

HOUSING & HOSTELS — GAUTENG

1996

# Stocks & Stocks denies SABC report

(127) CT (PR) 8/1/96  
BY CHARLOTTE MATHEWS

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Stocks & Stocks relinquished subsidy allocations for about 1 000 housing units, but is continuing with projects for over 10 000 units.

Martin van Zyl, the chairman of the housing board, said any perception that the board had a problem with Stocks & Stocks was incorrect. The cancellation of a project because of non-performance did not indicate that private sector developers were unwilling or unable to perform. It could be for other reasons, for example community issues.

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## Land release plan to take off soon

(127) ~~(210)~~

The Gauteng government announced yesterday that it would make land available to homeless people, but warned it would not condone illegal land invasions.

The administration and Greater Johannesburg's local government structures had identified land which could be used as reception areas to relieve the crisis of land invasions in the next few weeks, Development Planning, Environment and Public Works MEC Sicele Shuceka said in Johannesburg.

He said a task team that had been formed to look into land invasion in Greater Johannesburg would report to local constitutional structures and the province for final ratification in the next two weeks.

*Star 12/1/96*  
"Government wants to assure people that they are seriously looking into the issue of land release. However, government will not condone the illegal invasion of land," Shuceka said.

He said the move demonstrated the willingness on the part of the government to release land in the province - Sapa

## Hostel dwellers threaten council with violence

(127) Star 13/1/96

A Soweto-based hostel dwellers' association yesterday threatened violence at the Greater Johannesburg Transitional Metropolitan Council's offices on January 24.

Hostel dwellers were angered by what they saw as the council's foot-dragging over the upgrading of hostels in Soweto, said Thulani Mlotshwa, spokesman for the National Hostel Dwellers' Association.

Speaking after a meeting with hostel dwellers at Soweto's Merafe hostel yesterday, Mlotshwa said the council's failure to give the go-ahead to building contractors set to upgrade Soweto's Dube, Merafe, Jabulani, Nancefield and Lisateng hostels had caused the decision.

"This will be a similar invasion to that of October last year when a lot of damage was caused to council buildings. I think the community will recall that considerable damage was done due to the hostel dwellers' anger," warned Mlotshwa.

Council spokesmen said they would not be able to comment without consultation with Southern Metropolitan Substructure officials, who were in a meeting yesterday afternoon - Sapa.

# Brightly lit future for Tembisa

R80-m plan to end blackouts and bring electricity to homes that have never had it

(127) (scribble) Star 17/1/96

By HOPEWELL RADEBE  
City Reporter

Frequent electricity blackouts and potentially fatal wires hanging loose in Tembisa should soon be a thing of the past with the area having been earmarked for a massive electrification overhaul

The Kempton Park/Tembisa Metropolitan Substructure is scheduled to announce an R80-million plan for the overhaul next week, which will include electrification of households which have never had electricity

At present, hundreds of homes are connected illegally and dangerously with electric wires all over the place, hanging loose from poles and across streets, creating a life-threatening hazard

Kempton Park electricity director Jan Malan said the electrified portion of the township was heavily overloaded.

This was especially true during peak winter periods which had led to frequent and lengthy blackouts in the past

He said a multi-phase plan to

renovate and electrify the township has been designed

The first phase - to be started in May this year - would deal with the installation of a R35-million prepaid metering system for every household

Phase 2, also with a face value of R35-million, would be aimed at homes which had never had electricity.

This phase would focus on new suburbs such as Phomolong.

The remaining R10-million had been budgeted for administration and a marketing cam-

paign for the scheme.

Part of the massive overhaul involves the installation of a central computer centre, enabling the authorities to manage and control the use of electricity

The system will also detect anyone tampering with the electricity supply

Residents will no longer need to fear general cuts in electricity because of non-payment of electric bills, as the individual metering and computer systems will allow for individuals to be disconnected should they fail to pay

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# Outrage as water fines stay in place

By BRONWYN WILKINSON

The announcement that water restrictions are still in place for Johannesburg - which means residents are still paying penalties for water used over quota - has outraged consumer bodies and ratepayers

Minister of Water Affairs and Forestry Kader Asmal announced the immediate lifting of restrictions on December 27. That was followed the next day by Rand Water announcing that it was immediately withdrawing its quotas and punitive tariffs.

However, the Greater Johannesburg Transitional Metropolitan Council has announced that it can lift the restrictions only after council meetings on January 31.

And George Keay, the council's director of water and gas, confirmed yesterday that the punitive tariffs had actually been



Minister Kader Asmal

increased from R3,75 per kilolitre over quota to R5 per kilolitre on January 1 - after the Government had lifted the restrictions and quotas. He confirmed that the money was still being collected from residents, but it was no longer being paid to Rand Water.

The Consumer Council has said it is extremely unfair that consumers are still paying penalties when the quotas and restric-

tions have been lifted by Rand Water, and has appealed to the TMC to credit consumers with the penalties paid this month.

Keay said no penalties had been paid in December because consumers had kept their water consumption at quota level. However, he conceded that after the announcement by Asmal and Rand Water that restrictions had been lifted, consumers had probably increased their water use tremendously and would be far over quota for January.

The reasons for the retention of the restrictions and penalties are taped and the council recess over Christmas.

Keay said that the metropolitan substructures were still being created after the local government elections over two months ago.

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## Water outrage

Their first council meetings are due to take place only at the end of the month.

He explained that the lifting of the restrictions could only be effected by the unanimous decision of those four councils.

After the proclamation of water conservation measures in the Vaal River system last year, and the subsequent imposition of quotas and punitive tariffs by Rand Water on local authorities, the Greater Johannesburg Transitional Metropolitan Council had passed the costs on to its consumers, said Keay.

He added: "Water restrictions, quotas and additional charges applicable to consumers in the Greater Johannesburg Transitional Metropolitan Council area were imposed by resolution of the council, in terms of the water supply by-laws."

Water restrictions came into effect on August 1 and punitive charges for water consumption in excess of quotas were levied on a sliding scale from September 1. On January 1, the punitive tariff was to increase from R3,75 to R5 per kilolitre used over quota.

On January 2, Keay said restrictions would remain until January 16, but he was optimistic they could be lifted retrospectively to December 28.

However, he said yesterday that in terms of the Local Government Ordinance, the lifting of restrictive measures, including the additional charge, could not be carried out retrospectively.

Keay said the TMC had not met until the end of August, to vote in the restrictions and quotas, and had thus not been able to penalise residents in August.

However, the council had had to pay Rand Water R4-million in quota tariffs that month.

"So the public had a month's grace at the beginning and, effectively, the council recovers that money in January."

However, that money had been collected after the announcement by Asmal and Rand Water of the restrictions, and residents had reduced their water consumption. January's consumption is likely to be far higher than August's.

Consumer Council director Ina Wilkens said it was outrageous that consumers were paying unnecessary penalties for restrictions which had been lifted by Rand Water.

"The least the metro council can do is see to it that consumers are credited for the unfair fines," she said.

The Housewives' League said that while restrictions were a good idea in a dry country like South Africa, consumers should not be paying for council sluggishness.

The league added that if the council intended retaining the money taken for January, it should spend it on improving water pipes and drainage systems for better water retention in future drought periods.

# Homeless to get land

3 (127) Sowetan 23/1/96

GAUTENG will begin its land-release programme in the first quarter of this year. MEC for development planning, environment and works Mr Sicelo Shuceka said at a media briefing yesterday

About 30 000 sites had been identified which could be used to settle homeless people, but the release of land had been delayed until representative local governments were elected, he said

Chief director of planning services Mr Paul Waanders said about 500 000 families, or between two and three million people, were homeless

He said there was uncertainty about how much land was available to settle people on. A provincial asset register being drawn up would clarify this. Presently, four departments need to approve the land transfers - *Sapa*



# Station project shot in arm for ailing city centre

Star 24/1/96

(127)

Despite an exodus by business, R162,5-m from 'investors of vision' is an example for those who have given up on CBD

BY SHIRLEY WOODGATE AND TARYN LAMBERTI

The ambitious R162,5-million revamp of Johannesburg's Park Station is being seen by property developers and the Government as a significant move to rejuvenate the heart of the city

At a function on the Johannesburg Station site of the Park City development, Transport Minister Mac Maharaj yesterday commended investors in the project for their vision: "The investors here today are committing themselves to a rejuvenated inner city, thereby setting an example for those who have given up on the

CBD and are leaving in droves"

The project is one of three major construction deals over the past several years which have transformed the CBD. Millions have also been poured into First National Bank's Bank City, and South African Breweries and the Reserve Bank are participating in the Newtown project.

Two major property developers in the CBD, Anglo American Property Services and Old Mutual Properties, said yesterday the Park City project was a further sign that investors were willing to bring money back into the area

Jack Prentice, managing director of Intersite Property Management Services, the SA Rail Commuter Corporation's property arm, said the exciting urban renewal scheme would ultimately provide public transport for the 220 000 commuters who use the facility every working day

The project will include a R47-million transit centre for buses, taxis and trains; a new R34-million metro concourse; a R30-million road transport concourse, 8 000 sqm of retail space; shopping malls; and a R15-million budget hotel

Covering 600ha and 22 blocks of prime CBD land - including Rissik, De Villiers, Hoek, Wanderers and Wolmarans streets - the project will deck the so-called "river of steel", the railway line dividing Johannesburg and Braamfontein.

The new metro concourse will do away with the existing first and third-class platforms, and the related retail component will consist of 10-15sq m convenience shops which will encourage informal traders to become formal businessmen, Prentice added

Work started in October on the first phase of the project, the reinforced concrete deck which will

## R162,5-MILLION PARK CITY PROJECT

### Station project boost for CBD

(127)

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link the Rissik Street bridge with the concourse building, providing parking for 600 cars

Maharaj praised investors in Park City "for having the guts to get the ball rolling while others in the industry remain cautious", and urged the private sector to invest in the CBD

This in turn would provide jobs in a city which had reached saturation point, where it could no longer support the increasing number of people who arrived daily.

The scarcity of jobs perpetuated the cycle of poverty linked to crime, the main reason why major tenants were relocating to safer working environments in Rosebank and Sandton, he said

Grahame Lindop, managing director of Amtrad, the development arm of Ampros, said the CBD was "a very run-down area and any money spent on its improvement is money well spent".

"The movement of the regional government into the CBD will also encourage the council to upgrade the city's amenities," Lin-



dop said, adding that the influx of people into the CBD would bring the crime rate down

Gauteng Premier Tokyo Sexwale, in a speech read for him at the station site by Development and Planning MEC Sicelo Shiceka, echoed Maharaj's call on the private sector to invest in the city

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# Revolt over Johannesburg

Star 29/1/96

(127)

water fines

Millions of rands at stake as private and commercial consumers resolve not to pay penalties which are lifted restrictions in the wake of record rains and overflowing dams

By Troy Lund

Residents and business organisations from Houghton to Soweto are united in their decision to boycott January's water penalties unless Johannesburg's administration guarantees that money will be reimbursed

This ultimatum follows the announcement that water penalties will be in place for January even though, on December 28, Rand Water lifted the stiff fines - R5 a kilolitre used above any allocated quota.

Millions of rands are at stake when the fines were at their lowest in August. Greater Johannesburg ratepayers forked out about R2-million, but this rose to R4-million in October when fines were increased.

A transitional metropolitan council (TMC) spokesman, who did not wish to be named, described the problem as "unfortunate and purely administrative".

She said water matters were now the responsibility of the four municipal substructures (MSSs) and the matter had nothing to do with the TMC.

Because the MSSs have not met since Rand Water officially lifted the restrictions, necessary legislative changes had not been made. The earliest that changes could be made would be at MSS meetings officially scheduled for the end of January, she said.

Councillor and Bryanston resident Liz Clogg described the situation as "typical of a tortoise-like system" which could not cope with emergency regulations. She said it was essential for a mechanism to be put in place that could deal with any emergency legislations needed.

"Business will suffer most by this system and must make representations to central Government to have the necessary provisions added to the Local Government Act," Clogg said.

She warned that MSSs might decide not to reimburse penalties because they had taken a month to implement and the administration had paid for ratepayers' ex-

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Thursday January 25 1996

## Jo'burg water fines revolt

(127) (0)

► From Page 1

Star 25/1/96

cessive use during that time

"It is just gross incompetence. Residents must not pay January's penalties," Emmarentia Ratepayers' Association chairman Jeanne Loomes said.

After consulting key industries, the newly formed Gauteng Association of Chambers of Commerce and Industry said it rejected the imposition of penalties.

"We will not pay because municipalities were unable or unwilling to interrupt the Christmas recess in order to react to Rand Water's decision," chairman Frank Cauldwell said.

There is a "considerable degree of concern" within commerce and industry at the time it has taken for new municipal structures to "get down to business", Cauldwell said last night.

Soweto Civic Association chairman Maynard Menu agreed that the penalties should not be imposed.

He was not prepared to say what action Soweto residents would be taking until he had "all the facts about the position councils were in" and had discussed the problem with his organisation.

He added, however, "If we believe the MSSs have been unfair, we will make ourselves heard loud and clear."

"And once we decide there is unfairness, there will be no stopping us."

Johannesburg water and gas director George Keay emphasised "it is in the hands of each MSS". He added he had heard nothing about plans to reimburse the fines.



In disbelief as Egypt down his beloved team at the FNB Stadium yesterday

## upper lip defeat

will now head for in to play the Group B 1 their quarterfinalaturday an Neil Tovey yesterday his side would be bang after the defeat against Egypt d coach Clive Barker's un of 15 matches optimistic SA will capcan Nations Cup re the stronger side ited Egypt's defence, ick was not on our ovey

sports 3 and Back Page

## Entries pour in for the game

Entries for The Star's "Name the Team" competition - an attempt to find a new name for the nation's soccer team - poured in yesterday, as South Africans displayed their love for images of animals and war.

Clearly "the boys" - Bafana Bafana to their fans - have matured into a team worthy of a more flattering name so they can take their place alongside the country's conquering cricket and rugby teams.

One name came forward 12 times which encapsulated our fledgling country's search for non-racialism and its eagerness to do battle. The Rainbow Warriors.

A contestant from Dube,

Soweto, produced a name unlikely to steal the hearts of our nation and of our squad of rodents "The Maluti Rats".

Another chose the rather inappropriate "Amagents", normally translated in township language to mean "thugs". Johannesburg hijackers have of late assumed that flattering term.

Not to be outdone, another called for "The Amabuto" to venture into the planet and do battle. Thus Zulu word means warrior or regiments and conjures up images relevant to both the early frontier wars and more recent power struggles between Inkath and ANC followers.

Enter The Star's Name th

# Consumers' revolt wins the day over water penalties

(127) (127)  
BY TROYE LUND

Stan  
29/1/96

Water penalties in Johannesburg have been lifted and consumers will be credited for fines levied this month.

This follows an uproar over the announcement by the transitional metropolitan council that, despite Rand Water having lifted water restrictions on December 28, municipal substructures would charge penalties for January because the councils had not met in time to lift punitive legislation.

The executive committees of three of the four Johannesburg substructures - Northern, Western and Eastern - have now decided to pass credit on penalties.

Penalties will still show on January accounts, but credits should be reflected on February statements or soon thereafter.

DP Eastern MSS councillor Mike Moriarty said he expected that credits would be recorded on February accounts, or as soon as councils "get their house in order".

The lifting of the tariff has been welcomed by residents and businesses.

The Southern MSS is expected to pass a similar decision this week.

■ A technical possibility - although highly unlikely - could see Johannesburg's 220 councillors paying out of their own pockets for January's fines.

In terms of the Local Government Act, councillors are prohibited from adjusting or backdating levies and rates already set for the month.

A lawyer, who specialises in local government, confirmed that the auditor-general was technically entitled to claim from councillors personally the amount for which they had passed credit, as it contravened the ordinance.

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# Concern over housing board staff quitting jobs

(127) BSO 29/1/96  
Robyn Chalmers

THE Gauteng provincial housing board's secretariat has been hit by a spate of resignations, leaving it temporarily weakened just as the provincial government is making progress on housing.

Government sources said at the weekend that the resignations related to the transformation of the public service, but it had implications for the delivery of homes in Gauteng.

The secretariat is crucial to the functioning of the board and responsibilities include implementing housing policy and allocating subsidies.

The board's chairman Martin van Zyl said the resignations included the head of the secretariat Wilhe Botha and two other staff members.

"When the board was devised, the secretariat was supposed to consist of 14 people.

"However, only seven or eight people at the most were appointed to the secretariat and with the loss of three people,

it is a big worry," he said. Van Zyl said three more people had been appointed and were expected to take up their positions during the next few months.

This will help take the heavy workload off the remaining board members.

The people who resigned apparently fell victim to government's transformation of the public service.

Some people had not been offered their positions back, or had been demoted when they re-applied for their jobs in line with government policy.

Housing boards are an integral part of governments' housing programme because they allocate subsidies and implement policy, among other tasks.

However, government sources said boards were likely to find their role in the housing programme downgraded, if recommendations from the recent task team report on the mobilisation of housing delivery were accepted.

## Mayors will face defaulters

(127)  
Mduzizi ka Harvey

60 1/2/96  
GAUTENG mayors had vowed to work with local councils in setting a strategy to crack the whip on municipal service payment defaulters in the province, said Masakhane campaign national director Chris Ngcobo.

At a meeting attended by 25 mayors in the province, held in Vereeniging yesterday, they committed themselves to plan towards delivering effective services and collecting payments with immediate effect.

The first step of the plan will be relaunching the campaign at a local level by councils, which will hold mass meetings and ward meetings in their areas. At these meetings mayors will decentralise the campaign by reaching all parts of society, and communities and councils will be involved in strategising steps to be taken against defaulters.

In addition, workshops which will include all stakeholders from local structures, the business community and political parties in the various areas will be held.

Councils will also investigate those cases where residents are in no position to pay.

Other plans proposed by the mayors included the endorsement of the campaign by their local councils, the formation of subcommittees consisting of the different stakeholders and council officials to evaluate the campaign on a regular basis, and the accumulation of proper data at a ward level on payment levels to enable councils to focus on problem areas in order to take appropriate measures.

Education programmes will also be held at ward level and incentives to encourage payment will be proposed.

# Pay for services — mayors

By Mongadi Mafata

THIRTY Gauteng mayors signed the Masakhane campaign pledges at the Regional Services Council's auditorium in Vereeniging yesterday in an effort to encourage communities to pay for service charges

Speaking at the conference, national campaign director Mr Chris Ngcobo said communities could no longer blame apartheid after voting for their own local representatives

"The number one priority for mayors is to clean their own houses by improving administration in order to create the necessary conditions for ser-

vice payments to resume," Ngcobo said

He added that the reasons for non-payment had been removed and a culture of payment had to be inculcated in the communities. He urged the mayors to intensify the fight against vandalism at schools, clinics and in the streets. "Now is the time for communities to take pride in their own properties"

At the end of the conference, several mayors called for the decentralisation of the campaign with the appointment of local Masakhane coordinators

Other points put across were that

(127) *Sevketan*  
11/2/96  
programmes of action at local level should be set up and the campaign should be continuously monitored and evaluated

It was resolved that local workshops which would include all key players in the campaign such as Eskom, the SA National Civics Organisation and trade unions should be established to work out a programme of action

The first local Masakhane campaign workshops will be held in Kempton Park, Tembisa, Edenvale and Modderfontein from February 19 to 24 to formulate strategies to resuscitate the culture of payment

## 80 000 to get houses

(127)

MORE than 80 000 residents who have rented four-roomed houses in black townships in Gauteng will own them by mid-year without paying a cent, Gauteng MEC for Housing and Local Government Mr Dan Mofokeng said yesterday.

In a statement, Mofokeng said lists of claims were currently being compiled involving 70 percent of the rented council housing in the Witwatersrand and Vaal areas.

He said in nearly all cases the historic cost of these older properties was less than the State's discount benefit figure of R7 500, enabling ownership to be transferred without any further payment.

Mofokeng urged tenants of the remaining 30 percent of properties to come forward without delay. He said an announcement would be made by mid-February identifying places where houses may be inspected, and setting a deadline for the submission of counter-claims.

*Sowetan 2/2/96*

## Council finally lifts water restrictions

Star 3/2/97

All water restrictions have been lifted in the Greater Johannesburg area and residents who exceeded their quotas will not have to pay fines incurred since Rand Water lifted the restrictions on December 28.

The long-awaited announcement was made by the Greater Johannesburg Transitional Metropolitan Council yesterday.

The retrospective dropping of the punitive tariffs would be referred to the auditor-general's office for condonation, the council said.

Johannesburg's water and gas director George Keay said the council was in recess and this had delayed the amendment of the relevant council legislation. Sapa

(127) (80)



## Gauteng acts to stop invasions

# Huge tracts of land for homeless

(127)

(127)

BD 12/2/96

Ingrid Salgado  
and Nomavenda Mathiane

STATE land in Gauteng would be released on a massive scale in a bid to stop land invasions, a ministerial meeting resolved at the weekend.

Land Affairs Minister Derek Hanekom reached an agreement on the issue with Gauteng MECs including housing MEC Dan Mofokeng and acting premier Mary Metcalfe.

This follows promises by the Gauteng government last year that it would spend R225m on providing land sites in 16 areas across the province in a bid to beat the growing squatter crisis.

The weekend meeting also comes two weeks before the release of Gauteng's policy on land invasion. According to Gauteng development planning director Carien Engelbrecht, the policy will focus on people being given security of tenure on the sites they are occupying in about 100 informal settlements in the province.

Sapa reports that after the weekend meeting Mofokeng said local councils would draft new lists of people waiting for houses. Local authorities would also be required to assess land needs in their area.

A Gauteng housing spokesman said the meeting with Hanekom showed government's resolve to deal firmly with squatters who were sabotaging

government's development plans and delaying the delivery of houses.

Hanekom said on Friday he would help resolve questions about land invasions and evictions, but the national policy required authorities to offer alternative land or accommodation to squatters who faced eviction.

Gauteng's policy for dealing with homelessness goes, implicitly, beyond even the incremental housing — or site-and-service — approach previously rejected by a number of provincial housing MECs.

Security of tenure was designed to stabilise settlements, leading to rapid upgrading as people were more likely to invest money in their areas, Engelbrecht said. This strategy was aimed at relieving government's budget constraints on service upgrading. About 80% of informal settlements in Gauteng had no access to basic services.

The province would also prioritise the release of additional land at various stages of service provision. Technical committees were being set up to steer programmes to release land.

Engelbrecht said occupiers of provincial land would be evicted only as a last resort. Where possible, every attempt would be made to relocate squatters to reception areas.

The state, as a special landowner,

Continued on Page 2

## Homeless (127)

Continued from Page 1

was obliged not to create homelessness through its actions. It had to show on the balance of convenience that it had acted in a "humane way"

However, punitive measures would be introduced in reception areas. These included allocating small sites (between 80 and 100 square metres) to rule out subletting and expansion, and charging occupation levies instead of securing tenure. Minimum health and safety standards would be adhered to.

Legislation was also on the cards for

backyard shack dwellers

There was no short-cut route to addressing landlessness, Engelbrecht said. The department expected results to start showing in about 10 years. Government was having discussions with local authorities and was counting the informal settlements.

Gauteng has seen the scene of numerous cases of squatters occupying land, with the most recent being Mofat Park, south of Johannesburg. Earlier squatters occupying buildings in central Johannesburg were moved after a court battle which ended in a court order being granted for Greater Johannesburg's metropolitan council to evict them.

# Hostel inhabitants voice disapproval of sloppy work

(127)  
By HOPEWELL RADEBE  
City Reporter

Star 12/2/96  
Hostel residents of KwaThema, Springs, are unhappy with the workmanship of contractors who have been awarded a R19-million contract to refurbish hostels which were destroyed during the early 90s violence between inmates and township residents

The residents have accused the local city council of corruption, demanding to know what has happened to the rest of the R5-million earmarked for upgrading their buildings

They and council authorities have been at odds ever since money was put aside to refurbish the buildings. The residents have also demanded compensation to hundreds of people who lost property during the conflict.

National Hostel Residents Association deputy chairman Siphon Nkwanyane said hostel residents also want the council to develop the squatter camp near the hostel

They want basic infrastructure such as toilets, water and electricity to be provided to the informal settlement to prevent squatters from abusing hostel facilities

Nkwanyane said other grievances included the council's lack of response to their complaints, and that blocked sewerage pipes, a number of leaking roofs, and unconnected and incomplete elec-

trical wiring represented a health hazard

The hostel inmates' misery started in September 1990 when KwaThema residents, allegedly acting on a call by the then civic association, demolished the hostel

According to the KwaThema town treasurer's report, council insurers were supposed to have paid out an estimated R5,2-million for the building and material damage, contents and income losses incurred during the violence

## They want basics like toilets and water

The council received R3,63-million from insurers. The National Housing Board also granted an additional R16-million for the upgrading of the hostel, bringing the total put aside for refurbishment to R19-million.

Council treasurer Willie Steinberg argued in his report that the monthly rental received from the hostel dwellers was not sufficient to cover upgrading costs

The inmates had begun paying for the services despite being dissatisfied with the quality

# Independent Zim paper closes down

Harare - One of Zimbabwe's last independent newspapers published its last edition yesterday after the owners said they could no longer afford to lose money

Elias Rusike, chief executive of the Modus publishing company, said the closure of The Sunday Gazette was "purely a business decision", not the result of political pressure.

In a front-page statement, Rusike said the newspaper, published since 1990, was not paying its way and its losses were hurting the company's flagship, the weekly Financial Gazette, Zimbabwe's only remaining serious independent newspaper.

Rusike, Financial Gazette editor Trevor Ncube and his deputy were convicted of criminal libel and fined last year for reporting that President Robert Mugabe had married his secretary in a secret civil ceremony

Mugabe (71) has not denied marrying Grace Marufu (36) in a traditional African ceremony. The libel suit appeared to have been part of a long battle between the government and Rusike.

Rusike's Daily Gazette was shut down in 1994, also for business reasons. Its audacious reporting had angered the government, and state-owned enterprises were ordered to withdraw their advertising.

The government controls five newspapers, including two Sunday papers - Sapa-AP

Star 12/2/96

# Outcry over 'low-income' neighbours

By Pamela Dube (127)  
Political Reporter

RESIDENTS of Kelvin and Buccleuch have threatened legal action against the University of Witwatersrand for selling Frankenwald Estate, east of Johannesburg, to the Greater Johannesburg Transitional Metropolitan Council

The GJTMC bought the land for R25 million for low-cost housing

*Sowetan 13/2/96*  
Residents of neighbouring suburbs argue that the intended use of that land goes against the conditions of the "Deed of Gift" signed by the original landowner in 1905

Frankenwald was given to the Colony of Transvaal by the late Alfred Beit in 1905 for an industrial school. In 1922, the land was transferred to Wits University in accordance with Beit's will. For decades a larger portion of the

land remained barren, with parts of it used by Wits for agricultural research.

Mr Robert Aveling of the Frankenwald Technopark Trade School Consortium claimed they had the support of the communities around Frankenwald, and that their project was more in line with Beit's will.

The Kelvin/Buccleuch Residents Association say the sale was "illegal" and the university did not consult them.

POLITICS

Plan to settle rent disputes

Ingrid Salgado (127)

GAUTENG'S housing department has recommended amendments to the Rent Control Act of 1976 to allow for the establishment of mediation boards to resolve disputes between landlords and tenants.

The province's housing and local government standing committee will hold public hearings on the matter next month.

Gauteng housing and administration director Monty Narsoo told the committee yesterday there was evidence of deteriorating relationships between landlords and tenants in the inner city and in areas characterised by backyard shack accommodation.

Changed housing patterns in metropolitan areas meant "inventive measures" had to be sought to manage problems connected with rented housing.

Rent control was phased out in the 1970s

Public works wage deal expected soon

BD 14/2/96

Ndaba said it had been conceded that in the interests of job creation, workers in the public works programme should not expect parity of pay and conditions with their counterparts in the formal sector.

The Cosatu executive was also willing to try out the task-based payment system Ndaba emphasised, however, that the federation would be pressing for changes to the agreement's provisions on training, which he said were "very weak".

Cosatu believed that all employees in public works projects should receive skills training to enhance their prospects of finding work.

He also said the unions would be seeking to sharpen the agreement's provisions on workers' benefits. Giving details of progress in employment creation, Radebe said a total of 28 158 jobs would be generated by the Independent Development Trust's community employment programme, to which R70m had been allocated from the RDP fund. This would improve the incomes of 100 000 rural people. In addition, R150m had been allotted for 182 projects in the provinces. These were expected to create 18 000 jobs.

Drew Forrest  
CAPE TOWN — Cosatu has resolved internal wrangles over wage levels in the public works programme and is to sign a long-delayed deal with government "within weeks".

Public Works Minister Jeff Radebe said yesterday labour, the civil engineering industry, government and representatives of civil society were at the final stages of negotiations on a framework agreement designed to enhance the use of labour in all government construction projects.

Negotiations on the agreement began in 1994, but were stalled by internal union differences over pay. A one-year deal was concluded in 1993 to allow for pilot projects, which Radebe said had been successful.

Cosatu's head of negotiations Khumbula Ndaba said unionists had been divided over whether workers should receive the same pay levels and benefits as in the formal sector, and over the government's proposal of "task-based" payment.

Some had felt that workers should be paid by the hour

One week only for submissions on Bill

Wyndham Hartley

BD 14/2/96  
CAPE TOWN — Due to the urgency of the legislation needed to allow minors charged with serious crimes to be held in prison, the public is being given one week to make submissions on the Bill.

The Bill, introduced as a private members' proposal by ANC MP Carl Niehaus, seeks to make it possible as a short-term emergency measure to incarcerate children awaiting trial. It was introduced to the National Assembly's correctional services committee yesterday.

Niehaus, who chairs the committee, later announced that the public would have until February 20 to make submissions. Between then and February 29, when the Bill was scheduled for debate in the National Assembly, the committee would debate the measure. This could include public hearings.

Niehaus stressed that while large numbers of child offenders were not involved — about 700 were released into places of safety and parental custody last year — the legislative measure was necessary because those who had escaped and returned to crime were a danger to the public.

When the Correctional Services Act was amended last year to outlaw holding children in prison, there were many submissions from organisations. These would be taken into account.

It would be difficult for the committee to allow more time for submissions, he said. Submissions (and if possible 40 copies) can be addressed to the Secretary to Parliament, attention Simone Ingerfeld, PO Box 15, Cape Town, 8000.

S N D I A M B A R E I O S U M I J I A J A U U U H I

# Housing consultants to monitor Gauteng

Ingrid Salgado

(127)  
BD 14/2/96

THE Gauteng housing board would employ consultants as early as April to monitor housing delivery in the province, board chairman Martin van Zyl said yesterday.

This would enable the board to deal with problems as they arose, he told the province's housing and local government standing committee.

Funding for the project — not expected to exceed 1% of the board's total payouts — would come from the national housing fund's coffers.

"If we don't monitor programmes closely now, we may very well be asking why there is no delivery of houses even a year from now," he said.

Although it was not within the board's jurisdiction to employ monitors, the lack of such control had hindered delivery in the past. The board would seek the necessary approval from national bodies.

Van Zyl said the board had overallocated subsidies to contractors but had not run into trouble because developers were not drawing on the subsidies.

However, payments had started to flow after progressive payment contracts were introduced. The board had paid R66,5m to contractors under the progressive payment system by February 6, compared to R28m in normal payments. The new system would ease the cash flow problems that had hindered delivery by minimising developers' risk, he said.

Nearly 20 of Gauteng's 65 contractors had already submitted their cash flow projections for the new system. The rest had until Friday to submit them.

Other problems which had hampered delivery were affordability constraints, lengthy approval periods by local authorities and communities, a lack of understanding of national housing policy and unrealistic expectations.

Low-cost housing was also not a viable business for the private sector since profit margins were low or non-existent.

Van Zyl said the board would submit a proposal to housing and local government MEC Dan Mofokeng that cancelled contracts be replaced with projects in the same or neighbouring areas.

The political implications of failing to replace planned projects were "very serious" since communities would believe government was renegeing on its promises, he said.

# 88 500 lay claim to council houses

BD 15/2/96 (127)

Robyn Chalmers

MORE than 88 500 people have submitted claims to ownership of rented council housing in the Witwatersrand and Vaal areas, which could lead to the free transfer of R3,5bn in state-owned assets.

Gauteng housing and local government MEC Dan Mofokeng said yesterday the claims could be inspected at the offices of the local authorities concerned and at housing transfer bureaus in the offices of township managers.

During the next two weeks a notice of claims received would also be delivered to the occupants of each of the 88 500 houses listed.

Mofokeng said any counter-claims and objections relating to these properties would have to be lodged at the relevant bureaus by March 29.

Officials overseeing the process expected a substantial number of claims to be disputed. This could cause difficulties in determining ownership, as a large number of records in former black local authority areas were incomplete, incorrect or had been destroyed.

After the end of March, the lists would be finalised, claims checked by a transparent process, any disputes adjudicated, agreements completed and transfers regis-

tered in the deeds office.

"In nearly all cases the historic cost of these older properties is less than the state's discount benefit figure of R7 500, enabling ownership to be transferred without any further payment," said Mofokeng.

He urged tenants of the remaining 30% of state-owned rented properties which had not been listed to "act without further delay" as claims would be processed for a short period only.

A provincial housing department consultant said the listed selling price was based on the historic cost. Since most black housing was built years ago, the discount benefit of up to R7 500 a property would cover the full listed selling price in most cases.

"There are 127 361 rented properties on record in the former black local authority areas of the Witwatersrand and the Vaal Triangle. Assuming a 100% acceptance and a replacement value of R40 000 a serviced site plus house, this represents a potential free transfer of assets at a value of more than R5bn," he said.

There were also about 50 000 people who had bought properties from local authorities and who still owed balances who could benefit from the offer.

## State poised to give houses to tenants

(127) Star 16/2/96

HOUSING REPORTER

The transfer of state-owned houses to tenants is in the last stages in Gauteng, where the government has released 88 500 names of people who have claimed ownership.

Tenants can now visit their local authorities and housing bureaux offices to check if their names appear

MEC for Housing Dan Mofokeng said a notice of claim would also be delivered to the occupants of each house listed. Dispute claims - which should be submitted within the next two weeks - should be lodged at bureau offices.

"Claims will be checked by a transparent process, any disputes will be adjudicated, agreements will be completed, and transfers will be registered in the Deeds Office," he said. When the properties were approved, the tenants would receive a R7 500 discount, allowing free transfer of ownership

Phone 080-111-4886 toll free for information.

# Hostel dwellers protest against rent hikes

Star 16/2/96 (127)

By HOPEWELL RADEBE

Vosloorus, south of Alberton, was tense yesterday as hostel dwellers closed the main road for six hours in protest against rent increases and the cutoff of electricity because of non-payment

About 1 000 hostel dwellers armed with traditional weapons toy-toyed around burning tyres barricading MC Botha Drive, the main entrance leading into the township, watched by a large contingent of policemen and defence force members in armoured vehicles.

Soldiers and policemen tried to extinguish the blazing tyres but the demonstrators, armed with tins of petrol, set them alight again amid pouring rain.

The protest disrupted tax and bus services in the area, leaving workers stranded inside the township. Others used alternative exits through Spruitview.

More security forces were moved into the township and managed to gain control of the road after removing rocks and refuse skips which were used as barricades.

The demonstrators are demanding that the Greater Boksburg Town Council reconnect the electricity supply, which was cut off on Monday

Hostel leader Wilfred Langa said residents were also voicing their anger over the council's decision to increase rents from R20 to R55 a bed.

They were demanding that the mayor and councillors visit the Vosloorus hostel to address their grievances

"Refuse removal and the cleaning of hostels have been very irregular. Roofs are leaking and some electric stoves have not been properly wired," Langa said.

"We are not satisfied with the workmanship of the contractors

who are renovating the hostel"

Boksburg acting town clerk Hannes Langeveld said the council had been negotiating with communities over the inadequate payment for services since July last year.

The average payment had been only 10% of the amount required, and the councillors appointed after the November elections had decided to issue an ultimatum.

Hostel leaders were in talks with Boksburg councillors in an effort to resolve the matter

Safety and Security MEC Jessie Duarte condemned the road closure, saying conflict with local government should no longer be used to prevent other people from leading their lives

"We cannot allow the National Hostel Residents' Association to dictate rates and taxes when there is a democratically elected structure in place with legitimate powers to do so"

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Public



# Small contractors hit hard as repair work cancelled

STAV 17/2/96

BY CHRISTINA STUCKY

About half the jobs awarded to small contractors for the repair of war-damaged houses in the Katlehong-Tokoza-Vosloorus area will be cancelled within the next few months because, in many instances, their ambitions exceed their abilities.

Although the problems with small contractors have caused a backlog in the repair and hand-over of the houses, the cancellations may also have a positive side effect, a consulting engineer says.

"The Government's idea was to uplift the emerging contractor," Fanie Sadler, director of the consulting engineering company Leech Price & Associates, explains.

"Initially we were happy to

give them the opportunity to prove themselves, but now we have to start cancelling contracts."

Of the between 70 and 80 small contractors who won tenders to rebuild houses in the formerly war-torn Katorus area, he estimates that half will lose their contracts in the next few months.

On the bright side, he points out that "we have achieved our objective to sift out the men from the boys."

Once the company can work with reliable contractors, the process will be speeded up.

And in need of speeding up it is. More than 170 contracts have been awarded since September, but so far fewer than 50 houses have been completed and hand-

ed over.

Another company employed by Leech Price does an initial check of the house while the Home Loan Guarantee Company proves rightful ownership. Then Leech Price drafts a bill and the tender goes out.

About two weeks later, the contractor - by government regulation the one with the lowest bid - is awarded the job.

But the small contractor with the lowest tender is not always the one with the most experience.

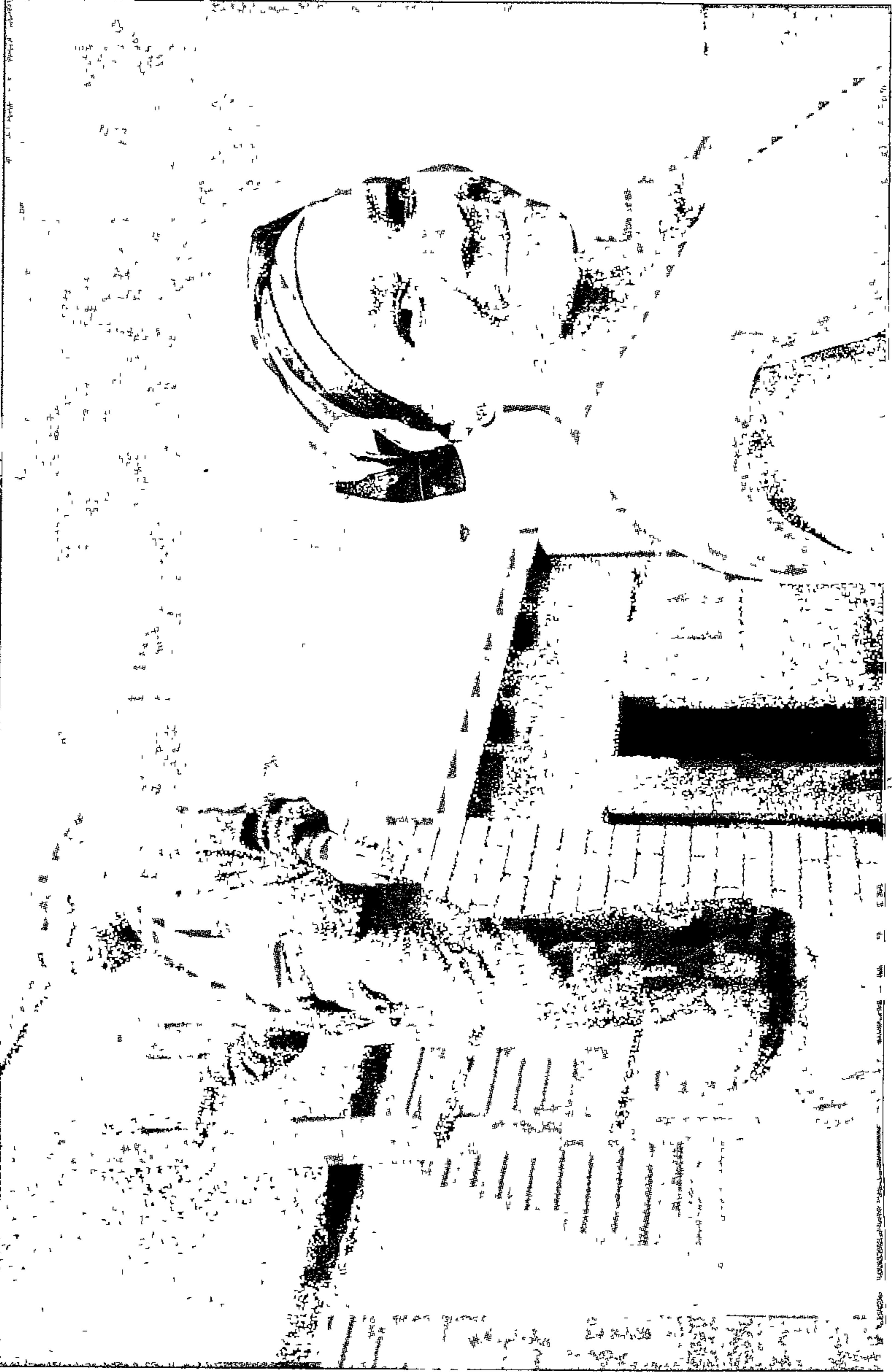
"Some guys who were walking around Katlehong with a wheelbarrow now all of a sudden have become real-life contractors."

"That's how you get the problems," says assistant contract manager Imus de Beer.

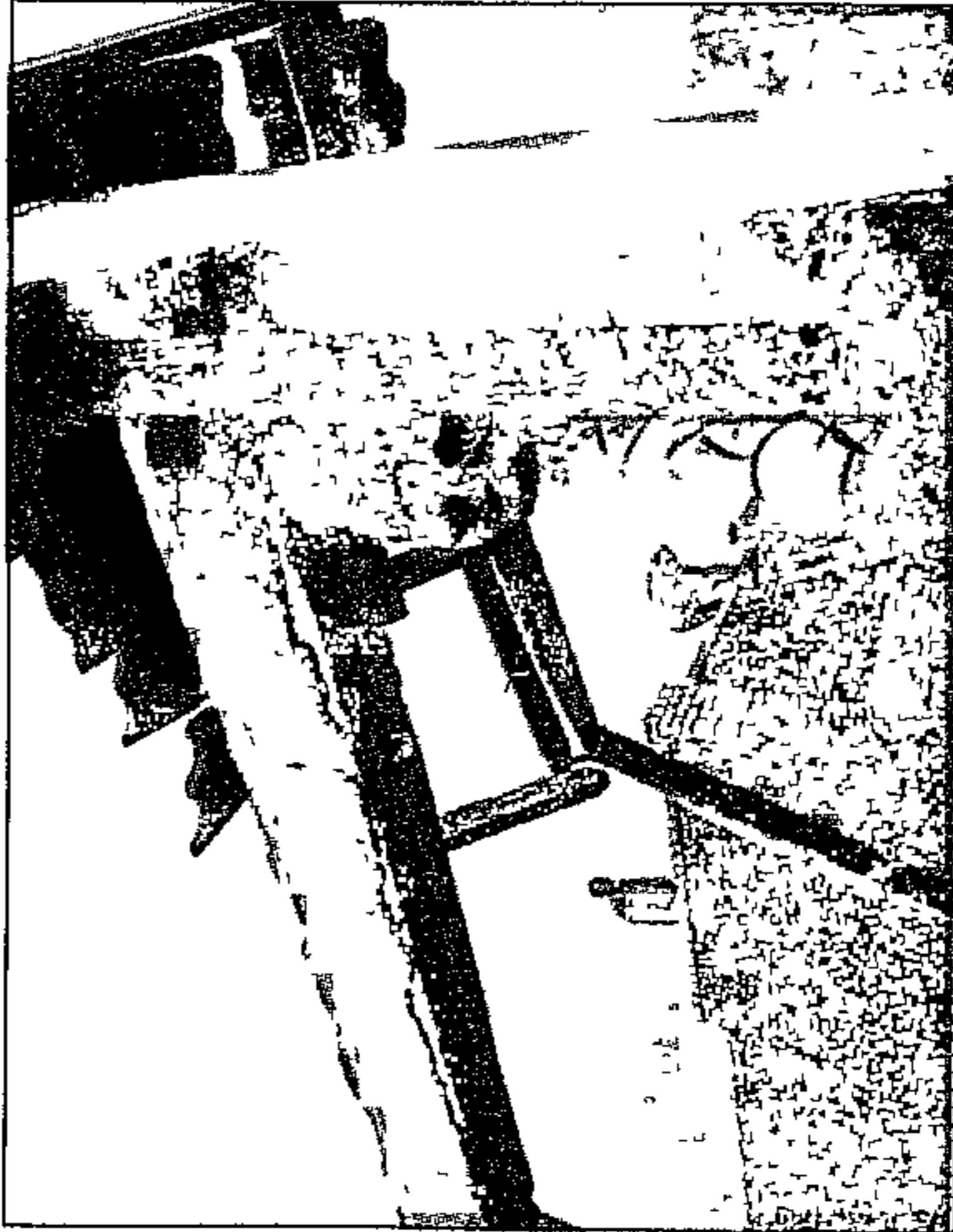
"I'm still dealing with houses that were awarded in September as three-week jobs," he says.

Since it is the responsibility of the small contractors to come up with the financing for the supplies, many of them "get stuck after the first payment to suppliers and workers."

A few suppliers were willing to provide supplies on credit, but after a number of bad experiences they have chosen the safe rather than the altruistic route.



GETTING HER HOUSE IN ORDER: A happy resident looks on as her house is repaired after political storms ravaged the area.



SORRY STATE: A Katorus house awaits the builders.

PHOTOGRAPHS ANTON HAMMERL

# For some it's home sweet home once more after dwellings are fixed

By CHRISTINA STUCKY

Angelme Sithole abandoned her house in Katlehong in 1993, forced to flee from the violence ravaging the township south-east of Johannesburg.

She is now back in her newly refurbished house, but getting her to sign the handover documents takes a great deal of convincing.

"No, this is not good. Look at the cracks," she says, pointing up at the caves, while her two-year-old son Malcolm stands rigid at her feet and stares at the

strangers.

"But were these cracks here before? Are they because of the war or because of lack of maintenance? We can only repair what was damaged during the violence."

Ynus de Beer, assistant contract manager for consulting engineering firm Leech Price & Associates, runs through this type of exchange every week when he visits the Katorus homeowners for the signing of the official handover documents.

It is then that the public's misconceptions regarding the Gov-

ernment's commitment towards the refurbishment of their homes, damaged in the political clashes in the townships, come to the fore.

"We sometimes get complaints from the owners," De Beer says.

"They moan about things that are unfair to moan about, if you think of what the Government is doing for them in terms of rebuilding their houses," he explains.

"They have not been properly informed," he adds.

The Government has commit-

ted itself to repairing the damaged houses - if the house had burglar bars before, the bars will be replaced; if there was a window, that too will be replaced.

The Reconstruction and Development Programme allocated a total of R25-million to the repair of war damage in Katorus.

Each house has been allocated a maximum of R100 000 for restoration, but the average cost of repairing a house in the area is R20 000.

"The idea is to get them into a

house with windows and doors. We are also putting in stoves to make the house livable," De Beer says.

Like Sithole, many of the returning home owners suffer the misconception that the Government should upgrade their houses, and not simply refurbish them.

One woman complained, for instance, that one room had no tiles, while another man said he wanted the windows to be put in like before, that is, two narrow windows rather than one larger one.

But most agree to sign the

handover documents once De Beer explains to them what the extent of the Government's obligation is.

The home owners also have a three-month period in which to lodge complaints stemming from the rebuilding process.

In the end, the returning home owners are happy just to be settled back in their own houses again, and not in exile in other townships, hiding from the clashes.

"I am very pleased," says Sithole after signing the handover documents. "I am home."

(127) Star 17/2/96

## ANC calls suburban rates boycott 'irresponsible'

Star 19/2/96

(127)

By **NORMAN CHANDLER**  
Pretoria Bureau

The ANC says a rates boycott by people living in former white suburbs of Pretoria is "irresponsible and deliberately undermines the Masakhane campaign supported by all parties in the Government of National Unity"

A local organisation, the Concerned Ratepayers' Association, has called on ratepayers in the city to withhold municipal rates

"We call on each party to encourage its own constituencies to pay for services which are delivered on an equitable basis," says the ANC's Pretoria region

"If we start a vicious cycle of non-payment, the respective city councils and the metropolitan councils will not have money for development, which will affect the stability in Pretoria. An unsta-

ble environment will keep investments away from Pretoria (and) such actions will harm all the people and jeopardise such initiatives as the relocation of Parliament to Pretoria."

Mike Seloane, secretary of the regional office, says the association was ignoring the fact that township residents do not enjoy the same standard of municipal services as do the former "whites-only" suburbs, that electricity supply is so poor that during winter residents are faced with blackouts almost every night, roads are untarred, investment by local authorities during the apartheid era was inadequate, and that the system of flat rates has been abolished

Seloane invited the ratepayers' group to tour the townships "to view the conditions under which township residents are living"

# Dream of home shattered by council's mistake

Yusuf Amond bought a council plot to build his house on. He thought his problems were over, but they had only just begun

BY HOPEWELL RADEBE  
City Reporter

A family's dream of building a house in Pageview has become a two-year nightmare because of the Greater Johannesburg Council's failure to rezone the stands into a residential area

Yusuf Amond is one of more than 20 families who bought stands from the National Housing Board more than two years ago in an area that had been set aside as public open space

The board sold the stands to the families in 1993 while negotiating with the council to rezone the stands to permit residential buildings on them.

Amond says he bought a stand hoping to move his family into a new

(127) Star 20/2/96  
home The council approved his housing plans and he began the construction.

But shortly afterwards, a council official came with an order to shut down the construction, claiming the area had been incorrectly sold to him because it was earmarked for a park

Amond said "I've lost more than R50 000 because I've had to pay the contractors"

He said the delays had caused severe financial strains which had forced him to continue renting a house

"I have been battling to get the council to resolve the matter, but I see no hope My dream has been shattered," he remarked

Greater Johannesburg Metropolitan Council acting Town Clerk Karen

de Beer said Amond and other buyers were made aware that the stands could not be developed until the rezoning had been passed

"Unfortunately, Amond's building plans were approved erroneously, but the error was picked up at a very early stage," De Beer said

De Beer said other residents in the area objected when the council advertised the proposal to permit housing instead of parks The organisation of the Dispossessed People of Pageview also objected and wanted all development in the area stopped until the land claims issue had been resolved

She said the two-year delay has been the result of a series of negotiations between council and concerned parties

# Council faces criminal charge over sale of Sandton land

Star 20/2/96 (127)

## Residents claim irregularities in R25-m purchase of land for low-cost housing

By ANNA COX

Sandton residents have laid criminal charges against council authorities for alleged irregularities in the R25-million purchase of the Frankenwald property from the University of the Witwatersrand.

They will also be instructing their attorneys to issue an interdict against the Greater Johannesburg Transitional Metropolitan Council to stop the sale of the land.

This has prompted criticisms from the GJTM, which says the moves could delay the construction of low-cost housing on the site.

Frankenwald is a 270ha piece of land on which the GJTM plans to construct about 7 500 houses – with schools, community centres, clinics and factories.

Eastern Metropolitan Sub-structure councillor Alan Fuchs says the purchase price is exorbitant and amounts to R92 000/ha when most township land can be bought for between R5 000 and R25 000/ha.

"Who is going to pay for this lack of financial discipline to meet short-term political objectives? An implication of this is that homeless people in other parts of our metro may never get homes because too much of our financial resources is being plugged into one project," he said.

Fuchs is calling for an independent group of experts to re-examine the feasibility of the project. He said a feasibility report conducted in 1994 was "shallow and incomplete".

Residents' spokesman Jim Powell – who laid the charges at the Buccleuch police station – said charges were laid to contraventions of a local government ordinance which requires a valuation certificate before any property is sold, but which was not obtained.

Furthermore, he said, monies had been paid by the then Central Witwatersrand Regional Services Council for the property, without permission from the minister of finance and without consultation with the then administrator of the Transvaal as was required by the Regional Services Council Act of 1985.

The GJTM last month paid

funds into a trust account, pending transfer of the property.

Scip Vernede, chairman of the Frankenwald committee of the Kelvin/Buccleuch Residents' Association, said his association had taken legal opinion and had been advised that there were certain technical irregularities in the offer to purchase.

Vernede said the transferring attorneys had been advised of the intention to stop the sale.

An "illegal" approach to the development could result in ecological and financial disaster for residents and ratepayers of the neighbouring residential areas.

"Large tracts of the property have either been used for dumping solid waste material or are below the 50-year floodline of the Jukskei River. Other parts are steep and are close to the N3 freeway, while another area is affected by the provincial road-widening proclamations for the P1-2 and P66 roads," said Vernede.

"On these grounds alone, the land is unsuitable for residential housing.

"The need for affordable housing is inescapable, but skills are important and we would like to see a technopark and training institution to provide training and employment opportunities within walking distance of Alex."

GJTM housing and urbanisation convener Ian Taitz said some of the residents' objections were based on the financial feasibility, but said an offer to purchase 20% of the site, for more than was paid for the entire site, had already been received.

The recent offer to purchase would release a well-located parcel of land for development at no cost to the GJTM.

But The Star is in possession of a letter from the financial institution which made the offer, stating that it had been put on hold pending further investigations.

Taitz said the land would be used for development of industry, commerce and affordable housing. A group of experts had conducted a feasibility study.

He said the intention was to involve all relevant stakeholders through a participative process, and funds had been allocated for the appointment of an independent facilitator.

# Masakhane fails to get Joburg rates paid

(127) Star 22/2/96

By ANNA COX

Payment levels for rates and services in many Johannesburg areas like Soweto and Alexandra remain at between 2% and 30% and have not improved despite the introduction of the Masakhane campaign

But the Greater Johannesburg Transitional Metropolitan Council plans to extend the campaign, which has already cost the council R75 400 this financial year, and has adopted the attitude that "it is sufficient that payment levels have not declined", according to acting head of metropolitan financial services Lucas Opperman

He said the GJTMC had not incurred financial loss in cash terms, never having expected a 100% payment level and had cut back on expenditure accordingly.

"The total budget is still very much on track," he said.

Payment was encouraged with the introduction of new systems which included payments

now being accepted at any local authority within the GJTMC area; credit card payments extended, service levels improved, payments allowed at post offices and the introduction of uniform tariff structures

"Although there is no noticeable drop in payment levels in general, the GJTMC would prefer payment to increase and is poised to implement more strict credit control measures," said Opperman.

DP leader Tony Leon described the levels as "staggeringly low" and said the financial consequences for the city were "dire". He said ratepayers could find themselves paying massive increases to subsidise rates

"The levels are staggering. The complacency of the council is culpably pathetic. There is a growing resistance among those who are paying rates. If things continue in this manner, there will be no money for development projects in the city," he said.

ANITA ALLEN



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## More pay rent in KwaThema

(127)  
By HOPEWELL RADEBE

City Reporter

Star 23/2/96  
Rent payment has more than doubled in the past six months in KwaThema, Springs, signalling an ending to an eight-year-old rent boycott, the council says

Springs City Council executive committee chairman Tatis Phasha attributed the success to the Masakhane campaign and said that in the past six months rent and services payment had improved more than 100%

Phasha said in July last year KwaThema residents were contributing R280 509 in rent and services payment

Through the Masakhane campaign, contributions were raised to R514 880 by the end of January.

"Payments received up until 19 February 1996 amount to R634 000 and already exceed the total amount received for the whole of January by R120 000," Phasha said.

He said residents should pay the amount on their accounts, otherwise the council would be unable to continue providing high-quality services.

# Officials arrested after housing scam uncovered

Nov 24/2/96 (127)  
By LANNIE MOTALE

Pretoria police have uncovered a massive low-cost housing scam involving a number of government officials who allegedly sold houses in Lotus Gardens to more than one buyer.

Two suspects - one a former House of Delegates official - have already been arrested in connection with the fraud involving more than 400 houses, and further arrests are expected soon. The housing official and his partner were arrested in Pretoria on Tuesday this week by Pretoria North fraud unit detectives.

The scam was uncovered when it was found that registration documents of the houses earmarked for low-income families were issued to more than one buyer - creating conflict between the rightful owner and the illegal occupant.

Investigating officer Inspector Stoney Steenkamp said more suspects were expected to be arrested in the wake of an investigation which could involve hundreds of thousands of rands.

He said police were investigating the involvement of a number of government housing officials in the shady deals.

Steenkamp said some of the officials were acting as estate agents and had received huge amounts of money from prospective clients, ranging from R3 000 to R50 000.

In some instances, buyers who paid more than R80 000 each for the purchase of the

houses never received transfer of ownership documents. This led to police investigating charges of the illegal sale of state property. The suspects were allegedly selling or subletting unoccupied houses in the area to unsuspecting buyers who were then later evicted by the rightful owners of the houses.

Steenkamp added that fraud charges were being investigated against landlords who owned more than one house in the area. These people had registered the homes in the names of dead people or minors who were still at school. The people in turn rent the low-cost houses out to homeless tenants for up to R1 000 a month, he said.

The landlords also collect water and lights payments on a monthly basis without paying the money over to the local authority.

Lotus Gardens Community Forum spokesman Fani Makhudu said they welcomed the arrests of the suspects and appealed to the authorities to sort out the matter speedily.

While low-income groups are homeless, there are businessmen who use some of the houses as warehouses. People who can't afford to pay the rentals are being evicted nearly every night.

Post Molepo, spokesman for the ANC in the area, said residents had resolved not to move out of the houses.

■ Late yesterday, police announced they had arrested more suspects in connection with the alleged housing scam.



DEVELOPMENT

**LEGAL TUSSLE**

(127)  
FM 23/2/96  
Irate residents of Buccleuch and Kelvin in eastern Sandton are still fighting to stop the R25m sale of land by Wits Uni-

FINANCIAL MAIL • FEBRUARY 23 • 1996

## 66 PROPERTY

versity to the Central Witwatersrand Regional Services Council

Disputing the university's right to sell the land — a gift from a philanthropist — other than for educational purposes, the residents are threatening to seek an interdict against the sale

The dispute over the sale of the property, in an area known as Frankenwald, dates to 1993 when Wits indicated it wanted to sell the property given to it by mining magnate Alfred Beit in 1905

In January 1994, the RSC took an option on the land at R35m, but, after a report by the Planning Facilitation Group on the erection of 7 000 low-cost houses, offered R25m

Under the Wits/RSC agreement of August 1994, a R5m deposit was paid into the trust account of RSC attorneys Kok & Hendriks. The parties also agreed that the sale was subject to various suspensive conditions, including:

□ Wits being allowed to sell the property in terms of the Alfred Beit Deed by January 1 1995, and

□ Approval being granted for the housing scheme as proposed by the RSC

It was agreed that R10m would be deposited within seven days of the fulfilment of the suspensive conditions or in case of a waiver by the RSC. A further R5m deposit was also agreed on if the first deadline to meet the suspensive

conditions had to be extended

However, in a later amendment to the agreement, the RSC waived the suspensive conditions and the deadline was extended to January 8 1996

Meanwhile, representatives of Buccleuch and Kelvin have on various occasions objected to Wits and the Greater Johannesburg Transitional Metropolitan Council, which has taken over the responsibilities of the RSC

On January 30, Wits council chairman Steve Anderson wrote to the group saying that, as far as the university was concerned, the sale of Frankenwald to the RSC had been finalised. Anderson said the property had been transferred to Wits by parliament, free of all restrictions, and that the Education Minister had consented to the sale

The same day, TMC CE Nicky Padayachee's office wrote to say the Finance Minister had authorised the RSC's budget for 1993-1994 which included a R29m provision for urbanisation. An independent registered valuer also evaluated the Frankenwald property

In the latest salvo, residents last week wrote to Padayachee requesting that copies of the cheques for R10m and R5m paid into the Kok & Hendriks trust account be supplied to them

They dispute the TMC's statement that there is a registered valuation or authori-

sation from the Finance Minister "This transaction is clearly illegal. The restrictions on the title deeds have not been lifted in accordance with the Alfred Beit Trust. Therefore, the contract of sale has no effect," says one

The residents say they will obtain legal opinion on the documents, then seek an interdict to stop the sale. On Monday, council member Jim Powell, in his personal capacity, laid criminal charges against the TMC for allegedly not complying with the relevant ordinances

*Eddie Botha*

# Low-cost housing plan ends with developer's arrest

Valley Moosa held on charges relating to money invested in scheme

(127) Star 1/3/96

By **BONGIWE MLANGENI**  
AND **ISHMAEL PHIRI**

**A** low-cost housing developer, who owned The Love of Africa/Lerato la Africa and allegedly demanded deposits of about R1 500 from home-seekers, has been arrested for theft

Police confirmed that Valley Moosa was arrested on charges relating to money that was invested for low-cost houses

The developer went public last year with plans to build 500 000 houses south of Johannesburg at a cost of R85-billion. The project, he

said, would introduce an integrated township with the help of state subsidies and banks

He claimed that privately owned land had been identified at Elandsfontein and was in the process of being purchased

But home-seekers were expected to pay their deposits before the sale was finalised

Last year, residents in the area objected to the project and submitted a memorandum to the Eastern Metropolitan Substructure, stating that they had not been properly consulted

"Love of Africa only has its

own interests at heart and not that of the surrounding community," they said

The company is now headed by new owners and there are plans to continue with the project

New director Patrick Sibiya said they were negotiating with Elandsfontein residents and buying the land

He said about 1 000 people had registered with the company

"The money is part of a trust fund and once we start building, it will be deducted from the building costs," he said

Asked who was funding the

project, he said only that they were receiving money from the US and would be getting money from banks

But The Star has found that the company was not and had not yet applied to be registered with the National Home Builders Registration Council. This means the company will not be able to access bank finance to build the houses.

The council has warned home buyers who need mortgage loans to ensure that they choose only contractors registered with it

The council's number is (011) 886-3636

Confusion as  
homeless asked  
to restart march

(127) Star 6/3/96

By NORMAN CHANDLER

Pretoria Bureau

(127)  
The homeless became temporarily lost yesterday as hundreds marched to the Union Buildings and then back to the start-off place, and police and organisers argued about who had issued a call for the protest to start.

Homeless people from several provinces - brought to Pretoria on a fleet of buses - were to have marched from Brown Street in the central business district to the Union Buildings to hand over a memorandum to the government protesting against the inclusion of a property clause in the new constitution.

The organisers, the National Land Committee (NLC), said the clause would prohibit the government from expropriating land for redistribution. The memorandum was to have been given to President Nelson Mandela but could not be because he was undergoing a medical checkup in a Johannesburg clinic.

The NLC claimed the police had forced members to start marching, but police said an organiser had indicated protesters should proceed.

The march was completed without further disruption.

NEWS

# Deelkraal miners build shacks in bid to change housing policy

By Ross HERBERT

Johannesburg — The desire to escape hostel life and to live with wives or girlfriends in their own homes led mine workers to a struggle with management at Gold Fields' Deelkraal mine this week.

Fed up with living in single-sex hostels with 20 men to a room, Deelkraal workers on Monday made their third attempt in three weeks to build shacks on unoccupied land at the mine. They vowed to abandon the hostels and build their own houses unless management changed their housing.

Through the workers were being deliberately provocative, the issue raised the stakes at Gold Fields where industrial relations have long been combative. It also introduced a new variable in the debate over weekend work. Aware that Deelkraal mine is barely profitable, workers said they would work two extra days a month if the profit would be used to upgrade housing.

The fusile began on February 16 when workers began building the first shacks. Company security forces waited until most of the workers were underground on the day shift then crushed the half-completed structures with a Caspurs armoured vehicle. After gathering new materials, workers made another attempt on February 23, according to James Khumalo, chairman of the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) at the mine.

Again the Caspurs came, but workers rallied to protect the shacks. "When the hippos (armoured vehicles) came, the men decided to stand around and protect the shacks. They threw themselves in front of the wheels," said John Blom, the regional chairman of NUM.

Later the Caspurs returned to bulldoze the shacks. Workers said company security has not wanted to confront large numbers of workers. But the workers cannot defend the shacks at all times. So the two sides have parried.

Build, bulldoze, rebuild  
Each repetition of the cycle has produced more workers determined to have their way. On Monday about 150 workers cut down trees and scavenged for wood and sheet metal from the mine's vacant spaces. By dusk they had completed one shack and erected the skeletons of two others.

"People are very, very cross. The workers are tired of living in the hostels and they want to live with their wives," Khumalo said.

The situation is a test of wills. Worker anger over living conditions is genuine, but the shack-building drive is designed to step up pressure on management to improve living conditions.

Management is surely loathe to see permanent settlements grow on mine property outside its control. Workers say they do not really want to live in shacks, but will build them if they are their only option. Either the hostels are upgraded and allowances are granted for living in nearby townships, or the workers say they will persist until they establish their own housing.



