraints need to be incorporated into anti-inflationary policies and can work if they are then seen to be the outcome of negotiations rather than imposed upon the parties concerned. Trade union economists are quick to point out that these



restraints must be linked to price restraints, heralding forms of state intervention that drastically depart from free market principles. Yet such steps may be necessary if undertaken for the right reasons and with the involvement of those most affected. Failing this participation, there will be much resentment among wage earners, leading to the release of pent up wage demands when the incomes policy is inevitably relaxed.

### Political Factors

Economic policies are clearly not immune to political influences and decisions, which in turn may have unintended economic consequences. Two examples indicate the economic power of political lobbies in South Africa. Firstly, the lobbying by white workers successfully secured protection against wage competition — eg, via statutory job reservation — until the 1970s, when black worker power began to emerge as a significant economic force. Historically, black communities were not encouraged to develop, resulting in an artificial skills shortage as the economy grew. This process ensured high wage levels for skilled white workers and undoubtedly contributed to wage inflation. In this context, trade unions do have an unavoidable political role (Schlemmer 1983), whatever their skin colour and ideology.

Secondly, with the economy arguably at a 50-year low, South African employers would appear to be in a strong position to resist wage demands. Yet the unstable political situation in black communities presents management with a real dilemma:

- should they refuse to offer concessions, and in doing so, risk a further weakening of the credibility of trade unions simultaneously involved in township struggle? Such actions might prejudice one of the few remaining communication links with the African community via an identifiable and legitimate leadership, or
- would it be preferable to offer some settlement, albeit economically undesirable, which would neither exacerbate political instability nor further weaken the credibility of collective bargaining in a free market system?

The above examples demonstrate the role of imponderable factors in the macro-economic context and the difficulties confronting the decisionmaker in the sphere of industrial relations. While the macro-issues need to be taken into account in any environmental scan, they remain largely outside of the immediate control of either employers or trade unions. The micro-economic issues which follow are more closely linked to the circumstances of the parties in a particular industry or company.

### Monopoly Ownership

Ownership concentration can be defined as a measure of the monopoly power of a small number of large employers located in a

particular industry. The more 'concentrated' the industry, the more discretion employers are likely to enjoy in fixing product prices. For instance, though competitive, the automobile industry is concentrated in this sense, as there are relatively few employers. Likewise, the brick and cement industries exhibit a high degree of ownership concentration. By contrast, the appliance and textile industries are examples of low concentration and high competition.

Trade unions are likely to place greater pressure on concentrated industries, in the expectation that employers will pass the cost of wage increases to consumers, who have no alternative market from which to purchase. In a similar context, import controls undoubtedly contribute to increased wage demands through nurturing markets protected from foreign competition.

### The Level of Unionisation

The pressure that a trade union can exercise in any particular plant or industry will have an economic impact, especially in the short term — the higher the level of unionisation, the greater the pressure exerted on employers. A number of factors may affect the rate of unionisation, including:

#### ● Technological Change

The number of 'smokestack' industries which employ large numbers of blue-collar workers is declining, along with the constituency from which trade unions draw the bulk of their membership. A process of automation and mechanisation has proceeded steadily in many industries, contributing to a worldwide decline in union membership, particularly in the USA where the proportion of unionised workers has dropped from 35 percent to below 20 percent since 1945. Containerisation has reversed the traditional labour-intensive nature of docking and freight handling, while computerisation has already begun to change the face of clerical and administrative work.

#### ● Ratio of Labour Cost to Total Cost

With the growth of more automated, capital-intensive industry, larger companies have pursued a viable strategy of union substitution, especially in 'high-tech' areas of production where labour costs are not a major component. These policies are characterised by pro-active personnel management, by paying high wages, and by providing a satisfactory work situation via quality of life and related programmes. In South Africa, however, mobilisation around non-economic issues by most of the newer black unions reduces the viability of a union substitution strategy, especially in the turbulent political climate of today.

#### ● White-Collar Unionisation

Unions may well be assisted in meeting these challenges through the reaction of white-collar workers to the progress made by unionised blue-collar workers. In a recessionary context, all employees may sense

*If an incomes restraint policy was adopted in South Africa, trade unions would probably demand that it should be linked to price restraints*

*While macro-issues need to be considered in any environmental scan, they remain largely outside the immediate control of employers or trade unions*

*Trade unions place greater pressure on monopoly industries because employers are able to pass wage increase costs onto consumers*

*Black union mobilisation around non-economic issues makes a union substitution strategy, via individual quality of life programmes, non-viable*

*In a recession, even white-collar workers may join unions in response to employer initiatives for rationalisation and higher productivity*

*In the early 1980s, as unions gained ground in the Eastern Cape, some employers in the automobile industry studied relocation options, while others expanded elsewhere*

*The attraction of 'union-free' sectors may diminish for industrialists once the stabilising influence of unions is accepted*

*An assessment of the effects of economic trends should focus on the expectations of parties to collective bargaining*

a greater need to stand together against employer initiatives for rationalisation and higher productivity. In the Eastern Cape, the all-white Iron, Steel and Allied Industries Union has been actively organising among supervisory, administrative and clerical employees, and at least one automobile plant is already facing recognition demands for this bargaining unit.

It is also very likely that similar pressures will be felt in the predominantly labour-intensive public sector, as government employees are becoming an increasingly attractive target for unionisation from the outside, particularly so in the case of black workers. However, politicians and the state can be expected to continue to resist this trend in South Africa, because of the cost implications and the significant political pressures that may be generated by a labour movement in this sector.

### Profits and Union Avoidance

In recent years, the developed world has seen a crisis of profitability in many large industrial sectors, such as the steel industry in Britain and the USA, and the automobile industry outside of Japan. Faced with increased international competition, firms like Chrysler have struck bargains with their labour forces, involving wage reductions and the curtailment of restrictive practices, to successfully head off closure. In West Germany, the automobile unions have also cooperated with management to hold down wage costs in the face of foreign competition for domestic markets.

In the absence of such positive employee responses, trade unions will continue to face the reality of employers' ability to ship products cheaply and reliably over long distances and to switch production across international boundaries. It would seem that the scene described by John R Commons in his famous essay on the Philadelphia shoemakers in 1916 is still relevant —namely, that unless a union can succeed in taking wages out of competition by organising the entire product market, any increases in wage costs in the unionised section of the market will result in a loss of employment to the non-union sector. Likewise, strikes and other problems in the union sector will make relocation to non-union areas appear more attractive.

In the Eastern Cape, as unions gained ground due to early mobilisation successes in the early 1980s, some employers in the automobile industry embarked on serious feasibility studies of relocation options, while companies in other industries either did relocate or expanded to the Witwatersrand area. Two of these companies are back in Port Elizabeth after experiencing similar and other problems in their new locations, where unions have also recently gained ground. The National Automobile and Allied Workers' Union (NAAWU) has since organised all

automobile factories nationwide and wage rates are no longer the highest in the Eastern Cape.

Whether homeland areas such as the Ciskei and Transkei, with their avowedly non-union stance, will be able to attract a significant number of companies away from the unionised areas remains to be seen. This process is happening to some extent, but as unions mature and become an accepted, stabilising part of the marketplace, the attraction of 'union-free' sectors may diminish for industrialists.

While unions may be successful in countering union avoidance moves within national boundaries, it is debatable whether they will be able to counter such management strategies on a global scale. There can be little doubt that competition from the Far East in many industries has already had major effects on both wage bargaining and on employer initiatives within established and emergent areas of unionisation.

### Conclusion

Although the economic determinants of collective bargaining are often regarded as the more 'hard nosed' elements of industrial relations, they are in fact inextricably linked with political, behavioural and other variables. In the words of economist Melvin Reder (Kochan 1980:p49), 'An analyst who wishes to know how much of an increase in hourly wages will occur over the next month as a result of current negotiations, should usually study the current bargaining patterns, the political climate for successful strikes, etc, and forget about formal economic theory.'

True as this may be, it is still not the full story, for the prudent decisionmaker needs to avail himself of all sources of input, even if only a few factors bear on the particular problem at hand. Application of the model discussed here suggests that analysis should begin with an assessment of the overall state of the economy and its effects on the expectations of the parties involved. Thereafter, a micro-analysis could serve to reveal the economic sources of power that may affect bargaining relationships, either constraining or facilitating the demands and positions.

Knowledge of these issues can help to develop strategy, but should not be interpreted as laying down a rigid set of responses. Today's labour arena in South Africa is too complex for quick fixes of any kind. Instead, careful background analysis and preparation is essential, whereafter tactics, skills and sensitivity will still have to be applied if affordable and workable agreements are to be concluded and accepted by the parties to collective bargaining. *IPWA*

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*The well-contoured and expansive sugar estates on Natal's north coast contrast dramatically with the fragmented rural cane-growing homesteads located across the border in KwaZulu.*

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- 5** *Rural Entrepreneurs: A Trucking & Bartering Spirit*
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# A NEW ANIMAL ON THE SUB-CONTINENT

## THE DEVELOPMENT BANK OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

*In June 1983, a regional Development Bank was established in Cape Town through an agreement signed by representatives of South Africa and the independent homelands of Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda and Ciskei (TBVC). Two years later, the Bank's large staff complement vigorously pursues its stated goals of promoting economic development in the broadest sense, increasing productivity and raising the standard of living of people in the less developed areas of South Africa.*

*Initially, sceptics warned that the magnitude of the Bank's envisaged role and the intended scope of its projects would probably produce yet another unwieldy bureaucracy, inappropriately geared for the further development of man in Africa. However, many of these critics have become proponents of what is arguably the largest development initiative undertaken in Southern Africa to date. When viewed in the context of a recent World Bank report which notes that 'no list of economic and financial statistics can convey the human misery spreading in sub-Saharan Africa', the Development Bank's substantial plans are certainly impressive so far:*

- the handling of 272 projects between 1983/84, with an estimated total investment volume of R2 462 million
- the R1,5 billion committed to the Bank's Development Fund over a period of five years
- the reworking of project design and objectives to promote appropriate technical solutions to developmental problems
- the intention to raise further substantial sums in the international capital market.

*On the other hand, more strident critics (primarily academics) have come to view the new institution as a bureaucratic extension of the South African government, because of its role in implementing a grandiose regional development plan geared towards adding legitimacy to homeland political structures. Since the Bank's inception, there have been warnings of its potential to become a mechanism for a future constitutional confederation, ensuring South Africa's continued political and economic dominance in the region. This critical reception is hardly surprising considering the Bank's 'multi-lateral' financial structure, whereby the voting rights of member states are partially determined by levels of capital contribution. Furthermore, provisions to include the self-governing areas of KaNgwane, Gazankulu, KwaNdebele, KwaZulu, Lebowa and QwaQwa as additional participants in the Development Bank may be interpreted as a strategy to continue promoting distinct homeland sub-economies.*

*In the following interviews with two senior Development Bank officials, undertaken by Indicator SA Researcher Jeff Zingel, some important policy, procedural and practical issues concerning the Bank's role and operations are considered. Economist Dr Stef Coetzee discusses the broad linkages between regional development, urbanisation and political frameworks in Southern Africa. Executive Deon Richter, who is intimately involved in the running of programmes on the ground, reveals the proactive role undertaken by project staff, particularly in dealing with the complexities of the inherited homeland and regional administrations in South Africa.*



An interview with Economist Dr Stef Coetzee of the  
Development Bank's Research & Specialist Services Division  
Conducted by Indicator SA Researcher Jeff Zingel

There is a need in Southern Africa for less sophisticated, smaller scale development projects, which maximise local participation

In the field of development strategies the Bank is not a policy-making institution, but rather provides supportive assistance

Urbanisation projects range from low-cost housing and the interim upgrading of informal settlements, to the establishment of overall strategies

The Bank accepts the existing political and constitutional framework of South Africa as its operational boundaries

Zingel: Firstly, what role is the Bank taking in the re-organisation of the decentralisation programme, as set out in the Cape of Good Hope proposals (1982)? The critical issues here are the proliferation of growth points, the costly incentive package, and the difficulty of attempting regional planning solutions across different political and administrative boundaries.

Coetzee: The Bank operates within the framework of the Good Hope proposals and the new incentive package, and faces certain political constraints. But it is aware of the problems mentioned, and is continually on the lookout for ways of minimizing these problems, as well as for alternative ways of promoting regional development.

Zingel: Does the Bank have a long term strategy for regional development?

Coetzee: No, not yet. It is evident that decentralisation alone will be insufficient and should be concentrated in only a few areas. It is also obvious that more activities on a smaller scale and of a less sophisticated nature are needed, to maximise local participation for the direct benefit of the local population. The Bank is keen to support these types of projects and does so on a case-by-case basis. However, this approach to regional development is of relatively recent origin in Southern Africa and more research is required before the point of long-term strategy is reached.

Zingel: It seems that the Bank has a major role to play in implementing appropriate development strategies.

Coetzee: Yes. However, the Bank is not a public policy-making institution. I think one should rather look at our work as supportive. With regard to the TBVC states (the independent homelands) and self-governing states (the non-independent homelands), our research is simply geared towards providing supportive assistance if we are requested to do so by these areas.

Zingel: Is the Bank taking an active role in the formulation and implementation of an urbanisation strategy for the country as a whole? What types of programmes are in operation?

Coetzee: Well, the Bank's official brief is to operate mostly in the less developed areas of Southern Africa, especially in the different independent and non-independent states. We are looking into the rapid urbanisation that is occurring in these areas. A number of substantial projects are currently in operation, ranging from low-cost housing, upgrading urban infrastructure and the interim upgrading of informal settlements, to establishing overall strategies.

However, we do not forget that we are

operating in Southern Africa, nor do we view the urbanisation process in isolation. We take into account rural-urban migration in the greater area, and keep up to date with approaches to urbanisation elsewhere, especially in countries which are comparable to the South African situation. So yes, we are attending to urbanisation, in the broadest possible terms, yet at present we are only financing programmes in homelands, some of which are very close to metropolitan areas.

Zingel: To change from issues of urbanisation to political matters, the Bank's initial mandate has been tied to the development of South Africa's independent and self-governing homelands. What view is the Bank taking of medium-term political prospects for the people of these areas?

Coetzee: I quote Dr Simon Brand, the Chief Executive, in saying that the Bank accepts the present political/constitutional framework as given. That is the operational framework and it is not our task to either detract or build on it. Obviously different people in the Bank have different views as far as a future constitutional dispensation is concerned. The multilateral structure within which we operate is not perceived as a confederation or a federation. From its side, however, the Bank will encourage cooperation between different states.

Zingel: Finally, notwithstanding some present crises in Botswana and Mozambique, to what extent has the Bank progressed with initiatives in the larger Southern African region?

Coetzee: That is a difficult question at the present point in time. It depends very much on broader political developments in Southern Africa and on South Africa's constitutional development. It is also premature after a year of project operations to take an official stand. It does depend very much on the present states which are represented in the Bank, and it is also important to stress that we will need new capital. Present capital is directed to the development needs of participating states.

We cannot rule out the possibility of becoming a Southern African Development Bank in the true sense of the word. Quoting Dr Brand again, there are obviously political reservations on the part of other states (South Africa's external neighbours), perhaps wanting to see the Bank establish a trade record in terms of our ability to mobilise capital and process projects. In the meantime, we have been making informal contacts with various other states, simply on the basis of exchanging information about what we are doing, and seeing whether there are lessons we can learn from the development efforts of other countries.

An interview with Deon Richter, Divisional Manager of the Development Bank's Programme & Project Division  
 Conducted by Indicator SA Researcher Jeff Zingel

Zingel: Mr Richter, could you set out what you understand by the term 'development'?

Richter: The Bank's multi-lateral structure sets out the overall framework within which we operate. A major component is the regional development policy of 1982, wherein South Africa is divided into eight development regions. Our position and role allows us to adopt a pro-active, innovative and flexible approach in achieving the aims of balanced economic development and raising the standard of living.

We are consciously moving away from 'top down' structures towards more autonomy for the local level decisionmaking process, and attempting 'bottom up' grassroots progress. The Regional Development Advisory Committees (RDACs) need to be supported in order to be more instrumental in this

regard. We are actively promoting initiatives which come from communities and the private sector, and in doing so, we are in a position to cut through the proliferation of inherited formal channels.

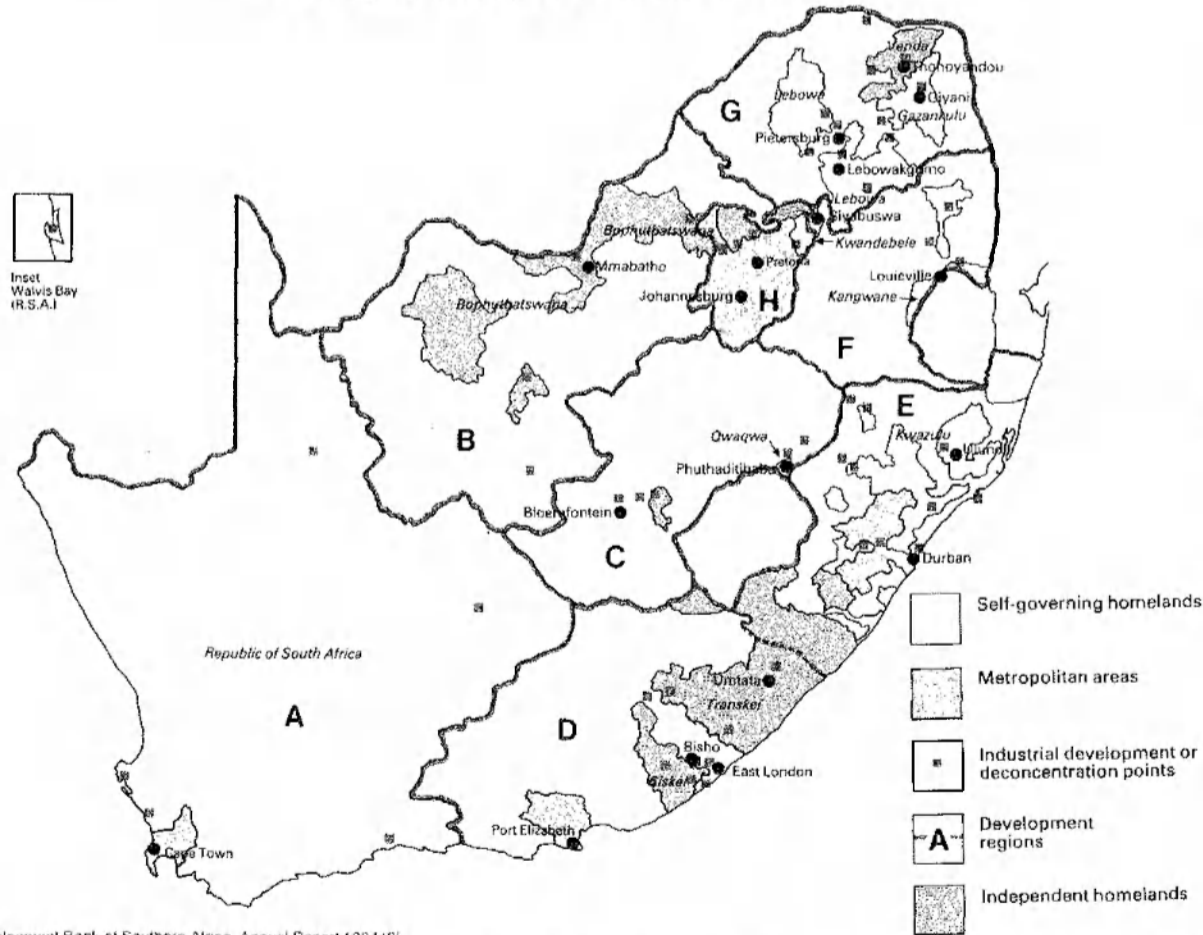
Zingel: Yet how do Bank staff keep in touch with what is happening 'on the ground'? A frequent criticism is that staff fly in and out of the various capitals and see little more than committees and negotiating tables.

Richter: Formally, we play a supporting role in these areas. The Bank's mission is to mobilise resources, make these available to participating states (South Africa's homelands), and ensure that they are applied effectively to their development needs. While it is the responsibility of borrowers to identify their requirements, Bank staff, through established procedures of the project

In attempts to encourage decentralisation and increased autonomy of local administrations, the Bank stresses support for Regional Development Advisory Committees

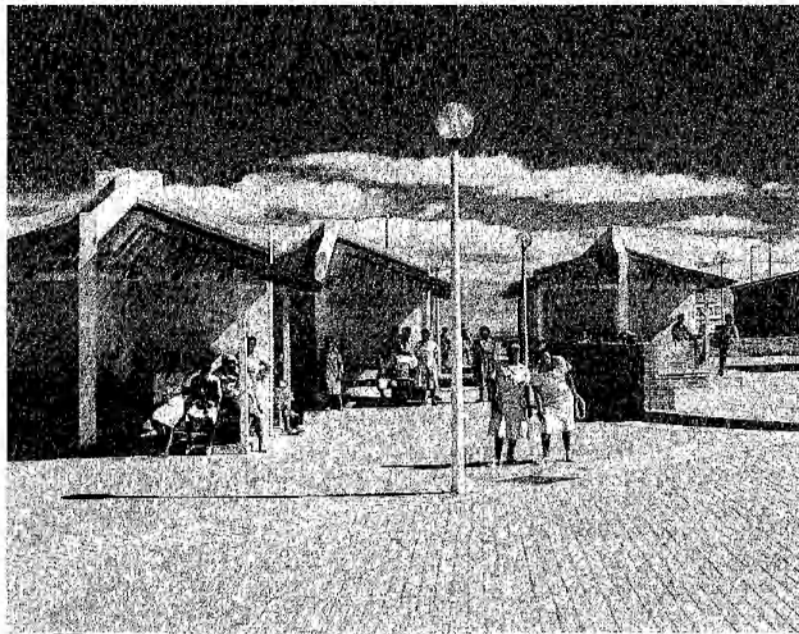
## Development Regions

THE CAPE OF GOOD HOPE CONFERENCE (1982)  
 Development Proposals for South Africa



SOURCE: Development Bank of Southern Africa, Annual Report 1984/85





*The Bisho Market in the Ciskei: through projects such as these, the bank hopes to encourage the development of informal trading, by providing infra-structural facilities.*

*Politically, the Bank is in a position to bring important development issues to the attention of top government decisionmakers*

*Infrastructural and industrial projects have absorbed a great deal of past development expenditure, but the current trend is towards agricultural and rural programmes*

aid cycle, are able to clearly assess — at the appraisal stage and at the final stage — the applicability of programmes to an area's real needs. A standard requirement is that communities should be consulted by our participating states.

Bank staff are spending considerable time in the regions in both a research and an evaluation role. We do not play a passive role, sitting in Sandton advising and guiding clients . . . Senior staff are formally assisting regional administrations to assess and address needs outside their immediate surroundings, including rural and urban areas where the potential for agricultural development and appropriate community services, such as water supplies, can be addressed. Imbalances within regions and across regions may thus be alleviated in the long-term. Where we see that needs are similar in different areas, lessons learned in one place can be applied elsewhere.

