Sash

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Our 30th year — 1955 - 1985

Senator Edward Kennedy talks to the elders and people of Mathopiestad during his recent visit to South Africa. Seated next to Chief John Mathope (centre) is the next chief, Solomon Mathope. *photo: Gill De Vlieg*

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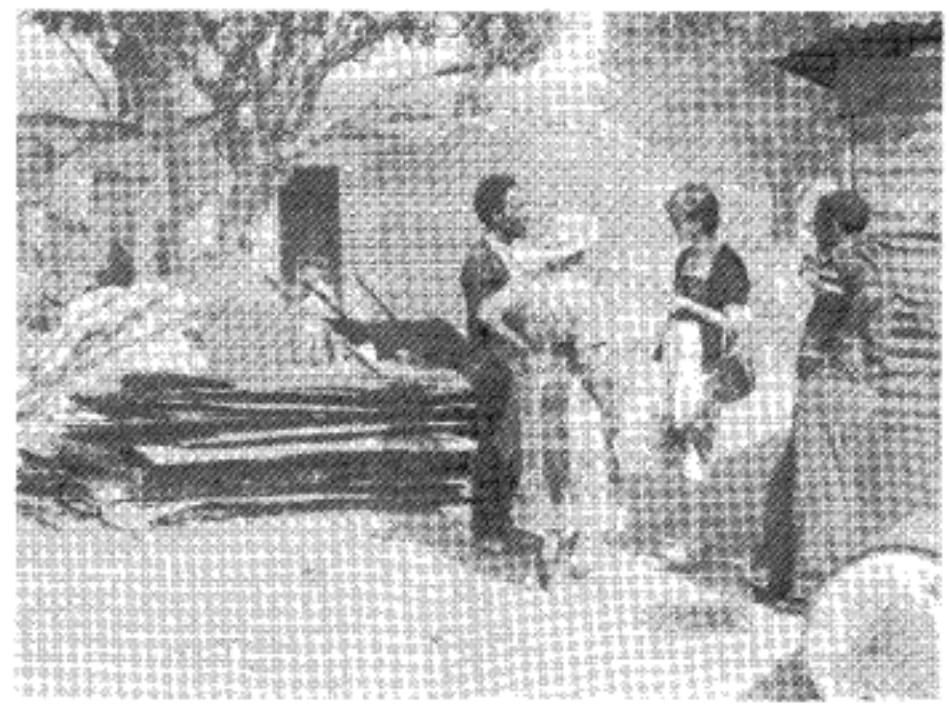
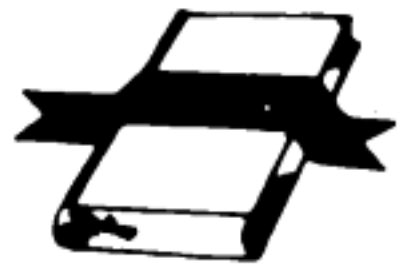
MERLE BEETGE — *The Star's* unsung heroine for 1984



Having been nominated by one of the Grasmere squatter community, Sash member MERLE BEETGE was elected Unsung Heroine by *The Star* newspaper's readership in recognition of her hard work among the Grasmere community, her initiative, negotiating skill, accurate fact-finding and quiet, unselfish reliability.



I was privileged to attend recently the welcome home luncheon for Bishop Desmond Tutu in Khotso House. I heard him deliver a magnificent off-the-cuff speech in which, while outlining the sufferings to which his people have been subjected, he at the same time made an impassioned plea to white South Africa to hear his words. For he held out the hand of friendship and conciliation, calling for negotiation, envisioning a wonderful country in which all would be free, and stating the undeniable truth that whites cannot go it alone, neither can they be free unless blacks are also free.

Very little of the content of this speech appeared in the local press, and none at all on TV. It would seem that it is the intention of SABC TV, and therefore also of the government whose slave it is, to label the Bishop a man of violence while denying him the right to speak for himself.

There was so much good feeling at the luncheon, such inspiring singing, such happiness at the recognition the people had received through their Bishop, and an utter lack of racialism. All were welcome, white and black. I was deeply moved, and could not help thinking how good it would be if only we could go ahead, hand in hand, benefitting from the diverse cultures with which we are blessed, and enjoying each other.

Joyce Harris *National Vice-President*

It is exceedingly difficult to comply with the editor's request to write a few words about the debate published in this issue of Sash.

We are engaged in a discussion which has no beginning and no final end. It is a discussion which is always part of the ongoing debate within any human rights organisation and this must be so.

Sometimes the debate is muted and takes second place to other issues because there is no particular event on hand to make it a priority. At other times, and this is one of them, it becomes a matter of urgency to address ourselves to the problem once more.

This is not the kind of discussion which can comprehensively be contained in a few pages of typescript. It requires long hours of verbal communication and argument. It will never be resolved satisfactorily because it always has to be argued out again and again in the light of new circumstances.

It is a debate which challenges the most fundamental principles of justice and democracy. It is a debate about just war and just revolution — is there or is there not such a thing? It is about justification of the use of violence in fighting repression, or judgment upon that violence.

It is about coercion in all its many forms. Coercion to force the oppenent to give way is one thing. Coercion to force the compliance of reluctant poeple in a planned action such as boycott, strike or stayaway is another. Both present moral problems. When does persuasion become coercion and is there a point at which it becomes morally unacceptable? 'It is a debate about strategies and whether the means do shape the ends, about whether the ends do justify the means.

It is about democracy and about the restraints and limitations which need to be placed on leaders, as well as about the ways in which leaders can sometimes shed the shackles which bind them to their followers.

It is a debate which sometimes seems to challenge our loyalty to our friends. It makes us feel uncomfortable and often very angry.

Nevertheless it is absolutely essential and very healthy that discussion is taking place and that it will inevitably have to be repeated over and over again.

There will never be any absolute and final answers. The line between right and wrong, guilt and innocence is a fine, faint and wavering one. The search for definition and guidelines on which to base our own actions is an unending one.

My own personal commitment to total pacifism remains unaltered but when the Church and society in general justifies and condones violence as a means to an end personal pacifism only provides guidelines for one's own behaviour. I can preach and teach non-violence to others but my views do not often prevail so we have to struggle through with everyone else to some kind of accommodation within this violent, coercive and exploitative world without sacrificing the basic values of justice and peace, truth and compassion. We must not be tempted to compromise those things.

Sheena Duncan *National President*

Controversy over recent Sash editorial

Regional conferences are currently discussing the following correspondence which reflects the kind of debate which is ongoing. We would enjoy comment from our readers.

from Mary Burton

Dear Jill,
I hope you have had some peace and rest over the holiday period. 1984 was a hard year in so many ways, and I am not over-optimistic about 1985.

I was able to have a brief discussion with Sheena last month about the editorial in the latest edition of Sash, and I think I should put in writing to you some of the points made in often heated discussions in this region. I enclose a photocopy of an article by Barry Streek in the Cape Times (see page 5) which added to the concern expressed. Arguments were:

1 *Objections were raised to what was seen as a 'thinly veiled attack' on the UDF. It was acknowledged that the Black Sash must speak out when violent tactics are used, but stressed that we need to document carefully with factual information and to identify those responsible (or at least not to suggest that some organizations might be responsible, especially if the leadership of, for example, UDF and COSAS have explicitly rejected violence as a strategy, which we understand is the case.)*

2 *The Editor of Sash is entitled to express her views in articles in the magazine, but editorials should reflect Black Sash policy. There was anxiety about whether the national President and/or Executive regularly see editorials before publication.*

3 *There was objection to the introduction of the Schlemmer/Kane Berman/ Welsh argument. There appeared no evidence of 'widespread anathematizing' of them, although there have been considerable differences of opinion.*

4 *There was a feeling that hard information about events such as those at Sebokeng, and about the critical situation in the Transvaal is what our members needed — information which is increasingly denied to us by the commercial or government media. Our responsibility to our members is to provide them with information and to help them to work out the implications for the future. (That sounds rather vague — notes made during discussion! I think the idea was that the mood in the Transvaal, the anger and the demand for rights, which has not really been made so evident in the Cape, needed to be conveyed, and that Sash members at least should try to see inevitable rapid changes as part of a necessary process — uncomfortable but healthy in the long run).*

On the other hand, I must also tell you that there were members of the Sash (and of the public after the Streek report) who were delighted with the editorial.

The different responses are all part of the on-going debate about how best to bring about the changes we all agree are essential. I hope this will have helped to explain how we see the function of the Sash and the magazine.

With love, but no hisses,

Mary Burton

* *Mary Burton writes on behalf of her committee, not in her personal capacity.*

Jill replies . . .

I welcomed your letter, for the debate will surely liven up the magazine for months to come. I must say that I do get irritated by signs of a basically authoritarian squeamishness about openly criticising fellow dissidents and/or ourselves.

You say, 'It was acknowledged that the Black Sash must speak out when violent tactics are used, but it was stressed that we need to document carefully with factual information and to identify those responsible . . .' The editorial was primarily about the risk of a new dictatorship in an atmosphere of riot and intimidation. Members of Cape Western cannot seriously be suggesting that one is not allowed to open up commensense debate on complicated problems without first preparing dossiers which, however harmless they may seem, might run the risk of

benefitting the security police.

I gather that members felt we should avoid laying responsibility for violent tactics at the door of organisations which explicitly reject violence: but what if the leaders of those organisations (including our own) don't realise that some of their ideas and strategies contradict the non-violent principle? I would expect it to be the first duty of a human rights organisation to point this out and if those ideas have already become so habitual that they have entered the field of received wisdom, then the only way to counter them is vigorously and publicly and often.

Take for example the constant reference to 'the evil system.' You cannot negotiate with 'evil' only confront it. Add in the all-or-nothing ethic and you have a strong subliminal pull towards violence. Good-evil rhetoric is such an obvious dehumaniser and in times of instability one of history's killers. Just read half a page of Robespierre. Human rights campaigners, if indeed that is what they genuinely are, will always insist on looking at ordinary human beings and their mixed motives and needs and will shy away from emphasis on good or evil systems.

And when Allan Boesak says to a Black Sash conference, 'Non-co-operation with evil is as much a moral obligation as is co-operation with good,' is he not leading people onto dangerous ground, placing the stigma of immorality on anyone who seeks to use those painful, slow, organising, bargaining, pressurizing strategies which are essential to peaceful development and some of which involve the use of leverage within 'the system? Clearly good-evil rhetoric has its place but not so fiercely and insistently that it pushes out the grey areas where creative political activity can take place. I would expect it to be the first duty of a human rights organisation to fret about this sort of thing.

The whole question of reactive violence, which didn't come into this particular editorial, will be debated at the March conference. The trouble is, when the Black Sash discusses violence it gets bogged down in explaining to itself what it already knows: that the structural violence of apartheid is the culprit. Those who chair our debates should learn to prevent this happening. Members join the Black Sash because they know all about apartheid as the cause of violence and counter-violence. We must start from this point, not argue in circles ending up at this point. We should also avoid going on and on about how the government hasn't had a change of heart. Forget about change of heart. We need to concentrate on finding non-violent ways of compelling change. The challenge is — and I again quote Ken Owen because he expressed it best —

> *'When moral leaders airily dismiss resort to violence as a "normal human reaction" they are, at best, omitting to warn that violence is not a solution but a deeper level of hell to be avoided even at very great cost.'*

We urgently need to discuss creative ways of meeting this challenge. We will never do so during two-hourly debates at regional meetings and conferences at which people talk past each other. We need a series of long and sober workshops.

And if we truly believe in democracy we should learn to watch out for a lot of those 'educating' notions which flutter around at our meetings (and everybody elses) which could so easily coalesce into the new dictatorship. When *any* action against an 'evil' regime gets the sanction of high morality; when you add the all-or-nothing ethic and speak scornfully about piecemeal change; when you insist on defining the origins and purpose of government and of institutions and deny the human truth that these mutate and change continuously; when you believe in an elite of ideologists politicising the masses; when you create that terrible myth called 'the will of the people' (which is a means of trapping people into a particular ideology and never allowing them to change their minds); when you downgrade the importance of the vote by dreaming of a one-party state; when you denigrate civil rights by balancing them against the need for 'economic justice'; when you develop an exaggerated belief in the power of the media — then you are slotting in on the ideas and strategies that have been spoken and used by authoritarians from Plato to Marx, Lenin and Stalin, Mussoline and Hitler, Chiang Kai-shek and Mao Tsetung and politicians throughout East Asia, South America and Africa; and you are setting the stage for a fiercer and more destructive fascism than the one you are currently opposing. One only has to read the history of the mass murdering century to understand this.

Incidentally, I believe the UDF's stated discipline of internal democracy could save this country from the above nightmare — because when change comes slowly from the bottom up and not from an elite who have captured the high ground, *there* is that great hope for humanity for which so many agonised writers, writing in the wake of revolutions, have pleaded. That is what my editorial was really about.

Note: All editorials have to be approved by the National Committee before they go to the printer. On two previous occasions there has been no concensus and the editorials in question were published as articles by me, clearly marked as such. These were 'Onslaught on Human Rights (Vol 25, No 2, August 1982) and (Trying to defuse violence (spelt diffuse!) Vol 27 No 2 Aug 84.

Jill Wentzel

Mary Livingstone writes:

I just want to say that your editorial in the November Sash was the sanest thing I've read in months. You will probably know that before we in Cape Town had received our copies, Barry Streek picked it up and wrote a story on it in the *Cape Times* which gave the impression that the Black Sash was criticising the UDF (why not

anyway? No organisation is sacrosanct).

I feel that one of the difficulties is that the real extent of the troubles in the Transvaal is not appreciated here. You did not accuse any individual or group but simply drew attention to 'some disconcerting straws in the wind' about which many of us also have misgivings. The over-simplistic clichés and the double standards applied to our judgments of political friend and foe! You made a magnificent plea for us to hold fast to the principles which brought the Black Sash into being and which cannot be put into cold storage until the dawn of the Brave New World.

from Sheena Duncan

I have difficulties about your negotiation argument and the good/evil characterisation of our present situation. If ever an oppressed people has been prepared to negotiate it has been in this country. The whole history of black resistance has been a history of endless trust in negotiation and endless violations of that trust. Look at the present leaders in communities threatened with removal and their patient continuing with attempts to be granted meetings with the Minister or the Magistrate. You can certainly never accuse the Black Sash of attempting to prevent or dissuade them from their chosen course of action. We have always sought to facilitiate it if that is what the people have decided to do.

I think there are times when to enter into negotiation is just another trap. Negotiation is not negotiation at all when one of the parties has nothing at all to bargain with. Someday I would like to have time to analyse the result of our 1979 meeting with Dr Koornhof which actually immobilised us for approximately 18 months because he had promised to attend to certain things such as administrative procedures at pension payouts and to recruitment of skilled and educated people from homelands. He did nothing at all about any of the things he promised and we were too polite and courteous to attack while we waited for him to carry out his stated undertakings.

Negotiation is going to be a big issue again now with whatever arrangement the State President is going to come up with following his opening address to Parliament. Should people agree to try yet again? They have tried so often before in Representative Councils, Advisory Committees etc and they have always been defeated because they entered into conversations with trust and belief in law and honour while the other side had no intention of moving forward but only of emasculating the black leaders while consolidating their own power.

If you study Ghandian strategies of non-violent coercion there was always love and concern for the opponent, but negotiations came only when there was some kind of balance of strength.

I do think you can only confront evil. It is the method of that confrontation that is all important and you know very well that evil methods of confrontation have been rejected solidly by the Black Sash always.

I think the real cause of all our troubles in white liberal circles at the moment is that we are not victims. We stand on the outside and can maintain high moral positions because we are not watching our children die, our mothers being evicted from their houses because someone has bribed someone else, our husbands denied UIF benefits, our daughters and sons refused permission to work or to make the most of their abilities. This is what causes our confusion.