**HOMEMAKERS** Workers at Deelkraal mine on Monday night rebuilt shacks that were crushed by armoured vehicles

Workers can book for a stay with wives. But no girlfriends are allowed, which means workers must rent a bed in a township or have sex lying in the weed-covered fields.

"If they are going to stay in the hostel, they have to be upgraded to one man a room," said Blom. A key issue is overnight stays by women. There are only 15 rondavels work-

ers can book for a stay with wives. But no girlfriends are allowed, which means workers must rent a bed in a township or have sex lying in the weed-covered fields.

"Would Alan Munro (executive director of Gold Fields) like to have to go off into the bush to sleep with his wife?" asked one union official. The pressure seems to have partially paid off. The mine manager met yesterday with the NUM regional officers. Michael de Kock, the Gold Fields spokesman, said mine management had tried to meet the union on the subject last week and had called a housing forum at the end of March to discuss housing issues on a company-wide basis with NUM.

The issue has damaged Gold Fields' reputation for management and industrial relations with international investors and analysts.

"We see there is major opportunity at Gold Fields to add value. But we don't see that driving over unshacks in armoured vehicles is the way to do it. It shocks me but does not surprise me," said an analyst for Mercury Asset Management, which owns a chunk of Gold Fields shares.

"I think generally the perception is that Gold Fields has the greatest assets but they just aren't managed well compared to the other houses," said Carel Van der Merwe, a gold share sales analyst at Fleming Martin in London.

The NUM headquarters has not sanctioned the action at Deelkraal, but is watching the situation closely. It has made housing a national issue and succeeded in getting the government to change residency rules for foreign workers.

Gold Fields is not alone in facing difficulties over living conditions. De Beers is locked in long-running negotiations over women who have camped outside the gates of the company's Namaqualand mines. Several have been arrested, but

workers demanded that they be allowed to live in unoccupied housing on the mine.

Nationally, hostels present difficult choices to companies. Building individual housing on mine property raises the possibility that workers will eventually lay claim to their houses and resist leaving even if fired from company jobs.

As children grow up on mine property, will they come to see mine jobs as their right? And how much can the industry afford to pay?

Deelkraal has barely made a profit in the past year, one is being mined faster than new reserves are opened up and the mine has not generated enough cash to cover new development. But workers laugh at the idea that Gold Fields does not have the money.

Several mining houses offer subsidies for workers to live out of hostels. But Susan Moorhead, the housing co-ordinator for NUM, complains that the amounts offered are generally less than the costs workers incur for rent, water, electricity and food in a township.

"They are the ones who created the hostel system. They can't just discharge their responsibility by offering a small amount and walking away," said Moorhead.

In addition to privacy and poor facilities, food is another evocative issue.

Workers at Doornfontein held a mass meeting last week to protest over hostel food that was giving them diarrhoea. A regional NUM official also became ill after eating the food on a visit. A worker co-ordinating committee was established to raise food standards.

ERPIM workers held a two-day protest in January over what they said was rotten food bought by a catering subcontractor. New purchasing standards were set with worker participation.

Vaal Reefs workers complain that they must drag mattresses across the hostel grounds to rooms that they must book in advance for overnight marital visits.

Moorhead said the mines spent an average of R3 a day for food for each worker, compared with the R22 spent for each student at Witwatersrand University.

CHRISTINE NESBITT

## It's a miracle on Twist Street for flatdwellers (127)

BY BONGIWE MLANGENI

Housing Reporter

Star 7/3/96

Six years ago, when Johannesburg inner city tenants from seven buildings proposed to buy their flats in Joubert Park, they were seen as "a bit too ambitious"

Today these tenants are owners of 435 flats. The members of the Seven Buildings Project were officially handed their homes yesterday by the Gauteng Provincial Housing Board, marking the beginning of social housing in the city.

They are the first to benefit from the government institutional subsidy scheme and the first low-income earners to buy the inner city buildings they had been renting.

The institutional subsidy is paid to a specially formed company that will buy or build housing which can be rented or sold to people who qualify for a subsidy. The rent should be lower than that charged by private landlords.

The seven buildings include Argyle Court, Branksome Towers, Conston Court, Manhattan Court, Margate Court, Protea Court and Stanhope Mansions and have been bought for R5,9-million from previous owner David Gorfil.

These buildings are now registered under the residents' group institution called the Seven Buildings Company (Pty) Ltd, which will be monitored closely by lawyers, the city council, residents and the Gauteng government.

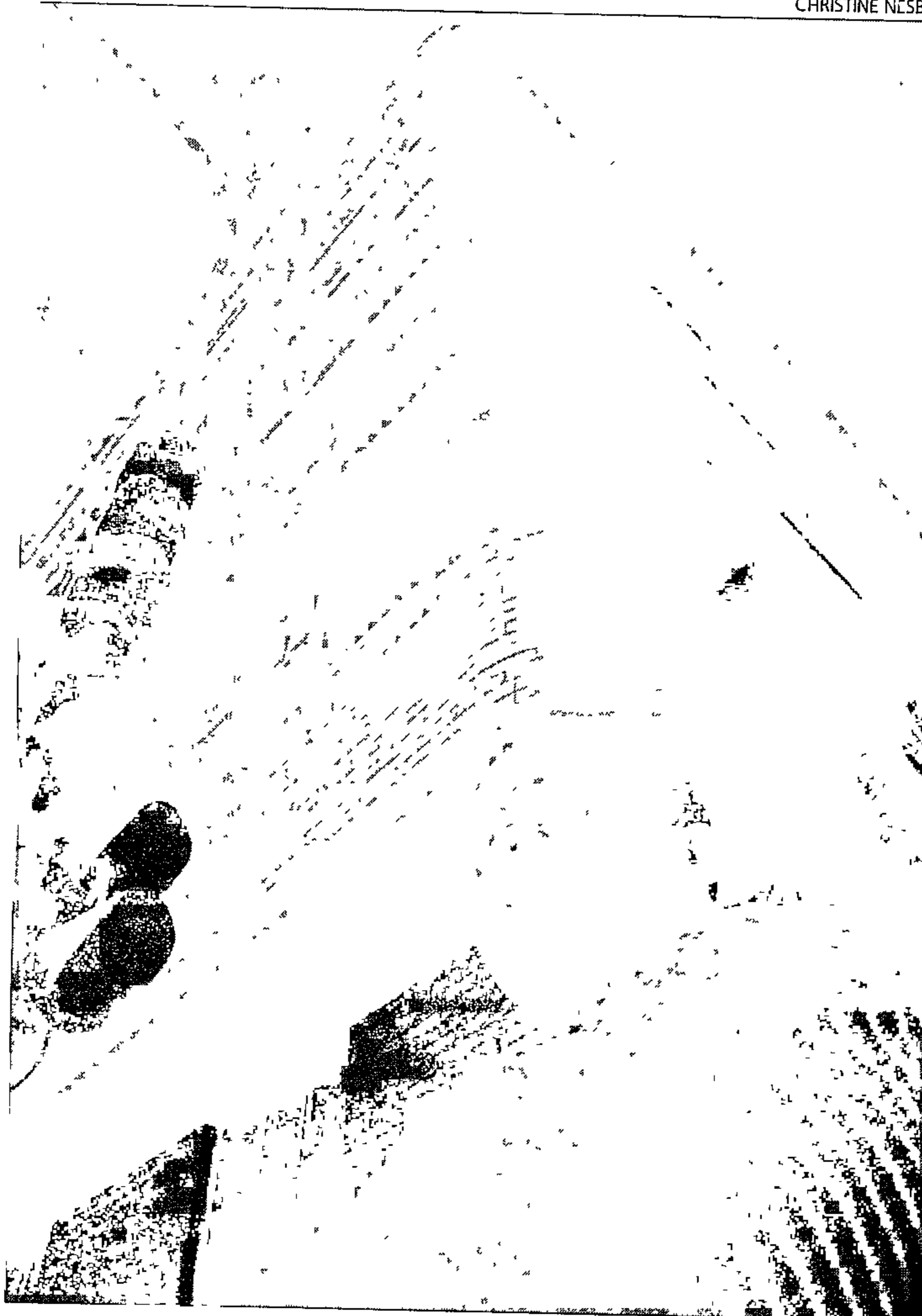
Yesterday, the new owners relaxed in their dilapidated flats without fear of being evicted.

"It has been a struggle," said Pressage Nkosi, one of the residents who led the fight to acquire the buildings. But the struggle had yielded more than had been expected: residents did not pay anything towards the sale of the buildings, he said.

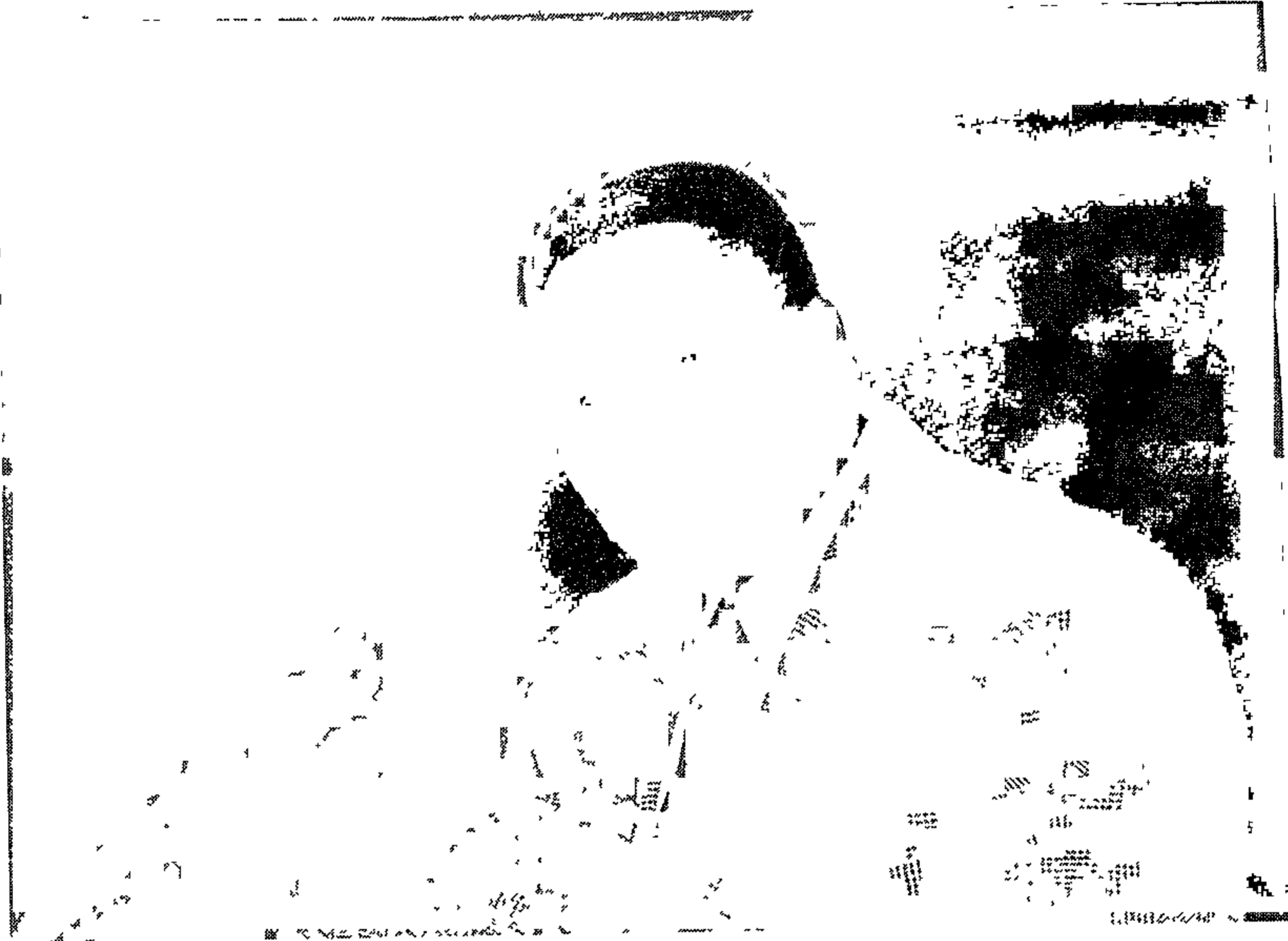
Although the seven buildings have been acquired for free, it did not mean that maintaining them would also come easy, Nkosi said.

"Residents are currently paying R400 a month to maintain the buildings. We are fighting to reduce the amount, but we have a lot to fix. We are going to make sure that people pay for services," he said. Nkosi believes that, but for government red tape, the tenants could have acquired the buildings much earlier.

But a new struggle has begun: "We now need training to be good managers of these buildings," he said.



Victory ... Pressage Nkosi, who led the fight for the acquisition of seven blocks of flats in central Johannesburg, which was finalised yesterday.



Gauteng provincial housing and local government minister MEC Dan Mofokeng at a news conference after handing over a R5,9m cheque to Seven Buildings Company directors. Picture COBUSBODENSTEIN

## Tenants buy buildings (27)

Robyn Chalmers

65 713 196  
GAUTENG provincial housing and local government MEC Dan Mofokeng handed Seven Buildings Company directors a R5,9m cheque yesterday for an institutional housing subsidy after tenants bought the seven buildings on a group basis.

Tenants have been struggling for years to get the Seven Buildings Project off the ground, and last week managed to buy the buildings after they received government's go-ahead for an institutional subsidy.

The buildings involved are Argyle Court, Branksome Towers, Coniston Court, Manhattan Court, Margate Court, Protea Court and Stanhope Mansions.

# Gauteng land programme 'innovative'

Ingrid Salgado

(127)

BDS 3/96

THE Gauteng farmer settlement programme is to be tabled in the provincial legislature next Tuesday, paving the way for provincial land to be leased and sold for agricultural purposes as early as May.

A joint meeting yesterday of the conservation and agriculture, housing and local government and urban and rural development standing committees accepted the amended document outlining the programme.

Conservation and agriculture standing committee chairman Trish Hanekom said the document contained "innovative proposals" that would have far-reaching implications for Gauteng. Other provinces had expressed interest in the programme.

The programme aimed to address

skewed land holding patterns and to provide for the redistribution of agricultural land to farm workers, labour tenants, share croppers and members of disadvantaged communities.

It stipulated that land would be leased for three years with an option to renew the lease or an option for the tenant to purchase the land if the provincial government intended disposing of the land.

The committees rejected that the option to renew leases would be based on "satisfactory performance". The stipulation was vague and gave the farmer no security, they found.

Tenants would have to commit themselves to the sustainable use of land and environmentally acceptable agricultural practices as determined by the conservation and agriculture department when leases were signed.

# End in sight for Gauteng slumlords

(127) Star 9/3/96

Gauteng housing authorities intend to buy, or even confiscate, city buildings which could put slumlords out of business, writes GAVIN DU VENAGE

Slumlords could soon be out of business if Gauteng housing authorities follow through on plans to buy up old buildings, or in extreme cases, confiscate them outright.

Inner city residents are among the most easily exploited of South Africa's poor. Often living in appalling conditions, they face a choice of paying extortionist rents or eviction. In some instances tenants live free after their landlords simply abandon buildings - but without services and at personal risk as their homes slowly crumble around them.

The worst off are the inner city homeless who bed down wherever they can - Park Station being the best known such residence.

Until the census we will not know exactly how many people live in central Johannesburg, but estimates vary from anything between 500 000 to more than a million.

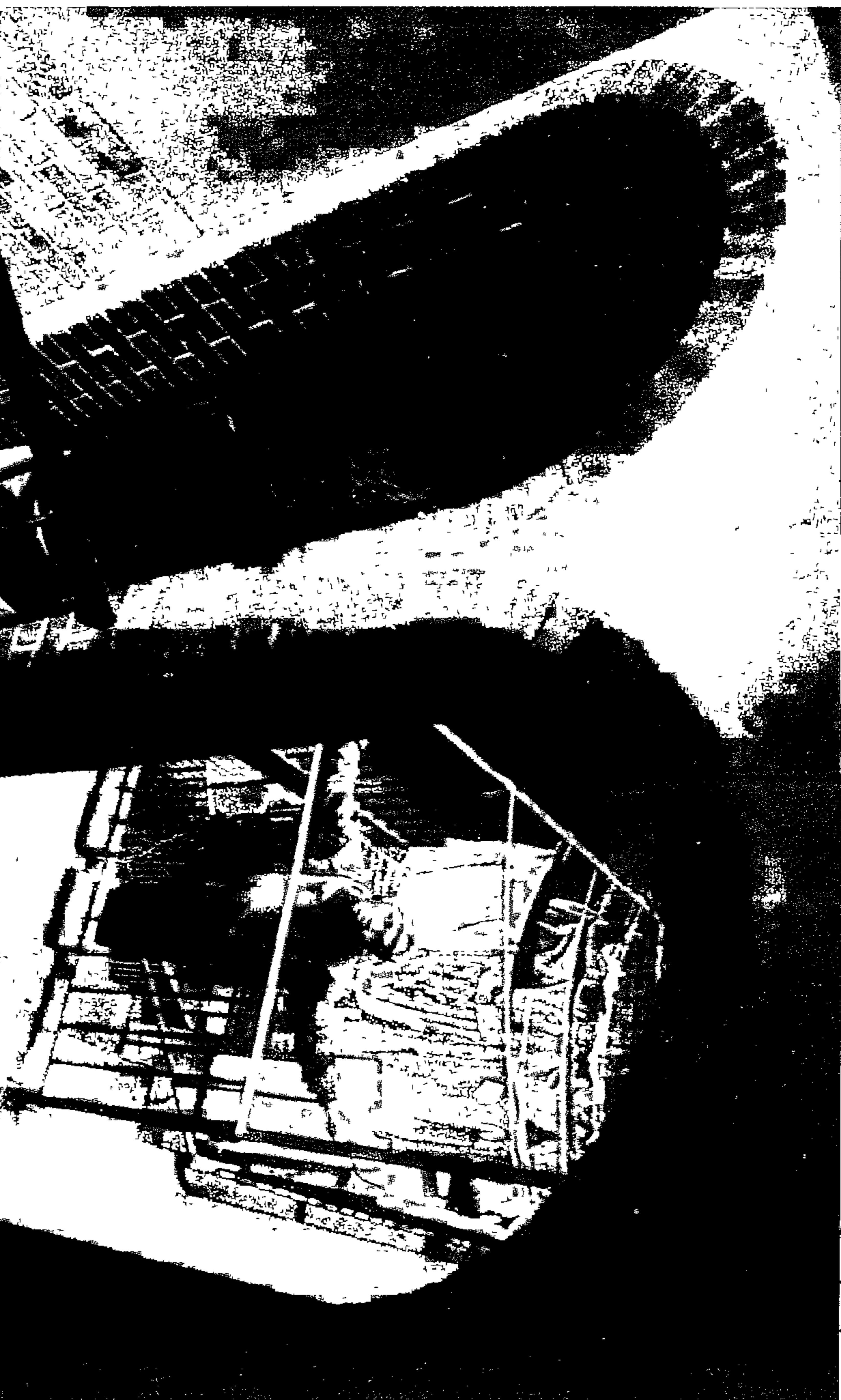
In spite of conditions, many people choose to live in the city because it is close to work - be it in the formal or informal sector.

President Nelson Mandela, in his State of the Nation address, touched on the iniquity of low-cost housing projects sited around townships, a trend that keeps the poor economically isolated, and incidentally, perpetuates the racial segregation of our cities.

However, Gauteng housing officials want to buy up buildings, upgrade them and hand them over to tenants.

There is also the as yet unofficial view that disused or poorly maintained buildings should be confiscated outright if their owners are judged to be negligent in the upkeep of their property.

One advocate of confiscation is inner city housing activist Dale McKinley, who serves on a number of inner city housing groups.



UNOFFICIAL VIEW: Many feel that disused or poorly maintained buildings should be confiscated outright if owners are judged to be negligent in the upkeep of their property

McKinley says market forces should be removed from downtown housing delivery and that the city council should be able to intervene directly in the downtown housing market.

"We need to decommodify the inner city," he says. "It is clear the market has not been able to save the city. You only have to consider what the place looks like now to see that."

McKinley wants the city to be able to buy up buildings and, with public funds, renovate them. Once made habitable, buildings would then either be sold to tenants who qualify for a housing subsidy or be retained by the city council as public housing.

He is particularly in favour of projects such as the recent renovation of the old Turkish baths, which are undergoing conversion into a facility for 250 homeless people.

Although he supports "willing buyer, willing seller" arrangements, McKinley says local authorities should also be empowered to confiscate buildings that are clearly being misused.

"In the same way that police can confiscate the proceeds of a crime, local authorities should be able to confiscate buildings where gross violations of bylaws take place. If a building is a health hazard to its tenants, the council should have the authority to take it over and rehabilitate it," he says.

McKinley, a member of the South African Communist Party, acknowledges his proposal is controversial. But he insists the private sector which owns most of the inner city, has not lived up to its responsibility.

"Downtown is starting to look like one big parking lot. Buildings are being demolished without any consultation - buildings that could have been used to house people."

The council should actively intervene and buy or take over these buildings," he says.

Johannesburg metropolitan councillor and chairman of the council's planning and urbanisation committee Lindsay Bremner firmly backs this view.

Current legislation prohibits the confiscation of private property, but Bremner advocates changes that would allow local authorities to take over buildings where landlords fail to carry out their responsibilities.

"I think local authorities cannot afford not to take action - we should have the authority to take over buildings where necessary and hand them over to tenant associations," she says.

"We don't want to manage buildings. This would present its own set of problems. What we should be doing is handing over buildings to tenant associations for them to manage."

Bremner says the idea is not particularly radical. Metropolitan cities around the world are increasingly adopting interventionist tactics to reverse the decline of inner cities.

New York has many successful tenant-managed buildings. Interventionists say that if the city can directly control the fate of tenant blocks, slumlords would be driven out.

Ultimately, the city would be home to thousands of people who would own or manage the buildings they live in.

Another view is that while local authority or provincial intervention is necessary, it should be to improve market conditions, rather than to replace them.

Ampros director Gerald Leissner says the role of local authorities should be to manage the city in such a way that businesses return Ampros, or Anglo American Property Services, is one of the largest property administrators in the city.

Its portfolio includes city landmarks like the Carlton Centre and the diamond building. "Bad management over years has caused the decline of the inner city. Once management has improved, normal market forces will take place," says Leissner.

Leissner says that although there are a number of organisations working to upgrade central Johannesburg, the root of the problem lies in poor management that has ignored chronic problems such as excessive hawkling, crime and filth.

"I think the key to revitalising the city is management. Nobody wants to live and work in an environment that is dirty and unsafe," he says. For instance, he says, health inspectors rarely visit problem buildings.

Landlords have little incentive to maintain buildings and tenants even less to pay rents. Until non-paying tenants are evicted, and negligent landlords penalised, nothing much will change.

"With proper management, and the return of market forces, buildings will start to change hands again," he says.

However, Leissner denies that the city has an abundance of derelict buildings. He says a recent World Bank study showed that the problem was much less pronounced in many other international metropolitan centres where abandoned and gutted buildings rot away for years. But without a determined city council to stamp its authority, the decline of Johannesburg will progress.

The Gauteng provincial government has cautiously begun to look at means to acquire buildings. Gauteng housing director Monty Narsoo announced last month a pilot project in Yeoville to purchase buildings for upgrading. Gauteng Housing Board chairman Martin van Zyl says R17-million has been set aside for the upgrading of buildings.

This money is only "seed" finance which the board makes available to developers who want to renovate a building.

"We will provide the seed capital for a project, whether it comes from a non-governmental organisation or any other body," he says. It was this seed money that finally got the Seven Buildings project into its final phase. The long-delayed scheme to finance the upgrading of seven inner city buildings and assist tenants to buy the units, will soon be completed, helped by nearly R6-million provided by the board.

Van Zyl says the finance was not intended to cover the cost of the entire project, but would be supplemented by private sector loans which the project managers were expected to raise. The project has served as a pioneer for inner city development.

Van Zyl says the long delay - over five years - was largely because no policy was in place to deal with the then novel idea of residents taking over the ownership and management of a building.

Most existing policy was drawn up around the project and will now serve as a guideline for future developments, he says.

"We don't know how many buildings could be up for redevelopment."

"There are old hotels, warehouses and office blocks that could be released back into circulation as apartments," he says.

*to report*



## Township businessmen get a piece of the action

Tembisa businessmen have joined the struggle to resolve problems of refuse removal in the township after a Kempton Park/Tembisa Metropolitan Council initiative to involve them.

Director of the Environment and Recreation Department, Johan Ferreira, said the council had devised a scheme which opened up potential opportunities for local entrepreneurs to undertake the daily door-to-door collection and dispos-

al of solid waste. This move follows problems of irregular refuse collection experienced by Tembisa residents in December last year. Refuse removal in the township used to be handled solely by a private contractor.

Ferreira said the council had approved an innovative scheme aimed at empowering township entrepreneurs, and to keep the area clean at the same time. —City Reporter.

(127) Star 11/3/96

# Springs to cut off unpaid services

Mduduzi ka Harvey

MUNICIPAL service payment defaulters in Springs would have electricity and other services cut off because the council was not a charity, executive committee chairman Tatis Phasha said at the weekend

Phasha told a Masakhane rally that the coun-

cil had in the past five months accumulated a debt of R10m, which was over and above debt accumulated over the past few years

Phasha said only a third of Kwa-Thema residents were paying for their services and it was important to stress that a culture of payment was needed for the survival

of the council and that the council could not render services which were not being paid for.

He said in October payments had totalled R397 000 with a deficit of R1,2m, in November payments received were R375 000 with a R1,9m deficit and in December payments had increased to R414 000 with a R1,8m deficit. Payment levels had risen this year — in January payments were R514 000 with a deficit of R1,8m and last month payments had reached R813 000 with a deficit of R2,1m

Gauteng local government and housing MEC Dan Mofokeng acknowledged demands for improved services and a council commitment to deliver these services. It was also essential for the community to approach local councillors to ensure that the delivery of services was accelerated, local economic growth stimulated and money invested for infrastructural development.

Without such involvement the council's commitment to basic services would fail, he said

The rally followed a Masakhane workshop, which was attended by trade unions, church groups, community development forums, civics and the police. They all agreed that full payment and the delivery of services must be linked, and that services should be cut off if not paid for

Other issues discussed included the need to make more pay points available and simplifying the billing system

Workshop facilitator Linda Makatini said Springs was one of the only towns which had an advanced communications strategy focused on the Masakhane campaign, and that more than 120 000 residents had been reached by the localised campaign

BD 11/3/96

(127)

# Brick by brick, rural women build their lives and communities

(127)   Raw 11/3/96

Thanks to training and technical support from a major company, eager women are not only learning an essential skill but turning into entrepreneurs, reports Glenda Daniels

Rural women are producing bricks by themselves, learning skills and starting their own businesses in what is proving to be an economically powerful development trend for themselves and their communities

Last year, in the Northern Province, several women's groups began brick-making projects which served to further skills. This year, these projects have reduced unemployment, and have helped build schools and houses

One such project is the Tshushula community project in Thoyandou, consisting of 25 women.

The Blue Circle Cement (BCC) company, which runs technical and training support programmes for informal brick-makers and emerging entrepreneurs, says that bricks used on countless rural schools and housing projects have often been made, cured, stacked and loaded by women.

BCC training consultant David Madau, assigned to several rural projects in Northern Province, confirms the impact women are making

He says that after women from the Tshushulu project identified a need for a creche and pre-school, they took the initiative to acquire funds and start a brickyard

From this a small business emerged and now several buildings have been built

"Often it is the women who are the most eager to learn. We gave them training and output as well as quality, improved. Production went up by about 25% to 3500 bricks a day."

He says that the first school seen to operate in networks. We learn about one group and offer our help, and then the women spread the word and we are approached by another group."

Rashid Jaffer, customer development manager at BCC, agrees

and pre-school have been built with these bricks. "This year we will help them get on a proper commercial footing."

"They are now supplying bricks for other projects. They have a contract to supply bricks for new classrooms at several old schools in their area," he says

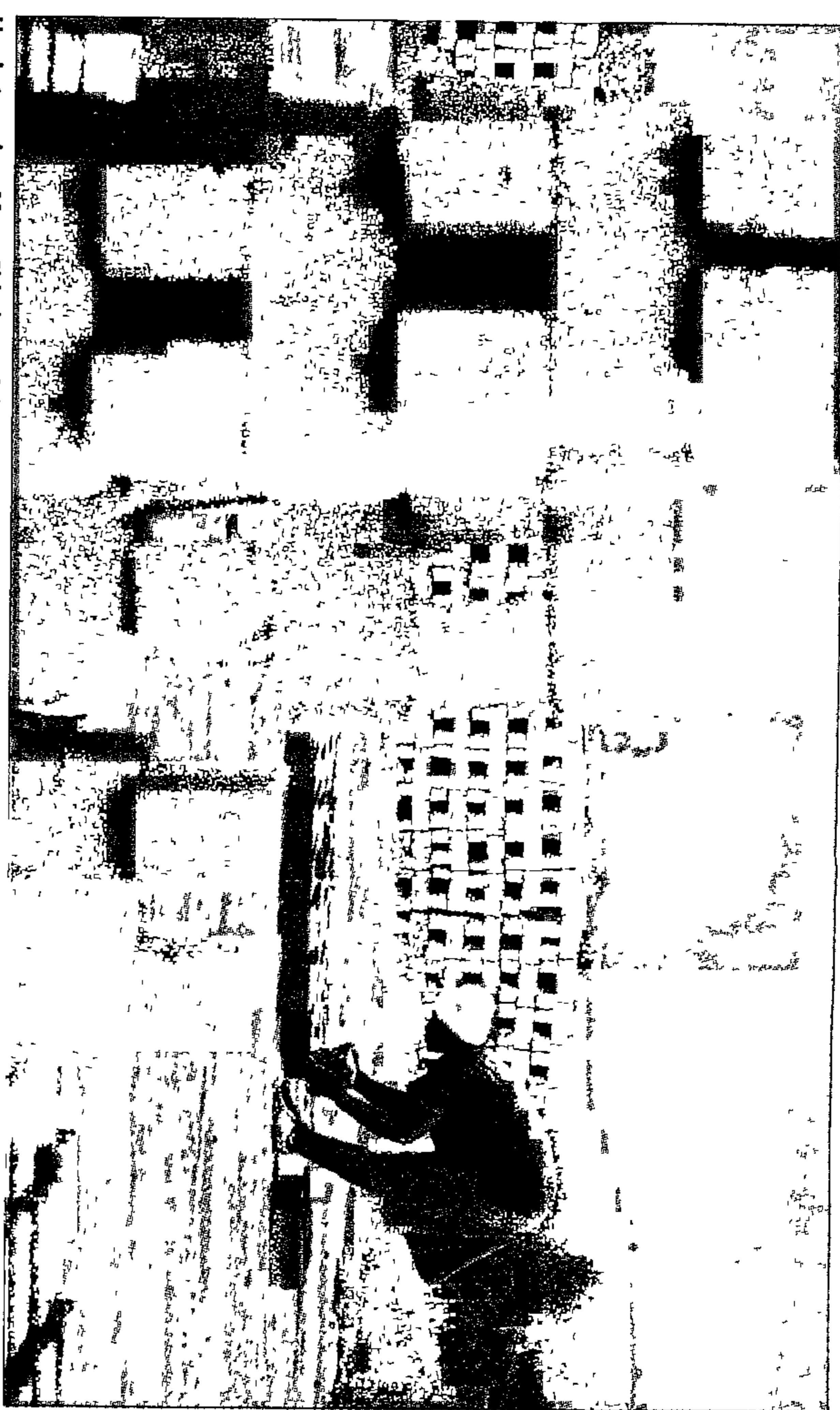
"On some projects 90% of the trainees are women. The women seem to operate in networks. We learn about one group and offer our help, and then the women spread the word and we are approached by another group."

Rashid Jaffer, customer development manager at BCC, agrees

that women are becoming a force to be reckoned with in housing delivery. Rural women are strong-

and pre-school have been built with these bricks. "This year we will help them get on a proper commercial footing."

that women are becoming a force to be reckoned with in housing delivery. Rural women are strong-



Hard at work .. Mavis Sithole carefully places the freshly cast bricks out to dry at the brick-making project in Thoyandou.

willed, self-reliant and determined to build a better life for themselves and their families"

"They want to acquire skills that can provide them with an income and build facilities that will improve the quality of life," Jaffer says

The company, he says, gets requests from communities to set up brick-yards after the word goes round

Some women's groups are now considering opening hardware stores because they are doing so well

"This whole project is about skill transfer, job creation and a solution to housing problems

"And the rural women's determination to succeed is gratifying to see," Jaffer says

In Gauteng, on the other hand, there is often an attitude of complacency and an expectancy that others will do things for you, he says, but in rural areas, this is not the case

Rural communities often identify their needs and then approach the company for training when they accumulate some capital either from RDP funds or from a community pool

They then get training on how to make bricks, run their business, financial management, marketing

at a higher price

when bricks were made, they were often exported, improved upon overseas and then imported

Now, we can make its own quality product and sell within the country, thereby making sure the money stays here and the economy is boosted

Jaffer is encouraged to note that some building companies operate for bricks and blocks because of the housing shortage," he says

"This is a budding industry. The trend is that local communities are producing for themselves, learning skills and keeping money in the country."

"We don't subscribe to the culture of handouts. We believe rather in empowering people with skills

"We need houses, we need bricks to make the houses. Let's learn how to make the bricks, then how to sell them and start a business. This is what we're doing"

He feels passionately that South Africa should stop being a country of retailers and instead become manufacturers like Japan, where quality products are made and used in the country and also exported



Preparation. Eisah Netswanga and Gladys Nemakhvanani prepare the cement mix to be used in the bricks.

Hopefully, this has started to happen, albeit in a small way, with the rural women's brick-making projects.

# Housing relief for low-income families

*(127) Souwelan 11/3/96*

**By Joshua Raboroko**

GAUTENG MEC for housing Mr Dan Mofokeng said at the weekend that thousands of low-income families would soon sigh with relief when the Government offers them housing subsidies

Speaking at the launch of the Liberty Community Development Trust in Johannesburg, Mofokeng said the Trust would provide technical and financial help to communities qualifying for state housing subsidies

The development trust would boost the Government's attempt to speed up

the housing delivery, which has met with bottlenecks as a result of financial institutions' reluctance to provide funding in the low income sector

Mofokeng said he would resolve the problem around the banks' reluctance to grant home loans because of the onerous criteria that they (banks) intend to introduce from April 1

Prominent people in Government and the private sector have admitted that there had been little delivery in the field of low-cost housing over the past two years

The extent of the crisis will be highlighted at a two-day exhibition and

housing conference to be hosted by the National Association of Home Builders and Urban Developers at the World Trade Centre, Kempton Park, which starts on Friday

Conference secretariat Mrs Tharina Buys said yesterday that particular focus will be devoted to low-cost housing, sources of housing finance and lending criteria, developmental and constraints, up-market niche opportunities and land invasion

The event comes in the wake of disclosures in Parliament recently that less than 21 percent of the total R3,15-billion available for housing

this year had been spent by the end of January.

While most of these funds had been allocated to the nine provinces, bottlenecks on delivery had resulted in very little - about R658-million - being spent to date

Much of what had been spent has been in long-term projects initiated under the old dispensation ahead of the April 1994 elections

With one or two exceptions, most notably Gauteng, relatively little had been paid out in subsidies in terms of the Government's housing subsidy policy

# Council in R10 million debt due to non-payment

*Sowetan 11/3/96 (1)(27)*

**By Lulama Luti**

THE City Council of Springs on the East Rand is R10 million in the red accumulated over the past five months due to non-payment of services in nearby Kwa-Thema township

And in a move lauded by Gauteng MEC for Local Government and Housing, Mr Dan Mofokeng, the council has decided to crackdown on defaulters by cutting off their services

"The flat rate story must disappear. The flat rate was used as a weapon because people could not vote," he

said

"We need to put a question mark on those who come up with that argument today against a democratically elected council or provincial government," said Mofokeng when he was responding to a question on the R85 interim flat rate that some residents still insist on paying

The decision to cut off services to users who did not pay for them was taken after a two day workshop at the Springs Town Hall organised to encourage more payments

The workshop culminated in a

poorly attended rally held at the Kwa-Thema stadium yesterday

The weekend workshop in Springs was one of several which have been held since June last year by the provincial government to encourage more payment of services in mostly black residential areas

In a similar workshop held in Kempton Park recently, incentives proposed included a possible five percent discount on early or timely payments and lucky monthly draws where tenants with up-to-date accounts could win prizes

JODI BIEBER

# Home ownership may bring back pride in Jo'burg

By **BONGIWE MLANGENI**  
Housing Reporter

*Star 12/3/96 (127)*

Johannesburg is set to become a vibrant place again as home ownership in the city becomes the cornerstone of the revival strategy which aims to improve the quality of life in the inner city

Although bringing business back to the city is vital, experts believe the city will become vibrant only if more residential buildings can be sold to inner city residents and be upgraded

The sale of flats and upgrading of buildings would contribute to creating a cleaner and livelier Johannesburg, experts say

Already, the Seven Buildings Project, which has become the first group to benefit from the institutional government subsidy and has bought seven buildings they had been renting, has brought new hope to residents and the city's revival

The institutional subsidy is available to groups of people who need funding to build or buy a joint housing project

Tenants from two more buildings, Wellington Court and Darwin Mansion in Joubert Park, are also planning to buy their flats with the help of the subsidy

Inner city project director Presage Nkosi believes that only ownership can bring pride and dignity back to Johannesburg

The Greater Johannesburg council's housing and urbanisation spokesman, Lindsay Bremner, said the project was a launching pad from which the renewal strategy could spread home ownership in the city

She added that the urbanisation department hoped to investigate new policies to deal with overcrowding and tenant/landlord issues and was willing to as-

sist residents in establishing projects which could use the subsidy

However, while the council supported home ownership, it viewed rental accommodation as equally important

"If projects such as the Seven Buildings Project and others can get off the ground successfully, this will increase confidence in the city and create an attractive atmosphere for funders to invest. It will also help to develop more housing in the area," she said

Uptown project director Clive Cope believes ownership will bring commitment from residents



**We hope banks will end red-lining**



to pay for their services and upgrade their homes "We are hoping that banks will stop red-lining the areas and make it possible for more people to own a home in the city"

Ownership would also bring an end to slumlords and more buildings were expected to be better maintained, he said

■ The Seven Buildings Project needs about R10-million to renovate the buildings it bought through government help

The buildings have broken windows, leaking roofs, blocked toilets, burst pipes and stuck lifts, and the walls are peeling

Occupants are willing to receive skills that will help them to fix their homes. Companies that wish to assist can call Nkosi at (011) 720-7489



... making renting tenants the owners of the buildings they live in the city centre a clean and rewarding area in which to reside.

# Joburg to be revived in a year

Millions of rands are being spent on redevelopment and rejuvenation of the inner city. In one move, new bylaws have been drafted to regulate informal traders

By **TROYE LUND**

The Greater Johannesburg TMC forum established two months ago to jump-start plans to rejuvenate the inner city and to deliver the area from its present "anarchic, filthy and unmanaged" state says it intends to achieve its plans within a year.

The Inner City Forum of 25 members includes representatives from government, business and

From 14/3/96

127

communities which reside in the city. The forum came under the spotlight following Democratic Party criticisms last week that there had been no follow-ups to 1995 plans to rejuvenate the area, but interviews with forum members have discovered definite plans are already afoot to clean up the city.

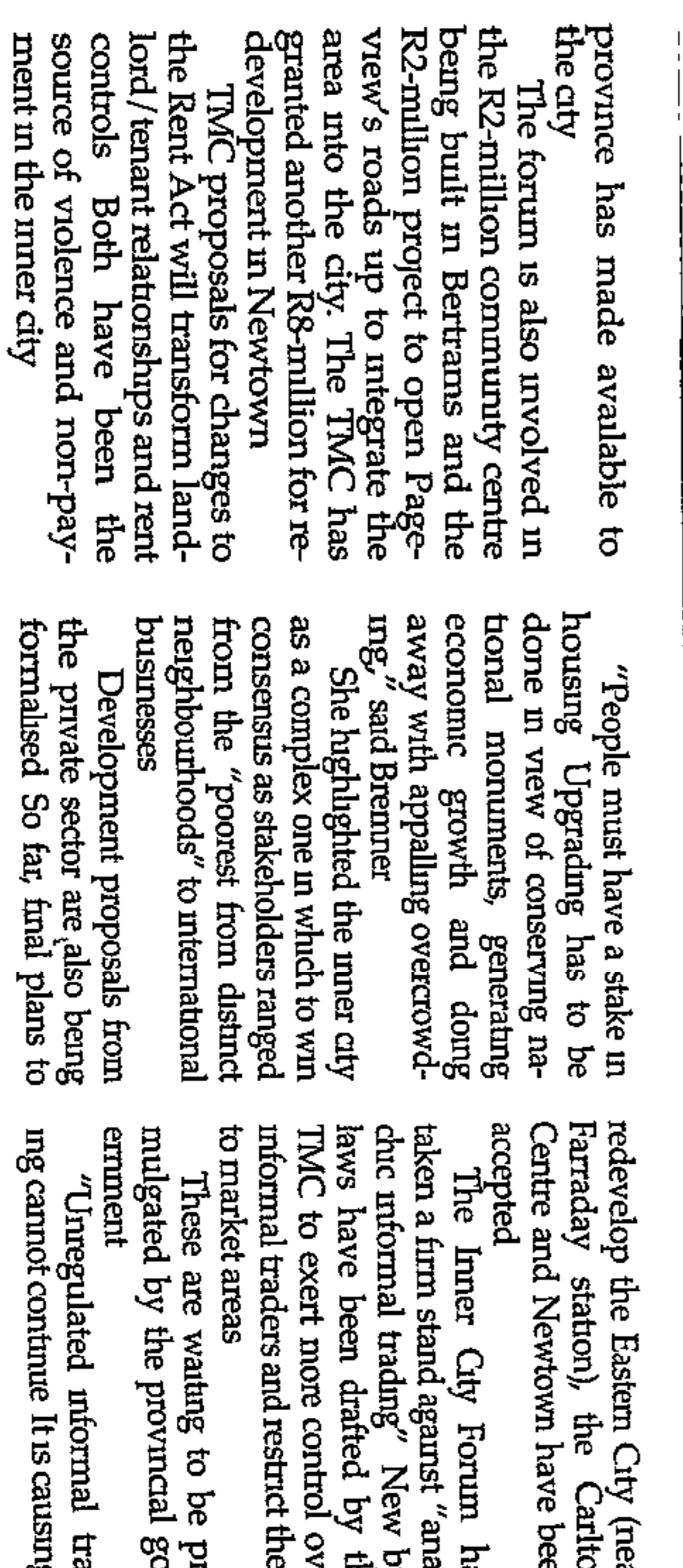
TMC housing and urbanisation councillor Lindsay Brenner puts the lack of success of 1995 renewal plans down to the local government transition with its changing boundaries and new politicians.

Speaking for the Central Johannesburg Partnership (the business coalition on the forum), Neil Fraser said business was "reluctant" to be part of previous renewal strategies as they were "imposing decisions from an illegitimate council".

The two-month-old forum aims at having a vision of "what the city should be" by July and to get "it burning" in the following six months.

"We have always floundered because of a lack of consensus on a vision. All stakeholders will agree what Johannesburg's identity must be. A black African city, a Singapore, a world city, a gateway to Africa or any other concept that has been banded about in the past. It will be a vision that is supported by and belongs to all stakeholders," stressed Fraser.

In the short term, the forum is involved in projects aiming to "stabilise and make the city a comfortable working and residential place". Housing, ridding the city of slumlords and promoting home ownership are priorities. The TMC has also applied to the provincial government to erect eight shelters as part of the 4 000 housing subsidies the



GRAPHIC BY VIJAY GOVENDER

provision has made available to the city. The forum is also involved in the R2-million community centre being built in Bertrams and the R2-million project to open Pageview's roads up to integrate the area into the city. The TMC has granted another R8-million for redevelopment in Newtown.

TMC proposals for changes to the Rent Act will transform landlord/tenant relationships and rent controls. Both have been the source of violence and non-payment in the inner city.

"People must have a stake in housing. Upgrading has to be done in view of conserving national monuments, generating economic growth and doing away with appalling overcrowding," said Brenner.

She highlighted the inner city as a complex one in which to win consensus as stakeholders ranged from the "poorest from distinct neighbourhoods" to international businesses.

Development proposals from the private sector are also being formalised. So far, final plans to redevelop the Eastern City (near Farraday station), the Carlton Centre and Newtown have been accepted.

The Inner City Forum has taken a firm stand against "anarchic informal trading." New bylaws have been drafted by the TMC to exert more control over informal traders and restrict them to market areas.

These are waiting to be promulgated by the provincial government.

"Unregulated informal trading cannot continue. It is causing a

Giving new life ... the area earmarked for complete transformation stretches from Bertrams to Pageview and from Yeoville to Selby.

rapid deterioration in relations between informal and formal traders. Its resolution is a matter of urgency," said Brenner.

A new refuse collection and solid waste management programme has also been worked out by council and will be implemented in the next few months.

The advantages of managing the city in a block system are being put to the test by two pilot projects in a block around the library and government buildings and another area around the Carlton Centre.

Council officials will be stationed permanently in each block and will deal with all complaints the public may have.

Plans to set up a metropolitan transport authority will address the present transport system which is "just not working".

Taxi ranks, taxi nodes, interchanges and other forms of transport are key areas being addressed.

The forum meets twice a month and is confident "the implementation of our vision will make Johannesburg a prosperous place for business and residents".

# Company restructures to prepare for housing surge

Lukanyo Mnyanda

THE New Housing Company is to open a separate East Gauteng division to place itself in a better position to take advantage of the expected surge in low-cost housing and other RDP related projects.

MD Rod McGilhvray said the company, which was forced to close its KwaZulu-Natal operations last year, decided to create a separate region in Gauteng as it identified opportunities for growth in the area.

He said management had to get close to the projects to devote the right level of attention to them. The organisation was looking for a CEO to guide the division.

Substantial growth in the existing Gauteng division had created the necessity for splitting it into two; each with its own CEO and management structure.

Overall, housing delivery was picking up Gauteng, Mpumalanga and the Eastern Cape showed the most impressive performances.

Progress in the Free State was disappointing and the Western Cape was slow although the projects were expected to pick up pace this year.

"Criticism of government on the basis of lack of delivery before now was either a reflection of misunderstanding, regarding the time frames involved or a case of political opportunism."

## New R28m timber project

THE SA Forestry Company yesterday announced the launch of a R28m project to reclaim low-grade timber from its southern Cape plantations.

The project provided for the creation of an R18m small timber project subsidiary, which would reclaim large volumes of stagnant and low-grade timber, and a R10m upgrade of its George mills to process some of the smaller logs.

CEO Tienie van Vuuren said the project would run for nine years and included a replant of 75% of Safcol's plantation area. The replanted plantations would produce high-quality timber in 20 years' time while the remaining 25% would be converted into conservation areas.

Safcol expected a significant turnover, with about 196 new jobs created. Downstream operations should contribute at least another R90m to the George-Knysna area's income, and also create jobs. — Sapa.

**Business Day Tonight**

**on SABC 3 at 8:30pm**

**- news worth watching**

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# Gauteng resolves to house 'poorest of poor'

Star 15/3/96

(127)

By **KARIN SCHIMKE**  
Gauteng Reporter

Gauteng Housing and Local Government MEC Dan Mofokeng will have to recommit himself and his department to providing houses to the "poorest of the poor" after a motion was adopted in the legislature yesterday.

The motion, brought by Ian Davidson of the Democratic Party, asks the House to note the "slow progress being made in respect of the Government's project-linked housing subsidy scheme"

In his response to the motion, Mofokeng said Gauteng had performed better than most of the other provinces "when judged on the basis of our budget allocation"

"In addition, we have pioneered mechanisms that will allow us to fast-track housing development through a multi-pronged approach, effectively monitor performance, and speedily identify and solve problems and blockages in the delivery process. We have a focused housing programme which will result in significant progress in the short

term," he said.

The motion was adopted unanimously.

A motion that Safety and Security MEC Jessie Duarte prepare and introduce legislation on metropolitan policing in 1996 was withdrawn by Annalzé van Wyk of the National Party after she indicated the motion had been put merely to focus attention on the topic.

All parties supported the principle of metropolitan policing. Many indicated the need for regulated metropolitan police forces in local authorities.

# Gauteng opens housing support centres

BD 22/3/96 (127)

Robyn Chalmers

GOVERNMENT's initiative on housing support centres has kicked off after more than two years of planning, with the Gauteng provincial government approving 13 centres

Gauteng housing department spokesman Manase Sefatlhe said yesterday that the provincial housing task team recently completed the evaluation of a wide range of applications for housing centres. Of the 13 approved, 10 would be given a total of R750 000 as start-up funding

The centres — outlined in the housing white paper — would help people house themselves, and provide support in areas such as training, technology and affordable building materials

Sefatlhe said the applications which had been approved included a Midrand housing support centre initiative to serve Ebony Park, Tembisa, Ivory Park and Robie Ride and a Mohlakeng housing support resource centre to service Kagiso

The Greater Benoni centre, serving Daveyton, Etwatwa and Watville, the Kanana centre serving the Vaal areas and the Bopapong building and training centre were also among those approved

Housing Minister Sankie Mthembu-Nkondo said recently it should be up to the provinces to decide how to go ahead with support centres as well as to ascertain how many were needed in each area

Housing ministry delivery support directorate adviser Ken Fin-

layson said the housing support centre initiative was gradually getting off the ground, stressing that funds available for the centres had to be used productively. Finlayson said three centres had been approved in the Free State and one was already operating, while a further two had been given the go-ahead in the Northern Cape, one of which would be launched on April 29.

Finlayson said most of the other provinces were still considering proposals on centres, with five such centres mooted in Mpumalanga and five proposed in the Eastern Cape

One centre was already up and running in Northwest while a range of proposals were under investigation in Northern Province and KwaZulu-Natal

# Tenants and landlords can air their grievances

BY BONGIWE MLANGENI  
Housing Reporter

Johannesburg tenants and landlords were the first to express their views on laws regulating their relationship when they took part yesterday in the first round of public hearings aimed at amending the Rent Control Act of 1976.

The hearings will be held around the province this week, and all tenants and landlords have been called on to make submissions.

Since the coming about of grey areas, the Rent Control Act, which lays down the roles and duties of tenants and landlords, has been ignored, leading to exploitation and overcrowding, as well as failure to pay rents, in the Johannesburg

inner-city area

Gauteng local government and housing spokesman Jubie Matlou said township backyard tenants would be among the first to benefit from the amended Act.

He said the act would deal with the "uneasy relationship" between the backyard tenants and landlords which started during the 1980s rent boycott.

Some residents argued that backyard tenants should not pay their rent because landlords were taking part in the boycott, while others felt tenants should pay because the rent boycott was directed at local authorities, he added.

Matlou said that once the changes had been adopted and en-

acted, the Act would serve as a dispute resolution mechanism between landlords and tenants.

Tenants and landlords would then have the right to submit complaints about rent exploitation, illegal occupation, intimidation, municipal services problems, contravention of lease agreements, damage to property, and eviction issues.

Other hearings will be at the Krugersdorp City Hall on March 26 at 9am, Vaal Civic Centre on March 27 at 2pm, Germiston Civic Centre on March 28 at 2pm and North East Rand Ricardo Mulder Community Library on March 28 at 10am.

For more information, contact Tandaza Dzulane at (011) 493-5555 or Meverett Koertz at (011) 871-7911.

(27) Star 26/3/96

# R50-million sports complex for Katilehong by 1999

(127) Star 26/3/96

By HOPWELL RADEBE AND CHRISTINE ROMBERG

Katilehong residents will soon have a multipurpose sports complex with the rebuilding of the Huntersfield Stadium at an estimated cost of R50-million.

Greater Germiston Parks and Recreation Department head John Dixon said the three-phase construction of the sports complex should be completed after three years, depending on funding.

He said the national Reconstruction and Development Programme had already donated R1,5-million to the project which began in January.

The first phase involved the development of two tennis/volleyball courts, four basketball courts, four netball courts, two soccer fields, a cricket oval, a softball diamond and a clubhouse. These would be completed in August.

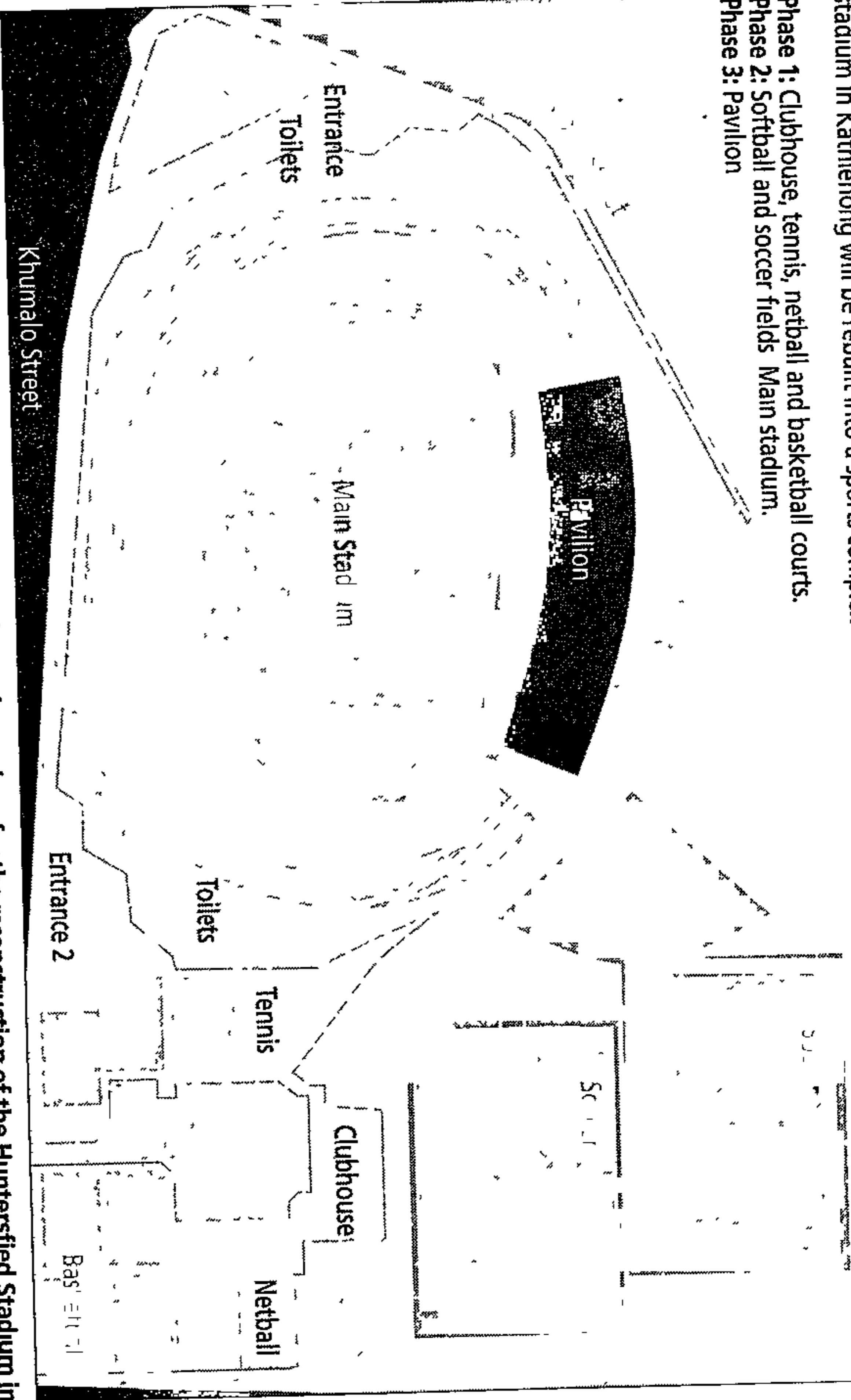
The second phase involved the building of the main stadium with a soccer/rugby field and an athletics track. Lastly, a grassed 17 000-seat embankment and a 5 000-seat pavilion will be built. The pavilion alone will cost an estimated R10-million.

"During the initial investigations and contact with the community, a great need for proper and decent sporting facilities in Katilehong was identified," Dixon said, adding that due to substandard facilities in the area, it was impossible to organ-

## REVAMPING THE HUNTERSFIELD STADIUM - KATLEHONG

In a 3-year project by the Greater Germiston Town Council, the Huntersfield stadium in Katilehong will be rebuilt into a sports complex.

Phase 1: Clubhouse, tennis, netball and basketball courts.  
Phase 2: Softball and soccer fields. Main stadium.  
Phase 3: Pavilion.



**Sporting chance .. this graphic shows the ambitious three-phase plans for the reconstruction of the Huntersfield Stadium in Katilehong.**

ise sporting events. He said the rebuilding of the stadium would help create work opportunities and training for the community during con-

struction and in the maintenance of the sports complex. Dixon said the community would be involved in the maintenance of the complex to avoid

material theft and to assist a spirit of ownership. The council, being the only major funding source, intends inviting local businesses and

foreign investment to assist with the project. He said he was fairly positive that the project would be completed in three years as envisaged.

# POLITICS

## Gauteng hearings first step in rent Act revamp

Ingrid Salgado (127) 20 26/3/96

IN THE first step towards amending the Rent Control Act, the Gauteng housing and local government standing committee held public hearings in Johannesburg yesterday on the future of rent control and landlord-tenant relationships.

The hearings will continue this week in the Vaal; Pretoria, Krugersdorp and on the East Rand and North-East Rand.

The proposed new legislation aims to create representative bodies with enhanced powers to replace the existing rent boards, which have increasingly taken on a mediatory role between landlords and tenants.

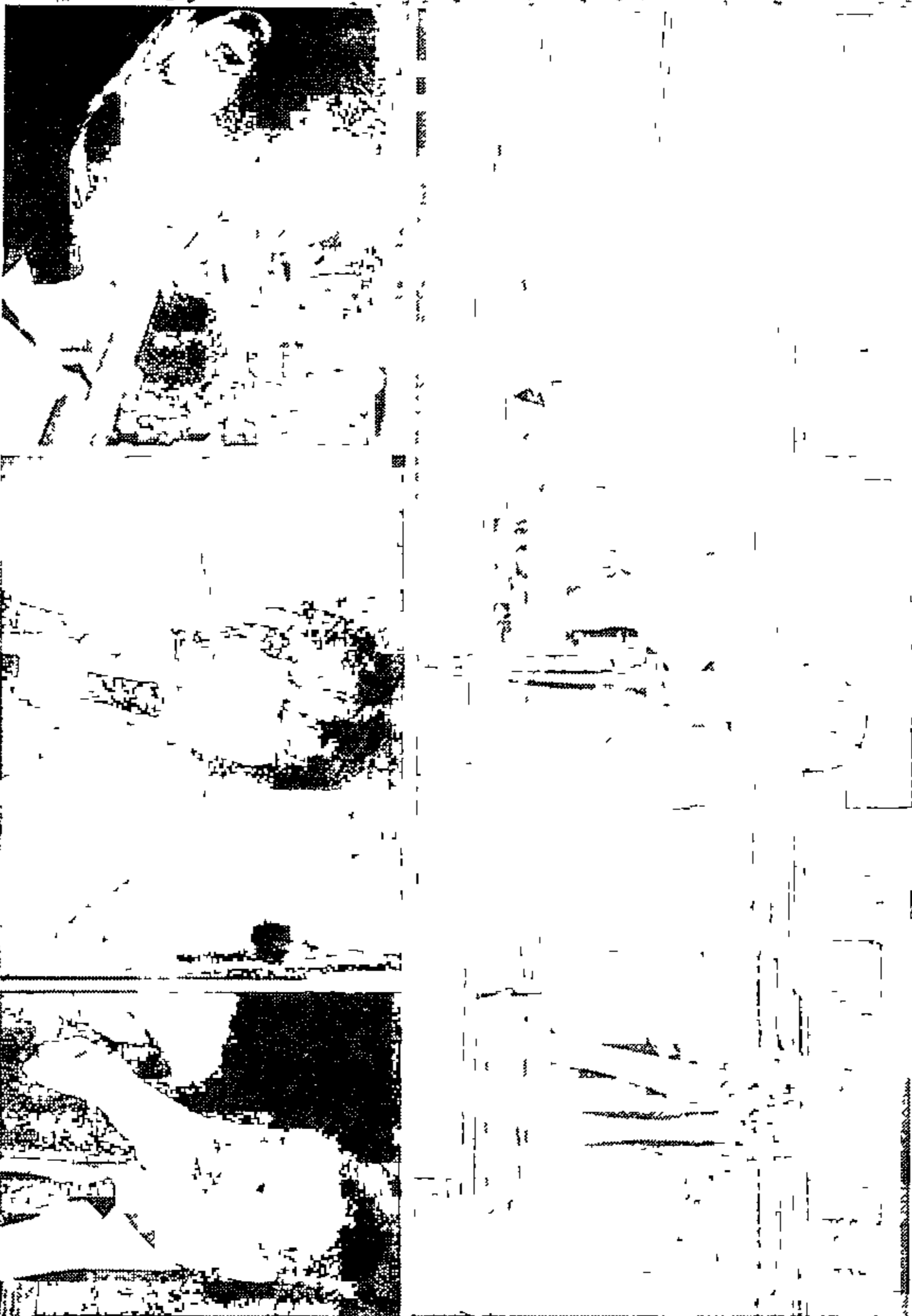
Standing committee chairman Nomvula Mokonyane said the current Act had emerged in a "totally different" environment Gauteng needed to set up a fair rental system in city centres and surroundings.

Mokonyane said the committee would investigate landlords' concerns about the effect of legislative interference in market forces, the plight of people with fixed income, especially pensioners, exploitation of the homeless; exploitation within the market itself, and the role of the courts.

Property owners at the hearing expressed fears that problems could arise if rent boards adjudicated in fair value and rental price disputes.

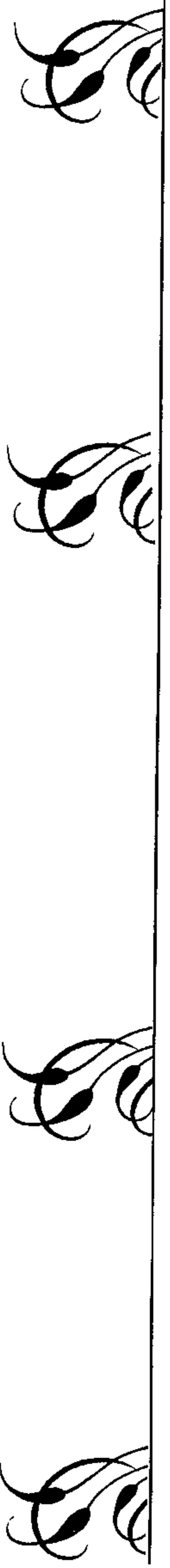
The ANC Hillbrow-Berea branch submitted that the Act should not be overhauled but rather "scrapped in its entirety". Tenants — who were often ignorant of their rights — were continually in a position of weakness as landlords "called the shots".

The SACP said landlord-tenant dealings were marked by "grossly unequal" power relationships, bad administration and institutionalised racism.



Gauteng's housing and local government standing committee held hearings on rent control and property matters in Johannesburg, yesterday. Clockwise from top left are committee deputy chairman Vincent Thusi, chairman Nomvula Mokonyane, Gauteng housing director Monty Narsoo, Gauteng DP MP Ian Davidson, greater Johannesburg metropolitan council policy and urbanisation deputy director Erica Emdon and Hearings property broker Graeme Levin

Pictures ROBERT BOTHA



# Non-payers in Tembisa plunge council into R260-m debt

(127) Star 27/3/96

By HOPEWELL RADEBE  
City Reporter

Non-payment by Tembisa residents has plunged North East Rand Metropolitan Council into a growing R250-million debt

Chief Executive Officer Hans Muller said a R200-million liability had been incurred by former Tembisa Town Council. A number of Masakhane campaigns have been launched in attempts to encourage people to pay, but the response from the community had not been good.

He said the council had struck

a temporary deal with Eskom which had agreed to suspend its demand for resettlement of debt from March 31 to September 30, provided Tembisa residents improved their payments and did not accumulate any additional backlogs

"All accounts to Eskom are fully paid to date except for the Tembisa account where non-payment has existed for the last few years," Muller said

The council was holding a licence for the supply of electricity in the area, and was responsible for supplying it to three metropol-

itan substructures of Kempton Park/Tembisa, Edenvale/Modderfontein and Greater Midrand

In January, the Kempton Park Metropolitan Substructure (MSS) announced an R80-million electric renovations scheme which was intended to stop potentially fatal methods of illegal electrical connections as well as regular black-outs in Tembisa

The MSS expected to include electrification of households which had not been electrified. Residents were urged to pay for their services to enable the Substructure to have enough funds to

constantly deliver services

The Star has found that many households are connected illegally with wires hanging above the streets and houses

Others are running wires across the streets in shallow furrows in sections such as Vusumuzi Hostel, Thafeni and all informal settlements

Muller said non-payment for electricity and other services had to be resolved in the next 18 months, including the replacement of inefficient metering and billing system with prepaid metering systems for every household

1 0 1 9

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# Jo'burg authorities name five areas to be released to 4 000 homeless families

**BY ANNA COX**

Five areas, to be released by greater Johannesburg local authorities for some 4 000 homeless families, were identified at a Randburg public meeting last night.