*Zingel: Practically, how is the Bank attending to development needs arising from urbanisation?*

Richter: A significant process of urbanisation takes place in parts of our participating states. First of all, we assist in the formulation of appropriate strategies, the financing of infrastructure and the mobilisation of private capital for housing. The Bank's efforts are not restricted to the black states (the homelands), although in terms of relative needs, we focus on their development.

Development needs in the region are interrelated and the Bank plays an active role in bringing attention to requirements on both sides of member state and South African borders. Examples are Queenstown, Ezibeleni and Ilinge, located across the border in Transkei. We have approached governments to initiate a joint planning operation to identify projects which can be implemented immediately. While no major initiatives have been undertaken in metropolitan areas yet, we have assisted the KwaZulu/Natal Planning Council in order to identify projects in the greater Durban, Pietermaritzburg, Pinetown urban area. Also, on an ad hoc basis, we are active in planning and implementing programmes which arise from interrelated needs across the borders of Natal/KwaZulu.

*Zingel: What political 'clout' does the Bank have in this regard?*

Richter: Operationally, we attend simultaneously to the policy levels and the practical levels of project planning and implementation. We have the advantage of being in a position to bring important issues of development to the highest level of decisionmaking in government. While not being prescriptive, the Bank advises on those issues affecting a programme which go beyond the limitations of a specific administration.

*Zingel: Infrastructural and industrial projects, arguably the easier programmes to operationalise, have absorbed a great deal of development expenditure. What direction is the bank taking now?*

Richter: When kicking off in 1983 we inherited 138 projects of this nature from South Africa's Department of Foreign Affairs. Since then, great care has been taken in assessing projects to avoid duplication of existing or underutilised facilities. The Bank's emphasis is shifting towards agriculture and rural development programmes.

Functionally, the types of programmes handled during the 1983/84 financial year can be broken down as follows:

• infrastructure	33.9%
• industry, commerce, tourism, mining and mineral affairs	21.6%
• agriculture, forestry and fisheries	20.1%
• manpower development	14.0%
• urban development and housing	9.3%
• rural and community development	1.0%

*Zingel: Finally, the human factor — most developing areas are characterised by high unemployment, extensive out-migration and a low productive and administrative capacity, which together must inhibit some of the goals of the Bank.*

Richter: One of the most important functions of the Bank is to assist participating states in institution building and to increase their capacity for development planning and project implementation. Such assistance can take the form of in-house training, special training courses and seminars, identification of needs and mobilisation of know-how from the private sector, etc. Furthermore, financial assistance is being provided for informal, technical and vocational projects.

Development has tended to be heavily bureaucratic and of an extremely 'high-tech' nature. Many proposals, particularly in the engineering line, are sometimes inappropriate. A number of well-designed dams which are functionally useless to the real needs of communities and are monuments to technological blindness. We are actively motivating people to get closer to appropriate technical solutions to what are often socially determined potentialities and problems. A lot of people are now struggling in their own minds about how to define and deal with these issues. On a number of technical and agricultural projects, we have reworked approaches to design and objectives, with very positive results. *IPQA*

# RURAL ENTREPRENEURS

## *A Trucking & Bartering Spirit*

By Indicator SA Researcher Jeff Zingel

*Transport and crop cutting contractors at work – the trucking and bartering spirit in Mapumulo*



RURAL ENTERPRISE

*Within South Africa's rural sub-regions, a considerable institutional effort is currently underway to promote and establish independent 'small' businessmen from African communities. In what is essentially an ideological battle for hearts and minds, substantial public and private investment is being pumped into programmes designed to support the initial endeavours of prospective entrepreneurs. These development efforts are directed at a number of commercial enterprises, ranging from farming, shopkeeping and mechanical workshops, to construction, small scale manufacturing and transportation. Drawing on a micro-level case study, Indicator SA researcher Jeff Zingel illustrates how the local conditions and constraints faced by an aspirant entrepreneur affect his daily choices and decisions taken in business matters. From research undertaken in KwaZulu among African contractors in the sugarcane-growing area of the Mapumulo district, Zingel describes some of the social and institutional dynamics which determine success or failure for an aspirant rural entrepreneur.*



*Planners and development 'experts' often enforce a poorly informed rationality on projects and unsurprisingly meet with resistance from peasant participants*

*Rural entrepreneurs, the recipients of many parastatal and private sector programmes, have diverse career paths requiring careful evaluation*

In order to promote African entrepreneurship in rural communities, parastatal development corporations and private sector companies are providing substantial amounts of capital and contributing to large manpower and training initiatives. Frequently, the level of individual performance in such programmes is disappointing and does not match the foreign expectations of development practitioners. In fact, a predominant and sometime racist conservatism is undoubtedly a factor preventing many planners and developers from attaining a deeper understanding of the broad and complex range of local circumstances within which aspirant entrepreneurs operate.

In KwaZulu, a stated objective of an early plan aimed at coordinating economic growth and development was the promotion of individual income and private enterprise. Yet paradoxically, it is reported in the same document, 'Towards a Plan for KwaZulu' (1975: p19), that the notions of a free enterprise society are supposedly not found among rural Zulu people. Such generalised and distorted cultural perceptions are commonly found among planners and technocrats who deal with economic life in a rural milieu.

Another noticeable bias found among planners stems from their inclination to impose a poorly informed rationality on many development programmes, established ostensibly for the benefit of individuals or small communities in South Africa's rural sub-regions. Designers of agricultural schemes are often criticised for 'making calculations about the improvement in yields which would follow the introduction of a new input . . . then put into effect policies based on the results of these profitability calculations. Yet in nine cases out of ten they

come up against the resistance of the peasantry' (Amin 1976: p21)

The following case study documents the various problems encountered by a local 'peasantry' in attempts to manage social and economic resources on the typical path from migrant labourer to rural entrepreneur. The research also suggests appropriate ways of evaluating the performance of rural African men and women involved in private enterprise programmes aimed at increasing individual income. It should be stressed that the circumstances and issues experienced in the sphere of agricultural and transport contracting in the Mapumulo district of KwaZulu are representative of a range of similar rural enterprises encountered elsewhere.

### An Integrated Approach

The evaluation of entrepreneurial performance may rely on exchange theory, which provides an appropriate focus on the restrictions and incentives of both an instrumental and moral nature affecting individual economic behaviour and performance (Long 1977). A good starting point is to adopt the kind of integrated theoretical approach that emphasises an individual's management of the multiple socio-economic and political relationships encountered in the course of a typical career lifespan. In Southern Africa and other developing areas, a useful way to apply this approach is to isolate six broad dimensions of the total social and institutional milieu, or in other words, the local circumstances within which rural entrepreneurs operate. In brief, their career environment and the process of individual accumulation of wealth can be separated into the following significant factors:

- space, the nature of links between town and country
- change in rural economy and society
- the role of extended family relations
- similarly, the impact of community relations
- experience of management practices and procedures.

### Town and Country

A distinct pattern emerging from the research into sugarcane production and transport shows that most contractors participating in the KwaZulu Small Cane Growers Scheme spent long periods (10 to 15 years) employed in the urban wage labour market before reaching early middle-age and decided to permanently return to home areas. In effect, they subsequently cut ties to secure employment opportunities in the city and concentrate instead on developing home-based commercial ventures. While still in wage employment, these African migrants attempt to cultivate useful technical skills such as truck driving or mechanical abilities,

*Despite major institutional schemes to promote prospective entrepreneurs, levels of homegrown commercial development remain low in rural areas*



though their initiatives are obviously inhibited by racial restrictions placed on job opportunities and occupational mobility.

Minor auxiliary enterprises are often initiated at home while undertaking full-time work in the city. Having obtained personal transport (a bakkie or truck) and put by some savings, future rural entrepreneurs turn their attention to secondary commercial activities which might include maize milling, vegetable and cereal vending, or firewood and sand carting. In short, these rural men and women of enterprise may be characterised as a relatively small group of innovative return migrants, who are capable of making an independent living and a positive contribution to the development of 'sender' areas, often described as migrant labour reserves.

### Change in the Countryside

Although the nature of 'change' occurring in rural economy and society is a difficult process to quantify, the four major elements of rural change warrant mention nevertheless:

- the development of the public sector: particularly in this case study, the expansion of the KwaZulu administrative infrastructure in education, health and agriculture;
- the increased local demand for small-scale services: a market determined by population growth levels, the absence of household heads and their migrant remittances, the availability and fluctuating prices of commodity supplies, and the amount of local wealth in circulation;
- the rapid development of a single crop technology and a government regulated market: in Mapumulo, the cane growing extension programme implemented in conjunction with the white-owned sugar mills and the SA Sugar Association;
- rapidly changing attitudes to traditional authorities.

A rural environment of this kind provides for a relatively easy entry for men or women with the proverbial 'eye for the main chance'. Prospective entrepreneurs tend to respond to changes principally in locations where the existence of a transport and market infrastructure affords a diverse return on their investments. However, even with these institutional and local advantages overall levels of development remain low in rural areas. This is primarily due to an absence of an open market in land sale and acquisition, a crucial pre-condition for the expansion of farming scale.

### Family Resources

The resources of the extended family, as is the case with most other communities, contribute to both the institution and promotion of an entrepreneur's career. Research gleaned from a working sample of contractors in the Mapumulo district showed that returns from sugarcane production on lineage-held land constitutes one of the major

sources of finance for entry into contract work. Aspirant entrepreneurs in rural areas lacking such familial resources might need to look elsewhere for initial financial assistance and have a particular need for institutional support in getting started.

Family members are expected to make additional contributions to cash injections in order to aid their relative's enterprise, in the form of labour or managerial inputs. Although the provision of familial assistance provides a convenient launchpad for rural entrepreneurial activities, a negative consequence is that family helpers might make excessive demands on the sometime modest returns accrued from individual enterprise.

### Neighbourhood and Community

Within poor rural communities, the individualistic pursuit of profit is almost universally regarded as anti-social and dangerous. The individual accumulation of wealth essentially undermines an ethic of shared, routine and unavoidable poverty. In this context, a possible consequence of success or progress for rural entrepreneurs is that social and ideological conflict is generated in the community, which provides those very resources and demands that facilitate individual enrichment.

For contractors and community, emergent social conflict of this kind requires both a practical and ideological resolution, involving what can best be described as social strategies. For instance, the successful trader, builder or transporter might attempt to justify his own commercial progress in terms of service to the community. Witness the plethora of rural trading stores named 'Siza

*From minor enterprises at home areas while working in towns, entrepreneurs use family resources and institutional services to expand into full-time operations*

*The individual accumulation of wealth generates social conflict in poor communities and requires various strategies for resolution*

*Many women entrepreneurs with 'an eye for the main chance' have quickly responded to opportunities for small business development.*







KwaZulu's administrative infrastructure in education, roads and agriculture promotes rural change and progress.

Rural entrepreneurs compete for political, religious and economic status, with adverse consequences for more practical management decisions

Management of a varied portfolio of commercial interests becomes a tricky balancing act, requiring informed training to recognise competing demands and requirements

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Bantu', literally meaning, 'We help the People'. Yet everyone knows that their mark up on consumer goods is almost prohibitive! Other more practical strategies adopted by rural businessmen include the waiving of fees for work done, backing down when dispute over rates of payment threaten to become socially disruptive, or voluntarily assisting their small labour forces during personal crises. Invariably, an entrepreneur may not make legal claims for losses incurred in these situations, since he adopts the role of public benefactor in many of his business dealings. These social mechanisms, primarily intended to resolve localised conflict, also act as a limited form of redistributing wealth in small, impoverished communities. In this sense, an approximate parallel with contemporary corporate social responsibility programmes in the sophisticated urban environment is evoked. The more complicated redistributive mechanisms whereby entrepreneurs are perceived as contributing to the public good are evident in social displays of wealth, intended to enhance an individual's social or political prestige. Research in KwaZulu revealed a propensity on the part of successful African businessmen to invest in church or local public works development, as legitimate avenues for obtaining a following or a forum.

### Management Practices

"The biggest problem with contractors is budgeting. They do not do it, and the result is that they over-extend themselves. Why? Because they want to be big men" (Interview with Extension Officer, 1984).

Rural entrepreneurs are only able to ensconce themselves as independent businessmen when they can diversify their limited, original

auxiliary, contracting and/or trading interests. In the case of the case study at hand, an increased demand for transport services, a single crop technology and a guaranteed market outlet facilitates their final entry into small, yet big, business in terms of rural career development. Having begun participating in a major enterprise such as this one, the onus immediately falls on the entrepreneur to astutely manage his diverse portfolio of commercial interests within a complex and changing environment.

From the viewpoint of institutional promoters of rural free enterprise activities, the management procedures adhered to by emergent entrepreneurs are usually seen as perplexing and poorly informed. Obviously the most crucial stage in an individual's career, this final step necessitates the successful allocation of income and expenditure between the demands of:

- capital investments
- interest bearing loans
- fixed and running costs
- personal and domestic consumption, and
- social or community expenditure.

### Two Case Studies

Drawing on two examples of individual career development (see box), Mr A followed the classic entrepreneurial path from small beginnings to better things. From a diverse but limited portfolio of enterprises, Mr A's venture into maize milling successfully promoted entry into contracting, which in turn facilitated his expansion into taxi operating. Only recently has he seen the need for the proper allocation of income and expenditure in terms of balancing demands, and his success is now ensured, notwithstanding other potential mishaps with regard to:

- filial and domestic relationships
- physical accidents or disease
- excessive personal or domestic consumption
- intense commitment to either religious or political status.

In the second example, Mr B successfully entered the "final" entrepreneurial stage and over the years, expanded his commercial portfolio to include a shop, more land for cane growing and land preparation services. In the course of managing a complicated range of enterprises, he has had to cope with drought, vehicle replacement costs, the drying up of a supplementary source of income and excessive social demands made by his church. For this rural entrepreneur, the most effective management strategy in a period of consolidation will probably be for Mr B to sell his shop and reduce the land area he works, while cutting back on income draining activities involving the church.

### The Career Trajectory

In a nutshell, the expansion of the cane growing scheme in KwaZulu offers the initial

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## Two Case Studies

### THE CAREER PATHS OF TWO RURAL ENTREPRENEURS

#### Case Study 1: *The Successful Contractor*

Mr A, an astute and modest man, a leader in the Full Gospel Church, has played a leading role in the development of the Newspaper district, near Tongaat. Beginning work as a farm labourer, he set off on an entrepreneurial career by buying a secondhand van to cart and sell paraffin and firewood on weekends. By trading goats and growing quality beans and maize for local sale, Mr A saved up to buy a maizemill. He began contracting about the same time, planted 2 ha of sugarcane aided by a Sugar Association loan, and bought a tractor with a KwaZulu Development Corporation loan. From substantial income earned from his milling services, Mr A subsequently bought a second tractor, drawing in two brothers as business assistants. Although they had little capital to inject into the venture, the family later bought two kombi taxis with the help of private sector banks and income from the other enterprises.

Today, Mr A provides a milling, contracting, taxi and food service to a diverse community. With so many people coming to him, he also goes to the people, has helped build a chapel and donates a church tithe. He dispenses patronage through waiving fees where people cannot pay for work done. Mr A throws an annual harvest party, which is attended by neighbours, growers and church members from far afield. His success as a self-made community man is widely recognised, yet uncertainties, debt and expenses constantly remind him of the need to keep income circulating from

avenue for aspirant entrepreneurs to utilise their wage labour savings, skills experience and capital equipment and thus expand whatever commercial home base they have created. The financial and technical services provided by the KwaZulu Development Corporation (public sector) and the Financial Aid Fund (private sector), in conjunction with family-based labour and cash reserves allow for purchase of the necessary capital equipment for final entry into contracting.

Thereafter, success in contracting and other forms of rural private enterprise is likely to be achieved by individuals who firstly, develop a secure base in ancillary commercial operations, and subsequently, manage a mixture of enterprises according to the sound principles of portfolio management outlined above. The long-term prospects for rural entrepreneurial efforts also hinge on the application of appropriate technical skills, time allocation and the provision of proper extension services by the public and private sectors. Since overall levels of income achieved through these enterprises have proved to be relatively low, entrepreneurs are continuously involved in a delicate balancing

act and attempt to marshal a diverse combination of resources, while not neglecting social expenditure in their communities.

#### Case study 2: *The Average Contractor*

Mr B, born into the Nazareth Church, left school in 1953 and first worked as a wage labourer in Durban for eight years. He then chose to return to the Umvoti valley in KwaZulu's Mapumulo district, to assist in the planned expansion of his father's sugar cane lands. With the help of an uncle and a loan from the former Bantu Investment Corporation, the family enterprise bought their first tractor in 1969. The next eight year period was one of expansion, as they obtained more land from a deceased brother and began to contract land preparation services. In the meantime, Mr B took a leadership role in a local sect of the church and established a farmers' association, becoming chairman. He then acquired his own truck and bought a shop in 1978, to be managed by his second wife.

On the death of his grandfather in 1981, Mr B inherited more land and bought a new tractor, acquired on credit like the store. Competition with a mill has since reduced his contracted land preparation work. Simultaneously, Mr B's sect hived off from the main church and he has since become embroiled in a leadership struggle. His resources and energies are being further drained by the drought, labour expenses and necessary truck repairs. Mr B now faces a testing phase of consolidation (see text) as he tries to marshal his commercial and community leadership interests to cope with these problems.

act and attempt to marshal a diverse combination of resources, while not neglecting social expenditure in their communities.

If rural enterprise schemes are not as successful as they could be, perhaps this is because state and private sector promoters have not sufficiently recognised the role of social and institutional dynamics in the individual career of the prospective entrepreneur. On the basis of this case study, it would seem that more attention needs to be especially paid to the diverse nature of a rural entrepreneur's portfolio of commercial interests, as a means of evaluating past and potential performance, as well as understanding the reasons for poor performance at present. *IPAA*

*Attention needs to be given to the entrepreneur's allocation of income between capital and running costs, personal and social consumption, and expenditure*

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# PREVENTION OR CURE?

## Community Health Services in the Rural South

By Francie Lund, Research Fellow,  
Centre for Applied Social Sciences

HEALTH POLICY

*There is fierce debate among health professionals and policy-makers over the provision of an effective health service to overcome a legacy of structural underdevelopment and unequal state expenditure on different communities in South Africa. CASS researcher Francie Lund of the University of Natal explores both the racial and urban/rural divide in health and general living standards, illustrated by statistical indicators such as comparative infant mortality rates, hospital beds per population group and regional expenditure. She presents a cogent argument for government and health workers, having adopted in principle a policy of primary health care, to allocate far greater resources to promote preventive and educational measures, and as importantly, to demonstrate their political commitment to pursue the goal of 'Health for All'.*

*Primary health care should include immunisation, food and nutrition, sanitation and clean water, and emphasise mother and child care*

*Innovative projects in community health demonstrate how inappropriate present health services are, while testing more effective alternatives*

It is widely recognised that health services in South Africa as presently delivered do not cater for the health needs of the majority of the population. This is particularly true of rural areas, where the treatment of serious problems such as malnutrition and infectious diseases, which feed into an interminable cycle of poverty, is completely inadequate.

The poor state of health of black rural South Africa is partially the historical product of an implicit state-private sector policy which has treated rural areas as a depository for sick and infirm industrial workers. The overall effect of skewed land distribution, resettlement and lack of development is to increase African migration to the cities because people perceive the possibility of improving their standard of living. Rural migrants are leaving areas where health services, in a similar sense to the availability of job prospects, are underdeveloped, expensive, and hard to reach (see tables 1-3).

### Health for All

To come to grips with these structural and historical problems, a new approach to health is needed, which should include immunisation, food and nutrition, sanitation and clean water, while placing greater emphasis on mother and child care. These elements form the basis of primary health care, a unified policy currently being promoted by the World Health Organisation, whose goal is captured by the slogan, 'Health

for all by the year 2000'.

In South Africa, the policy of primary health care has been adopted by some independent and self-governing homelands. Aspects of this approach are also evident in the central government's revamped Health Act of 1977 and its National Health Service Facility Plan of 1980. Legislation now provides for comprehensive health services to reach all sectors and communities, and for the first time, the duties of provinces and local authorities are clearly indicated.

But how far are the new approach and policy being translated into practice? Is the rural family as yet feeling the effect of these changes?

### Primary Care in Practice

Clinic networks are indeed being extended by government and other agencies in many rural areas. Though still inadequate in terms of number and quality, they are at least closer to hand for the people who have most need of them.

Various organisations are doing innovative work in the sphere of community health. Though they reach relatively few people, these projects demonstrate the inappropriateness of present health services and test the ground for more effective styles of delivery. The Health Services Development Unit of Wits Medical School, for example, carried out a mass immunisation campaign in the Gazankulu homeland. Their report states that: 'The total

cost of the first immunisation campaign was much less than the cost of ensuring long-term treatment for a single case of paralytic polio . . . the cost of all three campaigns is covered if we have prevented a single child going blind as a result of vitamin A deficiency following measles' (Buch 1984).

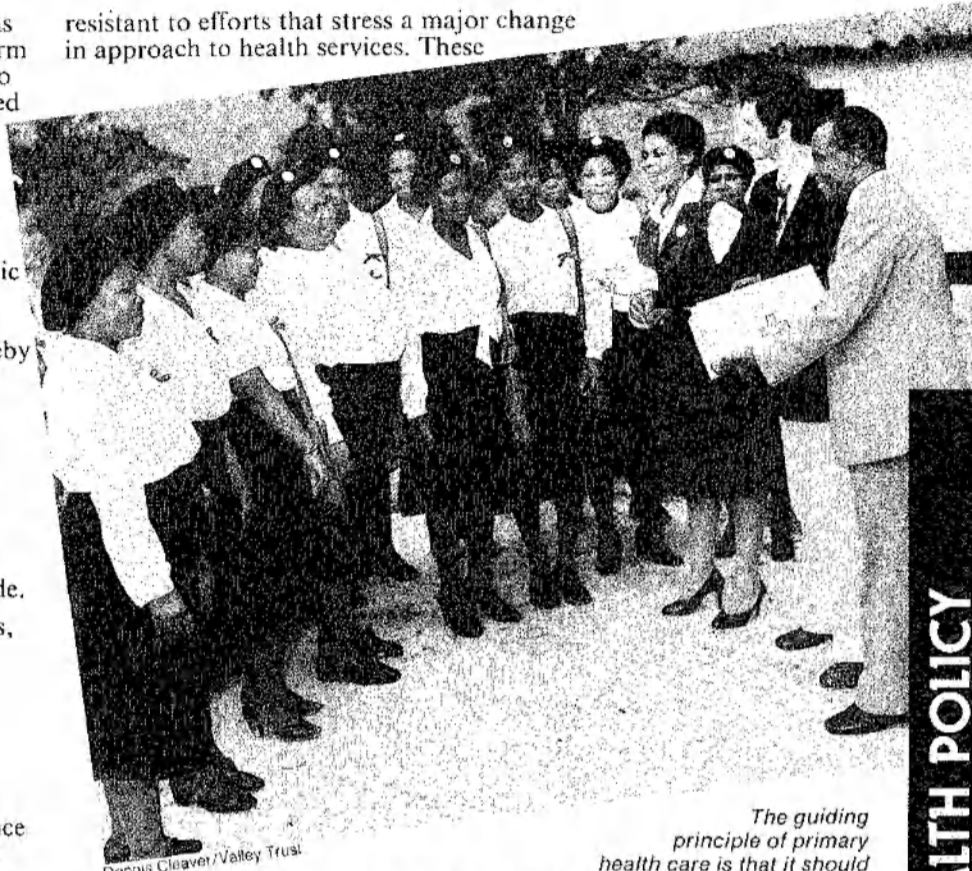
In recent years, most medical schools have established new professorships and departments, reflecting a change in academic orientation to promote the concept of community health. These efforts will to an extent ensure that future doctors, and thereby policy-makers, will at least be aware of alternative models of health care delivery. But as long as only three out of every hundred health rands allocated by government continues to be spent on educative and preventive, as opposed to curative measures, the gap between the rhetoric of policy and the reality of implementation will remain desperately wide.