I personally find it difficult to come out with high-sounding righteous statements about good and evil, right and wrong. You do not pay any attention at all to the solid, sacrificial hard work done by active members of the Black Sash to further non-violent and effective strategies of opposition. In all Regions you find us engaged in encouraging, exploring, teaching the law and structures to enable people to find effective ways of insisting on those rights they have and to find strategies for gaining rights they do not have. I do think we expend almost all our resources of time, talent and energy on 'finding non-violent ways of compelling change.'

and Jill . . .

Re negotiation and the Black Sash contribution to non-violent means of compelling change: you are quite right. I and every other Sash member agree with everything you say, having spent many years doing the work you describe. In addition I have written on this theme in almost every issue of *Sash* that I have edited, especially in relation to the leaders of communities under threat of removal. In August 1983 I made it the theme of the removals issue of *Sash* — 'this repetitiveness in our history, representing the continuous failure of whites to respond to the challenge of black moderation and desire for negotiation and co-operation.'

For this reason I didn't think it necessary to spell it all out. I keep on hoping we will learn to *start* a debate from this point. You say 'negotiation comes only when there is some kind of balance of strength.' Precisely. The tragedy may well be that *NOW* when the government has seen that it has to respond to a combination of pressures which did not exist previously, opposition organizations seem to be imprisoned in the rhetoric which better fitted past decades.

If people persist in believing the government is evil rather than a confused amalgam of different personalities with different motives and perceptions, then chances for peaceful manoevre are going to be missed in favour of an armageddon philosophy. There are all sorts of straws in the wind which could coalesce one way or another. I am only concerned that we look critically at ourselves and others constantly reassessing where we are going.

I agree with you that our great strength is the fact that our work is rooted in the lives of ordinary people.

I am only concerned that we hold onto this strength. That is why I am worried about the effects of disinvestment, for example. We all cringe, do we not, from the faces of unemployed people in our advice offices? That is why I am concerned about our silence when people get their ears sliced as punishment for going to work during a stay-away. I know these are not easy matters. I just want us to worry about them.

Your argument about sitting comfy and passing judgment can be turned on its head. It's just as bad to sit comfy and forget how awful it must be to be caught between police violence on one hand and intimidation by a highly politicised elite on the other. I speak about this not from some lofty theoretical ivory tower but from contact with people who have explained to me in graphic detail what it is like to live like this. I have two black students who intermittently live with me who don't know whom to fear most and who want to emigrate to America!

Sash warning on new 'dictators'

By BARRY STREEK

THE Black Sash has warned against the "ominous" potential for dictatorship among black communities where leaders are not elected.

It has also urged the United Democratic Front (UDF) to adopt strategies in which the government was presented with demands it could meet.

The creation of strong constituencies for organization and negotiation would never happen if leaders allowed themselves to be guided by self-interest and ideology "rather than by the needs and aspirations of ordinary people", the Black Sash said.

In an editorial in the latest issue of the organization's journal, Sash, it said: "One result of denying the vote to the majority of citizens is that there are no properly accepted structures for the expression of discontent or bargaining or management of day-to-day living.

"But now we are glimpsing signs of a more ominous, less recognized consequence, which is the potential for dictatorship that exists among the disenfranchized masses; for when leaders are not elected, they are free from responsibility to their constituencies and even from the necessity of having constituencies."

When the government could prohibit meetings, either by banning or the refusal of permits, "you are asking for a situation where any determined group can order masses of people around by means of posters, leaflets and strong-arm tactics".

The article declared also that there were some disconcerting straws in the wind which needed to be discussed by the UDF and all opposition organizations.

Boycotts

Substantial numbers of people now wanted to get on with their lives and schooling, and they did not see what was being achieved by endless boycotts. The kind of rhetoric which invoked "the wrath of the people", together with statements that collaborators only had themselves to blame for violent attacks on them, "do not exactly create a suitable climate for frank and free discussion", the editorial continued.

The editorial suggested that "strategies must surely be worked out whereby the government is presented with demands it can meet. The consequences of the all-or-nothing ethic need to be looked at".

From Cape Times, November 28, 1984

Rural blacks in the western Cape

Sue Joynt

In Ceres — a small Boland town — the prescribed areas defined by the government for the purpose of 'ordering' the lives of blacks, is divided into a municipal and a divisional council area. The former covers the town and the latter the surrounding farming areas. Mr D J was born (he claims) in the town of Ceres where for many years he has worked for a dairy. The Development Board officials claim that he was born in the divisional council area of Ceres and therefore needed their special permission to work in the municipal area. This he was given, together with a place in the single quarters in the black township.

Problems arose when he married a coloured woman — her family are happy for him to live with them in the coloured township but this is not allowed. Because his wife was with him in the single quarters after repeated warnings that she was to leave, his permit and accommodation in the municipal area have now been cancelled and he has been told that he must find a job in the divisional council area of Ceres. The employer, meanwhile, would like to continue employing him but would have to provide him with housing which is not possible.

In Robertson there are families with qualifications for permanent residence in the area but no residences for them to occupy and no obligation on the part of the authorities to provide any.

Mr and Mrs O have lived on a farm in the Robertson district since 1962. They therefore have qualified under Section 10 (b) of the Urban Areas Act to live and work there permanently. All their children were born there. Because no provision is made for schools for black children in the area, they had to be sent to boarding school in Transkei. When Mrs O returned from taking the children to school, she found that they had been moved out of their house on the farm and her husband was in the single quarters. As she has no other home, she moved in with him. They have twice been arrested — she for being where she is not permitted to be and he for harbouring her. The magistrate feels that this is not a matter for his Court but the authorities are not compelled to house them. (Robertson is theoretically served by a small township — Ashton) nor is the employer (in this case the Dept of Nature Conservation). Where are they meant to live? No other farmer can provide them with accommodation unless they are registered as working for him and the township has no room.

In Swellendam the position is even worse. Many blacks have lived and worked there for 20 or more years but there is no township at all. Thus a place to live in the area where a black is qualified to be is totally dependent on

his employment. If he works on a farm he will probably have a house. If he works on the national road for the Provincial Administration he is supposed to live in a hostel in a camp with no provision for his wife and family to be with him — even though many of these men have wives who if black are qualified to live in the Swellendam area too.

The WCDB and/or SAP regularly raid these camps and arrest the women they find there.

Lucky is the black family who have a house on a farm but what is supposed to happen to them when the parents reach retirement age? They are entitled to a pension in the area in which they are qualified to live. They know no other home and the farmer will probably evict them from his land because he needs the housing for his new workers.

Who is responsible for sorting out problems such as these? Who decides that there will be no township in Swellendam even though there are scores of black families qualified to live and work there but who are not provided with houses, schools or any access to basic social infrastructures which they are not allowed to provide for themselves either?

In Swellendam most of the women are living on farms with at least their children and sometimes their husbands with them. This puts them in a tenuous position as farmers are only allowed to acccommodate their own workers on their farm. Thus if the woman loses her job she loses the family's accommodation too. This has just happened to Mrs M who has lived and worked on a plum farm for the past 20 years. The farmer has now decided to farm cattle instead of plums and she and her family have been evicted. Her husband has worked for the Provincial Roads Dept all his life and is supposed to live in the 'camp'. Where is his family to live now?

The whole of the Western Cape is administered by the Western Cape Development Board which has its head office at Goodwood in Cape Town. There are regional offices at Stellenbosch, Paarl, Worcester, Hermanus, Ceres. Ashton/Montagu, Malmesbury and Springbok. According to the Western Cape Development Board there are presently 136 000 people qualified to live in the Western Cape — of these 2 585 families live in the rural areas. 353 families in Ashton (where there is a small township) 132 in Robertson, 123 in Ceres, 1 022 in Paarl (where there is a township) 129 in Hermanus (where there is a township) 231 in Stellenbosch (another township) 251 in Kuilsriver (a township) and 1 160 in Worcester (again a township) — *Die Burger* October 2, '84. No mention is made of the remaining 435 families who presumably do not live in townships and are scattered through the rest of the WCDB area.

Figures for the de jure (ie legal) population of the Western Cape for 1983 are as follows:

Prescribed Areas:	males	females	total	number of houses rented
Ashton	3 173	1 639	4 812	202
Ceres	4 853	347	5 200	59
Hermanus	7 250	800	8 050	93
Malmesburg	8 770	100	8 870	—
Paarl	10 180	4 700	14 880	622
Springbok	4 432	—	4 432	—
Stellenbosch	11 547	1 113	12 660	279
Worcester	9 466	4 287	13 753	1 038

Hansard 17 of '84 para: 1387

Worcester covers a large area extending up to Sutherland and Laingsburg while Hermanus administers all the coastal magisterial districts up to the Gouritz River. There is only one township in this region and this is at Hermanus which is obviously of no use to most of the blacks working in this large area. Each town in the area is visited one day a week by a circuit labour officer and the camps are regularly raided by the board inspectors and/or the SA Police. Tear gas has been used in these raids. If the women apprehended in the camps have permission to be in the area then they are charged with trespassing in the camp.

During July 1984 the Black Sash advice office went to Swellendam (controlled by the WCDB office at Hermanus, but it has no township) and interviewed 87 people from whom we ascertained the following infomation:

MEN : 68 interviews
Permits — ie permanent residence rights:

5 had contracts, 29 had open permits, 23 had a permit marked 'nie kontrak', 1 had 10 1(b) rights, 3 had pensions, 2 were work-seekers, 3 had no permits, 2 had new travel documents into which their permits had not yet been stamped.

Thus 58 of the 68 interviewed, or 85%, have permanent residence rights.

Accommodation:

Men living on farms: 32 — with wives 28 (6 coloured); without wives 4

Men living in camps (ie single quarters): 32 — with wives 7 (3 coloured); without wives 25; with wives on farms 7 (1 coloured).

Of these wives, 7 had no permits, 14 had permits, 13 permit position unknown, 12 coloured.

WOMEN : 19 interviews
Permits : 4 working with permits, 6 without permits, 5 have permits but are not working, 4 have no permits and are not working.

Accommodation:

On farms: 16 — with husbands 5; without husbands 9 (4 not married); away all week working in Paarl 2
In camps: 2 — with husband
In town: 1 — without husband

Length of time in Swellendam:

Of 68 men : 22 were born in area, 2 had lived there longer than 40 years, 8 longer than 30 years, 22 longer than 25 years, 13 longer than 15 years, 1 longer than 10 years.

Of 23 women either interviewed or wives of men interviewed: 10 were born in area, 3 had lived there longer than 25 years, 5 longer than 15 years, and 5 longer than 5 years.

In dissucssions with senior officials of the WCDB they agree that the situation is deplorable but representations to the government regarding the building of family housing have not met with any success.

Black housing

— weapon of apartheid —

What will change?

Pauline Morris

Pauline Morris

To help members monitor the government's promised changes in housing and influx control, here is an account of the existing regulations, written in September '84.

This article

- *outlines the South African government's urban black policy as it is currently applied, taking Soweto as an example;*
- *indicates the manner in which housing, settlement and land policies are used as mechanisms for implementing urban black policies*
- *assesses the implications of these processes for the Soweto community and certain groups within it; on the private sector as a housing agent; on the Soweto Council; on the local Development board.*

Urban black policy

From various official policy statements made since 1976, it would seem that the general policy being applied in urban black areas such as Soweto is as follows:

- permanency

The permanency of those residents with the required qualifications to reside in the urban areas of 'white designated' South Africa (Section 10 (i) (a) (b) and (c)) is accepted. This is a significant change from former policies, which regarded such persons as 'temporary sojourners'.

- the restriction of numbers

The intention is to restrict further permanent movement of persons from the rural areas and from the homelands into these areas, and to initiate a process to contain or even to relocate surplus population to areas outside the Central Witwatersrand.

- the creation of a middle class

The basic premise of the Riekert Commission (1979) was to strengthen the position of established black communities in the 'white designated' urban areas of South Africa, and afford them new and wider opportunities. The government has accepted the main recommendations of the Commission, and certain of these, such as the lifting of trade restrictions and the establishment of service industries, are being implemented. Home ownership, as will be shown, is being actively encouraged.

- the increased participation of the private sector in the implementation of urban black policy

Numerous official statements suggest that the government is anxious to encourage greater private sector, and particularly employer responsibility, in its strategy to create a stable middle class through the promotion of education and training, black advancement, and, as will be highlighted later, participation in its housing programme.

- the withdrawal of South African citizenship

The withdrawal of South African citizenship may be another aspect supporting the containment of the permanent group of blacks living in 'white designated' South Africa. Apart from the fact that influx control can be implemented under legislation permitting the deportation of 'foreigners', citizenship status, as will be shown, is used as a criterion for access to residential and employment rights.

Special Parliamentary Committee

Certain aspects of urban black policy, such as influx control and citizenship, will be clarified once the proposed urbanisation bill (formerly the Orderly Movement and Settlement of Black Persons Bill) is presented to Parliament. This legislation, the third of a 'trilogy' of Acts relating to urban blacks, is currently under investigation by a Special Parliamentary Committee under the chairmanship of the Minister of Constitutional Development and Planning.

Policies in other regions

Broad urban black policies, as well as supporting settlement and housing strategies, differ among regions. In the Western Cape for instance, although a new

township, Khayelitsha is being established and freehold title is now to be granted to 'legals'. a major emphasis of the housing policy in this region is to remove 'illegal' persons through the control and demolition of 'unauthorised dwellings'. In the Durban/Kwa Zulu region, the number of persons having permanent urban rights is being limited through boundary changes which incorporate urban townships in 'white designated' South Africa into Kwa Zulu.

The housing policies being applied in Kwa Zulu and in other homelands are very different from those being applied in Soweto, and emphasise a self-help, site-and-service approach. The housing and standards are more flexible in these areas where vast informal settlements have emerged on the urban periphery.

It should be borne in mind, too, that particularly after the 1976 disturbances, national and international attention was focused on Soweto. This gave particular impetus to a process aimed at stabilising and upgrading the area.

Housing policy as implemented in Soweto

Having outlined the broad policies being applied in Soweto, an attempt will be made to identify and examine certain housing, settlement, and land use strategies which support this overall policy.

Permanency

The introduction of the 99-year leasehold system which is being promoted actively in Soweto is a clear indication of the recognition of the permanency of qualified persons in the area. In terms of the Black Communities Development Act 1984, this leasehold is automatically renewable and the leases are registered in the Deeds Registery Office. The stated intention of the home ownership programme is to promote the free enterprise system and to develop an active property market, as well as to involve the private sector in this process.

However, as will be shown, the promotion of home ownership plays a significant part in other urban black strategies such as the creation of a middle class. While home ownership may be in line with the development of a free market system, its application in an artificial market such as exists in Soweto is likely to have negative implications for many Sowetans.

The restriction of numbers

Certain policies are aimed at restricting the number of permanent residents in Soweto, and may even indicate an intention to relocate residents from Soweto to certain growth points located outside the Central Witwatersrand. The migrant labour system is to be retained and promoted. The following policies support this view:

- decentralisation
- restricted land allocation
- the removal of 'unauthorised' structures
- the further provision of hostel accommodation
- the availability of approved accommodation as a criterion for residential and employment rights.

Decentralisation

Certain policy statements show that a strategy is being devised and implemented to curtail development in the Central Witwatersrand and to redirect it towards a development axis stretching from Brits to Middelburg, with Bronkhorstspruit as its focus.

A document drawn up by the Physical Planning Branch of the Office of the Prime Minister (1981), 'A Spatial Development Strategy for the PWV Complex' spells out this policy. The Central Witwatersrand was designated as an area of future surplus black labour, which would have to be moved to areas having a shortfall of labour.