They are in Witkoppen, Blou-

bosrand in the Northern Metropolitan Substructure, Lombardy East in the Eastern MSS, Liefde-en-Vrede and Misgund in the Southern MSS. Exact locations have not been disclosed.

Greater Johannesburg Transitional Metropolitan chairman of the housing and urbanisation

(127) (270)  
committee Lyndsay Brenner said the release of the land, known as the Rapid Land Release Programme, was only part of a multi-pronged approach to supply housing for 250 000 homeless

She said that although there would be public participation, it would not undermine the rights

SAW 28/3/96  
of the Government to make decisions.

Bloubostrand Community Forum chairman Wayne Schluter said the news was "bad". He said residents had not been consulted.

"We will be holding a residents' meeting to decide what action to take," he said.

(Kriel) were not what he had intended to state - Sapa

# Gauteng leads the way in SA's delivery of housing

By WILLIAM-MERVIN GUMEDE

127 Star 30/3/96

More than 500 000 low-cost housing units are likely to be delivered in the next two years - rebuffing the barrage of criticism levelled at the Housing Ministry for the pace at which housing delivery is taking place

Gauteng and the Western Cape have seen the biggest improvement since the slump in housing delivery in 1993 and 1994, followed by KwaZulu Natal and the Free State, according to a survey by consultants Settlements Dynamics

The number of active housing projects in Gauteng has increased by 38%. Gauteng Housing Board chairman Martin van Zyl said more than 10 000 houses had been built and more than 25 000 sites prepared in

Gauteng alone. "The delivery of housing has increased in the past few months since the introduction of the Government's subsidy scheme," he said.

Housing Minister Sankie Mthembu-Nkondo said delivery had accelerated in the past six months. She predicted that delivery would improve further because more money was being made available by provincial governments each quarter as spending by provincial housing boards rose

She said about 2 000 low-cost houses a month were being delivered under the subsidy scheme compared with 470 in September, and 34 000 homes had been built over the past 18 months

TO PAGE 2

## ◆ Housing delivery

127 Star 30/3/96

The survey singles out the local authorities and says "more than half the municipalities in the country have not yet started construction - despite the availability of the subsidy scheme"

The survey argues that while the figures do not necessarily reflect the number of completed housing units, it does provide a measure of the delivery potential of the housing sector. "Although the recent increase in project activity in the sector is not indicative of the actual number of units being delivered, it shows that delivery potential has increased with the introduction of the new housing policy and the new subsidy scheme in 1994," the survey says

It also blames the lack of a clear housing policy before the 1994 elections and the months just after the poll for the slump in the number of houses delivered

Mthembu-Nkondo lambasted the private sector for "playing a minimal role in housing delivery" and said "the banks' refusal to release funds to the lower end of the market was an obstacle. She has also attacked the construction industry for demanding higher subsidies and the private sector's call for larger guarantees, saying such demands contradicted housing policy, which had been based on the partnership between government, communities and business

Meanwhile, the Greater Johannesburg Transitional Metropolitan Council has identified five sites where 4 000 homeless people will be relocated, as part of a move to establish townships for 250 000 people under the Rapid Land Development Programme

The areas identified are Witkoppen and Bloubastrand in the Northern Metropolitan Substructure, Laide-en-Vrede and Mispund North in the Southern MSS, and Lombardy East in the Eastern MSS

The names of the areas were initially kept secret to prevent illegal land invasions. Around-the-clock security has been posted at these areas. Planning and urbanisation committee chairman Lindsay Brenner said the communities in the surrounding areas had been informed of the decision last week

Johannesburg tenants and landlords had also had the opportunity to express views on laws regulating their relationship during the first round of public hearings aimed at amending the Rent Control Act of 1976

A Gauteng local government and housing spokesman said the act would deal with the "uneasy relationship" between tenants and landlords which started during the 1980s rent boycott



# Concern over low-cost houses in several areas

Star 1/4/96 (127)

By ANNA COX

Residents of the areas bordering land set aside for low-cost housing in Johannesburg are concerned about the effect the developments might have on their neighbourhoods

The locations of five areas released for about 4 000 homeless families were announced at public meetings last week. They are 970 stands in Bloubostrand, north of the dump site, 1 130 stands in Witkoppen, south of First Road, 770 stands in Lombardy East, south of London Road, 880 stands in Misgund North, south of Naturena, and 1 500 stands in Liefde-en-Vrede, south of Swartkoppies Road.

Lombardy East residents have been assured by Displacees' Crisis Committee chairman Tsietse Kungoane that occupation of the land will be orderly. The displaced people of Alexandra will be given priority to the 770 stands.

Kungoane said: "We were displaced by violence and thrown out of our homes in 1992. We have been living in community halls and municipal offices in overcrowded, unhygienic and tragic conditions.

"Now that we have our own land, we will make sure that houses go up quickly - we qualify for housing loans. We will move into temporary structures initially, while our houses are being built, so we can protect and police the area from other land invaders ourselves. We will not allow anyone else to take our land again.

"We would like to give our neighbours the assurance that we want proper housing and we would ask them to facilitate our move and not to criticise."

Bloubostrand Community Forum chairman Wayne Schluter said the "news was bad". He said authorities were creating squatter areas and had taken the decisions without consultation. His association would be meeting soon to decide what further steps to take, he said.

Greater Johannesburg

Witkoppen

Liefde-en-Vrede

ous parties to meet in a more constructive and positive environment. It is unfortunate that at the public meetings last week, extreme positions were taken and genuine concerns that were voiced gave way to ultimatums and threats.

"Many residents are concerned about the safety and welfare of the communities who are to be moved and I know many residents in my ward would be prepared to assist these communities."

The stands will each be 250sq m. All householders will have to qualify for the R15 000 housing loans and the construction of houses is expected to take about 18 months. In terms of the procedure for establishing townships, a town planning tribunal will hear objections before a final decision.

But Lyndsay Bremner, chairman of Greater Johannesburg's housing and urbanisation committee, warned at a meeting last week that although there would be public participation, it would not undermine the rights of the government to make decisions.

"If participation blocks our goals, we will revise how we go about participation," she said.

Northern Metropolitan Sub-structure councillor Kate Lorimar, part of whose ward falls in Witkoppen, said "We believe it is absolutely essential that all stakeholders work closely together to reduce tensions and enable vari-

# New civic movement threatens rent boycott

Mduduzi ka Harvey

BO 2/4/96 (127)

THE newly formed Africa Renaissance civic movement has threatened to embark on a national municipal service, rent and bond boycott if government fails to scrap arrears and provide affordable housing for communities

The movement's chairman Jennifer Meyer said members took their demands to Gauteng premier Tokyo Sexwale two years ago, but there had been no response. Now central government would be lobbied directly.

The movement plans to lobby on the scrapping of arrears, provision of affordable housing, particularly for pensioners and the unemployed, and job creation by ensuring contractors within the different councils involved communities in the implementation of local projects. The provision of proper infrastructure, toilets, water, sewage and health care were other issues.

In addition, the organisation would fight against evictions by assisting squatters in every possible way in having their needs addressed.

Although the organisation, which claims to have a membership of more than 30 000 from 73 different smaller

civics countrywide, claims to be politically non-aligned, it is functioning from the office of the PAC's 'Khoisan X' at the Gauteng legislature.

The movement claims to have strongholds in the East Rand townships of Daveyton, Tembisa, and Kagiso. They also have members in Actonville, Eden Park, Kliptown and Eldorado Park.

Meyer said the organisation, which was launched at the weekend, would not work with the SA National Civic Organisation because, since the 1994 national elections, the Sanco leadership had turned into political figures, a move which had weakened Sanco's ability to take action, she said, because it now had to work in consultation with the ANC.

Sanco general secretary Penrose Ntlonti said it would be difficult for his organisation to work with the new civic because it was not known and Sanco would have to find out what the new civic intended to do which Sanco had not done in the past.

But, he said, it was their democratic right to start a new civic movement and communities would decide which organisation to support.

# Jo'burg and Gauteng in plan to relocate 67 000

Mduduzi ka Harvey

THE Johannesburg council would work in consultation with the Gauteng government to relocate about 67 000 homeless families in the province who qualified for land under the rapid land development programme, council planning and urbanisation chairman Lindsay Bremner said.

The first phase of the relocation was launched last week when land was made available to house 4 000 of the city's homeless families and was only the beginning of a series of programmes aimed at solving the province's housing backlog.

The areas identified for implementation of the programme were Witkoppen and Bloubastrand in the Randburg area, Liefde-en-Vrede and Misgund near Soweto, and Lombardy East in Sandton.

Criteria used to select the families included investigating whether they were living in haz-

ardous conditions and whether they lived in areas where there was serious social conflict, Bremner said.

In addition the province emphasised the need to spread the communities geographically.

The first phase of the programme will involve the moving of families from Zevenfontein, Alexandra and the Soweto areas of Thembelihle and Dlamini.

Initially the families would be housed in shacks and provided with temporary services like toilets and clean water. Then, through consultation with the province, houses will be built under schemes which will aim at employing the families.

Bremner said the communities living adjacent to the identified areas had been informed about the programme, as well as the township application procedure which would be followed.

The next step, which forms

(127) part of the standard township application procedure, would be the placing of advertisements announcing the council's intention to establish townships on the prospective sites, allowing objections to be lodged with the town planning tribunal.

Once the legal proceedings had been completed, Bremner said, the townships would be laid out, rudimentary services installed and stands for occupation would be allocated.

Bremner said while early occupation of the land could be expected, the stands would be developed in accordance with existing town planning schemes, which included provision of proper housing conforming to current by-laws.

The fast track approach, she said, had been adopted to prevent possible invasion of the sites should development be slow and to alleviate the chronic living conditions of the beneficiaries.

02/4/96

(127)



# Hopes rise as low-cost housing projects grow

Star 2/4/96 (127)

Council is looking at different ways of solving the problem

**By BONGIWE MLANGENI**  
Housing Reporter

Several low-cost housing projects are taking shape around Greater Johannesburg, raising hopes that more homeless people will end this year as home owners

The Greater Johannesburg council said there were a few projects already under way and more which could get off the ground during the year

Most of the developments are planned for the south of Johannesburg and include upgrading squatter camps, hostels and building new houses

Housing and Urbanisation

chairperson Lindsay Bremner said the council was looking at different mechanisms to solve the problem of housing and was focusing on individuals who qualified for the government subsidy

One of the mechanisms includes introducing transitional housing around the city for the destitute

Some of the programmes already in the pipeline include projects in Claremont and Riverlea where communities are being consulted on the kind of development that should take place

Near Eldorado Park, services have already been installed and

houses will be built soon on land earmarked in the area

Other projects will take place in Eikenhof, Denver, Frankenwald and Vlakfontein

One of the major projects which could kick-off this year is the Baralink in the Southern Sub-structure which aims to connect the CBD and southern townships

Informal settlements which have earmarked for upgrading include Klipspruit Valley in Soweto, which is divided into three squatter camps and Alexandra

Hostel upgradings are almost completed in Daveyton and at George Goch hostel

# Rand homes returned to original owners

(127) Star 2/4/96

The Katorus special project aims to normalise devastated neighbourhoods.

By **BONGIWE MLANGENI**  
Housing Reporter

**D**espite problems of illegal occupation on the East Rand, about R18 million has been used to repair damaged houses and 200 revamped homes have been transferred to their owners.

Houses in Tokoza, Vosloorus and Katlehong are being renovated through the Katorus Presidential Special Project, which aims to normalise the neighbourhood after it was affected by violence four years ago, causing some families to flee the area.

The project - launched in 1994 - is also looking at repairing street lights, cleaning and repairing main roads, upgrading sports fields and establishing community centres.

Project manager Themba Maluleke said while they were still trying to negotiate with some illegal occupants to move out, there were families who had already regained their homes.

A total of 300 houses in the area had been invaded and some occupants were refusing to move out before being provided with alternative accommodation. Most of the occupied houses are in Tokoza.

"This has raised tensions between those residents who are currently displaced and unable to return to their homes and those who are occupying their houses," he said.

He said with the help of the Alberton Local Council, he has been identified to help the invaders and details of its location would be released soon.

About R650-million has been set aside to repair 700 houses in Tokoza, 785 in Katlehong and 15 in Vosloorus.

But in Tokoza only 14 houses have been completed and about 500 evaluated. In Katlehong 505 houses have been evaluated and about 200 completed, while six have been completed in Vosloorus.

Maluleke said fewer houses than expected have been revamped because some residents were afraid to reclaim their homes and return to their neighbourhoods.

"Only houses claimed by legitimate owners will be repaired," he said.

Good progress has been achieved in upgrading hostels.

More than 2 000 units have already been upgraded in the Vosloorus Nguni and Sotho sections.

# Cleanup campaign involves residents

(127) BD 3/4/96

Reports by Michael Moon

A R12m campaign to help municipal authorities set up waste management systems in townships and informal settlements was launched in Johannesburg yesterday.

The Clean and Green project is a tripartite initiative between the public works department, SA Breweries and Keep SA Beautiful.

It is expected to create more than 700 jobs in the next year and is aimed at getting communities to start paying for refuse removal and civic cleanup operations. The campaign is aimed at setting examples in certain selected townships over the next year, with some 20 communities, covering 167 000 households, throughout the country being targeted.

The communities will be asked to appoint their own waste removal contractors, each of whom will be responsible for servicing 250 households a week. Contractors will be paid from a government allocation of R10,8m until residents can be persuaded to pay a service fee of R6,50 a house per month.

Keep SA Beautiful CE Raymond Byrne said money earned in this way would stay in the community and give residents a stake in ensuring the service remained viable.

Rallying community groups behind environment enhancement projects and waste awareness also formed part of the campaign.

Byrne said it was intended that local authorities would take over management of the waste collection after the start-up period of a year. The programme would then be rolled out to other areas.

## CSIR probes plant's emissions

(127) BD 3/4/96

EMISSIONS from a medical waste incinerator at Aloes, near Port Elizabeth, could be harmful to the health of people in neighbouring communities, a CSIR investigation has found.

The CSIR has called on operator Waste-tech to try to eliminate problem pollutants, look at increasing the plant's stack height, review management procedures and consider using a gas cleanup system.

Waste-tech, a spokesman said yesterday, welcomed the opportunity to put forward an action plan.

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## R12m campaign to clean up townships

(127) CT 3/4/96

JOHANNESBURG: Public Works Minister Jeff Radebe yesterday launched a R12-million Clean and Green Campaign to remove litter and waste from neglected townships and informal settlements

The result of collaboration between his department, SA Breweries and Keep South Africa Beautiful, the campaign also aims to create jobs, improve local government and encourage communities to pay for municipal services.

About 20 pilot areas have been selected where projects will run for a year, among them Umtata in the Eastern Cape and Stanger in KwaZulu-Natal

"The absence of formal waste management systems in most of South Africa's townships and informal settlements has led to a massive build-up of litter and unmanaged waste in these areas," Radebe said — Sapa

## Govt wages war on pollution

THE war against pollution of the land, seas and skies is to be fought "with renewed vigour", the Department of Environment Affairs announced yesterday

(128) CT 3/4/96  
The government has created a new chief directorate to deal with the problem. Its main functions will be to create a holistic approach to integrated pollution control and environment quality management and to promote the control of air pollution

The move follows an investigation by the Public Service Commission into the department's chief directorate of environmental management. The probe was called for by Environment Minister Dr Dawie de Villiers — Environment Writer

# Campaign to clean up townships gets under way

(127) Star 3/4/96

One of the aims of the community-driven project is to teach township residents to treat their surroundings and the environment with respect

**By HOPEWELL RADEBE**  
City Reporter

The Government has joined forces with business and non-governmental organisations in the launch of a R13,8-million Clean and Green Campaign aimed at improving the removal solid waste material in informal settlements around the country

Addressing about 200 environmental and business delegates at the campaign launch in Johannesburg yesterday, Public Works Minister Jeff Radebe said the campaign's objective was to select areas swamped by litter in each province and to finance the provision of services in solid waste removal together with local authorities

He said the campaign, which had received overwhelming



Jeff Radebe ... massive buildup.

support in all nine provinces, had been prompted by the disheartening situation in the townships, where people were "forced to drive over floods of sewage spilling from burst pipes and witness mounds of dumped

waste piled up along the streets".

"There is a world of lavish wealth with all the characteristics of the First World and a painful world of abject poverty, squalor and iniquity existing side by side in South Africa," Radebe said

But through the Reconstruction and Development Programme, the Government was determined to "bring together strategies to harness national resources in a coherent and purposeful effort which will be sustainable in the future".

Radebe said his department was happy to be associated with South African Breweries Beer Division and Keep South Africa Beautiful, a group concerned with environment issues, to encourage environmental cleanliness in informal settlements



# Smallest province, but Gauteng tackles land, housing head-on

Land invasions, overcrowding, squatter settlements, eviction of labour tenants and farmworkers, and the exploitation of backyard shack dwellers come under focus

By **KARIN SCHIMKE**  
Gauteng Reporter

**S**even programmes for the equitable redistribution of land in Gauteng have been proposed by the provincial department of development planning, environment and works. If implemented, they will tackle issues of growth and development while also trying to house and employ Gauteng's landless.

People affected by land issues were addressed at the weekend by MEC Sicele Shiceka who outlined possible strategies for combating the many problems associated with the rapid urbanisation of the country's smallest province.

The problems include land invasions, overcrowding, growing

squatter settlements, eviction of labour tenants and farmworkers, increasing crime and the exploitation of backyard shack dwellers.

Of the seven programmes, some have already been put in motion, most notably the rapid land delivery programme which releases land to people in crisis areas for permanent settlement in an organised way. The Mayibuye programme aims to provide secure, permanent settlement in such a way that it ensures community participation in future upgrading.

The policy of the Gauteng farmer settlement programme was adopted in the provincial legislature three weeks ago and this will allow farmers to settle on underused provincial land which

they will have an option to buy after three years.

Two other proposed programmes are the release of land for economic activity to support small and medium-sized enterprises by making land available which will create jobs and boost the province's economy and the release of land to religious and welfare organisations to give them access to land for their activities.

The last, and most prickly, of the programmes is the reception areas programme. These would provide alternative land for people who have been evicted due to illegal land invasions of government-owned land. Reception areas are expected to be established with the help of local authorities and will be provided

with emergency services. Residents will have to pay a monthly fee for these, but no permanent tenure will be granted. The aim of this is to stem "queue-jumping".

Shiceka told the conference the programmes would, if implemented, attempt to redistribute land to disadvantaged groups and restore equity to people who had been dispossessed or suffered from exclusion from access to land.

They would also improve security of tenure, attempt to manage land resources effectively, promote greater involvement in decision-making around land issues, establish adequate governmental administrative capacity and contribute to co-ordination between different levels of government and society.

(127) KAW 3/4/96

# Rapid urbanisation a major health hazard

(127) H/4/96

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In just 15 years 25 cities will have populations of 20 million, creating daunting social and sanitary problems. Johannesburg must prepare its defences now

BY DAVID ROBBINS  
Health Writer

By the time the next century is 10 years old, 25 cities in the world will hold more than 20-million people each. That's double the present size of the whole of Gauteng, currently Africa's third largest urban conurbation behind Cairo and Lagos. We're living at the dawn of the age of the megapolis.

The health problems involved are obvious.

Listen to Dr Hiroshi Nakajima, director-general of the World Health Organisation (WHO). "The health of at least 600-million people living in cities in developing countries is being threatened by lack of food, clean water and shelter. Overcrowding, inadequate waste disposal, hazardous working conditions, polluted air and street violence are all contributing to what have now become the routine risks of city life. And the situation isn't getting any better."

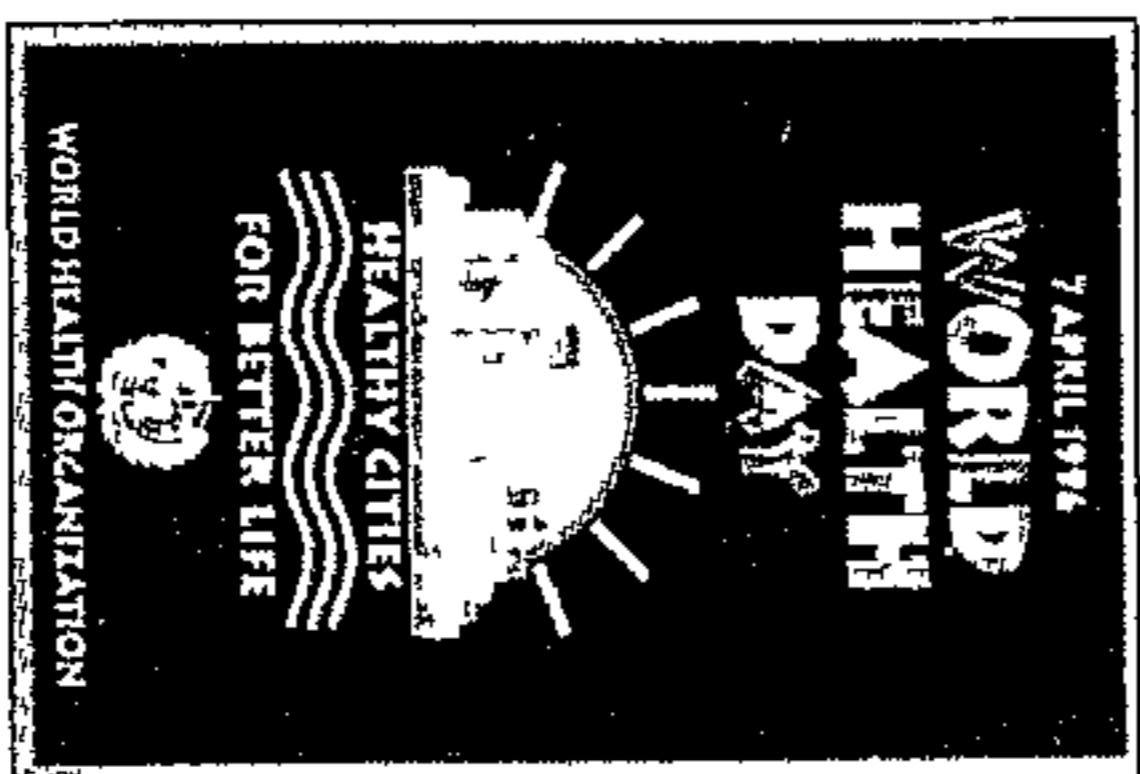
Nor is it getting smaller. By the year 2000, more than half the population of the developing world

will be living in urban areas. For South Africa, read closer to 60%. And many of these new "urbanites", as they are now being called, will be living in conditions that are, quite frankly, life threatening.

In response to these deteriorating conditions in the world's cities, WHO launched the Healthy Cities Programme (HCP). That was in 1987. Today, more than 1 000 cities are involved, and metropolitan Johannesburg is one of them.

Dr Yasmin von Schurnding, director of environmental health for the Greater Johannesburg Transitional Metropolitan Council, sketches the background. "We first started in 1992 when the former Johannesburg city council approved our involvement, and we started in a small way.

"The establishment of the TMC has certainly helped to in-



crease the scale and scope of our activities to include the whole conurbation, and we are now in a position to get health and the environment on to the agendas of transport, waste and housing decision makers as never before."

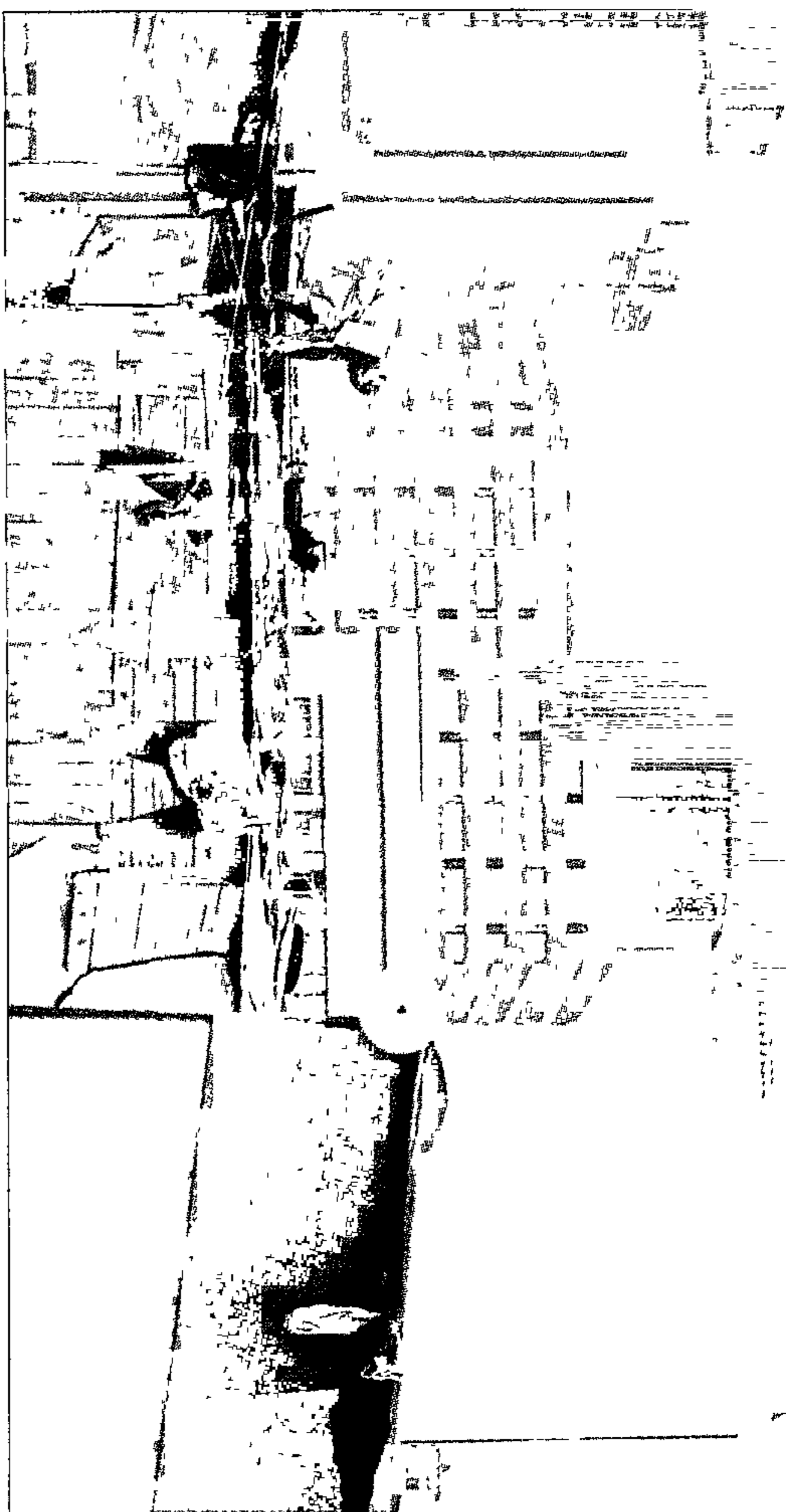
But the process is as important as the desired outcome, she says. "International experience shows us that there are no blanket solutions to urban health problems. It is vital, therefore, that communities are encouraged to participate in solving their own problems. Local authorities can provide material and logistical support, but the people themselves need to buy into a participative approach."

As examples of this new approach, Von Schurnding describes three specific projects, all of which should be regarded as

pilots, that are currently under way in Johannesburg.

■ Healthy schools. Launched last year at one school, this programme has now expanded to schools in different settings: one in an informal settlement, one in a high-density urban area, the third in a typical Johannesburg suburb. The pupils and teachers themselves decide on what they want to do about their school and broader environments. Waste disposal, air pollution, and testing for lead contamination are examples of activities undertaken.

■ Healthy homes. A building in Hillbrow was chosen for this pilot project. The building was run down, with faulty plumbing and electrical systems. A health inspector has become a community facilitator, surveying the health status of those living in the building and deliberately linking prevailing health problems with environmental problems. In and around the building, next step was to establish what skills the occupants had, and these were then mustered for the improvement of the building which improved the environment which in turn im-



Future imperfect squatter shacks, not in the veld but atop a city building, highlight the impact of uncontrolled urban growth.

proved the health status of the occupants.

■ Healthy markets. A specially equipped caravan is being used to instruct street vendors in the basics of food hygiene. The classroom goes to where the vendors operate, and a system of evaluation and knowledge testing has also been worked out to date more than 100 certificates have been issued to fresh or cooked food vendors in Hillbrow and downtown Johannesburg.

"These may seem like small projects when confronted by the enormity of some of the health problems which we face in metropolitan Johannesburg," says Von Schurnding. "But as pilot projects they will be capable of rapid replication once we have learnt the necessary lessons of community participation and action."

"An important element of all these projects is that they must challenge existing policy and be capable of changing people's per-

ceptions and traditional ways of doing things."

It is at least in part the quality of the Healthy City projects in Johannesburg, and the approach being adopted here, which has prompted WHO to establish a world collaborating centre for urban health in South Africa.

The ultimate responsibility for driving this important function rests with the Medical Research Council-based National Urbanisation and Health Research Programme in Cape Town, but in partnership with the Department of Community Health at Wits and the Health, Housing and Urbanisation Directorate of the Greater Johannesburg Transitional Metropolitan Council. This is the first time that a local authority has been included in a WHO collaborating centre.

The significance of this appointment is that South Africa

will be expected to collaborate in the development of urban health and environmental policy, and, according to the terms of reference, "to promote health programmes (such as HCP) as evolving models for inter-sectoral collaboration and health advocacy."

"This means that what we succeed in doing here in greater Johannesburg could impact favourably on cities all over sub-Saharan Africa," says Von Schurnding. "Already, African cities are in frequent contact with us."

In addition to the HCP projects, Johannesburg is one of 14 cities worldwide recently selected to contribute to what is being called the "model community programme", a participatory initiative to implement Agenda 21, which is an action plan emanating from the Earth Summit held in Brazil in 1992. The Agenda 21 initiative and those of the HCP are

likely to merge, and they will almost certainly form the basis of a "city summit" to be held in greater Johannesburg later this year.

But Von Schurnding has no illusions about the enormity of the task and the responsibility which these new international roles places on Johannesburg's efforts to succeed.

"This is probably our last chance to get it right from an environmental and urban point of view. A look at cities across the world presents a frightening picture. But I do feel confident Johannesburg has tremendous potential. It's got the political will to succeed in these vital projects."

"It's also got the resources and now the appropriate mechanisms to equitably distribute them. And it's most certainly got the health and environmental problems on which our projects can impact."

# Move to end landlord-tenant rows

(127) Nov 4/4/96  
By BONGIWE MLANGENI  
Housing Reporter

Since the phasing out of laws regulating tenants and landlords, the two have been like enemies set to destroy each other

The breakdown of the tenant-landlord relationship has contributed to turning certain parts of Johannesburg into slums

Despite declining living conditions, neither the tenants nor landlords have been willing to give up the fight for what they think is their right

Tenants complain about high rents, intimidation and arbitrary evictions while landlords list irregular payments, damage to property and overcrowding

But a mechanism to solve such disputes could soon be found

For the first time, last week, landlords and tenants had an opportunity to present their problems and make recommendations on how lease obligations can be fulfilled

The public hearings held throughout Gauteng could bring new hope to the inner city as it suffered extensively since the phasing out of the Rent Control

Act in 1977 which has led to the emergence of slumlords, non-payment of rentals and services, and derelict buildings

The Rent Control Act protected tenants from being evicted unfairly and being charged high rents. However, in 1977 landlords could be exempted from rent control, making it possible for them to set their own rules to run their buildings

Only a few buildings, such as those occupied by elderly people, are still under rent control

Most organisations fighting for tenant rights have called for the reimposition of a revised Rent Control Act while some landlords are opposing it

The public hearings opened a platform for this issue to be argued and resolved

Gauteng housing director Monty Narsoo said the aim was not to bring back the old Rent Control Act but to use it as a base to formulate legislation that would regulate relations between tenants and landlords

He said the need for legislation was profound as rental hous-

ing was a necessity and could not be a success without addressing the existing difficulties

Narsoo stressed that the laws would protect both sides and make it possible for tenants and landlords to submit complaints, address contravention of lease agreements and discuss municipal service problems

Regulating the tenant-landlord relationship is important in the revival of the inner city

Greater Johannesburg housing and urbanisation chairperson Lindsay Bremner said the laws could be a solution to overcrowding

Among different mechanisms being investigated to solve overcrowding, it has been proposed that private meters for water and electricity should be installed in each flat

Bremner said landlords who have tried this method have found that tenants became economical in their use of services as they were reluctant to pay high bills.

Besides lobbying for protection through provincial government, tenants are also demanding attention from the Ministry of Housing

**NEWS NATIONAL**

# Land delivery gets moving

(127) (S10) Sowetan 4/4/96

**By Joshua Raboroko**

GREATER Johannesburg Metropolitan Council has become the first local authority in Gauteng to introduce some of the seven programmes aimed at an equitable redistribution of land for development and planning

GJMTC executive chairwoman of the planning and urbanisation committee Mrs Lindsay Bremmer said yesterday that five areas had been identified for the introduction of a rapid land development programme

These areas are Witkopen and Bloubostrand in the northern metropolitan sub-structure, Liefde-en-Vrede and Misgund North in the Southern MSS and Lombardy East in the Eastern MSS

The seven programmes, proposed by Gauteng MEC for development planning, environment and works Mr Sicelo Shiceka, hope to tackle growth and development while also trying to house and employ Gauteng's landless,

## Land invasions

The programmes include solving the problem of land invasion, overcrowding, growing squatter settlements, eviction of labour tenants and farmworkers, rising crime and exploitation of backyard shack dwellers

Some programmes are already in motion, most notably the rapid land delivery programme which releases land to people in crisis areas for permanent settlement

Bremmer said the names of sites were not

previously released in order to ensure that all stakeholders were informed and that the sites did not become targets for invasions

The next step, she said, would be to put up rudimentary services and to allocate stands to people

The Gauteng farmer settlement programme, adopted in the provincial legislature three weeks ago, will allow farmers to settle on under-used provincial land with the option to buy after three years

Two other programmes are the release of land for economic activity to support small and medium-sized businesses

Lastly, the reception area programme will provide alternative land for people evicted because of land invasion

# Joeys goes all out for a massive clean-up

WILLIAM-MERVIN GUMEDE  
Own Correspondent

JOHANNESBURG - The city fathers here, in partnership with the Gauteng government and business and community representatives, have unveiled an ambitious plan to revamp the inner city.

The Inner City Urban Renewal Strategy will be set in motion by July. It includes cleaning up, slashing crime, jacking up public transport, putting business back and making Johannesburg a city with efficient services that operate around the clock.

Eradicating crime is a mainstay of the plan. Satellite police stations will be built and visible policing beefed up in areas identified as crime "hot spots". Security companies will increasingly be hired to strengthen the South African Police Service in combating crime.

Closed-circuit television cameras are already positioned at strategic places in the inner city. Johannesburg will also soon get a full-time city manager to run the day-to-day activities - a first for South Africa.

Johannesburg's famous street hawkers and pedlars will be allocated to areas designated for trading. The greater Johannesburg transitional metropolitan council has already passed bylaws that will outlaw selling goods on the crowded streets.

Old and derelict buildings will be upgraded and tough action will be

(127) ARG 6/4/96  
taken against city landlords who allow their buildings to deteriorate. A refurbishment fund will be established to monitor and facilitate upgrading run-down buildings.

About R3 million will be spent by the Gauteng provincial government to invest in building shelters for 4 000 homeless people squatting at Park station and to provide another 1 500 inner-city housing units.

The plan will also focus on job-creation with the development of small and medium-size businesses.

The volatile taxi industry will be brought into line and two major ranks are planned to take pressure off the over-stretched Noord Street and Bree Street ranks.

The council also intends to step up its regulation of the city's taxi operators. The suburbs immediately bordering the city will be upgraded, with Berea, Yeoville, Troyeville and Jeppestown in line for facelifts.

Soweto will also be developed and "brought into the city".

"All these initiatives highlight the fact that business is optimistic about the future of the inner city, and enormous amounts of money have been invested in the area," said Neil Fraser, spokesman for the Inner City Business Coalition.

Standard Bank, Absa, First National Bank, Liberty Life, Sanlam and other companies have, in a show of confidence in the inner city, expanded their business in the area.

# Bid to put glitter back in Golden City

By WILLIAM-MERVIN GUMEDE

An ambitious plan to revamp Johannesburg's inner city area is to be launched in July with the support of the Government, business and community leaders.

The Inner City Urban Renewal Strategy - touted as a plan to convert Johannesburg into the Hong Kong of Africa - will slash the crime rate, jack up the public transport system and lure business back to the area, making Johannesburg a

city with efficient services that operate around the clock.

Announcing the plan Sicele Shiceka, Gauteng MEC for development planning, environment and works, said that reducing crime was a mainstay of the scheme. There were plans to erect satellite police stations in key areas and to introduce visible policing in crime hotspots.

Security companies would be hired to strengthen the SAPS in combating crime. Closed-circuit television cameras were already positioned in strategic places

A full-time city manager would be hired to run day-to-day activities. Hawkers would be taken off the streets and relegated to designated trading areas.

The Greater Johannesburg Transitional Metropolitan Council had already passed by-laws that would outlaw the selling of goods on the city's crowded streets.

Derelict buildings would be upgraded and tough action taken against landlords who allowed buildings to deteriorate. A refurbishment fund would facil-

itate the upgrading of buildings.

The provincial government would invest about R3-million in building shelters for the 4 000 Park Station squatters and to provide another 1 500 inner city housing units.

Job creation would be a cornerstone of the plan with a focus on developing small and medium-sized businesses. The volatile taxi industry would also be brought into line. Two major taxi ranks were planned to take pressure off the Noord and Bree Street ranks,

while the council would step up the regulation of taxi operators.

Adjacent suburbs - Berea, Yeoville, Troyeville and Jeppestown - were also in line for facelifts. Sovereio would be developed and "brought into the city".

Inner City Business Coalition spokesman Neil Fraser says "All those initiatives highlight the fact that business is optimistic about the future of the inner city, and enormous amounts of money have been invested in it". Standard Bank, Absa, First National Bank, Liberty Life, San-

lam and other companies had, in a show of confidence in the inner city, expanded business there.

Shiceka said, "The provincial government has a great interest in development and regeneration of the inner city (which is) increasingly viewed as a zone of decline, insecurity and danger".

Housing the Gauteng legislators and 10 provincial departments in the city centre was testimony to the provincial government's confidence in the area as a centre of economic growth and development.

(127)

Star 6/4/96

Johannesburg would play a pivotal role in providing services, jobs and houses for all the people of the province.

"The Gauteng government is certain that the partnership approach to restructuring the city will result in a shared vision of downtown Johannesburg that will transform it to reflect the values and aspirations of all who live and work in it," Shiceka said.

At an inner-city summit last year, the Inner City Development Forum was set up with representatives from the Inner City Bus-

ness Coalition, Johannesburg Inner City Community Forum and the Johannesburg council and the provincial government.

Council spokesman Lindsay Bremner said 22 members would visit the US, Britain and France "to learn how other cities in transition coped with development" and would attend an international conference in Coventry on city renewal.

Bremner said the trip would be paid for by grants from the US and UK governments and the private sector in South Africa.

THROUGH THE WINDOW CRISMET 1110 2

His father trekked up the hill

joke, but the members of the Seychelles

## State houses not yet given to claimants

127  
HOUSING REPORTER

Star 8/4/96

Although 88 500 claims for ownership of state-owned houses have been received in Gauteng, no houses have been officially transferred to the renting tenants

An impression - given in a recent council meeting by representatives of coloured residents - that some Soweto tenants had already acquired ownership of their rented houses has been rejected by a Gauteng local government and housing department spokesman

He said notices were served on black tenants who had claimed their houses "The notices were not title deeds but were intended to tell occupants that if they wished to make a claim or to raise an objection they could do so by March 29"

He said the list of claims had been published and individuals were invited to inspect or submit counter claims where necessary until March 29

In townships, where the lists and notices were not ready on time, residents had been allowed until April 30 to submit claims and objections

# Johannesburg 'to be cleaner and safer and make more jobs'

Star 8/4/96

(127)

By TROYE LUND

Johannesburg-based businesses, government and residents have joined forces to rejuvenate the city and establish it, over the next 20 years, as a competitor with the most eminent of world cities

This was announced at the weekend at a press conference called by the four major stakeholders committed to the Inner City Development Forum - civic groups, business, local and provincial government

"Regeneration of the Johannesburg inner city is imperative, especially considering that it generates nearly 50% of the provincial GDP and Gauteng in turn contributes 40% of the national GDP. It is the banking, communication, transport, business and provincial government nerve-centre and it surely must be the gateway to Africa. It must become

home to the rich and poor," said Development, Planning and Local Government MEC Sicelo Shiceka

He stressed how the city infrastructure had to be used 24 hours each day and development initiatives had to ensure Soweto was drawn into the urban economy.

## Stricter by-laws for street traders

TMC councillor Lindsay Bremner highlighted some of the renewal projects local government intended using to "manage the city better"

A trial block management system has been started in some areas of the CBD, involving TMC officials being on duty, around the clock, for the public to direct com-

plants to and get information from. A full-time city manager has been appointed. He will co-ordinate and manage all service deliveries, such as refuse removal

The TMC is about to start various new waste management and waste recycling projects. These will be designed in a way that creates jobs at the same time as maintaining clean streets

Stricter by-laws for street traders have also been drawn up by the TMC and will be promulgated in the next few months

Local government aims to improve transportation in the city and manage taxis better, and several provincial and local forums are currently tackling this issue with taxi owners

Bremner has also assigned teams to report on the needs of specific neighbourhoods in the city. These reports will include how rejuvenation of each neigh-

bourhood can best be achieved in conjunction with other projects and business ventures which will boost employment

"Business is highly optimistic. There is a great deal of room for 50% expansion in floor space. This could double the current 280 000

## Soweto has to come into the picture

formal jobs," said Inner City Development spokesman Neil Fraser

The Inner City Community Forum - representing city residents, religious, political and civic groups - endorsed Fraser's sentiments. ICCF spokesman Hop Papo said people living in the city were prepared to work with police to eradicate crime syndicates



# R250-m down the drain in water seepage

Star 8/4/96

(127)

Up to 50% of water supplied to some municipalities unaccounted for

BY LORNA ZOKUFA  
AND TAMSEN DE BEER

Gauteng lost R250-million in water unaccounted for by local authorities last year, and municipalities might be forced to undertake expensive repairs to water equipment throughout the province.

The loss was revealed by a survey conducted by Rand Water, and is equal to 250 kilolitres of water or 20% of the total water put into supply each year by Rand Water.

In certain local authorities, as much as 50% of the water supplied by Rand Water was unaccounted for.

Rand Water chief executive Vincent Bath said the province's water wholesaler intended to take "a very strict line on water loss in municipalities", including imposing tariffs on municipalities that could not account for water losses.

"We are planning to look at tariffs charged for unaccounted water so it becomes very uncomfortable for municipalities to allow leakage," he said.

Local Government and Housing MEC Dan Mofokeng said the survey had identified a need for municipalities to implement a method for a water audit.

In a written response to questions by DP MPL Jack Bloom, Mofokeng said "The survey identifies that there is a scope for a general reduction in the percentage of unaccounted water in most municipalities in Gauteng, particularly in townships which fell under the black local authorities in the past."

According to Bibo, R120-million of the unaccounted water could have been saved had there been a well-managed water loss prevention system in place and legislation requiring municipalities to implement annual water audits.

Bath said between 5% and 15% water loss was regarded as a "reasonable norm" in well-managed cities. By comparison, Gauteng's local authorities could not account for between 6% and 50% of the total water supplied by Rand Water.

While the former black local authorities experienced the highest levels of water unaccounted for - between 15% and 50% of the water provided - they used less than 25% of the province's total water consumption, he said.

"For the population and industry we support, our country is not well-endowed with water," he

► . To Page 2

# Meetings to decide on future of Rent Control Act flop amid confusion

Star 9/4/96 (127)

By **KARIN SCHIMKE**  
Gauteng Reporter

The Gauteng Department of Housing and Local Government has been criticised for the way in which public hearings covering the future of the Rent Control Act were conducted last month, and the department has confessed to making some mistakes

Sources with an interest in the public hearings, which affect mostly landlords and tenants, complained that there was not enough time given for public submissions, and the National Party in the Gauteng legislature indicated it would propose to the standing committee on housing and local government that the deadline be extended.

Deputy chairman of the standing committee, Vincent Thusi of the NP, said "The way I see it, there were two reasons for the lack of participation from the public at the five scheduled hearings.

Firstly, the notices informing of the hearings appeared about a week before the hearings were to take place, thus giving people little time to prepare. Secondly, once the hearings were started, there was a lot of chopping and changing about dates and times."

Thusi was referring to a hearing scheduled for 2pm at the Krugersdorp town hall on March 25 which was then postponed to 9am the next day. The hearing which was to take place in Pretoria at 10am on March 26 was moved to 2pm the same day.

The Krugersdorp meeting was consequently unattended, and although the Pretoria hearing was "fairly well attend-

ed", it was mostly by landlords

The hearing at the Vaal civic centre on March 27 also failed to attract anyone, while the hearings in the North-East Rand and Germiston were each attended by one person only from the public.

Ian Davidson of the Democratic Party said: "The hearings turned into an absolute shambles." His main concern was also the timeframe, saying a briefing on what the document proposed was only announced a day in advance, and that it was clear from the oral submissions that people did not understand the objectives of the hearings. "The DP rejects unequiv-

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**The hearings turned into an absolute shambles**  
”

ocally rent control, but we recognise the problems around tenancy and would like the public to make constructive suggestions about how these can be addressed. We do not want them to make blanket comments like 'rent control must go' or 'rent control must be enforced'. That is not helpful. We need to do a proper briefing, and the DP supports

any suggestion that the deadline for submissions be extended," he said.

Nomvula Mokonyane, chairman of the housing committee, agreed that the focus of the response was wrong and said her committee would address the problems after the present recess of the legislature. "We want to come out with an amended act informed by the views of the people," she said.

In addition, the draft policy document, which would be compiled after lengthy consideration of oral and written submissions, would be made public, perhaps as early as next week. This would allow people to read and respond to the document.

# Landlords and tenants get another opportunity to state their cases

By **KARIN SCHIMKE**  
Gauteng Reporter

Landlords and tenants who did not have a chance to make submissions at public hearings on the future of the Rent Control Act can still have their say

Nomvula Mokonyane, chairman of the Gauteng legislature's standing committee on housing and local government, said yesterday that earlier hearings were

labelled a flop by some because of the bad planning and administration behind them.

The provincial department of housing conceded to having "made some mistakes"

Mokonyane said it had been decided to extend the deadline because of "weaknesses in the process"

The department and the standing committee have decided to organise a series of consul-

tative meetings with property owners and community-based

## Earlier

## hearings

## labelled a flop by some

organisations. They meant "to canvass their

views on issues related to the landlord-tenant relationship"

She added that special consultative workshops would be held in townships, where public hearings would clarify explanations of the proposed amendments to the Rent Control Act

"Suggestions and contributions that arise from these meetings will form part of the public consultation, input that goes with the whole process, of re-

defining the landlord-tenant relationship," she said

A draft policy document will be issued for public comment and submissions will be received until one month after the release of this document.

Mokonyane said "The logical conclusion of this consultative process should see the inclusion and consideration of the various viewpoints of all the parties involved"

# CBD initiative winning crime-and-grime battle

BY TROYE LUND

(127)

Star 11/4/96

A prototype policing and management operation in Johannesburg's CBD has paid exceptional dividends - drastically reducing crime and attracting business back to the city centre.

Although the Central Business Improvement District (CBID) initiative is costing local businesses up to R150 000 a month, organisers say it is the only way to resus-

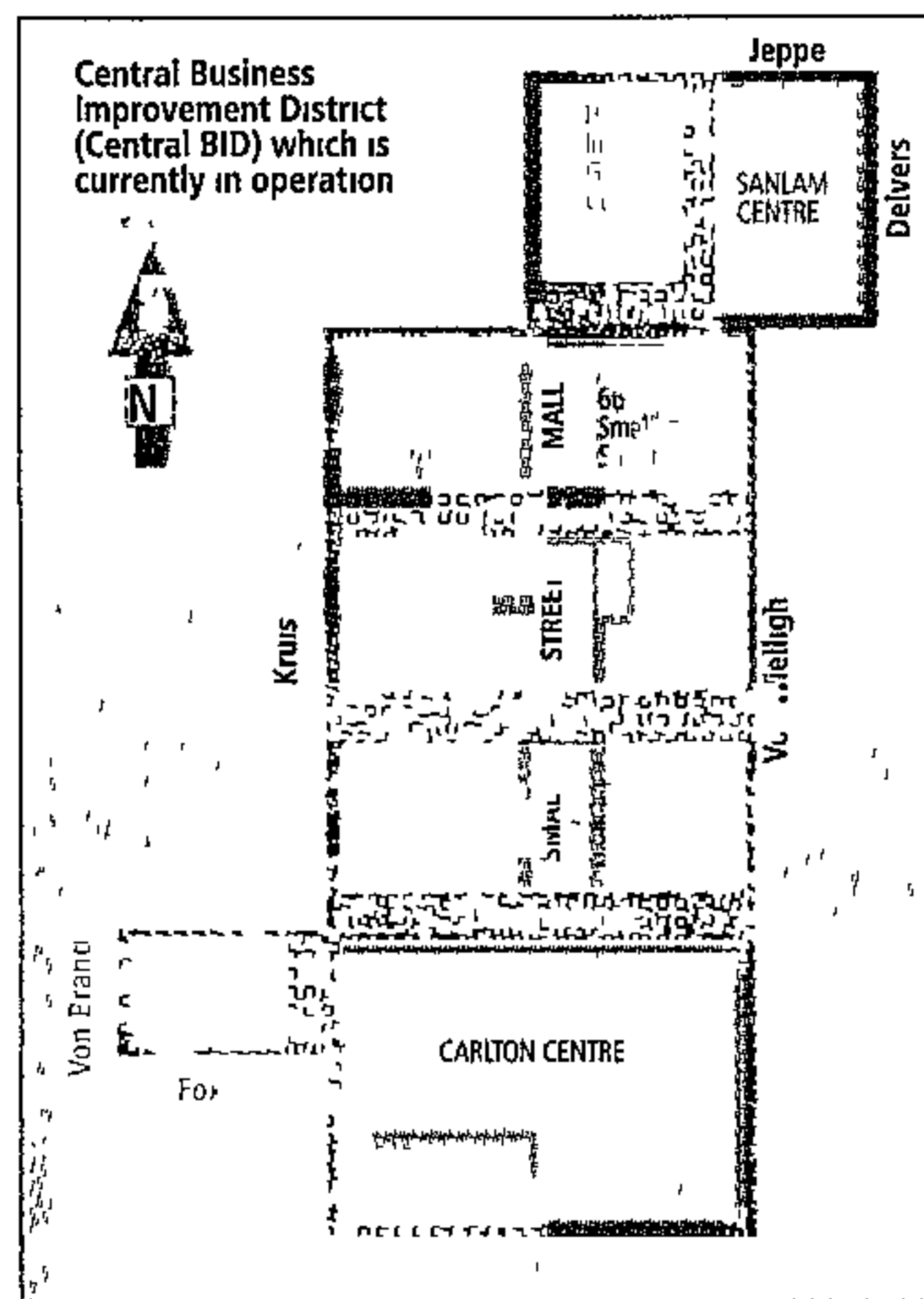
Fighting crime and grime has been the main focus of the operation. And crime statistics reveal that during the times the private security force is on duty, and since patrols began in April 1995, there has been a virtual elimination of common assault and vehicle-theft cases. Shoplifting has decreased by 95% and muggings have been reduced by 60%.

This year's crime figures for the CBID - including times securi-

ty patrols were not on duty - show there have been only six muggings, 12 common assaults, no car thefts, four shopliftings and two shooting incidents. This is substantially lower than figures for the corresponding period last year.

Cleaners pick up litter, remove illegal posters and paint over graffiti in between the council's morning and evening street clean-ups.

The project was launched a year ago by the business wing of the Inner City Development Forum - a partner-



ship between inner-city residents, business, and local and provincial governments which is committed to rejuvenating the city over the next 20 years.

citate the inner city and lure back business. The project currently affects only seven blocks - from Commissioner to Fox between Kruis and Von Brandis streets, and from Pritchard to Jeppe between Von Wielligh and Delvers streets - but organisers hope the initiative will be expanded.

Property owners in the CBID have deployed a private security force, and employed their own street cleaning, maintenance and aesthetic-planning crews. They are also negotiating a deal with street traders so that hawking can be "controlled and become a positive contribution" to the area.

ship between inner-city residents, business, and local and provincial governments which is committed to rejuvenating the city over the next 20 years.

"We have to fill the city with these districts and push crime to the periphery. Business confidence and the rate of letting undoubtedly increases when streets are clean, free of crime and well managed," said Neil Fraser of the Central Johannesburg Partnership which heads the initiative and represents inner-city businesses on the development forum.

Fraser plans to have three more districts up and running by the end of the year.

# Moving on from the squatter camp

Star 18/4/96 (127)

## Greater Johannesburg is embarking on its first major delivery programme

By Anura Cox

About 30 000 squatters are to be resettled in the immediate future in the greater Johannesburg area in two separate short-term programmes - the Rapid Land Release Programme (RLRP) and a 'reception areas' programme.

But there are still some 250 000 families living in informal settlements who need land, said Lind say Brenner, the chairman of the Greater Johannesburg Transitional Metropolitan Council's (GJTM/C) Urbanisation and Planning committee.

The RLRP will provide 4 000 families with permanent homes. For this, five areas were recently identified by the GJTM/C. They are 970 stands in Bloubastrand, 1 130 stands in Witkoppen, 770 stands in Lombard East, 990 stands in Liefde-en-Vrede Mulbarton, and 880 stands in Misingund North.

The RLRP is a once-off programme and is the first major deliv-

ery programme in the metropolitan area, said Brenner. People from the most disadvantaged communities, who have been living in hazardous and dangerous conditions have been given preference.

The new stands will measure 250sq/m and residents will have to qualify for the R15 000 government housing subsidy to build their homes.

The levels of affordability and employment among the new residents were found to be high, said Brenner.

Occupation of the land will start in August and the construction of the houses themselves should be complete within 18 months.

The aim is to integrate these people into the urban fabric economically, spatially and socially," said Brenner.

Although the participation of neighbouring communities would be sought in the programme, this would not undermine the right of the Government

to make decisions and if it blocked the Government's goals, the concept of public participation would have to be revised, said Brenner.

The programme is aimed at nation building and reconciliation," said Brenner.

There are two "reception" areas in greater Johannesburg. This concept was started after the invasion by squatters of Moffat Park last year.

Reception areas are transit areas or "catchment" areas for the homeless evicted for illegally invading land. The sites have basic services such as water, chemical toilets and refuse removal.

One reception area is at Weiler's Farm in Walkerville south of Johannesburg where 480 families evicted from Moffat Park have been relocated.

In the north, a 15 hectare site in Diepsloot, north of Randburg, was recently expropriated at a cost of R494 000 for a reception area. About 1 400 families squatting illegally in Kya Sands Blou-

bastrand and Olivevale will be moved there.

The 1 000 families illegally squatting on the Far East Bank of Alexandra will also be relocated into this reception area within the next few weeks.

Sand chairman of the Southern MSS Pema Naidoo "This should in no way create the impression that land invasions are acceptable and that all those that invade land will automatically be entitled to an alternative site.

"It should rather be seen as a bridging mechanism to enable the GJTM/C and the metropolitan structures to fast track the release of land which should bear fruit shortly," said Naidoo.

"Land invasions are still viewed in a very serious light as such action obstructs the development of land particularly aimed at addressing the homelessness in the province. We believe the relocation of people to reception areas will facilitate the delivery of land for permanent settlements," he added.



RIAN HORN

Build-up squatters around Johannesburg are soon to be given land or temporary reception areas as the city moves forward in its housing programme

# Alex residents angry over transfer delays by council

(127) Star 18/4/96

BY ANNA COX

Alexandra residents who purchased flats from the council seven years ago are still waiting for transfer of the units into their names

Although the units were sold under the Sectional Title Act, a register has never been opened

Numerous requests for clarification on the matter from officials of the previous administration and of the Greater Johannesburg Transitional Metropolitan Council (GJTMC) have remained unanswered

A petition submitted to the council in 1993 calling for transfer and the opening of a sectional title register was ignored and residents then decided to suspend bond payments.

Many who paid deposits and made bond repayments for several years say they are living in "limbo" fearing they could eventually lose their homes

The 10 blocks, consisting of about 50 units each, were constructed in 1989 and transferred into the

then Alexandra City Council's name in 1990

Said tenant/owner Peter Mareleni. "I purchased my unit in 1989 for R14 700 I paid a deposit of R2 000 and made payments of R136 every month until 1993 when we submitted our petition to the council. It is a bad situation because some of us want to improve and

## A register has never been opened

build on to our flats but are unable to do so because we don't know what the legal position is."

There are also many people living in the flats who do not qualify to be there, said Mareleni

The GJTMC said the legal and urbanisation departments were currently investigating every aspect of this issue and no information could be provided before the conclusion of the investigations

# 'No low cost housing on our doorsteps!'

By ANDILE NOGANTA

DISCONTENT over a decision by Witbank Town Council to go ahead with a low cost housing project in a section of Zwelihle township is threatening to erupt into a confrontation between residents of the affected area and those of a nearby squatter camp

Unknown people have already burned down a mobile office belonging to the construction company contracted to the project last week

Earlier a group of youths from the township had torn down a fence around the premises of the construction company, demanding that the project be stopped.

The next day an armed group of residents from the Vosman squatter camp allegedly entered the fray.

CP 21/4/96 (127)  
According to members of the residents' committee, the angry mob of squatter camp residents marched through their area chanting slogans and threatening people opposed to the project

The site on which the houses will be built is adjacent to a section of Zone 14.

Residents of the affected area are worried that the construction of low cost houses next to their property will lower the value of their houses

They say that when they raised their concerns in a meeting with the council on March 8 they were silenced as "they were not ANC members"

The chairman of the management committee in the council, Charles Makola, denied the allegations

# Wives of diplomats pledge financial and material support for 'new' Soweto

BY **ABBEY MAKOE**  
Soweto Bureau

The wives of 31 ambassadors and high commissioners from Africa, Latin America, Europe and Asia have pledged their financial and material support for the upgrading of facilities to help improve the living standards of Soweto's

estimated three million people. The group, which was hosted by the newly-formed World in Soweto organisation, was taken through a tour of Soweto last Friday before having a lunch with the mayor, Sophie Masite, at the council chambers in Jabulani.

"Soweto represents the core of a society engaged in a process that

will lead this rainbow nation to growth and development, that will benefit the entire Southern African people," said Ivette Jechande, wife of the Mozambican high commissioner.

"There is no doubt in our minds that this place will be a guiding light for South Africa," she said.

An elated Masite described the event as "a first for Soweto. We are not saying that these people should come and do the council's work, but just augment it."

"Within the next three years people should be seeing a totally different Soweto, spotlessly clean and safe to travel in," Masite said.

World in Soweto is a project

that has been designed to improve living conditions of the estimated 3 million township residents through job creation. Through the projects, Soweto should soon have colourful parks, pavements, market places, sidewalks and recreational facilities to keep children away from idling on street corners.



THE process of canvassing public views on ways to improve conditions in rental accommodation took another step forward this week when the Gauteng housing and land affairs department presented its latest proposals for comment.

The fact that the public hearings held in March were billed as hearings on rent control might have wrongly generated the notion that government wished to extend the jurisdiction of the Rent Control Act to all rental accommodation.

The discussion document recognises that property owners have the right to receive fair payment from people who occupy space in the city for which owners pay rates and service charges.

Among the proposals put forward is the creation of new statutory bodies at local level charged with resolving disputes between landlords and tenants.

Far from suggesting that rent control should be indiscriminately applied to all residential premises, the document recognises that there are issues other than how much a person pays for their accommodation that make for liveable residential environments.

This is not to say that the provincial government plans to turn a blind eye to unfair rentals charged

by unscrupulous slum lords seeking to benefit unfairly from the housing shortage in Gauteng.

Key proposals put forward in the discussion document include:

- Drafting of broad provincial legislation to address problems with residential letting, irrespective of date of first occupation;
- Establishment of representative quasi-judicial bodies at local government level charged with dispute resolution and education rather than rental determination;
- Establishment of a provincial review body;
- Provision of guidelines for resolving rental disputes, and
- Provision of a standardised lease agreement form to establish familiarity and predictability and limit the number of complaints received.

The emphasis is on stabilising city environments by providing tenants and landlords with recourse to a body with predictable and fair procedures for problem resolution.

This certainly, it is hoped, will discourage lawlessness and unfair practices on both sides, and estab-

lish an equilibrium in the residential letting market.

The influx of people to urban areas and the absence of proper programmes for managing increased rates of urbanisation has resulted in conflicts and the deterioration of valuable living spaces.

The public hearings revealed the diverging views of the property sector, fiercely protective of its right to manage its relationship with consumers, and consumers themselves, angry about high-handed treatment by some landlords or their agents.

During the hearings, criticism of government's decision to open debate about rental practices came thick and fast. There are those for whom government concern over unfair rentals signalled an intention to solve housing delivery problems through price intervention.

This mistrust is unnecessary. Government's motive in placing the spotlight on private rental accommodation was not nearly so sinister. That problems exist in the relationship between landlords and tenants, and in the actual state of private

PRO 25/4/96 (127)

rental properties themselves is a trite point. But why are these suspicions unfounded?

Firstly, far from helping to increase the amount of affordable accommodation, rent control would in fact place more people out on the streets. Tenants would no longer find it necessary to sublet in order to afford high rentals.

Landlords, too, might no longer tolerate overcrowding if the only result were to be a rapid deterioration in the value of their buildings, without any concomitant increase in earnings.

Secondly, development of new rental accommodation has all but dried up over the past 20 years in places like central Johannesburg.

Although private rental accommodation makes up a not insignificant proportion of overall housing stock in Gauteng, it can barely be viewed as the panacea to all the province's housing requirements.

At the end of the day, the question government must ask itself is will the market respect the rights of both consumers and suppliers in an

urban environment such as has developed since the repeal of the Group Areas Act in 1991? Indications are that the market has so far failed to regulate efficiently.

It may not be ideal for government to interfere in private relations between consenting adults — tenants or landlords or anyone else. But whether government should choose inaction after requests from both landlords and tenants for help is another matter.

What is needed are public policy interventions which promote stable, efficient and attractive urban environments in which private investors will be confident to invest.

To the extent that instability is the consequence of old apartheid laws and planning, the duty of government is most evident.

The issue is one of principle. Government has an obligation towards citizens to take any action, including the writing of laws, to prevent conflict, exploitation, and deteriorating living environments, and to establish stable conditions within which certainty of rights and obligations exists.

□ This article was submitted by the housing and land affairs ministry of the provincial government of Gauteng.

## LETTERS

# Councillors thousands of rands in arrears on rates

DP accuses executive committee members of North East Rand council of lacking transparency and accountability

**BY HOPEWELL RADEBE**  
City Reporter

About 23 councillors in the North East Rand metropolitan area are at a risk of losing their jobs for not paying their rates and for owing the council R42 000 in arrears

The transitional metropolitan council (TMC) was shocked to hear that 12 of the councillors were about four or more months in arrears. The information was disclosed at the TMC meeting last week following a question asked by Democratic Party councillor Mike Waters.

He said if the undisclosed

councillors failed to settle their accounts within 30 days, they would have to terminate their public representative status according to the ordinance on local government.

"It is completely unacceptable to find community leaders who have a fixed income refusing to pay for their rates," Waters said.

Challenging the council to divulge the names of the "guilty councillors", he accused the North East Rand TMC's executive committee members of lacking transparency and accountability.

Executive committee member Hans Eybers said revealing the names of the guilty parties would have serious legal consequences

and that their advice was that an account was a private matter between two parties - a debtor and a supplier.

Waters then challenged councillors who he said knew themselves to be guilty of non-payment to stand up and reveal themselves, but no one responded.

According to council records, arrears of three councillors in the Greater Midrand Substructure totalled R14 282, three in the Edenvale/Moederfontein Substructure owed R1 583, eight owed the Kempton Park/Tembisa Substructure R2 442, and the TMC itself was owed R23 703 by nine councillors.

Star 30/4/96

## 'Locals hampering housing projects'

(127) Star 1/5/96

Intimidation of emerging contractors by community members is hampering progress of low-cost housing projects in some parts of Gauteng, the housing standing committee heard yesterday.