There are forceful attitudes, vested interests, and structures which stand in the way of successful adaptation and transition.

### Resistance of Health Professionals

There is overwhelming international evidence that paraprofessional medical aids, or local people with brief, intensive training, can effectively assist with the prevention and cure of health problems. In this region, however, health professionals are on the whole

resistant to efforts that stress a major change in approach to health services. These



Dennis Cleaver/Valley Trust

The guiding principle of primary health care is that it should be community-based to promote health for all. Personnel from Natal's Valley Trust 'socio-medical project', with village health workers from the Nyusa area, who are equipped and trained in first aid, nutrition and the basics of preventive measures.

HEALTH POLICY

## Health Indicators

### Did you know that?

- A black male born in South Africa in 1980 has a life expectancy of 55 years, whereas, a white female born in South Africa in 1980 has a life expectancy of 74 years, or about one third longer.
- A black child in a rural area has a one in seven chance of dying during the first year of life, but the infant mortality rate for white children is about one in a hundred (see table 2).
- The World Health Organisation estimates that governments should spend at least 5 percent of GNP on health, yet South Africa allocates approximately 2 percent of GNP to health expenditure. Not more than 5 percent of this health budget is spent on preventive and promotive services — the rest is allocated to curative services.
- KwaZulu's health budget in 1984 was R60 million, comprising the total sum spent in running the Johannesburg Hospital in the same year (see table 1).
- Only 5 percent of South African doctors practice in rural areas, even though a majority of the country's population lives there.

### Monitoring Problems

For the analyst, the use of official data poses several insurmountable problems. In brief, statistics provided by government sources reflect three 'political' biases:

- They are classified racially, which obscures differences arising from socio-economic variables. For instance, the life expectancy of the wealthy, urban black male is closer to his white counterpart than to a rural black male (see table 2).
- They underestimate the extent of ill-health, particularly in rural areas, where the most basic health data is lacking.
- They need to be carefully checked to see whether the 'independent states' (homelands) are included in calculations. For example, the tuberculosis rate appeared to have dropped sharply recently (from 240/100 000 in 1975 to 180/100 000 in 1980). It then became apparent that the rates for Transkei, Venda and Bophuthatswana, to whom South Africa 'exports' many of its health problems, had been excluded from the national statistics.



*The move from curative to preventive care implies additional short-term costs, but expenses will be justified by tangible successes in the long-term*

*The centralisation of health administration under 'own affairs' apartheid is unlikely to lead to greater efficiency and will further duplicate services*

*Ill-health on a massive social scale has multiple causes which require integrated institutions to facilitate coordinated responses*

*Despite commendable efforts by various organisations, only the state has the resources to improve health in a situation of chronic rural poverty*

conflicts are expressed in various concrete terms:

- the nursing sister feels threatened by a less-educated person being trained to take over preventive or curative aspects of her job
- the doctor working in the sphere of community health finds himself competing for scarce research funds to upgrade the training of traditional birth attendants
- the ultra-modern research unit wants a multi-million dollar machine to enable it to maintain its position as an international 'centre of excellence', even though it will cater for relatively few patients.

### Community Opposition

Go into a rural community meeting and ask the people, 'What is needed around here to make people healthier?' In nearly every case, their answer will be a hospital, a doctor, or a clinic, because for years people have been exhorted to turn to these established medical institutions. It is no wonder that people mistakenly believe that the solution to ill-health is to be found in conventional medical services. It is also no wonder that the concept of village health workers — neighbours and friends who are trained to do health work — is often treated with scepticism at the grassroots level.

### Privatisation and Primary Health Care

Similar and possibly more serious scepticism, in terms of generating active opposition to primary health care, exists among politicised sectors in South Africa. Radical critics pose the following questions: 'Is primary health care third class medicine for third class citizens? Does it represent the modernising of apartheid health services?'

Such critical responses stem from a recognition that while this state approach is being accepted and implemented in mainly rural areas, there is a simultaneous national trend towards the privatisation of health services in the cities for those who can afford it. The government has put health services for the wealthy, and for those on medical aid, out to tender. And the private sector is submitting and winning profitable contracts.

### Local Authority Participation

The guiding principle of primary health care is that it should be community-based. In other words, the approach assumes working through local organisations, which involves the participation of, and control by, community leaders in decisionmaking and implementation.

In rural areas, such a policy, if initiated by state departments, automatically implies a role for the local (tribal) authority. In some cases they would merely be consulted on needs identification; in others they may have direct control over and supervise the work of health assistants. However, the lack of

popular credibility of these tribal authorities in many areas is undeniable. Even where they exert a benign influence and control, the personnel does not have the training, the administrative skills, nor the communication infrastructure to be an effective mediating institution between hospital and community.

### Preventive vs Curative Costs

The move from curative to preventive care implies additional costs in the short and middle-term. In other words, curative needs endure until the health of the population improves under the combined impact of preventive measures and a lessening of structural inequalities. In this situation, senior health officials face difficult choices over priorities in the allocation of funds and the development of services. Because the tangible evidence of the success of preventive and educational services is relatively long-term, the temptation is to opt for 'more of the same', rather than bold, assertive policy changes.

In the meantime, the homelands health pie is not getting any larger (see table 1), and new preventive services compete with existing curative services. The Regional Health Organisation for Southern Africa, set up to promote 'international' coordination between Pretoria and the independent and self-governing homelands, encourages uniformity of standards for all areas. But stressing the specific uniformity of, say, mobile clinic coverage, ignores the unequal nature of the existing support infrastructure and does not produce the staff or transport needed to deliver health services.

### Segregated Health Services

Although there is a clear trend towards the privatisation of health services in the cities, the state simultaneously insists on the continuation of segregated public health delivery. Apartheid in health services has created complex overlapping and duplicated structures and institutions, which make no sense in human, medical or financial terms.

The effects of the tricameral parliament and forthcoming Regional Service Councils on the organisation of health services and delivery have yet to be seen. But considering that health administration is to be further centralised under the guise of 'own affairs' within each ethnic parliament, these constitutional initiatives are unlikely to lead to greater streamlining or efficiency. According to Professor Loening of the Department of Paediatrics and Child Health, University of Natal, 'If the devil himself had been set the task of evolving a health structure so complex in nature that it would confound the mind of the most skilled health administrator, he would not have come up with anything quite as bizarre as we have managed to create in this country' (Inaugural Address, UND, 1985).

## Bureaucratic Structures

A further factor which works against the implementation of comprehensive primary health care is the compartmentalised nature of the very institutions which are required to translate policy into practice. Ill-health on a massive social scale has multiple causes which require integrated solutions.

Administrative structures and practice in South Africa, however, tend to obstruct instead of facilitate coordinated responses to pressing issues.

Consider, for example, the range of government departments which would need to be involved in even a modest health education effort focussed on demonstration vegetable gardens at primary schools: health, education, agriculture and community development. A common problem is that extension officials — the 'grassroots' workers from state departments — seldom meet and plan jointly at local level. Their departments are specialised, hierarchical and rigid. The Health Services Facility Plan specifies the need for clean water, and the Department of National Health and Population Planning then delegates responsibility for its provision to other departments. But the health departments have no influence in ensuring that water will indeed be a shared priority for another department.

## The Search for Alternatives

In the cities, organisations have emerged which are helping to highlight health as a basic need and right. For instance, the Health Information Centre and the Technical Advice Centre Group in Johannesburg and the Industrial Health Research Group in Cape Town are providing a research and resource base for trade unions and civic organisations in their negotiations with management and local authorities. They focus, inter alia, on the need for more adequate industrial legislation on health, and for more effective implementation of existing legislation.

Commendable efforts have also been made by independent projects in some rural areas. Their chief value lies in building innovative models as alternatives for the future. However, these rural projects remain piecemeal attempts, which affect relatively few people, given the magnitude and severity of health problems in South Africa.

The state is the only institution which ultimately has the capacity, the clout, and the resources to improve health in a situation of chronic rural poverty. International experience has shown that, for the less-developed world, a major requirement for providing health services for the poor is the political commitment to do so. *UNDA*

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INDICATOR SA Vol. 3 No 2 Spring 1985

## Data Base

### SOUTH AFRICA'S RURAL/URBAN DIVIDE

Table 1

#### EXPENDITURE ON HEALTH BY PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATIONS (PA's) AND HOMELANDS

Area	Amount spent	Population	Per capita expenditure
Natal (NPA)	R192 767 000	2 618 220	R73,63
KwaZulu	R 64 654 750*	3 400 000	R19,02
Cape (CPA)	R492 913 000	4 932 120	R99,34
Transkei	R 58 976 000	2 322 650	R25,39
Transvaal (TPA)	R471 785 000	8 243 780	R57,23
Venda	R 7 971 276*	315 545	R25,26

\*KwaZulu and Venda budgets are given for both health and welfare. These are:

KwaZulu	R129 309 500
Venda	R 16 572 300

KwaZulu spends 50 percent on welfare and Venda 51.9 percent on welfare.

SOURCE SA Institute of Race Relations, *Annual Survey Vol. 36 (1982)*

Table 2

#### COMPARATIVE INFANT MORTALITY RATES

Labour Status	Rate* (per 1000 live births)
• settled black Cape Town residents	82
• migrants in urban areas	107
• migrants in rural areas	227
• rural families with no access to migrant earnings	282

\*The comparative infant mortality rate for urban whites is  $\pm 15$ .

SOURCE Knulzen, V K and Bourne D E. *S A Medical Journal* No 51, p392, 1977.

Table 3

#### HOSPITAL BEDS PER POPULATION

	Urban	Rural
White	1:92	1:109
Black	1:109	1:154 (Bophuthatswana) 1:527 (Kangwane) 1:191 (rural 'white' areas)

### SOURCE

Jinabhai C C et al. *Socio-medical indicators for monitoring progress towards health for all in Southern Africa*. SALDRU, UCT. *Carnegie Conference Paper No 165, 1984.*

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# FARMING OUT THE LAND

## Reform & Resettlement in Zimbabwe

By Indicator SA Researcher Jeff Zingel

*In Zimbabwe, the land reform programme is the chief socialist item on the domestic policy agenda of the black nationalist government. Five years after independence, Mugabe's ZANU cabinet performs a delicate balancing act to meet the expectations and demands for land redistribution made by the politically dominant African majority. The issues at the heart of debate are the maintenance of productivity levels, the availability of white commercial farmland for black resettlement and the needs of thousands of peasants, particularly squatters occupying white-owned farms. Jeff Zingel sets out the historical context of the land resettlement programme and its strategies, objectives and achievements to date.*

*The current land resettlement policy is based on plans prepared by various agencies during the interim government phase of 1978/79*

*Overall objectives include an integration of the 'white' commercial and peasant agricultural sectors into a single national system*

In Zimbabwe the land issue was, and still remains, the central political issue in the country. In the search for policies that will promote increased agricultural production, national economic growth and social change in the countryside, post-independent Zimbabwe has adopted a socialist approach of land redistribution.

As in South Africa's homelands, the crisis of the Tribal Trust Lands (now renamed as communal lands) is the combined, historical result of:

- white settler allocation of the poorest land to the African population,
- limited development of necessary support infrastructure for transport, extension and marketing systems, and
- a serious manpower shortage, with most active adult men forced to work as city migrants.

The last pre-independence survey (1969) showed that some 80 percent of the populace in the Tribal Trust Lands (TTLs) comprised women and children.

Essentially, Mugabe's ZANU PF party won the war on promises to 'get back the land'. The revolutionary slogan hinged not so much on the practical issues of what land and how, but rather on the linkage between the original settler maldistribution of land, the massively skewed development that resulted and the contemporary circumstances of the new, politically dominant majority. During the 1978/79 period, under the interim government transition to black nationalist rule, various agencies prepared the resettlement plans which were to provide the basis for the current land reform programme.

### Land Distribution at Independence

At the time of reaching independence in 1981, about 40 percent of Zimbabwe's total

land area of some 39 million ha. was controlled by whites. Some 5 500 white farmers produced 70 percent of national agricultural production by value and about 6 000 small-scale African commercial master farmers (African cash-crop producers) provided 20 percent.

In contrast, the TTLs were occupied by some 700 000 semi-subsistence African farmers, with a total de jure population of around 4 million. The war period saw a rapid decline in production. Agricultural sales dropped from \$28 million in 1976 to \$17 million in 1979 and organised sales of cattle dropped in value from \$8.5 to \$3.2 million over the same period.

On attaining power, the Mugabe government began its land reform programme with the promise of resettling 18 000 families from the overcrowded communal land areas. Funds came from Britain's Overseas Development Organisation, the African Development Bank, the European Economic Community and the governments of Kuwait and Holland, with 1.1 million ha. of former white land earmarked for African resettlement. The new administration was mindful of the need to prevent a Mozambique type exodus of settler farmers, while subject to pressure for land redistribution from peasants in the communal areas and those dislocated by the long bush war, from squatters on 'white' farms and from demobilised guerrillas.

### Land Reform Policy

By 1982, only 15 000 families from communal lands had been resettled, making a miniscule impact on the need to reduce pressure on communal lands, where an estimated excess of 375 000 families now remain. The new government's stated objectives in the resettlement programme



Moko/Mirretoo Press

A volunteer from the Scandinavian-based Development Aid from People to People (DAPP) works alongside former nationalist guerrillas, helping to reconstruct and advance facilities in the rural communal lands of Zimbabwe.

## LAND REFORM

were directed at achieving:

- an acceptable and fair distribution of land ownership and use;
- an integration of the commercial and peasant agricultural sectors into a national agricultural system; and
- the promotion of a regional balance in agricultural development.

In 1983, the programme was accelerated, aiming at increasing the number of participants to some 162 000 families, with the ultimate purchase of some 10 million ha. out of 16 million ha. of white farmland originally allocated for resettlement. The priorities for places were accorded to, in order, refugees displaced by the war, the landless and those with insufficient land for subsistence. Once resettled, the planning and provision of infrastructure was to follow.

At this stage, four types of settlement schemes were introduced:

- Model A, to which about 90 percent of all settlers moved to, based on communal

grazing, with individual plots and concentrated village settlements;

- Model B provides for 'communal' management. Housing and livestock may be cooperative or private, but arable farming and grazing are to be on a cooperative basis only;
- Model C has a model A type village grouped around a core estate, to which participants provide labour in return for draught power, transport, seedling, marketing and social services; and
- an experimental Model D, whereby ranch land adjacent to the communal lands is being bought for communal grazing projects, which in turn releases pressure from existing grazing practices.

### Practical Effects

Overall, the programme has actually slowed down under the impact of a restriction on the availability of funds and manpower,

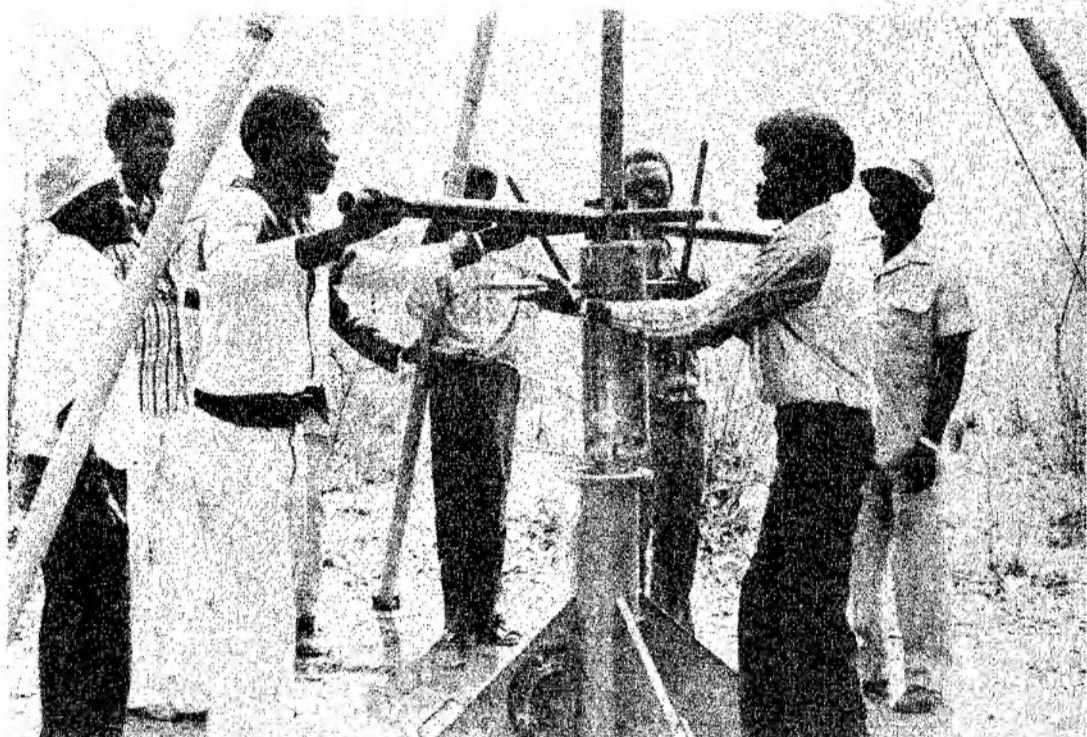
*The primary African beneficiaries of the several schemes have been landless residents from the overcrowded communal lands, farm labourers and those displaced by the war*



Land reform has made white agriculture more efficient and capital intensive, with poorer, more marginal land sold off for African resettlement

Zimbabwe's agricultural boom stems from the expansion of all services to communal lands, linkage of the 'dual' agricultural sectors and Africanisation of management

Squatters constitute the most important challenge for resettlement and perhaps prompted the merging of the Departments of Lands, Rural Resettlement and Agriculture



Prospective farmers learn how to use a manual well-drilling rig. The Chikwaka pilot project aims to develop milk production on a commercial basis in the communal lands, under the direction of Zimbabwe's Dairy Marketing Board.

interdepartmental rivalry — eight ministries fought for a share of the rural development cake — rapid resettlement leading to environmental destruction, and lastly, manipulation by chiefs urging a return to former lands. In fact, one outcome of land reform to date has been to consolidate, and make more efficient, white capital intensive farming.

Many of the remaining 40 000 white commercial farmers (1985) have sold off their more marginal lands at high (albeit market) prices, on a willing buyer/seller basis, as constructed by the Lancaster House agreement, and have used the cash to intensify production. Also, former white-owned, underutilised and/or abandoned properties adjacent to communal lands have been sold off more quickly, and are preferred by communal land residents. These processes of land redistribution have tended to distort the original objectives of racial integration and regional balance.

The agricultural boom experienced by Zimbabwe in the post-independence period, has been much acclaimed and is the envy of the rest of black Africa. It provides the new state with significant political muscle and status among the frontline states. The success story can be attributed to:

- the concentration on the provision of infrastructural credit facilities, extension, conservation and direct marketing services in the former underserved communal areas
- the linkage of peasant and commercial production into a single agricultural sector, the brainchild of former Minister of Agriculture, Dennis Norman
- the amalgamation of the Conex (white) and Devag (black) agricultural services to form

Agritex, which has concentrated its energies in the communal areas, and,

- the rapid Africanisation of management.

### Types of Participants

Which types of people have benefitted from the avowedly socialist, and somewhat limited, redistribution of land resources achieved to date? The government initially attempted to ensure that only the poorest peasants and war victims were to gain. Officially, those families with sufficient land and cattle and a wage income were excluded from the option to resettle under the programme. Recent studies of the earlier schemes have shown that the majority of participants came from the TTLs, whereas a substantial proportion (up to 40%) were originally farm labourers on white farms.

In future the most important single group of participants in the resettlement programme may come from the large groups of squatters who have converged on white farms. The need for political solutions to their aspirations and predicament, as well as the consequences of their presence for white agriculture, might well have prompted Mugabe to recently strip former Minister Dennis Norman of his agricultural portfolio and place it in the hands of Moven Mohachi, thus merging it with his Department of Lands and Rural Resettlement. *IPA*

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- Cobbett M. Agricultural Extension in Zimbabwe: The Basis for Rural Development. *Reality*, January 1985.
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# THE UPGRADING OF A SHACK SETTLEMENT

## THE WOODY GLEN PRECEDENT

By Clarissa Fourie, Inkatha Institute Research Officer

*There are indications that the usual government response to squatter settlements on the doorstep of our cities and towns – demolitions, removals and clearance – is changing to a more constructive, realistic accommodation of the steady urban influx of African people. At the Woody Glen shack settlement, near Hammarsdale in Natal, the authorities have quietly relented and allowed a novel upgrading scheme designed by KwaZulu government personnel to proceed. Through interviews with surveyors, planners and community spokespeople, Clarissa Fourie highlights the issues and problems experienced in implementing a new flexible approach which set out to retain most existing shacks and dwellings where they stood.*

**W**oody Glen, one of at least 35 shack areas found in the Durban Functional Region (DFR), is the first squatter settlement to have been formally upgraded there. In 1982, the KwaZulu cabinet decided that Woody Glen should be both a model and experiment for the development of other, similar shack areas under its jurisdiction.

The greater significance of Natal's pioneering upgrading scheme is that planning decisions implemented in one area of the DFR, whether acceptable or unpopular to the recipient community, often become known to people residing in other shack settlements. The urban grapevine often leads to the development of popular attitudes towards a particular service. For instance, the bucket system of toilets in Clermont, one of the oldest areas in the DFR, proved at one time to be highly unpopular there. Today, if you ask people why they would not choose the bucket system, they say, because it was not very good in Clermont.

In other words, decisions and actions taken in Woody Glen could quite possibly affect the future of any other shack area to be upgraded, both within terms of the

experience of the planners and the response of the communities involved.

### Origins of Woody Glen

In the 1960s, a large portion of black and white owned freehold land was expropriated for the development of Mpumalanga township outside Hammarsdale. Most of the area was developed, except for vacant land known as Unit E, where squatters started settling in 1979. The influx of people into this section heralded the start of the Woody Glen shack area, with steady settlement occurring until upgrading began in 1982.