Housing policies are to promote this decentralisation strategy. The Director of Local Government for the Department of Co-operation and Development has emphasised that housing provision is to be linked to a specific development project. Within the PWV Region housing provision is to be specifically linked to the Bronkhorstspruit Development Area (Cronje, 1982). The Steyn Commission of Enquiry into the Financing of Black Housing (1983) stated clearly that housing policies formulated for the 'white-designated' areas should not be in conflict with the decentralisation policy of the State.

In terms of the Black Communities Development Act of 1984, the Minister may designate a development area within or outside its area of jurisdiction (Sections 33 and 34). This would allow a board to participate in the establishment of decentralised growth points. It is pointed out that funds accruing from charges levied on residents in Soweto as well as from the proceeds of the housing sale could be used for the financing of these areas. The East Rand Development board is already actively involved in the development of Ekangala (see below).

The Bronkhorstspruit growth point (100 kms to the north-east of Johannesburg) is being rapidly developed. In January 1984 it was reported that the first 620 houses of a scheme intended to create a township (Ekangala) of 300 000 people by the year 2000 had been built. In 1983 the government spent R14 million on its development and was planning to spend the same amount in 1984 (*Rand Daily Mail,* January 3, 1984). The proposed township of Ekangala will straddle the boundary of South Africa and Kwa Ndebele. The standard of housing being provided in the first phase is relatively high although it is expected that rentals and sale prices will be heavily subsidised. It is likely too, that future projects, particularly those situated within Kwa Ndebele, will be mainly site-and-service schemes.

Restricted land allocation

The retention of the Group Areas Act as well as state control over the allocation of land provide further means of controlling the number of permanent residents. Statements on the 'optimum size' of the population of Soweto and on its expansion confirm the intention to constrain development there. Mr J C Knoetze, Chairman of the West Rand Board, has said that the size of Soweto should be limited. He accepted that the unofficial population was some 1,2 million and stated that the 'optimum' population should be 1,5 million. The decision was based on management, administrative and economic considerations. The additional 300 000 people could be accommodated by adding on rooms to existing houses, by increasing densities and by developing vacant sites (Soweto: A Survey. Supplement to the *Financial Mail,* March 25, 1983).

A typical Soweto house

The Black Communities Development Act 1984 (Sections 33 and 34) provides for the retention by the Minister and the board of all powers relating to the allocation of land for black development. No consultation with a black local authority is required. This provision is in line with the stated intention of government to concentrate on the provision of land and infrastructure rather than on the provision of housing (See 'Increased private sector participation').

The removal of 'authorised structures'

In January 1983, when Dr P J Koornhof, Minister of Co-operation and Development announced the government's 13-point strategy for black housing, he made it clear that 'squatting' had no place in this policy. The continuing raids on squatters in the Western Cape makes it clear that this policy is aimed at restricting the entry of 'unauthorised' persons into certain urban areas.

The action taken by the Soweto Council and the West Rand Board between February and July 1983 in Orlando East, where many 'unauthorised' shacks were demolished, suggests that it is also the intention of government to apply these controls strictly in Soweto. It is probable that the demolitions were halted because of the realisation that this action would reduce the credibility of the Soweto Council and the 'new' local authority dispensation for urban blacks. Elections under the Black Local Authority Act, introduced in July 1982, were due to be held in November 1983. It was also evident that certain loopholes regarding the Soweto Council's authority to demolish 'unauthorised' accommodation existed in the legislation being applied at the time.

In the new legislation introduced for urban blacks clear provision is made both to control and demolish shacks and 'unauthorised' settlements and to direct that a black local authority be responsible for the implementation of such action.

In terms of Section 23 of the Black Local Authorities Act, it is provided that the Minister may under any law instruct a council to take action to prevent or combat the unlawful occupation of land or buildings and the removal of such structures. The Black Communities Development Act (Section 37) provides that the Minister may direct a board or a local authority to 'disestablish a town or portion thereof', if in his opinion, the conditions under which persons are living endanger the health or safety of the public or any group or person of if 'it appears that any such measure is desirable with regard to any town or regional planning undertaken or the furtherance of this Act or any other law'. This provision may give justification for the removal of a settlement or town on the grounds that it is in conflict with the decentralisation strategy.

The ruling party in the new Soweto Council, the Sofasonke Party, was actively involved in the campaign to halt the demolitions that took place in Orlando East. Since the introduction of the new legislation no significant demolitions have been implemented in Soweto and it remains to be seen whether ministerial directives will be given to continue the process initiated in February 1983.

Further provision of hostel accommodation

While permanent movement into Soweto is to be controlled, the contract labour system is to be maintained and promoted. To implement this the government is encouraging the private sector to provide hostel accommodation, and planning to expand existing hostels in Soweto. (See also 'Increased private sector participation')

At present there are ten hostels in Soweto housing

some 45 000 persons. It is proposed that Mapetla, Dube and Jabulani hostels be expanded to accommodate a further 23 300 persons (Soweto: A Survey. Supplement to *Financial Mail,* March 25, 1983; *Financial Mail,* December 2, 1983.)

The availability of 'approved accommodation'

If the intent expressed in the OMSBP Bill and indeed in the Riekert Commission's proposals is incorporated into the proposed Urbanisation Bill, influx control will be tightened up and will be linked to the availablity of employment and 'approved accommodation'. The lack of such accommodation could be a means of restricting movement into and even forcing people out of areas like Soweto.

The creation of a middle-class

While policies aimed at creating a middle-class are, in world terms, a common socio-political strategy and may be a natural consequence of urbanisation, the application of such a policy in the context of separate development may be unique and have specific repercussions not only for groups within Soweto but also for those excluded access to permanent resident and employment in metropolitan regions such as the Witwatersrand.

It is held that the following policies on or related to housing are aimed at supporting the policy to establish a stable middle class in Soweto:

- home ownership
- the upgrading of infrastructure
- the type and cost of new housing being provided.

Linked to these policies is the stated intention that residents must pay the full costs of infrastructure, services and housing.

Home Ownership

The government's home ownership campaign, whereby certain discounts are being offered to buyers for a period ending in July 1985, is being promoted actively in Soweto.

It is maintained that the promotion of home ownership is an important part of the process aimed at creating a middle-class. Not only does it commit participants in a financial sense but it also is intended to give them something to defend and protect.

The home ownership programme will also tend to act as a filter aimed at excluding illegals and those who, in a socio-economic sense, do not fit into the middle-class mould. Leasehold rights are granted only to 'qualified persons' and it is required that all dependents and subtenants living in the dwelling be listed and approved. The shortage of housing, the limited expansion of Soweto, the high cost of new housing being provided and the increasingly high service and other charges being levied in Soweto mean that a restricted number of persons will have access to home ownership. In general those excluded are likely to be in the lower income category.

Upgrading

To assist in creating a middle-class environment, special attention is being given to the upgrading of services in Soweto. While the improvement of essential infrastructure such as water and sewerage reticulation is undoubtedly necessary, particularly since the maintenance and development of these systems have been neglected, the priority given to the costly electrification programme has been questioned. The present council, for instance, maintains that the provision of housing is of a higher priority and has expressed reluctance to repay the large loans acquired to finance the programme (*The Star,* June 26 1984). As will be shown, legal provision is made to enforce such repayments.

The type and cost of new housing being provided

The type and cost of new housing being provided supports the view that it is the intention to create a middle-class in Soweto.

While low-cost housing options are being provided in other parts of South Africa, such options are not being encouraged in Soweto. The lowest priced new housing available is a shell house scheme in Chiawelo where houses are being sold for over R13 000 (including services). In 'self-help' schemes being implemented in areas such as Khutsong in Carltonville, in Constantia near Kroonstad and in Inanda near Durban, housing is being provided at considerably lower costs (Nell et al, 1983)

Most new housing in Soweto is being built by the private sector for sale to high income groups. Some employers are assisting their higher paid employees to purchase these houses.

To further illustrate the cost of new dwellings being built in Soweto, it is noted that the price of two- and three-bedroomed flats in Diepkloof Extension is R36 000 and R40 000 respectively. (*The Sowetan*, April 3, 1984). The minimum expected cost of housing in an Urban Foundation scheme in Protea North is R20 000 (*Financial Mail,* March 23, 1984).

Residents to pay

The dire financial state of most black local authorities has been widely publicised. Councils are expected to be self-sufficient financially and receive no outside funding although their areas are, in economic terms, fully integrated into the metropolitan or urban systems of which they form part. Sowetans contribute significantly and to an increasing extent towards the Johannesburg metropolitan area's economic development, both in terms of production, profits and tax revenue, and the consumption of goods produced and sold.

Despite this it is a fundamental part of the new housing strategy that the community must pay the full costs of services provided. Site rentals (equivalent to assessment rates) and service charges (for water, refuse removal, etc) have been increased substantially in Soweto during recent years. A compulsory levy is charged to all housholds to finance the electrification scheme. It has been stated that house rentals (at present a fixed charge of around R4,00 per month based on the repayment of the original loan raised to build the house), are to be increased after July 1985 when the special housing sale compaign ends.

The increasing financial burden being placed on residents in Soweto and other areas is consistent with the strategy of creating a middle class. Those unable to meet increasing payments may have no alternative but to move out of Soweto in search of affordable accommodation.

Provision is made in the recently introduced legislation to enforce the payment of increased charges and levies. In Section 43 of the Black Communities Development Act a board may increase service charges by an amount determined to be 'fair and reasonable'. In terms of Section 45 of the Act 'a warrant of execution against the movable property' of persons failing to pay such charges may be issued by the Commissioner.

Under the Black Local Authorities Act it is provided that if a council fails to make 'adequate' charges for services or to meet financial and loan commitments, and if its finances are 'unsound', the Minister may direct the council to enforce such charges or alternatively dissolve the council.

To date the Soweto Council has neither reduced nor increased site rentals. In July, 1984 the council agreed to increase the electrification levy from R12 to R17 per month (*Rand Daily Mail,* August 8, 1984). Subsequently, however, this increase was temporarily shelved by the council 'because of the financial climate in the country and the confusion the levy created amongst residents' (*Rand Daily Mail,* September 10, 1984.

This reversal is likely to be a response to protests and rioting in other areas such as Daveyton, Tembisa, Tumahole and Lekoa where site rentals have been increased.

Increased private sector participation

It is stated policy that the government is to concentrate on the provision of land and infrastructure. The private sector (employers, financial institutions and developers) and the individual are expected to be responsible for the provision of housing. In Section 52 of the Black Community Development Act provision is made for the private sector to acquire land under the 99-year leasehold scheme and to develop this land. In Section 58 of the Act it is stated that an employer falling within a prescribed category shall provide the prescribed accommodation or housing for his black employees of their families.

While it may be important to involve the private sector in the housing process, it is evident that this sector is concentrating on the provision of or assistance with housing for the higher income groups. Many employees may live as sub-tenants in existing houses and have no access to lower priced accommodation.

It is pointed out too, that if certain provisions of the OMSBP legislation are reintroduced, employer responsibility both for providing housing and for ensuring that those employed are housed in 'approved' accommodation will be enforced.

Citizenship and leasehold rights

This matter as already mentioned, is being investigated by a Special Parliamentary Commission and is expected to be clarified in the proposed urbanisation Bill.

However, certain provisions in the Black Communities Development Act clearly link access to

leasehold rights and permanent residential rights to citizenship status. Section 10 qualifications are retained as a basis for the granting of 99-year leasehold rights. Since persons born after the acceptance of independence by a homeland of which they are citizens lose their Section 10 rights, they would automatically be excluded from acquiring leasehold rights. In addition the legislation allows only for the first generation descendant to inherit these rights and then only if such a person is a South African citizen or was born before the independence of a homeland of which he is a citizen. (Hansard No 2, February 8, 1984, col 588).

Thus the legislation as it stands and subject to provisions in the proposed Urbanisation Bill, suggests that fewer and fewer persons will be eligible for residential and leasehold rights. If this is the case it supports the view that it is the intention to limit or even reduce the number of black persons living permanently in areas such as Soweto.

Implications

The implications of the trends and processes that have been identified, as they affect certain groups of Sowetans as well as others involved in the housing process, may be as follows:

— All Sowetans

All Sowetans will be faced with increased costs for infrastructure, and service charges. These increases, as is evident from past experiences and from the reaction of communities where such increases have recently been implemented, are an explosive issue. The whole community will also feel the effects of increased overcrowding and increased state control. Divisions may appear between the elite group living in modern, high standard housing and those who have no or limited access to housing, as well as between a landlord and a tenant class.

It is unlikely that the capital gains associated with an active property market will be realised by many of those who buy their homes for the simple reason that the shortage of housing will limit the acquisition of alternative accommodation within Soweto. Only those owning houses and moving out of Soweto will be able to realise the profits to be gained.

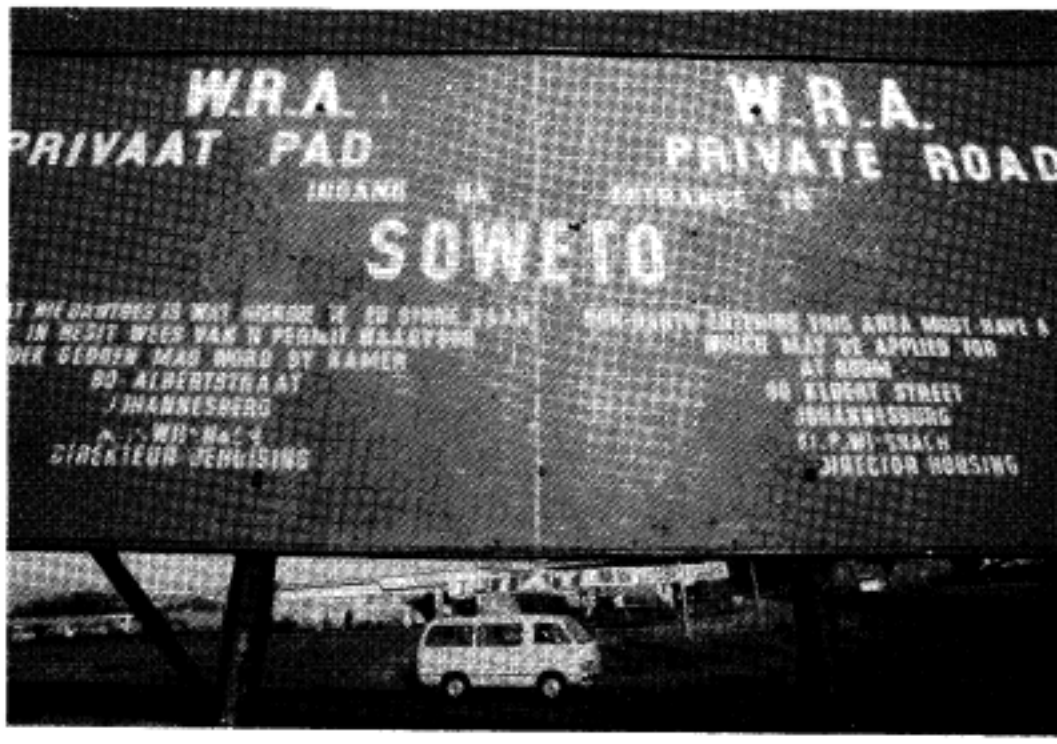
— The elite group

The elite group, who can afford the housing being provided or who have been assisted by their employers, will be suitable accommodated. However, land for such housing will soon run out. This means that members of this group may move out of Soweto into areas where new housing is being provided or they may use their influence to acquire existing houses. The increasing financial burden being placed on Sowetans will make it difficult for lower income households to retain their housing.

— Registered tenants in existing houses

Those who are registered tenants (and therefore 'legal') and who have bought their houses will be relatively secure if they can maintain their repayments and meet the increased services and other charges.

Those unable to buy their houses will be less secure. As tenants they will be more vulnerable to eviction, and



as mentioned, it is intended that house rentals will increase after July, 1985.