During a meeting, Gauteng housing director Enos Ngutshane said communities were creating problems for small businesses who have been given a chance to building low-cost housing

He said some people were complaining that the houses were too small

However, this happened despite a known fact that the government housing subsidy

was meant to build starter houses with a proper infrastructure, said Ngutshane.

He added that community members had been invited to take part in workshops to decide on the kind of houses they could afford.

Major problems in Katorus on the East Rand were emerging as contractors were unable to continue because of interference by the community. In some areas, owners were unable to occupy their houses because of disputes, he said.

A project management team would be formed to monitor new housing projects.

- Housing Reporter

# Alex to get R1,9-m power boost

Star 6/5/96

127

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By ANNA COX

An amount of R1,9-million is to be spent on upgrading the electricity network in Alexandra within the next few months to improve living conditions for hundreds of thousands of people, said Eastern Metropolitan Substructure executive committee chairman Nkele Ntingane

The council approved the expenditure last week following reports that an extremely serious overloading problem existed in the system

Ntingane said the large influx of people into the area had resulted in a significant increase in residential density and substantial increases in the electricity needs. The situation had reached the

point where the existing supply within Alexandra was no longer adequate for a secure and continuous supply to be maintained

"Repeated overloads and cut-offs occur on a daily basis causing great inconvenience to people and it can only worsen with the onset of winter.

"It is essential that urgent measures are taken to address the problem. This upgrading will make the lives of hundreds of thousands people a lot easier," she said.

Eskom, as the agent of the council, will undertake the work of installing the additional substations, reinforcing the main supply links and make all associated infrastructure rearrangements

# Tangled mass of housing claims expected in Soweto

Star 6/5/96 (127)

By **BONGIWE MLANGENI**  
Housing Reporter

When Sowetans heard they would soon be owners of the state houses they had been renting for many years, most rushed to submit a claim. But what they did not know was that "soon" could mean three years.

Most residents still do not know whether Gauteng MEC for housing Dan Mofokeng meant that the houses were already theirs or whether claims had to be submitted to have the houses transferred into their names.

Hundreds of disputes are expected in Soweto, which will make the process even longer. Some could reveal years of corruption and exploitation of tenants by former councillors.

A Gauteng department of housing spokesman said everyone had a right to claim a house and all disputes would be attended to. In Soweto they would have to tackle disputes such as those arising from extended families living in a house still registered in the name of a deceased tenant.

Another problem stems from subletting: some tenants living in backyard shacks or renting houses from registered tenants have claimed ownership.

Caroline Sekgome from Eldorado Park feels she has a right to the house she has been renting.

In 1993 she moved into a two-roomed house in Eldorado Park with her husband and child.

The registered tenant asked her to pay R250 a month and promised to put the house in her name as he had found new accommodation. Another family was also renting a backyard shack.

"My landlord advised me to have the house registered in my name, which I did. Officials told me to stop paying rent to anyone until a decision had been taken."

Sekgome later found out that the shack occupants in the backyard were also paying rent to



**Anxious ... Caroline Sekgome was told by officials to relax while a decision was taken.**

someone at the council office, in an attempt to get the house in their name.

"I went to inquire about this matter because it sounded strange. But I was reassured that it did not mean shack occupants would receive any preferential right."

In 1994 Sekgome was told to move out of the house by the shack occupants who claimed they had been registered as the new tenants. The council office denied this.

Sekgome said she took her matter to the Gauteng office because she feared she would be left without a home.

"I was told to relax as the matter was being investigated. Next thing, I went to the department and found the person who has been pursuing my case no longer worked there. That was the end of my case."

Last week Sekgome visited the main housing bureau office in Jeppe Street and was advised to submit a claim form.

But according to the bureau spokesman, the house occupied by Sekgome is likely to be claimed by the registered tenant and the shack occupants.

YES TO HOMES  
NO TO SHACKS

Shacks for show ... members of the Witkoppen and Craigavon Civic Association sit in a mock squatter camp in protest against the Rapid Land Development Plan. From left are Ted Vonk, Robert Leach and Nigel Andrews.

## 'Shack camp' built to protest against land plan

BY LORNA ZOKUFA  
City Reporter

A civic group in Fourways, Sandton, built a mock squatter camp over the weekend in protest against the Greater Johannesburg Transitional Metropolitan Council's (GJTMC) Rapid Land Development Programme (RLDP)

The camp, made up of four shacks, was open to viewing by the surrounding community. Between the small wooden shacks, with zinc roofs and plastic sheeting as windows, were washing lines

Members of the Witkoppen and Craigavon Civic Associations (WCCA) sat around a barrel in which a fire had been lit and pretended to be squatters

"Local residents need to be made aware of what effect this RLDP will have on them, and also really get a feel of what a squatter camp looks like

"In this way, the community will be able to see the necessity of submitting their objection letters," chairman of the WCCA, Robert Leach, said

The programme is part of the council's approach to supply

housing to 250 000 people

The chairman of the council's housing and urbanisation committee, Lindsey Bremner, said the most disadvantaged people would be offered land in five of the areas that have already been released throughout Greater Johannesburg

Leach said although they did not object to the RLDP in its entirety, they were concerned at the manner in which shack dwellers were treated.

"We do agree that homeless people need to be housed, but the local authorities also need to con-

stant residents who will be affected by the programme and the squatter community itself before such a programme is implemented," Leach added

When Bremner announced the areas earlier this year, she said that although there would be public participation, it would not undermine the rights of the Government to make decisions

Although the shacks have been taken down, Leach said mock-up camps would be built every weekend until May 21, the deadline for submissions on the RLDP

Stan 6/5/96

127 36 300

# Gauteng needs 90 000 houses a year for next decade to catch up with backlog

107  
Star 11/5/92

By WILLIAM-MERVIN GUMEDE

Gauteng has a housing backlog of 500 000 homes despite leading the way in delivering houses, according to Housing MEC Dan Mofokeng.

A strategy which includes making land available to the homeless is in place to kickstart housing delivery in Gauteng, but land invasions could scupper these plans.

"Forty-thousand families enter the housing market annually. The province has to deliver in the region of 90 000 houses a year over a 10-year

period to catch up with the backlog," he said.

His department, with a fund of R800-million for this year, had a host of projects in the pipeline to speed up housing delivery.

The value of subsidies approved in Gauteng totalled R1,024-billion.

Mofokeng said special pilot projects, including the development of publicly owned serviced sites, would result in the development of 21 000 housing units at a cost of R119-million.

An essential-services programme providing water, sanitation and roads

for 17 376 households at a cost of R114-million would start soon.

The province's rapid land development programme aimed to provide 18 720 serviced sites at a cost of R137-million this year.

A total of R50-million had been set aside for inner-city development over a three-year period. The inner-city programme would rejuvenate existing residential buildings and convert old offices and warehouses into residential units, while an institutional subsidy programme would provide "transitional housing" for the home-

less. The setting up of 12 housing support centres had also been approved.

Mofokeng said the province had allocated another R55-million to the housing budget for special projects. This, if combined with private sector finance, would see a further 3 000 houses built in two years.

The overall budget for special housing projects was R442-million and would deliver 61 146 houses. The repair of houses damaged in political violence in Katorus, Alexandra, Dobsonville, Meadowlands, Sebokeng and Boipatong would be completed at the

end of 1996 at a cost of R13,63-million.

Contracts to build 10,000 houses on state-owned sites had been given to small, independent builders.

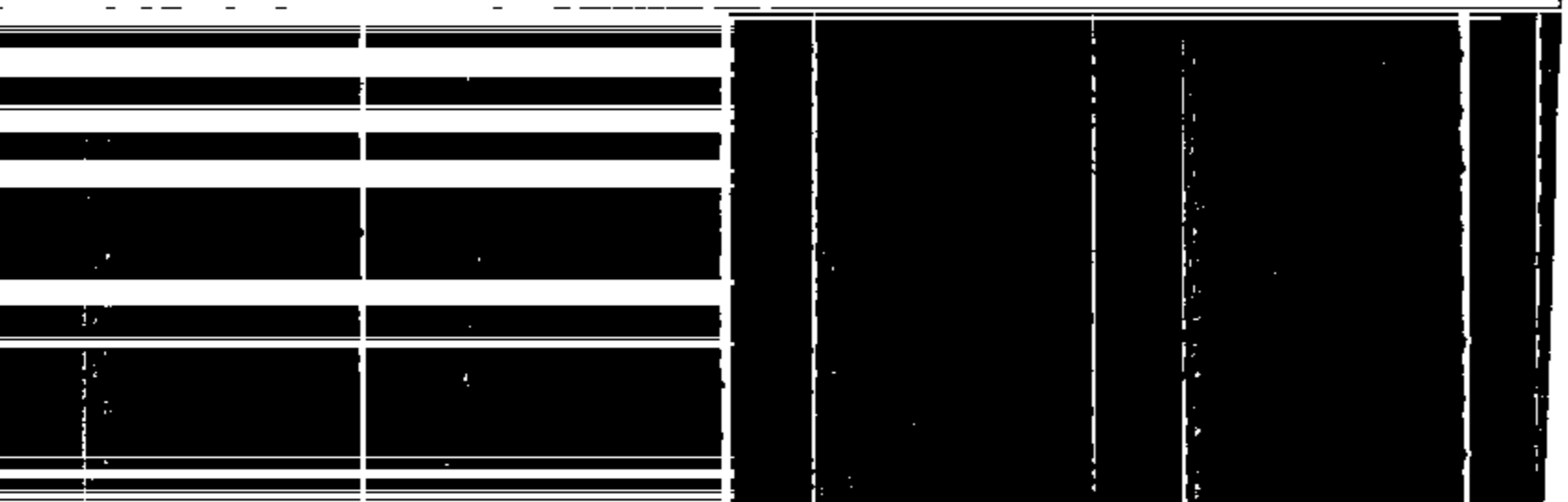
Six of these houses had been completed on Alexandra's Far East Bank and another 172 would go up in the next five months.

Mofokeng said 41 provincial projects totalling R86,9-million for the upgrading of infrastructure, including the extension and refurbishing of municipal services, had been approved by the now-defunct national RDP administration for funding.

The provincial housing department was providing subsidies, using savings and housing credit, rationalising where possible and releasing land for housing development in a coordinated and integrated way.

"This provides for a range of options and opportunities for homeless people to gain access to land and services on a fast-track basis. It also requires local authorities to take primary responsibility for establishing housing needs by compiling waiting lists," he said.

Hostels were also being upgraded



# Delivery of houses picking up, with Gauteng to the fore

By **KARIN SCHIMKE**  
Gauteng Reporter

Gauteng is leading the way in housing the homeless and has spent more money under new subsidy schemes than any of the other provinces, Housing Minister Sankie Mthembu-Nkondo said on Friday.

The Western Cape had also spent a large amount of money on housing, but most of this had been spent in terms of the housing schemes of the previous government. This was cause for great concern, said Mthembu-Nkondo, and her ministry was addressing the issue with the housing department of that province.

She said analyses of housing expenditure showed that houses were being delivered increasingly rapidly and that March had seen the delivery at its highest-ever figure of 7 046 for the whole country.

"The average monthly delivery in respect of project-linked subsidies increased from a monthly average of 490 from March to August last year to a monthly average of 3 227 for September to March this year."

She said her ministry was often accused of not producing but it had become obvious to her that people did not understand the process of building houses, which led them to believe delivery was not taking place. This was particularly true in Gauteng.

"When one considers housing issues, you must not relate to one door, two windows and four corners of a structure. From the point of allocating a subsidy to the point of putting up a structure is a long process."

It was high time for people to become aware that "things are happening in housing", and to stop making the assumption that because they did not see houses, none were being built.

"It is clear that there is a marked increase in delivery, which augurs well for the future," Mthembu-Nkondo said.

*Star 13/5/96*



# Greater Jo'burg faces huge rate

Proposed uniform rating policy will lead to some Sandton residents paying 214% more

BY ANNA COX AND LARA SMITH

Massive increases in municipal services and rates - up to 214% in Sandton - are looming for Greater Johannesburg residents in the 1996-97 budget.

This has emerged after a new uniform rating policy was proposed by the Greater Johannesburg Transitional Metropolitan Council (GTMC).

The proposals have elicited shocked reactions from ratepayer organisations in the city's wealthier northern suburbs, who say they do not see why they should be asked to supplement the incomes of other areas.

In an attempt to implement a standard rating throughout Greater Johannesburg, the GTMC has proposed that substructures adjust their property values and rating formulas to a uniform basis.

If the proposal is accepted, Sandton's rates will rocket by 214%, Randburg residents will fork out an additional 53%, while Johannesburg residents will have 17.6% added to their bills.

However, the proposal will also lead to a drop in rates, with areas like Emmantonia, Lenasia and Regentpark qualifying for de-

creases of 51.9%, 22.9% and 18.6% respectively.

The increases will be debated by Johannesburg's substructures within the next few weeks, in time for the GTMC budget in June.

Sandton rates would be increased so dramatically because, while the area's property values have always been relatively higher than in other substructures (municipalities), the rates as a percentage of the land value of property were lower, a GTMC spokesman said.

In addition, certain municipalities have in the past accumulated surpluses and it is now proposed that these be paid over to the GTMC for redistribution to previously disadvantaged communities on the basis of suitable business plans presented to the GTMC.

The Democratic Party has already indicated it will strongly oppose the increases and has appointed a task team comprising financial experts to urgently review the proposals and recommend alternative methods.

Eastern Metropolitan Substructure councillor Craig Stephens said "This will be a bitter pill for Sandton residents to swallow. Sandton, for the year 1996-97

Thursday May 16 1996

Huge rates increases (127)

From Page 1  
Now 16/5/96  
is expected to have a surplus of some R68-million due to efficient management and service payments. "On the one hand, we are now proposing to give over our surplus to the TMC and, on the other hand, residents will be asked to pay huge increases I foresee many problems such as rates boycotts."

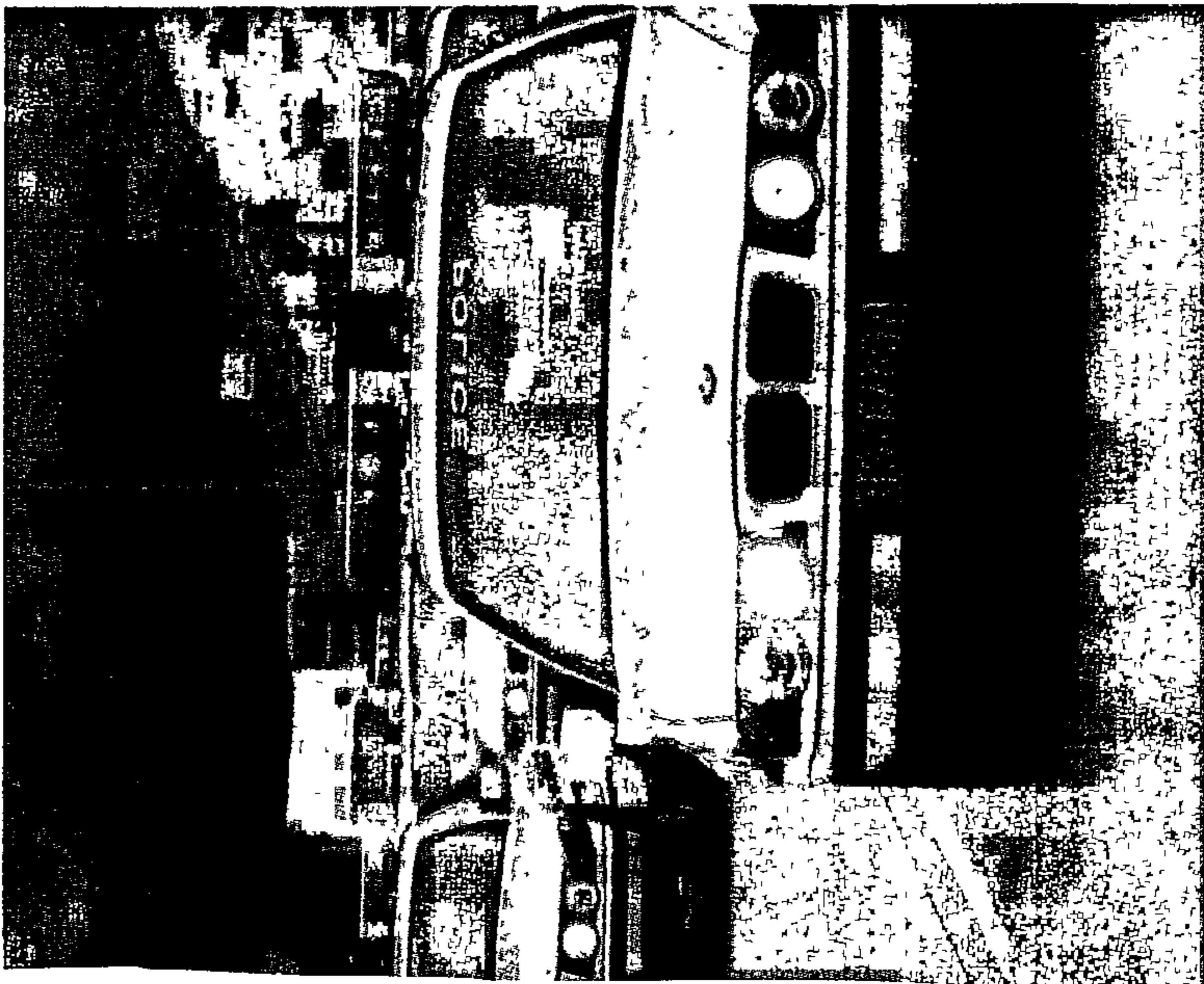
Ratepayers in the affected areas condemned the proposed increases - especially Sandton residents, who labelled it "totally unacceptable" and "unfair".

Wendywood Ratepayers' Association chairman Joe Mendes said residents in the area were concerned about deteriorating standards of municipal services. "We're not getting our money's worth. Obviously we're very strongly opposed to paying even higher rates, taking into consideration the current decline in standards," he said.

This was echoed by Woodmead and Khyber Rock Ratepayers' Association chairman Nick Thom. Any funds derived from such a sharp increase in rates would have to be utilised in his own suburb, he felt, and not to subsidise other areas.

Rate increases

Star 16/5/96 (127)



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# Gauteng starts housing project

(127) Saweran 17/5/96

By Joshua Raboroko

A MULTI-MILLION rand housing plan by the Gauteng provincial government and the private sector is to be kickstarted on Monday in an attempt to reduce the housing backlog of more than 500 000 units in the province.

Gauteng MEC for housing Mr Dan Mofokeng said yesterday that a joint venture with giant construction company Stocks and Stocks, to build homes – the first 70 homes costing R65 000 each – will be launched in Rookop on the East Rand.

He said a strategy which included making land available to the homeless was in place to kickstart housing delivery in the province amid fears that land invasions could sink these plans.

More than 40 000 families entered the housing market annually. Mofokeng said his department has to deliver about 90 000 homes a year over a 10-year period in an attempt to reduce the backlog.

The department with a fund of R800 million for 1996, plans to improve the living conditions of shack-dwellers in

the province starting with the supply of services to 25 000 households this year to speed up delivery.

Roads, waterborne sewerage for 17 376 households are to be provided for squatter camps in four areas in the province at a cost of R114 million.

The province has approved 98 272 subsidies valued at R1,024 billion and special pilot projects. This includes the development of publicly owned services sites which will result in the development of 21 000 housing units costing R119 million.

A total of R50 million has been set aside for inner-city development over a three-year period. The inner-city programme will renovate existing buildings and convert old offices and warehouses for residential purposes.

Mofokeng said the province had allocated another R55 million to the housing budget for special projects. Thus, when combined with private sector finance, would see a further 5 000 houses built in two years.

The overall budget for special projects was R442 million and would deliver 61 146 houses. Hostels were also being upgraded.



Sarah and Mbulelo Mbeki, left, were among the first to receive keys to new homes at the Rooikop housing project near Germiston on the East Rand. Provincial housing and land MEC Dan Mofokeng, right, launched the project officially yesterday

Picture GARTHLUMLEY

# East Rand housing project launched

(127) BD 21/5/96

Mduduzi ka Harvey

GAUTENG housing and land MEC Dan Mofokeng officially launched part of an R800m initiative to address the 500 000 housing backlog in the province, at a new housing complex in the East Rand which is expected to provide 4 500 houses

The finances for the project and 46 others provincially were made available to Mofokeng's department after a decision earlier this year to cut the budgets of all other provincial ministries by 3%, to cater for the growing housing needs of the province

The East Rand project — known as the Rooikop housing project — is to be built in phases at a cost of about R34m and is part of a joint partnership set up between a group of small emerging local contractors and Stocks & Stocks

The contractors have been employed on the project, with a 900-strong work force, while Stocks & Stocks would help with logistics, supervision and training

Mofokeng said delivery of houses during the past two years had been hindered by the lack of end user finances and having to deal with problems associated with project management, monitoring and implementation

To hasten delivery from the building of five houses a day at the East Rand and other projects, Mofokeng's department had lobbied government for additional funding and had adopted a hands on approach by negotiating directly with developers at sites

To date, 5 000 houses had been built in the province, more than 100 of those in the Katorus area in the East Rand

Thirty of the East Rand houses were in the initial stages of handover and another 50 almost ready, while another 70 houses were under construction on this subsidy-linked project

Mofokeng said the province's housing backlog was a challenge great enough for both public and private sector, and that it cut both ways in that it brought the question of addressing historical imbalances to the fore while also highlighting the urgency of addressing pressing needs of an ever growing urban population. This growth had been stimulated by the industrial and commercial activity in the province

He said that central to the new housing building programme was empowerment of previously disadvantaged communities — injecting more resources to these communities and capacity building by encouraging

partnerships with the business community.

Homes for Gauteng MD Alex Leonsins, whose residential development company is responsible for implementing provincial housing projects, said these achievements had been made in the past five months of prerequisites such as staged payments of subsidies, builders' warranties and the mortgage indemnity fund

He said although selling of houses had been hampered by affordability constraints 20 houses were being sold every week, and if these sales levels were maintained the company would be in a position to deliver 1 000 homes by the end of the year

A variety of homes ranging from 31m<sup>2</sup> extendible home starting at more than R42 000 to a 57m<sup>2</sup> home with a price tag of R72 915 are available. The price included the cost of the land as well as an established township infrastructure including roads, street lights and legal fees

A home can be acquired for as little as R450 a month and in some cases, depending on an individual's subsidy qualification, a deposit may not be required

To date, 60 000 subsidies had been approved by the province to facilitate speedy housing delivery

# Baralink project a job and housing provider

Mduduzi ka Harvey

THE Baralink Development Framework, aimed at attracting investment to the south of Johannesburg and at connecting Soweto to the CBD, was expected to create 80 000 new jobs and provide 35 000 houses in the next 25 years, the city council's strategic executive for metropolitan planning, urbanisation and environment Tshepiso Mashinini said.

The project forms part of a larger R8,7m four cities RDP initiative to develop the Wetton-Lansdowne road corridor in Cape Town, the Mabopane-Pretoria-Centurion corridor in Pretoria and the Warwick Avenue Development node in Durban.

Mashinini said R4,2m had been allocated from these funds for Gauteng last year and through a process of intensive community involvement a set of guiding principles, images and policy suggestions had been made for a development vision for the area.

Outstanding issues which were expected to be finalised in the next 12 months included bulk service infrastructure capacity, the establishment of transport and rail networks, an environmental and socioeconomic impact

assessment and the formulation of a development plan.

In addition funding for capital expenditure would also be lobbied for at national, provincial and local government level for the implementation of the project and the private sector would be asked to invest.

City council management committee planning, urbanisation and environment chairman Lindsay Bremner said the framework would set out at empowering communities by restructuring the urban form and integrating various land uses, so that jobs and social facilities were accessible within five minutes walking distance of where people lived and those without access to private transport could experience true city life.

Although time frames for the studies would vary, it was expected they would be completed within one year. In order to expedite the process, a structure consisting of a co-ordination committee, made up of councillors from the metropolitan council and the Soweto and Randburg councils, a development forum consisting of a range of community leaders and a technical task team to initiate and co-ordinate technical investigative studies, would be set up.

BD 28/5/96

City Council

# Warning to pay up or sit in dark and go thirsty

Substructure comes up with new idea for payment of arrears and a stern threat to those who won't

By NIKKI WHITFIELD

The Southern Johannesburg Metropolitan Substructure is working around the clock to set up pay-points and to inform more than 87:000 residents of its ultimatum to pay their bills or face a bleak winter without water or electricity

In an all-out effort to get ratepayers back on the paying track, the SJMSS is negotiating with First National Bank to allow residents to pay their monthly fees at any branch of the bank

"There were problems with pay-points in the past, particularly in areas of former black local authorities," said SJMSS chairman Prema Naidoo "There weren't enough, and people often had to stand in long queues. However, we are in the process of arranging with FNB for people to be allowed to pay their bills"

The SJMSS has embarked on a massive drive to rein in defaulters in a bid to retrieve the staggering R300-million outstanding in unpaid services bills. However, many non-payers "expected to be granted a second amnesty and have their arrears written off", Naidoo said

"Since (President Nelson) Mandela and (Deputy President FW) De Klerk cancelled arrears in 1994, many people who had been paying their bills suddenly stopped, thinking a similar thing would happen again"

In the SJMSS - which encompasses parts of Soweto, Ennerdale, Eldorado Park, Orange Farm, Lenasia and the Johannesburg CBD - 87 716 consumers are not paying for services such as electricity, water, sewerage and

rates. However, Naidoo said one of the most encouraging areas was Soweto, where payments had crept up from having a virtual zero number of bill-payers in 1994 to a climbing 22%

Now, though, all defaulters will be receiving pamphlets with their monthly bills proclaiming the following: Make arrangements to pay off your arrears and meet your monthly bills or you could find yourself in darkness and without water in July

"I know what people are going to say - how can you do this in the middle of winter - but

“  
There is  
never a  
right time  
for this  
”

there is never a right time for something like this," said Naidoo

People in arrears could arrange to pay off their debt in an agreement similar to a hire purchase arrangement, he said

"They can spread repayments over 60 months. Their current accounts they must pay on time. And in terms of the law, we could seize possessions if people refuse to comply

"People can't complain too much - we are giving them adequate warning. They must realise that if they want to get services, they have to pay for them," Naidoo added

Bonile Ngqiyaza

THE Gauteng government yesterday donated R50m to the Protea Glen housing project in Soweto to help kickstart community integration and small business in the area.

Premier Tokyo Sexwale handed over the cheque at a function organised jointly by developer Township Realtors and local government Township Realtors has built 5 000 houses since January 1991.

Sapa reports that Alf Levin of Township Realtors said sport facilities and a shopping centre, as well as numerous other services had been planned in an attempt to create jobs.

The development of Protea Glen commenced in November 1990 when

## Govt donates R50m for Soweto housing

(127) B04/6/96

the first services were installed. Levin said more than 2 000 jobs had been created in all the industries involved in the production of housing in Protea Glen.

"Unfortunately, this area is still seen by insurance companies and industrial developers as a high risk for their money and until they change their views, it will be difficult to draw any industrial development to this area."

In his address, Sexwale urged the Reserve Bank to manage the rand cautiously as this directly related to housing and employment

"The issue here is jobs. Jobs are the key to unlocking housing, transport and basic health care."

Phase 2 of the Protea Glen housing project — which, it is hoped, would build 4 000 housing units — was an example of co-operation between people who cared about the quality of their lives, he said.

Houses in Protea Glen cost upward of R65 000 in an all-inclusive package.

Developer Pat Culligan is building between 65 to 70 houses a month and has long-term plans to build another 20 000.

# Single waiting list for houses

(127)

By KAREN SCHMKE

Gauteng Reporter

Nov 5/6/96

Gauteng would have a single consolidated housing waiting list by mid-September, which should eliminate the exploitation of homeless people by "conmen", housing and land affairs MEC Dan Mofokeng said yesterday.

"It is important to establish a legitimate and authentic process that will result in the homeless knowing who is responsible for providing houses. In this way we can deal with those people getting rich from 'selling' land that does not belong to them," said Mofokeng.

In this process, which is set to start on June 18, local authorities in Gauteng will draw up lists of

## Records will prevent cheating

people needing homes Applicants would have to fulfil certain criteria: their monthly household income must be no more than R3 500, they must be married or be able to prove that they are cohabiting; and they must be South African citizens or hold permanent residence status.

Mofokeng said priority would be given to low-income earners, single mothers, the elderly and people living in communities which lacked essential services and infrastructure.

He said people who already had their names on lists needed to re-register "for safety's sake"

lend their support to green issues

# Gauteng to list all those now waiting for houses

Ingrid Salgado

BN 5/6/96

(127)

THE Gauteng government would create a comprehensive waiting list of residents needing houses in the province, in order to determine the extent of the housing backlog, provincial housing and land affairs MEC Dan Mofokeng said yesterday.

The list would be managed by local authorities. It would prioritise women, single parents, the elderly, those who lacked security of tenure in their current accommodation, people in communities without essential services and infrastructure and names that appeared on existing waiting lists.

Mofokeng said the province-wide list — a first for Gauteng — would prevent queue-jumping and help co-ordinate ranking criteria among different local authorities.

Those whose names appeared on the list would receive priority with housing subsidy allocations.

Applicants should meet the requirements for a housing subsidy if they were to appear on the list. This included that monthly household income not exceed R3 500 and that applicants be

married, prove that they were co-habiting or prove they had dependants.

Local authorities were able to add criteria to account for differing local conditions based on family and social circumstances, community cohesiveness, the lack of basic services and dangerous living conditions.

The housing backlog in Gauteng was estimated to be 500 000.

Land invasion of public and private land and the thousands of families living in backyard shacks had placed "enormous pressure" on the provincial government. The new waiting list would lead to proper planning and prioritisation in government's bid to build low-cost and affordable houses.

Housing and local government standing committee chairman Nomvula Mokonyane said yesterday that constraints in housing delivery — the lack of bridging finance, withdrawal of developers and low affordability levels — were being addressed.

Positive developments included delivery of more than 50 000 houses, nearly 10 000 sites under the rapid land delivery programme and 26 000 serviced sites.



# Hostel inmates shiver after electricity cutoff

Residents, longing for the days of coal stoves, struggle to prepare meals and do washing (127)  
after council switches off power following tenants' refusal to pay 160% rent increase *Star 7/16/96*

By **HOPWELL RADEBE**  
City Reporter

**V**osloorus hostel resident Zodwa Mthetwa and her two-month-old daughter Min'ehle sat outside her room, warming themselves in the winter sun

Min'ehle means "a wonderful day" but, except for the beauty of her child, there was nothing wonderful for Mthetwa yesterday

The Greater Boksburg Council switched off electricity in Vosloorus's Sotho and Zulu hostels at 1am on Wednesday, leaving thousands shivering in the winter cold

"I am afraid our children will catch flu this winter. They are too young to be treated like this," Mthetwa said

Yesterday most residents were preoccupied with finding other means of preparing their meals. Those with refrigerators were

worried about their perishables. Some truckshop owners were organising portable generators and others were illegally wiring up to the nearest electric pylon to save rotting stock such as meat and milk.

The hostels, usually vibrant and echoing with mbaqanga music, were subdued.

Mthetwa is one of 700 inmates in the Sotho hostel who have regularly paid their R20 for services

On Tuesday, however, the residents refused to comply with new rent conditions set by the council, which wants each tenant to register anew and pay an increased monthly rent of R55. Residents paid only their usual R20.

Mthetwa says that washing nappies with cold water is a nightmare. Her neighbour, Thulisile Sithole, who has a four-month-old daughter named Ngobile, longs for the days of coal

stoves

The council replaced the coal stoves with electric ones soon after renovations at the hostels, and residents are now forbidden to buy coal stoves.

Vosloorus Hostel Association leader Staff Khumalo said residents were angry with the council for using helicopters to drop notices last Friday. They wondered why council authorities treated them like vicious animals, he said.

Council executive committee chairman Vusi Sikhakhane said the council would be evaluating the situation at the hostels daily. Its main concern was that residents must register and sign an undertaking to pay the increased rent.

But Khumalo countered: "We want to pay but we do not find logic in raising the rent by 160% and expecting residents to take that lying down." He said the council has a list of



MOTLHALEHI MAHLABE

**Finding an alternative ..** Nomfundo Hlatshwayo (20) prepares candles from floor polish and paraffin at the Vosloorus hostel. tenants and their room numbers on computer without forcing residents to sign contracts

# Councillors lead the way in paying bills

10/6/96  
(127)

Community leaders find that setting an example is starting to work in Katorus wards

**By HOPEWELL RADEBE**  
City Reporter

Councillors in the Greater Boksburg Local Council, embarrassed by the culture of non-payment in Vosloorus on the East Rand, have started leading residents to local administration offices to pay for their services

The Katlehong, Tokoza and Vosloorus area (Katorus) has been plagued by a culture of non-payment and Vosloorus alone has a record of only 18% payment in April - double January's figure of 9%

Councillors involved in the Vosloorus campaign are hoping for dramatic increase in the payments and are aiming for a 60% level by the end of July

Executive committee chairman Vusi Sikhakhane and his ANC colleagues have started holding block meetings during the week before organising marches to municipal offices at the weekend

It is there where community leaders pay for their services under the watchful eye of residents, who are then urged to follow suit

Sikhakhane became the first councillor in the area to lead about 200 residents - most of whom were his immediate neighbours living in the ward which

elected him to office - to pay for their services

After paying his own bill, Sikhakhane urged other residents to join him - and some did

"It's the only way to get people paying. We have to lead by example," he said, adding that his fellow councillors had also pledged to organise their respective wards next month and take people to the administration of-

## Residents are urged to follow suit

fices and get them to line up to pay their bills

"We (councillors) are going to send notices every month to our electorate and go to all sections of the township holding meetings to give people an opportunity to question our role in the council while we also activate their support for service payment

"People should not expect us to go out there and do miracles without the financial muscle," he said, adding that residents had to realise that non-payment for services would bankrupt local government administration structures and lead to the collapse of local government

# Phase one of Far East Bank housing project launched

(127) 10/6/96  
Mduduzi ka Harvey

WORK has begun on more than 4 000 houses to be built on the Far East Bank near Alexandra by the Gauteng housing and land affairs department in conjunction with Johannesburg's eastern metropolitan substructure.

The development, which was expected to cost R10m in the first phase, will consist of three phases. The first phase will see 918 homes being built for Alexandra residents by the end of July. The future occupants have already paid the R250 deposit for the houses.

The department said the construction work for the project would be the sole responsibility of emerging and small construction companies in Alexandra. Government will help train the construction workers and will also help the companies who qualified for subsidies with finance.

Phase two of the plan will see the construction of 1 187 units. The final phase will see the construction of 3 510 homes in total.

Budget estimates for the first phase were R6 885 000 from Independent Development Trust cof-

fers and R4 771 500 from the Provincial Housing Board.

The budgets for the last two phases were in the pipeline as design work had not been completed. However, the department has about R10m as revolving funds for the area, which will be used as bridging finance.

The department said it was important to note that the development of the area had been discussed with all stakeholders, which included the Alexandra Civic Association, the Alexandra Land and Property Owners Association and the Far East Bank Civic Association, who have been working in close co-operation with the housing department.

Substructure executive committee chairman Nkele Ntingane said the development followed the successful relocation of the residents who had illegally invaded land in the area to Diepsloot, Randburg. The council would remain firm on its position that the large group of squatters who had invaded the camp at the last minute and those who had arrived with fraudulent registration cards would not be accommodated.

## Prototype housing project launched

(127)

CITY REPORTER

Stow 11/6/96

Gauteng Housing MEC Dan Mofokeng yesterday launched a project aimed at providing accommodation for about 800 families in the Germiston area

The Graceland project, a joint-Gauteng government, community and private sector venture, is a newly built prototype suburb which is self-sufficient, with security, quality basic services and social development projects

The suburb has a combined primary and high school which accommodates more than 600 children. There is a library that is also equipped with adult education programme facilities

The local government is expected to supply and pay for staff for the already fully equipped clinic

Provision has been made for shops for local entrepreneurs

Businesses in the area have donated funds for the construction of a community police station, and a neighbourhood watch has already been launched

Jimmy Hughes, an engineering project director for Murray & Roberts, who were among the developers involved in the project, urged the provincial government to reduce the bureaucracy surrounding the release of land

He said it took at least 20 months for land to be proclaimed as residential sites, and many more for housing plans to be passed. Buyers then paid for bank, municipal and legal paperwork to get the house registered.

Hughes added: "If we remove bureaucracy and excessive paperwork, housing would be at least 10 to 15% cheaper than what it is at present"

## Romanian walks over to UK to watch Euro '96

Newcastle - Double disaster awaited Constantin Ciuka at the end of his 4 000 km walk from Romania to watch Euro 96.

After watching his heroes lose 1-0 to France, he suffered another blow when he found his tent and other gear had been stolen from his campsite.

But Ciuka, called "the globe-trotter" and well known in Romania for walking to sports events, was supplied with replacement equipment by a local firm.

"I like to walk everywhere I can I wish I could have swum the English Channel," he said - Reuters

## Now 240 000 township householders must pay rates

By **LORNA ZOKUFA**  
City Reporter

Up to 240 000 households in Soweto, Dobsonville, Alexandra and Diepmeadow will be liable for rates when their properties are valued for the first time on July 1.

Previously, valuation of property was applied only in the former Johannesburg, Randburg and Sandton administrations, but now the Greater Johannesburg Transitional Metropolitan Council will introduce uniform valuation rolls across the metropole.

The valuation rolls are complete lists of rateable properties in

Greater Johannesburg. The upcoming rolls will determine the market value of properties as of January 2 this year.

"Rates form an important part of the council's income, and the uniform valuation rolls will mean that we will receive more rates, especially from the 200 000 to 240 000 property owners who did not pay rates because of the apartheid era," said Eugene Robson, chairman of the council's budget and finance committee.

Robson said a total of 500 000 properties would be valued throughout Greater Johannesburg and provisional valuation

rolls would be open for public inspection from June 26. During this time, any property owner may lodge an objection against the value of their property as recorded in the provisional valuation roll.

"All this has been developed entirely in step with the spirit of our constitution and the Local Authorities Rating Ordinance, and one of the main purposes of this ordinance is to ensure that there is an equitable distribution of the rates burden," Robson added.

In a bid to bring the public on board, the council and its four

substructures will hold 17 public meetings on the entire valuation process.

Although the valuations will be conducted by an independent board, Robson said the council and its substructures were the first metropole in South Africa to apply uniform valuation rolls that "cut across previous apartheid-created boundaries".

The Valuation Board is expected to comprise an advocate, an attorney, a retired magistrate, and two or more members who, in the premier's opinion, have sufficient knowledge and experience of the valuation of immovable property

## ANC in 'get clearance first' TRC storm

By **PATRICK BULGER,**  
**JOVIAL RANTAO AND**  
**MORIELI MAKHANYA**

Cape Town - The ANC is at the centre of a political storm over its insistence that members clear their Truth and Reconciliation Commission submissions with the party hierarchy before presenting them.

TRC chairman Archbishop Desmond Tutu said the commission was concerned by reports the ANC was to ask its members to consult the party first.

"We are particularly concerned that the publicity around the matter might discourage ANC

members from approaching the commission without prior clearance from the party. We find it impossible to believe that a political party would seek to muzzle its rank-and-file members by vetting their statements before they approach the commission, and we intend seeking clarification on the ANC's position," Tutu said.

He urged all parties to encourage their members to approach the commission and emphasised that it was an independent institution. "Our doors are open to all."

At least one truth commissioner, Dumisa Ntsebeza, has separately criticised the decision, say-

ing it would give him a dim view of what individual members had to say about their actions.

Water Affairs and Forestry Minister Kader Asmal, who is chairman of the ANC's disciplinary committee, told a media briefing that he intended going before the commission.

"I will go there myself, but shall share my testimony and submission with the ANC. That is my obligation," Asmal said.

Deputy Environmental Affairs and Tourism Minister Bantu Holomisa said the suggestion that people should get clearance from the ANC gave the impression that they wanted to control the system

### POLITICAL STAFF AND SAPA

Deputy Environment Minister Bantu Holomisa has thrown down the gauntlet to the ANC by refusing to appear before the organisation's disciplinary committee, where he was to account for his remarks about Public Enterprises Minister Stella Sigcau to the Truth Commission.

Holomisa said the disciplinary committee and the ANC leadership would by noon today receive his formal objections to the disciplinary inquiry. "I will state the reasons why I do not want to



Holomisa.

## Holomisa throws down the gauntlet

appear before the disciplinary committee. It will then be up to them to tell the people what those reasons are," he said.

He said he had received a copy of the procedure he would face from the party's national disciplinary committee chairman Prof Kader Asmal and that it was clear the charges would relate to remarks he had made about Sigcau at the commission.

Earlier, Asmal told a press briefing that the ANC had yet to prepare its case against Holomisa and that the inquiry might take place in only two months' time.

# Sowetans to fork out higher rates

*Sowetan 14/6/96*  
*(127)*

GJTMCM plans to increase township rates to match those of formerly white areas

By Joshua Raboroko

MORE than 240 000 residents of Soweto, Dobsonville, Meadowlands and Alexandra Township will be expected to pay the same rates as people in the formerly white suburbs after their township homes have been evaluated for the first time on July 1

The Greater Johannesburg Transitional Metropolitan Council announced yesterday that it will introduce a uniform property valuation roll for its four substructures as part of initiatives to create a single tax base for the city.

GJTMCM's budgets and finance head Mr Eugene Robson said the valuation would bring the black townships' rates in line with those of Johannesburg, Randburg, Sandton and Roodepoort.

The valuation rolls are complete lists of taxable properties in Greater Johannesburg. The upcoming rolls will determine the market value of properties as of January this year.

Robson said rates formed an important part of the council's income, and the uniform valuation rolls would mean that the

council would receive more rates, especially from the 200 000 to 240 000 households who did not pay rates during the apartheid era.

He said a total of 500 000 properties would be valued throughout the council's jurisdiction, and provincial valuation rolls would be open for public inspection.

The roll would also bolster the R950 million in council revenue expected from assessment rates for the 1995/96 year. Income projections are based on payments on about 270 000 properties and land valued at R27,5 billion.

Residents would be informed how rates revenue was used, while services would be upgraded so that residents understood reasons for payment.

The black areas are owing millions of rands in essential services to local authorities because of the boycotts which started in the 1980s.

Sources say the council was forced to bring uniformity to the payment of rates because of complaints by whites of unfair payment for the same services, such as water, refuse removal and electricity.

# Delivery scheme to boost township payments

By LORNA ZOKUFA  
City Reporter

Township residents throughout Greater Johannesburg are set to become involved in the delivery of municipal accounts in an effort to improve payment levels in the metropole

With payment levels varying from area to area, the Masakhane campaign in Greater Johannesburg plans to focus on the 240 000 households which will be valued for the first time on July 1

Payment levels in Soweto, Meadowlands and Diepkloof are currently at 23%, while Roodepoort is leading with a 100% payment level

Dassie Molemela, the head of the Masakhane campaign in the Greater Johannesburg Transitional Metropolitan Council (GJTMC), said they would involve the communities in these areas not only to improve payment for services, but also to encourage payment for rates

"Although there are mitigat-

ing factors why payments are low in some areas, people must also remember that there has been a drastic improvement in payment levels. At one stage, payment levels in the former black local authorities were 4%," Molemela said

Molemela said that with a new uniform valuation roll and the transfer of houses, more people would start paying for rates and services received

"It must be remembered that because valuation of property

was only done in the former white local authorities, a lot of black people did not understand why they had to pay rates. Now that some of these people own houses and will be told what the value of their properties is, and how rates are calculated, I feel that they will pay their rates," Molemela added

Molemela said the account delivery scheme would help on a practical level, but would also create enthusiasm around the Masakhane campaign

(127)

(123)

STAN 17/6/96

# Demonstrators protest against threatened eviction of bond defaulters

BY SHIRLEY WOODGATE

About 400 demonstrators presented a memorandum to the Association of Mortgage Lenders (AML) in Harrison Street, Johannesburg, yesterday opposing the threatened eviction of bond defaulters

The demonstration was organ-

ised by the SA National Civics Organisation (Sanco), and police later used dogs to disperse about 20 picketers outside four banks on the corner of Bree and Rissik streets

Addressing bankers and Sanco members outside the AML offices, general secretary of

Sanco's Johannesburg branch, Siphwe Thusi, said Saturday's arrest of more than 100 Sanco demonstrators outside the Roodepoort home of a Council of SA Bankers (Cosab) official was a clear indication the banks had started using the state machinery against the organisation. The

AML is a division of Cosab

The protesters were released until next week and issued with summonses to pay fines of R100 each

Cosab deputy general manager Stuart Grobler agreed to hand over the memorandum to AML members

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Staw 19/6/96



# Gauteng earmarks 30 000 sites for homeless people

(127) Star 22/6/96

By WILLIAM-MERVIN GUMEDE

The Gauteng government has identified 30 000 sites to accommodate the homeless and so prevent land invasions, Development and Planning MEC Sicelo Shiceka said yesterday.

The sites - part of a rapid land release programme - could not be named at this stage for fear of possible invasions, he said. The sites would be launched at the end of next month. Reception areas would be established to ensure that only people who qualified were accommodated.

"The sites, which are fully serviced, are situated across Gauteng and more than 19 000 subsidies have already been approved," Shiceka said.

The Land Affairs Department funded the projects.

Meanwhile, Housing Minister Sankie Mthembu-Nkondo has warned that not paying for services and bonds would not be tolerated, saying no payment equalled no houses.

"The law will take its course," she said in her housing budget speech this week.

She unveiled a R6,5-billion injection to speed up housing delivery, saying the Government would intervene directly in the low-cost housing market.

Its three-year plan contained a R525-million package for joint ventures with the private sector on high-density housing such as flats, R200 million to upgrade hostels and the approval of an extra 200 000 subsidies.

"These programmes of high levels of delivery at lower margins for developers will rest on the fundamental principle that people must adhere to agreements," Mthembu-Nkondo said.

The programme would draw more than half its funding from the private sector. The package amounted to R3,5-billion in state



**MTHEMBU-NKONDO:** No payment equals no housing

funds, excluding the R4,6-billion the Housing Ministry had to release this year.

"It addresses normalisation of the housing market, facilitation of new lending, provision of consumer protection, mechanisms to enhance bridging finance and working capital, and wholesale fund mobilisation," she said.

The proposals followed industry concerns that state intervention was needed to attract private sector support for low-cost housing. Banks have been reluctant to support the low-cost housing market, citing high risks and low returns.

Mthembu-Nkondo said "The private sector must meet its responsibilities by ensuring good building, prudent lending and providing consumer education."

The subsidies, on top of the 290 000 already in the market, would go mainly to Gauteng (nearly 49 000), Northern Province (more than 17 000), Kwa-Zulu Natal (39 000), Mpumalanga (10 600), Eastern Cape (more than 30 000), Northern Cape (3 600), Western Cape (22 000) and North West (14 000).

Banks had granted fewer than 18 000 home loans in the low-cost end of the market in the past year and would not meet the 50 000-loan target set for this month, the Mortgage Indemnity Fund (MIF) said.

The Housing Department was disappointed by the poor showing. Bank lending was a central tenet of the state's housing drive.

The Council of SA Banks blamed the loan shortfall on the lack of low-cost housing for banks to finance. Cosab housing chief Lance Edmunds said there had been fewer applications for home loans than expected. However, macro loans granted to upgrade properties would push up the number of loans advanced.

MIF managing director Nkululeko Sowazi said the latest figures to April indicated banks had advanced just 17 441 loans into the subsidy market, accounting for R667-million of the R1,6-billion advanced in areas covered by the fund.

The 50 000-loan target was an important pillar of housing delivery. Achieving it was a precondition for the building industry to continue participating in the builders' warranty mechanism which protected buyers against shoddy workmanship.

The Government had also seen the target as a test of the banking sector's commitment to provide housing to the masses. So far, only African Bank and Community Bank had entered the low-cost market with any enthusiasm.

The MIF had added about 90 development areas to its coverage. More than 128 000 housing units - 50 to 60% of which would require credit finance - were planned for next year.

"During the next 10 to 11 months there will be increasing opportunities to lend and we will be watching how the banks respond," Sowazi said.

# Illegal connections, high demand blamed for daily blackouts in Alex

Star 24/6/96

(127)

By ANNA COX

Alexandra residents are experiencing power cuts every night between 6 and 10pm and are complaining bitterly of not being able to cook, bath and get children's homework done

David Mphake said the power cuts had happened every night for the past four weeks and were causing great inconvenience to people who were unable to get on with daily living

"The electricity goes off when my wife and I get home from work, so we cannot cook, and most nights my children go to sleep without eating a proper meal," he said.

Eastern Metropolitan Sub-structure (EMSS) public relations officer Daleen van Wyk said the authorities were aware of the cuts and a R2-million programme to

upgrade the electricity infrastructure was in progress but not yet complete

She said illegal connections and a high demand during the winter months were causing the power to be cut off.

"We are taking action against the illegal connections, but once the upgrading is complete, things should improve vastly. Further provision has also been made on the 1996-97 operating estimates to continue with the upgrading programme," Van Wyk said.

A meeting to allow Alexandra residents to decide on increases in electricity charges will be held on Saturday

Residents will be asked to provide input on how proposed increases in electricity tariffs should be phased in.

A public meeting was held last month but although the commu-

nity agreed that tariffs should be increased, they asked for more time to consider how they should be implemented.

A number of options have been put to residents and published in a local newspaper. Residents who are unable to attend the meeting can vote for the option they prefer with a ballot paper outlining the options.

Concerns raised by the community regarding illegal connections, the non-payment by hostel residents and inadequate infrastructure will be discussed.

The EMSS is also planning an education programme for the community to address all issues related to the electricity supply

The planning of the programme was at an advanced stage and would be implemented towards the end of June, said Van Wyk.

Government -  
It said the ANC now  
paid positions in the legislature,  
bar those of whips and the chair-  
man of public accounts - a posi-  
tion the NP would use to fulfil its  
role as public watchdog

government -  
in which 3,5 million people are ex-  
pected to vote  
The raid, the second of its kind  
in four days, also unearthed an as-

## Sandton business rates upped by 300%

By ANNA COX

Sandton ratepayers face rates and services hikes of up to 108% for home owners and up to 200% for flat owners, with businesses being hardest hit by an increase of 300% in rates.

The increases were approved yesterday with the passing of the Eastern Metropolitan Substructure's budget. Sandton home owners will pay up to 108% more.

Property owners in the Johannesburg suburbs which now fall under the substructure fare increases of between 35% and 70%

Examples of increases facing home owners, dependent on property values, are: R431 to R643 for a property in Parkmore; R267 to R441 for a property in Wendywood; R711 to R1 066 for one in Riverclub, R740 to R865 for one in Sandringham, and R976 to R1 136 for one in Rosebank.

The substructure's budget was passed after a last-minute agreement yesterday got the DP on board. The party had claimed that the budget contravened legislation requiring the substructure to

► Randburg rates up

Page 3

► To Page 2

## Rates hike

► From Page 1

pay only an "equitable" portion of its R438,3-million budget surplus to the metropolitan council. It claimed that Sandton home owners were paying almost twice their required amount to the council. Eventually, there was agreement to allow the executive committees of the substructure and metropolitan council to negotiate the amount payable of the substructure's surplus.

There would also be a concerted effort to reduce the operating expenditure of both bodies, passing any savings on to the consumer through additional rebates.

Executive committee chairman Nkele Ntingane said: "In this process of redistribution, a particularly heavy burden in relation to the past devolves upon the ratepayers of Sandton"

Alexandra is set to receive R70-million, almost half the R149,8-million capital budget. The main expenditures are R20-million on a new community centre, R9-million on a new clinic, R4,5-million on upgrading housing, R7-million for recreational facilities and R11,6-million for maintenance work

Star 25/6/96

(127)

# Rates up by 18%-to-20% in Randburg

Star 25/6/96 (127)

By ANNA COX

Randburg residents face rates and services increases of about 18% while businesses in the substructure face increases of 20%, following the approval of the budget yesterday

Properties falling on the Johannesburg side of the Northern Metropolitan Substructure face an increase of between 35 and 70%, depending on property values

The 1996/97 budget was approved by all parties, except the Democratic Party, last night

The individual increases were 20% for water, 40% for sewage and 9% for non-domestic electricity

Examples of increases depending on property values include a Ferndale property rateable at R536,78 will now pay R638,32, a Randpark Ridge property goes up from R573,33 to R673,12 and one in Auckland Park from R444,83 to R609,76

In delivering the budget speech, executive committee chairman Pule

Buthelezi said properties in the metro had been evaluated, for the first time, on the basis of a uniform roll

"To ensure that the projected income is generated, the council should commit itself to providing an efficient service to communities and business to put in place a transparent and acceptable credit-control mechanism linked to improved pay-points, billing and metering systems

"Communication is vital and communities will be expected to meet their obligations to service providers," he said

Of the total budget, 26% had been set aside for capital programmes

Said Buthelezi: "One of the most critical tests the NMSS will have to pass is its ability to upgrade services in areas where such services are in a state of collapse or non-existent, while maintaining an acceptable level in others

"Our budget provides for

R207,3-million for upgrading and rehabilitation of essential infrastructure such as roads, bridges, water systems, housing, flats, hostels, health services, community centres and amenities

"A significant amount is allocated to Rapid Land Development to deal with the pressing need for access to land for residential, commercial and industrial development

"The balance of the budget is earmarked for the maintenance of infrastructure in areas where this was relatively an acceptable level of essential infrastructure"

The DP asked for an amendment calling for a ward-to-ward survey on the non-delivery in each ward

It also called for the NMSS surplus of R4,2 million, which was to have been paid over to the Greater Johannesburg Transitional Metropolitan Council, to be negotiated, saying it was not proportional with the other substructures

The amendment was rejected by the ANC and the NP

# Draft bill to resolve landlord-tenant disputes

Star 26/6/96 (127)

By **KARIN SCHIMKE**  
Gauteng Reporter

The Gauteng legislature is drafting a new bill to enable disputes between landlords and tenants to be resolved by a mediation board.

A draft document entitled "The Regulation of Landlord Tenant Relations" states that although legal avenues exist for landlords or tenants "to attempt to obtain justice," respective parties are often discouraged from

exploring these because they lack information and because of procedural complexities and expenses.

The dispute resolution board will screen wrangles to see if they can be resolved.

However, it will not try to replace the roles of the magistrates' or small claims courts.

The board is to be established within the department of housing and land affairs in the province and the MEC will have the power to set penalties for unfair practices

by landlords or tenants.

The penalties would probably include fines or paying compensation to aggrieved parties.

The housing MEC will also have to provide guidelines about the rights and obligations of landlords and tenants.

The housing and local government standing committee in the legislature is considering the draft legislation which is expected to be tabled in the house later this year.

# Residents to get summons

(127) Sowetan 26/6/96  
By Themba Sepotokele

SOWETO residents who are not paying the R63,84 for service charges, which has resulted in the local authority being R6 million in the red, will be issued with summons from July 1, *Sowetan* learnt yesterday

Mr Pat Nhlapo, a spokesman for the mayor, said thousands of residents were in arrears with payments for services charges, while there were those who had not paid since the Transitional Local Council was elected into office last year

Nhlapo said councillors who are in arrears would also be served with summons to pay up. The campaign to get residents to pay for services is non-discriminatory, he said

## Pensioners should pay

Responding to a demand by the African National Congress Veterans' League that the aged should be allowed to pay R20 for service charges and R25 for electricity consumption, Nhlapo said "Pensioners should pay the R63,84 for service charges as stipulated and agreed on by the Metropolitan Council, civic and political organisations last year"

He condemned the pensioners' stance, saying they were receiving a

monthly grant of R410 for social security. He said those who were paying R20 were automatically in arrears

"Pensioners are expected to pay the agreed amount because, on the other hand, municipal workers are also demanding a 25 percent wage increase," he said

Nhlapo said the council had arrived at R63,84 because it charged R33,06 for water, R17,10 for sewerage and R13,68 for refuse removal

However, unemployed people would be exempted from paying the service charges

"People who are unemployed should come forward and state their case so that they can be exempted from paying the service charges. Every case will be treated on its merits," Nhlapo said

Another council spokesman, Mr Lucky Dondolo, said debits and payments received during last month amounted to R6 million, against the total payments received of R1 million. This had left the council with a shortfall of R4 million

Eskom pricing manager Mr Hendrick Barnard said there was no way that Eskom could subsidise pensioners. This was the Government's responsibility. "Pensioners should all pay the standardised tariffs applicable," he said

# Service charges to go up

(127-2)  
Sowetan 26/6/96

By Joshua Raboroko

THOUSANDS of residents in the Greater Johannesburg metropolitan substructures - rich and poor - face major increases in service charges after the completion of valuation rolls next month

Already two metropolitan substructures - eastern and northern comprising Sandton, Alexandra Township and Randburg - have increased municipal rates and tariffs when they presented their budgets of R678,3 million and R554,08 million respectively yesterday

The southern and the western MSSs - comprising Soweto, Diepmeadow and Dobsonville - were still discussing their budgets by late last night.

However, sources have disclosed that they too will announce increases to be in line with all areas within the metropole

Payments in the Eastern MSS - the area embracing Selby in the south to Sandton in the north - will increase by up to R400 a month a property

Sandton ratepayers face rates and service hikes of up to 108 percent for homeowners and up to 200 percent for flat owners

People in the posh suburbs of Sandton and Bryanston will dig deeper into their pockets while hikes in the poor areas of Alexandra and Bertrams will range between R3,50 and R36 a month

Rates assessments in the substructure will increase from R2,65 to R6,45, water tariffs will rise by 20 percent or an average of R16 a month, while sewerage will go up by 40 percent or between R18 and R26 a month

Electricity charges are expected to go up in areas supplied directly by Eskom

# Sandton groups to take action over increases

By ANNA COX

Two major Sandton ratepayer groups - sectional title owners and business - have slammed the 1996-97 rates increases of 200 and 300% respectively and threatened to pursue the matter

The Sandton Residential Sectional Title Owners' Association is set to take legal action against the Eastern Metropolitan Substructure on the grounds that it wants the same assessment rate rebate as residential property

At the 1996-97 budget meeting on Monday, increases of up to 200% on sectional title properties and up to 300% on businesses were approved

At present the EMSS is offering rebates of 60% to residential property owners but only 35% to sectional title owners.

Chairman Reg Cartwright said his association had raised the issue of rebated assessment rates

even before the creation of the present metropolitan council and its substructures.

He said the association had decided to take legal advice and action on the issue of discriminatory assessment rates.

Sectional title owners were paying R2,23/sq m while residential was paying 80c. Sectional title owners were paying 7,06% of rates while occupying 3,82% of land, whereas residential property owners were paying

24,98% of the rates while occupying 37,49% of land.

"While sectional title land is 56% more expensive than residential land, 178% more rates are paid. This discrimination is not acceptable. We demand an equal rebate. We occupy less land, save the officials individual billing and require fewer services," Cartwright said.

"We noted that a local authorities ordinance was quoted with

regard to the valuation process

"In the document issued at the meeting, no mention is made of an ordinance regarding the rebate system attached to assessment rates

"As a peaceful and financially responsible community we fully appreciate that adequate municipal funds must be raised by the rate system," he said

"Our explanation of the legal authority authorising the present system has gone unanswered

"We believe that we are now justified in demanding the same assessment rate rebate as residential properties and group housing with immediate effect

"We are prepared to take this issue to the Constitutional Court if it is not corrected," said Cartwright

The Sandton Chamber of Commerce and Industry has described the 300% increase in business rates as "inequitable"

President Andrew Spalding said although it was understandable that Sandton and the EMSS had to subsidise other areas, there were areas within its own boundaries such as Alexandra and places in the inner city which badly needed the money

"It is often said that Sandton is privileged and has in the past paid lower rates, but on the other hand it has far fewer services than other areas, for example, there are few street lights,

few pavements and no bus service

"It is inequitable that we should be paying the same rates for fewer services," he said

Spalding said the increases would impact badly on the person in the street

"While businesses will be first hit, they will ultimately pass on their costs to the consumers, so it is they who will finally pay the cost of the increases"

**An equal rebate for sectional title sought**

**Issue may be taken to highest court**

(127) Star 26/6/96



# Jo'burg gets tough on rent defaulters

Ingrid Salgado

(127) BD 27/6/96  
THE Johannesburg metropolitan council is to take a hard line on people defaulting on rent and service charges to ensure the 100% payment levels it says are essential to the success of its R7,27bn budget, adopted yesterday.

Council executive committee chairman Collin Matjila said the crackdown could involve legal action against defaulters, including the attachment of property. He said the success of the Masakhane campaign, which aimed to encourage payments, was central to the success of the 1996/97 budget because of its income-driven nature.

The council was concentrating efforts on making billing, collection, management, service delivery and credit control systems more efficient.

Matjila said the southern metropolitan substructure — which included Soweto, where payment levels were stagnant at 33% — was starting a concerted communications strategy to popularise Masakhane.

See Page 5

# Urban renewal group confident of success in Johannesburg

(127) Star 1/7/96

Other cities in the world with worse problems managed to effect change

By ANNA COX

An urban renewal group appointed by the Johannesburg council has returned from an extensive international tour of the world's cities confident the Big Naartjie's decaying centre can be saved.

Jane Eagle, Greater Johannesburg Transitional Metropolitan Council (GJTMC) principal planner of urban strategies, said the city was not alone in its problems. Other cities in the world with worse problems had managed to bring about positive changes through their efforts, she said.

Eagle said a group of Inner City Development Forum (ICDF) members had recently visited the UK and the US, where they conducted study tours of cities which had also experienced urban decay.

Members came back confident the inner city could compete globally.

The ICDF is to compile a comprehensive costing report before the end of the year which will be presented to residents and the GJTMC for consideration.

The ICDF is a forum which consists of 21 different organisations, ranging from business and NGOs to the community, city councillors, political and religious leaders.

Said Eagle "A few years ago, Glasgow was known as the 'dog' of Europe but, through regeneration efforts, in 1994 it won the Cultural

City of Europe award."

In Manchester central government has promoted economic development to benefit the local community in upgrading and developing extensive housing units. Another success is lower Manhattan, where 1,5 million sq m of office space is vacant.

Councillor Parks Tau said it was obvious there was a need to develop an integrated city for social, cultural and recreational development, not only business.

"In developing Johannesburg all sectors of the population have to be catered for and this has to be done in partnership with local authorities, business, the community and a conscious effort must be made by all."

"The provincial and national governments have to play a role and offer incentives," he said.

Gauteng government director of development planning, environment and works, Rolf Dauskardt, said provincial government had an important role to play in revitalising not only the Johannesburg CBD but those of 51 other local authorities.

"It has been illustrated that it can be done," he said.

Central Business Partnership director Neil Fraser said the state of the CBD was not the fault of the present government but had been inherited from previous generations of councils.

**Need for integrated city obvious**

# Blitz on service boycotts

(124)

*Suspensions and evictions now face residents who refuse to pay their accounts*

AR 4-2/7/96

The Argus Correspondent

JOHANNESBURG - Residents refusing to pay for services could face harsh action by local authorities as the government and the South African National Civic Organisation (Sanco) adopt a get-tough stance

Johannesburg's Southern Metropolitan Substructure, which includes Soweto, has already launched a campaign in its area to pressure residents to start paying

Sanco president Mlungisi Hlongwane vows that his organisation will work with the government in evicting those who can afford to pay but refuse to do so

"We have been the key to rent boycotts in the past, now we can be the key to creating an environment of payment," he said

Sanco, with local communities, would identify non-paying areas and "insist on them paying"

His organisation would work alongside government in evicting those who had the means but "deliberately and arrogantly refuse to pay for services"

This development comes hard on the heels of the government's hand-over of ultimate control of the Masakhane campaign to local authorities last week, a step that could soon see the strategy change from publicity project to pressure group

And, in what could be the acid test for this new stance, Johannesburg's Southern Metropolitan Substructure - which includes areas traditionally at the centre of rent boycotts, such as Soweto, Emmerdale and Lena-

sta - yesterday launched its own credit campaign

This will mean residents who are not paying their bills getting warnings of legal action or termination of services

"We are hoping this will be the turnaround for our area that will also see increasing income for local government coffers," said a spokesman for the Southern MS, Grant Walker

The head of greater Johannesburg's Masakhane campaign, Dassie Molemela, said those cashing in on the confusion of service boycotts could expect stern action

"There are residents in areas of formal supply with full services and the ability to pay who are refusing to do so," he said, adding that these would be the people

who could expect tough action from local authorities

He said this was part of a "fresh start" in the Masakhane campaign that would ensure it became a local issue,

"This has been a long process, but now we are empowering mayors by giving them the strength to act on the issue of services" He said the government looked likely to commit resources to local authorities to make sure defaulters were dealt with

A spokesman for the Ministry of Provincial Affairs and Constitutional Development, Mpho Mosimane, said the national government had given local authorities the funds to service their debts

"In return they will themselves be able to write off arrears"

# Civic bodies threaten mass action over rates

By ADAM COOKE

About 45 branches of the South African National Civic Organisation in and around Johannesburg have threatened rolling mass action if municipal rates increases are not suspended

Three vast areas - the Southern, Western and Northern metropolitan substructures - will be affected by mass action if the increases, effective from July 1, are not suspended by July 12

Sanco Soweto region spokesman David Pine said the organisation was prepared to campaign for residents to pay rates for services only under the old tariffs

"We represent communities that are experiencing a very high

rate of unemployment and continuous retrenchment. They simply cannot afford to pay," he said

The executive committee of the Southern MSS said yesterday it was prepared to meet Sanco to try to resolve the problem

But Pine said Sanco would be prepared to discuss the issues only if the councils were prepared to suspend the increases

He said the campaign would see members picketing all three MSSs and the transitional metropolitan council in large numbers, which would be followed by a stayaway and march on July 22

Pine said the organisation supported payment in principle but "these increases came too early"

He said Sanco was demanding

that the increases be delayed by at least 12 months because the last increase was imposed a year ago

This comes as Sanco president Mlungisi Hlongwane said earlier this week that his organisation would help to evict residents who refused to pay for services

He said Sanco would spearhead efforts to normalise the culture of payment. But he added this could take place only in areas where residents could clearly afford to pay for services and continued to refuse

He said a distinction had to be drawn between those who experienced genuine poverty and were not capable of paying for services, and those who had the means but "arrogantly refused"

Star 4/7/96

(127)

~~Sanco~~

# Pay up or face electricity cut, defaulters told

127) Star 6/7/96

Eskom would cut off the electricity supply of two local authorities whose combined electricity bills were in arrears to the tune of R440-million if they did not pay, Eskom said yesterday.