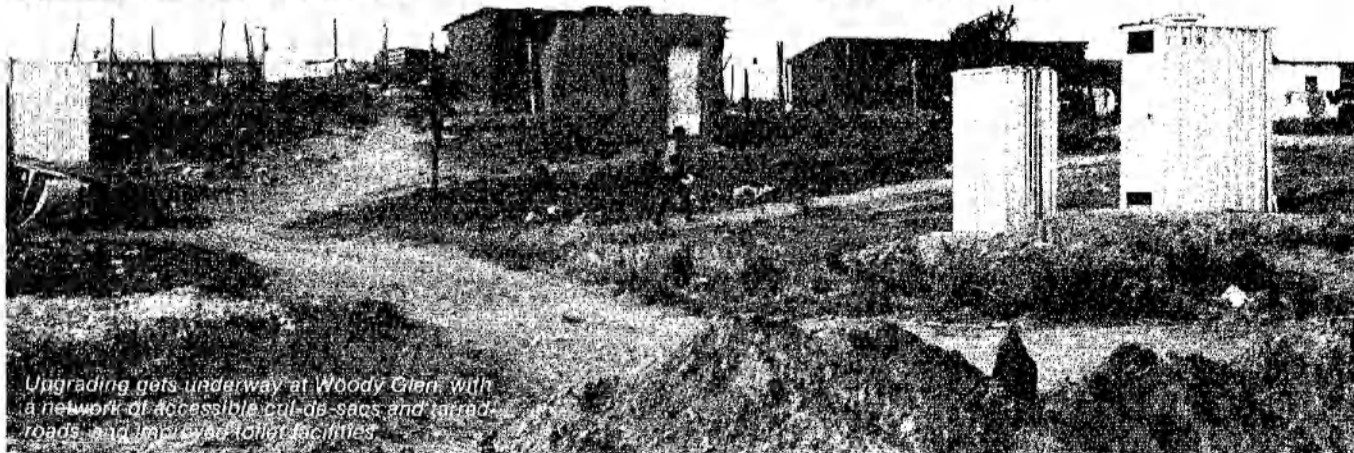
The squatters have made continuous representations to various bodies, for guarantees of security, or the right to remain on the undeveloped land. At present, Woody Glen is a community of about 6 400 people, with an elected Inkatha branch, which acts as a Residents Association and takes up civic issues on behalf of the community.

### Major Issues

Most of the issues surrounding the upgrading of Woody Glen will also be relevant to any

*Woody Glen is the first shack settlement in the Durban Functional Region to have been formally upgraded*

*The community comprises about 6 400 people with an elected Inkatha branch which acts as a Residents' Association*



Upgrading gets underway at Woody Glen, with a network of accessible cul-de-sacs and tarred roads, and improved toilet facilities.

Mark Bennett

SHACKDWELLERS



One of the major aims of the unconventional layout was to accommodate as many existing shacks as possible, where they stood

similar scheme implemented in future in the DFR. These issues are:

- The relationship between the authorities, community and developers, and the township and squatter communities
- The type and costs of services
- Demolition or retention of shacks and existing facilities
- Flexibility in design and implementation of plan
- The requirement of ongoing negotiation

and communication

- The development of community consciousness.

### Unconventional Methods

Mr Rudi Hillerman, principal land surveyor for the KwaZulu Department of Works (Southern Region), has been involved from the outset with the upgrading of Woody Glen.

Question: Mr Hillerman, what were the major issues that had to be negotiated?

Response: During the planning of the new layout, the land surveyor was instructed to abandon conventional routine, demarcation methods and parallel boundaries (see diagram) . . . instead, site boundaries were adjusted to fit the existing shack dwelling on an individual site, limited to an average size of 300 square metres. Negotiations were normally undertaken with the home owner and the Department of Co-operation and Development in Pretoria who allowed this form of survey, as a conventional survey would not have been practical.

### Design Objectives

The impact of broad development policies on the lives of individuals lies in the finer details of implementation, such as, if the residents have a toilet or are close to the bus-stop. Consequently, the type of design and behaviour of implementors are crucial factors which can make or break any policy in the eyes of the community, no matter how progressive or conservative the approach appears to be.

A planner, Mr B Rothang, was responsible for the lay-out which was implemented in Woody Glen.

Question: Mr Rothang, what is the planning concept for Woody Glen?

Response: The major aims of the design are:

- To accommodate as many of the existing structures as possible. We accommodated 85 percent of the existing shacks on average, as well as dwellings erected after upgrading began. Existing facilities, such as local shops, were also accommodated where they stood.

- To provide as many sites as possible. We planned 2 800 sites, which is considerably more than the original design.

- To provide spaces for all the necessary functions that a town needs but not to over-provide. The sizes of school, sport, shopping and administrative facilities were kept to a realistic minimum in order to avoid those huge, undeveloped and vacant areas often found in the townships.

- To take note of the restricted mobility of inhabitants and to locate any new facilities at easily accessible points. We grouped major facilities around interceptory points and minor facilities close to people at bus-stops.

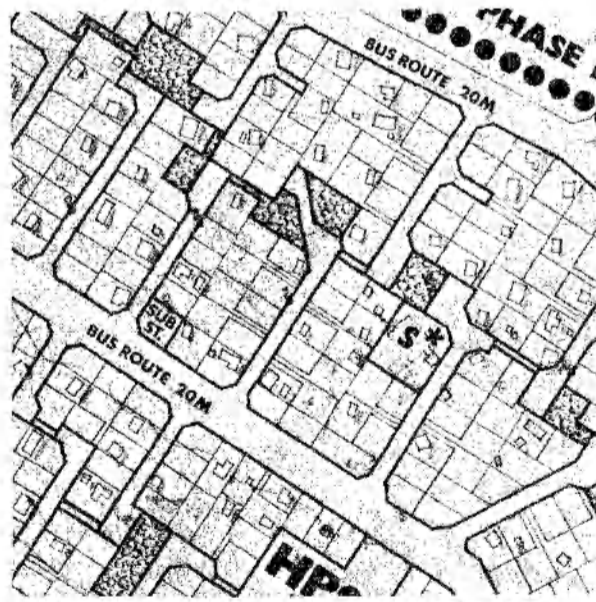
- To align sites so that in future, our design can economically accommodate extended services, such as water-borne sewerage and

#### CONVENTIONAL LAYOUT



The more formal scheme, with parallel boundaries, was abandoned in favour of the more flexible cluster layout, so that shack demolition was not necessary.

#### CLUSTER LAYOUT



Site boundaries were adjusted to fit the existing shack dwelling on an individual site limited to an average size of 300 square metres. The same length of road gives access to more than double the number of sites.

upgraded roads.

● To help to create a community where people can recognise their own area, thereby developing a sense of individuality.

In the cluster-type layout (see diagram), the same length of road gives access to more than double the number of sites, compared to a more formal layout design. At Woody Glen, there are also internal pedestrian links between the different housing clusters. At the end of a cul-de-sac there are common areas that can be used in a variety of ways, as a park, or for gardening or play-lots. Sites outside the built up areas are allocated as places for garden allotments or communal agriculture.

### Implementation Problems

*The design or layout was then implemented in Woody Glen by a land surveyor, Mr Borgen.*

Question: Mr Borgen, has the layout for Woody Glen proved to be practical?

Response: There are certain problematic aspects, such as where roads have been planned up the contours, thus becoming extremely steep, which might result in excessive soil erosion. However, I believe that this factor might have been introduced by the planners to avoid costs. Basically though, the plan achieves its object of retaining as many of the shacks as possible.

The upgrading plan was produced from a 1:2 000 autophoto plan, whereby the planner only saw the area in the form of a photograph. What sometimes occurs is that a road falls too close to a substantial building necessitating demolition, whereas if the road had been moved slightly over, a less substantial building could have been demolished instead. In future, perhaps planning of this nature should not be finalised before a thorough site inspection has taken place.

*Numerous problems generally arise during the implementation stage of any layout plan and negotiations have to be undertaken with various parties. New decisions are taken to ensure the continued progress of work and to achieve maximum benefit for the community concerned. Land surveyor Mr Hillerman describes some of the major problems encountered during the upgrading of Woody Glen:*

The administration of the area posed various difficulties. For instance, the township manager was not empowered to control the allocation of sites, yet the magistrate was not keen to allocate sites as it was intended to be a township area. Today, the sites are still not formally allocated.

Also, the town planning layout had to be amended during implementation to accommodate an existing shop, creches, and a further site for community use. The community leader requested that we supply a communal tap for the squatter area before the full installation of water supplies. This was done by the consulting engineers so that

the community was not dependent on the township residents for their water.

With regard to the installation of services, the most basic problem was the pre-existence of dwellings and people in the area. We were fortunate to have the full cooperation of the squatters, but more precautions than usual had to be taken during construction to prevent accidents. Lastly, probably the most important aspect of any upgrading exercise is that none of these problems could have been successfully resolved if we had not consulted with Mrs Xulu, the squatter leader; Mr Sishi, the mayor of Mpumalanga; and a local member of the KwaZulu Legislative Assembly.

### Community Response

*Of course, the recipient community is best placed to describe the achievements or failures of negotiations and development efforts. Mrs P Xulu, chairperson of the Womens Brigade of Inkatha in the area, comments on the community response to the upgrading scheme.*

Question: Mrs Xulu, how do you feel about the development of this area?

Response: The community think it's very nice the way it has been done. They especially like the area right in the middle of Woody Glen, because a lot of houses did not have to be demolished. We hear that we are going to get schools and a clinic, and we feel very lucky.

Question: What part of the plan does the community like in particular?

Response: The community likes where the big road for the bus goes right through the area in the middle. Also we are happy with the big road at the end of Woody Glen. There is really nothing that we do not like. The roads are very good and there is not one house that will not have a road near the house. There are little passages where you can walk right up to the houses, where there are no cars.

Also, the toilets are really good because they are clean and the holes are very deep. The toilets are better than we had before and very healthy.

Question: Have people started building their houses now, since Woody Glen has been upgraded?

Response: Yes, they are building their houses with building blocks, making them stronger than before. People want to make their houses nice and also warmer than the houses they had before the upgrading.

### Communication and Trust

*The relationship between all the various actors in this venture was of crucial importance to the success of this scheme. Communication, trust and the need for negotiation comes out clearly in the interface between planners and implementors, community and developers. Squatter leader Mrs Xulu and land surveyor Mr Borgen comment on this aspect of development.*

*In view of the restricted mobility of the inhabitants, new facilities have been located at easily accessible points*

*The formal allocation of sites was a problem, as neither the township manager nor the magistrate were empowered to perform this task*

*The community is particularly pleased with the bus route, which bisects the centre of the settlement and makes public transport more accessible*

*Since the area has been upgraded, people have already started building new and better homes*



*Constant negotiations between officials with a flexible approach and the community have created a good working relationship*

*The Mpumalanga Township Council plans to ask the KwaZulu government to further upgrade the roads and add electricity to Woody Glen*

*The Woody Glen community is reluctant to be incorporated into Mpumalanga, and would rather have its own magistrate and manager*

*The amalgamation of the two communities could effectively dilute the community consciousness which exists among the shackdwellers*

Question: Mrs Xulu, what was the relationship between the community and the officials doing the development?

Response: They were very happy with the white man because they were good people. Whatever they did at Woody Glen, they asked us first if they could do this, and that made us very pleased.

Question: Mr Borgen, how did you work with the community on a day to day basis?

Response: When we first went out there we had no idea what the reaction of the inhabitants would be . . . Their attitude was quite remarkable. They would welcome me with open arms. Working in this atmosphere was an absolute joy.

I had carte-blanc as to where to put beacons, provided that I did not deviate very appreciably from the plan that had been given to me. I was actually able to move certain boundaries and save certain shacks that would otherwise have had to be demolished, if one had rigidly adhered to the plan. I repeatedly got the impression that now that the person who occupied the place knew that he had a bit of ground — that he was not going to be moved from and where he could stay — he would start improving his shack.

### Jurisdiction Issue

*A major issue which developed during recent upgrading is the proclamation by the South African government of Woody Glen as part of Mpumalanga township. The proclamation directly involves the acrimonious and, at times bloody relationship of the shack community to the nearby township and its Council. Two of the leaders involved, Mr Sishi, the mayor of Mpumalanga and Mrs Xulu, leader of Inkatha in Woody Glen, comment on the jurisdiction issue.*

Question: Mr Sishi, how was the Township Council of Mpumalanga involved in the upgrading scheme at Woody Glen?

Response: In March 1982, a meeting was held with Mr van Rensburg, then KwaZulu Secretary of Interior, Mr Johns, then Secretary of Works, and the councillors of Mpumalanga, about the squatters in Woody Glen. Shortly afterwards, we were informed that the area would be upgraded on an experimental basis and the Council was asked to oversee the area and control the influx of people.

However, it became very difficult for the Council to involve themselves directly as Woody Glen had not been proclaimed as part of Mpumalanga township. Despite the fact that government officials promised us that within six months the area would fall within the jurisdiction of the Council, the proclamation has still not been passed.

Question: Mr Sishi, what are the future intentions of the Council for Woody Glen?

Response: As soon as it is proclaimed, we will immediately embark on steps to get the people of the area to elect representatives to

the Town Council of Mpumalanga. We will then ask the government to embark on the development of phase 2. Mpumalanga township has the best roads in KwaZulu. I would not want Woody Glen to fall behind because it will have an adverse effect on the township . . . So we would ask the government to upgrade and extend Woody Glen. The next phase would be to upgrade the roads and add electricity.

Question: Mrs Xulu, how does the community feel about being incorporated into the township?

Response: The community are not happy that Woody Glen must fall under Mpumalanga township. The committee prefers to be under the magistrate with its own manager. From the first time, Council did not want to help us. Now they only want us to go under them because there are going to be shops and a lot of business and money.

Question: Mrs Xulu, how did the KwaZulu government decide to come and work in Woody Glen?

Response: We went to the manager of Mpumalanga township and he told us that we could not stay in Woody Glen. So we had to go to the KwaZulu Department of the Interior, where we had about four meetings before everything was solved.

### Concluding Remarks

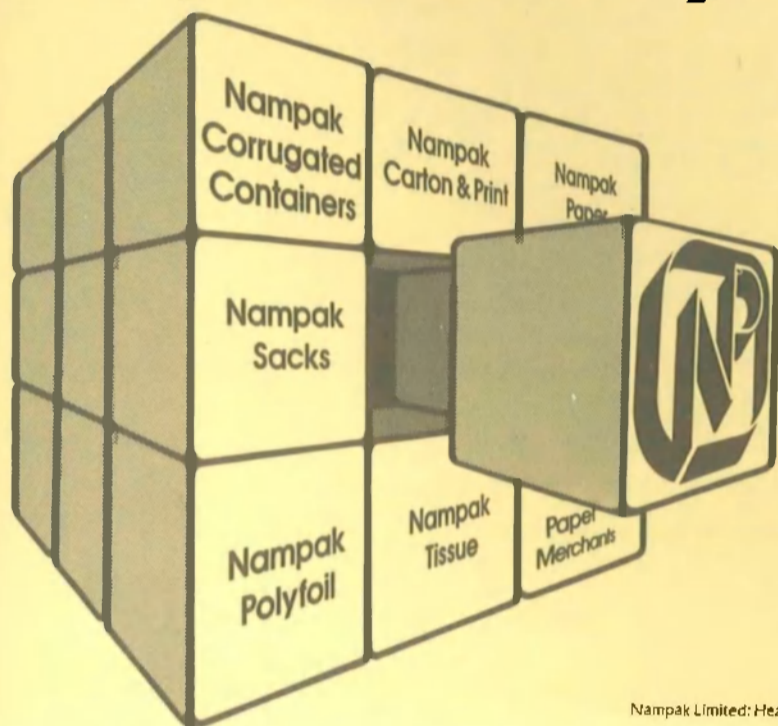
It is clear that the upgrading of Woody Glen was effected reasonably successfully from both the community and developer's point of view. The major reason for this was both the time taken to negotiate with, and listen to, the community's problems and needs; the flexible approach of the developers involved and the good relationship that existed among them. However, the role of the major facilitator, Mr Hillerman, must not be underestimated in a pioneering scheme of this nature. The role requires credibility with the Department of Co-operation and Development — who hold authority in planning — the developers and the community itself. Few individuals can operate successfully across such wide divides.

Though Woody Glen has advanced, its problems are not over. The proclamation of this area as part of Mpumalanga township holds the key to its future. Although proclamation would smooth administrative lines and facilitate servicing of the area, it might also:

- effectively dilute the community consciousness which exists
- threaten existing businesses in Woody Glen, as the Mpumalanga Council would control the allocation of much prized business licences
- possibly strain the resources of individuals in Woody Glen because of the introduction by the Council of services beyond their means, and lastly,
- the allocation of the empty residential sites would give great power to the controlling administrator. *IP/A*



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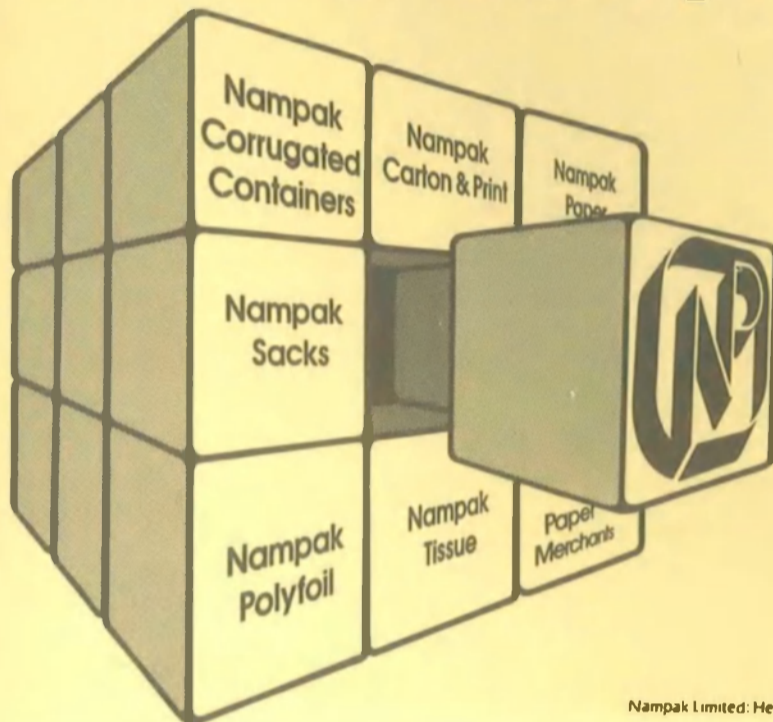
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S O U T H A F R I C A S P R I N G 1 9 8 5

INSTITUTE OF  
- 3 FEB 1986



Nonchalant onlookers stroll past a burning government vehicle at KwaThema township, near Springs. After twelve months of sustained civil strife in some areas, the violence of the riots loses some of its initial impact.

- 1 *Deadlock in Emergent States 1960/61 & 1984/85*
- 6 *A Chronology of Township Revolt, 1985*
- 10 *African Local Authorities twixt Government & Community*
- 12 *Black Student Resistance to Segregated Universities*
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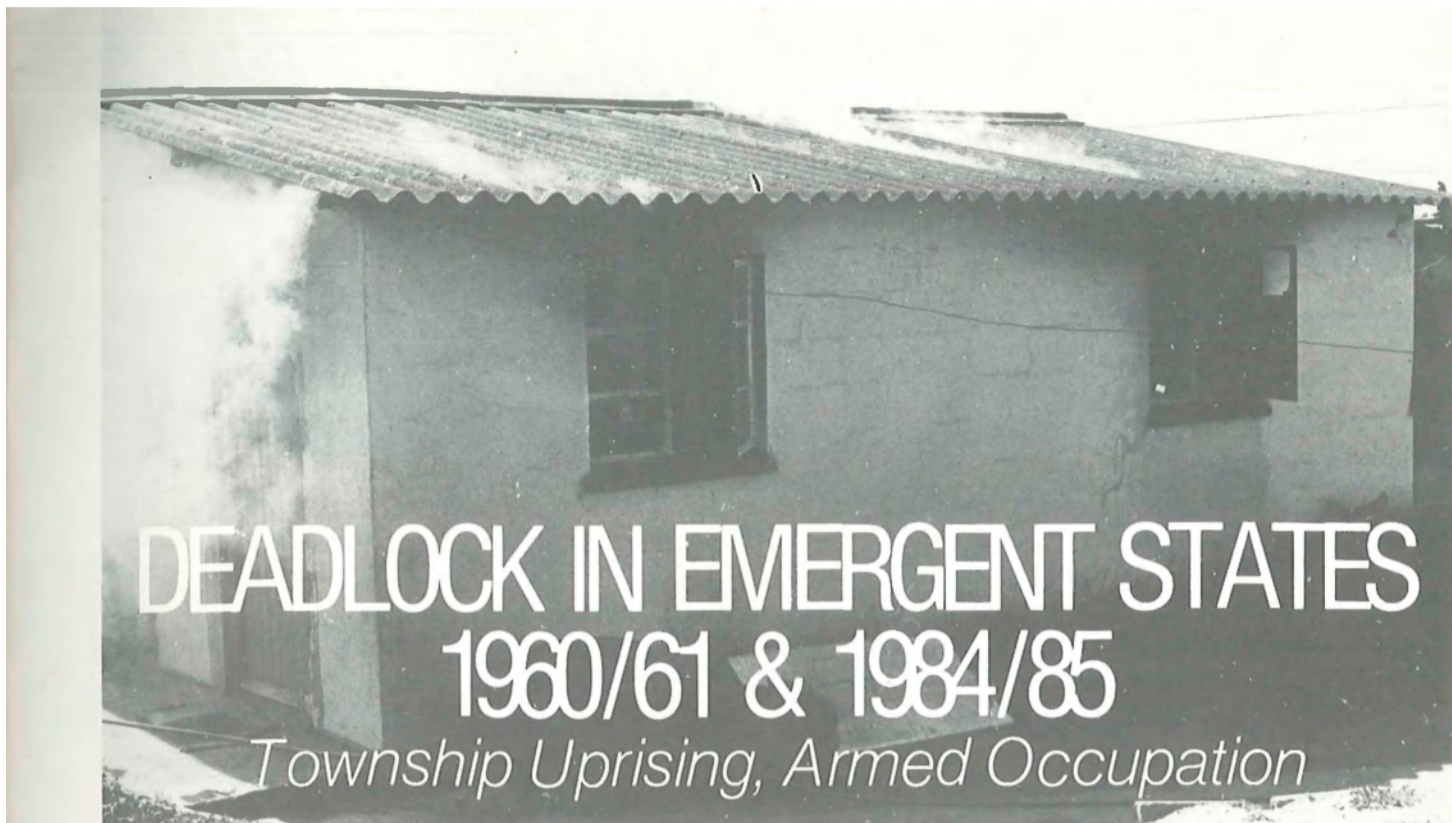
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# DEADLOCK IN EMERGENT STATES 1960/61 & 1984/85

*Township Uprising, Armed Occupation*

By Indicator SA Researcher Graham Howe

*Both the 1960 and 1985 crises witnessed major constitutional initiatives – the inauguration of a Republic and tricameral parliament respectively – amid a tussle between white and black nationalist forces, with opposing concepts of what constitutes the South African 'nation'.*

*In drawing comparisons between the upheavals of the 1960s and the present, Graham Howe assesses the new forms of struggle on the township terrain and the immediate consequence of the state crackdown on opposition leadership – the power vacuum filled by more militant youth locked into an unwinnable street war of attrition with security forces.*

**O**n 31 May 1961, the year after a five month-long state of emergency was experienced in South Africa, came the inception of a politically exclusive white Republic. The nation's new constitution was introduced amid vocal black protest and petition for political inclusion, accompanied by growing international pressure in an era of decolonisation and enfranchisement of indigenous communities.