— Sub-tenants

The already large number of sub-tenants in Soweto will inevitably increase. Over-crowding will become chronic and given the shortage of accommodation, tenant rentals will escalate. If the authorities are able to control the emergence of shacks both within Soweto and on adjacent vacant land, large numbers of sub-tenants will have little alternative but to move to other areas. Those who can afford it may move into formal houses provided in growth points like Bronkhorstspruit or in the Far East Rand. Those who cannot afford this housing (and it must be remembered that sub-tenants will not gain financially from the home ownership campaign) will have to seek affordable options which are, for the most part, only available in the homelands.

— The private sector

The responsibility for housing is being openly shifted from the state to the private sector. Employees will expect employers rather than the state to assist in or provide housing, and this may become a significant issue in labour relations. The state may force certain categories of employers to provide housing (see 'Increased private sector participation')

Employers will also have decreasing options as to whom they may house and where these houses can be

provided. Administrative procedures and the high costs involved will prevent employers, and particularly small employers, from contributing significantly to housing provision. Perhaps most significantly, they will have to assume the role of influx control officers by being responsible for ensuring not only that those employed are 'legal' but also that they live in 'approved accommodation.

— The Soweto Council/Development Board

The financial constraints (leading to increasing charges), and the pressure to provide more housing to control 'unauthorised' dwellings will make it increasingly difficult to manage and administer Soweto. If the council undertakes to or is directed to increase charges substantially or demolish shacks its credibility will be reduced further and this may even result in the breakdown of the local government system. Conflict between the board and the council over these and other issues seems inevitable.

Conclusion

The general theme emerging from the study is that it is the intention of government to initiate a process in Soweto which is aimed at containing its size, and at creating a middle class living in an upgraded environment, able to pay for this development and for the administration of the city. Excess population and particularly those people in the lower income groups may have little alternative other than to move out of the Central Witwatersrand area to other decentralised growth points, preferably those located in or adjacent to a homeland.

Land, settlement and housing policies as well as financial strategies are aimed at supporting this process. While it may be difficult to assess the effectiveness of the strategy, it is considered that certain key factors may counteract the process:

- Soweto is an area of high employment opportunity. It is likely that residents will resist having to move to other areas;
- measures introduced to encourage movement out of Soweto, such as the control or demolition of shacks and the increase of site rentals and other charges may tend to destabilise rather than stabilise the population;
- the Soweto council is likely to be reluctant to take responsibility for the implementation of the above-mentioned measures. If they are directed to enforce them, the local government system, which is part of the strategy to create a stable middle class, may be jeopardised;
- given the poverty and lack of employment opportunities in the homelands, measures aimed at restricting the movement of persons from these areas into Soweto and particulary at removing 'illegals' or even lower income groups from Soweto will be increasingly difficult to implement.
- black persons or communities who see the strategy of creating a stable middle-class as a co-optive measure aimed at establishing a buffer between permanent urban residents and those living in the homelands may react against such measures. Certain constraints such as the Group Areas Act as well as other settlement and housing policies may themselves frustrate potential participants in the strategy.

September 1984

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Photographs in this article by Ingrid Hudson

The bookstall at the Jhb morning market — from left, Netty Davidoff, chief cashier for many years, with convenor Judy Stacey. Standing is Joyce Michel who organizes sales of the leftover books throughout the year.

The Institute of Race Relations

— *its role and relevance*

John Kane-Berman's mother, Gaby, was a founder member of Sash and a member of the Liberal Party. His father Louis was the Torch Commando's National Chairman. Politicised from childhood, editor (with Clive Nettleton) of a reportedly scurrilous sixth-form newspaper, 'Sixth Sense', living among duplicating machines, petitions, protests and endless meetings, John grew up as a child (or skivvy) of the Black Sash, the Liberal Party, and the PFP. Members have followed his career from president of the Wits SRC to an Oxford PPE as a Rhodes Scholar, a researcher for the South African Institute of Race Relations, a journalist, assistant editor of the Financial Mail, a brilliant foreign correspondent — and now Director of the South African Institute of Race Relations.

As a founder Sash member myself, I've known John since he was 10 and I was 23. I most vividly remember him as a young researcher for the SAIRR, bitterly critical of the conservatism of the Council, absolutely furious when his exposures of business malpractice were subjected to merciless scrutiny and editing by Ellen Hellmann (it was he, was it not, who nicknamed her The Godmother?). Then, he grudgingly admired her; now, ironically, he wears her mantle in his efforts to return the Institute to the Ellen Hellmann ethic — political lobbying based on impeccable and independent research. Most vividly of all I remember John hurling abuse at me for reading George Orwell, who, he said, curling his lip scornfully then as now, was socialism's single most irresponsible and dangerous destroyer. Well, kyk hoe lyk hy nou . . .

Sash editor Jill Wentzel interviews the Institute's Director John Kane-Berman

John, you took over the Institute amid financial crisis and administrative breakdown, and you have spent just over a year trying to consolidate and start afresh. Inevitably, amid all the cutting back and redefining and consolidating, people have felt let down or bewildered or antagonistic. I think it would be useful if we examined some of the criticisms currently levelled at you and the Institute. Let us start with the most common of these: that now there is nothing for ordinary members to do; that the most important functions where all races could meet, where everybody felt comfortable and at home, were the lunch clubs. Why, people ask, have these been closed down in favour of symposiums where the whole flavour is elitist?

The lunch clubs were stopped because, with the occasional exception, only about two dozen people attended although well over a thousand were invited each time to hear the guest speaker. Now that we hold the equivalent function in the evening we get three or four times as many people and quite often well over 100. We also get a much bigger black attendance.

And do you feel a more elitist audience have attended these functions?

It's very difficult to judge, especially since we are seeing a lot of new faces, black as well as white. Our evening panel discussion on the cultural boycott, which was very exciting and controversial, drew more than 100 people, of whom about three quarters were black people we'd not seen before.

You couldn't have called these VIP's ?

I shouldn't have thought so.

Let's return to the question of there being nothing for ordinary members to do. There is widespread criticism regarding the abandoning of projects. People feel lack of money isn't a good enough excuse and say that projects can be devised where people can work together across the colour line for common goals, which do not need to cost much money. There is a lot of dismay at the closing of the arts and crafts shops.

When I was appointed director of the Institute in September 1983 it had already had to obtain a large bank overdraft and we had to take a very thorough look at the whole range of our activities and the costs thereof. We found that we had become a kind of holding company for a large number of projects, and there was simply not the money to continue financing them. The project itself may not seem terribly expensive but there are all sorts of overhead costs like bookkeepers and telephones and so on. These all add up, so it's just not true to say projects can be run without worrying about the costs. The arts and crafts shops, for example, were collectively losing R2 000 to R3 000 a month. With an overdraft of well over R100 000 we had no choice but to call a halt. You can't go on subsidising projects on borrowed money.

In any event there are now a whole range of other organisations with expertise in a variety of fields and we see no purpose in attempting to duplicate. Operation Hunger was initiated by us and once it was able to stand on its own feet administratively it went off on its own with our blessing (as other projects have done since the 1930s) and we, of course, are still represented on its board of trustees.

We still have two major project-type activities going in Johannesburg. One is the Education Support Programme, which last year had about 1 200 black schoolchildren studying for the JMB matric. The project will continue, as long as the funding does. The main project that we have, however, is our bursary programme, which is the biggest in the country as far a I know. Last year from our Johannesburg office we had about 325 black students at university.

Our ability to continue with this very large bursary programme depends on receiving the necessary funding and I have recently been in western Europe trying to increase that funding. Some of our regional offices also run big bursary programmes for both schoolchildren and university students.

So why do people, do you think, get the vision suddenly of Race Relations as an organisation that seems to be divorced from anything other than elitist functions for important business people? Someone said that the Institute seemed to have turned into 'a business advisory service.' Why do you think people are saying that?

I don't really know. Possibly they see things changing at Auden House and feel threatened by the changes. Our functions are certainly not divorced from issues of concern to the majority of the people in this country. We have organised discussions around the new constitution; we've had local and foreign experts talking about the dynamics of change in this country; we've looked at Namibia, influx control, the crisis in black education, whether ethnic editions of newspapers are perpetuating apartheid, and so on.

Another issue that we had a panel discussion on one evening was the Nkomati Accord, and that was a specific attempt to enable our own members and the public at large to listen to three or four diffferent black perspectives on the issue. We did that because we thought whites should be made aware of the fact that blacks didn't necessarily share their euphoria about the accord.

We encourage business leaders to attend because we believe that one of our roles is to try to put them in touch with black attitudes from the most militant to the least politicised. But that doesn't mean that the functions are geared towards business. Some, in fact, are geared in the opposite direction — like the briefing we specially arranged this week for trade union leaders on the Urban Foundation's investigation into influx control. We knew this information was being made available to the top business leaders and we wanted the unions to have it too.

Have you any ideas of numbers vis-a-vis black/white membership?

We obviously don't have records on a racial basis but I would guess our membership is three-quarters white and always has been. It's not at all a satisfactory situation. The question of increasing black membership has been raised repeatedly down the years at Institute meetings, but there has been a feeling that for us actively to recruit members from a particular section of the community is contrary to the whole ethos of an organisation which is supposed to be colour-blind. I don't believe that this is necessarily the right approach and we intend to take steps to increase our black membership. And people of all races continue to enrol.

One member quoted Ellen Hellmann as saying that she wanted the Institute to be relevant in the townships. What hope would there be of the Institute being relevant in the townships?

I'm never sure what that rather vague word is supposed to mean. I imagine we could be relevant as a charitable, or para-legal, or community-help organisation, but I don't think that's really our function. That work is obviously important but it is nevertheless really concerned with treating symptoms. We have set ourselves the tougher, and, I think, more radical task of getting to grips with the causes of some of the problems in this country, which are all too often rooted in our political system, and to work for structural change. If one takes something like education, our bursary programme is assisting several thousand black pupils and students and that's essential because they would not otherwise have the opportunity. However, we don't believe it is right that their chances of going to school or university should depend on the generosity of individuals or the private sector or foreign governments and foreign churches. After all, white education doesn't depend on charity. We therefore see it as our main purpose to work for fundamental changes in official education *policy* in South Africa.

I reckon when people talk about being relevant in the townships, what they are really criticising you for is not joining in on UDF campaigns, not joining the end-conscription campaign, that kind of thing.

I don't think — and I'm sure our governing Council doesn't think — that we should identify with particular political causes even though we might sometimes agree with the views of protest organisations. One of our problems down the years is that we have been too often preaching to the converted and have become part of a kind of protest laager, but if we are going to have any impact in this country in bringing about policy changes we have to break out of that laager and start making an impact on people who are not members of it. If we publish research showing the detrimental effects of the pass laws, for example, we want it to be respected because it is accurate from a statistical point of view, because it is dispassionate in its presentation, and because it is seen to be independent and not grinding the political axe of any particular organisation. We believe we will have more impact that way.

You must also remember that the Institute has been around a long time, since 1929. It has seen protests come and go; it saw the defiance campaign come and go, it saw the great hope of real change in 1960 and 1976 come and go. I can understand why many people feel this is very exciting each time it happens, and I also want apartheid to disappear overnight, but that is impossible because the government is entrenched in power. I'm not saying more gradual change is necessarily best. What I am saying is that, in my judgment, change is not going to come about in any other way. If you are to make an impact on the process, it is just as important to make a realistic assessment of your weaknesses as to know your strengths, or you might rush headlong into strategies that get you nowhere.

I have the feeling that people have reacted, actually, with a lot of anger and disappointment as the Institute has withdrawn from this kind of thing. Have you tried to explain yourself to the members? It seems to have generated a lot of anger, this withdrawal.

We have attempted to explain the new strategic direction, decided by our Council in January last year, both in our quarterly newspaper *Race Relations News* and at a public meeting in Cape Town and also at a closed meeting of members in Durban which our regional committees there invited me to address. As for a general feeling of anger towards our new strategic direction, I believe people will eventually agree with us when they see results — when they see we are able to be more effective and more influential by acting independently.

In the correspondence published in this issue you can see that I got into some trouble for suggesting that the Institute was anathema in some circles. Nevertheless I have noted a resentment of the Institute building up in what I would call more militant, indeed more fashionable circles. I would imagine that a large part of this resentment centres around the Institute's attitude to defensive violence.

I presume by that you mean people who are not themselves involved in acts of violence against the state but who nevertheless at the very least regard them as understandable, or even necessary, because they believe the apartheid system itself rests on what is sometimes called institutionalized violence.

Our organization opposes violence from whatever quarter not only because we regard human life as sacrosanct but also because history shows there is a very great risk that out of it will come a society based on even greater institutionalized violence than the one it replaces (Iran for example). The great impatience of everyone who wants to see immediate change is understandable, as is their scepticism about its chances of coming about peacefully: but, whereas the hardcore perpetrators of violence fully understand what they are about, some of their supporters, including their armchair supporters, are naïve in the extreme in supposing that a government installed in power here at the end of a protracted period of violence and civil war would necessarily be better than the present one.

Any organization, like the Institute, that attempts to explode this romanticism will be deeply threatening. We have chosen to work for black-white reconciliation. We cannot deliver results quickly enough for angry people. Our task is the hard grind of promoting the idea of political compromise and the plodding search for accommodating structures, and if necessary building up such structures block by block from the bottom up.

We see no benefit in a vicious circle of violence and counter violence. Indeed our raison d'etre is to break that cycle. So attracting resentment, as you put it, from hardliners on left and right, is really part and parcel of the price that we have to pay for being what we are. Our job of promoting reconciliation and compromise necessarily involves understanding every point of view and presenting each point of view to the proponents of other points of view. In order to do that we have to give a platform to all points of view. If we are 'anathematised' it is because we refuse to anathematise others.

One of your members, upset by what she feels is the changed role of the Institute, said, 'The word Race Relations implies doing something to improve race relations. Is there now a new definition of the title Institute of Race Relations and have we now to get used to a new concept?' So John, do you feel the Institute really has a role to play improving race relations?

I certainly do. Apart from the fact that people meet and talk at all our functions (that is what they are all about — discussion across differences of race or ideology), we are able to bring together government officials, black trade union and political leaders, black personnel managers, white businessmen and so on, so that we have blacks and whites not only just meeting each other, but meeting in circumstances where the divide is not always black-white.

But we don't think that simply providing those kinds of opportunities is enough. It's only a step. Improving race relations necessitates fundamental change. If race relations in industry are better now than ten years ago, it's not because people are politer to one another but because industrial relations have been restructured. Black workers have fought for and won trade union bargaining

power so management has had to change its attitude. Improving race relations in a more general sense means getting the government to do the same. In other words, it means working for political compromise and structural political change. This won't happen merely by talking or doing research or protesting but by the building of political bargaining power by the African majority. If we can act as a kind of intermediary in persuading whites to respond constructively, that is part of our role. Our research comes in, not as an end in itself, but as a data base for us to use to back up our arguments with solid fact and dispassionate analysis. It's also very useful to others — 'indispensable,' one trade union newspaper said, because our *Survey* provided 'back-up information' for representation to various authorities.

I may add that the political compromise I am referring to is not simply a question of white and black, though that will be difficult enough. Black politics is already starkly polarised within itself and mutual acceptance of each faction's political legitimacy would be essential to the success of any national convention or equivalent process. Otherwise we may run the risk of going the same way as Angola and Mozambique.

Are you willing to have dealings with the government?

Of course we are. The very confusion in goverment policy which is evident in practically every speech a minister makes is not something merely to be laughed at. That is the job of newspaper cartoonists and opposition MPs. Our job is to recognise that there is a confusion and exploit it by injecting some objective data into the debate in order to point the way to different policies. When a senior minister sent one of his advisers to see us recently to ask for our perspective on the disturbances in the Vaal Triangle I saw it as our job to make use of the opportunity to raise with him all the issues that we have been shouting to deaf ears about for years, like freehold, and why black political prisoners should be released and banned parties legalised again, to talk to him about the necessity of sensible financing of local authorities, to say to him the government must recognise that it can't expect black local authorities to get off the ground unless it gives them real power, and that if it gives them real power it must recognise that it may find this uncomfortable, but that it is actually in everybody's interests that black people build up non-violent bargaining power.