Eskom said the North-East Rand Transitional Metropolitan Council and Springs City Council had not paid their electricity bills for five years.

The power utility warned that a court order enforcing a switchoff for the two councils was being processed.

"Despite protracted discussions and negotiations, neither the North-East Rand council nor the Springs council have made any move to correct a totally unacceptable situation of non-payment for electricity supplied to them.

"The North East Rand Council, which consists principally of Kempton Park and Tembisa, is our biggest problem in that it owes Eskom about R290-million. Springs and KwaThema are next at about R150-million," Eskom senior general manager

Joe Matsau said at a media briefing in Johannesburg.

He said that once the court order had been processed, Eskom would inform the offending local authorities of the exact date on which their electricity supplies would be cut.

Matsau said Eskom had successfully negotiated with other local authorities whose payments were in arrears and had come to suitable arrangements. In certain cases Eskom had acquired electrical supply rights and suspended the

authorities' bulk account

"Today, about four local authorities signed agreements with us on ways to pay their bills and some have even finished paying off their debts, so it can be done," he said.

Matsau said Eskom felt that certain local authorities were not talking negotiations seriously enough and it had reached the point where it would have to "pull the plug".

"We have tried our best to avoid doing this but have no option. We hope other local

authorities will not force us to act against them as well."

He said Eskom had agreed to write off debts owed to it before June last year, provided full payment was maintained for 14 months. It had further agreed to stop adding interest to these arrears and eventually to write them back. Any debt incurred between June 1995 and May this year would have to be repaid by April next year. About R1,5-billion was outstanding for bulk supply to local authorities since 1991 - Sapa.

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# Council optimistic that Sowetans will pay more if they get better services

By TOMMY MAKOE

(127) Star 6/7/96

ILL SELL



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Strike Ralekgoma, chairman of the Western Metropolitan Substructure (WMSS), is optimistic that Soweto residents will pay for the newly introduced property assessment rates and their more expensive services

"In the past, conditions allowed for people not to pay for services. The state simply did not provide them," Ralekgoma said

He said people were consulted before the increases to explain why the plan had been undertaken

"We discussed the new tariffs with the people, civics and political organisations. We asked them what they wanted from the recently allocated budget, and they told us. Now it is time for us to deliver.

"Everybody can see the improvements in Soweto - especially the construction of tarred roads in areas like Meadowlands"

He said it would not be fair for residents to avoid paying when they were part of the decision-making process and could now see the improvement

But Ralekgoma warned that the improvements to services and facilities would be slow because they used a "labour intensive system" instead of machines

## Providing employment

"This was a decision taken with the communities so as to employ more locals. On the one hand we are providing employment for the residents and on the other we are improving their conditions"

Ralekgoma said that if services were not paid for, "eviction will be the last resort after we have exhausted all the means of encouraging residents to co-operate"

"We have our social workers and councillors working on the problem. From now on we will engage in campaigns aimed at encouraging people to pay"

He said the number of paypoints would also be increased and they would be made more user friendly

More than 65% of the WMSS budget will be used to improve facilities and services in disadvantaged areas

"In the white areas, which have better facilities, we will concentrate more on maintenance. Our aim is to integrate our facilities and services to close the gap between the white and black areas"

The hike in services and the introduction of assessments in black areas falling under the WMSS are effective from July 1. Meanwhile, the Soweto sub-region of the SA National Civic Organisation, which has threatened to organise marches against the new service charges, will hold talks with the WMSS on Tuesday

Unpaid municipal bills spark threat

# Regulator to block Eskom power cuts

Robyn Chalmers

GOVERNMENT's national electricity regulator has vowed to prevent Eskom implementing its threat to cut electricity supply to the East Rand and Springs

The cuts, threatened because of huge unpaid municipal electricity bills, would hit consumers, mines, major businesses and Johannesburg International Airport

The regulator said at the weekend that cutting off bulk supply would have huge ramifications, particularly for the health and safety of consumers.

Consumers jeopardised by Eskom's threat included much of the East Rand gold industry and businesses such as Impala Platinum, Sappi, Mondi, Engen, AECI and Carlton Paper

"The regulator was set up to protect the interests of customers, and the implications for health and safety should supply be suspended are such that we will stop it," regulator spokesman Johan du Plessis said. It would "not sit back and allow this to happen".

Eskom said on Friday that it would enforce court judgments obtained against the Northeast Rand metropolitan council and Springs city council, which together owe R440m. This would entail cutting supply to the areas within two weeks

The parastatal, owed R800m by local authorities, also warned on Friday

that councils in Ogies, Ikapa and Culnan — which together owed R16,7m — were next in line for its attention.

Du Plessis said the Electricity Act governing the regulator gave it the power to halt Eskom's plans to suspend electricity supply. One option to stop the cut-off would be to revoke councils' distribution licences and to issue a licence for distribution of electricity to Eskom or another local authority.

Northeast Rand metropolitan council financial director Ben Dorfling said that halting electricity supply would have a devastating effect on the area

He said the council had inherited massive debts when the Kempton Park council had been merged with that of Tembisa

The council had been able to begin managing that debt only after last year's local government election

The council did not receive sufficient funds from Tembisa end-users to cover its electricity bills, and it had to deal with illegal connections. The supply network was not up to standard

"We have a strategy in place to stabilise and strengthen the electricity network and are currently putting in new meters, but this will take time."

A Springs council spokesman said the council would negotiate with Eskom in a bid to reach a compromise

Picture: Page 3

(127)

(260)

BD 8/7/96

# Township power cutoff labelled as insensitive

(127) Star 12/7/96  
By HOPEWELL RADEBE  
City Reporter

Actonville residents have accused the Greater Benoni Council of insensitivity for cutting off electricity during South Africa's coldest week this year in an effort to enforce payment for services.

According to executive committee chairman Naweed Hassan, about 76% of Actonville residents were paying for their services. The defaulters had their electricity cut off because they ignored numerous requests over the past eight months to pay or make arrangements with the council.

Defaulters whose electricity was cut off yesterday took to the streets in protest.

United Civic Organisa-

tion of SA president Jennifer Meyer said the council had refused to address the residents or negotiate with their organisation.

Hassan argued the council had not received any request for negotiation and that residents had nonetheless been asked to negotiate their individual problems with officials.

Meyer said the march got out of hand and police were called after residents had shattered 17 windows of the municipal administration building.

After the incident, angry residents forced open electric substation boxes in the township streets and turned on their lights.

Hassan said residents had been "consistently warned to pay or be cut off" in a series of Masakhane campaign messages.



# Regulator tries to resolve Eskom's council switch-off

Robyn Chalmers

THE National Electricity Regulator is attempting to resolve the deadlock between Eskom and the Springs and Northeast Rand councils over the authorities' unpaid R440m bills.

Regulator spokesman Johan du Plessis said yesterday talks had covered various options, including revoking authorities' electricity distribution licences and allowing Eskom to supply direct to consumers in the region.

Businesses in the regions — including Sappi, Mondi, Impala and Johannesburg International Airport — are also likely to be pushing for a solution.

Eskom said last week that the two authorities had made no attempt to reach an agreement on paying their bills, and it would enforce court judgments against them. This included cutting off power supplies next week.

However, this week the regulator stepped in, setting up meetings to prevent the regions being cut off

Du Plessis said Eskom could negotiate rescheduling the councils' debts, pursue normal civil remedies through the courts or terminate supply.

The third option would lead to the Regulator revoking the authorities' distribution licences, depriving them of a key source of income.

Sources said it was still not clear how quickly, if at all, Eskom would recover the debts under any of the options.

Eskom senior GM Joe Matsau said the judgments would be enforced pending the outcome of negotiations.

Eskom regarded the decision to cut off supply as a last resort. Despite protracted negotiation, neither council had attempted to remedy the situation.

Enforcing court judgments was the beginning of firm action to persuade local authorities, which owed a total of R1,5bn, to pay up, he said. Eskom warned that the Ogies, Ikapa and Cullinan councils — which owed R16,7m — were next in line for firm action

ish with Rizes on constitution

# Naturena indignant about squatter site

By Themba Sepotokele

RESIDENTS of Naturena, south of Johannesburg, have lodged an appeal with the Greater Johannesburg Metropolitan Council to intervene in the planned relocation of squatters to the area

In a 53-page petition signed by more than 650 people last week, residents appealed to the GJTCM planning department to stop the resettlement at Naturena of squatters from the Misgund North informal camp in Lenasia

The squatters are scheduled to be resettled in October and residents plan to use every means at their disposal to stop the move

In a petition delivered to the

chief executive officer of the GJTCM, Professor Nicky Padayachee, residents said there had been a lack of communication and no consultation as required by the council's policy and the Reconstruction and Development Programme before the resettlement was planned

## Ignores strategic goals

Residents said the proposed resettlement ignored the strategic goals of the Urban Development Strategy, which stipulates that low-cost housing should not be part of an up-market suburb. The resettlement would also be a health hazard because no environmental impact study was done as required by the

Environmental Conservation Act

To make matters worse, they said, the Naturena Civic Organisation was not informed about the move

The residents said that as citizens and ratepayers of the country, they demanded that their case and their objections be heard

A resident said: "To have squatters in our area will lower the value of our houses. This should not be allowed to happen"

Padayachee has given residents an undertaking that the council will discuss the matter. "An option would be to put the issue on the agenda of the Petitions and Public Participations Committee's meeting scheduled for July 30," he said

# 48 000 residents to get electricity

By Josias Charle

ABOUT 48 000 Soshanguve residents are to benefit from a new R29 million electricity project launched at the weekend

Under the project 7 500 homes have been electrified, benefiting the communities in sections FF, GG, HH, JJ and LL. At least 19 schools and 37 other stands will also have access to electricity

The "switch-on" was performed by Soshanguve mayor Mr O Lukhuleni. Several parliamentarians including Deputy Education Minister Father Smangaliso Mkhathshwa attended the ceremony

Lukhuleni urged residents to continue paying for their services as this would allow the council to be in a position to render better services to all

"The special relationship that exists between a local authority and its residents places a responsibility

and obligation on each citizen. A local authority and the services it renders can only be as good as the support and financial contributions it receives from its residents," Lukhuleni said

The driving force behind the project, local councillor Mr Benny Makena, said the project has set an example of what can be achieved if the cooperation between the community, local authorities and developers was sound. He said the project was completed in seven months

Makena said under the project, 7 500 homes have been electrified as well as 19 schools and 37 stands and about 48 000 people will now have access to electricity

Makena said the project was financed by the Greater Pretoria Metropolitan Council

"This project was labour-intensive. About 302 residents were employed and benefited by about R1,5 million in wages," he said

# Editor dies in accident

By Victor Mecoamere

THE EDITOR of *The Sunday Independent* and *New Nation* supplement *Higher Education Review*, Mrs Karen McGregor, has died in a car accident in KwaZulu-Natal

McGregor's 18-year-old daughter, also named Karen, who was an architecture student, also died in the accident which occurred on the N2 highway between Izingolweni and Harding last Thursday

McGregor's husband Mr William Saunderson-Meyer, who is the communications and development director at the University of Natal, and their other daughter Amy (16) were injured in the accident

Amy reportedly broke a collar bone and cracked a rib

Saunderson-Meyer is in the intensive care unit of a private hospital but is reportedly recovering well

# Civics threaten action over rates rise

By ADAM COOKE

(127) Star 16/7/96  
About 45 civics in and around Johannesburg will begin mass action over planned rates hikes this week after talks with councils failed to result in a suspension of the increases

The South African National Civic Organisation said yesterday that all attempts to defuse the ever-worsening situation of non-payment had failed

"We are left with no option but to embark on this action - it seems to be the only language that is understood," said David Pine, spokesman for the Soweto branch of Sanco

The 45 Sanco branches - representing people in areas

falling under the Southern, Western and Northern metropolitan substructures - have been calling for the councils to suspend rates increases that came into effect from July 1

Pine said Sanco was prepared to embark on a joint campaign with local councils to transform the culture of payment, but the breakdown in communication meant this was impossible

About 23% of Soweto residents are still paying their rates, a figure that is expected to drop

He said a meeting between Sanco branch representatives and councillors at the weekend had been a failure "We achieved nothing, and so we

must commence action," he said He added that Greater Johannesburg mayor Isaac Mogase was also present at the meeting

The protest action begins on Thursday with pickets at all Greater Johannesburg metropolitan substructures and transitional metropolitan council centres

Sanco is also planning a mass stayaway on July 22 with a march which will make its way from the Elkah Stadium in Moroka to council offices

The increases on July 1 meant that a resident paying R63,84 for a site less than 300sq m under the old tariff system was now being asked to pay R94,62

# Housing bureaus for local councils

(127) Sowetan 10/7/96

THE Gauteng housing and land affairs department yesterday announced the opening of housing bureaus in all local councils to compile waiting lists for people who require housing or land

The lists will be used by the Gauteng provincial government to identify housing needs and serve as a basis for launching housing projects in the province

People who qualify for listing are those with South African citizenship or permanent residence status, families with a combined household income of R3 500 a month or less, and married persons or people with dependants

Application forms will be available at the housing bureaus and offices of the local authorities will be used for registering applicants in areas where bureaus do not exist

Names of people registered will be transferred to a central list for the compilation of a master database

The Johannesburg Transitional Metropolitan Council will not be able to register applicants until a later date

Applicants have until October 15 to register and people who need more information should telephone the department at 080-111-4886 - Sapa

# Sandton faces rates boycott

By ANNA COX

Some Sandton ratepayers are to embark on a rates boycott following recent increases of between 120 and 250%.

Several residents' associations have already decided to go ahead without the full participation of all Sandton residents.

Others have decided to determine the strength of support for the withholding of rates and to obtain a mandate to determine the final course of action.

A Sandton Federation of Ratepayers (Sanfed) executive committee member, Richard Thorpe, said several residents' associations had made it clear they were about to embark on a rates boycott.

Sanfed recently offered its

members three options to challenge the constitutional legality of the Greater Johannesburg Transitional Metropolitan Council's action in the redistribution of rates to areas outside the Eastern Metropolitan Substructure, to insist on ratepayers' representation within council committees to ensure wise spending, or the deferment of payment of rates until a full budget review had been completed.

"It was clear from the resulting debate on the three options that there is a large groundswell of opinion from ratepayers in general that the third option is the preferred route," said Thorpe.

Residents have been asked to contact their ratepayers' associations to make their views known.

(127) Star 17/7/96

## Eskom agrees not to cut East Rand power

(1270) ~~(1270)~~

BY ADAM COOKE

Star 17/7/96

Eskom has undertaken to suspend its planned power cut to large sections of the East Rand until the case appears again before the Rand Supreme Court on August 20.

Businesses have called for the National Electricity Regulator to enable the business community to pay Eskom directly. At present the Springs council buys power in bulk from Eskom, and adds a fee before billing the individual or business consumer.

As part of its undertaking in the Supreme Court yesterday, Eskom agreed not to interfere with contracts between the Springs City Council and businesses. The undertaking annuls businesses' attempt to bypass local authorities.

The chairman of the Forum for Energy End Users, Johan Hees, maintains that businesses are often at the mercy of inefficient local authorities.

Differing costs of energy often resulted in opposition industries paying different prices, which was unfair to businesses, he said.

## Bill to grant local govt powers okayed

(1270) ~~(1270)~~ Star 17/7/96

BY JOYAL RANTAO

Political Correspondent

The Government is to publish draft legislation which will grant and define powers of local government structures, Constitutional and Development Minister Mohammed Valli Moosa has announced.

Moosa secured the support for the draft bill on further regulation of local government or "the bridging legislation" from the nine MECs in a meeting he held with them yesterday.

Once the bill is published, the public will be given 21 days to comment before it is tabled before the Cabinet for approval, and then in Parliament.

The "bridging legislation" covers the powers and functions of metropolitan councils and local councils, district councils, stand-alone local councils, rural councils and representative councils. It also deals with the alteration, re-demarcation and re-delimitation of municipal areas, and creation of a municipal demarcation board.

# Residents doubtful *(127) Sowetan 17/7/96* over new houses

By Muzi Mkhwanazi

**T**WO SOWETO RESIDENTS who paid housing deposits of R1 700 each are sceptical about whether the Masakhane Development Trust will deliver houses as promised

Mrs Anna Masipa (30) of Naledi said yesterday that since she paid the deposit in March, she had been sent from pillar to post when she inquired about where her house was to be built

"They claimed that I had a site in Doornkop and later said it was in Protea. But upon inspection I found nothing had been built on the sites that they claimed their houses were being built on," she said

Since paying their deposits clients have not been told what's happening

Masipa said the company had also failed to furnish her with a site number

Another resident, Mr Donald Makhene, also paid R1 700 about three months ago. He had inspected some of the sites where they had promised him a house but nothing had been erected

MDT managing director Ms Badudzile Nxumalo yesterday said her company was having problems with sites due to squatter invasions. The Doornkop sites, she said, were not suitable for houses. The company was now acquiring sites in Protea Glenn

"We promised the two clients that

their houses would be completed by September. There is still time for us to build the houses for them. People should not be apprehensive. We are sure of what we are doing," Nxumalo said

She said her company had already built ten houses in Vosloorus. However, Mr Jimmy Ndinisa, a MDT board member, denied that the company had built any houses

Ndinisa said they would be building show houses in Protea Glenn and would only start building houses in the next two weeks

# Eskom signs agreement plan to repay arrears

(127) Sowetan 1/7/96

**By Shadrack Mashalaba**

GIANT electricity supplier Eskom signed a more than R9 million bulk debt agreements at the weekend with the Pretoria metro northern substructure (Acacia/Soshanguve) and the Alberton Transitional Local Council.

The agreement for the repayment of electricity account arrears was a culmination of protracted negotiations between state-owned electricity supplier, Gauteng province and local government officials.

Speaking at the official signing ceremony with the Alberton council members at Sunninghill, Johannesburg Eskom's executive director Jac Messerschmidt said he believes close collaboration with local authorities will go a long way to addressing the predicament of the arrears trap.

In terms of the agreement, the Alberton Council has agreed to pay Eskom in full for all electricity used in their area of supply from May 1

1996 onward. In exchange, Eskom has agreed to write off all arrears debt incurred before June 30 1995.

"If nothing transpires we will consider legal action against local authorities who still owe us R280 million.

Next week we will be announcing plan of action to be taken against local authorities who still owe us," Messerschmidt said.

## Resuscitate

The agreement comes in the wake of the government's intention to resuscitate the Masakhane campaign and local authorities' resolve to crack down on service defaulters.

"All that we expect from now on was for the local authorities to perform by ensuring what is due to them was recovered. Past debts accumulated will be transferred to a suspense account which will be subject to performance," Messerschmidt added.

This means that, provided full payment is maintained for 14



**Town Councillo, Doctor Nkonyana.**

PIC MOTLAPELE SEGALE

months, Eskom will stop adding interest to the arrears amount and eventually write off the arrears.

Any debt incurred between the two dates, June 30 1995 and May 1

1996, will be repaid on or before April 30 1997, with interest.

In the case of the Pretoria Metropolitan Substructure (MSS), they have already met the conditions and the arrears have been written off.

"People will be willing to pay their debts if the services they are utilising are adequate and seen to be provided. The time has come to instil a culture of payment and this will be done if we do not operate from a dis-tance," he said.

## Door is open

He further added that the agreement did not exclude Alberton and Pretoria local councils, but their door was open to other local authorities who want the same deal, so long as they make an unequivocal undertaking to deliver Alberton town councillor Doctor Nkonyana unconditionally accepted the terms of the agreement saying it will be viable as part of their endeavour in developing local communities.

Eskom said these agreements have established a mechanism for local authorities with problems over the repayment of service debts to clear themselves of the burden.

## Failure to perform

They also put it straight that concession is dependent on their performance. However, any failure to perform according to the terms of the contract will result in Eskom cancelling the agreements.

Eskom's senior general manager for sales and customer services, Joe Matsau said "This is a major step in the realisation of the Masakhane ideals. We trust that many local authorities will make use of this opportunity to escape from the trap in which the non-payment of bulk accounts has landed them.

Currently Greater Alberton (TLC) which includes Thokoza has between 80-90 percent payment ratio, said Messerschmidt, adding that Sowetoi has an 80 percent payment ratio.



# Eskom promises to keep quiet on row

Deborah Fine

ESKOM has given an interim undertaking not to publish any further statements that it would terminate or interfere with the supply of electricity to the Springs Town Council pending the outcome of court action in August.

The council will argue then that Eskom is not legally entitled to switch off its electricity.

The undertaking follows an urgent application by the council in the Rand Supreme Court yesterday for an order interdicting Eskom from publicly threatening to terminate the council's electricity supply and from making "inaccurate and defamatory" statements about the council.

This referred specifically to re-

cent reports by Eskom in the media that it had obtained a R150m judgment against the council in respect of unpaid electricity bills, and would enforce the judgment should the council fail to pay.

Eskom also undertook not to interfere with the council's contractual rights with industries and businesses in the Springs area with offers of direct electricity supplies.

In giving the undertaking, Eskom stressed that it was not conceding that the council was entitled to any of the relief Eskom maintained that in terms of its agreements with the council, it was entitled to cancel the agreements should the council fail to pay in full for the electricity supplied to it.

(127)  
In an affidavit before court yesterday, Springs town secretary Petrus Krog submitted that any suggestion that Eskom had obtained a judgment against the council was "devoid of any truth" because litigation in this regard was still pending.

Such suggestions were reckless and affected negatively the "mood" of the Springs community by implying that the council could not reliably act in the community's best interests and was unable to pay its debts. In fact, the surplus earned by the council's electricity department was used to subsidise other services.

The question of whether Eskom is legally entitled to terminate the council's electricity supply will be argued on August 20.

BD 17/7/96

Home to ...

# Soweto civics face split over rates protests

BY ADAM COOKE

(127)

The powerful Soweto civics may face a split as the Meadowlands branch lashed out yesterday at planned rolling mass action over recent municipal rates hikes.

Dissension in the ranks of the South African National Civics Organisation (Sanco) in Soweto emerged after a general council meeting of 45 branches at the weekend.

The deputy chairman of Sanco's Meadowlands branch, Dan Sekonya, said Sanco could not oppose municipal rates increases and at the same time expect the services to improve.

"We cannot have a boycott as is being called by the Soweto branch while we also expect delivery," he said. Meadowlands is the biggest branch in the Soweto region.

"This could lead to a split in our civic structures," said Sekonya.

Sanco Soweto is to begin mass action with pickets today and tomorrow, and a mass stayaway on Monday. The branch objects to the rates increases implemented on July 1.

The Soweto branch argues that the number of unemployed people in the area is growing and residents are thus unable to pay increases. It also claims the increases were implemented without proper consultation.

The Meadowlands branch disputes this, saying it was difficult for councils to consult local communities as there was no localised civic leadership in place. Sanco Soweto had, the Meadowlands region claimed, failed in its task to put in place localised leadership.

"We call on our members to distance themselves from any planned action by Soweto until residents are informed about the issue of the budget (increase of services)," a statement from the Meadowlands branch said.

The branch plans a programme explaining the issues surrounding the increase.

Sekonya said in the Western MSS, under which Meadowlands falls, there had been a real change in terms of service delivery. "We are seeing roads and clean-ups beginning. And if we are to sustain that, then we have to pay."

## Springs wins Eskom interdict

SPRINGS City Council was granted an urgent interdict in the Rand Supreme Court on Tuesday restraining Eskom from issuing defamatory statements and from interfering with electricity supplies within the council's area of jurisdiction.

In a statement issued yesterday, a spokesman for the council said Eskom had given an interim undertaking pending finalisation of the city council's application on August 20.

He said the undertaking, in part, stated that

"Eskom will not disseminate inaccurate and defamatory statements regarding the city council, and it will not make the statement that Eskom obtained a judgment

against the council for the sum of R150m

"Eskom will not unlawfully interfere with the council's contractual rights with industries or businesses situated in its area of jurisdiction ... by offering to supply electricity directly to such industries and businesses.

"Eskom will not make any public statement that it will terminate, or otherwise interfere with, the supply of electricity to the council."

The city council sought the interdict following the recent publication in the media of a threat by Eskom that it would cut its electricity supply to the council because of payment arrears. —

Sapa

DN 18/7/96

(127)

## Rand Water will rehabilitate three catchment areas, create 1 650 jobs

(127) Stav 19/7/96  
Gauteng's major water supplier, Rand Water, has put R10-million on the line to improve and rehabilitate the catchment areas of rivers from which it draws water

The money will go into three projects and create 1 650 jobs, the majority of which will hopefully be sustainable, Vincent Bath, chief executive of Rand Water, said in Pretoria

The water supplier was actively involved in three specific Working for Water projects. These addressed issues such as alien invasive tree removal, soil erosion and river rehabilitation.

Three areas have initially been targeted. They are the Liebensbergvlei River, the Seekoervlei wetland and the upper Tugela River catchment.

Removal of alien invasive trees in the headwaters of the Liebensbergvlei River, which rises in the vicinity of the Golden Gate National Park, will aid in improving water flow to the Wilge River which in turn feeds the Vaal Dam. About 200 people in eastern Free State will be employed

on this project

The Seekoervlei wetland on the Klip River drainage system near Memel in eastern Free State will be rehabilitated by construction of anti-erosion gabions to raise the water level. This will increase flooding levels, restore natural wetland functions and increase water retention time in the wetland with an improvement in the water quality of the Klip River and Vaal Dam. More than 400 jobs will be created during this innovative operation.

Infestation by alien trees in the headwaters of many rivers in the upper Tugela river catchment has reached the extent of closed canopies being formed which impacts negatively on water flow.

About 10 000ha of riverine and adjacent slopes of the Pocolan and Putterills river systems will be cleared of alien vegetation using mechanical, physical and chemical control methods with employment for 1 000 people.

Work on all three projects will start within months. - Own Correspondent

# Midrand prepares to fight settlement

2 000 shacks are planned to go up near Glen Austin in the near future (127)

BY ANNA COX

Midrand residents and businesses are set to take legal action against the North Eastern Rand Metropolitan Council to prevent the erection of almost 2 000 shacks near Glen Austin in terms of the Rapid Land Development Programme

Chairman of the Austin View Ratepayers' Association David Hellyer said residents of President Park, Austin View and Glen Austin had unanimously decided to raise funds for legal costs

He said the squatter camp, known as the Mayibuye Project, bordered two affluent areas in which properties were valued at up to R500 000 each. These would devalue by half if the shacks went up, he

SAW 24/7/96  
said. In principle, property owners were not opposed to housing developments, said Hellyer, but proper low-cost housing with infrastructure and services should be built, he said

Residents who qualified to live in the new informal settlement would be given a R15 000 subsidy, half of which would be used to pay for the site, leaving very little with which to construct a house.

**'Properties would devalue'**

Business in the area had joined hands with the residents and had agreed to contribute, fearing increased crime and smoke problems from fires would deter customers. This is not a colour but a class issue. Many people of all colours have spent a lot of money on their homes and do not want to have a squatter camp next door," he said.

# Tembisa council prepares to get tough with rates dodgers

(127)

Measures such as taking defaulters to court and allowing debt to accrue interest to be implemented

Star 25/7/96

**By HOPEWELL RADEBE**  
City Reporter

The Kempton Park/Tembisa Metropolitan Council is preparing to implement tough actions against rates and services dodgers with new measures to control credit on electricity consumption and service delivery

Executive committee chairman of the council, Mike Madlala, said all councils represented in the Gauteng Association of Local Authorities had jointly discussed ways of exercising strict credit control measures which they hoped would trigger a positive response from communities not heeding calls from the Masakhane Campaigns to pay for services

His council has agreed to implement measures which included taking debtors to court from next month.

They would also submit names of

those debtors who constantly refuse to pay the council to the credit bureaux and dodgers would be prejudiced by being refused credit by stores until they settled their municipal accounts

Outstanding accounts would also

## Unrest in community slowed up progress

accrue interest and residents would in that way "affect their hard-earned salaries when defaulting"

"Everyone in the council has tried to encourage residents to pay for services in Gauteng including provincial ministers and their senior officials,"

Madlala said

"Unfortunately, many people have adopted a wait-and-see attitude just to test the council's patience and seriousness about the issue of payment

"They would react positively when we begin with court procedures in particular"

Madlala said Tembisa had suffered a major setback because only half the township was electrified in the 1980s and, when unrest began, the process stopped, prompting illegal connections on an unprecedented scale

The council had been electrifying many houses and formally connecting residents who had connected illegally

The process will be completed next year but in the meantime, unregistered residents using electricity will be identified and made to pay an estimated level of their consumption per household

# Eskom to cut off ~~the~~ supply to defaulters

By Joshua Raboroko

ESKOM will start cutting off electricity supply to defaulters in the Vaal Triangle from August 1

This was decided following protracted negotiations between the company and the SA National Civics Organisations.

Eskom communication officer Ms Zella Richett yesterday said the parties had urged the community to pay for services, including electricity

Sebokeng, Sharpeville, Bophelong, Boipatong and Evaton will be affected by the electricity cuts

Negotiations lasted more than six months during which Eskom lost thousands of rands, sources said

"Eskom believes in maintaining financial discipline in order to support its electrification programme," Richett said

06/17/98  
sawetan 25/7/98

## Springs council rewarded for Masakhane campaign

(127) Star 26/7/96

**By HOPEWELL RADEBE**  
City Reporter

Greater Springs council, which is embroiled in a legal dispute with Eskom over its outstanding debt of R150-million, was recently given an award for its innovative Masakhane Campaign which reached 120 000 residents

Although the council's recent dispute signalled unhealthy payment levels for services and electricity by residents, council spokesman Frans Swart said the award from the Institute of Municipal Public Relations Officers (Impro) was divorced from the payment issue

Swart, who accepted the trophy on behalf of the department of public relations and marketing, said Springs entered the Masakhane competition in the category for external projects involving public contributions and participation which the council wanted to implement

He said the non-payment tide had begun to change for the better and more people were paying now than had been before the

campaign - which meant it had changed some attitudes

The criteria for judgment included innovative methods, cost effectiveness and proof of results

The council had a Masakhane school play delivering the message to schools, clinics, industries, sports clubs and community buildings.

In addition, the communications department organised a 10-minute video, posters, stickers and pamphlets in English, Zulu, Sotho and Xhosa which explained all council's RDP related developmental projects and services' delivery methods.

The council was also credited with taking time to address community questions in a number of rallies, churches, youth groups, pension points, women's associations and societies and local taverns during the campaign.

Executive committee chairman Tatis Phasha said the co-operation between the council and the community in discussing and implementing projects was a testimony to the success of the campaign



# Truth body hears how 4 white 'Inkatha spies' died

## Mutilated and hacked to death in 'about two minutes'

SAPA  
Kroonstad

It took two minutes for residents of Kuthwanong in the northern Free State to hack to death four whites suspected of being IFP spies planning an attack on the township, the Truth Commission's amnesty committee heard yesterday.

In a letter to the committee, Free State Attorney-General M T van der Merwe said the four had died a "horrible and gruesome death" and dismissed suggestions that the killings had been politically motivated.

He was referring to the amnesty application of ANC member Justice Segopa, who was jailed for 27 years for his part in

the panga and knobkerrie attack which ended with the corpses being set alight in their vehicle.

Segopa testified that he had taken part in the September 1990 attack because he believed the four to be "Inkatha spies" and because he wanted to "do away with apartheid".

The four victims were Basie van Niekerk of Rheeder Park in Welkom, Michael Bebele, Shirley Basson and Anthony Casey, all of Odendaalsrus.

Committee member Chris de Jager said according to evidence led in the trial of Segopa and 11 others, Basson had pleaded for her life and offered money to the mob. Instead, her breast was cut off and her eyes gouged out. Segopa, who was applauded

by the gallery when he finished testifying, said Basson had burnt to death in the blazing car.

He said the only role he played that day was to pull one of the men out of the car and to set the vehicle alight.

"It took about two minutes to kill those people because there were so many of them (residents). They had knives and knobkerries," Segopa said.

He added that several days before the attack, ANC branch secretary Simon Memong had warned the community of an IFP attack.

He said he knew from listening to the radio that the IFP was an organisation which included whites and was responsible for attacks on the ANC. - Sapa.

# Court rejects ratepayers' attack on fixed payments

(127) Star 26/7/96

Although Pretoria city council had discriminated between residents in charging some, but not others, a fixed monthly fee for water and electricity supplies, this was reasonable and not based on race, the Pretoria Magistrates' Court ruled yesterday.

Magistrate P J Geldenhuys dismissed an application by the Pretoria Concerned Ratepayers Group.

He found the council had discriminated between residents of Atteridgeville or Mamelodi and those of other Pretoria suburbs. But this discrimination was related to different areas, not race.

The standard of services rendered to Mamelodi and Atteridgeville were inferior to those rendered in other suburbs. The use of water and electricity in the former could for a long time not be measured because meters had not been installed. However, many meters had been installed by June last year.

and the council's discrimination was highlighted by it not reading these meters.

Also, no steps had been taken against residents who failed to pay the fixed fee, whereas about 3 000 summonses for non-payment of accounts were issued in other suburbs.

He criticised the council for not correcting a municipal information pamphlet which stated all residents would pay the same rates from 1995. This fell short of public responsibility.

Geldenhuys said he was satisfied that an objective consideration of the facts showed the council's discriminatory conduct had been reasonable, and that there was no deliberate policy by the council to unfairly discriminate against anyone. However, the council would not be able to justify its discrimination forever.

The ratepayers said later they would appeal against the judgment. - Sapa.

## Council's discrimination 'not racial'

(127) BO 26/7/96  
PRETORIA — Although Pretoria City Council had discriminated between residents in charging some, but not others, a fixed monthly fee for water and electricity, this was reasonable and not based on race, the Pretoria Magistrate's Court ruled yesterday.

Magistrate PJ Geldenhuys dismissed an application by the Pretoria Concerned Ratepayers' Group.

He found the council had discriminated between Atteridgeville or Mamelodi residents and those of other Pretoria suburbs. Yet this discrimination related to different areas, not race.

The standard of services rendered to Mamelodi and Atteridgeville was inferior to those rendered in other suburbs. Water and electricity use in the

former could not, for a long time, be measured as meters were not installed

However, many meters had been installed by June last year and the council's discrimination was highlighted by it not reading these meters.

Also, no steps were taken against residents failing to pay the fixed fee, whereas about 3 000 summonses for non-payment of accounts were issued in other suburbs. Geldenhuys took into account that the council was trying to end a pattern of non-payment.

He dismissed argument by the ratepayers' group that the council was deliberately implementing a system of discrimination. The ratepayers said later that they would appeal against the judgment. — Sapa.

### GOVERNMENT OF SWAZILAND

#### MINISTRY OF JUSTICE

#### REGISTRAR OF DEEDS

TENDER NO. 94 1996/1997

**SUPPLY OF A DOCUMENT PROCESSING  
(IMAGING) SYSTEM FOR THE REGISTRAR  
OF DEEDS**

# Battle lines drawn in city's rates war

The metropolitan council won't get its money without a fight, as Sandton home-owners prepare to climb on to the boycott bandwagon with their Soweto counterparts, writes GAVIN DUVENAGE

The current payment boycotts which are the bane of Johannesburg civic administration may soon spread to white areas as Sandton residents balk at paying the hefty rates increases announced last month.

At its annual budget presentation last month, the Greater Johannesburg Transitional Metropolitan Council said that everyone in the metropolis would pay rates levied on the same scale. Previously, the numerous municipalities set their own rates scale according to their localised needs.

The adjustment has two immediate results: property owners in places like Soweto and Alexandra will pay rates for the first time, and those living in wealthier areas like Sandton can expect their rates to go up as much as 240%.

Revaluation of property is itself a routine exercise. Every three years or so, municipalities appoint independent valuers to re-assess properties and adjust their values accordingly, says Sandton town valuer Dirk Coetzee.

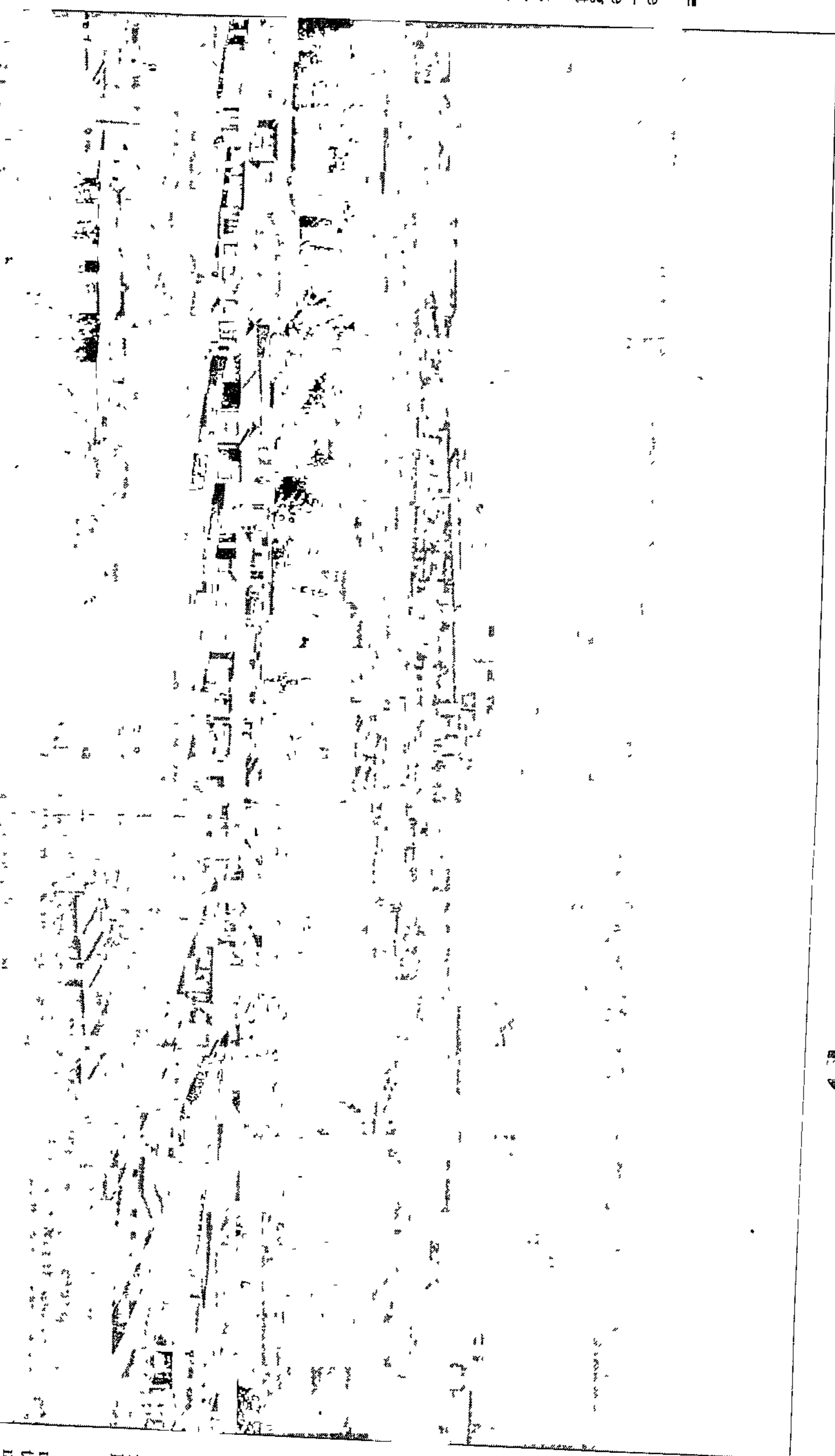
The readjusted rates are then made public for 30 days to give people time to object. If a property owner disagrees with the re-assessment, he or she can lodge an objection with the valuation appeal board. If the appeal is lost, the Supreme Court can also be approached. However, the appeals process does not extend to the scale at which rates are lodged.

## Distinction

This is a crucial point for home-owners in Sandton, who face the biggest rate increase. Like taxpayers who find rising salaries mean they enter a higher tax bracket, ratepayers will pay according to a higher scale in addition to the usual hike on the back of increased property values, Coetzee explains.

"We must draw a very clear distinction between the valuation roll and the assessment rates," he says. "Objections can only be made in terms of the values, and not the assessment rates." To give an example, a stand in Fourways valued at R75 000 in the previous valuation in July 1993 is now deemed to be worth R100 000 - an increase of about 33%. The owner had paid rates of R165,63 a month. With the increased value of his property, the owner could be expected to pay around R220,28 a month, if it was levied at the previous scale. Instead, the new scale will make him pay R537,50.

Home-owners who had been paying in the region of R500 a month can expect their



**HOT SPOTS:** In areas like Alexandra, people will be paying rates for the first time, while more affluent districts face huge increases

PHOTOGRAPH ANTON HAMMERRL

The metropolitan council has tried to cushion the blow by rejuggling the list of charges it levies on home-owners. Electricity, which constitutes up to 50% of monthly domestic charges, has not been increased this year. The rebate granted for property improvements has increased from 55 to 60%. The council has also extended the period of objections from 30 days to 60 days.

Senior metropolitan financing official Basil Lombard says the result of these concessions will reduce the effect of the adjusted rate scale. Unfortunately, it will offer little comfort to Sandton residents who receive their power directly from Eskom. Lombard says that in its early days Sandton struck a deal with Eskom to sell power directly to residents. So, while the metropolitan council will

absorb the price increase for power it buys from Eskom, Sandton residents will not benefit from this relief.

Lombard points out that Sandton residents had for years paid low rates in relation to their property values. Upmarket areas within Johannesburg, such as Forest Town and Rosebank, paid twice the amount in rates as did the equivalent areas in Sandton even if their property values were the same.

Metropolitan councillor and budget and finance committee chairman Eugene Robson says the decision to levy equal rates across the city was agreed to by the old Sandton town council during transitional negotiations. "It was accepted by all parties that rates partly was necessary during the phase that led up to the establishment of the transitional councils."

He says the deal to equalise rates was used to lure councils like Randburg and Rongedpoort into the metropolitan system.

Without parity, residents would have contemplated a greater percentage of their rates ingrease into the metro pool than Sandton. In effect, the other former local authorities would have subsidised Sandton's contribution to city financing.

This was of course one of the fundamental issues in local government negotiations stretching back to the Central White Paper. The ANC/white alliance wanted a single city tax base. The white councils wanted money to be spent mostly in the living areas of those who produced it. Although the councils recognised the necessity of contributing to townships that had no industrial rates base, the level of income to be shared, and

with whom, dominated negotiations for a very long time.

Indeed, Sandton initially tried hard to attach its flag to Alexandra and create a separate metropolitan unit. Alexandra has its own pressing development needs, but its bargain compared with what it will cost to service Soweto.

This aspect has been raised by some ratepayer groups who resent what they see as the expropriation of their rates for the upliftment of the south. Ratepayer associations in the North Eastern Metropolitan Substructure - which consists largely of Sandton and Alexandra - have previously called for their rates to be spent on development efforts within their borders only. Obviously, this is not very likely. Other structures would object to Sandton reducing its commitment to the city at

South African Civic Organisation regional chairman Matthew Pella says the organisation has been holding talks with its affiliates on the issue.

The objections of its branches may be embarrassing to Sanco as rates parity has been one of its key demands. The "single city, single tax base" call of all residents to pay proportionally the same amount according to what the city could deliver in services, quality of life and property values.

Pella says Sanco is sticking to its demand for equal payment but has had to acknowledge the objections of its members.

## Legal action

The determination of Soweto residents to resist service payments has of course been thoroughly demonstrated. It will be interesting to see if white ratepayers carry out their threats to withhold payment.

Three years ago Cape Town was forced to back down over adjusted rates scales after white ratepayers refused to accept increased valuations on their properties of up to 500%.

Cowed by threats of legal action from wealthy residents in areas like Camps Bay and Newlands, the council went to court itself and applied for the valuation roll to be scrapped. The Supreme Court concurred and the city is still levied rates based on valuations a decade old.

However, Robson insists that Johannesburg will not back down. "The principle of each property owner paying according to the value of his or her property measured according to a standard scale is not open to question," he says. The metropolitan council is willing to talk to home-owners who feel they are prejudiced, but will not allow some to have a larger concession than others. Robson says that if discussions cannot resolve the dispute, the council will resort to legal action.

127) SAN 27/7/96

## Sandtonians take the lead in efforts to protest against higher property rates

By JACQUI REEVES

Public meetings held this month by the four metropolitan substructures to discuss Gauteng's recently released property valuation rolls appear to have been poorly attended in most areas.

The only people to come out in force were the residents of Sandton, largely protesting against the increase in their rates.

The uniform valuation rolls are aimed at establishing a single tax base for Greater Johannesburg, eliminating the artificial boundaries created by the previous government.

Assessment rates are a major source of income for councils and are levelled as a form of local taxation on the value of the property as reflected on the valuation roll.

This year, more than 200 000 additional properties in areas like Soweto, Dobsonville and Alexandra were valued for the first time.

In equalising the taxation sys-

tem, past rates granted to areas such as Sandton have had to be reconsidered, also taking into account new areas that are being developed and supplied with basic and essential services.

Councillors believe the public outcry by residents of this more affluent Eastern Metropolitan Substructure area can be attributed not only to the added expense but also to a naive conception of the MSS itself.

Residents don't seem to grasp the fact that the MSS does not only represent Sandton. They do not yet understand the concept of metropolitan government, and that equal services need to be offered to all areas, so a uniform valuation system is required, one said.

Properties are valued according to various social forces, economic and environmental conditions in the area, and the general market value of the land.

Sol Cowan, a councillor with the Eastern MSS, believes the rating

system is essential to ensure an equitable distribution of the rates burden. "We are going through a period of trying to equalise services, so we have had to prioritise certain suburbs," he said.

"When areas such as Orange Farm are still not receiving essential services like water, we have to make sure this is put on the top of the list. But, at the same time, we still have to ensure that services to our existing roads and parks are maintained," he said.

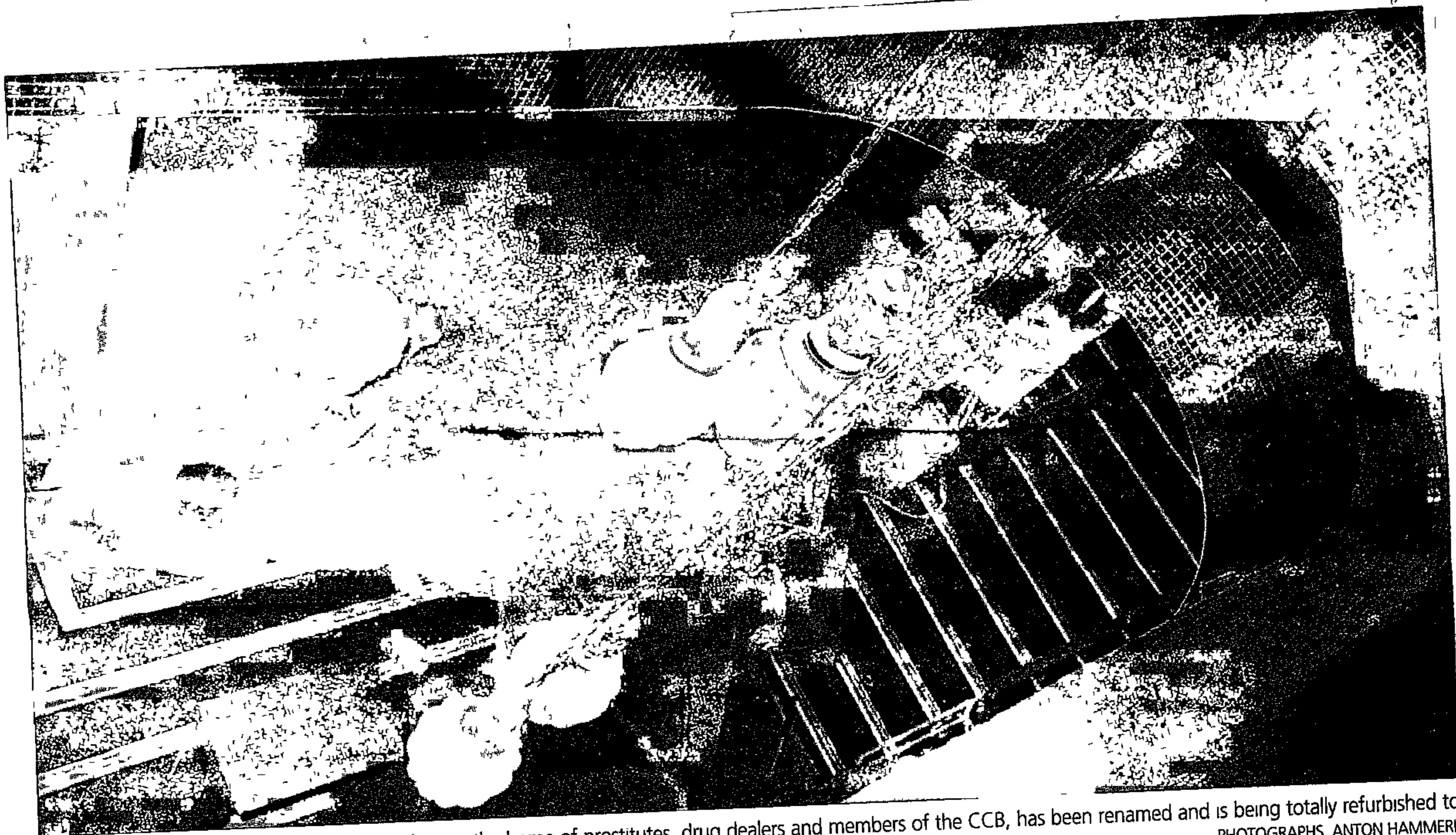
Councillors, disappointed with the poor turnout at the valuation roll meetings, say they had hoped to receive more input from the people they serve, but that the stay-away could mean more than just apathy.

"The fact that residents did generally not feel the need to attend the meetings could be seen as a passive acceptance of their property's new valuation," one councillor speculated.

See Page 13

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Star 27/7/96



**BIG REVAMP:** The notorious Quirinale Hotel, once the home of prostitutes, drug dealers and members of the CCB, has been renamed and is being totally refurbished to accommodate low-income families who are members of the Hospitality Industry Provident Fund

PHOTOGRAPHS ANTON HAMMERL

# Renamed Quirinale now a home of hope

Nov 27/7/96 (127)

By KURT SWART AND TOMMY MAKOE

You will find it difficult to obtain a drink these days at the notorious Quirinale Hotel, unless you are an invited guest of one of the new generation of tenants

Although the old Quirinale sign has not yet been removed from the entrance, the building is now Badri House, home of a unique project involving the use of workers' provident funds for "social investment"

It is being renovated to accommodate 120 low-income families, half of whom have already moved in

Once a landmark in vibrant, violent Hillbrow, where money could purchase alcohol, sex and drugs, and also once the safe house for apartheid hit-squad members and Civil Co-operation Bureau military gangsters, the Quirinale has undergone a change in nature as well as name

The sublime sleaze of its heyday is literally being hacked away by a team of renovators. The red carpets are being lifted, pool tables pushed aside. Removed from the walls are the mirrors where prospective clients used to eye prostitutes lounging on sofas. The bar, where men paid for drinks and flashed their notes at eager mer-

cenaries, has disappeared.

The stage, where exciting bands from across the northern borders conjured up a driving musical backdrop to a night on the edge in Hillbrow, is barren except for rubble and building material

Ernest Neluvhalani, a Pretoria University student, is the chairman of the board of trustees of the Hospitality Industry Pension and Provident Fund (HIPPF), a member-driven retirement fund for hotel workers and employees of catering companies

He told the *Saturday Star* about the groundbreaking project

"It's a unique thing at the moment - a completely new idea. Provident funds are built on contributions of about 6% from workers' wages and a matching amount from management

"Workers do not generally have much control of these funds. But our trustees decided to use the money for social investment - housing, funeral



**HARD AT WORK:** Builders demolish sections of the old hotel to make way for family flats in Badri House

benefits and later an educational scheme."

From the surplus funds a Section 21 (non-profit) company, Badri Housing Association, was formed

The association administers finances and loans, and manages flats for rental for its members. The transformation of the Quirinale Hotel to flats was the first initiative by the six-month-old association to provide affordable accommodation for its members

Most of them earn less than

R3 000, with an average of R1 400 which qualifies them for the government housing subsidy

"Residents will pay a subsidised rental of not more than R350 and R700 for one and three-bedroom apartments respectively," said David Brand, a spokesman for the association

"We have applied for subsidies from the Government's Housing Department, which we are sure we will

get. Our members are fully involved in the process because we have borrowed money on behalf of them from their pension and provident funds

"We are doing it because nobody is delivering affordable houses for the community. Besides, it came from our members who do not own houses and have no accommodation," said Brand

Neluvhalani said "We cannot use more than 25% of the total assets. We are non-profit, we are not landlords. Anglo and Liberty

Life are there to make money, to make profit. We are here to provide accommodation. We believe in collective participation, not dictating to the members

"Transparency is the foundation of this company. We must be accountable - we are using our members' money. Everything must be open to criticism, and if corrections are needed, they must be done"

He said Badri House was "fully booked", but after all the tenants had settled in, there would still be a long waiting list of HIPPF members seeking accommodation, and a solution to this was being sought. The association hoped other provident funds would follow its example

The hotel closed down late last year and was bought by Badri in February this year for R1,75-million

Said Neluvhalani: "We are aware of its reputation. But somebody has to take the challenge of moving away from the past. The place used to be a home for drugs and prostitution, but why can't we change that?"

"We want this to be a pilot project. We want this to be a symbol of a new Hillbrow. Look at the history of Hillbrow: there is no decent, affordable life here. Crime is everywhere, we need a change"

# Street committees mooted to bring non-payers to heel

(127)

New approach sought to boost Masakhane campaign and get residents to contribute to development plan

By **KARIN SCHIMKE**  
Gauteng Reporter

All adults in Gauteng will be given an opportunity to directly influence their local council on issues in their area in the next few months to contribute to a five-year development plan for the province. In return, they will have to be accountable for their council bills to their neighbours.

A new approach is being sought by the provincial ministry of development planning and local government for development and for support of the Masakhane campaign which is aimed at getting citizens to pay for the services they receive.

In the new approach, street and block committees will be formed to collect service complaints and household information from residents. The information will then be passed on to

ward councillors

Development Planning and Local Government MEC Siceko Shiceka, who calls the system revolutionary, believes that this method of "deepening democracy" will have several advantages, not least the strengthening of a culture of payment.

"There are a lot of problems in local government," said Shiceka yesterday. "Firstly, some people can't pay their bills because they live in abject poverty. By knowing their circumstances we can create a welfare safety net for them. Then there are people who refuse to pay. They want to live for free. We deal with them, perhaps by cutting off services to them."

"Thirdly, people complain about the quality of service from councils and we must rectify those problems because local authorities are seen as unfriendly and unhelpful places."

Shiceka has requested that the

Star 30/7/96  
collated information from all local authorities in the province be passed to him by March next year. Two months later, the analysed information will be used to put forward a five-year development plan for the province with specific aims and projects.

"This is going to be the biggest campaign since the election. With the information we get we will be able to allocate resources based on what people need. It is revolutionary, no country in the world has tried this," he said.

Shiceka added that the people of the province could use the plan as a means of holding the government accountable for delivering services.

The development process will be monitored by an inter-governmental forum (made up of provincial and local representatives) which will meet twice a year from 1998 to assess how plans are progressing.

# Gauteng hatches plan to collect R4-bn debt

*Sowetan 31/7/96*

By Joshua Raboroko

THE Masakhane office in Pretoria announced yesterday that Gauteng residents owe local authorities about R4 billion in unpaid services such as water, sewerage and refuse removal. Ms Tumelo Moloko, spokesperson for the office, said the figures were a clear indication that residents were still not paying for services since the launch of the Masakhane campaign by President Nelson Mandela.

The figures were released in the wake of an announcement by the Gauteng MEC for development planning and local government Mr Sicelo Shiceka that a new approach was being sought by the province to ensure that residents pay for services they receive.

In the new approach, street and block committees will be formed to collect service complaints and household information from residents. This information will then be passed on to ward councillors.

Shiceka, who called the approach "a revolutionary system", believes this method will offer several advantages, not least the strengthening of a culture of payment.

He said "There are a lot of problems in local government. Firstly, some people cannot pay their bills because they live in abject poverty. By knowing their circumstances we can create a welfare safety net for them."

"Then there are people who refuse to pay. They want to live free. We will deal with them by cutting off services or prosecuting them. Thirdly, people complain about the quality of service from councils."

The MEC said the people of the Gauteng province could initiate this plan as a means of holding government accountable for delivering services.

HOUSING & HOSTELS - GAUTENG

1996

AUG - DEC.



# SANDTON RATEPAYERS APPRAISE BOYCOTT OPTION

FM 2/8/96

(127)

## Taking cue from black neighbours

A rates revolt is stirring among the largely white home-owners north of Johannesburg

It has manifested itself in the somewhat incongruous sight of housewives in their plaid skirts and pumps and dark suited businessmen toy-toying in the streets in protest at what they see as unreasonable property rates charges that took effect on July 1

Especially militant are the ratepayers of Sandton. From Bryanston to Buccleuch and Wendywood to Hurlingham, ratepayers' associations are advising their members to reject the steep increases and pay their old rates charges, with some adjustment for inflation, into trust accounts

This is a hazardous — and probably illegal — course. But what is significant is that boycott politics are for the first time being espoused by a body of citizens that has traditionally been law-abiding and responsible. Unlike others, they are not the sort who would normally buy in to a culture of nonpayment.

The incendiary device that has pushed them from their comfort zone towards the politics of confrontation is the uniform rating system introduced by the Greater Johannesburg Transitional Metropolitan Council (TMC) as part of the transition towards the new system of local government which the electorate voted for last November.

This year, in a misguided pursuit of equity, the TMC decided it would be in everyone's interest if rates were equalised. Instead of having different charges being levied in the various municipalities that formed part of the old local government administration, it looked at its expenditure requirements for the four

new municipal substructures that make up the metropole, calculated the total land values for the area and divided the one into the other. In doing so, it came up with the magic figure of 6,45c in the rand as the rate to levy on property values in the Northern, Eastern, Southern and Western Metropolitan Substructures.

That is fine, in theory, the problem is that it doesn't work in practice. The municipalities had become used to juggling their finances by offering substantial rates rebates, discounts on electricity tariffs or other incentives to residents.

The upshot was, to quote a few examples, Sandton's rates went up from 2,65c in the rand to 6,45c in the rand while those paid in Roodepoort went down

from 8,39c in the rand to 6,45c in the rand. Nice for the residents of Roodepoort, but swinging from the perspective of Sandtonians.

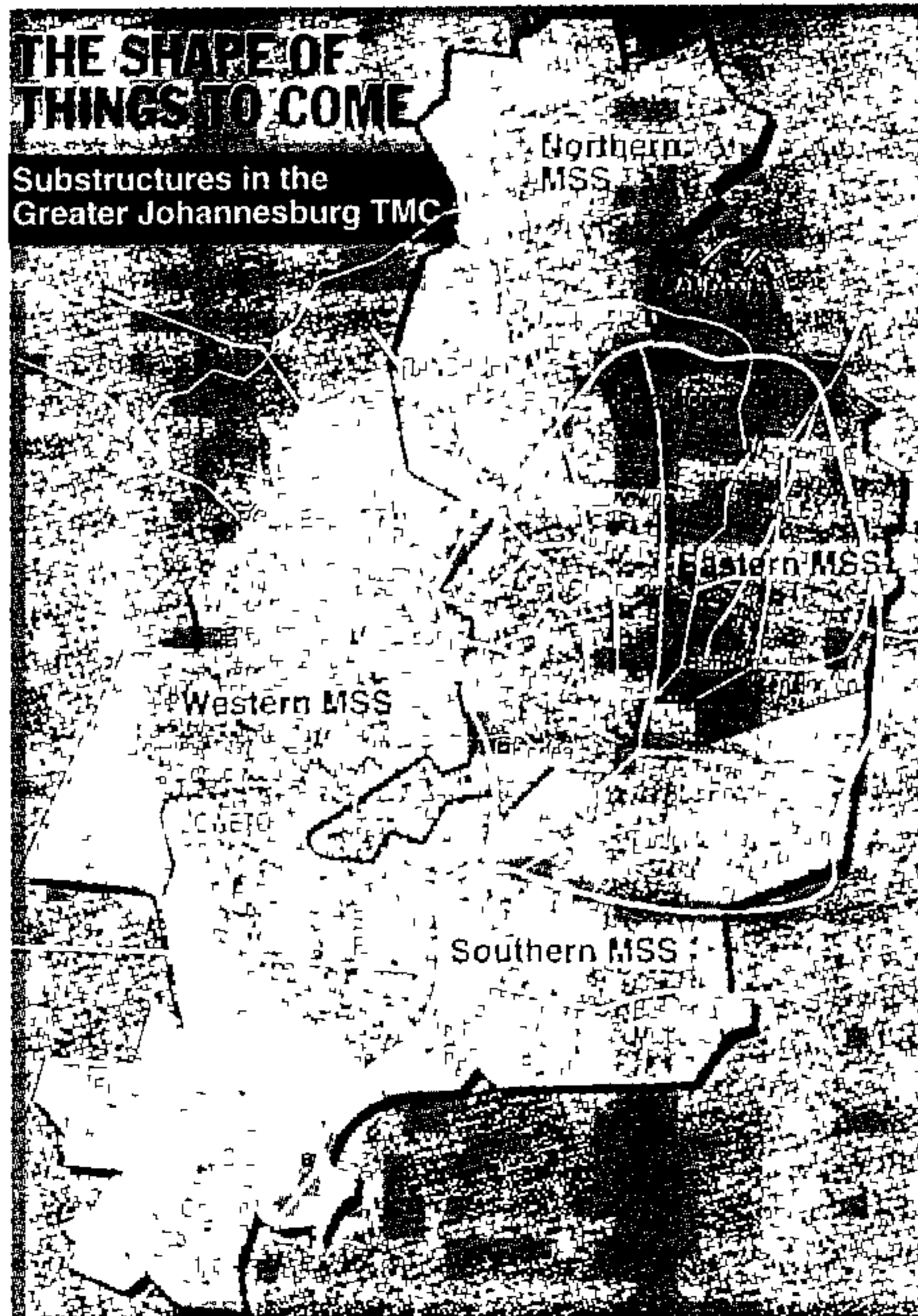
This is not the full story. In addition to the increase in the rate in the rand, water tariffs were increased by 20% and sewerage charges by 40%. What's more, the rates increases were applied on the basis of a revised property valuation roll. So residents were hit by a triple whammy.

The consequences of all this on household budgets, especially for the residents of Sandton, is significant. One homeowner in Hyde Park, which now forms part of the Eastern Metropolitan Substructure (see map), which includes most of Sandton and the areas to the east, says

the rates only portion of his monthly municipal charges has gone up from R540 to R1 360. To finance that, he has to earn an extra R2 000 a month before tax. The problem with this is that most of us have inelastic incomes. Other Sandton ratepayers have seen increases of 160%-190% in their rates bills.

Compounding the problem is the widely held perception that Sandton residents are being penalised for encouraging the former municipality to run a tight ship. To keep rates low, the town gave up the privilege of street lighting, sport stadiums, a municipal transport system and other services. This means residents of the eastern substructure are paying the same uniform rate as, say, those in the western one but are not getting the same services.

Also, they expect a R438m surplus in their municipal kitty — which the TMC has summarily announced it is appropriating to make good its projected R440m deficit on its operating budget in the Western and Southern MSSs for 1996-1997.



It might be unfair, but there's a pervasive belief that the Democratic Party and the National Party representatives on the eastern council were co-conspirators of the ANC in the fleecing of ratepayers. They did, after all, approve the 6,45c in the rand uniform rate when it was presented to council on June 24.