Today, the order of developments appears to have been reversed, with political rebellion following (rather than preceding) constitutional initiatives. In fact, the inauguration of a tricameral parliament and new forms of African local authorities gave rise to twelve turbulent months of civil strife, culminating in the declaration of a partial state of emergency as of 21 July 1985. Also, compared to black nationalist campaigns against consolidated segregationist policies between 1948/61, populist dissidents now target reformist constitutional initiatives limited – at this stage anyway – to the reincorporation of the coloured and Indian communities, albeit on an ethnic basis, and partial local empowerment of urban African 'insiders'.

In an attempt to apply the potential lessons of contemporary history, a brief comparison follows between the two formal states of emergency in 1960 and 1985, which draws on extensive unrest data collated for the 1984/85 period (see tables 1-3).

## Emergency not Extended

As from midnight 21 July 1985, approximately 5.3 million people in 'white' South Africa and almost simultaneously, 2.5 million people in the Transkei – collectively, a quarter of the country's total population (1980 Census) – came under the control of emergency regulations. Almost three months later, more riots have broken out in areas outside of those already covered by regulations, while unrest still simmers in the established epicentres. During August, the greater Durban area and then the Cape Peninsula, became the new flashpoints, though these short periods of intense civil upheaval have since subsided into the national pattern of sporadic confrontation between dissidents, the authorities and opposed political factions.

The state's emergency powers seem to have taken little effect on the volatile townships, where an unequal urban struggle for control of the streets is being waged. Mobilised youth and some politicised adults, armed with stones and petrol-bombs, are locked in daily confrontation with heavily-armed security forces. Table 1 shows that at least 285 people have died in an upsurge of civil unrest since the declaration and the death toll has escalated at twice the rate of the preceding six months of rioting. Since 21 July, at least 4336 people have been detained under emergency regulations, of whom 780 were being held at the time of writing. This is in

*Currently, 7.8 million people or a quarter of the country's population fall within the ambit of Emergency regulations*

*Between the declaration on 21 July and 1 October 1985, 285 people were killed, doubling the riot death toll for the preceding two months*



Though both the 1960 and 1980 Emergencies saw mass detentions, the huge death toll of 740 in '84/85 and 700 in '76/77 is a new phenomenon

An ominous feature of the spreading unrest has been the shift to an incipient form of domestic insurgency on the township terrain

Table 1

**● SOME STATE OF EMERGENCY FIGURES ●**  
21 July 1985 - 1 October 1985

	RIOT-RELATED ARRESTS	RIOT DEATHS	RIOT INJURIES
STATE OF EMERGENCY DISTRICTS	2107	48	122
REMAINDER OF COUNTRY	2926	237	2257
TOTAL	21 July/Oct 1985	5033	285
	Sept 1984/21 July 1985	14000	455
	Sept 1984/Oct 1985	19033	740

Source: Indicator SA, press clippings

addition to the 532 still held out of 837 detentions made under the Internal Security Act during 1985 so far.

For the purpose of comparison, the earlier Emergency (retroactive to 26 March) was lifted entirely on 31 August 1960, five months after the declaration. It had already been rapidly removed in 20 (mostly) rural districts on 11 May. Over the whole period, 11 503 people were detained, almost all from the African community, with another 21 000 Africans arrested under special regulations (Jochelson 1985: p14). In other words, both the 1960 and 1985 emergencies have witnessed mass arrests and detentions. However, apart from the Sharpeville incident – when 67 pass protestors were killed – relatively few riot deaths occurred then compared to the massive riot death toll of about 700 civilians in 1976/77 and 740 between 1984/85 so far (see tables 1/2).

August, the first month of the 1985 Emergency witnessed the highest riot toll in over 12 months of civil unrest, leaving 163 black civilians dead. The worst violence occurred outside of the specific emergency districts, with 72 deaths in Natal over one week, 48 in Cape Town over a ten-day period and 23 in one small township alone, Duncan Village (near East London). Unlike the 1960 Emergency, however, when the first proclamation of 30 March came to include a total of 119 districts, the current Emergency has not been extended as yet.

### Context and Consequences

State President Botha's declaration affecting 36 magisterial districts – divided equally between a cluster of African townships in the Eastern Cape and Witwatersrand/Vereeniging regions – came on the heels of rising speculation about an escalated security crackdown on extra-parliamentary opposition, especially on local and regional UDF affiliate leadership. Since mid-1984, two successive cycles of political rebellion, with epicentres on the Reef (September/November 1984) and Eastern Cape (February/May 1985) respectively, had gradually merged, while fanning out to

townships in surrounding areas. By mid-1985, sustained rioting had taken on the amorphous character of civil 'unrest', a euphemism obscuring a widespread township uprising.

An overview of critical developments between March/July 1985 offers some insights into why government might have taken the drastic recourse to a declaration of emergency in the fateful last week of July. With reference to the chronology (see p6/9), the following security factors were probably related to the decision:

- The regional convergence of sustained rioting between March/July 1985, shifting from the earlier pattern of sporadic violence, fluctuating from area to area. Whereas the months of October 1984 and December/February 1985 were relatively quiet, thereafter until mid-July, the monthly riot death toll rose to between 40/80 civilians.
- The attempted shift from arson and assault to an incipient form of domestic insurgency on the township terrain. Among other armed attacks between June/July, the use of faulty booby-trapped handgrenades killed eight COSAS activists in Duduza, leading to a resurgence of unrest on the East Rand (see chronology).
- The ominous emergence of unknown death squads, adding fuel to the growing chaos. Their hand was evident in the brutal assassinations of four Cradock civic leaders and suspected in the disappearance of another 40 leading opposition activists.
- The outbreak of unrest in Soweto in the week preceding the declaration, a sleeping giant since 1976; with civil unrest about to enter a second 12 month cycle.
- Possibly, the advantage of proclaiming an Emergency after the closure of parliament – as President Botha refused to reconvene parliament in late July, the regulations will not be subjected to official debate until the first 14 days of the next session.

As a historical footnote, the 1960 Emergency came about during the launch of anti-pass civil disobedience campaigns by the African National and Pan-African Congresses in March. The police shootings at Sharpeville on

Table 2

**• The Human Costs of Three Cycles of Unrest •**

1976/77, 1984 and 1985 (Pre-State of Emergency)

Compiled by Indicator SA Research Assistant Deborah Quin

Comparative Periods	RIOT DEATHS <sup>1</sup> Accounted for:	RIOT INJURIES <sup>2</sup> Accounted for:	ARRESTS Public Violence, illegal gatherings DETENTIONS <sup>3</sup> Security offences, treason charges, etc
1984 September/November	in security force action 96 in intra-civilian violence 30 in attacks on police & councillors 7 <b>TOTAL: 137</b>	in security force action 259 in intra-civilian violence ±238 in attacks on police & councillors 114 <b>TOTAL: 611</b>	Arrests no separate estimates available  Detentions 1 168 (for year of 1984)
1985 January/21 July	in security force action 240 in intra-civilian violence 50+ in attacks on police & councillors 12 <b>TOTAL: 318</b>	in security force action 700+ in intra-civilian violence 321 in attacks on police & councillors 101 <b>TOTAL: 1 136</b>	Arrests no separate estimates available 2000 (E. Cape alone)  Detentions 300
1984/85 (Provisional) Total	in security force action 336 in intra-civilian violence 80+ in attacks on police & councillors 19 <b>TOTAL: 455</b>	in security force action 959+ in intra-civilian violence 559 in attacks on police & councillors 215 <b>TOTAL: 1747</b>	Arrests 14 000  Detentions 1468
June 1976/ February 1977  (Final) Total	in security force action 451 in intra-civilian violence not available in attacks on police & councillors not available <b>TOTAL 575 (Cillie) to 700+ (SAIRR)</b>	in security force action 2389 in intra-civilian violence not available in attacks on police & councillors not available <b>TOTAL: 3907</b>	Arrests 5980  Detentions mid-Dec 1976: 433 mid-Mar 1977: 471

**FOOTNOTES**

**1** Because the circumstances surrounding some of the riot deaths or injuries are unknown to the media or the police, the break-downs presented here do not necessarily add up to the total estimate for each section. For other monitoring problems: see table 3.

**2** The estimates of injuries sustained during township unrest represent those with serious wounds, as the total number of injured undoubtedly runs into the thousands. Also, many victims of the unrest allegedly avoid medical treatment for fear of police arrest or questioning, so that their cases remain unreported.

**3** Both counts include detentions made by homeland governments: in 1984, 407 people were detained in the Transkei, 123 in the Ciskei and 1 in both Venda and Bophuthatswana. In 1985 so far, the Ciskei has detained 62, the Transkei, 10 and Bophuthatswana, 5 people.

**SOURCES:** See table 3 for complete listing.

26 March, followed by regional stayaway strikes in Cape Town and Johannesburg from 28 March, saw mass pass burnings and demonstrations. Continuing arrests, harassment and a spate of political trials up until the mid-1960s drove the black nationalist movement underground and into exile, to abandon passive resistance tactics and take up an initial strategy of limited guerilla violence and sabotage. In other words, the long-term consequences of the earlier emergency were an escalation of violence levels and the further broadening of the white/black nationalist divide, an unresolved legacy with disastrous effects today.

**Declaration no Solution**

In mid-1985, the fact that government chose to further empower the security establishment to quell a spreading township uprising – when

concerted army and police action had been unable to reimpose order – disappointed expectations of impending inter-nationalist negotiation. Initially, in response to the declaration in late July, commentators across a broad political spectrum pondered over the key factor: whether the new state of affairs would break or exacerbate the pervasive confrontations between dissidents and security forces, and thus accelerate or retard the slow reform process underway.

During the build-up to the Emergency, the security forces had become embroiled in a spiral of violence and counter-violence, emerging as an undeniably subjective element of the raging political conflict. In suppressing black protest, they are forced to bear frontline responsibility as symbols of widely rejected government policy on segregated education, national and local government, and general apartheid issues. With reference to table 2, by

*The 1960 Emergency escalated violence levels and further broadened the white/black nationalist divide, a legacy with disastrous effects*



*Massive death tolls over cycles of unrest seem to reflect a civil war 'body count' rather than conceivable civilian 'riot fatalities'*

*The divide in state and community perceptions begins where the riots are treated as a law and order issue rather than a political uprising*

*The protagonists tend to place partisan emphasis on incidents of brutal violence, which are in fact evident in all camps*

*Resolution of the growing conflict is unlikely until the contenders for power feel the economic and human costs outweigh the 'holdout' advantages*

20 July this year, the police had acknowledged responsibility for 336 out of 455 civilian deaths over 11 months of unrest, a figure more akin to a civil war 'body count' than any conceivable 'civilian riot' death toll. Preceding forms of tough security action had also failed to break the momentum of rebellion: more than 14 000 arrests and almost 1 500 detentions were made over the same period.

In terms of the proclamation under the Public Safety Act No 3 of 1953, the security forces were given broad powers of arbitrary arrest, news censorship, curfew orders, and controls over public and private property, all of which had been exercised in various degree within weeks of the move. Legalistic objections to President Botha's decision were made because in comparison to 1960, an array of earlier emergency powers have since been inscribed into statutory law, thus making the current Emergency even more unnecessary (Sowetan 21/7/84). These measures, with the later statute in brackets, include:

- detention without trial (Terrorism and Internal Security acts)
- suppression of 'subversive' organisations (Unlawful Organisations Act)
- bans and controls on gatherings/processions (Riotous Assemblies Act).

### The Gulf of Perceptions

In an interview conducted during the first week of Emergency, the Commissioner of Police, General Johan Coetzee, dismissed exile nationalist and township dissident claims that they had rendered many African townships 'ungovernable', through forcing councillors to resign en masse. Instead, he emphasised the need to curb 'anti-social' elements – 'To maintain law and order, it was necessary to give the security forces as a whole wider powers' (Financial Mail 26/7/85). His comments echoed President Botha's sentiments to the effect that, 'The majority of the black communities ask that conditions are normalised and granted the full protection of the law to continue their normal way of life' (Text of Declaration 20/7/85).

Perhaps it is a truism that the range of viable medium-term solutions is narrowly circumscribed when sustained rioting is treated as a law and order issue rather than a political uprising with legitimate cause. Nevertheless, the two responses to the causes and conditions of civil violence mark off a great divide in state and black community perceptions, illustrated by the Federation of SA Trade Unions' condemnation of the declaration. They anticipated 'more curfews, more raids, more arrests and more shootings .... it is highly unlikely that the state will address itself to a single grievance of the vast majority of the population' (Sunday Tribune 21/7/85). The impression of growing civil war does not seem far-fetched, as the army has occupied at least 15 townships (Frontline 8/85: p52/3) and set up camps on the fringe of many small Eastern Cape townships.

Secondly, the partisan emphasis placed by the various protagonists on allegations of brutal violence also identifies another perceptual parting of the ways. Some local news comment and President Botha's speech justifying the imposition of a state of emergency referred to the 'inhuman forms of assault' witnessed on the day of declaration, when an alleged informer was burnt alive by township youth. Most observers have been horrified by the copycat killing of black policemen, councillors and informers given the 'necklace' – a car tyre soaked in petrol placed round the victim's body.

These dramatic events have tended to obscure another side of the violence. For example, the torture of detainees, 'practised systematically on a widespread basis as part of the coercive treatment of security law detention in South Africa' (Sunday Tribune 15/9/85). In a recent study published by the UCT Institute of Criminology, 83 percent of 176 former detainees interviewed had been tortured while held in detention without trial, involving methods of physical assault, electric shock and hooding. In addition to this chamber of horrors, the Detainees Parents Support Committee has monitored 27 deaths in detention or police custody over the last 14 months (Weekly Mail 20-26/9/85).

### Deadlock over Negotiations

At present, calls for a political solution reverberate around the country, to bring an end to the deadlock between security force containment and the dissident war of street attrition. Behind the scenes, the major contending forces of white and black nationalism remain locked into a shifting trial of national and international strength. Their political representatives seem to have both discounted negotiations until their hands are significantly strengthened or weakened. The political stakes are high at this stage, and until the economic or human costs are felt to be unaffordable and outweigh the advantages of a holdout, an effective interim resolution of the conflict is unlikely.

Domestically, with 38 members of the UDF national and regional leadership on treason trial and many other affiliate office-bearers in detention, the intention of government to negotiate with its internal extra-parliamentary opposition seems most unlikely. Likewise, the probability of an earlier 1960's generation of ANC leaders being released on unconditional terms in the near future remains extremely slim. In the meantime, security efforts to bring the leaderless – and therefore more militant – township dissidents under more than temporary control are a little like 'trying to keep the sea from the beach' (Reverend Jan de Vaal on police and rioters in Cape Town, 9/85). An apparent peace imposed by force of arms is really no peace at all. **IPJA**

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Table 3

• **Comparative Targets & Costs of Three Cycles of Unrest** •

1976/77, 1984 and 1985 (Pre-State of Emergency)

Compiled by Indicator SA Research Assistant Deborah Quin

RIOT TARGETS: Number & Costs of Damage <sup>1</sup>	FIRST CYCLE, August/November 1984	SECOND CYCLE, January/21 July 1985	(PROVISIONAL) TOTAL for Both Cycles, 1984/85	(FINAL) TOTAL for June 1976/ February 1977
<b>PUBLIC PROPERTY</b>				
Government Buildings <sup>2</sup>	17	55	72	161
Educational Institutions	61	84 (±R4m)	145	429
Official Vehicles	47 (Also 1 train)	269 (Also 3 trains)	316	466
Churches & Clinics	No separate estimates available	No separate estimates available	22 (10 churches) (12 clinics)	466 (includes 244 police vehicles)
Beerhalls/Liquor Outlets <sup>3</sup>	34	38	72	188
<b>Sub-Total Costs</b>	<b>R30-55m</b> (Vaal Triangle)	—	—	<b>R15.5m</b>
<b>COMMERCIAL SECTOR<sup>4</sup></b>				
Shops/Business Premises	100	125	225	264 (R10m)
Delivery Vehicles	55	151	206	(See vehicle count in third section)
Bus Company Vehicles	468 (±R1m)*	328 <sup>5</sup> (±R3.5m)	1 088 (± R4.5m as of 13/5/85)	599
<b>PRIVATE PROPERTY</b>				
Town Councillors' Homes	56*	120*	Not available	250
Policemen's Homes		168* (±R279 000)		
Unspecified Houses <sup>6</sup>	23	318	341	
Vehicles	140*	326*	516 (as of 12/4/85)	764 (includes delivery vehicles)
<b>TOTAL COSTS</b>				
All Buildings	No separate estimates available	No separate estimates available	<b>R31m</b> (as of 23/5/85)	<b>(No breakdown)</b>
All Vehicles			<b>R12m</b> (as of 30/4/85)	<b>TOTAL = R25.5m+</b>

(\*incomplete count)

**FOOTNOTES**

1. The figures record the number of riot targets destroyed or badly damaged, not the actual number of attacks, which would considerably boost the estimate if included. All estimates exclude grenade and bomb attacks by guerillas or internal insurgents on a range of explicit targets (see following chronology).

2. The 'Government Building' category includes all official premises, such as those occupied by township development (formerly administration) boards and other state bodies, post offices, police stations, etc.

3. Government-owned beerhalls have traditionally been used to raise revenue for township development, formerly under the aegis of (white) administration boards, since transferred to the (African) town councils (see main text).

4. Estimates in all tables also exclude loss of life, injuries or damage to property ensuing from strikes and labour unrest on the mines.

5. The provisional totals presented in the third column do not always reflect the combined figures from the first and second columns (see asterisks). There are obvious discrepancies because both general, official totals and incomplete, daily media reports have been used in compiling this table (see monitoring problems).

6. Rioters specifically targeted the homes of suspected police informers and 'collaborators', and in concert with unknown agents, attacked the homes of leaders/members of other opposition groups. All of these incidents fall into the general category of attacks on 'unspecified homes'.

**MONITORING PROBLEMS**

The table draws comparisons between the final riot damage figures for the 1976/77 period and the two most recent cycles of unrest between 1984/85 up until 21 July, concentrated in the Transvaal and Eastern Cape respectively. A specific breakdown of macro-costs and targets has since become impossible, due to regulations banning 'independent' (unconfirmed by police) press reports in the 36 magisterial districts where a state of emergency has been declared. Table 1 (see main text) collates unrest figures from government sources for the third 'emergency' cycle to date.

For tables 1/3, as estimates for the current period have been compiled from interim official figures and media reports, the figures for the 1984/85 period should be regarded as provisional and by no means complete. There are other constraints on the full, accurate monitoring of the human and material costs of the riots. Since 3 April 1985, press information on incidents of unrest has had to be obtained from central police headquarters and the generalised 'situation reports' issued do not contain sufficient detail for the purposes of close monitoring. Updated, consolidated estimates for the entire 1984/85 period of unrest will be presented in a future edition of Indicator SA.

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Statements issued by the Departments of Co-operation, Development and Education, Foreign Affairs, and Law and Order.