Well, a lot of people are going to call this 'co-operating with an evil system.'

It is not a question of co-operating with evil. It is a question of making use of an opportunity to get your views heard in circles that make political decisions which affect people's lives. In any event, the question for the Institute is not whether the government is evil or not, but how to get it to abandon policies that are harmful to the country. It always particulary amuses me when people in universities attack others for collaborating with evil or capitalism or whatever, because these institutions wouldn't last a day without their huge subsidies from parliament and business. I don't suppose any of the political hardliners there are going to refuse money voted to them by the new tricameral parliament either.

So you mean, John, that making use of structures the government has been compelled to create could have strategic advantages for blacks?

Well, if one takes, for example, something that has arisen in the last year in black schools, the demand for SRCs. Those have now been conceded. Not in the form that the schoolchildren wanted, but it is a major step. I can't for a moment see the white Transvaal Education Department readily allowing SRCs to be formed in white government schools. I would suggest that the kind of strategy that needs to be carefully considered — I am not necessarily advocating it — is to say, 'All right, we now have the SRCs. We are going to take them and put our leaders on to them at democratic elections and we are going to use them to our political advantage.' That's one strategy as opposed to simply rejecting the proposal completely because it hasn't been conceded in precisely the form you want.

I think, dare I say it, that the black local authorities present a possible opportunity for the same kind of thing now that it seems that they may be in a stronger position financially. If the different political organizations (UDF, Inkatha, Azapo etc) built up their power bases as political parties and variously and democratically took control of the 400-odd black townships in this country, you would have councillors who were less vulnerable to nepotism or manipulation by the government because they would have to answer to their political party. In this way you could use the black local authorities to build up strong black institutional bargaining power around the country — and a potential formidable challenge to the government. It would need a lot of political ingenuity (of the kind which the trade unions have developed) to get control of these institutions; but they could be hijacked to the advantage of the legitimate black political organisations.

There's another point. If Africans are one day going to be running this country, then the more practical experience they get in the meantime wherever they can get the chance the better. No matter what their causes are, the housing and educational backlogs are not going to disappear when the National Party's monopoly of power does, nor are the problems that are attached to urbanisation or squatting. After all, Mugabe and Machel are having to grapple with them, as are dozens of other governments all over Africa. There is no time to be wasted in finding the appropriate solutions, and the sooner blacks can involve themselves in the awesome responsibilities that all government, including democratic government, entails, the better it will ultimately be for everyone. Here as in other countries, it's a question of trial and error. The quicker the trials start, the quicker the errors have a chance of being eliminated. I don't say the black local authorities in their present form are the answer. What I do say is that I have every confidence that legitimate black leaders can out-manoeuvre whatever Machiavellian intentions the government may have and turn these local authorities to the advantage of their constituents.

Let's deal with the criticism that is so often hurled at you, John, that you don't really retain your independence, that you are biased towards Chief Gatsha Buthelezi and Inkatha. You are a great friend of Chief Buthelezi, are you not?

I would be honoured if he regarded me as a friend. I certainly am an admirer of his. But my personal friendships do not cause the Institute to be biased, as you suggest. I would ask you to point to one policy decision taken by the Institute or one publication issued that substantiates an accusation of bias towards anybody since I have been Director (and before, of course). Chief Buthelezi has had a platform at the Institute. But so have representatives of the Transvaal Indian Congress, the Labour Party, the Transvaal Council on Sport, Swapo, black journalists with anti-Inkatha views, the Soweto Civic Association, etc.

Nobody objects to our providing platforms for, or having contact with, any of these other organisations so I can't avoid the suspicion that the reason the Inkatha question is raised at all is that there is a strong — and fashionable — sentiment in some circles that Buthelezi must be completely stigmatised rather than given a platform along with many others at the Institute. This sentiment sometimes leads to very odd behaviour, for example, when demonstrators effectively stopped him from speaking at the University of Cape Town last year. But for a group of university students — including white South African students, who must be among the most privileged of elites on earth — to deny any black leader with a large following of poor and illiterate people the right to be heard seems to me rather arrogant, to say the least.

The Institute need not endorse or reject Buthelezi's overall political strategies but for us to treat him as a political untouchable, as some people seem to want us to do, would be indicative of an almost colonialist mentality. In any event our Council decides policy and to suggest that the present Director can align the Institute contrary to its constitution in favour of any one political organisation is nonsense.

What is your attitude to disinvestment?

If one is talking about general disinvestment — as opposed to carefully chosen, limited sanctions tied to specific attainable targets, where the arguments may be different — we need to recognise that the single most difficult problem which this country has to face is the spectre of many millions more jobless people by the year 2000. And that in my view means one has got to welcome investment that creates more jobs whether that investment is local or foreign.

No doubt some people who favour general disinvestment do so in the belief that if white South Africans are hurt economically they will be persuaded to make radical political changes. That seems to me to be rather naïve. It is much more likely that if the economic cake shrinks, whites will try and hang on to things even more firmly.

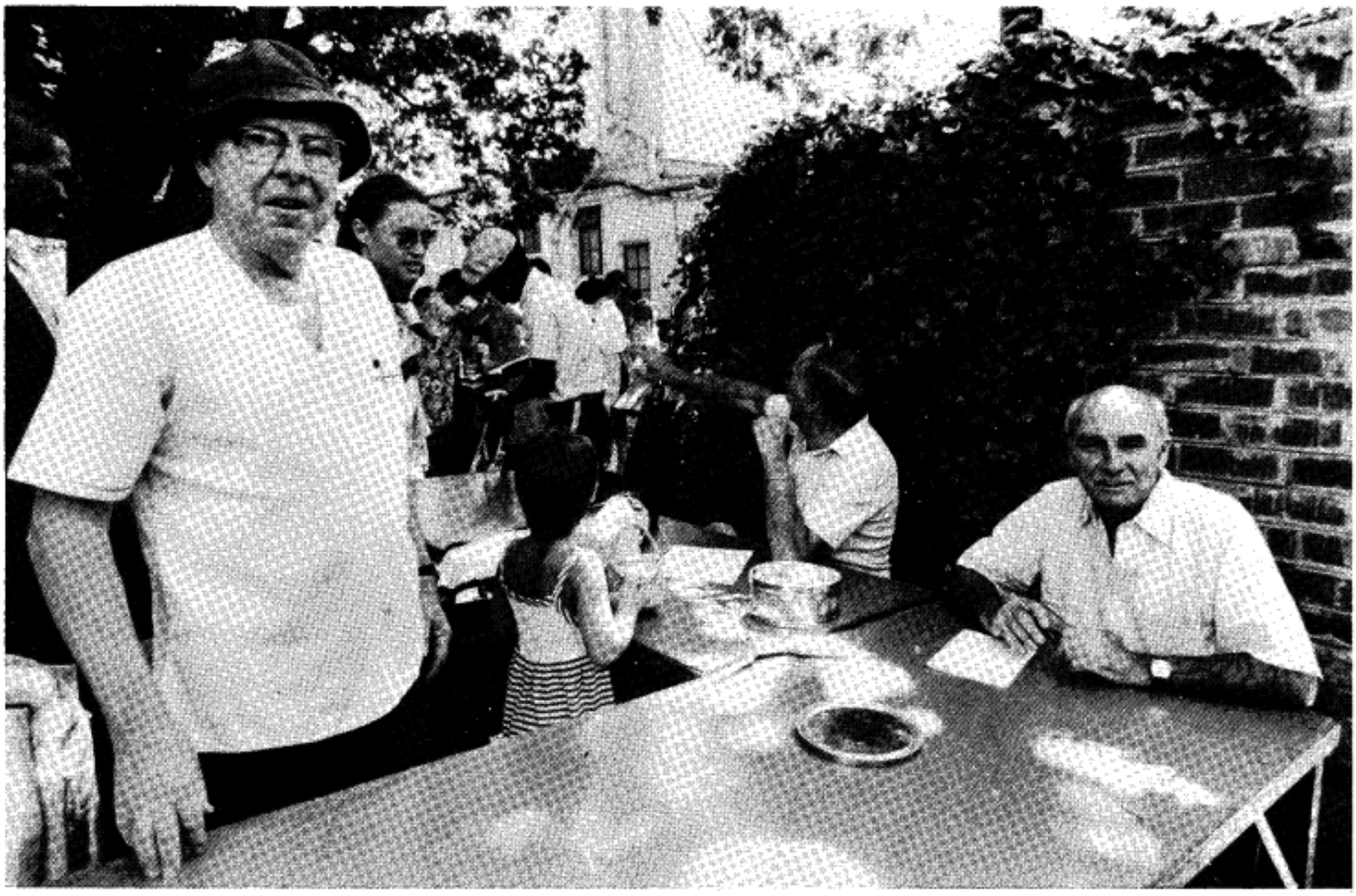
If disinvestment were to succeed it would have the potential to inflict great hurt and it is the long run effect of disinvestment which is the most disquieting. We live in a society with an explosive conjunction of affluence in the midst of poverty. We have to create jobs and prosperity and share that prosperity widely throughout our society to deal with rapid population growth and rising black expectations. Already we have a vast backlog in educational opportunities, not to mention jobs and houses. Disinvestment and/or trade sanctions, by causing the country as a whole to get poorer, will condemn even more people to lives of illiterate, jobless squalor.

The danger of disinvestment is that it will deliver a blow to the economy which no political change will be able to reverse. The idea that foreign companies will withdraw from South Africa but return after political change is naïve, for there are many places where that foreign investment would in the interim have been relocated.

I think there is another important point that one has to remember about foreign investment. If trade unions are not in a position to deliver material gains because the economy is stagnant and profits are declining and businesses are going bankrupt, they will have a very much tougher battle in winning benefits for their members. If we had been in a situation of economic stagnation, with foreign capital being withdrawn through the 1970s, I wonder whether we would have the resilient trade union movement that we have today.

An American visitor said, Why is the Institute so orientated towards the English-speaking community. Are you trying to change this?

The Institute's main support base down the years has been the white English speaking community, but we are not orientated solely in that direction. We make strenuous efforts to get our publications publicised in Afrikaans newspapers and in white newspapers read by blacks. In fact the briefing papers that we have published over the last year have had more coverage from newspapers like *The Sowetan* than in any other paper. We have at least one major Afrikaans company among our corporate members and I hope that we will get more. I recently had the opportunity to put the Institute's viewpoint on why the ANC and PAC and other black political organisations should have their bans lifted, and on other issues, to a group of Afrikaans academics, which included the chairman of the Broederbond. That is the kind of opportunity which we need and I welcome. If we can facilitate situations where black organisations can talk directly to the same kind of people, I welcome that too.



The skivvy husbands — Neil Duncan (left) Manfred Hermer (centre) and Nathan Harris at the white elephant stall.

photos: Gill De Vlieg

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The Johannesburg morning market

That the world is full of a number of things is never more plain than when one is convening the boutique section of the Black Sash annual market.

There are silks and satins, a lovely brooch, an antique silver purse, a pair of men's suede shoes which someone has tried to shine with black polish, very old clothes and clothes whose first errand is a trip to the dry cleaner or washtub, a few dozen cockroach traps and a nifty little bit of apparel, a waistcoat, perhaps, for an armadillo.

Eleanor Anderson

Lise MacArthur clowning in boutique goods. Eleanor Anderson, convenor, on the left.

Our debt to DET?

Verna Brown

Lesson in black attitudes — a characteristically defiant funeral. Six year old Thaba Sikeco of Wattville was killed.

Our reality is what we perceive. What, therefore, does a black child perceive of his education that prompts him to turn his back on a current reality in the hope of its immediate improvement?

He is confronted with overcrowded schools, inadequately trained teachers and the dismal litany of matriculation failures and falling standards. The 1984 results can hardly be counted a cheering prospect. It's all a far cry from those inspiring words of the preface to the de Lange Commission report:

'The provision of education should be aimed simultaneously at the achievement of man's highest ideals and at meeting the needs of his time.' Whether it *is* possible, Janus-like, to reconcile these two thrusts is debatable, but there's no gainsaying the power of the rhetoric.

In May of this year, horrified by the Atteridgeville educational impasse, the Pretoria branch of the Black Sash submitted a memorandum to the then Minister of Education and Training, Mr Barend du Plessis. As an overview of pupil, teacher and parental attitudes it stated:

> 'It would be accurate to say that most pupils are bitterly unhappy with Bantu education. They feel cheated by its inadequacy and inferiority. They argue that so much more money is designated for white than for black education that the very fabric of their education system is suspect. At the funeral of Emmah Sathege, a spokesman for COSAS said, "It will always be in our minds that Emmah was killed by a bad education given to the majority of the people in this country."
>
> Traditionally the black child, respectful of his parents who wished to promote his success in life through the attainment of a sound education, was docile and hardworking in pursuit of this goal. As the credibility of Bantu Education has been eroded, a wedge has been driven between parental aspirations and pupil resistance. In fact, a yawning generation gap has developed, fuelled by conflicting attitudes to education. Parents deplore the boycott, foreseeing the ruin of their children's chances of status in the community and a secure livelihood. They accuse their children of either laziness or cowardice in allowing themselves to be intimidated by agitators.
>
> Pupils feel that they have justifiable grievances which their parents wilfully misunderstand. They often regard their parents as sell-outs, having accomplished nothing in black improvement. Their opinions, therefore, are discounted as valueless.'

The memorandum concluded by saying that the problem is deep-rooted, not admitting of easy solution. Even the capitulation of DET to meet the demands of the students has not ensured their continued attendance at school. A lasting solution will not be found until black pupils believe that their educational system is fully on a par with that of the whites and is adequate to their needs. Otherwise they will continue to feel 'that education provided by the oppressors to the oppressed will better serve the needs and aspirations of the oppressor than the oppressed. Its aim should be to create self-reliance in the people. To stimulate reasoning instead of resorting to imitation. To fight ignorance and illiteracy.' (Quoted from the Eye, Volume 4, March 1984, p 3)

The memorandum urged that the major recommendations of the well considered de Lange Commission Report be implemented as a matter of urgency and that TV, a powerful educational tool, be extensively used to upgrade black education as soon as possible.

In July, our chairman, Mrs Anneke van Gylswyk received this civilized response from the Minister.

> *'Thank you very much for your letter of 9 May 1984 and for the interest that you share with me in a matter that is of critical importance to the future of South Africa and that obviously should be treated with the honesty, realism and responsibility it deserves.*
>
> *I had started, in all sincerity, to reply to your memo seriatim but soon realized that our respective perspectives of the matter were so widely different that no useful purpose would be served in my trying to react to each one of the points raised in the memorandum. Since we do have in common a sincere concern about as complex and important a matter of education, I should like to invite you as a first step, to pay a visit to our Head Office with the sole purpose of being informed factually and correctly in regard to the extent, policy, problems and progress of Education for Blacks.*
>
> *Following this exercise, a further discussion with the*

* DET: Department of Education and Training

photo: Gill De Vlieg

Minister of Education and Training can serve a useful purpose.

Before considering any other possible course of action. I shall await your response.

Yours faithfully
B J du Plessis, MP
Minister of Education and Training.'

In November Anneke van Gylswyk, Margie Laurence and I were cordially received by the Public Relations Officer for DET, Mr Job Schoeman, for our briefing. In all we spent two and a half hours in his office, being exposed to a sophisticated DET version of 'show and tell.'

The 'show' comprised a glossy film, emphasising DET's considerable achievement in expanding the scope of black education. Shiny faces, scintillating teachers, sophisticated equipment and soulful singing added up to an object lesson in 'Happiness is'. We remarked (though it seemed somewhat rude to do so in the wake of the movie's euphoria) that if that were a realistic portrayal of black education, the boycotts would not be in progress.