But acting head of the DP Mike Moriarty defends the party's position, claiming council had to vote on the budget before June 30 to meet the deadline for introduction. He says had the DP rejected the budget, it would merely have gone to the premier's office for rubber-stamp ratification.

He says "What is not widely known is that we passed the budget with an amendment to the effect that Sandton's R438m which the TMC wants to take will have to be negotiated."

Moriarty says that if negotiations with the TMC succeed, some of the surplus could be re-

tained and will be passed on to Sandton ratepayers in the form of a rebate which will bring their rates down from 6,45c in the rand to around 4,5c.

He says "To make up for any budgetary shortfall, the Local Government Transition Act allows the TMC to impose a levy on the various substructures based on an equitable contribution of the gross rates income of the substructure (in the eastern substructure's case, about half of the TMC's total rates income).

"To my mind it is unequivocal that it should be done proportionately. That means the eastern substructure's contribution to the TMC's R440m shortfall should be R220m — or a 50% share."

Moriarty says the eastern executive committee will now have to negotiate the size of the surplus to be paid over with the TMC executive. If the TMC is not going to make good its shortfall entirely from Sandton's surplus, it will have to receive contributions from the other substructures. Which can only mean that cuts will have to be effected in their own capital or operating budgets or other savings somehow introduced. But he says the DP is so sure of its interpretation of the Act that it has let it be known that it is

prepared to go to court over the issue.

As the details of the deal still have to be negotiated with the TMC, it could be months before the Sandton ratepayers feel a benefit — provided the proposal is accepted. If it is not, Moriarty says the DP will go back to plan B — that of trying to persuade fellow councillors to agree on a phased introduction of the new rates

charges through the year. However, he says his ANC colleagues seem to be insensitive to the hardship the rates increases are likely to cause home-owners. "They feel Sandtonians should take it on the chin," he says.

Meanwhile, he advises that Sandton ratepayers either pay their new rates in full or raise their payments by at least 50%. Though he takes seriously the threat of a rates boycott — expecting some sort of nonpayment protest from at least 20% of the ratepayers — he says that, as a responsible

official, he cannot endorse such action.

Even in a worst-case scenario, if all the Sandton ratepayers boycotted their payments, he estimates the substructure would lose only R150m out of its total income of R1,1bn. "That's not going to bring us to our knees."

One has sympathy for the Sandton ratepayers — especially as elements of the eastern administration appear to be showing gross insensitivity to their personal financial plight induced by the rates and municipal services rises.

What clearly rankles them more is that

even the best efforts of President Nelson Mandela's Masakhane ("pay your rents and services") campaign have been unable to reverse it. They suspect, too, though the truth is elusive, that much of the budgetary shortfall they're now being asked to make up comes directly from the nonpayment of services by township residents. The last survey done indicated payment levels ranging from 0% in Vosloorus to 4% in Ivory Park and 33% in parts of Soweto.

Finance specialist and former councillor for the North-Eastern Metropolitan Substructure Leon van Wyk says there was a R280m under-recovery against budgeted income for the 1995-1996 budget which officials put down to "transitional budgetary difficulties" (See graph.) In reality, he says, this is a smoke screen for the nonpayment of services in the mainly black areas. Moreover, he says, he understands the TMC is now running up a shortfall of R40m a month — all of which will be passed on to the ratepayers in due course.

Sandton ratepayers claim there is a case to be made for their rates being used for the betterment of greater Sandton. In reality, the principal of cross-subsidisation (the contribution by richer local authorities to the running of Soweto and Alexandra) has been in place for a long time.

In terms of the 1996-1997 budget, residents of Soweto and Alexandra, among others, will, for the first time, be expected to pay rates on their properties, in addition to charges for municipal services. Whether they will pay them or not is another matter. Many civic associations have said emphatically that they won't.

The current budget, with its projected deficit, has been worked out based on 100% payment of the amounts due by township residents. That's clearly unlikely. One can thus extrapolate that

growing annual budgetary deficits will be a recurring theme in municipal finances. So the burden of payment is being shifted on to ratepayers who habitually pay their bills. It is, in effect, a wealth tax by stealth.

Unless some way is found to ease the effect on ratepayers, there will be further capital flight from SA's economic heartland.

"People will vote with their feet," says Moriarty. "They will migrate to another city, province or even country." ■



Sandton residents give vent to their anger

MONEY DRAIN	
TMC Budget 1995/96 (Rm)	
Budgeted income	2 885
Actual income	3 299
Total deficit	282 011

they know the residents of Johannesburg's satellite black townships, which now fall into the new metropolitan substructures, have for years boycotted their rates and services payments. This state of mind has become so entrenched that

## Eskom to write off arrears

Star (127) 3/8/96

An agreement on the payment of outstanding electricity bills was reached between Eskom and the North East Rand Metropolitan Council yesterday

NERMC spokesman Thom Peters said in a statement the accumulated arrears until the end of June this year amounted to about R204-million. In terms of the agreement, Eskom would write off all arrears incurred before mid-1995 against regular payments of current accounts, together with a phased repayment of arrears incurred since mid-1995.

It was agreed that Eskom would withdraw court actions it instituted against the NERMC which were linked to the non-payment of accounts.

The agreement was similar to earlier contracts signed between Eskom and the Pretoria North Metropolitan Substructure and the Alberton Transitional Local Council, the statement said - Sapa

# Sandton ratepayers ready to revolt

By ANNA COX

Sandton ratepayers will fight the recent huge rates increases of between 100 and 300%.

The Sandton Federation of Ratepayers (Sanfed), an umbrella body representing some 22 ratepayers' organisations, is setting up a central office this week where ratepayers will get qualified advice on any query related to the rates issues.

A facility will also be provided for those ratepayers who choose to withhold rates payment. It will be manned by attorneys and professionally administered by a firm of accountants.

Sanfed has urged residents to pay for water, refuse and sewage services irrespective of the decision they take on rates.

Ratepayers are also being asked to view the valuation roll

and officially object either as individuals or in groups.

An urgent meeting will be sought with the Greater Johannesburg Transitional Metropolitan Council to discuss the matter.

Said Sanfed spokesman Peter Harmsen: "Various ratepayers' associations have been holding meetings since the announcement of the increases, and the overwhelming response has been for a deferment of rates payment."

"Ratepayers are no longer ready to be the pot of gold while services are either non-existent or sliding. No account seems to have been taken of an individual's ability to pay within what is an already tight budget for many."

Harmsen said a meeting had been arranged with the EMSS executive committee on August 8 to outline the strength of the feeling in the area.

(127)

STAN 5/8/96

# Now Hyde Park joins Sandton rates boycott (127)

BY ANNA COX  
Star 7/8/96

Another Sandton suburb -  
Hyde Park - has decided to  
join the rates boycott

At a meeting this week,  
residents agreed to institute  
a rates boycott, either full  
or partial, according to per-  
sonal wishes

Residents decided, to  
continue paying for ser-  
vices such as water, elec-  
tricity and sewerage but to  
withhold rates payments,  
put the money into an in-  
terest-accumulating ac-  
count and wait for the au-  
thorities to issue  
summonses against them

Once the summonses  
arrived - the process could  
take several months - the  
residents would either pay  
or put in a motion to de-  
fend the matter, wait for a  
court date, pay at the last  
minute, and then start the  
procedure all over again,  
creating an administrative  
nuisance and adding costs  
for the authorities.

Residents will also be  
asked to object to the new  
valuation roll and to ask to  
make personal representa-  
tion to the valuation board,  
thereby creating a backlog.  
another administrative nu-  
sance

Chairman David  
McGillvray said the idea  
was to hit the Eastern Met-  
ropolitan Substructure  
where it hurt most - in the  
pocket.

Said McGillvray "We  
are tired of financing the  
gravy train. They are bleed-  
ing us dry and if we contin-  
ue paying they will contin-  
ue increasing our rates"

# Sandton rates protest is ready to get rolling

(127) Star 13/8/96

By ANNA COX

A trust account has been set up by the Sandton Federation of Ratepayers (Sanfed) into which residents can deposit their money and an office is to be set up where they can get professional advice on the rates issue.

Residents have been advised by Sanfed to pay for services and to pay their old rates with an additional 20%, said Sanfed spokesman Frank Croswell.

He said although the first rates payment was due only by September 3, preparations were in place to assist residents with their rates deferral.

The central office will be staffed by qualified people who will be able to field all questions regarding the withholding of rates.

A pro-forma letter, drawn up by attorneys, is also to be circulat-

ed to residents to send with their services payment advising authorities of their reasons for paying only part of the rates.

Croswell said there was legal defence against the huge increases on two grounds: the unfairness of the new valuation rolls and the unfairness of the hikes in terms of the new constitution. A legal team was investigating this on behalf of Sanfed, he said.

"Although we cannot compel residents not to pay rates, we are urging people to pay old rates plus 20% while negotiations are under way with the council. Sandton has a history of payment. It is now not unwillingness to pay but inability of many to pay. We believe authorities are showing insensitivity to residents by imposing these huge increases on us while they are running bloated bureaucracies."

Croswell said most Sandton

residents' associations had held public meetings during the past few weeks and the feeling was unanimous to withhold payments.

He had held a meeting with the Eastern Metropolitan Substructure last week proposing the payment of old rates plus 20% and was told that the matter would be considered and an answer given by the end of the month.

EMSS executive committee chairman Sol Cowan said withholding rates was totally illegal and anarchic.

He said Sandton residents had chosen to live in an area where property values were high and therefore should expect to pay higher rates - as was the case in other developed countries.

"They should not live in expensive areas if they cannot afford the rates," he said.

# Rates shock for Soweto squatters

By Joshua Raboroko

**R**ESIDENTS OF INFORMAL settlements in and around Soweto were shocked to learn that they are now expected to pay the same rates as homeowners in the townships

The same shock awaits their counterparts elsewhere in the country, who will be expected to pay rates for the first time in terms of the Local Authorities Bill expected to be ratified by the Cabinet next week

Millions of township home owners throughout the country will have to pay more in rates when the Bill becomes law later this year

Squatters living in areas under the Greater Johannesburg Transitional Metropolitan Council will have to pay about R21,50 for rates as from July 1

The TMC recently approved the assessment rates, and residents living

Upset informal housing residents do not understand what they'll pay for

in squatter camps in and around Soweto are also expected to pay rates according to the size of their sites

According to statistics compiled by the council, more than 100 000 people live in informal settlements in Soweto, Diepmeadow, Dobsonville Alexandra Township and surrounding areas

Sites at informal settlements have been valued by the TMC for rate charges. The council has begun the process of registering squatters on the valuation roll

Mr Bob Mashaba of Soweto's Fred Clark squatter camp said he and other residents were unaware that they were expected to pay rates

"Some councillors have informed us that we should support the

Masakhane campaign by paying for services as announced by President Mandela. They promised to come back to us with more information, but have not done so"

"We are shocked that we have to pay rates. What is that, and why should we pay for facilities we do not have?"

Residents said they did not have proper roads, street lights, sewerage, water or "sports fields, halls, parks and libraries that are luxuries to us"

Mrs Naomi Mofokeng said the conditions at the Fred Clark settlement were deplorable

She said they had tried in vain to summon councillors to explain to the people why they were not getting facilities

# What rates are all about

By Joshua Raboroko

RATES are levies charged on the value of property and land owned by residents within a local authority

Monthly assessment rates are based on the value of property, reflected in the valuation roll

The new valuation roll in Greater Johannesburg came into effect on July 1. Property owners can object if they do not agree with the value of the property as recorded on the valuation roll

How the council determines this According to the valuation roll the value of a (an ordinary matchbox) site is R10 000

The council charges 0,645c for every R1 in the total of the property. The value of the property (R10 000) is multiplied by 0,645, which gives a total of R645

The total (R645) is then divided by 12 months, giving R53,75. The council then deducts a 60 percent rebate from the figure (R53,75) and the remaining 40 percent (R21,50) is then payable monthly by residents

This new figure will appear in bills sent to residents this month

In addition, residents will also pay for water, sewerage, and refuse removal

Electricity bills are in some cases paid directly to Eskom but for those residents who get their supply from the council, the rates will be reflected in their monthly bills

The money generated by means of assessment rates is used to provide services such as roads, parks, libraries, halls and street lights

Residents of Greater Johannesburg have until August 26 to inspect the new valuation rolls of the substructures

Forms are available at Eastern Metropolitan Substructure Sandton Civic Centre, Alexandra Civic Centre, Metropolitan Centre Braamfontein. Telephone 881-6075 or 407-6883

Northern MSS, Randburg Civic Centre 1425A Sofasonke Street, Orlando 1729 Zone One Diepkloof Metropolitan Centre Braamfontein. Telephone 407-6883

Western MSS, Roodepoort Civic Centre, Dobsonville Civic Centre, Metropolitan Centre Braamfontein. Telephone 766-2166 or 407-6883

Southern MSS, Metro Centre Braamfontein, Jabulani Centre Soweto, Lenasia Centre, Ennerdale Centre. Tel 886-0163 or 407-6883



People living in "matchbox" houses such as these in Soweto will soon be paying monthly rates like those paid in the former "white" suburbs of Johannesburg. PIC PAT SEBOKO

# Jo'burg residents have to pay up

By Joshua Raboroko

HUNDREDS of thousands of Greater Johannesburg residents - black and white - are to pay the same assessment rates based on new valuation rolls and increased water and sewerage tariffs this month

The shock tariff increases for ratepayers were announced by the Greater Johannesburg Transitional Metropolitan Council amid protests from the civic organisations and concerned residents

The TMC has approved an assessment rate of 64,5c for every rand in the total value of a property, a water tariff

increase of 20 percent and a sewerage charge hike of 40 percent

The TMC has become the first metropole in South Africa to introduce uniform valuation rolls (assessment rates) that cut across previous apartheid-rated boundaries

It has been equipped with the basis for achieving equity in property taxation after uniform rolls have been completed for all four metropolitan substructures which include Soweto, Dobsonville, Diepmeadow and Alexandra Township

These mainly black residential areas and others to the south of Kliprivier have been valued for rating

purposes for the first time

Assessment rates as a form of local taxation are levied on the value of a site as reflected on a valuation roll

These rolls are complete lists of rateable property of all substructures within Greater Johannesburg and their value, which reflects the market value of these properties as at January 2

These valuation rolls will include some 200 000 to 240 000 properties that have never been valued for rating purposes

There are nearly 500 000 properties within the areas covered. Previously valuation departments existed only in Johannesburg, Randburg and Sandton

This year private valuers were responsible for the valuation of Roodepoort, south and east Lenasia and Ennerdale

Councillor Eugene Robson says assessment rates form an important part of the council's income. Certain services, such as electricity, water, sewerage, transport are classified as remunerative services and the underlying principle is that the users should pay for them

There are, however, also certain facilities which are available to all where no charges are raised for the use thereof, such as libraries, parks, sports fields and roads

## Naturena low-cost housing approved despite protests

(127) Star 14/8/96

STAFF REPORTER AND SAPA

The application for the establishment of a low-cost housing scheme in Naturena has been approved by the Southern Metropolitan Sub-Structure (SMSS) town planning tribunal, despite heated protests by residents.

Tribunal chairman Norman Prince said the scheme had been approved in accordance with the recommendations outlined in the application.

He said a steering committee made up of residents of Naturena, representatives from the beneficiary community and other stakeholders would be set up with immediate effect and would have 30 days to compile a report on the proposed housing scheme.

Early yesterday morning residents blockaded both exits to Naturena with about 50 vehicles for three hours, before moving to the Johannesburg Transitional Metropolitan Council chamber, where the tribunal was to meet



# Council offers compensation if property prices decline

(127) *Star* 15/8/96

STAFF REPORTER

Authorities have offered to compensate residents if their property values plunge as a result of a low-cost housing development in Misgund North, Naturena.

Only employed people now living in Thembalihle, near Lenasia, would qualify for houses and subsidies, said Norman Prince, chairman of the Southern Metropolitan Substructure's town planning tribunal, which approved the development.

It was hoped these assurances would allay Naturena residents' fears that the housing development would inject crime and unemployment into the area and cause the value of their properties to plummet.

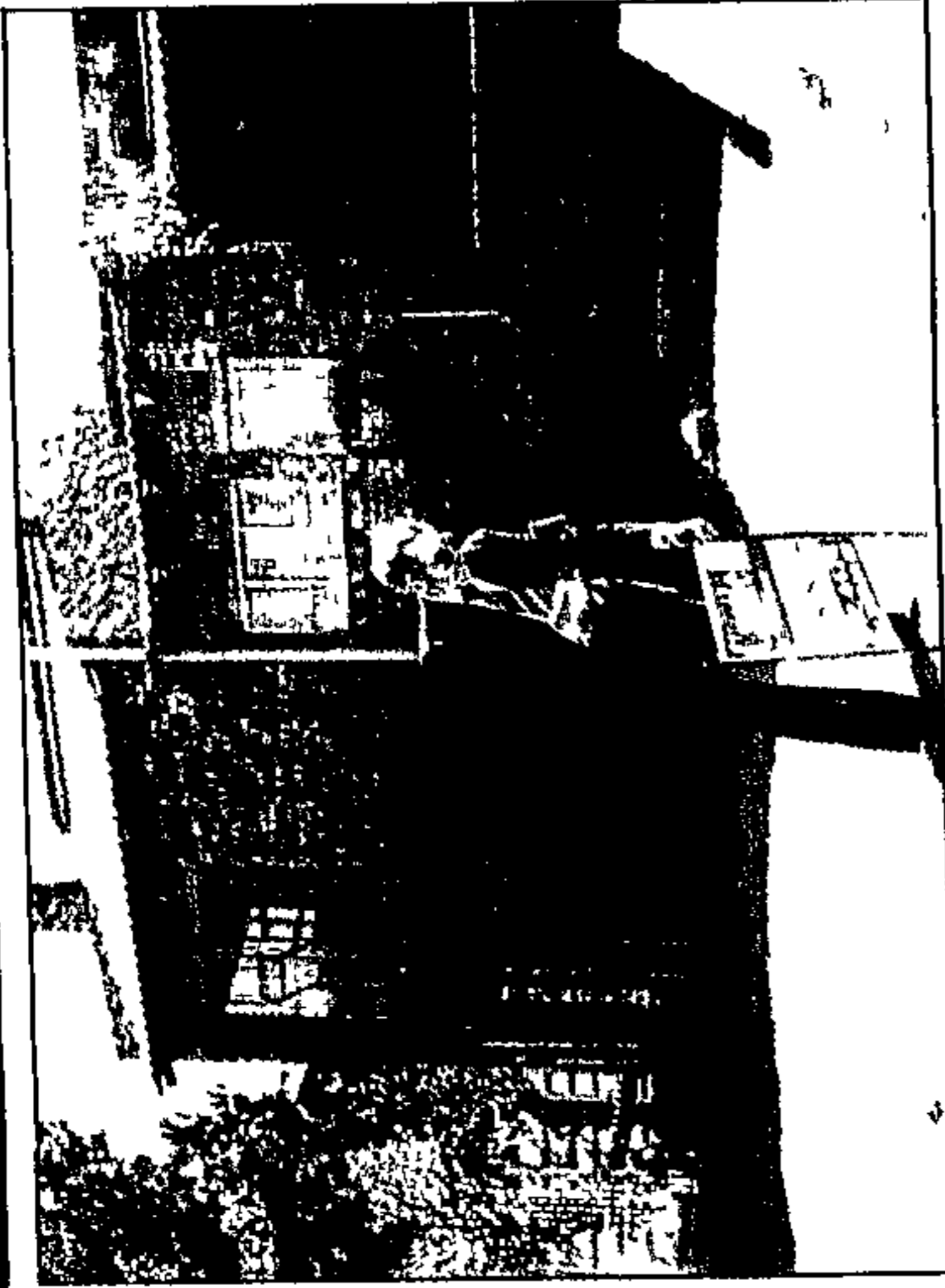
"If any person can prove

within six months from the time the Thembalihle people move in that their houses have been devalued, the council will go through a legal process to investigate the claims and compensate them if necessary," Prince said.

Angry Naturena residents blockaded the area on Tuesday morning in protest against the development. They later disrupted a tribunal hearing on the development in Braamfontein.

■ Sapa reported yesterday that residents intend applying for a Supreme Court interdict to prevent the city council from resettling squatters in the area. Residents' spokesman Jackie Marohanye said a meeting with a council tribunal on Tuesday night had failed to address the concerns of the community.

**BITTER**



**COME AND GET IT . . .** Jim Arthur says the decision to allow squatters to move into Naturena will bring property prices down — so he's getting out quickly. **PICS: ANDRIES MCINEKA**

**BAFFLED**



**MOVING UP . . .** Betty Maleho can't wait to leave her matchbox home in Thembehle. She doesn't understand why Naturena residents don't want people like her to move in.

# 'So there goes the neighbourhood . . .'

**BY TSEPISO MATELA**

WHEN approaching the suburb of Naturena, south of Johannesburg, one is impressed by its tranquility. But behind the apparent calm lies frustration and anger.

Its home owners are angrily opposed to the pending relocation of squatters from Lenasia to Naturena by the Greater Johannesburg Metropolitan Council.

We found one resident Jim Arthur, fuming as he put up a 'sale' sign outside his house.

Arthur believes there is a place for everyone but said the squatters belong in Thembehle outside Lenasia, and not in Naturena.

"This government is corrupt. From its President to its local authorities they are the people creating this problem. This is our neighbourhood and the squatters will bring all the house prices down," he said.

A bitter Arthur said he plans to relocate to a suburb unthreatened by a squatter invasion. "I would rather move and be happy, because my R270 000 house will devalue if these squatters come. What I do not understand is why the authorities are moving them to Naturena because we do not have sufficient infrastructure here."

"We only have five buses to transport the residents, and there's

only one primary school," he added.

Arthur said the relocation of the squatters is a deliberate ploy by the government to devalue their houses.

"In the past, a thing like this would not have been tolerated. But because this government is corrupt they allow anything, regardless of who suffers. I used to be a proud owner but not anymore so I am moving," he said while putting up the sign outside his home.

On the outskirts of Lenasia, in the squatter camp called Thembehle, the squatters that spoke to City Press were excited about the prospect of owning their own homes.

We found Betty Maleho seated

(127) CP 18/8/96  
outside her one room shack. She shares this 'matchbox' she calls home with her three children and husband.

"My husband and I want to move in Naturena we will have a proper house. Unlike here we will be happier because there will be enough space for all five of us," she said.

What she does not understand — like most Thembehle squatters — is why Naturena residents do not want them to move in.

I thought this is a democratic country and people could live wherever they want," she added.

We then spoke to Mooketsi Mashumi who is on the Thembehle Administration Development Forum.

"The reason why the residents of Thembehle are to be relocated from Lenasia to Naturena is because this place is a disaster area."

"The area has dolomite (a type of limestone) which causes the ground to sink after a heavy rain-fall. For that reason the Greater Johannesburg Metropolitan Council, under its Rapid Land Release programme, decided last year that we can move to Naturena when the low cost houses are ready — as it is safer," he explained.

Meanwhile, an emergency meeting called by Naturena residents with council officials in Braamfontein on Wednesday failed to overturn the council's decision to relocate the squatters.



South of Johannesburg, marched to Gauteng premier Tokyo Sexwale's Houghton home to demand protest against planned low cost housing development in Naturena. Watched build a makeshift shack on the pavement outside Sexwale's house. Picture: ROBERT BOTHA

## Demonstration at Sexwale home slammed

(127) PD 19/8/96  
THE Gauteng department of safety and security yesterday slammed Naturena residents, protesting against approval of a low-income housing development, for targeting the Houghton residence of premier Tokyo Sexwale.

Safety and security department spokesman Mbulelo Vusi said in an interview the department would not allow private residences to be targeted for protests. "People must express their grievances through the right channels; the premier's house is a private residence," he said.

Vusi condemned as shocking the throwing of litter by protesters in front

of the premier's gate. He said the group had abused their right to protest and had violated the rights of the premier.

The group of about 40 protesters, who had threatened clashes with police, dispersed peacefully after their memorandum was accepted by safety and security representative Mkhabelo Sibeko.

On Tuesday last week protesting Naturena residents blockaded entrances to the south of the Johannesburg suburb and shouted down the application hearing for the proposed housing development in the Johannesburg Metropolitan Council. — Sapa

## Rubbish-dumping protest draws ire

BY STUART KELLY

(129)  
Naturena residents who marched to Gauteng Premier Tokyo Sexwale's home in Houghton, Johannesburg, yesterday had abused their rights to protest by taking their grievances to his home instead of going to his office, Sexwale's spokesman said last night.

Sefako Nyaka said the residents, the second group of protesters to besiege the premier's home in the past month, could have used other means of voicing

their grievances.

The previous group of people who demonstrated outside Sexwale's home were casino owners disgruntled with the province's new gaming laws.

The group of about 50 who converged on Sexwale's home yesterday dumped rubbish in his driveway in protest against plans to build low-cost houses in their southern Johannesburg suburb

Mkhabelo Sibeko, from Safety and Security MEC Jessie Duarte's office, received a memorandum from the residents

Star 19/8/96

# Sexwale's plush home trashed

*South African 19/8/96 (127)*

By Russel Molefe and Sapa

**T**HE PRIVATE HOME of Gauteng premier Mr Tokyo Sexwale in Houghton, Johannesburg, was trashed early yesterday by a group of Naturena residents who are protesting against a low-cost housing development plan for squatters in their area.

Sexwale was not at home when the residents, armed with full rubbish bags and braziers, caught his aides offguard and blocked the street.

The residents emptied the rubbish bags on the premier's driveway, then cooked mieliepap on braziers and threw it inside the yard. This was done to show the premier "how the squatters were going to mess up their suburb", the residents said.

They later demanded to meet with the premier but were told he was not

## Frustrated Naturena residents take their campaign to a dirty new level

available. Safety and security director-general Mr Mkhabela Sibeko accepted a memorandum from residents after a lengthy argument with other officials.

This action by the residents follows a plan by the Greater Johannesburg Metropolitan Council to develop low-cost housing in Naturena where squatters from Lenasia are to be relocated.

### Action slammed

The area in which the squatters are presently staying is dolomitic, which causes the land to sink in after a heavy rainfall.

Gauteng safety and security department yesterday slammed the action by the group of residents in targeting the

premier's house and vowed to prevent similar occurrences in future.

Spokesman Mr Mbulelo Vusi said residents had violated their right to protest and had also violated the rights of the premier.

"People must express their grievances through the right channels. The premier's house is a private residence," Vusi said.

The premier's spokesman, Mr Sefako Nyaka, said residents did not notify the premier's office of their intention to march to his residence. He dismissed as "lies" claims by residents that they had been informed the premier would meet them at his residence yesterday.

# No regrets over protests at Sexwale's home

(127) Star 20/8/96

**BY KARIN SCHIMKE**  
City Editor

Groups of protesters who in recent weeks have taken their grievances to Gauteng Premier Tokyo Sexwale's Houghton, Johannesburg, home are unrepentant about the disruption they caused, even though their problems were not directly linked to the premier and his family

On Sunday a third protest in as many weeks was staged in front of the premier's house. Naturena home-owners, unhappy that informal settlements are going up near their homes, built a shack on the pavement outside his home, trampled plants, dumped rubbish and dog faeces on his driveway and made a fire in a drum near the wall

Three weeks ago casino owners and workers also protested in front

of his house

Superintendent Billy Combrink of the police VIP protection unit said yesterday the protests outside the premier's private home were cause for concern

He said the safety of the Sexwale family was under threat, their privacy was being invaded and protesters were breaking "all kinds of municipal by-laws".

"Mr Sexwale's wife would not have been able to leave the house yesterday if there had been an emergency because the driveway was blocked. Also, one has no idea of what kind of people might have been hiding within the crowd, and that created a security problem"

Combrink said extra VIP protection members were deployed at the house when a protest occurred

Sexwale's spokesman Sefako Nyaka said it was wrong for people

to protest near the premier's house, "especially when one considers that the premier has repeatedly told the community that the door to his office is always open"

He urged people with grievances to bring them to the Gauteng government's head offices at 30 Simmonds Street, Johannesburg

However, protesters who took part in the demonstrations said they were not sorry for their actions

Jackie Maarohanye of Naturena said Sunday's protest was to show the premier and his family what it was like to live near squatters

Delon Dannhauser, who marched with casino owners, said "We have serious issues that need to be addressed, even if it does mean invading Sexwale's privacy"

Lynne Bezuidenhout, a neighbour of the Sexwales, said the premier had handled the protests "admirably"

# Diepsloot not 'promised land' residents hoped for

By FREDRICKS  
MOVIA

Three months after being re-located from the Far East Bank squatter camp in Alexandra, Innocent Siphuma is still unhappy at Diepsloot in the north-west of Johannesburg.

His new home - a two-roomed shack he shares with his wife, baby daughter, brother, sister-in-law and their 15-year-old daughter - has proven to be more of an inconvenience than the new squatters were promised.

He has had to leave his job as a security guard in Isando because his transport costs were too high.

"When I lived in Far East Bank, I paid R2 to get to work, now I have to pay R7,50," he said. Siphuma was earning R1 200 a month at Isando, with a medical aid scheme and a pension fund.

His niece also had to leave school in Alexandra because the family could no

longer afford travel costs. Siphuma said he found little solace in the job offer the Diepsloot council made him to become a security guard.

There he would be earning R46 a day, but he is sceptical of the council's intentions. "I saw people being re-trenched there and now they tell me they do not have my name in their files. How do I know they will pay me come month end?" Siphuma asked.

However, not everything about Diepsloot was gloomy, he said. "At least here we have toilets and we have been promised electricity. A mobile clinic makes regular rounds."

In Far East Bank, he said, there had been no infrastructure. Despite all the problems, Siphuma insists Diepsloot remains better than Venda, which he left six years ago to work in Johannesburg.

"At least there's money here," he said.

# New Far East Bank homes ready for occupation soon

ANDREAS VLACHAKIS



Mixed blessing - his new home has brought both problems and benefits to Innocent Siphuma.

Shacks give way to 4 600 units to be built in three phases

By ALMA COX AND KAREN SCHMIDT

There only months ago shacks jostled for space on the Far East Bank in Alexandra there is now nothing but a high security fence and piles of rubble. Further down the bank, the frames of new houses are springing up daily.

The Far East Bank was the centre of controversy earlier this year when about 4 000 squatters illegally invaded the land. Now development of the area, which saw such bitter fights, is in full swing and Gauteng housing department spokesman Eugene van den Berg said the new houses would be occupied "within the next few months".

He said 121 houses were under construction out of the 172 scheduled for phase one A of the housing scheme.

A total of 4 600 units are expected to be built in three phases. Phase one, with a budget of R11,5-million through Provincial

Housing Board and Independent Development Trust funds, will have 918 units.

Applications for these units have already been approved. Residents have paid deposits of R250 for occupation and have qualified for the housing subsidy. If additional finance is needed, financial institutions are on site to assist in arranging it. Houses are selling at between R16 000 and R42 000.

The construction work of phase one is being carried out by Alexandra builders.

Phase two will see the construction of 1 187 and phase three of 3 510 units. A budget for phases two and three is in the pipeline but design work has not yet been completed. Plans for cluster and three-storey units are being considered. The Department of Housing has about R10-million available as revolving funds for the area which will be used as bridging finance.

But while the intended course of development goes ahead in

Alexandra, the land invasion has left a scars that may take years to heal.

The people who were relocated to Diepsloot north of Randburg at the beginning of May are unhappy that their new homes are so far away from Alexandra. Travelling costs to work and school have doubled and many find they cannot afford it.

Removing the land invaders, erecting a perimeter fence and keeping sheriffs of the court on site during the worst of the conflict, is estimated to have run up a bill of close to R5-million.

Mike Monary, a councillor of the Eastern Substructure, said in a council meeting that all the work on the Far East Bank had been carried out by the Transnational Metropolitan Council and the Eastern Substructure. He pleaded for provincial government to accept some responsibility for the costs incurred.

He said, "All too often, the ratepayer of Johannesburg is being given the burden."

# Gauteng housing gets a R1bn boost

(127) ET(BR) 21/8/96

By Mpho Mantju

Johannesburg — Housing in Gauteng received a R1 billion boost from the private sector yesterday, which will result in 20 000 houses being built in the province over the next three years

Dan Mofokeng, the MEC for housing, said thousands of people in Gauteng on waiting lists for housing would soon be able to rent and buy houses

The housing project would take the form of well-located high-density housing such as townhouses,

with a variety of innovative financing mechanisms attached to their construction, Mofokeng said

Companies that would be involved in the project include First National and Nedcor banks, RMP Properties Services, LTA Construction, the New Housing Company and Grinaker Construction

Alec Grant, the general manager at FNB, said black construction companies would be roped into the project

Grant said the national housing backlog was estimated at between

1,5 and 2,9 million units, with 60 percent of these in Gauteng.

Monty Narsoo, of the Gauteng housing and land ministry, said the government was putting R200 million into the project

Agreements have been reached between the various parties and Mofokeng to ensure the existence of available land, the availability and approval of subsidies, the utilisation of sufficient building expertise and the existence of sufficient building capacity to cater for the development



# Homes for deprived draw 20 000 objections

Star 22/8/96 (127)

First families were to have moved on to their sites this month, but only two hearings have been held

By ANNA COX

**T**wenty thousand objections against five housing projects for people living under stressful conditions in Greater Johannesburg have been received by local authorities from neighbouring residents

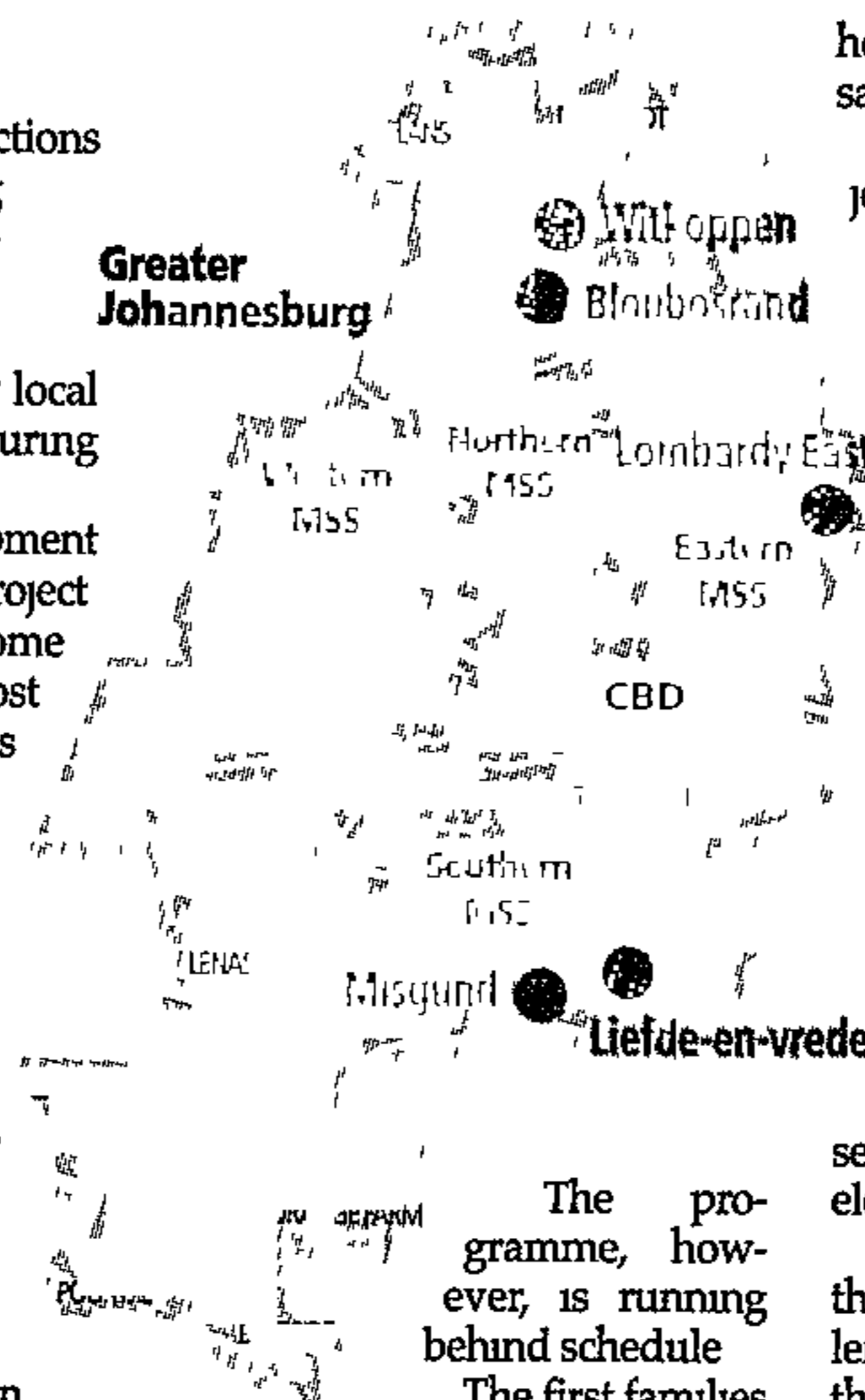
The Rapid Land Development Programme is a once-off project involving the relocation of some 5 000 families from the most disadvantaged communities living in hazardous and dangerous conditions such as on dolomite, floodplains, ash-dumps or in politically dangerous conditions.

Of 20 000 families living in these conditions, 5 080 were identified as a priority.

These are the Alexandra displacees who were forced to flee their homes in 1992 after political violence, and who have been living in overcrowded and unhygienic conditions in church and school halls; people squatting illegally on privately owned land in Zevenfontein; residents of Dlamini in Soweto where people are living below the 50-year floodline; and Thembalihle squatters near Lenasia who have built shacks on dolomitic ground

The five new areas are 970 stands in Bloubostrand, north of Randburg; 1 130 stands in Witkoppen, Randburg; 770 stands in Lombardy East, next to Alexandra; 880 in Misgund North, next to Naturena, and 1 500 stands in Liefde-en-Vrede near Alberton

Major concerns neighbouring residents have voiced are fears that with only a R15 000 subsidy – part of which would be used to pay for infrastructure – people qualifying for the 25sq m sites would only be able to afford to build shacks, which would result in the devaluation of neighbouring property prices.



The programme, however, is running behind schedule. The first families were to have been moved on to the five identified sites this month, but only two of the town planning tribunal hearings – Lombardy East and Misgund North – have been heard.

The Lombardy East application was approved subject to certain conditions and the Misgund North application, following recent protests from Naturena residents, has been put on hold until a representative steering committee reports back to the tribunal within the next two months

The Liefde-en-Vrede hearing will be held next week, and the Bloubostrand and Witkoppen hearings will be held at the beginning of next month

Greater Johannesburg Metro Council strategic executive for metropolitan planning Tshepiso Mashurini said progress could not be made until the town planning tribunal hearings were completed

"The projects had been advertised and various public meetings

held in the proposed areas, he said.

"The council wishes the project to develop as quickly as possible, working with the community representatives of both the beneficiary and existing residents. Hence the relocation of the communities on the identified portions of land will depend on the outcome of tribunal hearings."

The council was also committed to providing a high level of service, as was seen in adjacent residential areas

"Such a level of infrastructure will include surfaced roads, stormwater drainage, water-borne sewage, water reticulation and electricity," he said

Mashurini added that last year the council had undergone a lengthy process of identifying those communities who were living in stressful conditions

The financial modelling for the delivery of houses and infrastructure was being looked at carefully, but no final decision had been taken. The council had made application to the Provincial Housing Board for finance

The housing department of the Greater Johannesburg Metro Council was investigating various housing options and financial models to finance the top structure, taking into account the affordability level and what the communities were able and willing to invest

Local steering committees, comprising three political parties, had been established and had held meetings with objectors, hearing their concerns and addressing misconceptions

People earning up to R800 will qualify for a R15 000 subsidy, those earning between R801 and R1 500 for a R12 500 subsidy, between R1 501 and R2 500 for R9 500, and between R2 501 and R3 500 for R5 000

# Tembisa Council and Sanco clash

(127) Star 22/8/96

By HOPEWELL RADEBE  
City Desk

Kempton Park/Tembisa Metropolitan Council is seeking legal action against the Tembisa branch of the South African National Civic Organisation (Sanco) for allegedly interfering with the council's programme of electricity cut-offs for communities not paying for services.

Deputy executive committee chairman Bheki Khumalo said the council had begun implementing credit control measures and switching off the electricity supplies of all residents who were ignoring council notices and were not updating their bills.

Tembisa's Sanco branch has, in turn, announced its intention to reconnect the electricity at all households which have had their electricity cut off by the council, calling its act of defiance "Operation Khanyisa" - meaning to switch back on.

Sanco branch president Ali Tleane is the former mayor of the Kempton Park/Tembisa Metro Council. He was expelled from the council in May this year for failing to pay for his services.

Tleane had refused to settle his municipal accounts and was paying only a flat rate, which the council was phasing out on the grounds that if he paid he would be betraying his people whose

problems had not been satisfactorily addressed by the council.

Tleane also said Sanco would counteract the "myopic switch-off antics of the discredited council". He accused the council of taking unilateral decisions to enforce payment while many township households meters had not been fixed.

Khumalo said the council has had discussions with Sanco and various group community structures about payment of services and improvement of service delivery.

He said the law would take its course in disciplining all those who were interfering with council powers.

He said before the implementation of the credit control measures, every Tembisa resident was informed about the agreement between Eskom and the council that about R4,5-million of Tembisa monthly electricity consumption would be paid by the council but all residents would have to pay for what they were consuming.

Chief Executive Officer Johan Leibrandt said residents had expressed the desire to pay, provided the council ensured that their water and electricity meters were repaired. "People wanted us to make sure that no one was illegally connected to their meters because they did not want to pay for other people," Leibrandt said.



Gauteng premier Tokyo Sexwale at the Tembalihle squatter camp south of Johannesburg yesterday dissuading protesters from marching to neighbouring Naturena where residents have protested against a low-cost housing project for the squatters  
 Pictures TREVOR SAMSON

## Sexwale 'will not abandon' squatters

Nonavenda Mathiane

BD 23/8/96

GAUTENG premier Tokyo Sexwale promised Tembalihle squatter camp residents yesterday that he would not abandon them just because they were poor.

He said that by staying in Houghton he had become a symbol for the poor, showing that they too could live there some day.

Sexwale told more than 2 000 residents of Tembalihle — which is adjacent to Lenasia — that he was born at Shantytown, a squatter camp in Orlando, and was in Tembalihle to stop residents marching to Naturena.

Accompanied by Johannesburg mayor Isaac Mogase, members of the greater Johannesburg metropolitan council and southern substructure councillors, Sexwale received a tumultuous welcome and led the crowd in singing freedom songs.

While he would not say when houses would be built for Tembalihle residents, he spent the greater part of his speech denigrating Naturena residents, saying it was shameful that they had not tackled the previous government.

Residents carried placards bearing messages about housing, among them one that read "Beware Watkins of your actions."

Sylvia Watkins, a Naturena task team member, spoke out on television on Monday against the building of low cost-housing in Naturena.

# Sexwale rounds on Naturena protesters

(127)

## Gauteng premier says the poor are being punished for being destitute

By FAREE-NITSEMELLO MOVA  
City Desk

The value of property in Naturena, southern Johannesburg, will not fall because of the settling of squatters from Thembalille, but because of Naturena residents who are "middle-class upstarts", says Gauteng Premier Tokyo Sexwale.

He said on Wednesday they were to be blamed for making the Thembalille residents wanderers in their own land.

Naturena residents recently blockaded the suburb during rush hour in protest against the relocating of Thembalille residents to nearby Misgund. They also trashed the driveway of Sexwale's house in Houghton, Johannesburg, last week.

The residents complained that the settlement would reduce the value of their property and cause an upswing in crime.

"The people who are fighting (the provincial government) are not the poor but the rich, or those who think they are rich. They are fighting us because we run with the poor," said Sexwale, adding that the poor were being punished for being destitute.

"I would rather let my property drop by 3% so that one day



CHRISTINE NESBITT

Star 23/8/96

Calming measures ... Gauteng Premier Tokyo Sexwale placates residents of the Thembalille squatter camp near Lenasia, saying poor people are very much the concern of the Government.

It rises with that of all the people around me," he said. Naturena residents needed to heed the example of Sandton residents who were prepared to work together with the people of Alexandra to improve the standard of life for the poorer section of the community. Sexwale said the trend asked how Naturena residents hoped the lives of Thembalille people would improve if they were left to their own devices. "We will never abandon the poor," Sexwale said.

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# Sexwale slams Naturena residents

(127)  
Sowetan 23/8/96

By Muzi Mkhwanazi

GAUTENG premier Mr Tokyo Sexwale yesterday lashed out at residents of Naturena, south of Johannesburg, for their refusal to accommodate squatters from the Tembelihle settlement in Lenasia.

Addressing hundreds of Tembelihle residents, Sexwale attacked Naturena residents, calling them "middle-class upstarts who have forgotten where they come from" and accused them of "turning against brothers".

Tembelihle residents had planned to march on Naturena, but changed their minds when Sexwale visited them.

Sexwale said Naturena residents were hiding behind "dropping property values and high crime, but in truth they did not want poor, stinking and dirty people" as their neighbours.

They were practising economic apartheid and marginalising and pushing the poor away from them, he said.

He said some of these (Naturena) people had brought filth to his house but had never thought of applying the same action during apartheid.

However, not all of the residents at Naturena were against the squatters. There were cliques who were bent on derailing the government's plan of housing people and some were collaborating with rightwingers to achieve that goal.

"Nothing is more dangerous than a former slave who has turned master. People in Sandton are cooperating with us to house the homeless people from Alexandra, but our brothers have turned their backs against their brothers."

Last Sunday, Naturena residents demonstrated outside Sexwale's house in Houghton. They erected shacks and littered his yard.

Councillor Dan Bovu said Tembelihle residents wanted to correct the misapprehension that they were going to build shacks in Naturena.

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**DAN HAS A PLAN**

FM 23/8/96

The Gauteng Housing & Land Ministry this week announced a "billion rand partnership" with the private sector to build 20 000 houses in the province over the next three years

Housing MEC Dan Mofokeng says the structures worked out together with a number of private sector partners will "ensure delivery" The new housing will be "well-located" from the perspective of job opportunities and existing residential locations, and financed with a "variety of innovative mechanisms"

The financing mechanism is essentially "nonmortgage based and aimed at those earning between R800 and R1 500 a month," says Gauteng housing policy and administration director Monty Narsoo R200m will come from government and R800m from the private sector in the form of small loans The average cost per unit will be R40 000

Implementation will be facilitated by two separate business initiatives The first partnership is made up of First National Bank, RMP Properties, LTA Construction, The New Housing Company and Grnaker Construction

The other partnership consists of Grnaker and Nedcor Bank

The development will be known as the Gauteng Housing Projects (GHP) Each development will consist of about 5 000 units, utilising 5 000 government housing subsidies each Mofokeng also says the GHP may be spread over different geographic locations in Gauteng

Each company involved has submitted a separate plan for the proposed development The plans are the result of research by the private sector task force formed two years ago and aimed at providing basic shelter to those earning less than R1 500/month ■

## Midrand threatens legal action over erection of homes for 2 000 squatters

Midrand residents and businesses are threatening protest and legal action against the Khayalami Metro Council, formerly the North East Rand Metro Council, to prevent the erection of structures for almost 2 000 families at an informal settlement there.

Businesses are irate about the proposed settlement which is to happen in Commercial, an area zoned as industrial. The land was expropriated from local business by the council in May for the purpose of low-cost housing.

At the council meeting last week, Community Action Party councillor Finnie Janse van Rensburg accused the Khayalami council of failing to involve the Midrand council from the beginning of the process. She challenged the legality of the Khayala-

mi Metro Council expropriating land, arguing that the local government ordinance did not grant metro councils such powers.

"The council should not ignore the fact that businesses and residents in the area have invested hundreds of thousands of rands in their properties, and any low-cost development, unless well planned, would negatively affect them."

Charles Muller of the President Park Residents' Association said residents believed proper low-cost housing had to be established because the proposed informal settlement would be bordering two affluent areas in which properties were valued at around R500 000. Residents feared these would lose half their value if the shacks went up. - City Desk

(127)

Star 26/8/96

# rates revolt has begun

Star 26/8/96 (127)

RIAN HORN

**Taking no prisoners ... police task force members ready themselves during a search at the Highgate Mall yesterday. They were called in because two robbers were believed to be hiding in the mall's ceiling.**

## Council silent as it loses millions, with residents in Sandton, Roodepoort and elsewhere ignoring higher monthly accounts

By ANNA COX

**T**he Greater Johannesburg Metro Council faces a backlash from angry ratepayers against huge rates hikes and massive increases in the valuation of their properties

Sandton residents have already begun their threatened rates boycott with payment levels dropping from 98 to 60% in the past two months - even before ratepayers received their first accounts reflecting increases of an average 243%.

Owners of hundreds of smallholdings in Roodepoort and Randburg are also threatening a rates boycott in protest against excessive increases in the valuation of their properties

Although Eastern Metro Council officials have refused to comment on the decrease in payments in Sandton, a budget and finance committee report containing these figures has been leaked to The Star

The report shows that arrears increased from R54-million in May to R59-million in June, when

the massive increases were announced, and to R76-million last month

In an apparent move to prevent publication of these figures, authorities have refused to answer any questions regarding them

Questions sent by The Star to metropolitan planning strategic officer Irvine Florence on Tuesday have remained unanswered despite repeated requests for comment.

Public relations officer Daleen van Wyk initially told The Star the replies were ready, but later said both chief executive officer Canzi Lisa and executive committee chairman Nkele Ntingane were "too busy" to reply.

Meanwhile, the Sandton Federation of Ratepayers (Sanfed) - an umbrella body representing 21 ratepayers' associations - has established an office in Benmore Gardens, staffed by volunteers, to assist residents who wish to withhold or defer rates payments.

Residents can also obtain advice regarding objections to property valuations at the

office

A trust fund, which will be administered by auditors and attorneys, has been set up for those wishing to pay their rates money into a dedicated account

Sanfed is recommending that services accounts, such as water, sewerage, refuse and electricity, be paid in full, but only on the due date

Said Sanfed spokesman Brian Stolzenberg "Ratepayers will obviously go into arrears with the shortfall and be charged interest until the issue is resolved, but that's better than letting the council have our hard-earned money. Maybe they will realise this time that we are serious."

"We now have to stand together to fight. Apathy and complacency are out - this is the new South Africa."

Sanfed is also arranging a petition objecting to the general rates increase of 243% on the grounds that it is inequitable, and seriously and adversely affects property owners.

It says that no attempts have

► To Page 2

## Rates revolt

### has begun

► From Page 1 (127)

been made by authorities to involve property owners, who will protect their rights to oppose any increase in excess of 20% above the previous rate

DP Johannesburg leader Anchen Dreyer said she was shocked that the council's top officials were withholding information regarding rates payment levels

"This is not a political matter - the public is entitled to get this kind of information

"We are dealing with public money and the public is entitled to answers"

Roodepoort and Randburg smallholding owners, who are also threatening a rates boycott, claim excessive valuation

in some areas of Randburg has led to increases of between 900 and 1 500% in areas like Inadan in Randburg and greater Wilgespruit, resulting in residents having to pay R2 000 a month to live on unserviced plots, many threatened by informal settlements

Plot owners have been paying rates for decades, however, still don't have water or sewage connections, tarred roads, street lights or any basic services suburban dwellers take for granted, said Johan Annandale of the Honeydew Ratepayers Association

Said Honeydew resident Matthe Hough "The agricultural smallholding market in Gauteng is shaky right now and residents fear that high rates will push it over the edge

"Deteriorating safety situations, fear of legal and illegal land invasions, lack of services and infrastructure and high maintenance cost of smallholdings have created a very slow market over the past few years," she said

Said chairman of the Three Rivers regional rates resistance committee, Denis Gillilan

"We are tired of being exploited, whether by confusion or conspiracy. It is high time that local government gets its act together and stops wasting the time of citizens who are trying to build this country's economy"



# Ratepayers in Gauteng in for a rude shock

(127)  
By Joshua Raboroko

THOUSANDS of ratepayers across Greater Johannesburg, including informal settlements in and around Soweto, will be in for a shock when they receive accounts of their rates today

The accounts, which were expected from July in the southern, eastern and northern metropolitan sub-structures and other areas of the Greater Johannesburg, were delayed as a result of "logistic problems"

GJTMC media liaison Mr Grant Walker said yesterday the bills would be distributed from today

Most residents of Alexandra Township and Soweto, Dobsonville, Diepmeadow, Ennerdale, Lenasia and squatter camps of Orange Farm and Poortjie who never paid rates before, will be shocked to find an extra R21,50 or more added to their bills

Regarding squatters, Walker said owners of plots in informal settlements would be billed

Ratepayers and their associations slammed the council for the rises

Soweto civic organisations and ratepayers associations have expressed their concern, urging residents to boycott payment of new rates

# Major row over housing project

(127)

Sowetan 27/8/96

By Joshua Raboroko

## Some residents opposed to the erection of houses in the area

**A** MAJOR SHOWDOWN is looming between the Greater Johannesburg Metropolitan Council and a ratepayers' forum over plans by the council to build more than 3 000 low-cost houses near formerly white suburbs.

The dispute started at a Press conference in Johannesburg yesterday when the council and the Johannesburg South Ratepayers' Federation supported the rapid development of land at Liefde and Vrede, south of Johannesburg, for the building of low-cost houses.

A group of opposition ratepayers, calling themselves New South Community Forum, immediately threatened protest and legal action against the move, saying they had not been consulted. They said they

would prevent the creation of any informal settlement between Kiblerpark and Mulbarton.

The council's executive committee chairman, Mr Prema Naidoo, told journalists that they had decided to lift the moratorium on the sale of land at Liefde and Vrede.

About 1 500 families who have been living in squalid conditions on an informal settlement at Dlamini 2 in Soweto for many years will benefit from the housing project.

After considering concerns raised by communities, the council decided to consult the federation to support the project on condition basic services such as roads, water, sewerage

and electricity were installed.

Federation chairman Mr Ken Giese said after negotiation with the council and political parties they had agreed to build houses, preferably not less than 50 square metre units.

Mr Hugo Venter, representing about 3 900 members of the ratepayers' forum, said they opposed any moves by the council to build low-cost housing in all areas south of Johannesburg.

Meanwhile, Midrand residents and businesses are threatening protest and legal action against the Khayalami Metro Council to prevent the erection of structures for about 2 000 families at an informal settlement there.

# Subsidy to house Jo'burg vagrants in the balance

BY KARIN SCHIMKE

City Editor

MON 28/8/96  
The fate of about 6 000 vagrants in Johannesburg hangs in the balance because housing subsidies may not fall within the ambit of the National Housing Board's subsidy scheme.

The Greater Johannesburg Metro Council, with the Gauteng housing department and several non-governmental welfare organisations, last year began work on a R51-million programme to purchase and renovate buildings in central Johannesburg to house the vagrants in the next three years.

However, Lindsay Bremner, who chairs the council's housing, urbanisation and environmental committee, said yesterday that housing officials and councillors were concerned about news that the National Housing Board may refuse a proposed subsidy of R17-million a year over three years.

"Earlier this year the provincial housing department and the provincial housing board approved finance for capital costs. The council would pay running and maintenance costs, and welfare organisations would manage the shelters. But because of the nature of the national housing subsidy programme, and despite the province's agreement, through technicalities the National Housing Board will now have difficulty funding us," Bremner said.

She said it appeared the subsidy was being refused "based on the premise that the housing of homeless people should be undertaken by the Department of Welfare." Welfare did not, however, have a budget for the capital costs of purchasing and refurbishing buildings and had no programme for the housing of the city's adult homeless population, Bremner added.

Nine projects in central Johannesburg and one in Rosebank are now in various stages of renovation, but may have to be put on hold until financing is finalised. The shelters are to be refurbished to provide sleeping units, lock-up facilities, and communal ablution and cooking facilities.

People are to be housed temporarily until they can move on to more permanent accommodation

# 6 000 homeless face eviction

(127) sawetan 28/8/96

By Joshua Raboroko

**A**BOUT 6 000 HOMELESS people may be evicted from their temporary shelters because the National Housing Board has turned down a R51-million subsidy to buy and renovate buildings in Johannesburg's inner city

Because the planned project will provide shelter for the poor, it is feared this may result in more crime, poverty and vagrancy in the area

This gloomy scenario was painted by Greater Johannesburg Transitional Metropolitan Council executives at a Press conference yesterday

Council housing, urbanisation and environmental management committee chairwoman Ms Lindsay

## Project to renovate inner city buildings fails to secure funding

Bremmer said the purchase and renovations of a number of inner city buildings was in jeopardy if they were not funded

The buildings to be refurbished include the Marshalltown Barracks, the Drill Hall, Perskor building in Vrededorp, the Zion Centre in Doornfontein, a house in Berea and buildings in Rosebank

### Upgrading buildings

The council, together with a number of non-governmental organisations, have already embarked on a programme to upgrade the buildings, Bremmer said

Housing officials were con-

cerned about the news that the NHB might refuse a proposed scheme of R17 million a year for three years to house homeless people in the city

This money was promised by the Gauteng housing and land affairs department earlier this year in a bid to resolve the critical shortage of houses in the inner city for the disabled, aged and street children

Council urbanisation director Ms Erica Emdon said it was planned the shelters would provide sleeping units and communal ablution and eating facilities

Emdon announced that delegates from the provincial legislature and the council would meet the NHB

# R51 m aid plan for homeless dashed

*Technicality blocks funds to renovate inner city buildings*

(127)  
By ARLY 29/8/96

JOHANNESBURG - A R51 million project initiated by the Johannesburg Transitional Metropolitan Council to buy and renovate buildings in the inner city to shelter the homeless is in jeopardy because the National Housing Board may not approve funding.

The TMC teamed up with some non-governmental organisations in setting up the project to house 6 000 homeless people. But their hopes of receiving R17 million funding a year from the NHB over the next three years may not transpire owing to a technicality.

TMC chairperson for housing, urbanisation and environmental management, Lindsay Bremner, said "The national housing policy is based on individual and company ownership or rental. The combination we are providing is none of these, as we intend people to move in and out of the shelters, and they can't afford to pay rent anyway."

She said the provincial housing board was prepared to fund the programme, but it needed permission from the national government. The NHB felt the project

should be undertaken by the Department of Welfare, said Ms Bremner. However, the Housing White Paper states that welfare housing was a local government responsibility.

"The Department of Welfare does not have a budget for the capital costs of purchasing and refurbishing buildings, and has no programme for housing the city's homeless adult population," Ms Bremner said.

Eight projects have been identified for the first year. The proposed shelters, either owned or rented by

the TMC, would provide private sleeping facilities for the homeless and their families, and communal cooking, ablution and social facilities.

Ms Bremner said a fundamental part of the project would be to re-integrate people back into society through job creation programmes.

"It must be seen in context of the greater housing project. We are not dealing with everybody's housing problems. This project is directed at tackling the problems faced by vagrants and the homeless," Sapa

# Gauteng homes in on vast issue of building a nation

PROGRAMME	PROGRESS	EXPENDITURE
INDIVIDUAL SUBSIDIES	7 516	R92,3-million
PROJECT LINKED SUBSIDY	27 143 stands 4 257 houses	R218,7-million
INSTITUTIONAL SUBSIDY	425 units	R6,0-million
HOSTELS REDEVELOPMENT	8 hostels 18 978 beds	R132,9-million
TRANSFER OF PREVIOUSLY OWNED COUNCIL HOUSES	150 567 claims lodged 89% of existing houses	
REPAIR OF VIOLENCE DAMAGED HOUSES	500 houses	
KATORUS RESIDENTIAL PROJECT	39 projects completed	R325-million

BY MANASE NEO SEFATLHE

**O**ur government is facing the extremely difficult and daunting task of housing the nation. Since its inauguration about two years ago, many accusations and counter-accusations about delivery have been levelled at it.

Very few people – among them the developers, banks and beneficiaries – identified the backlog and hazards facing the housing process.

Fewer still would think of the first 14 months in Gauteng as months of proper planning, strategising and, more importantly, of setting up the infrastructure to deliver in a professional manner.

Building housing is not like baking cakes, where all you need is the ingredients. A sustainable programme of house-building must at all costs be based on a well-thought-out plan.

Policy on many matters, therefore, had to be developed, debated and finally approved.

Despite this painstaking process, Gauteng Housing Department is now ready to deliver in an efficient manner.

Recent housing delivery figures released by national housing minister Sankie Mthembu-Mahanyele indicate that Gauteng is South Africa's flagship province when it comes to the delivery of houses.

But Gauteng has an estimated housing backlog of 500 000. This is a third of the national backlog. We have about 7 million people and our population growth stands at 1,29%, creating vast pressure on Gauteng to deliver housing.

The Gauteng backlog is also caused by the immigra-

(127) STAN 30/8/96  
tion of about 20 000 people every month from other provinces and the neighbouring countries.

Our province has the highest population densities (365 people per sq km) of citizens who are fully urbanised, but who occupy only 1,5% of the total land mass of the country. There are about 1,3 million houses and about 500 000 informal homes.

To address the housing backlog, Gauteng Housing Department has embarked on a number of programmes. The accompanying table shows the department's resolve to house the nation.

Other projects to address housing are the setting-up of Housing Support Centres to assist individuals who do not qualify for either government subsidies or bank loans. Thirteen housing support centres have been set up at a cost of R750 000.

These centres will assist communities in planning new housing developments. Through them, communities will be encouraged to start self-help building projects.

Other projects include access to land tenure, providing infrastructure to informal settlements and the building of new cities of different designs.

Pivotal to the planning and delivery process is the creation of housing waiting lists.

The department noted that previous waiting lists were racially biased and corrupt.

The new waiting list being compiled by the housing department, in conjunction with local council, will arm the province with the tool to determine how many houses should be built.

■ Manase Sefatlhe is the principal communications officer for the Gauteng Department of Housing and Land Affairs.

# Ratepayers vow to block housing plan

(127)  
Sowetan 30/8/96

Greater Johannesburg has a housing shortage of more than 300 000 units

By Joshua Raboroko

**R**A TE RATEPAYERS have vowed to continue protest and legal actions against the Greater Johannesburg metropolitan substructures if low-cost houses are built without their consent on the periphery of previously white suburbs

In a strongly-worded statement the New Johannesburg South Ratepayers Forum have raised objections to the building of houses in the Liefde and Vrede and Naturena areas

The forum's legal representative, Mr Hugo Venter, said they objected to the

building of homes unless certain amenities such as sewerage, toilets, proper roads and street lights were provided

SMSS town planning tribunal chairman Mr Norman Prince yesterday invited objectors to the development of the areas to a meeting to be held at the chamber on September 17

He said the tribunal, which was scheduled to take place on August 27, was postponed "in order to satisfy requirements of the ordinance for the convening of such a meeting"

Greater Johannesburg has a housing shortage of more than 300 000 units

# Home owners 'a spanner in the works' for housing project

By JACOUI REEVES

The war of words that erupted last week between Naturena residents and Gauteng Premier Tokyo Sexwale was not an isolated incident.

While the province's housing department frequently finds itself accused of slow housing delivery, there appears to be a new spanner in the works.

The Naturena incident was just one example of Gauteng property owners' attempts to protect their investments.

The people of Naturena argue two points in their fight against the erection of low-cost housing in their area for the squatters of Tembahlile, near Lenasia.

The first is that, although government subsidies will be granted, once basic services like water, electricity and sewerage systems are in place, very little will be left to build homes.

Naturena resident Jackie Maaro-hanye says that although the promise is low-cost housing, all residents will have to be serviced sites.

At a private meeting this month, one Naturena resident said "The government is planning to build houses of about 40sq m. We all know that is basically a dogbox, and having this type of house so close to our area is going to bring our property values way down."

The residents' second argument is what earned the people of Naturena the wrath of the premier. They say they built themselves up to the economic level at which they now stand, and that simply moving the squatters into Naturena is not the correct option.

Maaro-hanye says "We come from those two-room houses in Soweto, but we fought in the struggle and built ourselves up to this level."

"By simply dumping these squatters in this area, the government is saying they do not have to work hard to live here, and offering them no role-models."

While the premier lashed out against the residents, calling them "middle-class upstarts" and accusing them of punishing the poor, the people of Naturena remained unmoved, joining the ranks of a growing number of Gauteng's opposing low-cost housing projects.



**DAN MOFOKENG** - Residents are misguided and unrealistic

The rapid land development project set up to move 5 000 families out of geographically unstable areas in Greater Johannesburg has attracted more than 20 000 objections from people living next to areas targeted for development, including Bloubaarsrand and Witkoppen in Randburg, Lombardy East near Alexandra, Liefde-en-Vrede in Alberton, and Mingsund North near Naturena.

Housing MEC Dan Mofokeng called *Star* 31/8/96

on the people of the province this week to reconsider their opinions on low-cost housing.

"We have to reach some sort of an agreement with developers and estate agents on certain rules, guidelines that will help control property values. We can only begin to address these problems when people can feel assured that their property values are being correctly assigned."