TOWNSHIP UNREST



# COUNTDOWN TO STATE OF EMERGENCY

## A Chronology of Township Revolt, 1985

By Indicator SA Researcher Mark Bennett

	<b>NON-COLLABORATION POLITICS</b> <i>School, Worker and Consumer Boycotts/ Stayaways</i>	<b>GENERAL CIVIL UNREST</b> <i>Township Revolts and Factionalism</i>	<b>GOVERNMENT RESPONSE</b> <i>Reform and Repression</i>	<b>BLACK NATIONALIST ACTIVITY</b> <i>Strategies, Guerilla/Internal Insurgent Attacks</i>
<b>JANUARY</b>	<p>1 Jan 350 000 township residents in Vaal Triangle (VT) continue rate and rent boycott begun in September 1984. Two councillors resign after the VCA demands that Lekoa Town Council reduce all charges to R30 a month.</p> <p>9 Jan Except for VT area, African pupils return to school in Pretoria-Witwatersrand-Vereeniging (PWV) complex, despite COSAS calls to continue boycott. The massive school boycott of 1984 continues in Eastern Cape — in Port Elizabeth (PE), pupils protest against detention of 11 COSAS leaders; in Illegelihle (Cradock), they demand that 2 teachers, Fort Calata and Matthew Goniwe, be reinstated. AZAPO urges all pupils to end boycott.</p> <p>19 Jan Katlehong (East Rand) residents begin boycott of rent charges and of all businesses owned by councillors and ERAB. Police rescue officials from public meeting called by Katlehong Town Council.</p> <p>21 Jan PE school boycott ends after 9 COSAS leaders are released on bail.</p>	<p>1/3 Jan African youths riot in Grahamstown and Port Alfred. Sporadic stone throwing incidents in VT and East Rand townships.</p> <p>5/13 Jan Senator Edward Kennedy's visit to South Africa exposes deep AZAPO/UDF divisions.</p> <p>17 Jan Uitenhage youths riot and destroy homes of 3 African policemen.</p> <p>20/21 Jan In Tembisa (North Johannesburg), UDF supporters disrupt meeting organised by AZAPO to form new branch of AZASM for pupils/students. In Beaufort West, police use teargas to disperse 300 demonstrators after UDF leader William Kratshi is shot dead.</p> <p>23 Jan Riots in KwaThema (East Rand) — PUTCO suspends bus services into township after 6 buses and ERAB buildings are stoned.</p> <p>29/30 Jan Unrest spreads to OFS townships — in Khotsoeng (Bothaville), 48 arrests are made when a large crowd attacks teachers, policemen, their houses and vehicles; in Virginia, police disperse 600 pupils who stone police vehicles and school buildings.</p>	<p>2 Jan The van der Walt Commission identifies the major catalyst of 1984 VT unrest as township residents' widespread misunderstanding of the new local authority system.</p> <p>22 Jan Cabinet Minister Dr Gerrit Viljoen says the government will create a central negotiating forum for Africans.</p> <p>25 Jan On opening parliament, State President PW Botha makes a 'declaration of intent', offering Africans limited freehold rights and a review of influx control laws and forced removals.</p> <p>30 Jan Minister of Law and Order Louis Le Grange says that police will investigate SACBC claims of police misconduct in VT townships. He states that police action in 1984 resulted in 96 deaths, while SACBC puts figure at 150 deaths.</p> <p>31 Jan PW Botha offers conditional release to Nelson Mandela and other long-term security prisoners if they reject violence as a political weapon. Le Grange announces that 135 people are now in detention under Section 29 of the Internal Security Act.</p>	<p>Mid-Jan ANC external mission in Lusaka announces it is revising its guerilla strategy to include the 'soft target' (civilian) option.</p> <p>13 Jan Three heavily armed ANC insurgents and 1 policeman are killed in rural contact in Nongoma (Zululand).</p> <p><b>ACRONYMS</b>            ANC African National Congress            AZAPO Azanian Peoples Organisation            AZASM Azanian Students Movement            COSAS Congress of South African Students            ERAB East Rand Administration Board            OFS Orange Free State            SACBC South African Catholic Bishops Conference            UDF United Democratic Front            VCA Vaal Civic Association</p>
<b>FEBRUARY</b>	<p>6 Feb In Galeshewe (Kimberley), Department of Education and Training (DET) suspends classes at 2 schools after unrest and demands parents sign undertaking that children will not boycott. Pupils return to classes 6 days later.</p> <p>11 Feb Pupils at 6 Mamelodi (Pretoria) schools end boycott.</p> <p>18 Feb In Uitenhage, pupils at 2 coloured schools boycott classes for 3 weeks until transfer of SACOS activist teachers is suspended. In Duncan Village (East London) pupils begin 8 day boycott to demand expulsion of principal. 70 000 Pupils are now on boycott in areas affected by unrest.</p> <p>27/29 Feb DET closes 5 Tembisa schools after 4 000 scholars demonstrate near police station for release of 9 colleagues.</p>	<p>3/9 Feb Unrest simmers in Illegelihle after a policeman dies and a crowd of 5 000 riots. In Soweto, SA Suicide Squad petrol bombs home of publicity secretary of Sofasonke Party.</p> <p>11 Feb Arrests are made as youths riot in Seeisoiville (Kroonstad) and destroy 27 businesses, worth R500 000.</p> <p>18/21 Feb Violence erupts at Crossroads settlement near Cape Town, leaving 18 dead and 230 injured in clashes with police. Police disperse 400 shackdwellers protesting against rumours of forced removal to Khayelitsha and arrest of community leader.</p> <p>27 Feb Homes of UDF activists in VT are petrol bombed and AZAPO pamphlets found nearby. Both UDF and AZAPO blame 'agents of the state'.</p>	<p>1 Feb PW Botha rejects idea of creating fourth parliamentary chamber for Africans.</p> <p>8 Feb Nelson Mandela and other ANC long-term political prisoners reject conditional release offer, but by mid-month 18 former PAC activists accept terms of release.</p> <p>19 Feb Eight UDF executive members are detained, including Albertina Sisulu (FEDSAW); Sam Kikine, Isaac Ngcobo, Sisa Njikalana, Thozamile Gqweta (SAAWU); Cassim Saloojee, Ismail Mohamed (TIC) and Rev Frank Chikane (RMC). All join 8 other treason trialists in Pietermaritzburg.</p> <p>28 Feb Detainees Parents Support Committee (DPSC) claims that 164 people have been detained without trial in 1985 so far.</p>	<p>8/9 Feb Limpet mine damages old army offices in Johannesburg (JHB). ANC guerilla killed by police in Alexandria (JHB).</p> <p>23 Feb Hand grenade attacks on homes of 2 Huhudi community councillors (Vryburg) and policeman.</p> <p><b>ACRONYMS</b>            FEDSAW Federation of South African Women            PAC Pan Africanist Congress            RMC Release Mandela Committee            SAAWU South African Allied Workers Union            SACOS South African Council of Sport            TIC Transvaal Indian Congress</p>
<b>MARCH</b>	<p>6/8 Mar DET suspends classes at 20 schools on East Rand and at Wesselsbron (OFS) schools, where police disperse pupils. Reopened schools are boycotted by 5 000 pupils in Tembisa, 7 000 in Mamelodi, and others in Bloemfontein.</p> <p>10/14 Mar In Thabong (Welkom), 300 residents disrupt town council meeting to demand its resignation. All KwaNobuhle (Uitenhage) councillors, except Kinikini, resign. DET closes 7 schools in Illegelihle.</p> <p>16/18 PEBCO organises total stayaway strike by scholars, workers and consumers, to protest price increases of petrol and consumer goods.</p> <p>19 Mar School boycotts by 10 000 pupils begin in Klerksdorp and Bethlehem, while massive boycott of VT schools continues.</p> <p>21/22 Mar Second stayaway strike in PE and Uitenhage. 35 African miners injured in clashes with police at Vaal Reefs (Klerksdorp) where 42 000 workers strike for higher wages.</p> <p>29 Mar 8 000 FOSATU members in Uitenhage stop work for 15 minutes to mourn Langa (Uitenhage) dead.</p>	<p>2/4 Mar Riots in Uitenhage townships leave 1 dead, 5 houses and 3 vehicles destroyed, and another councillor resigns. Home of Atteridgeville town council candidate is petrol bombed.</p> <p>9 Mar In Eastern Cape, clashes between crowds and police leave 10 dead, and 83 people are arrested.</p> <p>15/18 Mar Regional upsurge of unrest with 9 fatalities, 20 injuries and 30 arrests. A security policeman is killed in Illegelihle during attacks on homes of 11 policemen and 14 town councillors/supporters.</p> <p>19 Mar Two policemen's homes attacked in Atteridgeville (Pretoria) and home of Soweto Youth Congress leader petrol bombed.</p> <p>21/24 Mar On twenty-fifth anniversary of Sharpeville, police open fire on crowd near Langa, killing 19. Intense rioting in Uitenhage's townships leaves 10 dead as mobs kill Kinikini and destroy 17 policemen's homes.</p> <p>28 Mar Four members of Bontrug Town council (Kirkwood) resign. Soweto home of former deputy mayor petrol bombed. In PE, arsonists cause R530 000 damage to 6 schools.</p>	<p>2 Mar Magistrate bans funeral of Thabong riot victim.</p> <p>5 Mar Government orders inquest into death of UDF leader Kratshi.</p> <p>11 Mar In central PE, police disperse 800 pupils at law courts, where 9 COSAS members appear on public violence charges.</p> <p>22 Mar Government orders inquiry into Langa shooting and bans all meetings to do with student boycotts.</p> <p>26/27 Mar 239 Demonstrators including Reverends Allan Boesak and Beyers Naude arrested during march on parliament. Kannemeyer Commission into Langa shooting sits for first time.</p> <p>29 Mar Government imposes 3-month ban on meetings convened by 29 organisations in 18 magisterial districts.</p> <p>SAIRR records for first 3 months of 1985 put riot death toll at 104, with 60 percent of fatalities in Eastern Cape, and 71 deaths due to police action.</p>	<p>4 Mar Explosions destroy home of Alexandria Mayor Sam Buti and National Party offices in Kroonstad.</p> <p>13 Mar In Swartruggens (Western Transvaal) 3 suspected ANC guerillas flee to Botswana after they kill 2 shopkeepers.</p> <p>17/19 Mar Limpet mine destroys police vehicle in Mamelodi. Two alleged ANC insurgents shot dead and 1 arrested by police in Eastern Transvaal.</p> <p>23 Mar Hand grenade attacks on government building in Soweto and on security policeman's home in Tembisa.</p> <p>28 Mar ANC external mission announces possible guerilla attacks on SA subsidiaries of multi-national companies.</p> <p><b>ACRONYMS</b>            FOSATU Federation of South African Trade Unions            PEBCO Port Elizabeth Black Civic Organisation            SAIRR South African Institute of Race Relations</p>

	<b>NON-COLLABORATION POLITICS</b> <i>School, Worker and Consumer Boycotts/ Stayaways</i>	<b>GENERAL CIVIL UNREST</b> <i>Township Revolts and Factionalism</i>
<b>APRIL</b>	<p>1 Apr Black traders close stores in Grahamstown to protest arrests.</p> <p>8/16 Apr Illegible school boycott ends, though Goniwe and Calata are not re-instated. 32 Percent of pupils continue boycott to protest police presence in township.</p> <p>21 Apr Joint Somerset East-Cookhouse Community Council resigns en masse.</p> <p>26/28 Apr 14 400 miners from Vaal Reefs and Hartebeesfontein gold mines are fired after mass strike, which leaves 2 dead and hundreds injured. In Fort Beaufort, white businessmen try to negotiate end of month-long black consumer boycott.</p> <p>29 Apr In Grahamstown, African pupils boycott school to protest against death of scholar in police action. University of North closes after student attacks on staff members.</p>	<p>2/3 Apr 21 Ward committee members and 5 councillors on Kayamandi Town Council (PE) resign. Arsonists destroy homes of 5 policemen in Bontrug.</p> <p>4/7 Apr Unabated unrest in Eastern Cape leaves 5 dead and 13 arrested. Police disperse 7 000 mourners at funeral of 7 PE unrest victims.</p> <p>10 Apr Police vehicle and home petrol bombed in Kattlehong.</p> <p>11/17 Apr Another 8 die and 3 policemen's homes are petrol bombed in Eastern Cape riots. In KwaThema, the homes of a policeman and the Mayor are burned down and youths attack businesses of former Soweto mayor 'ET' Tshabalala.</p> <p>28/30 Apr Five die and police arrest 200 as regional unrest continues in Eastern Cape, Transvaal and Northern OFS. A policeman is killed in Motherwell (PE), while in Oudtshoorn, 155 school children are charged with public violence.</p>
<b>MAY</b>	<p>1 May Lebowa homeland closes University of North and nearby schools after students clash with police. May Day celebrations in Natal and Transvaal result in isolated worker stayaways.</p> <p>7/9 May School boycotts in Port Alfred and Grahamstown lead to DET-parent talks. In Alice (Ciskei), boycott hits University of Fort Hare after arrest of 8 students.</p> <p>11 May AZAPO and UDF reach accord in Eastern Cape and blame government and state media for fuelling black political factionalism. One week later, abduction of AZAPO leader breaks truce.</p> <p>14 May 107 500 Workers in Transvaal, Natal and Eastern and Western Cape strike, hold work stoppages and meetings to protest death of CWIU official Andries Raditsela on 6 May after release from detention. 30 000 People attend funeral in Brakpan.</p> <p>25 May Near Pretoria, UNISA's medical school is closed after students boycott lectures to demand dismissal of professor.</p> <p>28 May In Imbali township (Pietermaritzburg) scholars end 5 day sit-in after arrest of 6 students.</p>	<p>1/5 May Soweto homes of 2 AZAPO and AZASM leaders attacked. In Pretoria, 3 die and 2 are injured in riots.</p> <p>6 May Alleged UDF supporters attack 5 AZAPO members' homes in Eastern Cape and scuttle Bishop Tutu's early efforts to reconcile AZAPO/UDF activists. In Soweto, police disperse crowd of 500 who attack delivery vehicles. During UDF/Inkatha clashes in Natal, the homes of 6 UDF supporters in Hambanani are destroyed.</p> <p>7/9 May Soweto homes of 2 UDF leaders, Rev. Frank Chikane and Aubrey Mokoena, and homes of UDF members in Eastern Cape are petrol bombed. Alleged UDF activists kill AZAPO member in PE.</p> <p>11/13 May Unrest is unabated in Eastern Cape. OFS and PWV townships. In Thabong, homes of 2 AZASM members petrol bombed.</p> <p>15/22 May Bus services are suspended in Soweto after rioters cause extensive damage to 80 PUTCO buses. Petrol bomb attacks on SADF vehicle in Soweto (PE), and homes of Tinus town councillor (Fort Beaufort), AZAPO and AZASM members in Zamdela (Sasolburg) and 2 COSAS members in Grahamstown.</p> <p>31 May Police in KwaZakele (PE) disperse clashing AZAPO/UDF supporters.</p>
<b>JUNE</b>	<p>4 June In Lenyenye (Tzaneen), pupils on week-long school boycott to support demands for students representative council.</p> <p>11/13 June 4 000 Students at University of North end 2 month boycott. In Tanti (Grahamstown), alleged UDF activists kill AZAPO member. In Soweto, AZAPO and UDF agree to hold joint 16 June memorial service to commemorate black martyrs of 1976 student protests.</p> <p>16 June One student shot dead and 3 wounded at University of North in clashes with Lebowa police. Pupils demonstrate outside DET buildings in Mankweng (Pietersburg).</p> <p>18/23 June Township factionalism continues as 4 youths armed with grenades arrested in PE after UDF and AZAPO homes attacked.</p> <p>28 June Three Cradock Resident Association (CRADORA) leaders, Matthew Goniwe, Fort Calata and Michael Mkhonto mysteriously disappear.</p>	<p>1/6 June Riots break out in Guguletu (Cape Town) and Galashewe. Unrest continues in Eastern Cape townships and on East and West Rand. Policeman dies in Graaff-Reinet and homes petrol bombed.</p> <p>9/13 June Homes of 2 Barberton councillors, 3 Tembisa officials and 3 PE AZAPO members attacked with petrol bombs and grenades. Three Zwide (PE) policemen injured in attack on SAP vehicle. Three die in Eastern Cape and Northern OFS unrest.</p> <p>16/18 June On East Rand, 2 youths shot dead in attack on home of Daveyton Mayor Tom Boya. Unrest in VT, De Aar and KwaMashu (Durban) townships.</p> <p>19/26 June Upsurge of unrest engulfs PWV and Eastern Cape regions. Riots also reported in Eastern Transvaal, Oudtshoorn and KwaMashu. Police disperse crowd of 6 000 after 8 COSAS activists die and 7 are injured by own suspect grenades on East Rand. Four SADF vehicles stoned by 240 coloured youths in Newclare (JHB). Grenade attack on Tembisa councillor's home.</p>
<b>JULY</b>	<p>2 July Bodies of missing CRADORA leaders Goniwe, Calata and Mkhonto found. UDF exonerates AZAPO and blames right-wing hit squad.</p> <p>3 July East Cape African Chamber of Commerce initiates AZAPO/UDF peace talks as homes of Eastern Cape UDF president and AZAPO member are petrol bombed. Three die and 85 arrested in violence during wage strike at Western Platinum Mine (Rustenburg).</p> <p>15 July In PE and Uitenhage, 2 month consumer boycott of non-African businesses begins, to demand withdrawal of SADF/SAP from townships and resignation of Kayamandi Community Council. After many shopkeepers experience a 90 percent drop in turnover, PE mayor asks PW Botha to negotiate end to boycott.</p> <p>17 July School boycotts in 26 centres including 46 East Rand schools, all Eastern Cape (except Uitenhage and PE), 3 Alexandria, all Ratanda, 5 Mamelodi and some Northern Transvaal schools.</p> <p>18 July 90 Percent work stayaway in Pietermaritzburg to support MAWU demands for Howick company to re-employ 950 dismissed workers.</p> <p>20 July 40 000 Attend funeral of assassinated CRADORA officials.</p>	<p>1/3 July Seven die in Eastern Cape, 3 in East Rand, and SADF vehicle is petrol bombed.</p> <p>4/7 July 200 Coloured demonstrators dispersed by police in Westbury township (JHB). Lamontville home of KLA member petrol bombed. After 3 days of rioting and 5 deaths, Duduza residents threaten work stayaway unless SADF/SAP are withdrawn.</p> <p>8/9 July Seven die in waves of intense township unrest. 50 000 KwaThema residents attend funeral of 4 killed in hand grenade incidents. Crowds attack SADF patrols in KwaNobuhle and PE townships.</p> <p>10/12 July Two die in rioting in VT townships. SAIRR claims 300 people have died in political violence since 1 January.</p> <p>14/17 July Eleven die in widespread unrest in 7 Eastern Cape, 4 East Rand, Huhudi, Lamontville and OFS townships.</p> <p>17 July Five die in nationwide unrest. Riots break out in Soweto where PUTCO suspends services after a bus load of foreign tourists is stoned and home of Soweto mayor Edward Kunene and shops of former mayor are attacked.</p> <p>18/20 July Riots continue throughout Soweto and 122 people arrested on East Rand as crowds of up to 2 000 battle with police. Imbali town councillor's home petrol bombed. Rioting in Guguletu.</p>



<b>GOVERNMENT RESPONSE</b> <i>Reform and Repression</i>	<b>BLACK NATIONALIST ACTIVITY</b> <i>Strategies, Guerilla/Internal Insurgent Attacks</i>
<p>2/4 Apr Deputy Minister Adriaan Vlok says SADF, SAP and SARP will continue to mount joint operations in townships. State withdraws Internal Security Act charges against MAWU official Moses Mayekiso for role in stayaway of November 1984.</p> <p>8/11 Apr SADF units patrol New Brighton (PE) and police raid Bontrug township, arresting 39 on charges of murder and public violence.</p> <p>15/16 Apr Joint SADF/SAP patrol disperses crowd in KwaThema. SADF patrols in townships are now issued with live ammunition and shoot dead youth in Langa (Uitenhage).</p> <p>23 Apr Three UDF leaders, 'Terror' Lekota, Popo Molefe and Moss Chikane are detained by security police and later charged with treason.</p> <p>28/30 Apr Joint SAP/SADF force of 50 police and army vehicles tours PE townships. Le Grange announces that 217 people have died between September 1984 to 22 March 1985, with more than 10 000 unrest arrests.</p>	<p>18 Apr Bomb explodes at Spar supermarket in central Durban during consumer boycott to support striking workers.</p> <p>25 Apr Durban park attendant is killed by bomb planted at electricity sub-station.</p> <p>29 Apr SACP pamphlet bomb explodes in Durban.</p> <p>30 Apr In central JHB 2 limpet mines damage offices of mining companies involved in mass dismissals.</p> <p><b>ACRONYMS</b>  MAWU Metal and Allied Workers Union  SACP South African Communist Party  SADF South African Defence Force  SAP South African Police  SARP South African Railway Police</p>
<p>3 May Pietermaritzburg judge overturns decision of Attorney-General and grants bail to 16 UDF treason trialists.</p> <p>5 May 1 000 Police and SADF personnel conduct house-to-house searches in KwaNobuhle. COSAS organiser Siphosiso Mutusi dies in police custody in KwaNobuhle (Odendaalsrus).</p> <p>8/9 May Three PEBCO members disappear, including president and general secretary. Security police later deny they are in detention. Simultaneous SADF/SAP operations in Fort Beaufort and Adelaide townships result in 44 arrests.</p> <p>13/15 May Combined SADF/SAP operation in Langa results in arrest of 3 criminals. In Fort Beaufort, police disperse 200 youths who march on magistrate's courts.</p> <p>20/22 May Treason trial of 16 UDF members begins in Pietermaritzburg. Joint SADF/SAP operation mounted in Duduza township (East Rand) after youths stone motorists, killing a white woman.</p> <p>29 May Police arrest 115 people in Khotso township.</p>	<p>10 May Largest arms cache ever found in South Africa discovered on OFS farm, containing 31 limpet mines, AK47 rifles, pistols, hand grenades and ammunition.</p> <p>14 May ANC insurgents bomb police station and courts in Brakpan, Raditsela's home town.</p> <p>27 May Two suspected ANC insurgents kill policeman in Garankua township (Pretoria).</p> <p>28 May Explosion at SADF offices in central JHB injures 14 people.</p> <p>29 May Defence Minister Magnus Malan warns that SADF will hit ANC guerilla bases in neighbouring countries.</p> <p>30 May Limpet mine damages Southern Cross defence fund offices in JHB. Rev. Allan Boesak has discussions with Oliver Tambo in Lusaka.</p> <p><b>ACRONYMS</b>  CWIU Chemical Workers Industrial Union</p>
<p>6 June 400 Arrests made in simultaneous SADF/SAP operations in Soweto (PE) and Tumahole (Parys).</p> <p>10 June Eastern Cape UDF President, Edgar Ngoyi, and Vice-President Henry Fazi detained.</p> <p>11 June Second major treason trial of 22 UDF activists begins in Pretoria. SADF/SAP operations in Tumahole and Mokwallo (Vrededorp) result in 195 arrests.</p> <p>13 June Gerrit Viljoen announces that community militants have forced resignation of 240 African councillors since September 1984. Later, the homes of another 3 town councillors are petrol bombed in Soweto.</p> <p>24 June Application for bail by 22 UDF Pretoria treason trialists refused. SADF announces that it will double citizen force call-ups from 30 to 60 day camps to cope with continuing unrest.</p> <p>25 June Pretoria magistrate bans commemorative meetings of thirtieth anniversary of Freedom Charter.</p>	<p>12/13 June Western Cape Suicide Squad in hand grenade attacks on homes of 2 coloured parliamentarians. Crossroads resident and Langa (Cape Town) police station. ANC denies responsibility.</p> <p>14 June SADF kills 14 in raids on alleged ANC bases in Botswana.</p> <p>16 June In Mmabatho (Bophuthatswana), policeman who fires on crowd is killed. Three blasts at Natalia Development Board offices in Lamontville and Umlazi police station (Durban).</p> <p>19/21 June In Durban, bombs damage restaurant and sub-station, and SACP pamphlet bomb explodes. Police kill suspected guerilla in NE Transvaal contact.</p> <p>24 June Bomb damages AECL offices in JHB in support of labour conflicts at AECL factories.</p> <p>26 June Blast destroys Transkei Development Corporation bulk fuel depot and water and power supplies to Umtata.</p> <p>Last Week June Major ANC conference in Kabwe (Zambia) rejects negotiations with SA government and decides to hit 'soft' civilian targets.</p>
<p>3 July SADF/SAP conduct house-to-house search in Tembisa. Daveyton police arrest 8 men with 9 petrol bombs.</p> <p>4/5 July Government rejects UDF accusations that it is responsible for assassinations of 11 political activists and disappearance of 27 in Eastern Cape, Transvaal and OFS. Police arrest 79 in Colesburg township and round up youths in Duduza.</p> <p>10 July Duduza COSAS leader gets Supreme Court order to prevent police from assaulting or harassing him.</p> <p>16 July SAP raid Ratanda township (Heidelberg).</p> <p>18/19 July Organiser of PE consumer boycott questioned by police. In Grahamstown SADF, Security Police, ECDB, DET, and business representatives meet to discuss boycott. SAP announces that 500 people have died in 17 months of political violence, with attacks on homes of 360 policemen, 178 on East Rand alone. Widespread security crackdown on COSAS leaders on Rand.</p> <p>21 July Government declares a state of emergency in 36 magisterial districts, predominantly in the PWV and Eastern Cape areas.</p>	<p>1 July Petrol bomb and grenade attacks on homes of Indian parliamentarian in Durban and former Guguletu town councillor. ANC headquarters in Lusaka bombed.</p> <p>2 July Two hand grenade attacks in Tembisa. Rifle attack on home of Indian MP in Durban.</p> <p>12/15 July Two limpet mines destroy electrical sub-stations in Durban. Johnson Mhlambo takes over presidency of the exiled PAC after death of John Pokela in Harare.</p> <p>20 July SA Suicide Squad attacks 2 Soweto policemen's homes.</p> <p><b>ACRONYMS</b>  CRADORA Cradock Residents Association  ECDB Eastern Cape Development Board  KLA KwaZulu Legislative Assembly</p>

**CIVIL UNREST**

IPWA

# CAUGHT IN THE CROSSFIRE

## African Local Authorities Twixt Government & Community

By Thami Mazwai, News Editor of The Sowetan

URBAN GOVERNMENT

*Disregarding the near collapse of local government in many African communities, the government is proceeding apace with its most recent constitutional initiative and plans to get the first regional service councils off the ground by January 1986. During more than twelve months of fierce township rioting which has continued in almost uninterrupted fashion, participants in community and town councils have been a primary target for dissident attacks.*

*In reviewing these tumultuous events, top journalist Thami Mazwai concludes that the resulting political vacuum at the third tier level of African local government poses insurmountable problems for ongoing constitutional manoeuvres. In an attempt to pick up the pieces, Mazwai suggests some local solutions that might bridge the divide between 'civics' and councils, bringing opposition community leaders in from the cold while simultaneously taking the heat off official incumbents in a deteriorating political climate.*

*Town councils are caught between the demands of the community and the intransigence of government*

*African people want local authorities to encompass national political aspirations as determined by the people themselves*

African local government had ground to a virtual standstill by 20 July of this year, when the central government declared a state of emergency in 36 parts of the country. Since the outbreak of civil unrest in September 1984, at least 240 African officials, including 27 township mayors, had resigned under pressure from residents. The gradual withdrawal of these incumbents left only five out of 38 fully-fledged local authorities established over the past two years in effective operation (Community Education and Information Group, June 1985).