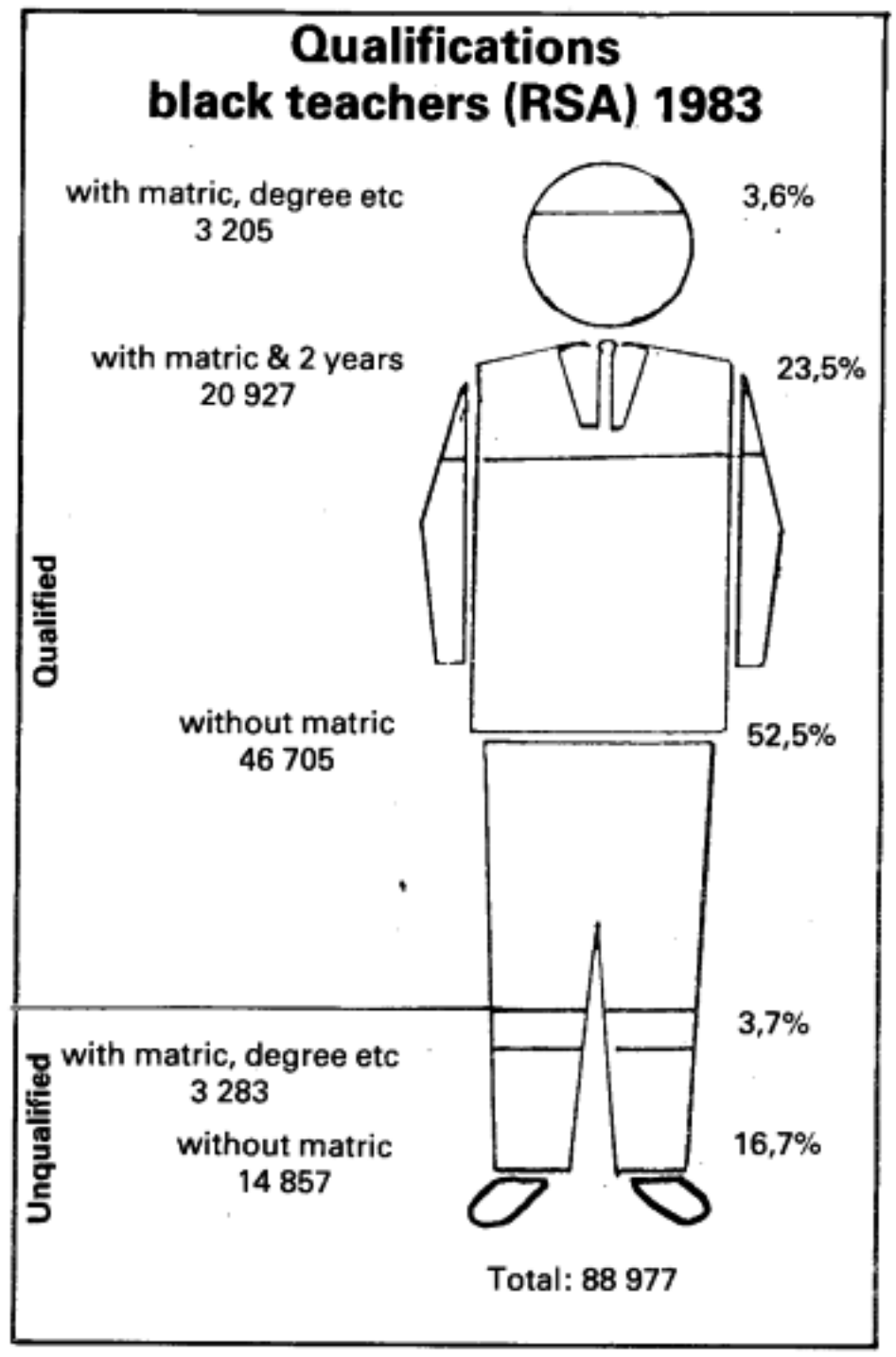
The 'tell' involved Mr Schoeman's expounding knowledgeably on a number of carefully mounted slides which stressed the following:

- In 1973, 3,3 million black pupils were enrolled at school. Ten years later the enrolment was 5,6 million. He explained, and we took his point, that the black population explosion is the single most difficult problem with which the Department has to contend. Mr Schoeman said that the department could hope to come to terms with existing numbers but that simply keeping pace with the black growth rate was a Herculean task without the accompanying necessity of a major programme of improvement.
- To accommodate ever spiralling numbers DET's budget had increased from R143,8 million in 1978/9 to R709,25 million for 1984/5. The total revenue from black taxation is not sufficient for the Department of Education and Training's budget.
- DET admits that the quality of education for blacks is not the same as for whites as this is essentially determined by what happens in the classroom. Even if massive funding were immediately forthcoming, the problem of unqualified and underqualified teachers would not be solved overnight. Its solution is to be found in steady, patient application to upgrading over a long period of time. The qualifications of black staff are an eye opener. In 'RSA' in 1983 3,6% of black staff have matric plus a degree, 23,5% have matric plus 2 years, 52,5% are without matric and 20,4% are unqualified (i e having no teacher training whatsoever). Since 80% of DET's budget is expended on teachers' salaries and the majority of the teaching force is under 30 years of age, it is easily seen that salary commitments are not as heavy as in white education where teachers are much better qualified. (We were quick to point out that the shortfall could easily be spent in other areas.)

  Mr Schoeman made the interesting point that DET had been criticised by Malawian educational officials who said that if education were more elitist, available resources being devoted to the gifted and able, quality teachers would be forthcoming within a much shorter time span.
- We raised the subject of the unsatisfactory teacher-pupil ratio and were told that the Department aimed to reduce this to 1:40 (primary) and 1:35 (secondary) by 1986. A total of R107 million was spent on school buildings during the 1982/3 financial year, 12 new classrooms being built during every working day.
- Anneke van Gylswyk asked specifically about unrest at the Mabopane Technikon. She was told that as it operated as a autonomous body it was not DET's concern.

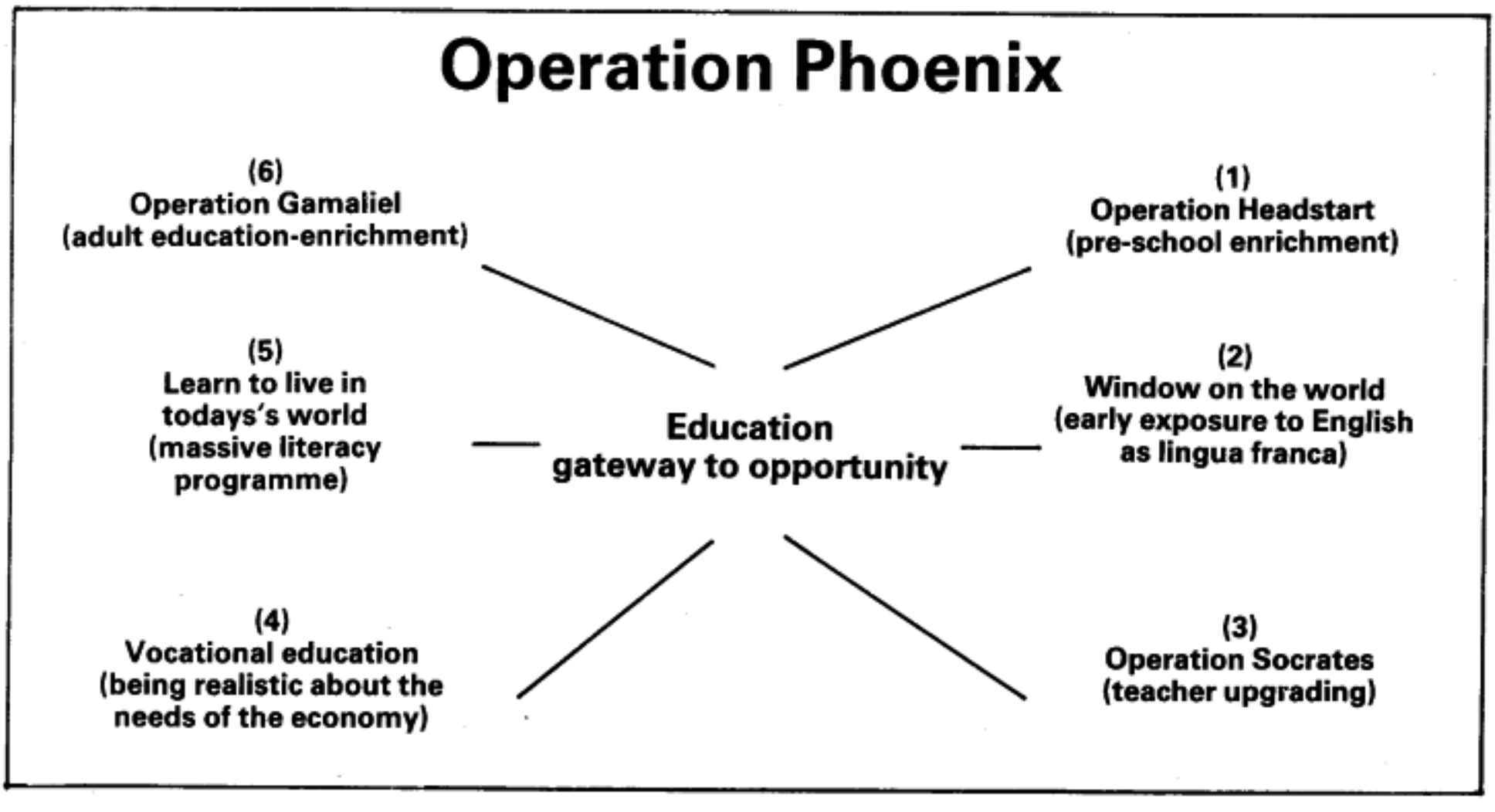
- To sum up Mr Job Schoeman's point of view I quote from the SA Foundation News, June 1984 in which he said, 'No one, least of all the departments responsible for black education, would deny that shortcomings, handicaps and disparity in several spheres exist between the various departments of education. Simple comparisons between, for instance, white education and black education are totally unrealistic if the evolution of the different departments, the levels of development of the population groups and the extremely important demographic, socio-economic and socio-cultural differences are not taken into account . . . In a situation where a department of education has to cope with Third World growth rates and socio-economic conditions on the one hand, and on the other with First World expectations and a highly sophisticated economy within which its products must compete, frustrations develop that may serve as a hot-bed for boycotts and political incitement, as has happened in Atteridgeville . . . The unscrupulous exploitation of black education and the black pupil as a "soft target" can only serve to promote stagnation and is to the detriment of the pupil.' He deplores the rôle of the English Press in fanning the flames of pupil unrest and never giving DET any credit for its efforts.

The black pupil, however, continues to make the 'simple comparison' that Mr Schoeman deplores. He sees the superior white school buildings, the high pass rate of white matriculants, the distinction-gloat fanfare. He perceives the glittering opportunities afforded those who emerge from the system. Like most adolescents he is absolute. He does not make allowances. He declares his education inferior. Comparisons in this case are not odious; they are inevitable.



There is no gainsaying the fact that educationally, DET has made strides in addressing itself to the massive shortfall. When we presented Mr Schoeman with the following plan to upgrade black education, we found that in every single area either considerable advances are in progress or an impressive start has been made.

Life in South Africa cannot remain compartmentalised. By its nature our 'very strange society' gives everything a political edge. In education the political edge is being honed to a cutting tool, sharpened by the South



African political malaise that separation invites inequality and breeds suspicion. In response to this the de Lange Commission pleaded for ONE education system headed by an umbrella body responsible for all aspects of education. Dr Gerrit Viljoen said on the TV programme Midweek (November 21) that such an umbrella body existed in the National Education Department, which was responsible for the areas of Policy, Funding and Certification of Examinations, but that differentiated education would continue to be appropriate to the social, political and educational matrix of the South African reality.

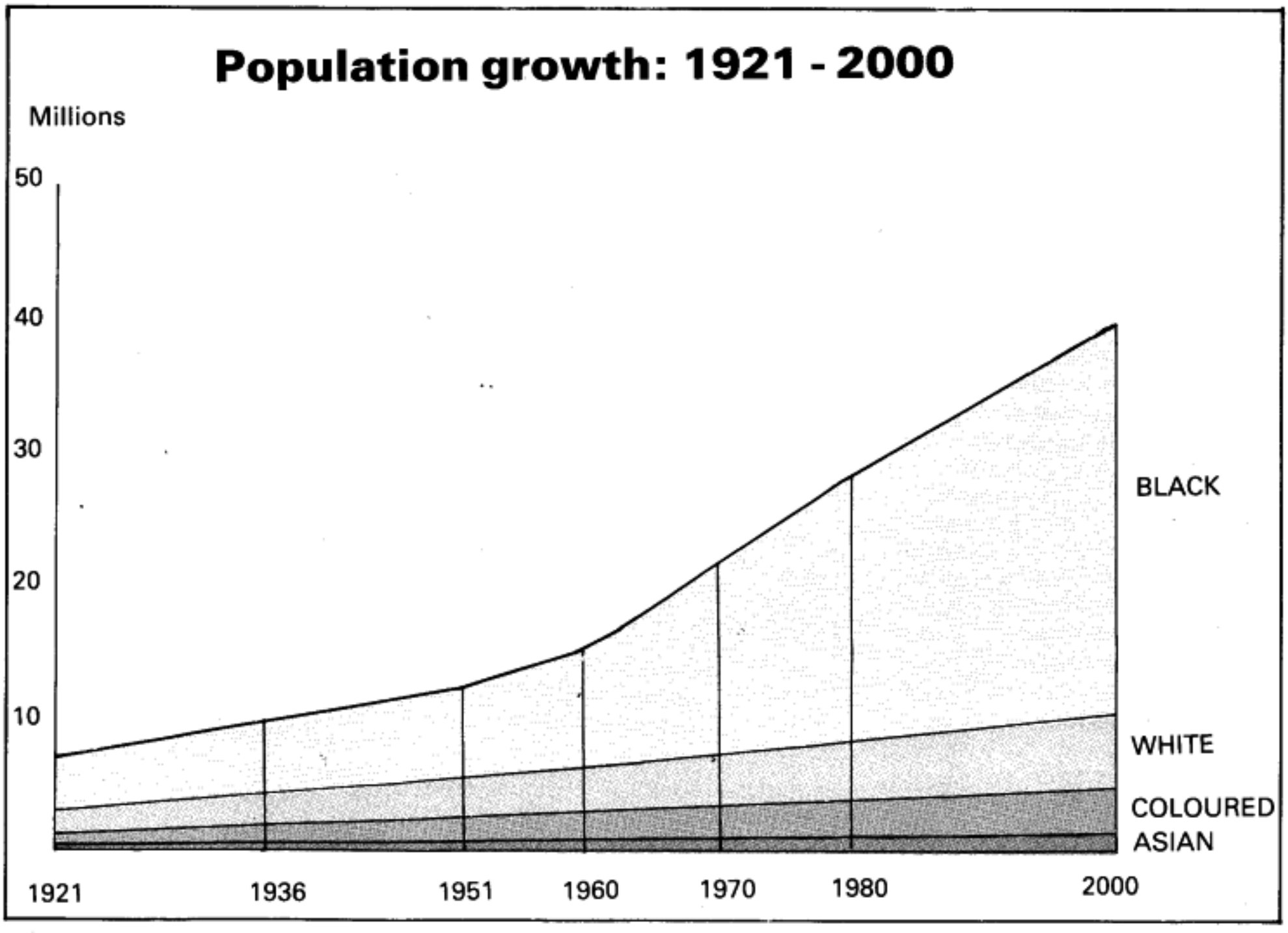
Part of this South African reality is the passionately held belief among blacks that differentiation inevitably spells inequality. *If Black education were miraculously transformed overnight into a scholastic utopia, provided it were separate, it would be perceived to be discriminatory.*

Cosmetic change, image building and even sound educational reform will not effect a resurgence of faith in a system perceived to be socially and politically non-viable. What is needed is a dramatic commitment to the elusive goal of true educational equality and a groundswell of goodwill to carry it.