Mofokeng said residents opposed to low-cost housing development were often misguided or unrealistic in their demands.

"As an example, the people of Naturena are demanding houses no smaller than 80sq m. This is unrealistic because 40sq m is what most of these people can afford. The fact remains that housing has to be supplied, and if land is available, it has to be used to avoid land invasions."

Mofokeng said the department had worked out programmes setting out realistic time-frames. Systems were in place to monitor progress.

Figures released by the housing department this week showed that 7 516 subsidies had been granted, 27 143 stands and 4 257 houses had been allocated. Project-linked subsidies, and 18 978 beds were available

in refurbished hostels.

However, the challenge remains daunting. Gauteng still faces an estimated backlog of 500 000 homes.

The 20 000 people who move to Gauteng every month from neighbouring provinces and countries are complicating the problem.

Last week the Gauteng government and two consortiums of banks and construction companies formed a R1-billion partnership to put up 20 000 homes in four huge housing developments.

The partnership is something Mofokeng hopes to foster. "The commitment by the banks to offer credit at a constant interest rate is an important development. The capacity to develop houses lies to a great extent with the big banks and construction companies. Their involvement is certainly a step in the right direction."

While people such as the residents of Naturena remain determined that they have a legitimate argument against low-cost housing, the government is sticking to its guns.

"In the past two years we have learnt a lot. We can now predict how many houses we can build, where and when - but they simply must be built," Mofokeng said.

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# R10-m plan to clean up the city centre

(127)

Municipal plan to provide extra sweepers, better street lighting, cleaner public conveniences

By **KARIN SCHIMKE**  
City Editor

More than R10-million is to be spent on cleaning up the centre of Johannesburg, using mostly the services of the homeless and unemployed

The results of the effort could be seen by as early as the beginning of December

A municipal management plan, which will be set in motion by the end of next month, will provide extra sweepers, better and more economical street lighting and cleaner public conveniences to be staffed 24 hours a day

## Jobs for homeless, unemployed

Wally Mayne, strategic executive for technical services in the Southern Metro Council, said one of the short-term objectives of the plan was to add an extra 394 sweepers to the 150 currently working in the city core - defined as the area bordered by Troye, Sauer, Bree and Main streets

The working day of temporary staff is to be increased from five to eight hours and mechanical street sweeping is to be done once a week instead of once every two weeks. There is also an undertaking to rid the city centre of illegal posters and to scrub buildings where posters had been glued

The total cost of this part of the project is estimated at almost R7-million, and although there is no departmental provision for this

expenditure, funds would be re-allocated to provide these services, Mayne said.

Another of the short-term objectives is to use street lights that are twice as bright as the ones being used, consume 12% less electricity and last twice as long

The third objective is to improve the city centre's 26 public conveniences which Mayne said were plagued by "criminals, vandals, drug addicts and immoral activities". They were also often broken into at night so drivers could use the water to wash their taxis.

The existing staff complement would be bolstered by using temporary staff to clean and staff the facilities and prevent vandalism.

This was expected to cost around R1,2-million a year. About 15 extra taps would also be provided for taxis to use and this would cost about R75 000.

"The funding is the main problem at the moment because there are no specific allocations for these things. Reallocation of the budget will have to be done if the money cannot be found anywhere, but that would mean other services might suffer," Mayne said. "I hope the province and business will come to the party on this initiative."

Funding and final approval from the Southern Metro Council and the Transitional Metro Council has to be finalised by October 16 in terms of a resolution taken at a meeting of the Inner City Development Forum yesterday. Mayne said he had no doubt they would "go for it" because most councillors recognised how important it was for the survival of the inner city.

Arvan 13/9/96

# Sandton ratepayers run into (127) brick wall

By JACQUI REEVES

*Nov 14/9/96*  
Sandton ratepayers' hopes of an end to the rates deadlock appear to have been dashed by the hardline response of Greater Sandton executive committee chairman Nkele Ntingane.

Although Sicelo Shiceka, Gauteng MEC for Development Planning and Local Government, made it clear at Thursday's meeting between members of the Sandton Federation of Ratepayers (Sanfed) and local authorities that the door to negotiations had been unlocked, Ntingane told the *Saturday Star* yesterday that the council could not entertain the idea of negotiations on the rates issue until the next budget.

She said that because the budget of the Eastern Metropolitan Substructure (EMSS) was linked closely to the budget of the whole metropole, she did not believe it could be altered.

"Not in this financial year. With the current budget I cannot see how anything could happen to change the situation."

Ntingane denied allegations that residents were not given enough opportunity to comment on the budget. She said various opportunities had been presented to residents to make comments.

"When the EMSS came into office in November (1995) we had to have a budget ready by June (1996). Even with these time constraints, we placed advertisements in newspapers for people to respond to the budget. Also, people had the opportunity to comment during the viewing of the valuation rolls," she said.

Ward councillors in the EMSS have come under attack during the rates boycott. Politicians have accused the councillors of not keeping their constituents sufficiently informed.

Sanfed treasurer Brian Stolzenberg this week denied that ward councillors were responsible for the boycott, saying they had been kept well briefed by their representatives.

TO PAGE 2

## ◆ Sandton rates (127)

*Nov 14/9/96*  
"We first heard of the problem through our ward councillors on June 5. By June 12, Bryanston had made a written application to the council to discuss the rates issue, but this request was consistently ignored until the meeting finally took place on August 12," Stolzenberg said.

"We did try to talk to the council before the budget was passed, but we were never allowed access."

Stolzenberg reiterated earlier comments that the residents of Sandton had never intended to boycott rates, but had been forced to do so to "get some leverage".

"We were forced into the boycott action because we were consistently refused negotiations when we requested them."

"In all our correspondence we said to the council: 'Please let's get together, we need a constructive forum.' But when it didn't happen, we had to take action."

Ntingane said the council would adopt a wait-and-see attitude on the rates issue, adding she was "non-committal" on the type of action that will be taken.

"The finance department is still analysing the payments currently being received. Only once we have got that report will we be able to say who is paying what, what is not being paid - and will then be able to make a decision."

If the report showed that people had been boycotting the full payment of the new rates, Ntingane said, the usual procedure of investigating each case individually would apply, and only then would action be instituted.

"Each case will be decided on its individual merit. We cannot, for example, take Sanfed to court on the rates issue. The whole matter has to be handled as individual cases."

Although this may entail thousands of individual cases being investigated, Ntingane said she was sure there were mechanisms that could be put into place to deal with the individual analyses.

Shiceka was not available to comment on Ntingane's statements at the time of going to press.

# Rent boycott threat in 'coloured' townships

(127) Star 16/9/96

By SHIRLEY WOODGATE  
AND ANNA COX

The South Western Joint Civic Associations (Sowejoca) launched a total rent boycott yesterday to emphasise residents' objection to the authorities' refusal to discuss the community's problems.

A packed meeting in Coronationville resolved yesterday to withhold even the flat rate of R65 which is being paid by many tenants living in council houses.

Sowejoca leader Basil Douglas warned the Government that any attempts to evict or prosecute defaulting individuals would be regarded as action against the entire community.

He appealed for top-level talks to discuss problems faced by un-

employed people.

The two-year-old organisation, which claims a membership of 8 000, in the former coloured areas including Klipspruit, Westbury and Eldorado Park, called yesterday's meeting to commemorate the deaths of

two people on September 15 1994, when police opened fire during a protest meeting in Coronationville.

Sowejoca also threw its weight behind the Sandton rates boycott which continues to intensify as residents grow angry with the intransigence of the Eastern and Greater Johannesburg metro councils.

Sandton Federation of

## Appeal for top-level talks

Ratepayers (Sanfed) spokesman Brian Stolzenberg said the escalation followed the weekend statement by Eastern Metro Council executive committee chairman Nkele Ntingane that the council could not entertain the idea of ne-

gotiation on the rates issue until the next budget.

Stolzenberg said Sanfed, representing 24 ratepayers' organisations, held a

meeting yesterday to discuss the issue and although delegates decided to continue the boycott, the organisation was still committed to finding a speedy solution.

Ntingane said the council would adopt a wait-and-see atti-

tude. He was noncommittal on the type of action to be taken against those who did not pay.

Each case would be decided on its own merit, he said.

The DP has dissociated itself from this response, saying the council is discriminating against Sandton residents.

The party's Johannesburg leader, Anchen Dreyer, said the council earlier this year agreed to phase in Alexandra electricity increases to accommodate residents and had held public meetings for residents themselves to decide on the increases.

The DP would insist that negotiations begin soon.

► Picture

# Fading hope of homes for all...

*127*  
*Sowetan 17/9/96*

The reality is that the Government alone cannot solve the problem

**P**RESIDENT NELSON MANDELA took office with high hopes for housing citizens like four-month-old Vanessa Ndlovu, who was born in a cardboard hovel in the shadows of Johannesburg's skyscrapers

Now it seems the best that can be built for Vanessa and her parents is a better shack, perhaps one with running water or an outback toilet

Humbled by its own inexperience and by the size and complexity of the problems it inherited from South Africa's apartheid era, Mandela's Government has had to admit it can do little to help the helpless

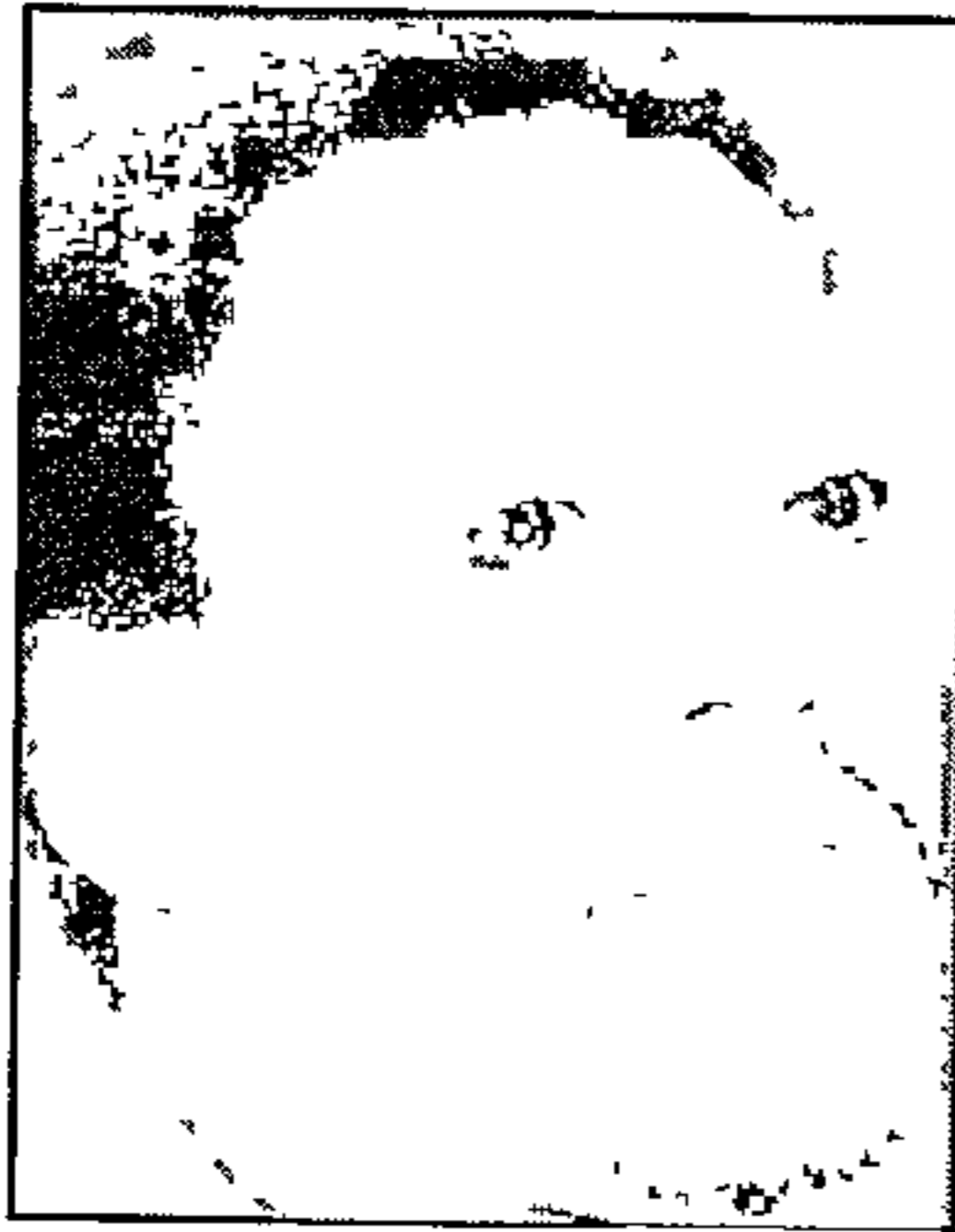
"If you don't have sufficient resources and if your own private sector is reluctant to do anything, then you'll end up using government money - and government money alone can't build houses," said Dan Mofokeng, housing MEC for Gauteng

With most of South Africa's 40 million people poor and more than one-third of the workforce unemployed, commercial lenders are leery of the home mortgage business, leaving the problem to the Government

The African National Congress estimates it needs to build homes for 350 000 households every year over the next decade to erase the existing need and make sure a new waiting list does not appear

A third of those homes are needed in Gauteng, where a constant stream of job seekers has created a landscape of squatter camps

Vanessa's parents came from rural KwaZulu-Natal four years ago in search of jobs after the brickyard that employed her father, Siphon Ndlovu, went out of business



**Gauteng housing MEC Dan Mofokeng ... the Government alone cannot build houses**

Neither Ndlovu nor his wife, Cynthia, finished high school. The only work they have found is collecting scrap paper and discarded soda cans to sell to recyclers

They have salvaged their home from trash heaps, erecting walls of cardboard and a roof of black plastic sheeting

## Not a house

"This is not a house, it's a toilet," Mrs Ndlovu said, pointing to her one-room shack. Her daughter, wrapped tightly against her mother's back in a blanket, cried weakly

A man from the shack next door was doing his laundry - rinsing trousers in a basin of water drawn from a broken underground pipe, then hanging them on a line to flap in the wind and dust

Two years ago, the Ndlovus fled their first big-city home, an army



**This squatter camp near Orlando East, Soweto, is the result of the stream of job seekers to Gauteng.**

barracks converted into a homeless shelter, because of overcrowding and crime

Ndlovu said his hopes for a better future fade a little every day he picks his way to his shack past mounds of garbage and his neighbours' smouldering cooking fires

"If I could get a nice place to stay, maybe my life would change," Ndlovu said

Camps similar to the Ndlovus' have been moved to tracts of land that mock the suburban dream. There are no houses, but plots are drawn out along grids, each connected to water and sewer service

It is a temporary solution, the country's new leaders say. Critics accuse the Government of borrowing a page from the "site-and-service" policies of the old governments, which laid out similar sites but left impoverished blacks to provide their own housing

The ANC, which won the country's first democratic elections in 1994, had campaigned on promises of building one million houses for the long-neglected black majority during its five-year term

"It may not be in the first five years. It may be in the second term or the third term," said Mofokeng

"We won't be shy to say, 'Well, we may not have built the one million houses, but this is what we have managed to do. Give us time.'"

Some progress has been made nationally, since 1994, the Government has handed out more than 50 000 grants to subsidise new homes. But it can be months before a grant is transformed into a concrete-and-brick home, so only a few thousand subsidised houses have been built

Mary Tomlinson, who keeps tabs on the Government's housing policy for the independent Centre for Policy Studies, said most of the grants were for R15 000. That is the amount offered to the poorest families, those earning less than R800 a month

## Unemployment rate

With only R15 000 families often cannot immediately afford to build more than a shack once they have bought their plot hooked up to water and sewer lines

Nearly 40 percent of South Africans earn less than R800 a month, while an additional 30 percent earn between R800 and R1 500

Add to that an unemployment rate estimated at as high as 40 percent, and it is easy to see why lenders are reluc-

tant to help South Africans become homeowners

Government experts say the entire economy has to be reformed before the housing problem can be solved. In its policy document, the national Housing Department calls for a faster-growing economy, more equitably distributed wealth, lower inflation, more jobs and a higher savings rate

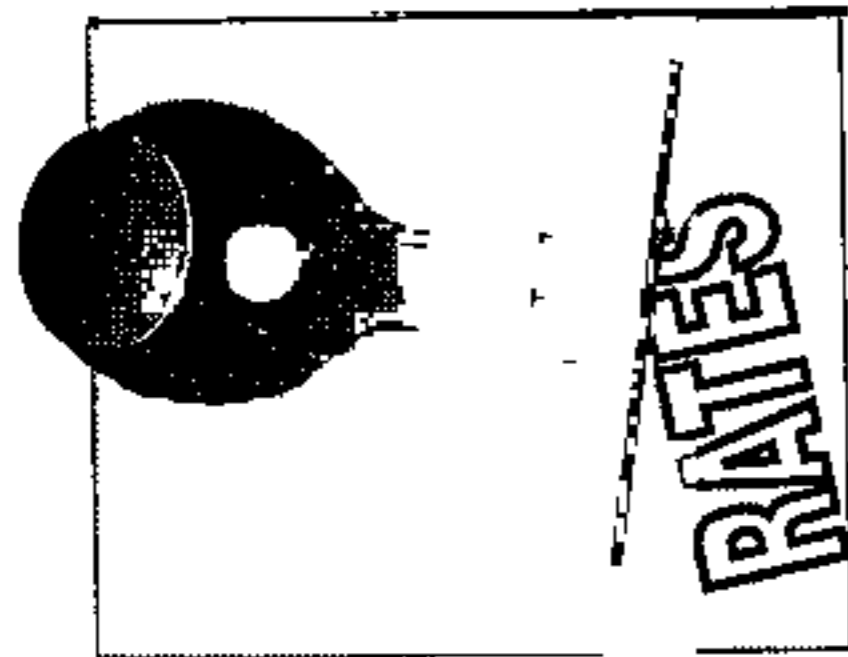
Mofokeng says the new government has spent much of its first two years in power streamlining a housing administration once established along racial lines and learning how to manage and evaluate grandiose proposals

It is only now beginning to reassess - and rein in - its basic assumptions

Initial visions of a home with a yard for every family are giving way to blueprints for duplexes and low-rise apartment buildings that can be built quickly and cheaply

Mofokeng has even suggested people could be housed faster if more emphasis is put on building rental homes

That raises the nightmarish spectre of United States-style projects, but South Africans may find that more palatable than the Latin American-style slums overtaking cities like Johannesburg - *Sapa-AP*



# Finding a workable solution to Sandton

Star 17/9/96

Other EMS suburbs have faced such levels of valuations and taxes for years, writes

**T**he dispute over property valuation and tax levels in the Sandton portion of the Eastern Metropolitan Sub Structure needs a quick, equitable, and unambiguous resolution before the growing indications of racial and class conflict become unalterable and prospects for effective democratic local government in the EMSS founder

It needs saying bluntly Sandton residents are only now facing valuations and rates at levels other ESS suburbs have been coping with for some years

It is wrong-headed and ingenuous for Sandton residents to lament the absence of street lights, sidewalks, and other local ser-

vices, which in fact could have been available if they had been willing to pay a level of rates required to provide those services. It is not surprising that the ratepayer resistance to valuation and rates is limited to Sandton residents and businesses increases in other formerly "white" suburbs of the EMSS have been far more modest

Sandton residents and businesses with complaints about their new valuations still have some time - to October 1 - to register their individual objections

**O**verall, the EMMS might want to consider phasing-in all new valuations if the percentage increase involved is over some substantial amount - say, 100% - over two or even three years. In justice, thus

phasing-in process would need to apply throughout the EMSS, not just in former Sandton suburbs. Whether or not a phasing-in process is put forward, Sandton residents and businesses have no moral basis nor unequivocal legal basis for putting into escrow a portion of their established rates

Their self-proclaimed equivalent to toy-toying may give them a sense of satisfaction, but it is not surprising that the EMSS ANC majority (and, indeed, a good many residents of other EMSS suburbs) suspect elements of noblesse oblige and even racism in this behaviour

Is there a solution? A straightforward and feasible one is at hand. The new valuation forms sent out throughout the JTMC area includes two components: site value, on which the present rates are set, at 6.45%,

and the value of improvements

Why not place the tax on the combined total of these two items, permitting a considerably lower rate of taxation for the same level of government revenue?

**T**he principle of a progressive property tax is well-established in the US and other Western countries and provides the basis for municipal administration and (at least in the US) for juridically-distinct public school districts as well

Of course, grumbling about increased valuation is commonplace, but the principle has been generally accepted. One EMSS councillor reacted when this proposal was posed that it would not only discourage development but even lead to

physical deterioration in neighbourhoods

This is a shaky premise, assuming its uniform application throughout the JTMC and the smaller tax percentage that could be applied. More than offsetting whatever weight this argument might have is the evident advantage in equity for pensioners and other residents and businesspeople with smaller fixed incomes

Assuming their developed properties have relatively low valuations, their taxes would turn out to be lower than under the present inequitable format

Building an effective and democratic local government is too vital a task to be sidetracked by the present dispute. Whatever the procedural constraints, this simple proposal is worth attention.

■ Dr John Seiler is a political analyst living in

rates row  
(127)

Dr John Seiler

# Randburg joins fight against hikes

(127)

Residents form a new body and may follow route of Sandton

ratepayers as boycott spreads across Greater Johannesburg *Star 18/9/96*

By ANNA COX

The rates boycott is gaining momentum across Greater Johannesburg, with Randburg now entering the fight to get increases lowered.

Randburg residents have formed a new organisation called the Northern Rates Lobby and have arranged a mass meeting for Saturday to decide on what steps to take next.

However, the group has already been talking about boycott action and the creation of a trust fund in which to deposit its payments

Residents face a 285% increase, from 2,26 cents in the rand to 6,45 cents

Organiser Pippa Wepenaar said there was huge support among residents to follow

the same route as the Sandton Federation of Ratepayers' boycott action.

"We have decided to get all ratepayer organisations in Randburg together on Saturday to form a committee and to take a vote on what action we shall be taking," she said.

The Randburg Chamber of Commerce has called for a moratorium to be placed on business rates increases, which amount to almost 70%

It said the business sector could not afford the large increases in the light of the economic climate, which was already resulting in staff cuts and job losses that adversely

affected the disadvantaged in an already stressed unemployment situation.

Business rates in the Randburg area have risen from 3,9 to 6,45 cents in the rand.

Chamber president Megan Leathwhite said. "The Rand-

**'Business cannot afford large increases'**

burg chamber is against boycott action. "However, we believe that something has to be done in the immediate short term as

business cannot afford the large increases.

"In order to attract investment into the area, we believe that the subsidy applied to residential property values be applied to vacant land, commercial and industrial- and

business, albeit at different rates."

While the chamber had reached consensus that rates had to be paid to finance the local authority, the basis on which the tariff was levied was inequitable

Budgeting for excess expenditure, including uncontrolled increases in salaries and perks, had been loaded on to the shoulders of the ratepayer, said Leathwhite

"The inequity in wages and salaries across the private sector is apparent when one looks at the remuneration received at administration level compared with police, nursing staff and teachers," she added

■ The meeting will be held at the Robin Hills Primary School on Saturday at 2pm.

# Cosatu raps Liberty Life boycott of rates 'before trying to negotiate'

Star 18/9/96

(127)

Cosatu has no copyright on strikes, but big business is not following its own advice of holding discussions before embarking on any action, says spokesperson

**By FIKILE-NTSIKELELO MOYA**  
City Desk

South Africa's main federation of trade unions has come out strongly against the Sandton rates boycott because it believes residents and businesses are not going about the protest in the correct manner.

Reacting to Liberty Life Properties' move to join the Sandton rates protest, Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu) spokesman Nowetu Mpati condemned big businesses for not following their own advice of discussing disputes before embarking on strike action.

"We have not read anywhere in the newspaper of them (Sandton ratepayers and council) negotiating and reaching deadlock," she said.

She said Cosatu did not claim to have copyright on strike action but only embarked on it after negotiations failed and a deadlock had been reached.

A meeting between provincial authorities and a delegation of the Sandton Federation of Ratepayers (Sanfed) on Tuesday evening failed to map a way forward on the rates issue. The provincial government said it had not gone to the meeting to negotiate the rates increase, only to hear resi-

dents' complaints.

Mpati suggested Sandton residents pay for their services while negotiations with the council continued, especially as the boycotters were enjoying better services than their counterparts in the townships.

She said township residents had always "subsidised the rich with their taxes" and it was time that Sandton residents gave something back to township residents who lived in areas which were "not even Third World".

Mpati said it was not just Sandton residents who would suffer due to the rates increases, but also township residents who

would be paying for the first time.

Mpati said the boycott undermined the Masakhane campaign which had recently gained momentum after Sanco called off its bond boycott.

She refused to be drawn into whether the federation believed that the hikes were reasonable, but added "you must understand we are talking about people who can afford here".

Mpati said the federation had not planned action against Liberty Life, but stressed that "sometimes we need to protect our own government".

Liberty Life Properties said it had no comment to make.

## Bid to help unemployed start own businesses

Star 18/9/96

**By PATRICK PHOSA**

Thousands of self-employment opportunities are to be created to reduce the estimated 70% rate of unemployment on the West Rand following a project to teach people how to start their own small businesses.

Kim Clarkin, a spokesman for the project, said an Informal Business Training Trust Centre (IBTTC) aimed at offering regular, practical courses to people in the mechanics

of micro enterprises was to be opened in Randfontein next month.

The initiative has been made possible by a R260 000 donation from the Johannesburg Consolidated Investments Limited Chairman's Fund, which is also revamping the former Battery Reef Training Centre, at Randfontein Estates Gold Mine to accommodate the centre.

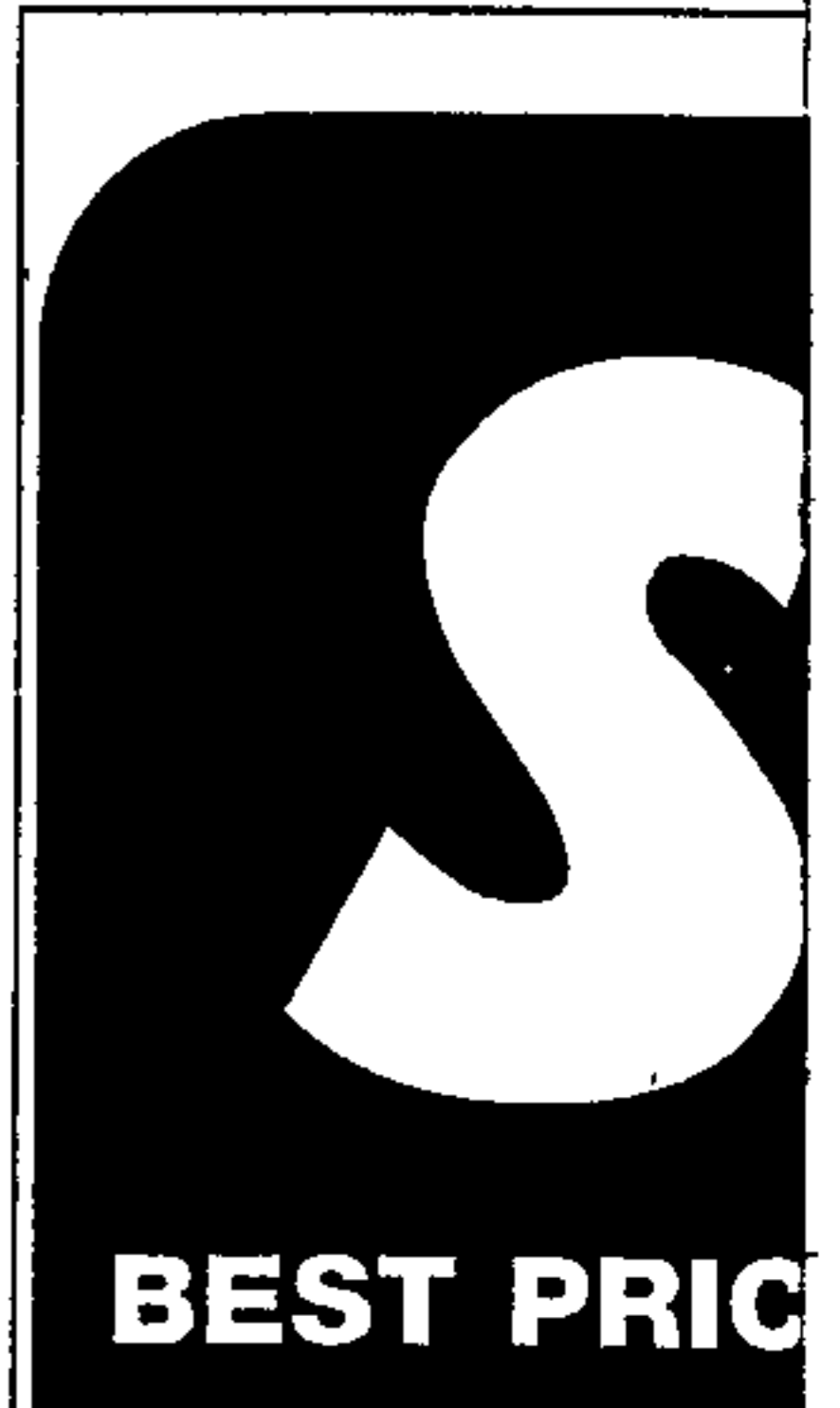
IBTTC Gauteng training manager Dix Xipu said there was a great demand for entrepreneurial education on the West Rand because of

unemployment in the area.

Students pay a refundable deposit of R100 for the one-week training, workbooks, briefcase, book-keeping material, calculator and diploma. They also gain access to financial muscle through the Start-Up Fund.

The fund offers trainees a series of increasing loans, which total R5 400 over 30 months and R4 000 per year thereafter.

For more information contact Dix Xipu on (011) 403-3758.



# DP to meet Sexwale over rates and allowance row

(127) 80 19/9/96

THE DP would meet Gauteng premier Tokyo Sexwale today to discuss the Sandton rates boycott and the 95% increase for councillors' allowances in Johannesburg's eastern substructure, a DP spokesman said yesterday.

Gauteng MPL Jack Bloom said the DP would try to convince Sexwale that the levy demanded by the Johannesburg metropolitan council was inequitable and open to legal challenge.

Bloom said in terms of Sexwale's own proclamation, the metropolitan substructures were empowered to draw up their own budgets and the DP believed this ensured direct accountability to voters in each substructure.

He said the practical implementation of this principle would go a long way towards resolving the Sandton rates boycott, rather than enforcing one single, uniform rate.

The DP proposed a rate of 4,5c in the rand for properties in the eastern substructure as opposed to 6,45c, which would meet all running expenses and contribute R220m to the R400m which is currently demanded.

Regarding the 95% increase in allowances, voted for by the ANC

and NP, Bloom said the DP would urge Sexwale not to approve the increases "The DP believes the increases were exorbitant and were voted in without the necessary two-thirds majority for any matter which requires extra budgetary provision," Bloom said.

Gavin Du Venage reports that up until now municipal councillors had been treated as part-time elected volunteers paid only a small allowance to cover the expenses of their posts.

Several Johannesburg local authorities voted to almost double the capacitation allowances of ordinary councillors from about R2 800 to R4 500. The northern and eastern substructures have voted for the increase.

Giving more money to councillors has only heightened ratepayer suspicions that their money is being used to fund an inefficient and self-serving entity.

However, local government officials say the role of municipal councillor has changed substantially within the new system and remuneration needs to be revised.

NP spokesman and councillor Yakoob Makda said few councillors could hold down a job and still carry out the duties to which they

were elected.

Councillors in former white administrations were invariably retired people with legal and management skills, and a source of income like a pension. Others were business people whose activities allowed them to devote substantial time to municipal affairs without drastic reduction in income.

Few black councillors had access to a reasonable income, Makda said. Most held down low-paid jobs and were torn between giving them up or compromising on council duties. He said employers quickly lost patience with workers who constantly asked for time off to attend committee meetings.

"I know of several councillors who in the first part of this year have used up all of their leave and sick leave time already," he said.

Another disadvantage many black councillors face is the lack of support facilities. Many live in townships where telephones are non-existent and they have to use cellphones to keep in touch with their council and caucus.

Makda says even simple things like typewriters and stationary and other items essential for administration are costs carried by the councillors — Sapa.

## Call for equalising SA energy

80 19/9/96



Deputy Mineral and Energy Affairs Minister Susan Shabangu. Picture TREVOR SAMSON

THE existing energy system in SA had discriminated against the country's poorest communities, Deputy Minister Susan Shabangu said yesterday.

Shabangu said this was because the system failed to use solar energy resources.

After returning from the world solar summit in Harare, Shabangu said she was eager to see solar energy used more among developing communities in SA and would soon take up the matter with the organisations concerned.

"I am keen to see solar energy put on at least a level playing field with hydrocarbon-based energy.

"Solar energy is free, plentiful, renewable and a far more environmentally friendly energy source than hydrocarbon fuels."

Shabangu said SA's energy system was biased against the extended use of solar energy. "Our grid electrification programme includes a subsidy to new consumers, reducing their costs for electricity.

"However, those not connected to the grid and using environmentally friendly solar energy receive no subsidy at all," she said.

This had the effect of discriminating against the poorest and most marginalised communities in remote rural areas of SA.

"The government has for decades actively supported the development of energy institutions for conventional forms of energy but has done very little in comparison for renewable energy," Shabangu said — Reuter.

See Page 13



# Gauteng moots incentives to rejuvenate city and township centres

Robyn Chalmers

THE Gauteng government is to launch a plan next month to rejuvenate the province's city and township centres.

Financial incentives to boost business and infrastructure development, closed-circuit television to combat crime and a special tourist police force are mooted in the plan, which has been described as the beginning of a provincial green paper on inner city renewal.

Provincial development planning

chief director Rolf Duashardt said yesterday that flexibility in zoning and removing bureaucratic barriers to property development, rehabilitation of mining land to make it suitable for development and promotion of inter-modal public transport systems such as trams were also on the cards.

Dynamic city centres were vital if the province was to grow, he said at a conference. "We have huge problems in our city centres, such as crime and urban decay, but there are also 51 local

authorities in Gauteng with established city centres which have the potential to be regenerated," he said.

A four-point plan, expected to be launched at a provincial conference on October 25 and 26, was proposed. It involved promoting clean and safe centres, fostering compact development, encouraging vibrant commercial centres and building partnerships.

An accord supporting the plan was expected to be signed by provincial government, local authorities, business,

labour and other stakeholders, he said.

A document outlining the plan proposed that a task team be established to explore incentives such as tax increment financing, loan guarantees and a city regeneration fund to boost business and infrastructure development.

It mooted laws for community investment districts modelled on existing business districts which had significantly reduced crime and littering.

New regulations on informal trading were being legislated to ensure

that informal business in city centres did not interfere with the environment.

Business representatives at the conference welcomed the plan, but called on government to ensure that it did not remain a "wish list".

Greater Johannesburg metropolitan council housing and urbanisation executive Landsay Bremner said the council had also been involved in talks on the plan. It had submitted comments on elements of the plan such as promoting clean centres

# Sandton residents and council reach stalemate

Star 20/9/96 (127)

By ANNA COX  
Sandton Bureau

The battle between Sandton residents and the Eastern Metro Council has reached another stalemate after officials failed to respond to the Sandton Federation of Ratepayers' deadline for a meeting yesterday.

Council executive committee deputy chairman Sol Cowan said officials had not responded to the deadline set by Sanfed to negotiate a decrease in rates - which had gone up by an average of 243% this month - because they would not allow residents to put them under pressure with timeframes.

He said officials were still assessing the situation and the effect it would have on Greater Johannesburg's budget.

A meeting scheduled between the DP and Gauteng Premier Tokyo Sexwale was called off at the last minute yesterday because Gauteng MEC for Development, Planning and Local Government Sicelo Shuceka was away on official business, said Sefako Nyaka,

a spokesman in the premier's office. The premier was eager to get the matter resolved as soon as possible and another meeting would be scheduled.

Sanfed acting chairman Frank Croswell said he was disappointed that his calls for a meeting had been ignored.

"We are tired of being fobbed off. We are increasing our appeal for a rates boycott, and posters will be placed around Sandton this weekend informing ratepayers that the boycott is still on.

"We are determined to see this through and if both local and provincial authorities will not meet with us to discuss the matter, we will request a meeting with the state president himself," he said.

Croswell also said he had in his possession a letter from the Department of Finance dated May 17 this year which specifically stated that projects in the capital budget and increases in the operating budget should not cause an unreasonable burden on residents.

# Landlords halt squatter development

Gavin Du Venage

CONSTRUCTION of a multimillion-rand low-cost housing project on the northeast Rand has been forced to a halt after residents obtained a court injunction to stop work.

Kyalami metropolitan council development executive manager Keith Naicker said that work on the Maybuye project was stopped last week after residents won a court injunction ordering construction to cease.

The council will try to have the injunction overturned next week.

Residents and businesses have objected to the project which they claim will devalue properties.

The land in question fell under the Midrand town council until 18 months ago when it was transferred to Kyalami after a demarcation board hearing. The site now falls inside Kyalami on the border with Midrand.

However, most of the objectors lie on the other side of the boundary in Midrand. They claim the Kyalami council failed to discuss the proposed development with them and rejected alternative proposals put forward by residents.

The project aims to house 1 800 squatter families near the Commercial industrial park. It will be one of the first of its kind in SA as it provides squatters with serviced sites and assistance to develop their plots into formal homes.

(127)

~~BD 20/9/96~~

BD 20/9/96

Funds to lay out and service the site were provided by the land affairs department and the Gauteng housing board.

Low-cost show houses will be built on several stands and squatters will be able to select a design from several variants. They will be assisted in obtaining the R15 000 housing grant needed to build on their plots.

The scheme is a pilot project that could be applied to more than 20 000 squatters living in the northeast Rand.

The metropolitan council hopes a formal settlement programme will end unplanned land invasions in an area which faces the influx of up to 4 000 squatters a day at times.

# Sanfed to take rates boycott to provincial level

Mar 21/9/96  
By JACQUI REEVES

The Sandton Federation of Ratepayers (Sanfed) has decided to take the rates boycott to provincial level.

Sanfed spokesman Frank Croswell said the decision was made after Eastern Metropolitan Substructure (EMSS) executive committee chairman Nkele Ntingane admitted on national television this week that she did not have a mandate to negotiate the rates issue.

Croswell said this confirmed Sanfed's earlier allegations that the EMSS is "a local government with no clout, and a puppet of the metropolitan council".

"We were led to believe that there would be a substantive meeting between the ratepayers and the council to negotiate this issue. If Ntingane does not have the mandate, then who does?" Croswell asked.

Democratic Party councillor Frances Kendall gave her support to Sanfed's decision yesterday, saying the ANC had left the ratepayers with no alternative. "The ANC, both within the substructure and the TMC, have decided not to talk to the ratepayers. I don't know why, but I can only think they believe they will be able to tough them out," she said.

Sanfed is hoping for a meeting next week with MEC for Development, Planning and Local Government, Sicelo Shiceka, to discuss possible solutions to the stalemate.

A stop-gap approach to the problem could be the devaluation of ratepayers' properties. Kendall, however, believes the two issues are not related.

"Despite claims by the ANC that we (the DP) agreed to the system, we did not in fact agree to a uniform rate in the rand."

"We agreed to a uniform valuation system, where properties would be valued in the same manner," she said.

Croswell reaffirmed Sanfed's decision to continue the rates boycott, advising residents to pay only for services provided.

# Randburg residents to join growing rates boycott <sup>(127)</sup>

Star 23/9/

Northern Rates Lobby to start negotiations with council

By ANNA COX

Randburg ratepayers have decided to join the rates boycott initiated by Sandton residents.

At a mass meeting on Saturday, attended by about 650 people, it was unanimously decided to follow the same route as Sandton and withhold payment of rates increases. Residents decided to continue to pay their old rates for their services until they were able to get clear answers to the budget.

Convenor Steven Wepener said the number of people who attend-

ed the meeting proved there was great concern over the increases.

"We were only expecting about 200 people - this shows people are very unhappy and want clear answers," he said.

Residents, who face a 285% increase, formed an organisation called the Northern Rates Lobby.

"We had many ratepayer organisations in Randburg represented and we will now start negotiations with the Northern Metro Council. We will also set up a trust fund for residents who wish to pay their rates money into an account," he said.

The Randburg Chamber of

Commerce last week called for a moratorium on business rates increases which amounted to almost 70%, saying that businesses could not afford the increases in light of the economic climate.

The Sandton rates boycott has reached a stalemate, with authorities still refusing to meet residents to negotiate a solution.

Sandton Federation of Ratepayers spokesman Brian Stolzenberg said the boycott was gaining momentum and thousands were not paying. He said that if local and provincial authorities refused to meet them, he would seek a meeting with the State President.

# Is there a way out of the rates impasse?

(127) Atm 25/9/96

Anna Cox looks at the rates boycott and warns that the situation is deteriorating



**T**he Sandton rates boycott is heading for disaster as both residents and local authorities are determined not to back down.

Authorities refuse to meet to negotiate the rate increase, and the residents are determined to continue their boycott until their demands are met.

Both sides have much to lose. Residents believe they will be perceived as "cash cows" and fear massive increases in subsequent budgets. They also feel burdened with a "double wealth tax" - they have to pay heavy personal and business taxes and now face rocketing rates as well. Authorities fear that if they back down in Sandton, their decision will have repercussions in other areas.

Residents in other areas, seeing authorities refusing to negotiate or listen to residents' grievances, are jumping on the boycott bandwagon. At the weekend Randburg residents decided to go the same route as Sandton, and last week the South Western Joint Civic Association - an association in the former coloured areas - also pledged its support for Sandton residents.

The stalemate could have been averted had officials negotiated with residents from the start, before the matter became one of national importance.

It appears to be too late now. The matter has received widespread national and international attention because, for the first time, wealthy residents are digging their heels in over issues which they claim affect their democratic and constitutional rights.

Local and provincial authorities appear powerless to do anything and it is likely the conflict can now only be resolved at national level.

Residents are still pursuing the negotiating route and say they want to talk to authorities to resolve the boycott.

They have made many attempts to meet with provincial and local authorities, but officials have refused to negotiate.

Nkele Ntingane, the chairper-

son of the Eastern Metro Council executive committee, last week openly admitted she was adopting a wait-and-see attitude and said on television that she had no mandate to negotiate a decrease or phasing in of the rates.

Council officials have so far only agreed to meet with the Bryanston Ratepayers' Association, a meeting which came to nought. Two meetings held in the past two weeks, one with the provincial government and one with Eastern Metro Council officials, also proved fruitless when residents were told the meetings were purely for information gathering. Provincial authorities also failed to arrive at a live television debate scheduled last week.

Another meeting arranged by the Democratic Party with Premier Tokyo Sexwale was can-

“  
**There are not  
only mansions  
in Sandton,  
there are also  
old-age homes**  
”

celled last week because the development planning and local government MEC, Sicelo Shiceka, was not available. Sexwale has indicated, however, that another meeting would be scheduled because he was keen to see the matter resolved.

Most Sandton residents are not refusing to pay - they are still paying their old rates plus services, some are paying for services only and some are paying the old rates plus 20%.

Sandton residents appear to be serious this time. They have gone about the boycott in a professional and organised manner, have sought legal opinion, and are considering taking the matter to the Constitutional Court.

They have opened an office to assist residents with queries. A trust fund has been established for the residents' rates payments.

The Sandton Federation of Ratepayers - which represents 24 residents' organisations - also gauged public opinion before acting. Every association was asked to hold a public meeting, to make a resolution and report back to Sanfed.

The unanimous decision was to boycott Sanfed spokesman Brian Stolzenberg said residents felt they were alone in their fight, that no one from Government was supportive or cared about their plight simply because they lived in Sandton.

Their fury was evident at a meeting held by the council to explain the budget some weeks ago. Residents walked out, claiming they were not being heard. Many people said they were living on fixed incomes in the less affluent suburbs of Sandton and could simply not afford the average R1 000 a month in rates.

"There are not only mansions in Sandton, there are old-age homes, pensioners, apartments, townhouses and moderate properties where people are finding themselves in extreme financial difficulties. Many will be forced to sell," said Stolzenberg.

The Eastern Metro Council's estimated surplus of R438,3-million could have been used to phase in the average 243% increase, he said.

Sandton residents, who have a payment level of 97%, are concerned about the prospect of receiving summonses, but they have been advised to wait until the summonses are served, to pay the outstanding amount and then to restart their boycott. They could also enter a plea to defend the action, which could delay the matter for months, or even years.

The council would end up spending millions of rands on legal fees, said Stolzenberg.

Residents admit the cents-in-the-rand rates increase should be equal to that of other Greater Johannesburg suburbs, at 6,45 cents,

but say it should be phased in, using the council's surplus to allow them to adjust their budgets and lifestyles. They say this should be their reward for good payments levels.

They also believe that the surplus should not be given to other substructures but should be used to upgrade areas like Alexandra and the inner city.

Stolzenberg said he had a letter from the Department of Finance to the authorities, dated May this year, which said the increases should only be introduced if they did not put an unreasonable burden on residents.

Council officials are adamant that all political parties knew about the levelling of the cents-in-the-rand, that local councillors should have advised residents and if they failed to do so, they had neglected their duties.

Deputy executive chairman Sol Cowan said public meetings had been held and that advertisements had been placed in newspapers explaining the budgets.

"We cannot do the Eastern substructure work in isolation. We have to co-operate with the other substructures and the Greater Johannesburg council and the money has to be evenly spread. Sandton has been paying a lot less for many years," he said.

Business has also entered the fray, with many major corporations agreeing to support the boycott, much to the fury of provincial authorities, who criticised their stand and said it would threaten future relationships.

"All we want is a negotiated settlement and we will call off the boycott. If provincial and local authorities cannot do this, we will go to the president himself. We have too much to lose and we will not back down on this one," said Stolzenberg.

# Boycott

# A history of concerned citizenship behind rates

The Sandton rates row might end up in the courts, says DP councillor Frances Kendall

(127)

BD 25/9/96

DURING the 1995/96 financial year 99% of Sandton residents paid their rates. Their neighbours in Johannesburg chalked up an average payment of 88% and only 3% of Alexandra ratepayers paid their council bills during the same period. What has driven the Sandtonians, previously the best payers in greater Johannesburg, to boycott their rate with such determination this year?

Sandton residents have a history of involved citizenship at the local level. Following negotiations in 1994 they watched with horror as all the powers of the former Sandton Council were centralised in the Transitional Metropolitan Council where they had no influence, while simultaneously their services, already fewer than those of Johannesburg, deteriorated.

The final straw came when, in June this year, their rates were increased by more than 200%.

Combined with new property valuations, this resulted in a 300% hike for many residents.

The Sandton rate hike must be seen in the context of the ANC's efforts since 1994 to consolidate a power base in the metropolitan council. The council-ANC vision has been that of Johannesburg as a powerful mega-city with the

structures serving as administrative arms, and have fought long and hard to gain control of, among other areas, town planning, municipal employees and finances.

By contrast, the DP has battled to keep the substructure fully empowered as primary local authorities, reserving to the metropolitan council the role of bulk supplier, strategic planning for the metro and redistribution to upgrade the former black townships.

Throughout the world, centralised cities provide inferior services at a higher cost than decentralised cities. In the US, cities of more than 1-million people spend more than three times the amount per capita for the same range of services as cities with fewer than 50 000. The reasons are well known: Big administrations — public or private — breed inefficiency, corruption and waste.

When the ANC decided this year to equalise rates throughout greater Johannesburg it ignored the fact that the four substructures have the legal right to set their own rates. The Local Government Transition Act and various provincial proclamations

grant the four local authorities the power to draw up their own budgets and levy their own rates, tariffs and service charges. In the Pretoria and East Rand metros these provisions have been respected and substructures have set their own rates and tariffs.

Sandton falls into the eastern substructure as does Alexandra and about 40% of Johannesburg. The DP and the Sandton residents believe the substructure should have drawn up its own budget and decided its own policy on rates and service charges. Only when service providers control their own income and expenditure are they accountable to ratepayers.

Johannesburg is well on its way to proving this rule yet again. The southern and western substructures are relying on the east to foot their bills, so they have no incentive to cut costs and improve productivity.

The east has lost its reasons for running a tight ship, since any savings it makes will be passed onto the other administrations.

Furthermore, local authorities must have the freedom to subsidise needy residents and offer

businesses and industries incentives to invest in their areas (all four substructures, by design, include rich and poor areas in similar proportion). As each substructure strives to improve services and expand its economy within guidelines agreed with the metropolitan council, the city will benefit as a whole.

If one substructure achieves more rapid growth than another, others will earn from its example the council can levy an "equitable contribution" from the wealthy substructures to improve infrastructure in the poorer ones.

Since the Sandton residents decided to boycott their rates they have been accused of selfishness. They have been told by the ANC that their boycott will be dealt with severely despite the fact that Alex residents have never received more than gentle cajoling to improve on their 3% payment rate. The time has come, say the ANC, for whites to make reparations for the past by footing the local bill for the poor.

However, there is no sign that the poor will benefit from the new property taxes. The R438m that

the metropolitan council is demanding from the eastern substructure (while the northern substructure contributes R4m and the south and west receive subsidies) is not going towards improved infrastructure in poor areas, but to the council's operating account to support more than R850m in salaries and to maintain services already provided.

During the transition the numbers of councillors and consultants grew substantially, as did their allowances and salaries. This process continues apace. At a council committee meeting in August councillors argued energetically for a 10-week paid annual recess and all overseas travel for councillors in business class.

Also during August the NP and ANC councillors in the eastern substructure took their first, fat bite from the redistribution cherry in voting themselves a 96% raise (totaling R2,5 million).

The DP believes services for the poor can be improved without hiking rates provided powers are properly devolved, administrations cut to the minimum as in old Sandton, and, most important, as

many services as possible are contracted out. Instead of penalising and driving away highly skilled and productive residents, income from the sale of capital equipment and the savings from more cheaply and efficiently supplied services can be used to upgrade the former townships with maximum involvement of the residents. Consequently the DP decided to vote against the budget in the eastern substructure. However when budget day came, after hours of debate DP councillors were persuaded by the ANC and NP to accept the budget subject to an amendment to renegotiate the payment to the council and adjust rates downward accordingly. Now the ANC and NP are making it quite clear they have no intention of honouring the amendment. Nonetheless, the amendment means that no transfer of funds in respect of the TMC levy can legally be effected. Any attempt to pay over or seize monies in respect of this levy can and will be challenged by the DP in the courts.

□ Kendall is a DP councillor in the Greater Johannesburg TMC and its eastern substructure

See Page 27

# Protestors disrupt council meeting over rates increase

Staw 26/9/96 (127)

BY ANNA COX  
Sandton Bureau

The Eastern Metro Council monthly meeting was disrupted last night when Kelvin/Bucleuch Community Council members bearing placards marched in, stopped the meeting, and demanded to be heard on the issue of the rates increase.

ANC councillors walked out for a hasty caucus. Mayor Justice Ngidi decided to allow the chairman of the association, Dr Axel Joosting, to address councillors and deliver their memorandum.

Joosting said his association had been unsuccessful for the past three months in negotiating an acceptable increase. He said officials had refused to meet members of his association and the council was not fulfilling its role in repre-

senting the community. He said if the executive committee had no authority to negotiate the increases, it had to represent its residents and negotiate on their behalf.

The acting chairman of the Sandton Federation of Ratepayers, Frank Crosswell, said although the organisation dissociated itself from the militant actions of Kelvin/Bucleuch residents, their action was indicative of the possible consequences if the authorities persisted in refusing to negotiate with residents.

"This type of militant action will intensify if residents continue to see the way they are being treated by the council. We, as Sanfed, are still pursuing the negotiating route, however," he said.

He added that Sanfed had re-

► To Page 2

# Protestors disrupt council meeting

(127)

► From Page 1

Staw 26/9/96

quested a meeting with Gauteng Premier Tokyo Sexale before October 1, failing which residents would turn to the Constitutional Court for assistance.

"We have the will and the money available and will take the boycott further in the meantime," he said.

■ A motion put forward by the Democratic Party - which called for a speedy and acceptable method to restore payment levels in Sandton and urged the executive committee to enter negotiations with Sanfed representatives to find a constructive solution to the cash-flow problems of the Eastern Metro Council - was considered not urgent and was voted against at last night's meeting.

ANC councillors won the vote by a majority of 28 to the 21 of the DP, NP, IFP and independents.

Payment levels in Sandton have dropped from around 100% to 70% during July, causing a shortfall of R15-million.

A memorandum from the financial strategic officer, put before the council, shows that debits raised for services during July were R49,1-million. Total payments received in respect of July levied up to September 4 amounted to R34,4-million - a drop of 70,1% from the month of June.

From the 36 250 accounts rendered, full payments on only 15 264 accounts were received. Services plus a portion of rates were paid by 8 172 account-holders. Services only with no rates paid were received from 195 account-holders and 647 account-holders paid for some services and no rates. The remaining 10 358 account-holders rendered no payments.

About 10 000 written objections and dissatisfied consumers were received regarding the level of services.



## R167-m given for new services

(127)

BY BONGIWE MLANGENI

Star 27/9/96

The Gauteng housing department has donated R167-million to local authorities for the upgrading of infrastructure and installation of new services, MEC for Housing Dan Mofokeng announced yesterday.

He said the bulk sum would be shared among 15 local councils in the province for the improvement or (where they did not exist at all) the provision of water, roads, sanitation, and stormwater drainage systems.

Mofokeng said the move was part of the Government's effort to create well-serviced land in most areas so that low-cost housing could be built at a faster pace.

"These funds will specifically be for areas that are earmarked for low-cost housing projects approved by the provincial housing board," he said.

He said the provincial government was working on two types of grants, one of them focusing on improving infrastructure in all areas that needed basic services.

Local authorities would have to compete for the other grant, which was intended for the poorer local councils which were working on projects that did not have funds, he said.

# Sandton ratepayers to call for complete boycott, legal action

BY PAULA FRAY

(127)

The Sandton rates boycott is set to deepen following a decision by the Sandton Ratepayers Federation to start immediate legal action against the council and call for a complete rates boycott.

Sanfed treasurer Brian Stolzenberg said the matter was now in the hands of their legal advisers, who believed there was a "strong case that what has been done is unconstitutional and illegal".

This follows months of wrangling between the Eastern Metropolitan Substructure and Sandton ratepayers after a uniform rates structure was introduced into the entire Greater Johannesburg metropole. Sandton residents were hit hard by a rates levy increase from 2,54c in the rand to 6,45c as well as an updated valuations roll.

"This is really the last straw. The residents have had it up to here these guys (the council) don't want to talk," Stolzenberg said yesterday. "We also intend to send a personal letter to the president to ask him to intercede in this matter."

He said Sanfed was now calling for a complete rates boycott - as opposed to residents paying their old rates plus 20% - as it appeared the council believed it could "sit it out".

TMC officials are adamant concessions cannot be made.

In an interview yesterday, TMC strategic executive, metropolitan finance, Lucas Opperman stressed it was the TMC's long-declared intention to introduce uniform rates and a uniform valuation roll.

As early as the 1994-95 budget, the issue was raised by then exco chairman Ian Davidson (DP). The creation of a uniform valuation roll was postponed at that budget and, last year, the council decided to delay the introduction of a uniform rates base until this roll was complete.

From the start there was agreement at a political level that the TMC and MSS budgets be done jointly. It was also agreed, said Opperman, that the budget would allow for limited growth in old advantaged areas and maximum possible growth in disadvantaged areas. "The Eastern Substructure is generally well developed and the main disadvantaged area is Alexandra. Even then its budget is not large compared to, say, Soweto."

The EMSS has an operating budget of R678-million with R93-million allocated to Alex.

It would be "unrealistic" for the EMSS to have its entire surplus paid to Alexandra as there was "only so much that can be done in a financial year," he said, noting that most of the wealthiest areas fall into the EMSS which accounts for virtually half of the TMC's rates base.

"I don't think Sandton residents appreciated how low their rates were in comparison to the

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*'Sanfed is calling for a complete rates boycott as it appears the council believes it can just sit it out'*

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rest of the metropolitan area. Last year, before the rates were levelled, the council found that, for example, someone in Malvern was paying the same rates as someone in Wendywood."

Opperman acknowledged that introducing a uniform rate along with new valuations had compounded the problem.

Reacting to criticism that it was immoral for Sandton residents to pay the same amount in rates as someone living in, say, Malvern, Stolzenberg said it was up to those residents to call on the council if they had a problem.

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*'I don't think Sandton residents realised how low their rates were compared with the rest of the area'*

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He said they were still open to negotiations "before the culture of non-payment is entrenched".

The ratepayers have come under fire for not first pursuing avenues such as objecting to the valuation of their properties before embarking on a boycott.

ANC councillor Ivor Isaacs noted yesterday it was the valuation of the property which determined what residents would pay and residents could object if they disagreed with these valuations, which were based on land values only.

While Sandton residents supported the principle that unions first had to resort to all legal avenues, available to them

before going on strike, the ratepayers had opted to boycott "without resorting to the legal remedies available to them".

"Instead of probing whether our laws adequately address cases of genuine inequity, they threaten action to sustain the situation of the poor paying for the rich," said Isaacs, referring to the example of Malvern.

"How do you put genuine cases of hardship in a group admitting to be boycotting on principle," he asked, stating that the council had redress for people with "genuine hardship".

According to DP councillor Mike Moriarty, the effects of the boycott are already being felt. Whereas Sandton's payment have been virtually 100% in the past, only R34 461 834 was raised from July's debits of R49 134 144 - a drop to 70% in the payment levels. Of the 36 250 accounts sent out, 15 264 accounts were paid in full, 8 172 account holders paid for services and a portion of the rates, 195 just for services, and 647 for certain services and no rates. The remaining 10 358 account holders did not pay at all.

Moriarty called for a phasing in of the increases but Sanfed has rejected this. "It is not acceptable. They have taken it upon themselves to propose it. We have a mandate of a 20% increase. Anything over that must go back to our members for a decision," said Stolzenberg.

Opperman said it was not financially feasible to phase in the increases. "The problem with phasing in the increase is that legally whatever concession applies to a portion of the rate would have to apply to the entire EMSS - not just ratepayers from the old Sandton council. Bearing in mind the amount of rates levied in the EMSS, it would have a massive effect on the entire budget and place an additional burden on the other substructures," said Opperman. "The shortfall in income would have to be received elsewhere. Where is that money going to come from if not from the other MSSs?" he asked.

"If the payment levels remain at 70%, the inevitable consequence is that we cannot build up the internally funded portion of our capital budget, which in turn puts constraints on a huge variety of projects, the most important of which is related to the building of infrastructure."

# DP apologises to Sandton ratepayers

(127) Star 30/9/96

By ANNA COX

Sandton Bureau

The Democratic Party has issued a formal apology to Sandton ratepayers for approving the budget which resulted in rates increases of about 243%.

The party is to place adverts in local newspapers this week formally apologising to ratepayers.

Sandton councillor Craig Stephens said his party had made the mistake of trusting the ANC.

The DP approved the budget only on condition that the estimated surplus of R438-million would be negotiated downwards and all savings passed on to residents as an additional rebate, he said.

"The ANC and the NP have now reneged on the deal and made it clear that the council will not entertain the idea of negotiation on the rates issue until the next budget. Had we stuck to our guns and opposed the budget, we could have blocked it temporarily, but the Gauteng premier would then have been required by law to intervene and decide the budget," Stephens added.

The final outcome might have been exactly as it is, but the DP would at least have indicated its clear opposition to the rates hike, he said.

■ The Sandton Federation of Ratepayers is to institute legal proceedings immediately against the Eastern Metro Council and the Greater Johannesburg Council.

# Sandton rates boycott a 'threat' to Jo'burg

(127)

BH 30/9/96

## Gavin Du Venage

THE continuing rates boycott in Sandton could threaten the creditworthiness of entire greater Johannesburg, which hopes to raise at least R900m during the coming financial year for capital projects.

The greater Johannesburg council has circulated a notice to the four councils that make up the city asking them to approve the raising of loans for the 1996/97 financial year.

Council finance strategic executive Lucas Opperman confirmed last week the council was hoping to raise loans to fund capital expenditure. He said most of it could be raised on the capital markets.

"We compete in the capital markets with other buyers," he said. However, market analysts warned that the boycott could seriously jeopardise Johannesburg's efforts to raise money.

"The ratepayers provide the revenue source for Johannesburg

If you tamper with the income base, the issue would be viewed as high-risk," a capital markets dealer said. Unless the city could convince the markets they would get their money back, it was unlikely Johannesburg would be able to command a favourable premium.

Opperman said payment levels across the city were between 80% to 90%. "We have been able to maintain our performance so far our creditworthiness has not been affected." However, this would de-

pend on how long the boycott continued and how much support it gained, he said.

Meanwhile, Sandton residents said at the weekend that they would begin legal proceedings to challenge the increase and have the council budget overturned.

Sandton ratepayer federation (Sanfed) spokesman Brian Stolzenberg said an interdict to prevent implementation of the new valuation role would be launched this week. "We have obtained le-

gal opinion from senior counsel and believe we have grounds to challenge the valuation roll in court. This will basically mean the budget would have to be suspended," he said.

"We wanted to avoid this because of the costs involved, but we feel we have no choice," he said.

Stolzenberg said that Sanfed was also holding talks with the Association of Credit Bureaux to protect credit ratings of ratepayers who had joined the boycott. He

# Credit

said Sanfed wanted an undertaking from the association that it would not blacklist ratepayers who participated in this action.

Stolzenberg said an independent mediator had approached the council and ratepayers with an offer to help settle the dispute but his offer had yet to be accepted.

Council sources confirmed that the mediator had held talks with the eastern substructure executive but indicated that they had very little room to manoeuvre.

# Heavyweight joins Sandton boycott

(127) BD 3/9/76

LIBERTY Life Properties, the biggest ratepayer in Sandton, would refuse to pay an "outrageous" rates increase due this week, MD Wolf Cesman said yesterday.

"Our rates bill is millions of rands a year. We believe the rates increase is outrageous and unconstitutional, and we will refuse to pay it."

The stand comes in the wake of a rates increase of up to 180% imposed by the eastern metropolitan substructure since July 1, but due on September 4.

Another major company, Absa Props, said it was taking legal advice and was at present not paying the increase.

"We have a considerable property portfolio and the rates increase will have a significant impact on our tenants," GM Mike Joubert said.

"It is premature to say we will refuse to pay the increase. We are first taking legal opinion

Joubert said Absa Props would pay the increase in rates into an interest bearing account in the interim.

Cesman said Liberty Life Properties did not have problems in other areas in Johannesburg where rates increases had been reasonable.

"But we have a lot of difficulty with Sandton where rates assessments have almost trebled."

"We have taken a decision to pay the council the same rate in the rand as previously, based on the provisional value of properties."

"This calculates at about a 20% increase."

The action by major property companies came on top of a growing boycott by ratepayers against rates increases of up to 465% in some areas. The Bryanston Ratepayers' Association estimated 80% of Sandton ratepayers were refusing to pay the increase. — Sapa

## CP calls for white schools

CAPE TOWN — The CP yesterday asked a parliamentary education committee that schools legislation be amended to allow for state schools for Afrikaners.

CP representative Daan van der Merwe said he could not pretend that children of other races would be welcome in an Afrikaner school.

"The Afrikaner is white and I want a school for the Afrikaner people. Just give the Afrikaner his schools, with his ethos, then you will have the Afrikaner off your back."

Earlier this year police were deployed at a school in Potgietersrus to prevent white parents from barring black children from enrolling.

He said the Afrikaner was not being racist in demanding the right to maintain its cultural identity. "In America you have the black caucus, and there's nothing wrong with that. But when a white person tries it, you're a racist."

— Reuter.

BD 3/9/96

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Comair

ules 200 flights a week, would soon add

# Gauteng takes the lead as delivery of houses improves nationwide

By BONGWE MLANGENI

There is nationwide improvement in the number of houses being delivered, with Gauteng taking the lead among the provinces and utilising a large chunk of its housing budget for 1996/97.

Housing Minister Sankae Mthembi-Mahanyele said statistics showed a discernable increase in delivery.

"All indications are that this trend will strengthen in the months ahead," she said.

By June this year the government had approved 344 237 project-linked subsidies and 18 254 individual subsidies.

She said the number of individual and project-linked subsidies approved monthly had increased. Between March 1994 to August 1995, about 536 subsidies were approved monthly, but the number had increased to an average of 5 611 between September 1995 and June 1996.

Statistics of provincial expenditure revealed that about R350-million was available for hous-

ing in Gauteng which has a backlog of 500 000, the longest waiting list in the country.

Since the beginning of the year Gauteng has spent 36% of its budget, Mthembi-Mahanyele said.

Gauteng, housing department spokesman Hubert Matlou said this year alone about 7 300 houses were built and about 23 938 stands had been serviced. Figures of transferred state-owned houses could not be provided, although about 150 000 claims had been

launched in different housing bureaux around the province.

Other provinces allocated the highest budget are Kwazulu Natal and the Eastern Cape but each have only managed to use less than 12% of the money.