According to the Urban Councils Association of South Africa (UCASA), five African councillors have died at the hands of furious mobs since the start of the township riots, at least 75 members have had their houses damaged and many of their businesses have been razed to the ground. Although the then Department of Cooperation, Development and Education claims that all 234 village, community and town councils are still functional, it acknowledges that 197 vacancies exist. Admittedly, a few vacancies occur for non-political reasons, but 95 percent of these councillors have been forced out of office. Councillors have become an endangered species and those still involved in township administration are now guarded 24

hours a day by the security forces and their own 'law enforcement agencies', a euphemism for hired vigilantes.

### Local Politics, National Demands

The reasons for the collapse of African local government under the impact of dissident attacks are not hard to find. The town councils are caught between two currents — the demands of the community and the intransigence of government — and it is the buffers who get hammered in the ensuing crossfire.

At the heart of the matter are the differing government and community definitions of the roles of these local authorities. The government applies a classical definition, with the rider that they must satisfy the political aspirations of the so-called 'urban blacks'. Many township residents, on the other hand, expect these institutions to be part of the country's political mainstream, with the ultimate goal of one-man one-vote. In short, the government wants them to fulfil a particular function in the grand scheme of apartheid, yet African people want these institutions to encompass their political aspirations as determined by the people themselves.



The earlier rejection of government created community councils led to the founding of the Soweto Civic Association by Dr Nthato Motlana in 1979, to address local issues. The concept gained popular momentum, with civic organisations spreading throughout the country. While they still serve as alternative platforms to articulate demands at a local level, these issues have since been buttressed with national demands. Today, the 'civics' tend to interpret local issues in terms of the status quo prevailing in the larger society, rather than restricting themselves to local politics.

### Integrated Authorities: Preconditions

The proposed regional service councils have been ignored by civic and resident associations, because they represent a 'non-racial' centralisation of services for geographic entities, while retaining the racial division of local government. This is another double shuffle by government — the creation of racial, non-racial institutions!

Where constitutional manoeuvres concern local authorities, it is obvious that government needs to return to the drawing board and explore other avenues. In fact, integrated councils seem to be the only remaining option (see interview with UCASA President Steve Kgame, Indicator SA Vol3/No1). Taking into account the demands of major opposition groups, their preconditions for participation would be that integrated councils should be:

- autonomous to administer their areas and free from government control, save on major issues such as overseas loans
- based on geographic units and not divided along racial or group area lines
- based on the principle of one-man, one-vote.

The above recipe for integrated local authorities would probably not be acceptable to the government or the white community at large. Yet significant sections of the black community have already rejected the government's notion of regional service councils. In this ominous situation, something has to be found within these two extremes or a breakdown of regional government is also on the cards, following the discrediting of the present community and town councils.

### The Super Council Compromise

The creation of a super council consisting of white councils and black civic associations might provide a compromise solution. Or, instead of the civics' participation, the present coloured, Indian and African local authorities in revamped form could be included, if made acceptable to the black community through consultation with recognised leaders of their choice. A super

council would control a single treasury with the allocation of funds on some kind of proportionate basis, for the provision of amenities and facilities. Municipal taxation would have to take into account the fact that most black people cannot afford the property taxes paid by many whites, except for blacks in the higher income bracket.

The advantage of the proposed super council is that African people could start enjoying the fruits of the wealth they help to create in the major cities. Taxes paid into municipal coffers would benefit the country's labour force, who should also be provided with amenities such as swimming pools and libraries. However, this super council would be a stopgap measure, pending the creation of a new order in South Africa. Without accompanying change in the larger society, no local or regional authority can operate for long in the current political climate. The contradictions of apartheid inevitably catch up with these institutions.

### Concessions for Whom?

In the long term, local authorities will only survive if both the government and communities involved share the same definition of these bodies and expect them to perform similar functions. The parallel with the different perceptions of reform among the various population groups is of illustrative value in this regard. Although recent reforms indicated a major shift in government policy and perhaps represented a revolutionary turnabout in white nationalist thinking, these changes left most African people unimpressed. At this late stage, acknowledgement of the permanence of urban Africans in 'white' South Africa and the relaxation of influx controls do not satisfy widespread black expectations of major reforms.

Today, the black community has taken fixed positions on these two issues — firstly, they speak of a common South African citizenship and secondly, they call for the complete scrapping of influx control, not its revision. Although urban insiders with section 10(1) rights or prospective entitlement to permanent urban status may benefit from limited reforms granting them greater inter-township mobility, the position of the majority of African people remains unimproved.

An unfortunate aspect of change in South Africa is that all too often, government reforms appear to be aimed at placating international pressure, while giving assurances to the dominant white community of continued political stability. When black people do not greet these reforms with delight and gratitude, government expectations are disappointed and their white constituency is angered. It would appear that they still do not realise the most basic point of reform — that for change to be meaningful, it must be perceived as constituting reform by the people at whom it is directed.

*To ensure participation, integrated councils should be largely free from government control, based on geographic units and on the principle of one-man, one-vote*

*In the interim, a super council composed of white councils and black civic associations, controlling a single treasury, might provide a compromise solution*

*Local authorities will only survive if government and community share the same definition of these bodies and expect them to perform similar functions*

*For change to be meaningful, it must be perceived as constituting reform by the people at whom it is directed*

# BLACK STUDENT RESISTANCE TO SEGREGATED UNIVERSITIES

By Indicator SA Researcher Monica Bot

*The application of South Africa's apartheid policy over the past decades, leading to the creation of separate or 'ethnic' universities for different race and language groups, has caused tremendous resentment among black students and resulted in frequent outbursts of protest. As a consequence, the academic career of a substantial number of black students has been either interrupted or come to a full stop, partly as the result of an increasingly hard-line attitude adopted by some of these universities.*

*In the first of two articles on black universities, Indicator SA researcher Monica Bot looks at the history of black universities and the accompanying student unrest. She concludes that repressive action by university administrations, while doing damage to their academic reputation, is not likely to quell protest while apartheid policies continue to apply both to education and the wider socio-political environment. In our forthcoming issue, some of the comprehensive survey findings of Professor Gerhard Totemeyer will be presented, which test student opinions at five homeland universities on a wide range of issues.*

*Student dissent has been a part of black university life ever since the inception of 'ethnic' universities in 1960*

**T**he nationwide unrest in black residential areas over the past twelve months has been reflected in South Africa's universities. Students have boycotted lectures over a wide range of issues, to protest the tri-cameral elections in 1984 and, more recently, the state of emergency, and in response to specific educational issues such as poor facilities and the actions of certain staff or administration members.

Student expulsions and arrests, and police action have spiralled as the result of an increasingly hard-line attitude taken by university administrations on boycott action, especially at the black ethnic universities. During 1984, for example, five black universities were closed either temporarily or for the duration of the year. Whether these actions can ever fulfil their purpose of restoring order is questionable, however, in view of the fact that student dissent has been a part of black university life ever since their inception in 1960. Before looking at the issues involved in student unrest in more

depth, a brief overview of the development of segregated university education is presented.

## Ethnic Universities: Background

Prior to 1948, when the National Party came to power, there was far less state interference in black education with regard to the way staff was recruited, curricula organised, teaching conducted or students selected. Black students could attend the theoretically multi-racial South African Native College which was founded by missionaries in 1916 (later the University of Fort Hare) or, in limited numbers, the Universities of Cape Town, Witwatersrand, Rhodes, South Africa or (in segregated classes) Natal.

In 1948 the Nationalist government came to power and appointed the Eiselen Commission to investigate the institution of separate university education. The government's motivation was that each population group has an ethnic identity,



which should be given the opportunity to express itself at university level. In 1953, the same year the Bantu Education Act was passed — whereby separate educational amenities were established for the different races — the Holloway Commission was appointed to investigate the practicability and financial implications of providing separate training facilities for 'non-Europeans' at university level. After this Commission rejected the proposal on financial grounds, the government appointed an interdepartmental Committee to consider the founding of separate universities, 'without incurring an excessive drain on the state's finances' (van der Merwe & Welsh 1977).

In 1959, the Extension of Universities Education Act (No 45) came into effect, providing for the establishment of universities for the coloured, Indian and African communities. Furthermore, white universities lost the ability to accept students on academic merit alone, though black students could attend white universities for courses not offered at black universities, with the approval of the Minister for Bantu Education. In terms of the new legislation, The University of Fort Hare fell under the control of the Bantu Education Department and became an ethnic university for Xhosa speaking students. In 1960, four additional black university colleges were established: Turfloop for Sotho, Tsonga and Venda speaking students (later University of the North); Ngoye for Zulu speaking students (later University of Zululand); Western Cape

for coloured students; and Durban (later University of Durban-Westville) for Indian students.

The ethnic university colleges were proclaimed autonomous in 1969. Since then, several other mainly black universities have been established in the homelands and South Africa: Transkei (1976), the Medical University of SA (1978), Bophuthatswana (1980), Venda (1981), QwaQwa (1982) and Vista University (1983).

### Divisions Today

That the Nationalist policy with regard to education still pertains to a large extent was recently underlined by Minister of Co-operation, Development and Education (now Education and Development Aid) Dr Gerrit Viljoen, who stated in parliament that the government's policy with regard to education was that it must serve particular population groups (Star 29/5/85). The net result of this policy is the present split between universities along racial (African, white, coloured and Indian) and language (English and Afrikaans) lines, with one dual-medium white university (Port Elizabeth) and one non-racial dual-medium university (Unisa) for study by correspondence. Since 1977 it is possible for white and African students to register at the Universities of the Western Cape and Durban-Westville, subject to the agreement of the minister concerned.

At white universities, the language differences also reflect an ideological gap, with the English universities generally more opposed

*An interdepartmental government Committee was appointed in 1956, to consider the founding of separate universities 'without incurring an excessive drain on the state's finance'*

*The policy of segregation, which still applies, has resulted in the present split of South African universities along racial and language lines*

## EDUCATION



July 30th, 1985. Students set debris on fire at the University of the Western Cape's main gate during a clash with police.

Capo Times

## A CHRONOLOGY OF BLACK UNIVERSITY UNREST 1960 - AUGUST 1985

### EDUCATION

#### University of Fort Hare

1960: SRC dissolved to protest limitations on freedom of actions.  
1966: Political slogan campaigns, subsequent sit-in to discuss grievances with rector. 21 students suspended, 7 students detained.  
1972: Eight-day boycott in protest against expulsions, dictatorial attitude of principal, lecturers powers and police activity on campus. 160 students leave.  
1973: One day lecture boycott over suspension of students after an unpopulated African hostel warden is attacked. ~300 students leave.  
1976: Sympathy boycott with Soweto pupils; university temporarily closed.  
1977: 1250 Students arrested at open-air memorial service for Steve Biko; attendance drops considerably afterwards.  
1978: University closed on two occasions after boycott protesting expulsions of unmarried pregnant students, and after boycott because of dissatisfaction with semester system, and science faculty conditions.  
1978: Student shot dead by Fort Hare security guard. Students boycott and demand abolition security system, give R1 000 to his family and enable SRC to prevent rector from closing university.  
1980: University indefinitely closed after boycotts to reject HSRC investigation and support equal education. Boycotts continue after holidays and by end of year less than half of students are at university.  
1981: Anti-Republic day and June 16 memorial services.  
1982: Boycotts after 2 students killed by police, 22 are detained and 1 500 arrested, during protest against Sene at a graduation ceremony. Students boycott and demand tests be postponed after power failure at 4 hostels.  
1983: 1 500 Students sent home, university temporarily closed.  
1983: Demonstration over hanging of 3 ANC guerrillas; 200 students arrested. Students set fire to university buildings and protest among other issues, increase in fees and lack of heating. Sympathy boycott with Ciskeian commuters' bus boycott. Hundreds arrested after Biko demonstrations, entire student body boycotts.  
1984: Sit-in in solidarity with UCT students and over alleged refusal by university authorities to meet students and discuss grievances over security system. Lecture and meal boycott in sympathy with UCT. Handle victims and Biko. Eight SRC members temporarily detained.  
1985: Seven Azaso members refused readmission. Lecture boycott after arrest of 8 students (6 from SRC interim committee) by Ciskei Security Police.

#### University of the North (Turffloep)

1969: Mass meeting of students to protest two suspensions. Grievances, no meaningful status of SRC, ban on University Christian Movement.  
1970: Boycott of celebration marking attainment of full university status. Speech attacks discrimination against blacks and bantou education system. Student sit-in. SRC suspended and 22 SRC members refused readmission.  
1974: University closed week earlier for holidays after pro-Frelimo gathering. Six day boycott demanding release of SRC president, and 2 SASO presidents. Ten students refused readmission following year.  
1976: Sympathy boycotts with Soweto pupils, university temporarily closed.  
1977: Lecture boycott, students demand SRC elections. Boycotts protesting SRC members' expulsions, quality of food and detentions of 7 students. University closed, mass exodus of students follows, and partial boycott continues.  
1979: Lecture boycott, after organiser of Sharpeville memorial service is expelled. 100 Students march through township protesting removal of Makgato tribesmen.  
1980: Five student leaders refused admission, results in boycotts. Students start leaving and do not return in July.  
1982: Boycott to protest expulsion of 6 unmarried pregnant students and student detentions. Campus closed temporarily.  
1983: Students protest after registration of 7 students was withdrawn.  
1984: One day boycott after police charge students during anti-Republic day protest. 200 Students injured and 11 arrested during 16 June demonstration. One day boycott against Ngoye violence.  
1984: Sit in over congested exam timetable and students want economics lecturer sacked. Lecture boycott during tri-cameral parliamentary elections. Students boycott demand expulsion of 3 department heads and among other issues, increase in fees and lack of heating. Sympathy boycott with Ciskeian commuters' bus boycott. Hundreds arrested after Biko demonstrations, entire student body boycotts.  
1984: Sit-in in solidarity with UCT students and over alleged refusal by university authorities to meet students and discuss grievances over security system. Lecture and meal boycott in sympathy with UCT. Handle victims and Biko. Eight SRC members temporarily detained.  
1985: Seven Azaso members refused readmission. Lecture boycott after arrest of 8 students (6 from SRC interim committee) by Ciskei Security Police.

#### University of the Western Cape

1970: Sit in, students demand more responsible status for student body, better communication structures with authorities.  
1970: Sympathy boycott with Turffloep students, later also boycott of food. Six students are expelled, students demand black rector.  
1973: University closed following demonstrations against oppressive rules, the fact that there are more white staff than black, poor lecturer-student relations. Later, 16 leaders suspended, number of students leave.  
1976: Lectures suspended when students decide to boycott. Among other demands, resignation of all White Personnel Vereninging (Staff Association) opening of university to other races. Police clashes follow.  
1977: Petrolbomb attack on university, later mass meeting in protest against inferior quality of coloured education. Lectures disrupted, student university temporarily closed.  
1978: Food boycott at hostels.  
1980: Police baton charge and tear-gas students during 1-week boycott, in solidarity with boycotting pupils and against unequal education.  
1981: Anti-Republic day and June 16 demonstrations.  
1982: Brief sympathy boycott with Fort Hare students.  
1983: 1 000 Students march to administration block. Demands: improve hostel food and end harassment of students squatting on campus.  
1984: Sympathy boycott with UCT students. 3 000 Students boycott, demand cancellation of mid-year exams, extension of lunch hour, stopping of cafeteria exploitation and lectures in English and Afrikaans.  
1984: Boycott during coloured and Indian elections. 800 Students erect blockade on road in protest of P W Botha's inauguration as State President. Police action involved. 4 000 Students boycott and march to administration block, demanding resignation of finance registrar for cooperation with police during unrest. Students resolve to boycott exams.  
1985: 1 500 Students boycott, protest Uitenhage township shootings and arrest of protesters earlier. 4 000 Students boycott after discussing state of emergency. Also demand dismissal of certain staff with certain political affiliations. Campus meetings banned. SRC offices petrolbombed. Several students arrested with UCT students after memorial service for Mrs Mxenge. Professors office gutted by fire. SRC reinstated after temporary suspension. Police enter campus after protest march.

#### University of Zululand (Ngoye)

1963: Graduation ceremony boycotted.  
1971: Boycott of celebration marking attainment of full university status.  
1972: Mass meeting and lecture boycott in support of Turffloep students.  
1976: Sympathy boycott with Soweto pupils, administration buildings burnt down and university closes for rest of year.  
1983: 700 Students on rampage to protest hanging of 3 ANC guerrillas. One day boycott against meeting commemorating Zululand. Later five students killed and 100 injured in clash with Inkatha supporters.  
1984: Students demand suspension of lecturer after he disrupted day-day meeting with gunfire. Boycott over heating, food, residences closed and 2 000 students leave campus. Boycott over university's refusal to reinstate 11 expelled students, of 80 people detained. 13 are students. Classes temporarily suspended. University closes for rest of year and 280 students informed they will not be readmitted.  
1985: 280 Students told to re-register.

#### University of Durban-Westville

1971: Students wear black armbands after campus newspaper is banned.  
1972: SRC disbanded after choice to accept university constitution or not operating, two day lecture boycott in sympathy with Turffloep. Mass sit-in after banning of SASO, four students expelled.  
1973: Solidarity march following death of 12 miners in Cartonsville incident.  
1976: One-week sympathy strike with Soweto events. Women on hunger strike because Naleda food is not available.  
1980: Lecture boycotts in sympathy with pupils. Violence when students gather and demand withdrawal of conditions of re-admission, removal of police, no victimisation and principal to be dismissed. Boycott follows.  
1985: Exam boycott announced, unless Fort Hare is reopened and students readmitted unconditionally. Boycotts followed.  
1981: Lecture boycott to demand reinstatement of expelled pupils. Ten percent of students write June exams.  
1983: SRC suspended.  
1984: Illegal meeting of 600 students who want suspended SRC re-instated. University closed after lecture boycott during elections.  
1985: 4 000 Students boycott, in sympathy with widespread unrest.

#### University of Trankeel (Unitra)

1980: Sympathy demonstrations with pupil boycotts, army and police subdued students.  
1984: Three weeks arrest. 5 lecturers deported, about 150 students detained and 14 expelled. Police take over discipline. Causes: questioning of 4 SRC members by Security Police, administration did not discuss grievances, SRC suspension. 137 Students released on bail, calls on principal to resign. Boycott continues, students demand return of 6 lecturers, two professors, and inquiry into events. Security Police round up 260 students. All full-time students expelled for year. 247 Students arrested earlier, not prosecuted. 580 Students banned from campus, and from living on campus in 1985.  
1985: Police evacuate and search university. 1 lecturer and 2 students detained.

#### Medical University of South Africa

1983: Four day boycott of university food. Boycott by 800 students to protest administrative suspension of 2 SRC members leads to closure of campus.  
1984: Boycott in solidarity with striking canteen workers. More than 1 000 students in solidarity boycott with Unitra and to protest the new constitution.  
1985: Lecture boycott, students demand dismissal of anatomy faculty head who fails too many students. Lecturer suspended during inquiry, finally resigns, while university is temporarily closed.

#### University of Bophuthatswana

1983: Two week boycott over hostel accommodation, followed by boycott over exam timetable.  
1984: Soweto lectures temporarily suspended because of unrest climate in township. No lectures during tri-cameral parliamentary elections at SRC's request.

#### University of Venda

1984: Boycott backing a dismissed lecturer, allegations of irregularities are made to principal.



to the divisive nature of education in South Africa and restrictions on the admission of black students than their Afrikaans counterparts. Similarly, students at English medium universities have more frequently been involved in demonstrations and boycotts, expressing opposition to apartheid or solidarity with black students on boycott.

Although most white universities admit black students, they form a minority of the student body. Since 1980, enrolment of African, Indian and coloured students at white universities has steadily increased; from 4.7 percent in 1980, to 6.8 percent in 1983 and 7.4 percent in 1984 (Africa Notes and personal communication).

### Causes of Resentment

The accompanying database on university unrest shows that black universities have been one of the focal points of resistance to apartheid ever since their establishment. This is certainly not surprising, as progressive thought is stimulated at any university and values such as academic freedom and freedom of thought are emphasised. The obvious contradiction between these principles and segregated education has naturally created conflict and resentment among black students, exacerbated by the limited political and economic rights enjoyed by black people in South Africa as a whole.

Another cause of resentment and unrest is that generally, facilities at black universities are not equal to those at white universities, and their separation fosters suspicions about their academic quality and status as well. Surya Parmanand, Dean of Law at the University of Venda, recently wrote in an article in the Sunday Times: '... it is often heard in silent circles that it is only the refugee academic of dubious ability who pursues his career at a black university' (25/8/85). Furthermore, it was recently reported that, 'students enrolling at Unisa were told that some of the courses passed at black universities were not recognised by the university because of low standards at the "tribal" universities'. According to a Unisa spokesman, only those courses were accredited when the same syllabus as their own had been used (Sowetan 21/12/84).

A further cause of student resentment at black universities has been the initial large complement of white South African staff at both the senior administrative and professorial levels. Despite an increase in black staff, they still represent a minority; presently, there are 343 African lecturers in African universities as opposed to 773 white lecturers (Financial Mail 16/8/85). Over the years a vicious circle has developed, whereby increasing student unrest has resulted in an increasingly unsympathetic response by these white-dominated administrations of black universities, which in turn produces further student protest. Expulsions, arrests or bannings of politically active students and student organisations, and police intervention

on campuses have caused black students to view the university administrations, both in South Africa and the independent homelands, with hostility and suspicion.

A further indication of this repressive attitude is found in a provision of the Universities for Blacks, Technikons and Education and Training Amendment Bill, which was recently debated in parliament. The Bill proposes not only to allow black universities greater autonomy with regard to staff appointments, conditions and the admission of students of other races, but also proposes to give them the power to cancel the registration of any student whose activities they believe are harmful to the university, without first having to hold a hearing (Star 29/5/85). According to Dr Gerrit Viljoen, this provision was unanimously supported by all university councils consulted by government.