The structure being what it is, every social group in South Africa is, in one way or another, a minority group. Blacks, numerically in the majority, are given artificial minority status by law.
Jean Marquard: from the introduction to *'A Century of South African Short Stories'* p 17, National Book Printers, Goodwood, Cape.

photo: Gill De Vlieg

Students at the funeral of four Daveyton pupils



Overseas investment in SA

Black workers attitudes

Extract from a study by Lawrence Schlemmer

Up to now we have seen results pointing to a very poor image of industrial management held by black workers in South Africa but also to an accceptance of capitalism and to a general rejection of the use of organised labour in the political struggle, despite high levels of politicisation and serious political grievances. There is, thus, a mixture of frustration and pragmatism in the consciousness of black workers which does not contain any clear indications of what their attitudes to disinvestment and trade boycotts might be.

Disinvestment and trade boycotts of South Africa are complex issues which are not likely to form part of popular debate among black workers. Therefore these issues had to be approached with great care in the interviews. Fairly detailed explanations of the issues in clear and simple language were given before questions were posed. The same themes were also addressed in several different questions in order to make the results as valid as possible. The results are given in the sequence of Tables which follow (Tables 13 to 17). Each Table includes the exact phrasing of the explanation and the questions asked. In each question alternative answers were rotated in presentation in order to eliminate recall bias.

TABLE 13 PERCEPTIONS OF THE INTERESTS PROMOTED BY FOREIGN INVESTMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA

Item *'Which one of the following is true. When American companies build factories in South Africa, who do they help most?'*

	Overall Sample %	Employed in US Company %
Help the African people to progress	38	26
Help the whites	16	31
Help the South African Government	46	44
	n = 451	n = 55

These results give an inconclusive result. While in the sample as a whole over one-third see blacks as the main beneficiaries of US investment, this, oddly enough, drops to just over 25 percent among those employed in US companies. It is probable, however, that even though most respondents saw whites or the government as the main beneficiaries, they did not necessarily see blacks as not gaining at all from external investment. This is clarified in Table 14 below.

Although very slightly more employees in US companies support the disengagement position than among black workers in general, very clear majorities of employees in both the overall sample and the subsample support engagement. Variations in the degree of support for disinvestment are listed below.

TABLE 14 SUPPORT FOR CONSTRUCTIVE ENGAGEMENT VERSUS DISINVESTMENT AND TRADE BOYCOTTS

Item *'One man, Samuel says: "Overseas people and banks and companies must stop buying South African goods and stop sending money to build factories in South Africa so as to frighten the South African government into getting rid of Apartheid.'*

'Another man Joseph says: "People and banks and companies overseas should continue to buy South African goods and send money to build factories because it makes jobs for all people in South Africa.'

Which man would you agree with, Samuel or Joseph?

	Overall Sample %	Employed in US Company %
Support for Samuel (Disinvestment/ Boycott)	25	29
Support for Joseph (Constructive Engagement)	75	71

TABLE 15
SUPPORT FOR OR OPPOSITION TO EXTERNAL INVESTMENT

'There are groups of people in America and England who try to encourage banks and organisations not to invest money in South Africa — not to put their money in factories which are in South Africa. Do you think this is a good or a bad thing?'

	Overall Sample %	Employees in US Companies %
Good thing (Disinvestment)	26	24
Bad thing (Engagement)	74	76

'Why do you feel this way?'

Good (Spontaneous)	(Base 100%*)	(Base 100/*)
Warn South African Government/ Frighten South African Government	30	62
Weaken Government/whites	18	23
Weaken managers/employers/ capitalists	9	15
Encourage better wages/conditions	39	54
Encourage political rights for blacks	28	46
Other	4	—

'Why do you feel this way?'

Bad (Spontaneous)	(Base 100%*)	(Base 100%*)
Fewer jobs	54	50
South Africa becomes poorer	19	26
Harms blacks	41	48
Makes no difference/no effect	5	5
Harms South Africa/Government	12	19
Other	2	—

* Answers exceed 100% because more than one answer was given

There is thus very little variation in the results. Trade union members, for example, are no more likely to support disinvestment than other workers. The higher support for disinvestment among employees in US companies is in large measure due to the fact that these companies have a higher proportion of 16 - 24 year old people in service (33% US Co's, 24% overall) and also have fewer people with lower educational qualifications.

It should be noted that the item reported on in Table 14 has a built-in incentive to support the disinvestment position, namely the phrase *'. . . frighten the South African government into getting rid of Apartheid. . . '* Given this deliberate suggestion in the question, it is remarkable that only one-quarter of the respondents support disinvestment.

At another point in the interview the same theme was explored, as indicated in Table 15.

The results overall are remarkably similar to those in Table 14. It is the workers from Pretoria, the nerve centre of apartheid, who are most inclined to support disinvestment. The reasons for such support make it clear that even among the disinvestment group, one important position taken is aimed at improving wages and conditions rather than being aimed at a complete ending to foreign investment. The reasons in favour of disinvestment also emphasise political factors rather than intentions to harm management, while the reasons against it feature fears of loss of employment and the consequent harm to blacks as the most prominent factors.

Support for Disinvestment/ Trade sanctions	%
Overall	25
16 - 24 yrs	33
Worker radicals (support for use of labour in political action(	29
35 yrs and older	20
Under Std. 4 education	20

Variations in support for disinvestment as measured in the results in Table 15 show the following pattern.

Support for Disinvestment	%
Overall	26
Pretoria	35
Employees at non-US multinationals	19
50+ years	16
East Rand	15

A very similar question was asked but one relating to trade sanctions rather than disinvestment. The results obtained are so similar to those given in Table 15 that it is unnecessary to repeat the full table. Some 26 percent supported trade sanctions against South Africa (24 percent among employees in US companies) while 74 percent felt that trade sanctions were bad. Once again the effects of sanctions on employment opportunity and therefore on black welfare were prominent among the reasons given.

Finally, among the range of questions on disinvestment, a third type of question was posed, the details of which plus the results appear in Table 16.

TABLE 16 SUPPORT FOR DISINVESTMENT, CONTINUED INVESTMENT OR CODES OF CONDUCT FOR COMPANIES

Which of the following would you prefer to see happen — What is best?'

(The alternatives were read twice, reversing order on second readings.)

	Overall sample %	Employees in US companies %
'American companies should build as many factories in South Africa as they can, making as many jobs for blacks as they can.'	59	60
'American companies should only run factories in South Africa if they can pay blacks high wages, give good pensions and help with housing, even if they make fewer jobs.'	32	33
'American companies should not run factories in South Africa because they make the government of South Africa stronger.'	9	7

Among trade union members the support for complete withdrawal rises very slightly to 13 percent, among people in Soweto it is 14 percent and in Port Elizabeth it is 12 percent. Other variations between sub-samples are even less significant. Thus here again there is consensus in the sample.

These results are noteworthy. Even when the option of codes of conduct including higher wages and other benefits is built into the probe, as is the case in Table 16, the majority of respondents still hold firmly to an opposition to anything which might remove US investment from South Africa. Furthermore, when the option of codes of conduct is presented to respondents, the proportion in favour of disinvestment drops from the 24 - 25 percent recorded in Tables 14 and 15 to a mere 9 to 12 percent. Hence one must conclude that the promotion of total disinvestment by US companies operating in South Africa has virtually no support among black workers in the very representative areas surveyed.

The reasons given in Table 15 indicate some of the major factors inclining workers to support continued investment. There are other factors as well, one of which is the image of US companies in South Africa. Results on this are given in Table 17.

The results in Table 17 are remarkably favourable for US companies as far as employment image is concerned. The slightly but consistently less flattering image held by the actual employees of US companies shows that the image outstrips the performance to some extent. Even among the US company employees, however, the employment image is consistently much more favourable than unfavourable.

Given the outstanding reputation that US companies appear to enjoy among black production workers it is not surprising that so little support for disinvestment exists. The fact that the employees in the US companies themselves share almost as favourable an image would strongly suggest that the codes of employment practice (the Sullivan Code) has had a very salutory effect on personnel policies in these companies.

Results from the Durban sample (n100) not presented thus far tend to confirm the broad pattern of reactions to disinvestment which has been noted. The interviewing in Durban was conducted by a separate team of interviewers working under different supervision, yet the results obtained are virtually identical. The following are comparisons of percentage support for the disinvestment positions between the Transvaal/Port Elizabeth and the Durban samples on the items in Tables 14, 15 and 16 respectively: 25% vs 28%, 26% vs 28% and 9% vs 7%. The Durban respondents, however, gave less favourable evaluations of US company employment performance. The average endorsement of the view that US companies are better than South African companies on all the issues listed in Table 17 for the Durban sample was 60 percent versus 69 percent for the Transvaal/Port Elizabeth sample. The 60 percent average for the Durban sample nevertheless shows that even in an area in which very few US companies operate they are viewed in a more favourable light than South African companies.

Generally speaking, then, the results accumulate to show a very substantial majority opposition to disinvestment policy. It might be argued that too great an incentive was given to support the disinvestment position by mentioning the effect on job creation in the wording of the items. This incentive, however, was matched by the opposite incentive which was worded as *'frightening the South African government into getting rid of Apartheid'*. Generally speaking black people have great faith — often unrealistic faith — in the capacity of the Western powers to influence the South African goverment. There is no reason why the wording of the disinvestment position should have been any less attractive than the wording of the pro-investment alternatives.

It might also be argued that these responses cannot be generalised for the black population as a whole. Some observers would expect a better educated and more sophisticated population like that of Soweto, for example, to support a pro-disinvestment position.

Results from the sample in this study itself, however, would contradict this view. The following is a comparison between the percentage support for disinvestment in the Transvaal/Port Elizabeth sample as a whole and in the Soweto and the high-school subsamples, across the items presented in Tables 14, 15 and 16:

	Overall (n451)	Soweto (n146)	High School Education (n175)
	%	%	%
Table 14	25	26	31
Table 15	26	26	26
Table 16	9	14	11

From this comparison it would appear to be highly unlikely that a Soweto sample would give majority endorsement to a disinvestment position. A white collar and student sample in Soweto might produce a substantially higher proportion favouring disinvestment but then this would have to be interpreted as a black *middle class* viewpoint. Given the very small size of the black middle class in South Africa it could never be taken as representative of rank-and-file blacks in any part of the country.

Concluding discussion

The results of this study form an interesting pattern. There seems little doubt that black industrial workers are responding to the present socio-political climate. Generally the effects of the economic recession are also clearly evident in their attitudes.

There is evidence of sharp discontentment among clear majorities of black workers. There is also a clear majority awareness of political policy as it affects blacks and a dominant rejection of the present policy dispensation. Added to this there is a militant sentiment evident in well over half of the black workers surveyed.

This militant sentiment among the better educated workers could be largely rhetorical, reflecting the fact that they have absorbed the mood of the black media and the black intelligentsia in the townships. There is, however, also strong evidence that categories of workers who were probably formerly less politicised are reacting with anger to conditions and constraints.

This is evident in the attitudes of even less well-educated workers in places like Pretoria and the Vaal Triangle, where race relations tend to be worse than in, say, Johannesburg. In other words, the militancy of sentiment expressed in these results is not by any means only due to any fashionable radical political culture in places like Soweto. These results give evidence of very serious grass-roots anger in places not usually expected to be at the forefront of black political thinking.

Despite these clear trends, however, the major pattern is for black workers to separate political issues from the industrial sphere. Notwithstanding a very poor image of employers and management in general, the workers do not allow their political feelings to colour workplace strategies. Hence a minority of workers emerge as being sufficiently militant to infuse labour issues with wider political objectives. It should be borne in mind, however, that the minority is substantial; roughly one-third of workers seems to have the sentiments which would incline

TABLE 17

IMAGE OF THE EMPLOYMENT PERFORMANCE OF US COMPANIES IN SOUTH AFRICA

'There are a number of American companies in South Africa. How do you think these companies compare with South African companies? Even if you do not know for sure, please tell us what you have heard or what you think is true.'

		More	Same	Less*
Wages %	All	74	17	6
'Do American companies pay blacks more, the same or less as South African companies?' %	US Co. empl	67	27	6
Help with housing and education %	All	71	18	6
'Do American companies help blacks with housing and education more, the same or less than South African companies?' %	US Co	58	29	13
Training of blacks %	All	75	16	7
'Do American companies train blacks for betters jobs more, the same or less than South African companies?' %	US Co	67	22	11
Dealing with black unions %	All	60	24	7
'Are American companies willing to negotiate and deal with black trade unions more, the same or less than South African companies?' %	US Co	46	31	16
		Better	**Same**	**Worse**
Supervision %	All	65	24	4
'Do American companies have better, the same, or worse supervision, that is, supervisors and foremen, than South African companies?' % %	US Co	58	33	7
Disciplinary practices %	All	70	20	5
'Are American companies more fair, the same, or less fair in discipline than South African companies?' %	US Co	51	35	11

* Balance making up 100% consisted of 'Don't Know'.

them to use labour power to gain political objectives.

Most black workers, therefore, have a split consciousness at the present time, with a minority, albeit substantial, having a consistent militancy which covers both labour, community and political issues. The majority appear to value the benefits of wage employment sufficiently not to wish to see their work opportunities destabilised by political action.

This is valid for the present, but the minority whose political and labour attitudes are consistently militant could grow over time if political discontents increase or become more intense.

This pattern of consciousness is compatible with the finding that black workers do not reject capitalism as a system, even though they are very emphatic in wishing to see it improved so as to produce equality of opportunity. The black workers may be very angry but they have not yet become ideologically estranged from the present industrial system.

The results of the present study in many ways support those of Nasser (1984) in showing that a great deal of resentment and mistrust of management exists. Nevertheless they still appear to perceive prospects of the employment system of industrial South Africa being improved to eliminate the discrimination they appear to experience. It is noteworthy, however, that in some areas, like the Vaal Triangle and Pretoria, the results show (tentatively because of small subsample size) that resentments are so great that majorities reject the capitalist system in these areas. This is a clear indication of the danger inherent in not eliminating race discrimination in industry.

Given the broad pattern of findings, however, it is perhaps not surprising that black production workers in South Africa are not likely at this stage to support the programmes abroad to promote withdrawal of Western or more specifically United States capital from the South African economy. The conclusions are based on a variety of probes in the survey, some of which included a rationale for disinvestment which would be politically persuasive for black people. The pattern of replies, however, remained consistent, showing a large and firm majority in favour of continued and increased US investment in South Africa.

These findings are very consistent with other results, which show that those blacks employed in US companies are likely to have a slightly more favourable view of employers than other workers. There can be little doubt from this trend, as well as from the very favourable employment image which US companies enjoy, that for black workers the presence of US capital in South Africa is highly valued.

Quite obviously the motivations of the black production workers are very pragmatic. They perceive the issue of external investment and trade policy with regard to South Africa in bread and butter terms. They take an unabashedly short-run and material view of the issue. Nevertheless, they are the people on whose behalf the disinvestment campaign is waged abroad, and for that reason their preferences should be heeded by protagonists in the campaign.

There is perhaps another reason why the preference of these black production workers should count in the debate. Their replies on political issues show clearly that they are no dull, apathetic and crushed proletariat who must be saved from a morass of false consciousness by liberated minds abroad. These production workers have very firm political views and very substantial proportions are inclined to express support for the very agencies who are pursuing the objectives of disengagement abroad. If ever these agencies achieve formal influence in South African policy and affairs black productions workers of the kind sampled for this study will be among the first supporters of that leadership.

In the meantime, however, these production workers have to weigh their political commitments against their responsibilities. While very aggrieved and fairly radical in regard to their political circumstances they realise that the system of industrial production, for all its weaknesses which they are the first to recognise, spells survival for the black proletariat.

This awareness may be heightened at a time of recession and high unemployment like the present, but comparative results over time which have been quoted show that the attitudes of these workers are not ephemeral but have a consistent pattern. They wish to see the benefits of the industrial system protected, no matter what the other aspects of political change might be. They are prepared to express support for banned organisations and over a third of them are even prepared to say that they will participate in a mass political strike, but they want their employment and material opportunities protected. Disinvestment by US companies and trade sanctions are a threat to their material and work interests, and therefore they oppose them with firm consistency.

In short, black workers make a balanced, strategic assessment of their position and of potential gains and losses. It involves a necessary (for them) distinction between alternative roles for trade unions. They appear not to see it as functional for unions and labour organisation to become involved in a political campaign. The extent to which they achieve a notion of specific domains of activity is remarkable, and it contradicts many a thesis that black workers are non-modern men who cannot separate specific principles from diffuse and general grievances.

Some people may argue that it is precisely this tendency among South African blacks to give priority to short-term survival and security that has crippled the black liberation struggle. This is the kind of prescriptive stance that can only be taken by well-educated middle class activists, however, for whom survival and security is not an issue. Change in South Africa is not primarily to be sought for the benefit of the disaffected middle class activists, and therefore any 'liberation' must occur with the support and involvement of the black working classes unless it is to be yet something else which is imposed on black people. It is perhaps appropriate, then, for programmes of change in South Africa to work within the priorities and possibilities of the black working classes. In this sense the disinvestment strategy, whatever its validity as a means of providing opposition to vested white interests and structures, cannot claim to be a compaign on behalf of the black rank-and-file people of South Africa.

Perhaps the major implication of this study is that most black workers in South Africa at this stage keep the spheres of politics and labour action

separate. This should not comfort employers and the authorities unduly, however. A majority of these black workers appear to realise that their labour power could be a powerful political weapon should they wish to use it. Furthermore, a substantial minority has sufficiently militant sentiments to have bridged the separation between the political and occupational spheres. Unless policy reforms occur to alleviate the frustrations and grievances of black workers in their daily lives more and more of them will draw their political views into the sphere of labour. Given the increasing militancy which this study has demonstrated, reform in urban policy, community development and influx control laws has become a critical necessity.

• **The full study is available in the Black Sash office in Johannesburg**

The Research

In the interests of the greatest possible validity fieldwork was carried out by means of lengthy face to face interviews conducted by highly trained and experienced black interviewers in the language of choice of the respondent. In order to win the confidence of people interviewed a good deal of time was devoted to establishing sound rapport, and interviews took an average of 110 minutes each. Although contact with respondents was made in industrial areas all the interviewing took place in private, most of it in the homes of respondents. No interviews were conducted on factory premises. The interview schedule used in the field work is not reproduced since items are given in the text.

Since the aim was to generalise for the people most intimately involved in the capitalist system and particularly in the sector in which most multi-national companies operate — the manufacturing sector — the sample was restricted to black male production workers. No list of people in this specific category of work is available as a sampling frame and therefore a normal random sample could not be drawn. The basis of the sampling method was the so called quota sample. In such a sample the selection of respondents is controlled by certain criteria in order to achieve representativeness. The detailed procedure was as follows.

Industrial areas in the following urban complexes were defined: Johannesburg, Pretoria, the East Rand, the West Rand, the Vaal Triangle area, Port Elizabeth, Durban and Pinetown. Contact points were selected randomly across the industrial areas. Within each selected area interviewers sought respondents who qualified as black production workers according to age criteria. In all a total of 551 interviews was conducted, distributed as follows:

Johannesburg	—	146
Durban-Pinetown	—	100
Port Elizabeth	—	100
East Rand	—	68
West Rand	—	59
Pretoria	—	49
Vaal Triangle	—	29

There was deliberate over-representation of the Port Elizabeth and Durban areas so as to allow adequate assessments to be made of regional variation in attitudes. If the results had been significantly different according to area it would have been necessary to weigh the results in order to rectify for over-representation. As it turned out, however, the differences according to area were generally not significant and the results could be combined. However, the patterns are always also specified separately by area so that any patterns of difference which do exist between regions are not obscured or hidden. The age and occupational characteristics of the sample are as follows:

Age		%	Occupation		%
16-24 yrs	—	25	Higher Semi-		
25-34 yrs	—	35	skilled and		
35-49 yrs	—	27	skilled	—	35
50+ yrs	—	14	Lower Semi-		
			skilled and		
			skilled	—	65

In the report the data for the subsample in the Durban-Pinetown region is provided only in summary form and is not included in presentations of combined results since the major interest as far as this report is concerned lies in the results for those areas in which most multi-national and US companies are to be found, namely the Pretoria-Witwatersrand-Vereeniging area and the Port Elizabeth area, where most of the multi-national motor companies are situated.

Thus the Durban results are provided by way of comparison, and the interest as regards these results lies mainly in the fact that the Inkatha position, which is dominant in Natal, openly favours a constructive engagement strategy. Hence Durban results appear as a separate comparison and as already indicated, are not included in the category of 'overall' results.

The needlework stall at the Jhb morning market is well known for the excellence of its products and the money it makes throughout each year — left to right: convenor Molly Smollan, Dea Lowitt, Truda Hemp, Esther Raphaely

Freda Lloyd (co-convenor with Lesley Hermer, bending over next to her) at the white elephant stall; Margaret Kirk seated at left.

Ann Cohen at the cake stall

photos: Gill De Vlieg

In front, from left: G Makhawulu (President CRADORA), Di Bishop, M Goniwe (organizing secretary, CRADORA), S Mkanto, Molly Blackburn

On trial at Cradock

The rents and schools protests in Cradock, where the unrest continues and where 4 500 black schoolchildren are still out of school, were recorded in *Sash*, vol 27 no 2, August 1984.

Arising out of their work among the residents of the Cradock township, Ilingelihle, our members MOLLY BLACKBURN and DI BISHOP (both also PFP MPCs) were charged with illegally entering the township. They were found guilty, cautioned and discharged.

BRIAN BISHOP writes about the trial

Background

Security police activity in the Eastern Cape is notorious, so that events that might cool down elsewhere often develop into a cycle of anger.

Ilingelihle outside Cradock is a neglected township and, following the announcement of a rent increase, the Cracock Residents' Association (CRADORA) was formed in September 1983. It is now a UDF affiliate.

The Chairman of Cradora was Matthew Goniwe, acting principal of the local high school and an outstanding mathematics and science teacher. Security police warned him that involvement would 'have consequences.' In November 1983 he was told that he was transferred to Graaff Reinet; then in January 1984 he was fired when he refused to accept the transfer. When his application for

re-instatement was refused his pupils walked out of school and soon the boycott spread to all the Cradock schools. Molly and Di believe the police gravely exacerbated the situation and the township has been in turmoil ever since.

In March 1984 Matthew Goniwe, together with Mbulelo Goniwe, Fort Calata and Madoda Jacobs were detained under section 28 of the Internal Security Act and variously transferred to prisons in Cape Town and Johannesburg. The Goniwe cousins and Fort Calata spent three months in detention — Madoda Jacobs was charged with public violence and acquitted.

Section 28 detainees can be visited if a permit is granted and as public representatives Molly and Di visited Mr Goniwe at Pollsmoor Prison and also attended some of the trials arising out of the Cracock disturbances. They became more and more aware of the police harassment of the community.

Like many other political trials those concerning Cradock residents were held far away, often in Somerset East 104 km from Cradock. Molly and Di attended a trial there on November 19 and afterwards drove Mr Goniwe and two friends home to Ilingelihle.

In Somerset East, and when they stopped for petrol in Cookhouse, they realised that they were being followed by three security policemen. As they approached Cradock they followed the sign-posted road to Ilingelihle, with no signs denying entrance.

They dropped Mr Goniwe at his house and were promptly arrested by the security policemen they had seen in Somerset East.

When Molly and Di arrived in Cradock for their trial on the morning of December 19 they found the Court surrounded by about 20 members of the Riot Police (the so-called Reaction Unit). About six members of the Security Police sat in the white portion of the public gallery. There was no one in the black area and Gavin Blackburn. Andrew Savage MP, Molly's sister Judy Chalmers (a Black Sash member) and I sat there.

As the trial started, a journalist leaned across to tell me that black people were being denied admission. I went outside and, around the corner, saw a group of people wearing CRADORA T-shirts. I said that they were free to attend the trial and should accompany me.

As we approached the Court a SAP officer said that only I could enter. I replied that there were at least 20 seats inside and that if anyone was denied entry while there was an empty seat I would recommend that the accused apply for a mis-trial. After a while 20 people were allowed in.

Later we heard dogs and vehicles outside. I left the Court and found a large number of riot and ordinary police on the Court steps and about 200 Ilingilihle people across the road. In the hearing of a police officer, I told the crowd that there were still eight seats. The community chose eight people who accompanied me in without hindrance.

The proceedings became tense when the local 'Bantu Administrator' told the magistrate that he alone decided who entered the township — there was no appeal. After repeated questioning he admitted that he had instructed the Minister to refuse this permit.

Di brought a lighter moment to the trial when questioned about the report she submitted after her previous visit in which she recommended that a senior police officer be seconded to Cradock. When asked why she had recommended this she replied 'To control the local police.'

The Prosecutor in this case read my reply from a Press clipping (sent from the Attorney-General's office nogal) in which I said: 'It is a contemptible law and deserves to be treated with contempt'.

At tea-time the Court conducted an in-loco inspection. When Court resumed the people who had been in the public gallery were waiting quietly in the street. As I entered I heard a Warrant Officer tell his Captain that 'the men are ready'. Outside I saw them all lined up for a charge, but everyone had entered the court by the time the full force of the law came racing around the corner. Nothing ruins a good riot so much as a complete absence of 'rioters'.

The police video crew on the verandah of a neighbouring building made it look even more like a B-grade movie. Four ladies had the misfortune to leave a neighbouring shop as the police rushed by. They were surrounded and when they displayed their purchases, were told to go home, 'but don't walk together'.

Revenge came at lunch-time. On our return we found that the people had been let in timeously and we were refused admission because 'the Court is full'. Two armed policemen stood in the doorway in case we defied the ruling, while the officer stood laughing in the background.

Andrew Savage MP sent a note to Defence Attorney Jan van Gend who interrupted proceedings to tell the magistrate of the refusal. At his request the people moved closer to one another and the proceedings were suspended until we were seated. At this point control was abandoned and even standing room filled up. It was a very colourful public gallery with a massed display of Cradora and UDF T-shirts. One young man even wore a RELEASE MANDELA T-shirt.

It was hard to realize that this was the trial of two white women, of two PFP public representatives. It made one realize that there is still hope of reconciliation in our country, despite the forces of violence and oppression.

The case ended at 6.30 pm when Di and Molly were found guilty, cautioned and discharged.

As the magistrate left the Court, the people formed a long crocodile and filed out shaking the hands of the accused, their attorney, their husbands and friends, and even the two reporters.

Di commented afterwards 'I was deeply moved by the fact that so many of this harassed community took the time and risked further harassment by supporting Molly and me at our trial'.

As we left Cradock I thought of the most famous name connected with the town, Olive Schreiner, who is buried on a local farm. I think Olive would have approved of Molly and Di. She had campaigned for women's rights, and for the rights of the black people and the boers in their own country.

Detentions protest

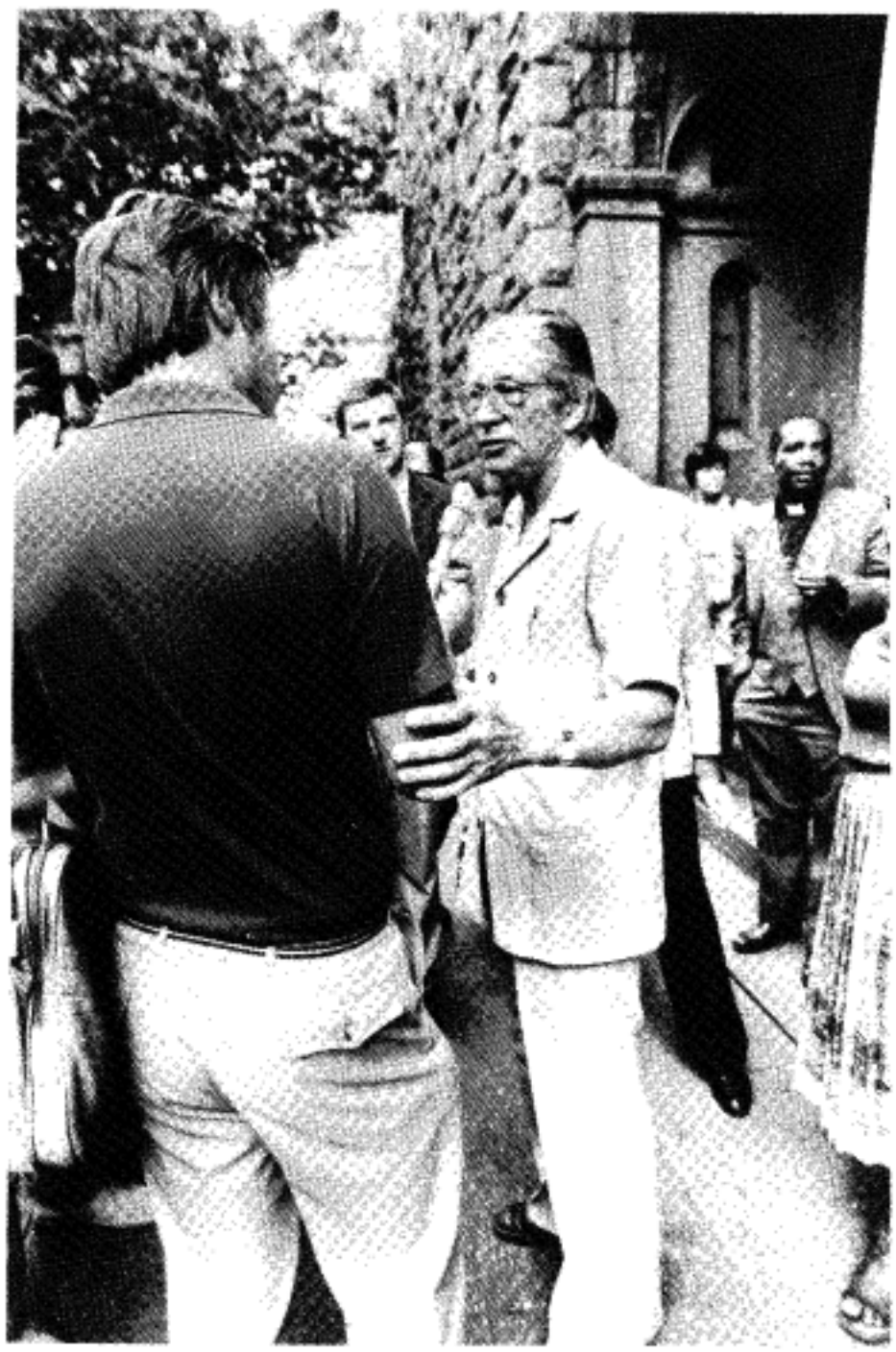
November 29

Police arrested and charged 37 people who took part in a combined organizations' protest against detentions, standing out of sight of each other around Johannesburg. Of those arrested under the Riotous Assemblies Act, nine were Sash members.

Altogether some 50 people took part in the demonstration. All, like Cathy Jordi, above, had their posters seized by the police.

Beyers Naude (right) attended the lunch-hour remembrance service in St Mary's Cathedral.

photos: Gill De Vlieg



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