As the database on unrest shows, however, repressive actions have not had the desired effect. Throughout the years of their existence, students at ethnic universities have continued to express their anger not only about separate educational facilities, but about segregation in the political and economic sphere as well. With this unfortunate historical legacy, these universities will never be seen apart from the wider apartheid environment until there are some drastic policy changes to promote a unified educational system within a desegregated society.

### Conclusion

As long as strongly repressive measures are carried out and identified with university officialdom, the reputation of black universities will suffer, with serious consequences for the tertiary education needs of national development and manpower. One hopes that more constructive steps will be taken by the universities to regulate and resolve disputes than the new Bill, which provides for the cancellation of the registration of a student at the stroke of an official's pen.

Black universities, while they must be accepted as an established and permanent part of South Africa's educational facilities, still have to overcome many problems before they will be fully accepted both within South Africa and by the international academic community. This task is complicated by South Africa's racial policies, for as long as apartheid remains not only in education but also with regard to wider socio-political and economic rights, students will continue to express their anger and resentment by recourse to the few means of protest still open to them, such as boycotts and demonstrations. *UPA*

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*Black students formed only 7.4 percent of total enrolment at white universities in 1984*

*Not only are facilities at black universities not equal to white universities, but suspicions exist about their academic quality and status as well*

*A vicious circle has developed, whereby increased student unrest results in unsympathetic responses by white-dominated administrations, producing further unrest*

*It is hoped that more constructive steps will be taken by universities to regulate and resolve disputes, than cancelling the registration of certain students*

# A PRINCIPLE OF PRIVATISATION

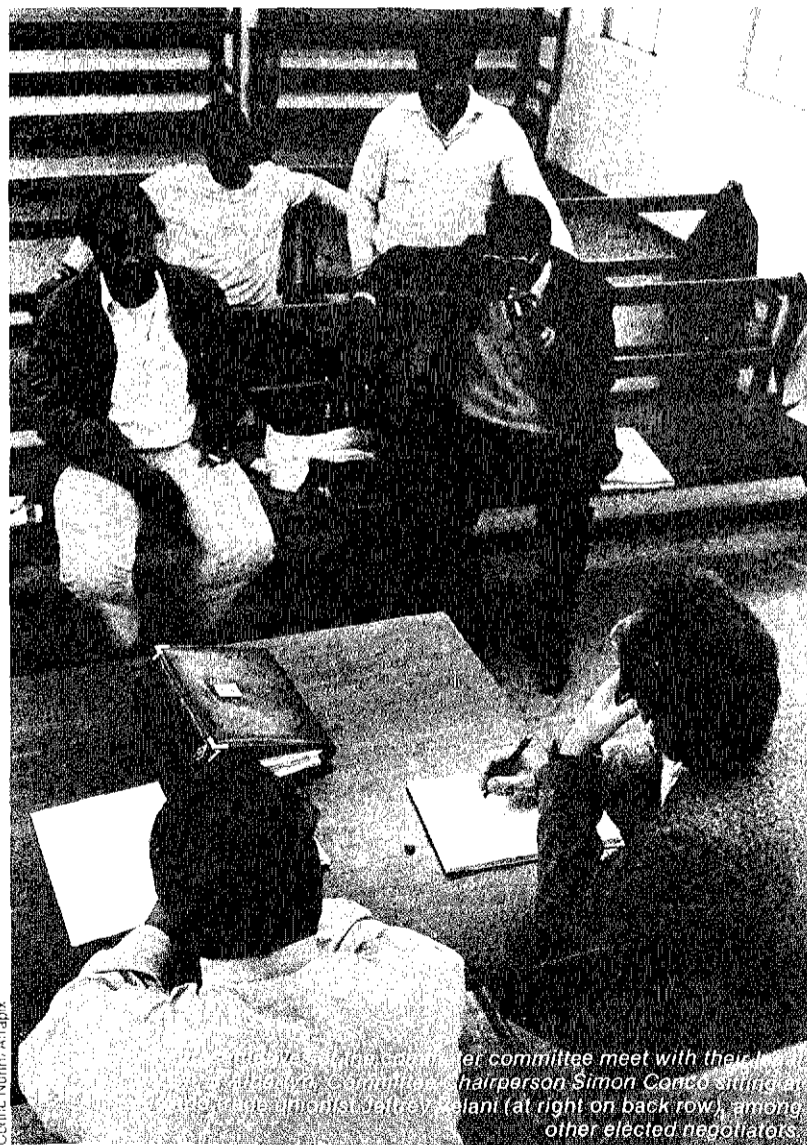
## Of Bus Boycotts & Consumer Choice

By Linda Venter of Empangeni

The Empangeni bus boycott of early 1985 follows a long history of black commuter action elsewhere in localised disputes over public transport costs and services. How do fare increases and passenger complaints become rapidly politicised issues in South Africa, sweeping in an entire community to register a united vote of protest, regardless of the disruptive social costs?

Linda Venter, based in the Empangeni community, describes the dynamics of a four-month bus boycott and focusses on the role played by the protagonists, commuters and bus company, with timely intervention by third party mediators. Drawing on wide ranging interviews with black and white community leaders, and rank-and-file commuters, she reveals the real issue that emerged at the heart of the dispute – the appeal to government to break national transport monopolies and allow consumer choice in a critical area of their daily working lives.

BUS BOYCOTT



Cofimca Nurni: A/rapix

The Empangeni commuter committee meet with their negotiators. Committee chairperson Simon Coetzee sitting at the table with negotiator Jeffrey Molani (at right on back row) among other elected negotiators.

In the aftermath of a three-month long bus boycott by black communities in the Empangeni/Richards Bay region on Natal's north coast, life is not simply reverting to normal. Both black and white residents appear to have read important lessons from the dramatic events of early 1985, which saw concerted action by 26 000 commuters from townships and rural areas, who have become determined to have a say in both transport and other matters affecting their daily lives. Although final settlement between bus company, commuter committee and community had not been reached by June, further meetings to discuss the final boycott trigger, a fare increase on most routes, are now scheduled for later this year.

In the meantime, a range of interested parties intend to keep open the channels of communication that developed during the bus boycott (see chronology box), appreciative of the advantages gained through patient negotiation, the timely expression of black grievances and the defusing of conflicts before they become crises. The profound impact of these experiences is reflected in recent editorial comment in the Zululand Observer: 'Is something happening in this part of the country which is going to yield a solution, a possibility of a harmonious reconciliation of interests? Can a concerted effort not be made to have a get-together of ordinary people from different communities, to talk on a spectrum of interests and pool our resources, the know-how of expertise and opinion-sharing at grassroots level?' (26/7/85).

### Build-up of Grievances

As early as mid-1983, approaches were made to Empangeni Transport (ET), sole operators of more than 200 buses in the region, to



complain about the quality of its services. Passengers claimed that bus drivers behind schedule left them standing at stops, overcharged for carrying parcels and frequently short-changed them. Neither personal letters of complaint, trade union nor employer representations to the company elicited much response. Passenger frustration slowly mounted, mostly directed at the driver as the most visible company representative, and eventually reached breaking point when fare increases took effect at the beginning of 1985.

Judging from interviews conducted with commuter representatives and other parties,

many passengers felt a general sense of powerlessness to influence ET to improve the quality of its service. The company's attitude towards consumer complaints was perceived as arrogant and community antagonism was exacerbated by the deteriorating daily contact between driver and passenger. By the time the almost total boycott of ET services began in January, the one non-negotiable demand expressed by up to 50 000 people at mass meetings was that the company had to go, to be replaced by other, competitive bus, rail or taxi operators.

On the other hand, a number of black commuters interviewed by the author

*Black commuter frustration with the quality of the local bus service built up from mid-1983, reaching breaking point when fares were hiked in January 1985*

## Chronology

### DIARY OF A COMMUNITY BOYCOTT With Comment from Interviews with African Participants

#### 31 December 1984

Empangeni Transport (ET), a monopoly bus operator in the Empangeni/Richards Bay area, hikes fares, a move which hits the pockets of about 26 000 African commuters.

*'The company should have called a mass meeting of commuters and explained that tyres and diesel are expensive and they need to raise the fare. We would have put our problems to them and if they had allowed us enough time, we could reach a compromise.'*

#### 13 January 1985

50 000 Commuters who live within KwaZulu — in the townships of Ngwelezane, Nseleni and Esikhaweni and surrounding rural areas — meet to protest the fare increases and the poor quality of ET's service. They decide to boycott the bus service and to approach local commerce, industry and other parties in a search for alternative means of transport.

*'Competition works - when we asked taxi drivers to reduce their fares during the boycott, they did so to help us. It is because they are many competing against one another . . . that is all we want.'*

#### 16 January

Mr Rob Barbour, regional chairman of the Chamber of Industries, offers its services as broker to the commuter committee elected at the mass meeting.

#### 29/30 January

The bus boycott enters its second week. The commuter committee puts forward proposals to promote consumer choice of public transport, in meetings with the Chambers of Commerce and Industry, the Department of Transport and with Umfolozi MP, Mr Willie Heine. Government later agrees to initiate an investigation into local grievances, under the Road Transport Act of 1977.

*'I would rather get wet on the back of a bakkie than be forced to travel on a bus because alternative transport is forbidden to operate.'*

#### 21 February

The Minister of Transport, Mr Hendrik Schoeman, releases state enquiry's findings and proposes to create a local Joint Transport Liaison Committee. He turns down commuter proposals to promote competitive services —restated at an 'on-site' commission hearing — in favour of the limited concessions offered by the bus company (see other box).

#### 25 February

After meeting with interested parties, the Minister rescinds his threat of enforcing law and order, though buses have been stoned in Esikhaweni.

*'The best thing about the negotiations is that the commuter committee went to Cape Town and got the ears of the Minister of Transport . . . that has never happened before.'*

#### 16 March

After separate talks between the commuter committee, Transport Department officials and Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi; MP Willie Heine — in a key go-between role — organises a meeting between the main protagonists, company and commuter representatives. Further fare and service concessions end the boycott in rural areas, but urban commuters still refuse to ride until black transport operators are allowed to compete freely with ET.

#### 11/12 April

MP Heine consults with commuter and bus company representatives as the agreement breaks down and the boycott is resumed in all areas. At a large meeting between commuters, Heine, the committee and certain chiefs, the earlier agreement is reinstated. The bus boycott peters out over the next few weeks through continued hardship and the enforced stoppage of alternative transport, supported by a police presence.

*'If I tell you my shoe hurts, you may hear me but you do not know what it feels like. That is why those talking to us should talk directly to us and not through our leaders on certain issues.'*

#### 1 July

The bus company reschedules the fare increases to 1 December, originally suspended until mid-1985 in terms of the last settlement.

#### Early August

The need for a standing transport committee is discussed by Chief Buthelezi, while an open meeting is to be convened in Empangeni to establish a local forum for the constructive resolution of conflicts in future.

*The bus boycott began because passengers felt that their earlier complaints lodged with Empangeni Transport were arrogantly dismissed, falling on deaf ears*

expressed a measure of sympathy for the bus company, though submerged in a dominant animosity. Some passengers were aware that because ET was seen as the immediate cause of social disruption incurred during the boycott, the company was simultaneously the focus for a community's larger political frustrations and social hardships.

Denied access to formal channels of communication and representation, community grievances over a specific issue, the price and quality of transport services, were compounded by larger issues also felt to be beyond their control or influence. For instance, the completion of major construction projects during 1984 had increased unemployment and depressed incomes in the area. Another social issue which heightened tensions during last year was the development of an Indian housing area on a traditional Zulu burial ground at Richards Bay, despite widespread protest from the local black community.

## The Commuters' Committee

On 14 January 1985, at inaugural boycott meetings attended by tens of thousands, a committee was elected to pursue alternative forms of commuter transport and to facilitate a solution with any interested party — except with the bus company itself. This initial stance illustrates the burning resentment of a community who felt that their earlier complaints had fallen on deaf ears. Compelled to take a drastic and disruptive course of action, the commuters now called for ET's permanent withdrawal (see conflict issues box).

In a context of intense factionalism among black political movements, the composition of the commuter committee was particularly striking. It brought together Jeffrey Velani, president of the Metal and Allied Workers Union, Simon Conco, Inkatha chief whip and KwaZulu parliamentarian, and Prince Gideon Zulu, alongside of tribal chiefs,

## Conflict Issues

### COMMUTER GRIEVANCES

- alleged increases in bus fares of about 30 percent during 1984, and of about 320 percent over a six year period
- failure to consult with commuters before Empangeni Transport (ET) applies to Local Road Transportation Board (LRTB) for fare increases
- provision of misleading and false information to Board to motivate for fare hikes
- irregular and unpunctual time schedules, with poor service to outlying areas
- overloading and other unsafe, unhealthy bus conditions and practices
- absence of commuter shelters and related amenities
- discourteous behaviour of bus drivers and company officials, who ignore need for trust and goodwill
- general attitude of company, which makes profits at expense of comfort and safety of passengers.

### COMMITTEE DEMANDS

- withdraw transport permits for bus company, appoint an official commission of inquiry into the public commuter system, and suspend ET services
- LRTB to issue permits for kombi taxis and other bus operators, pending outcome of investigation
- immunity from prosecution under the Road Transport Act for 'illegal' kombi-taxi operators, who take bus boycotters to work and operate outside of Empangeni's townships
- employer tolerance of workers who arrive late due to boycott and assistance in provision of transport
- law enforcement to be withheld for duration of boycott
- that the Commuters Committee, LRTB and Minister of Transport sign a legally binding agreement to regulate public transport in area
- steps be taken to promote genuine and free competition.

### COMPANY CONCESSIONS

- the original fare increase will now be introduced on 1 December 1985 and the commuters committee will be given a schedule thereof
- to discuss all future increases with committee before applying for LRTB approval and implement these annually, at the same time
- to review schedules to determine whether conductors and driver or baggage assistants are necessary
- to investigate whether driving schedules place an unreasonable burden on some drivers, and install radios for communication
- to train and supervise drivers to ensure greater courtesy is shown to commuters
- to transfer certain company officials from area
- to endeavour to remedy all reasonable grievances and appoint a senior PRO to liaise with commuters
- to demonstrate social obligation by continuing to make donations, in consultation with the committee.

### GOVERNMENT & COMPANY RESPONSE

- the Minister of Transport Affairs to initiate a national transport policy study to investigate public transport system in SA (see text)
- the Minister to also investigate the potential introduction of a railway commuter system for the region
- to facilitate permits for taxi operators or extensions thereof, provided applications are made within three months of 16 March 1985
- the Company to sub-contract and eventually sell permits to allow three potential, local bus operators on certain ET routes, on approved fare scales and timetables
- the Company to accept principle of competition between different modes of transport
- MP Mr Heine to endeavour to have boycott-related charges against 26 people withdrawn and to ensure gradual reintroduction of law enforcement in region.



Cedric Nunn, Argenta



Jeffrey Velani, President of the Metal and Allied Workers' Union, speaks at a report-back meeting called by the commuter committee to discuss community grievances over public transport.

township dignitaries, other unionists and KwaZulu MPs. The committee was mandated to implement various resolutions, while being expressly forbidden to negotiate any settlement which might compromise community demands. Labour lawyer Chris Albertyn was chosen as their legal representative.

Over the next two months, negotiations between a host of actors were characterised by a spirit of cooperation and compromise. After the initial stages, the committee dropped the demand to exclude the bus company from talks and began to exert a stabilising influence on the community at large. The diplomacy and sensitivity to larger grievances displayed by individual negotiators helped to create a constructive atmosphere with a relatively low incidence of violence and bloodshed. The democratic nature of the commuter committee's performance of its mandate and report-back meetings kept the black community in touch with the negotiating progress. In this way, unlike other parts of the country, the spark for localised conflict was defused and did not spill over into general unrest.

### Third Party Involvement

For most employers, the impact of the bus boycott on commerce and industry was felt immediately. With a boycott underway, black workers began arriving at work late and exhausted, having travelled long distances by foot or used a combination of alternative forms of transport. Some managements provided transport for their labour force as a temporary measure, to assist workers and overcome productivity problems. At the request of the Chambers of Commerce and Industry, employers were initially lenient towards latecomers who were boycotting the buses.

During the early stages of the boycott, Mr Rod Barbour, chairman of the Zululand Chamber of Industries, approached the

commuter committee and offered his assistance as a neutral broker. Under his leadership, the Chamber was prepared to arrange and sponsor negotiations between commuter committee and bus company. Both Barbour and Umfolosi MP Mr Willie Heine played a constructive role in attempting to promote a negotiated settlement which would achieve improvements for the entire community (see chronology box). In contrast, the two external negotiators appointed by the National Transport Commission on the instructions of the Minister of Transport were unable to break the deadlock and could only recommend increased law enforcement as a final solution to end the boycott.

### The Company's Defence

According to Empangeni Transport, it offers a comprehensive urban and rural transport system over an area of 35 000 square kilometres, but has been put under tremendous pressure in the process of adjusting to developmental phases and fluctuating commuter levels in the area. Expansion projects involving managers, supervisors and drivers to accommodate increased commuter demand have essentially fallen short of needs, leading to a deterioration in the quality of its services. In February 1985, in response to commuter demands, the bus company offered a number of concessions, which included appointing a public relations officer, reducing some fares, amending certain routes and offering company shares for purchase by black businessmen.

By mid-March, ET had revised its initial offer to accommodate other issues of discontent (see conflict issues box). The interim settlement reached at the eight hour meeting chaired by key broker, MP Heine — where commuter committee and bus company negotiated face-to-face for the first time — lasted less than a month before the boycott was resumed once again. Having negotiated a solution to some of the specific issues such as fares and service, a key conflict issue at the

*The commuter committee, elected by 50 000 people, brought together representatives of FOSATU trade unions, Inkatha, township officials and tribal chiefs*

*The committee exerted a stabilising influence on the community through report-back meetings to inform commuters of progress in negotiations*

*The Chamber of Industries, local MP Willie Heine and other third parties played a constructive role in promoting interim settlement of the dispute*

## BUS BOYCOTT

*Though many specific wage and service issues were resolved, the demand for genuine competition in public transport emerged at the heart of the dispute*

*Under the impact of tightened law enforcement and circumstantial hardship, the boycotters, resolve eroded during April and May*

*Commuters are still adamant that the monopoly held by the bus company should be replaced by open competition providing for consumer choice*

*An uneasy truce reigns at present, with the fare increase rescheduled for 1 December. However, a range of interest groups intend to keep open channels of communication*

heart of the dispute resurfaced: the African community's demand for free and genuine competition in the sphere of public transport.

## Law Enforcement

When the momentum of the boycott picked up again from 9 April, the Minister of Transport, Mr Hendrik Schoeman, instructed that law enforcement should be stepped up. Although the authorities had earlier turned a blind eye to unregistered or pirate kombi-taxis, transport inspectors backed up by police now turned to warnings, fines and prosecution of 'illegal' operators. Simultaneously, the Local Road Transportation Board announced it would not issue further temporary permits to non-company operators on routes reopened by ET. During the indiscriminate harassment of alternative transport forms, one of the interviewees for this study was fined R300 while operating a lift club with worker colleagues. The actions of transport inspectors during the crackdown undoubtedly undid much of the goodwill fostered during negotiations.

To counter sporadic incidents of intimidation of people who broke the boycott, the police took up a physical presence at all busstops and terminals inside South Africa, while KwaZulu police were persuaded to undertake similar actions in areas under their jurisdiction. With the high police profile, the bus company reintroduced its services route-by-route and most local employers were persuaded to withdraw alternative transport arranged for their workers. The boycott petered out during April and May, under the joint impact of tightened law enforcement and the inevitable erosion of the boycotters' resolve, and lastly, the circumstantial hardship endured by walking long distances and surviving on a reduced diet, necessitated by the higher taxi-fares.

## The Real Issue

Although a combination of harsh action mixed with some specific concessions eventually broke the boycott, the major issue to emerge from Empangeni and other similar disputes is clearly evident. Essentially, freedom of expression in the sphere of consumer choice lay at the heart of community grievances expressed during the course of the boycott. In a nutshell, it is at this point that localised conflict and larger national issues coincide, politicising a dispute over public transport. If freedom from being forced to use a monopolistic mode of transport is achieved, it symbolises for African commuters the right to choose in a central area of their daily lives.

By mid-year, though specific elements of the dispute had been defused, commuters remained adamant that the monopoly held by the bus company should be replaced by genuine competition providing for consumer choice. The African community has clearly demonstrated the effectiveness of a consumer

power base through their use of the boycott tactic. And there is a realisation in the surrounding white community that the imposition of first world standards to regulate transport is an inappropriate and counter-productive legislative response to the needs and demands encountered in a third world situation.

In another positive development, the course of the dispute has persuaded the Minister of Transport to initiate a national transport policy study (NTPS) to investigate the entire commuter system in South Africa. Already, there are indications of a complete rethink of some of the recommendations of the Welgemoed Commission (1983), especially the much criticised proposals to phase out minibuses and increase state intervention in transport affairs (See Indicator SA Urban Monitors Vol1/No3 and Vol2/No1). In fact, the Empangeni commuters committee has been invited to make representations to a NTPS committee, which is presently studying ways to:

- repeal the restrictive regulations governing black taxis
- promote equitable competition through curbing monopolies
- encourage private initiative in the public transport market
- introduce a more user-oriented passenger policy.

## Solutions

Although some concessions have already been implemented by the bus company, the major issue remains unresolved and an uneasy truce reigns at present. It would appear that the original commuter committee recently dissolved itself because it has not been able to achieve its only real, non-negotiable, mandate: to return to the broader community with a settlement which guarantees the principle of consumer choice in public transport. Failing this, the social consequences of the fare increase rescheduled to take effect on 1 December 1985 remains to be seen, as commuters are still not in a position to express any dissatisfaction by opting for 'legal', alternative means of transport.

From all accounts though, the boycott has achieved an important change of attitude on the part of the bus company. The terms of settlement indicate that what was originally seen to be intransigent arrogance has been replaced by a willingness to compromise. For the black community, Empangeni Transport symbolised other areas of powerlessness in their lives, so that the company had to face a barrage of emotion directed more at its attitude than its actions. If widespread social and economic disruption arising from a specific conflict of interests is to be headed off in future, the general change in attitude among interest groups in the area will have to be accompanied by efforts to maintain permanent mechanisms to facilitate the communication and resolution of community grievances. *UPJA*





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FORTHCOMING:

## **SERVICING THE NATION: LOCAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENT REFORM**

An essential component of the South African government's current reform initiative has been its attempts to restructure all forms of local and regional government. Central to these efforts has been the abolition of the Provincial Council system and the creation of multi-racial Regional Service Councils (RSC), the first of which are due to become operational in March 1986.

This INDICATOR SA Issue Focus takes an in-depth look at the problems and prospects for the second phase of constitutional reform. The issues at the heart of the debate are:

- the near collapse of Black Local Authorities
- changes in local authority structures
- problems in financing local government
- the anticipated costs of the new RSCs
- how RSCs will allocate resources
- Indian, African and coloured participation
- the impact of regional variations

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