Mthembi-Mahanyele said Gauteng, Free State, Mpumalanga, Northern Cape and Western Cape were the five provinces that were ahead of target on spending their budgets.

She said about R170-million was advanced to provinces in July, the highest amount yet ad-

vanced in a single month. In June R155-million was advanced to provinces, of which R145-million was spent.

Housing expert Ian Robinson said, based on this year's progress, predictions are that about 200 000 houses could be delivered by mid-1997.

"I am satisfied that the framework of delivery is in place and is working. While it is clear that our efforts are paying off, I am still impatient with the pace of delivery in the country," Mthembi-Mahanyele added.

127 Star 3/9/96

## Biggest ratepayer rejects increase

(127) Star 3/9/96

Liberty Life Properties, the biggest ratepayer in Sandton, will refuse to pay an "outrageous" rates increase due this week, managing director Wolf Cesman said yesterday.

"We are the biggest ratepayer in Sandton. Our rates bill is millions a year. We believe the rates increase is outrageous and unconstitutional."

The announcement follows a rates increase of up to 300% imposed by the Sandton council since July 1, but due tomorrow September 4.

Another top property company, Absa Props, said it was taking legal advice and was at present not paying the rates rise to Sandton.

"We have a considerable property port-

folio and the rates increase will have a significant impact on our tenants," general manager Mike Joubert said.

"It is premature to say we will refuse to pay the rates increase. We are first taking legal opinion."

Cesman said Liberty Life Properties had no problems in other areas where rates increases had been reasonable. "We have decided to pay the council the same rate in the rand as previously based on the provisional value of properties. I am making no bones about the fact I am encouraging other major players to do the same."

Bryanston Ratepayers' Association chairman Frank Crosswell estimated that 80% of Sandton ratepayers were not paying the increase. - Sapa



# Low-cost housing pays price for crime

Robyn Chalmers

(127) (23)

SA's high crime levels were beginning to have a serious effect on the delivery of low-cost housing, particularly in Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal, Housing Minister Sankie Mthembu-Mahanyele said at the annual National African Federated Chamber of Commerce conference in Durban yesterday.

The crime wave had resulted in major contractors shying away from tendering for these jobs, she said. "When they do tender they push up their rates; to include down time in case they can't get on site, for damage to vehicles, for theft of materials and so on."

Crime was putting contractors'

lives at risk, leading to spiralling costs and slowing down work.

Mthembu-Mahanyele said the situation was unacceptable, and action had to be taken as the real losers were the millions of homeless people who were being denied the right to shelter.

Mthembu-Mahanyele said that the project to repair houses damaged by violence in the Katorus area had had to be rebudgeted, largely as a result of rising crime.

The project would cost an additional R46m, with an estimated 10%, or about R5m, of the extra cost caused by theft. In addition, about 10% of the overall budget allocated to the Katorus special presidential lead project had been

allocated to improving general security measures on the project.

Despite obstacles, there had been an increase in delivery and this would continue, she said.



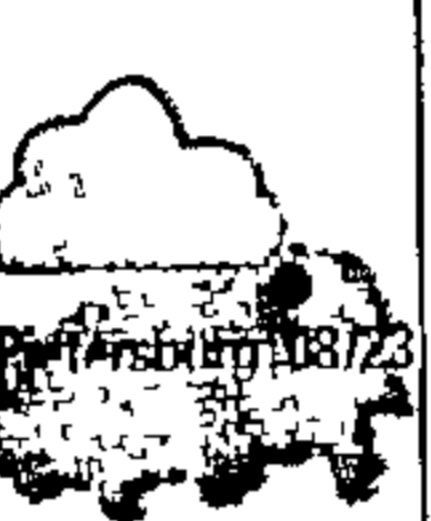






The average monthly delivery for individual and project-linked subsidies approved, increased from a monthly average of 539 for the period between March 1994 to August last year to 5 946 for September 1995 to July this year.

"While delivery is increasing, it is still not enough. I am impatient with the pace and I expect to announce new measures to speed up delivery," she said.

She remained concerned that there was no unified voice in the construction industry.

BD 4/9/96

## TODAY'S WEATHER

<b>GAUTENG</b>		<b>MPUMALANGA</b>		<b>NORTHERN PROVINCE</b>	
 Pretoria 12/24 Johannesburg 10/21	 Nelspruit 13/22	 Pietermaritzburg 18/23			
<b>NORTHWEST</b>		<b>FREE STATE</b>		<b>KWAZULU-NATAL</b>	
 Pretoria 11/23	 Bloemfontein 02/23	 Ladysmith 08/24 Durban 14/26			
<b>NORTHERN CAPE</b>		<b>WESTERN CAPE</b>		<b>EASTERN CAPE</b>	
 Upington 05/25	 Kimberley 03/23 Cape Town 08/17	 George 07/19 East London 13/23 Port Elizabeth 09/21			
<b>GLOBAL TEMPERATURES</b>					
	Min	Max		Min	Max
Amsterdam	08	21	Lisbon	18	29
Brussels	10	19	London	15	21
Dubai	28	43	Los Angeles	19	29
Frankfurt	11	21	Moscow	12	25
Geneva	11	19	New York	23	32
Harare	09	24	Paris	12	21
Hong Kong	26	30	Rio de Janeiro	20	29
			Rome	17	25
			Sydney	10	17
			Taipei	24	30
			Tei Aviv	22	30
			Tokyo	23	30
			Toronto	15	28
			Vienna	17	20

# Erwin rules out rates help for small business

Nicola Jenvey

(38) BD 4/9/96

DURBAN — Government did not intend subsidising interest rates to small, medium and microenterprise businesses, and would rather direct resources to education and training of business management skills, Trade and Industry Minister Alec Erwin said.

He told the Nafcoc convention yesterday that developing a sustainable economy that empowered black businesses demanded strengthening the small medium and micro enterprise sector.

Subsidising loan rates created businesses which would not be viable in the long run.

Erwin believed that by December SA would have an economic philosophy promoting growth with empowerment. He challenged black business to grasp the opportunities provided.

KwaZulu-Natal economic affairs and tourism MEC Jacob Zuma said provincial government remained committed to transforming proposed development nodes around KwaZulu-Natal into black economic empowerment opportunities.

"However, serious businesses cannot survive on outside financial injections, and before demanding anything from others, businessmen must demand many times more from themselves," Zuma said.

Labour Minister Tito Mboweni, although not providing a specific time frame, said SA urgently required antitrust legislation to counter past imbalances. "Its delay is only delaying the necessary restructuring of the economy," he said.

Safety and Security Minister Sydney Mufamadi urged black business leaders to counter crime by becoming visible role models to youth.

"Black role models are not giving sufficient of their time to their communities. Too often the role models are drug dealers and flashy criminals."

# Sandton rates rebellion looks likely to spread

(127) / ~~Sandton~~ 4/9/96

Lobby supported by 'most of big guys'

BY KARIN SCHIMKE  
City Editor

While only one large property owner in Sandton is taking part in a revolt against increased rates, other large commercial property owners appear to be bristling for action.

Liberty Life Properties earlier this week added its voice to the chorus of homeowners refusing to pay doubled and, in some cases, trebled rates to the Eastern Metro Council. While prepared to pay "fair and reasonable increases", the group refuses to pay the new rates.

The council will forfeit millions of rands if only Liberty Life continues this action, but if the threat of other action materialises, it stands to lose billions.

Liberty Life Properties managing director Wolf Cesman said. "I would suspect we are one of the biggest ratepayers in Sandton and pay the council millions a year. But now they have almost trebled rates. It is unfair and unconstitutional and we will not pay the extra rates."

Liberty Life, which owns Sandton City, is the first commercial organisation to join the ranks of dis-

gruntled Sandton residents who are paying their old rates plus 20% in a well co-ordinated boycott.

Cesman was adamant this was not a boycott. "We are paying rates, but not at the exorbitant new prices."

Fred Bhl, deputy MD of Ampros, said "We have joined the lobby that is beefing for legal action against the council so that we can challenge the validity of the rates rises. At the same time we are looking at each valuation individually."

He said this lobby was supported by "most of the big guys".

Absa Group general manager Dr Gert Dry said it was premature to say Absa was going to refuse to pay Sandton's increased rates, but the company was discussing its options with its legal advisers.

Sanlam Properties, though not ready to withhold payments "at this stage", sympathised with property owners affected by the increase.

Eastern Metro councillor Liz Clogg said she was not surprised by Liberty Life Properties' rebellion. She said the rates increase had been "ill advised and shortsighted".

Cosatu, meanwhile, condemned Liberty Life for "promoting the boycott".

# Sandton rates boycott gets going as Alexandra begins to

(1a7) BD 6/9/96  
Eavin du Venage

THE Sandton rates boycott is gaining momentum, as Eastern Metropolitan Substructure officials concede that evidence points to a massive decline in revenue from business and residents. The rates structure came into effect at the beginning of this month but initial indications are that most Sandton residents are paying only for their services. Sources said several businesses had cancelled cheques sent to the council after they were emboldened by Lib-

erty Life's announcement that it would not honour the increase. Cashiers at the Sandton administration pay point said hundreds of people had queued up on Wednesday to pay their service charges before the deadline of September 4. However, most paid either for services only, or the old rates plus 20%. The reason for the rush was that most homeowners had withheld their payments until the last moment.

Earlier in the week Liberty Life, owners of Sandton City, said they

would base payments on the previous scale plus 20%, which the institution said reflected a market-based increase. Cashiers working at the pay point said yesterday only about one in 50 people had paid the new scale. Those who did claimed a "civic duty" to pay the increase, according to one cashier Eastern Metropolitan Substructure CEO Cansi Lisa said it would take about three months to draw up an accurate income picture for the region.

However, he said his initial impression from looking at a few Sandton pay

statements was that people were not paying the full amount. Only the former Sandton municipal area has had an increase of more than 240% imposed on it, to bring its rates in line with the rest of Johannesburg. Other areas within the substructure, most of which fell under Johannesburg, did not appear to be affected by the boycott.

Lisa said interest would be added to the outstanding amounts. He said any action against ratepayers would be decided jointly between the Greater Johannesburg Transition-

## Sandton (1a7)

Continued from Page 1  
BD 6/9/96

going from door to door to encourage people to pay. The SA National Civics Organisation (Sanco) had organised a march to the Alexandra civic centre in support of rates and service payments. However, administrative problems also made it difficult to collect rates from Alexandra. Many addresses were out of date and a census was necessary to establish the names of homeowners.

Sapa reports Provincial Affairs Minister Valli Moosa and Gauteng planning and development MEC Sicelo Shuceka yesterday condemned the rates boycott while the ANC said it was irresponsible. But Sandton federation of ratepayers' association spokesman John Lambson said: "We are not interested in the views of political parties"

## pay up

al Metropolitan Council, the Eastern Metropolitan Substructure and the other substructures which would also be affected by income patterns.

Lisa said that in Alexandra it appeared that residents had responded to the call and were queuing to pay full rates and service charges.

The new rates structure introduced property valuations to the township for the first time.

Lisa said township councillors were

Continued on Page 2

Lambson said the federation, representing 24 ratepayer associations, wanted "meaningful negotiations" with the Eastern Metropolitan Substructure over the rates issue, but the request had been ignored or stalled.

"The campaign against unreasonable rates is a matter between Sandton ratepayers and the Eastern Metropolitan Substructure. The arrogant attitude of the Eastern Metropolitan Substructure is as outrageous as the unreasonable increase in rates inflicted without consultation."

Bryanston ratepayers' and residents' association chairman and initiator of the protest action, Frank Crosswell, also rejected the ANC criticism. "This is no political protest and we are not out to undermine anybody. We don't want confrontation with local government or the ANC. This is a grassroots protest by ratepayers."

Crosswell said 2% of Alexandra residents were paying rates, so the ANC was not on a strong platform.

SANDTON RATES (127)

## BOYCOTT POLITICS

FMB 19/9/96

The DP may go to court in an effort to stop the transfer of the eastern substructure's R438m surplus to the Greater Johannesburg Transitional Metropolitan Council

Houghton DP Councillor Mike Moriarty says action will depend on advice from attorneys briefed to study the case "The eastern substructure generates half of the TMC's rates income, so we believe it should pay over only half of the surplus," he says "The R438m is not an accumulated surplus. It isn't in the bank but is a projected surplus that will be generated this financial year"

Moriarty says the rates boycott has not yet bitten. About 97% of the payments due for June, when the old rates were still in force, have been received. It will be possible to judge the effect of the boycott only when rates for July (when the new charges took effect) are paid. They were

due by mid-August

Sandton Federation of Ratepayers (Sanfed) chairman Peter Harmsen believes the boycott is starting to have an effect "From what I gather, a high percentage of ratepayers are withholding rates. I understand that about 50 people an hour are filling in objection forms at our Benmore help-line office"

He says Sanfed is not inciting anyone to stop paying rates "but there's a pervasive feeling among home-owners that rates shouldn't be paid. Even the Bryanston Ratepayers' Association (BRA) has fallen in line with other associations which have recommended that residents stop paying"

The authorities apparently missed the BRA's end-of-August deadline to accept its offer to pay the old rates plus 20% while negotiations over current increases were in progress

Harmsen is upset at not getting the opportunity to discuss the rates issue with the Eastern Metropolitan Substructure's new CEO, Canzi Lisa ■

# Concessions expected as Sandton sets up meeting with ratepayers

By JACQUI REEVES  
Sandton 7/9/96  
(127)

Greater Sandton authorities, hoping to break the deadlock between the Eastern Metropolitan Substructure and boycotting ratepayers in the next few weeks, announced yesterday that a meeting between the parties in dispute would be held on Thursday.

Sources within the substructure said the council was preparing to make concessions on the rates dispute and hoped to solve the deepening crisis before the boycott began to bite.

Sandton Federation of Ratepayers (Sanfed) treasurer Brian Stolzenberg said although the meeting was a step in the right direction, it was long overdue.

"As soon as we (ratepayers) realised the situation, we called for meetings with various authorities.

"We were refused entry at every door we tried. At a series of public meetings we called for proposals to stop the

conflict developing. Everyone agreed to pay rates increases - but only reasonable increases. The boycott was our last alternative, having been turned away everywhere else."

This week ratepayers accused the substructure of being "lackeys for the Greater Johannesburg Metropolitan Council", saying their local representatives were not willing to use the power they had.

"The substructure simply accepts

whatever is passed down to it by the metropolitan council. It has the power to shape its budgets but simply agrees to all it is given," said Stolzenberg.

Substructure chief executive officer Canzi Lisa told the *Saturday Star* that although he could not say whether negotiations would result in rates rebates, some allowances would have to be granted. "Strategic executives have worked on service delivery projects on the basis of the approved budgets, tak-

ing into account the rates increases. If these rates are reduced, it will mean there will be certain things we are not going to be able to do in certain communities," he said.

Throughout the dispute, ratepayers have accused the substructure of a lack of transparency in setting the new rates. Lisa lays the blame for this at the feet of individual ward councillors

TO PAGE 2

## ◆ Sandton rates

(127)  
Nov 7/9/96

"Every ward councillor has the opportunity to discuss issues with his or her constituents before the policies go to the executive committee. It must therefore be left up to the councillors themselves to say whether they consulted their constituents sufficiently on the rates issue."

The matter was further complicated this week when a Johannesburg attorney said residents might have a constitutional defence for non-payment on the basis that differing rates structures violated their right to equality and protection against discrimination.

While the still uncertain option of a court battle appears to have given more power to the ratepayers, Lisa said the option should be avoided.

"There has to be a way to reach an amicable agreement, and to avoid the lengthy and often expensive process of a court case," he said.

Tactics used by the ratepayers this week have been interpreted by the two parties in very different ways, with both claiming victories.

The Wednesday deadline for Sandton residents to pay their increased rates saw residents flock to the civic centre offices to pay by cheque.

Lisa believes this might indicate residents' unwillingness to risk not paying, while Stolzenberg said it was all part of the plan.

"In the past we have made it so easy for the council. We have used debit orders or automatic payment facilities as soon as we received our bills."

"Sanfed advised residents who chose to pay their rates to pay only on the final day, and to use cheques. This flooded the office with paperwork and proved that the substructure simply did not have the administrative capabilities to deal with the situation."

While this proved ratepayers' support for Sanfed, the door to reconciliation remained open, he said.

"This boycott is destructive from all points of view. All we want is to reach an agreement that is mutually satisfying."

The rates boycott was initiated by Sandton residents after the Greater Johannesburg council took steps to make rates charges uniform throughout the metropolitan area.

# Council will meet Sandton ratepayers

Gavin Du Venage

THE eastern metropolitan substructure will hold talks with Sandton ratepayers this week in what could be the start of a retreat by officials who face an unprecedented boycott action by big business and wealthy home owners

Council CEO Canzi Lisa said at the weekend the executive committee was to hold an "informal meeting" with ratepayer organisations on Thursday. This is the first time the council has openly indicated it may negotiate over the issue. The meeting would be held with a "small group" of representatives in an attempt to end the boycott

A number of large institutions and businesses have refused to pay their rates on the new fariff Boumat is one of the latest big companies to join the boycott. CEO Peter Glendinning said on Friday the company would pay according to the old tariff structure, plus 20%. Liberty Life, owners of Sandton City,

launched a similar initiative last week.

Provincial Affairs and Constitutional Development Minister Valh Moosa raised the issue last week during a regular meeting with the Gauteng cabinet, urging it to intervene. Moosa's spokesman said government did not want the issue to "set a precedent". Other large urban areas around SA were also drawing up unitary budgets.

Mosimane said government wanted the provincial government and council to reach agreement with residents. "Residents should insist that the local authorities negotiate with them if they feel they are being treated unfairly. They can also approach the public protector and petition the premier of Gauteng as concerned residents."

Mosimane said government wanted residents to reach a settlement without resorting to boycott tactics. "What happens in Gauteng affects events around the country," he said.

In another development, DP

spokesman and Gauteng provincial legislature member Ian Davidson has claimed that the greater Johannesburg budget could be illegal.

"The law requires that valuers visit areas to make a valuation. However, interim legislation was prepared to allow valuers to value areas on a collective scale. This legislation was never passed. This means there is probably no legal basis on which they can be passed," Davidson said.

This could lead to legal challenges of the valuation role in former black areas, he said. The budget was based on an income pattern from the entire metropolitan area, so a successful challenge could force the budget to be suspended and redrawn.

"What is extraordinary is the incompetence in this matter," Davidson said. He claimed the legislation was never passed because Moosa's office had lost the relevant files. Moosa could not be reached for comment.

(127) BD 4/9/96 9/9/96

# Sandton rates boycott

Star 9/9/96 (127)

Official meetings with residents this week could have significant implications for those in Greater Johannesburg

## Tough talk over

By ANNA COX  
Sandton Bureau

The agreement by provincial and local authorities to meet Sandton residents who have started a rates boycott has been followed by tough talk across the divide, with major implications for residents in Greater Johannesburg.

The three sides are to meet later this week to discuss the average rates increase of 243%, but Sandton ratepayers have reacted furiously to threats by the Government to cut off services and to weekend reports that the TMC will not give in to their demands.

The outcome of the negotiations will affect other areas, such as Soweto and Alexandra, where residents are expected to pay rates for the first time, but are already protesting that the amounts being levied are too high.

So far the Eastern Metro Council, which covers Sandton and Alexandra, is believed to have discussed the increases with only the Bryanston ratepayers' group. But its CEO, Canzi Lisa, said at the weekend that his council had, since the budget was approved, "hosted public meetings, placed advertisements in local media, and the executive committee has met some ratepayer associations".

Negotiations between civic associations and the Greater Johannesburg Transitional Metropolitan Council (TMC) for lower rates resulted in a deadlock last month.

Sandton Federation of Ratepayers treasurer Brian Stolzenberg has dismissed the weekend threat of service cuts as "political speak". He says the council was not in a legal position to cut off services as most residents boycotting the rates increases were paying for their services.

He also slammed statements by Eugene Robson, chairman of the TMC finance committee, who said there was no chance of concessions for ratepayers.

Sanfed's spokesman Frank Crosswell said "Residents have

been attempting to negotiate for months, but the Eastern Metro Council has consistently refused, preferring to adopt an arrogant wait-and-see attitude. We do not want chaos. Most people living in Sandton now have to find an average of R1 000 a month more to pay for additional rates and services, and for salaried people this is near impossible," he said.

Crosswell questioned claims by Lisa that Alexandra payments were up "Official figures show payments in greater Alex remained at 3% until July," he said.

Resident Mike Allen said the Government had no right to interfere in local matters "Most of the country's financial leaders live in Sandton. The Government is heading for major trouble".

Residents also called for the abolition of the TMC following the referral by the Constitutional Court on Friday of the chapter on local government back to the Constitutional Assembly for renegotiation.

Sandton resident John Lambson said "The very existence of the council is an expensive luxury which ratepayers cannot afford. There is no reason why the four substructures cannot administer their own regions".

Two meetings will be held, one tomorrow involving Gauteng's development planning and local government MEC Siso Shiceka, TMC executive committee chairman Colin Matjila and ratepayers, and one on Thursday between Eastern Metro Council officials and ratepayers.

■ Boumat Limited is the latest business to join the rates protest. Chief executive P Glendinning said Boumat supported the rates boycott, as he believed it would bring all the parties to the tables.

■ The DP is to take legal action against the Eastern Metro Council on two rates-related issues.

It will attempt to prevent the council from handing over its R438,3-million surplus to the TMC, claiming it has no authority or legal standing to hand it over.

The Star 10 October 1996

# Masakhane campaign gets a fresh boost

(127) ~~Hamnca~~ star  
10/9/96

Gauteng government relaunches programme today

as part of national push to instill in the townships a culture of paying for services

**By JUSTICE MALALA**  
Provincial Correspondent

**T**he Gauteng government unveiled a series of programmes and projects today to encourage the payment of rates and taxes in a bid to reawaken the Masakhane Campaign

The campaign was launched amid much fanfare last February to get township residents to resume paying after boycotts of the 1980s

It was re-launched today by Gauteng premier Tokyo Sexwale and Provincial Affairs and Constitutional Development Minister Mohammed Valli Moosa at the Johannesburg City Hall. The event was attended by councillors from all over Gauteng

The Gauteng programme forms part of a wider national drive to resuscitate the campaign, which has failed to take off among communities since its launch on February 5 last year

A spokesman for Gauteng's Development Planning and Local Government ministry, Prince Hamnca, said yesterday the re-



**Mohammed Valli Moosa ... provinces must take lead.**

vised Masakhane Campaign was aimed at improving quality of life and deepening democracy

"The new projects will be aimed at creating jobs, while at the same time creating a framework for people to pay their rates

and taxes

"The feeling is that the campaign has been driven by Government alone and the relaunch wants to take it to the people through local government," Hamnca said

Hamnca said that the councils and the provincial government would compile a plan for the campaign. Street and ward councils would be called on to assist local councils in ensuring that a culture of payment was inculcated in residents.

Moosa said yesterday that in his meeting with North West premier Popo Molefe earlier in the day, he had emphasised the need for the provincial leadership to be seen to be leading the campaign.

His message is that provincial governments, business and other civil organisations should get involved in promoting the campaign.

National figures like Archbishop Desmond Tutu threw their weight behind the campaign, the brainchild of late housing minister Joe Slovo, when it was launched last year.



# Only 25% of hostel dwellers paying charges

(127) ~~Severson~~

BY HOPEWELL RADEBE

City Desk  
Star 10/9/96

While recent headlines have focused on the Sandton rates protest, councils on the East Rand are still battling to convince hostel dwellers to pay for services to cover operational costs.

This is despite efforts by councils in Greater Germiston, Boksburg, Alberton, Springs and Tembisa/Kempton Park to meet residents halfway by building extra pay points in and around townships.

Greater Germiston chief executive officer Anthony Kruger said only 25% of hostel residents were up to date with their services, even though each paid only R20 for a bed per month.

More than 10 000 people live in Katlehong's four hostels. Only the women's hostel, Khutsong, showed a significantly better payment rate of 42% over its male counterparts.

Kruger said the council had spent R2,3-million on emergency repairs last year. Council spokesman Frans Swart said the new tariff was just enough to cover the hostel's operational costs.

# R13-m to stop water leaks

(127) Source: 11/9/96

## Big project aims to replace old sewerage pipes all over Soweto

By Shadrack Mashalaba

**T**HE GREATER JOHANNESBURG Transitional Metropolitan Council and Rand Water are to spend a total of R13 million in a drive to eliminate water leaks in Soweto.

An amount of R1,2 million has already been spent for the first phase expected to last six months. The project covers Phiri, Senoane, Molapo, Dlamini, Moroka and Moletsane

Project coordinator from consulting firm BKS, Allan Young, says the funding for it has been borne by the council from its maintenance account and won't cost residents a cent

It is estimated that 16 000 megalitres of water are lost every year in Soweto due to leaking pipes

The council hopes to save R16 million through the project. "We feel we would automatically return the costs of the project by saving megalitres lost annually, particularly in the hardest-hit areas," says Young

### Play their part

"Nonetheless, we expect residents also to play their part in paying for the service"

Total work for the project will be subcontracted exclusively to small contractors. Currently, there are five small construction companies involved in the projects. These

include Docs Construction, Tina's Construction, Bike's Construction, TE Construction and Mokehele Construction

Young says the aim of the project is to replace old sewerage pipes after a study done a year ago discovered that thousands of litres of water were being lost daily through leaking pipes — costing the council millions of rands

"Other operations currently taking place in Soweto would not be affected because there is coordination with regard to them"

### Minimal disruption

DLM Constructing engineers manager Vusumuzi Msweli says the project is moving at a satisfactory pace and expects minimal disruption to services

"So far, the contractors have been doing a commendable job despite minor hiccups and the work was done within the expected time frame

"Tendering for the first phase had been an open affair and we expect approval for the second phase budget by the end of September. Tendering for the second phase is to begin by October," says Msweli

He adds that work for the second phase will be valued at R8 million

It will cover an estimated 14 000 privately owned houses. The last phase is expected to benefit 24 000 rented houses throughout Soweto



Thousands of litres of water are lost daily in Soweto due to malfunctioning infrastructure, but attempts are underway to correct the situation.

# Great debate over Sandton rates

BY BEATRICE MOTSI  
AND FIKILE-NTSIKELELO MOYA

The Sandton rates protest has become the talk of the town as people all over Johannesburg – and even as far as Pretoria – hold heated debates around the morality of the boycotts on the one hand, and the morality of doubled rates increases on the other.

The Star spoke to several people about the issue.

Julie Jacobs of Bree Street in the CBD said "It's ridiculous that rates have gone up so high."

Sipho Boesak of Bellevue felt there was nothing wrong with Sandton residents boycotting their rates increases.

Wendy de Lorm of Bryanston said rates had gone up too much and people had not budgeted for the increases.

(127) Star 11/9/96  
Ezekiel Tsubella of Meadowlands had little sympathy for Sandton residents "Those people in Sandton have the money to pay rates. Even ordinary people like us have to pay rates."

"Who told them we have the money?" asked an elderly Sandton man who gave his name as Mr Erling. "How do they know?" he repeated.

Saki Macozoma of Kelvin said he was "totally annoyed" with the Sandton residents.

"People want reconciliation but they do not want to pay for it, they still want to enjoy the fruits of apartheid," said Macozoma, who is the managing director of Transnet and a former ANC Member of Parliament. However, Macozoma was speaking only as a Sandton resident.

A Sandton shopowner who did not want to be named said

businesses would be forced to increase their prices because of the rates increase. "People can't afford to live in their houses and can't afford to eat."

Two visitors from Pietersburg, Andy Makgoba and Jimmy Mailula, disagreed on the issue. "Sandton is not for people like us who do not have money. These people can afford to pay," said Makgoba.

Mailula felt the rates hike was too great. He said he agreed with the boycott tactic because that was the only way people could "express" themselves.

Philemon Mashabo of Orlando East said "People should pay, but not more than double."

Michael Qabazi of Soweto said "It is not fair for them to boycott their rates because everything is going up. Everybody has to pay."

# No progress at rates hike meeting

BY ANNA COX  
Sandton Bureau

(127) Star 11/9/96  
The ANC last night refused to negotiate with the Sandton Federation of Ratepayers (Sanfed) when the residents' group met provincial authorities and political leaders to protest against increased rates for Sandton.

The Sanfed delegation was told that the meeting, held at the ANC constituency offices in Sandton, was purely for information-gathering and no negotiations would be held.

Sandton residents started the boycott last week against hikes of an average 243% on their rates.

Sanfed spokesman Brian Stolzenberg said the ANC had made it quite clear it was only prepared to listen to the issues relating to the rates so that it could hand the information to the Eastern Metro Council for its meeting scheduled with ratepayers tomorrow evening.

However, the ANC and delegates from the Gauteng govern-

ment had not indicated that they were prepared to negotiate at tomorrow's meeting either, said Stolzenberg.

"It appears many of the politicians did not understand the issues or had a poor perception of the issues at stake. We made it clear to them that we wanted a speedy, amicable solution but no promises were made to us. We also made it very clear that residents would not pay rates until they were given a fair hearing, treated fairly and given the opportunity to negotiate a fair settlement."

"We will not stop our boycott and we will go as far as we have to until we reach a reasonable settlement," he said.

The ANC could not be reached for comment. However, in an earlier statement, Greater Johannesburg Transitional Metropolitan Council executive committee chairman Collin Matjila said it was apparent that most ratepayers were either misinformed or ignorant of the facts about the bud-

gets of both the GJTMC and the substructures, and in particular of the uniform rating policy and the rationale behind the rates increase.

■ Gauteng development, planning and local government MEC Sicelo Shiceka said earlier he did not think the rates protest would undermine local government efforts to breathe new life into the ailing Masakhane campaign relaunched yesterday.

"Sandton's residents don't understand the consequences, the suffering that come with boycotts. They are embarking on something they don't understand."

He said if the council had to take boycotters to court, residents would probably lose their case because they had "no legal leg to stand on."

He also said, however, that people who paid rates had every right to know how their money was being spent.

► More reports

# A taxing time for Sandton

Star 12 | 9 | 96

(127)

All that has been done is that a 'market value' has been assigned to properties which, if wrong, can be corrected

Ratepayers believe success can be achieved if the legitimate rights and ambitions of all parties are accommodated

By EUGENE ROBSON

From the way Northern Ratepayers' Association leaders are changing the targets of their attack in media debates about the rates increases, it is clear that they are eventually learning the truth.

At first they tried to portray the introduction of uniform rates, (within the Eastern MSS and across the Metro), as something illegal and immoral. Now that some of them have attended the stakeholders' forum held at Braamfontein last Saturday, they appear to be floundering.

They have learnt that they were misinformed. The budgets in the GTMCC were adopted in the correct manner required by the law. They know that longstanding agreements, negotiated months ago with, among others, the DP, whom they elected to represent them, and their own predecessors in their associations and federations, were used as the basis for the budgets.

It is not the fault of the Greater Johannesburg Council (and its 4 MSSs) that Sandton's DP ward councillors, their own ratepayer associations' previous leaders, and previous local DP leaders, have courted Sandtonians' support and their votes without informing them of the substance of the agreements they had previously struck.

The new ratepayer leaders have a genuine dilemma. Like all prepared volunteers, hastily recruited to fight a rearguard action whose objectives they know little about, they find that the troops they were supposed to back up have retreated into the safety of noble debates about abortion, birthrights and casino licenses.



Eugene Robson: 'The council has no need to apologise for its approach'

There are, however, a few allegations and so called "suggestions" made which require some response.

■ The budgets are unfair. How can a uniform tax rate be the same as in Orange Farm, Soweto and any other area in the Metro?

All the Council has done is assign a "market value" to each property. If the Council's value is wrong, then, by all means, object and get it corrected. Follow the processes provided for by law throughout the world, rates are based on property values and this practice always been acceptable.

■ The allocations for development in the EMSS are too low. The truth is that the allocations for development are too low for all areas throughout the Metro. The allocations in the budget were made on sound principles. There are adequate provisions for maintenance of infrastructure in developed areas.

Areas in greatest need of life-line services were treated in the budgets as priorities for bigger allocations. ■ The Council has acted outrageously.

Why are people outraged by attempts at abolishing protections and benefits enjoyed unfairly during apartheid, while they clamour never to have supported it?

Neighbouring councils, communities and ratepayers have paid for many benefits enjoyed by Sandtonians. The next time these residents go to the Transvaal Automobile Club, the Wanderers Club Oval Room, Ellis Park, Hurdle Park Golf Club, the Zoo, the Zoo Lake and the Civic Theatre, they need to consider who has been paying all this time for these comforts.

Nobody is arguing for the backdating of equitable assessment rates. Let's try to level the future playing field and create stability in our region.

■ The increases are too high. 200%, 300% or even 10 000% is still considerably lower in statistical terms than an infinite increase. The increases in rates in Soweto are infinite and yet people there are not whinging. The plea by civic associations is that safety nets are provided for the genuinely indigent, who cannot afford to pay for services and rates.

Let the ratepayer federations find the genuinely indigent in Sandton, so that we can quantify the extent of the problem, and in co-operation with Provincial and National Government (who have a welfare competency) begin to seek solutions for all, in those circumstances.

■ The Council should have phased in the increases. How does one do this for one area (Sandton) only? Surely people in Yeoville and Newlands are also entitled to fair treatment?

■ Eugene Robson is a councillor in the Greater Johannesburg Transitional Metropolitan Council.

By PETER HARMSEN

The ratepayers of what was Sandton are incensed at the remarks made by politicians and officials that "they must pay because they can afford it".

Since when has the admirable trait of paying one's way in life been transformed into a dishonourable state from which one needs to be released by having one's hard-earned assets commandeered, just because one happens to possess them?

In fact, the reprehensible philosophy that pensioners will not be considered for remission of rates unless they, *inter alia*, have an income of less than R2 500 per month, suggests that our local authorities believe that anyone with an income above this level deserves to be further impoverished.

The ratepayers believe the only equitable basis for the levying of rates and service charges to be in relation to usage, not some subjective and readily abused notion of "ability to pay". For the genuinely indigent, for whom there is considerable sympathy, it should be openly subsidised by the State. Large numbers of others have for lengthy periods blatantly flouted their obligations to pay even denisory amounts for services, leading law-abiding ratepayers to question the political will of the authorities to act equitably.

Surely it is inappropriate to belligerently attack ratepayers who are settling services in full, and who have indicated that they would dutifully pay fair and reasonable rates, while exulting those whose payment levels have yet to exceed 3%? The ratepayers hold the view that among the is-



Peter Harmesen: '... why should you have your hard-earned assets commandeered?'

uses which need to be addressed to even approach equity and reasonableness in the setting of rates, are

■ A review in consultation with ratepayers of the Greater Johannesburg and Eastern MSS budgets, particularly of the need for R438-million (some 40%) of the amount raised in the EMSS to be transferred to the superfluous Greater Johannesburg TMC for costs of administration and disbursements to other areas.

Why, when allocated % of expenditure and 12% of expenses, is the EMSS expected to generate 46% of the income?

■ A common basis for valuations, based on an agreed philosophy and approach, to be implemented throughout the TMC before the rates are imposed at an equated level in the region.

■ Involvement of ratepayers in the establishment of budget for costs administration and particularly for benefits derived by politicians, who are currently deciding on their own rewards!

■ A special additional separate until services are brought to the same standard as those other areas.

The ratepayers approach the meeting which the authorities have belatedly granted, in a spirit of partnership and with optimism that we can achieve what has not been achieved elsewhere in Africa.

They believe success can be achieved provided the legitimate rights and ambitions of all parties are accommodated, and unnecessary imposition of hardship avoided on those sectors of the population who continue to generate a disproportionate share of the wealth which supports an encouraging standard of living for a broad cross-section of the population. They hope that all the parties share their optimistic vision and that a destructive prolonged conflict which would destroy effective local governance, will be avoided.

They do however believe that their actions were determined by the refusal hitherto of the authorities to address their objections and furthermore believe that their actions are not illegal.

The ratepayers dispute the authorities' right to increase the rates and charges to the degree that they have, and particularly dispute the barometer applied and the legality in levying such exorbitant increases.

Extensive ongoing investigation by senior counsel indicates that a strong case exists to legally overturn the budget and the newly imposed rates should a constructive and reasonable outcome of the dispute prove impossible.

It is clear that a negotiated settlement would be in the best interest of all the parties. ■ Harmesen is the chairman of Sandton Federation of Ratepayers' and Residents' Associations (Sanfeda).

# Liberty Life's role in rates protest slammed

By **KARIN SCHIMKE**  
City Editor

(127)  
Star 12/9/96  
Liberty Life Properties was warned yesterday about its participation in the Sandton rates protest, with Development Planning and Local Government MEC Sicele Shiceka saying it had to be remembered that the Gauteng government rented several buildings from Liberty Life

"Liberty Life is actually quite vulnerable. Some government departments rent buildings from Liberty Life. The ANC headquarters is rented from Liberty Life. We can mobilise these institutions. Liberty Life is undermining its own tenants."

Wolf Coesman, managing director of Liberty Life Properties, reacted with surprise, however.

"Why are we being targeted when there are thousands of other

ratepayers in Sandton protesting?" he asked.

He said the statements were not befitting of a person in government and that this was not the way to solve the problem.

Liberty Life was not boycotting rates, he added.

"We are paying our rates, and we are paying them to the right authority. We are not being confrontational at all. The rates increases are extremely damaging and it is our duty to reduce the impact of unfair activities on the people of Sandton."

Shiceka and chairman of the Greater Johannesburg Metro Council Collin Matjila had called journalists together to discuss the relaunch of the Masakhane campaign which is aimed at encouraging communities to pay their rates and services. The Sandton rates issue, however, dominated

Government's rejection of the rates boycott again emerged clearly. One of the resolutions taken at the relaunch of the Masakhane campaign earlier this week reads: "That the conduct of Liberty Life in calling for or boycotting payment of rates be condemned in the strongest terms as being both illegal and unethical."

Mathole Motshekga, who chairs the Gauteng legislature's local government standing committee, said "We support the right to protest, but there must be a justifiable basis for the protest. They (residents and Liberty Life) had opportunity to go through the budgets. We are not convinced on what basis they protest."

This was set to change today, Shiceka said, when the provincial government met ratepayers' representatives again to take note of their concerns.

# NP backtracks, says Sandton hike 'exorbitant, unfair'

(127)

By ANNA COX

Sandton Bureau

Star 12/9/96

In a remarkable turnabout over the Sandton rates increases the National Party, which applauded the budget and unanimously voted for it, has proposed a moratorium on the full increases, limiting the hike to 20% until the matter is resolved.

The NP's Daryl Swanepoel said it remained committed to restructuring the budget in such a way so as to improve the living conditions of the previously disadvantaged and to ensuring equality in the rates formula.

However, the increased financial burden should be fair and reasonable and should not be accompanied by a material reduction in services, he said.

"It appears the immediate increased financial burden on individuals and businesses located within the Sandton area is exorbitant and goes beyond administrative justice and is too severe to be absorbed in a single adjustment. Legitimate concerns of residents are being met with a hostile response, whereas a constructive problem-solving approach would prove more useful," he said.

# Sandton ratepayers give councils ultimatum as talks falter

By ANNA COX

Sandton's ratepayers issued an ultimatum to the council last night. They have given the Greater Johannesburg Metro Council and the Eastern Metro Council until September 19 to delegate six people, empowered to act on their be-

half, to discuss the controversial rates increases.

None of the issues which have riled residents were resolved at a meeting between local and provincial authorities and ratepayers.

Sandton ratepayers were told the meeting was purely an informal communications meeting

Star 13/9/96  
which did not have the power to negotiate reductions in rates.

The Sandton Federation of Ratepayers (Sanfed), representing 24 ratepayer bodies, has vowed to continue its boycott until an agreement has been reached on reducing the increases.

Sanfed chairman Peter Harm-

(127)  
sen said "We made attempts to negotiate but these attempts were strenuously resisted, so the situation remains the same and the boycott will continue."

The ANC's Sol Cowan blamed the Sandton DP councillors for not consulting with their ratepayers on the budget and increases.

PICTURES RIAN HORN



Alex resident ... Phule Phalatse says payments will be painful.



Bryanston resident ... Peter Walker will probably have to sell.

## Pay up, says one, while another fights increase

Star 13/9/96

(127)

Alex residents must get used to the idea of paying for services, but down the road they're fuming, reports Anna Cox

Phule Phalatse, a resident of East Bank, Alexandra, is a supervisor at a large department store. He has not yet received his first rates account and says he will be liable for about R70 a month in rates as a first-time payer.

He will be paying the rates because he says he understands that the council must be given money to deliver services. But he feels that a culture of rates payment should first have been instilled in people to get them used to the idea of paying.

"The rates payments should

have been introduced gradually. They will bring a lot of hardship to people who have never even paid for services before. It should have been discussed with people to explain to them why they should pay."

Phalatse says people used non-payment as a tool against apartheid and it has affected the standard of living in the township. But now that they have their own elected councillors, they should assist councillors by paying, thereby helping them to deliver proper services.

Peter Walker has been living in Bryanston for 37 years. He will probably have to sell his family home and move to a smaller place because he cannot afford the extra R300 a month he is expected to pay because of the increased rates, introduced recently by the Eastern Metro Council.

Walker is a pensioner who supports himself and his wife on a monthly pension from the former Johannesburg City Council, where he worked for many years as a civil engineer.

"We moved to Bryanston 37

years ago because it was the only place we could afford to live. We had seven children. We bought a stand for £600 and built a house for £6 000.

"We brought our children up in the house but we are now on the verge of losing it," he says.

Walker feels so strongly about the matter that he voluntarily spends time helping out at the Sandton Federation of Ratepayers' newly established offices, set up to assist ratepayers with inquiries regarding the rates boycott.

## Councillors who are late or don't pay rates will be put on a defaulters' list

Councillors who fail to pay for their services or rates will have their names published in a defaulters' list - with the express permission of the councillors themselves.

Most of Gauteng's local government councillors were gathered at the relaunch of the Masakhane campaign earlier this week, where they signed a declaration pledging to contribute fully

to "the smooth running, improvement of services and development of the province" by paying regularly and on time for services.

The declaration, which is to be signed by elected representatives at all levels of government, reads "In the event of us failing to keep our pledge through our own fault, we hereby give the relevant council permission to publish our names in a monthly defaulters'

list, and agree that the structure take whatever steps are necessary against me, which might include expulsion from government."

The pledge ends with a challenge to elected officials in political parties, business, trade unions, leaders in civic and ratepayers' associations and all government employees to do the same.

Development Planning and Local Government MEC Sicele

Shuceka yesterday said some of the resolutions taken by councillors at the relaunch included broadening and localising the Masakhane campaign, implementing credit control measures, fast-tracking quality service and conducting budget reviews in November so that "financial resources can be re-allocated to needy areas where that has not happened" - City Desk



# Bid to coax ratepayers to pay up slips up

(127)

Region sinks deeper into debt

as few respond to city's

appeals to pay for rates and services

SAPA

*star 2/10/96*

The Masakhane campaign to promote rent and service payment is having little effect in Greater Johannesburg, according to a report by Gauteng Auditor-General Shauket Fakie

In the report presented to the Metro Council yesterday, Fakie said he was unable to express an opinion on the financial position of Greater Johannesburg for the period December 3 1994 to June 30 last year because there had been a significant increase in service and rent arrears for that period

The report shows that more than R900-million was owed to the council in rent and services arrears on June 30 last year.

Fakie said "There is a further significant deterioration in the services and rent arrears debtors. The continued level of service delivery of the council could be seriously affected as a result of this continuing deterioration."

The Star's City Desk reports that a loan offer of R400-million from a foreign bank was accepted by the Greater Johannesburg Metro Council yesterday, minutes before the auditor-general's report was presented to the council

Fakie's report said R686-million was owed to the Greater Johannesburg administration on June 30 last year in rates and service arrears, up from R608-million on December 2 1994. In addition, R220-million was owed in rates and service arrears to the administrations of Soweto, Diepmeadow, Dobsonville, Ennerdale, Lenasia South-East and Alexandra

The report said "Various initiatives, including the Masakhane campaign, have not had any significant effect on the culture of non-payment for services and rentals in areas under the jurisdiction of the council"

It added that the situation had

deteriorated because the council had not consistently carried out, or been able to carry out, collection procedures

Fakie said the "serious nature" of the debtors' position was of concern to his office.

"It is the responsibility of the council, in which these dissolved town councils have been integrated, to follow up these matters and take the necessary corrective steps. The resolution of these matters, which are in the public interest, may be included in my report to the provincial government on the accounts of local governments," he said

Fakie also reported "material shortcomings" in the completeness and accuracy of fixed-asset registers at the former black local authorities

## Despite Masakhane, culture of not paying still rules

"Regarding the former Soweto, Diepmeadow, Dobsonville and Alexandra councils, take-on values of assets as transferred from the former West Rand Development Board were

not specified, certain assets transferred did not exist and many issues are still in dispute," he said

Councillor Eugene Robson said the report failed to put the low payment levels in their historic context "of the struggles waged against apartheid local authorities"

"The issue of payment levels and credit control is of grave concern to this council because, in the long term, the continued viability of local government will hinge on every resident and business meeting fully their commitment to pay all council dues," he said.

However, he added: "The financial state of the metro is in a much better position than it has ever been. This is proved by our ability to be the first local authority to be offered a foreign loan"

The DP objected to the loan, saying the council was not collecting enough money to support a debt.

# Millions owed by township residents

(127) Lowy 3/10/96

By Joshua Raboroko

The report stated that various initiatives, including the Masakhane campaign, have not had any significant effect on the culture of non-payment for services and rental areas under the jurisdiction of the council.

The report also stated that the situation had deteriorated because the council had not consistently carried out or been able to carry out collection procedures.

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In addition, R220 million was owed in rates and services arrears to the administrations of Diepmeadow, Lenasia South and East, Soweto, Dobsonville, Ennerdale, and Alexandra Township.

## Masakhane campaign

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# Mysterious donor will pay Sanfed's legal bills

(127)

Gavin Du Venage

BD 31/10/96  
A MYSTERY donor has offered to underwrite the more than R120 000 in legal fees that the Sandton Federation of Ratepayers (Sanfed) has to raise towards its legal costs in its fight to have the Johannesburg municipal budget overturned.

Sanfed acting Chairman Frank Crosswell said the organisation had received the offer last week from a South African living in London. The donor had telephoned Sanfed on Monday and offered to pay the legal costs of the court action, which could amount to R120 000.

The donor did not want to be named at this stage, but could be identified later, Crosswell said. "He is a man who feels strongly about democracy and wants us to win our fight against the local authorities."

However, Sanfed would try and raise most of the money locally. He said a recent meeting in Bryanston had raised R6 000 and that numerous other donations had been made.

"We will also approach captains of industry who live in Sandton and ask for their support," he said.

Crosswell said that it had been the greater Johannesburg council and not the Eastern Metropolitan substructure that had drawn up the budget, which he said was contrary to the local government ordinances.

Crosswell claimed the budget ignored a finance department directive that municipal increases be kept to 10%. He said Sandton faced an increase of 240%.

Crosswell also speculated that the budget could be unconstitutional. The Constitution stipulated that municipal increases be fair and equitable, which, he said, the rates adjustment was not.

# Councils face brake on 'berserk' taxes

Star 3/10/96

(127)

Constitutional negotiators consider steps to avoid damaging Sandton stands' by ratepayers countrywide who refuse to pay 'ridiculous' increases in rates

By PATRICK BULGER  
Cape Town

A limit will be placed on the powers of local government to levy rates and taxes, MPs negotiating a new draft of the constitution decided yesterday.

They were also considering additional measures to curb municipalities which raised rates and taxes so high that "there is no way of calling them to order but to make a Sandton-type stand", as a negotiator put it.

In Johannesburg the "Sandton stand" was raising a higher profile in national and local politics, Anna Cox reports.

The Sandton Federation of Ratepayers (Sanfed) appealed to President Mandela yesterday to intervene in their worsening dispute over the sharp increase in

rates - nearly 300% - set by their council.

Sanfed has also decided to go beyond its limited boycott, with members only paying a nominal 20% increase. It is urging the wealthy suburb's residents and property owners to go on a full-scale boycott and not pay any rates at all.

In Cape Town, the negotiating MPs made their decision on curbing municipalities during a meeting to give effect to the Constitutional Court's order that the Constitutional Assembly must comply with constitutional principles by giving municipalities "appropriate fiscal powers".

The political parties had agreed in earlier negotiations to

structure local government at three levels - "stand alone" municipalities, metropolitan structures and metropolitan superstructures.

In terms of a preliminary understanding reached between the parties yesterday, only municipalities and substructures will be entitled to levy property rates.

The ANC's Barbara Hogan added the provision, made at a meeting of a CA subcommittee, that the ANC was concerned about the limit on metropolitan government.

Apart from property rates, national legislation will be introduced to give all three levels of local government the power to impose taxes, levies or duties, in-

cluding surcharges on fees for services provided by or on behalf of a municipality.

Hogan explained this would allow municipalities to levy a surcharge on the electricity provided by a privatised distributor.

Municipalities may not impose "income tax, VAT, GST or customs duty", the draft said.

The NP's Jaco Maree said the NP wanted to insert a clause that stopped a municipality levying a tax that was harmful to a municipality itself.

"If the rates are raised so ridiculously high that they are harmful to the municipality itself, there should be a means to go to court."

"A stand-alone local government may go berserk and there's then no way of calling it to order but to make a Sandton-type stand," Maree said.

## Appeal to Mandela to intervene

# 'Noble' DP apologises for trusting the ANC

(127) Star 3/10/96

By ANNA COX  
Sandton Bureau

The Democratic Party published its formal apology and explanation to residents of the Eastern Metro Council, which includes Sandton, for voting with ANC councillors for the steep increase in rates - on the same day the Federation of Ratepayers (Sanfed) decided on a full boycott of rates, and not just the increase.

Sanfed appealed yesterday to President Mandela to intervene in the dispute by bringing local and provincial authorities to the negotiating table to reach a compromise on increases.

Until now, protesting ratepayers have been paying the old rates plus 20%, but their repeated re-

**DP Councillors apologise to Sandton ratepayers ... for trusting the ANC**

We thought we could rely on the ANC and NIP to obey the law and keep their promises. In a mistaken belief we supported this year's budget on condition that the TMC levy be cut, got paid downwards and all savings passed on to residents as an additional rebate.

quests for meetings with the Eastern Metro Council have been ignored and they are considering legal action in addition to the total boycott.

The DP apology, published in a local newspaper, explained. "We approved the budget only on condition that the surplus of R438-million would be negotiated downwards and savings passed on to residents as an additional rebate

"We felt this was the best move as it would have passed the benefits on to the ratepayers. Had we blocked the budget, the Gauteng premier would have rubber-stamped it through with no benefits to the residents."

"At the time we believed we were acting in the best interest of the ratepayers. However, in retrospect we were wrong for trusting the ANC and for this we have

apologised to the ratepayers. "The ANC has made it clear it will not entertain the idea of negotiation on the rates issue until the next budget. In the light of all this, we cannot condemn the ratepayers for their boycott - they are using the only means at their disposal."

In response, ANC executive committee deputy chairman Sol Cowan said it was "very noble" of the DP to apologise but it showed the party had no honour.

"All political parties, including the DP, approved the levelling of the rates base; now they issue an apology. They should have informed their ratepayers of the budget better," he said.

▶ To Page 2

## 'Noble' DP apologises for trusting ANC

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▶ From Page 1

Sanfed spokesman Brian Stolzenberg says ratepayers have raised R45 000 for legal costs in case the matter reached the courts. They have also secured a pledge of R120 000 from an unnamed sympathiser in London. Sanfed's acting chairman, Frank Crosswell, said: "All we are prepared to say is that he is a very powerful businessman who has interests in South Africa."

Sanfed has employed attorneys to investigate the legality and validity of the budgeting process. "It is ridiculous that we will not only be paying for our attorneys, but as ratepayers will be paying for the council's defence," said Stolzenberg.

He stressed that residents should not be intimidated by threats that services would be cut because of the boycott, as this was neither legally nor practically possible.

"Those residents who showed their willingness to pay by paying old rates plus 20% are encouraged to treat that payment as a prepayment against the current month's services and should request a refund where appropriate."

"Residents have been asked not to pay the interest of 18% per annum being charged," said Stolzenberg.

Stolzenberg said one result of the rates controversy could be the revaluation of thousands of properties in the Sandton and Johannesburg business centres.

According to a section of the Local Authorities Rating Ordinance, councils have to do a supplementary valuation if there has been any material change to the value of a property.

Stolzenberg claimed that property values in Sandton had dropped by between 15% and 40% because of the increased rates, and a revaluation would therefore be mandatory.

# Over R900-m owed to metro council, auditor-general reveals

BY KARIN SEMMKE  
City Editor

(227) (127)

Star 7/10/96

Serious concerns about local governments' accountability and taxpayers' apathy have been raised by the auditor-general, whose report for the Greater Johannesburg Transitional Metro Council shows a dire debt situation.

More than R900-million was owed to the council for rates and services

Because of the debt, shortcomings in the fixed asset registers relating mainly to former black local authorities and "several other fundamental uncertainties", the report on the TMC was issued

with a disclaimer of opinion, indicating serious reservations about its financial situation.

Provincial Auditor-General Shauket Fakie said early indications were that the debt situation was deteriorating, with unaudited figures for the year to June 30 showing the R686-million owing to the Johannesburg administration alone had risen to R888-million. Figures for Soweto and other areas were not yet available.

It was not only the high debt that was troublesome. Professor Bertie Loots, chief executive officer in the auditor-general's office, said: "There has been a problem with the accountability arrange-

ments a councils for some time now. To be blunt, on the evidence I'm not sure (measures taken to address this) have worked."

In terms of recent legislation, representatives of the auditor-general's office had to be present at the meeting where audit reports were presented, and council consideration of the reports had to take place at public meetings. Loots said these measures were not enough to ensure absolute public accountability.

"I am not satisfied the corrective action necessary (to increase accountability) has been sufficiently appreciated by councils." He added that South Africans

were historically apathetic when it came to insisting on financial information from local governments.

The report blames the council for the deteriorating situation.

"Various initiatives, including the Masakhane campaign, have not had any significant effect on the culture of non-payment for services and rentals in areas under the jurisdiction of the council," the report states.

It adds the situation has deteriorated because the council has not carried out or been able to carry out collection procedures.

These include increasing the staff in collection departments,

which are "severely understaffed", establishing adequate points of collection in former black local authorities, providing and installing service metering devices, following through court evictions for non-payment of rentals, and suspending services to non-paying consumers.

At yesterday's media briefing, Casper Venter of Ernst & Young said councillors deflected the issues by raising side issues.

"Councillors will have to come to grips with the facts. They blame (the debt situation) on the past, but do not understand the severity of it. They don't appreciate that it relates to the future."

# FNB rejects rates boycott request

(127)

BD 7/10/96

**Gavin du Venage**

FIRST National Bank has said it rejected a request from Liberty Life Properties for support in its fight against the Eastern metropolitan substructure rates increase Liberty has denied canvassing the bank for assistance

FNB GM John Collett said at the weekend the bank had been approached to help pay for legal action that could arise from Liberty's refusal to pay the full rates increase Liberty is paying rates based on the previous valuation structure plus 20% The

new tariff represents an increase of more than 240% over the previous tariff

Collett said that the bank had been approached last week for support. "FNB were approached by Liberty Life to contribute towards their legal costs in challenging the recent Sandton municipal rates hike," he said

However, FNB refused to support the boycott "While sympathetic to this initiative, FNB have declined to participate, as the group does not support any form of boycott"

Liberty Life Proper-

ties chairman Wolf Cesman denied that the institution had made the approach "Not true," he said "I don't know where they got that from"

Cesman said Liberty was not planning any legal action "Since it announced it would not pay the full rates increase, Liberty has had no official reaction," he said

He said Liberty had not wanted to embark on this action, but had been forced to do so by the council's imposition of an unreasonable increase

"I believe this matter can still be resolved," Cesman said

Standard, which is 40% owned by Liberty, has not been approached by Liberty to take part in any form of action against the council, a bank spokesman said on Friday.

Standard won the tender to act as bank to the Gauteng province 18 months ago, and the contract comes up for review in another 18 months' time Gauteng premier Tokyo Sexwale suggested last month that the province would use its influence on Liberty to get it to change its stance on the boycott

Gauteng chief director of planning and budgets, Paddy Maharaj, said at the weekend that the province had a legally binding contract with

Standard and that there were no plans to break it He said the province had the option to renew the contract for another two years without going out to tender

"If we do decide to go out to tender it will be based on the same kind of criteria we looked for before technical advantages and commitment to the RDP," he said

He said the Gauteng finance minister and the provincial finance committee had the authority to review the contract when it came up for renewal, and if necessary, to recommend that it be put out to tender again

Cesman said that Liberty did not involve itself in the management affairs of Standard. Both had separate management structures and controlled their own corporate strategies.

# DP to refer Sandton rates issue to HRC

Star 7/10/96 (127)

R438-m levy imposed on Eastern Metro Council not an 'equitable contribution' as required by Local Govt Transition Act

By ANNA COX  
Sandton Bureau

The Democratic Party will refer the Sandton rates boycott issue to the Human Rights Commission today

In his submission to the commission, councillor Gary Pienaar said that the R438,3-million levy imposed on the Eastern Metro Council by the Greater Johannesburg Metro Council was not an "equitable contribution" as required by the Local Government Transition Act

Furthermore, the process in terms of which the budget was drawn up was seriously flawed by lack of consultation with ratepayers and elected councillors, he said

The executive committee of the council had also not engaged in good-faith negotiations with Sandton ratepayers, having recently rejected an urgent motion brought by the DP in this regard.

The rights of ratepayers, therefore, had been unfairly prejudiced in terms of

- the equality clause in the interim constitution, with Sandton ratepayers being treated less favourably than other ratepayers such as those in Alexandra or the inner city,
- the Local Authority Rating Ordinance, which concerns the right to inspect and object to the new land valuation rolls in view of the serious lack of clarity concerning the budget increases,
- the right to administrative justice, in that ratepayers should

have been afforded a timeous and greater opportunity to make their input in drawing up of the new budget

Pienaar said legitimate expectations had not been met in terms of the finance department directive that local authority budgets be increased by no more than 10%, nor in terms of the reasonable and equitable distribution of the tax burden

"The DP is urging the HRC to make urgent intervention in terms of upholding the legitimate rights of Sandton ratepayers," he said

Meanwhile, Eastern Metro Council executive committee chairman Nkele Ntingane has denied that the ANC had reneged on the agreement to review the

budget and pass savings on to the residents

Reacting to an apology issued by the DP last week in which

## Ratepayers' rights were prejudiced

the party apologised to ratepayers for trusting the ANC to renegotiate the R438-million surplus, Ntingane said it was far too early in the financial year to reassess the surplus and pass savings on to the consumers.

"We will adhere to our agreement later in the financial year and renegotiate the surplus with the Greater Johannesburg Metro Council, not with residents," she said.

■ The Sandton Chamber of Commerce will be holding a meeting tonight with officials from the Greater Johannesburg Metro Council to discuss the boycott of rates by Sandton businesses



## Decision to defend action irks Sanfed

By ANNA COX

The Sandton Federation of Ratepayers has reacted angrily to the fact that the Eastern Metro Council is to defend a court action by the DP, preventing it from handing out the 94% increases in allowances to councillors

The council is to contest the action despite advice from its own legal advisors not to

Sanfed spokesman Brian Stol-

zenberg said this once again showed authorities believed they "could do their own thing"

An attorney and a senior advocate agreed the DP had a good case and should the council seek to oppose the matter it would fail

They said the decision to increase Eastern Metro councillors' allowances by 94% directly affected the budget, and should have been passed by a two-thirds majority in council

(127)

Star 7/10/96

# Sowetans hit hardest by electricity price hike

By FIKILE-NTSIKELELO MOYA  
City Desk

Soweto residents will be worse off than other residents in Greater Johannesburg after Eskom's decision to increase the price of electricity by an average of 5%, chairman of the Greater Johannesburg council's technical services, Kenny Fihla, said

He said tariffs in other areas of Greater Johannesburg would not be increased during the current financial year, which ends on June 30

"Soweto has been paying

Star 8/10/96  
15,45 kW/h while other areas were paying 17,1kW/h, so this is actually an adjustment," he said

Some areas in Soweto, like Protea Glen and Dobsonville Gardens, which have been paying tariffs higher than those paid in greater Soweto, are expected to benefit from the adjustment

"We intend calling a meeting with Eskom and the (electricity) regulator to discuss the standardisation of tariffs for some parts of Protea Glen, Dobsonville Gardens and Orange Farm, where the tariffs are too high. It is unfair and we are concerned with the lack of

equity," Fihla said

Eskom spokesman Peter Adams said Protea Glen and Dobsonville Gardens did not get their electricity supply directly from Eskom, hence the discrepancy in rates. They are supplied by the Roodepoort administration

Greater Soweto and other administrations within the Greater Johannesburg council are directly supplied by Eskom

Adams said Eskom was awaiting an invitation from the Johannesburg council to discuss the standardisation of tariffs throughout the council

(127)

# Hopes for peace lie in solving dispute over housing plan (127)

By BLACKMAN NGORO

Star 12/10/96

The hopes of peace after years of political violence in Tokoza, where hundreds of people have been displaced over the past decade, may rest on a strategically placed housing project.

The Empelisweni housing project, with 562 stands, is at the entrance to Tokoza. However, only one-third of the 30ha site, worth R500 000, is suitable for housing. The rest is on dolomite and will be used for schools, a clinic and a small business centre.

About 400 ANC-aligned families fled their Phenduka council homes, which were later illegally occupied during violent clashes in the late 1980s.

Talks are under way in an effort to resolve the issue, with the main problem being where the illegal occupants should be moved to if they are evicted.

The IFP has said that if its members vacate the occupied houses they should be given access to the Empelisweni stands. The project originally belonged to Transnet.

Transnet project leader Willem Jansen told the *Saturday Star* that the land, which belonged to the former railways and transport service, had been earmarked for its employees. Only a few Transnet employees were involved and it had, therefore, been opportune to make Empelisweni part of the Katorus presidential housing project.

Jansen and Mike Moekel, project leader of the housing project, confirmed that a subsidy had already been secured from the provincial housing board.

"The difficulty is that the area is so close to IFP hostels and lies in a ward with an ANC councillor, which complicates matters," Jansen said.

No decision has been taken on obtaining a court interdict to serve on the non-paying illegal occupants.

Moekel told the *Saturday Star* "One does not want to go heavy with people, but eventually the decision would have to come from the provincial government, particularly MEC for Housing and Land Affairs Dan Mofokeng".

Alberton Council community services head John Welman questioned the wisdom of such a move: "If you take the illegal person out, where do you put him?"

But many of the displaced home-owners do not want the issues of illegal occupations and the Empelisweni housing construction to be linked.

Although IFP organising secretary Thabani Dhlamini has said his organisation has applied for a piece of land for its people, Welman could not recall such an application.

"Not as a political party, although there is a project called Simunye which is not linked to any political party. Besides, there really is no land in Tokoza left to address a problem of that magnitude except the Transnet land where Empelisweni is going to grow. Many people are coming for land and none are politically aligned."

Welman also said a council meeting held this week had decided to work with the police in researching the legality of the current tenants with a view to returning the houses to their rightful owners.

# Sandton rates debacle could backfire on municipal authorities

(127) ST (BT) 13/10/96

RATES BOYCOTT

By DON ROBERTSON

THE virtual trebling of general rates on office blocks and residential properties in Sandton may yet blow up in the faces of the authorities

Section 33 of the Local Authorities Rating Ordinance requires that if there has been any material change in the value of properties, a supplementary valuation must be undertaken

This could mean a reduction in current property valuations and hence a reduced income for the authorities. According to Liberty Life Properties, the huge increase in the general rate has materially decreased the value of those properties.

The increases have led to a rates boycott by residents and a strong reaction from owners of office blocks.

Rentals in some Sandton blocks could increase by between R4 and R5 a square metre following the disputed increases.

Responding to the rate hikes, Liberty Life, with 12 sites in the area showing a municipal valuation of R1,5-billion, approached the Eastern Metropolitan Substructure and the Greater Johannesburg Metropolitan Council in August to object strongly to the "unacceptable" increases, says Wolf Cesman, chairman of the property division.

The letter mentioned that the local authority was obliged to cause a supplementary valuation (in terms of Section 33 of the Local Authorities Rating Ordinance) to be made on the properties in which Liberty Life had an interest because the increase in the general rate had decreased the value of the properties.

If rentals are, in fact, raised, office nodes such as Rosebank, Woodmead and even the Johannesburg CBD could become more cost-effective.

Cesman says the unilateral increase in rates of the magnitude applied is not commercially or economically acceptable, as shown by public reaction.

Liberty has not yet had a response from the authorities, and continues to pay

rates based on the previous rate level. It has asked for negotiations between the EMSS and Greater Johannesburg Metropolitan Council to settle the matter, failing which it will go to court to have the increases set aside.

However, Tommy Osborne, regional director of JHI property Services for Gauteng, says the immediate effect for tenants on net leases is that they will have to foot the bill.

"Operating costs are directly recovered by landlords and, therefore, the total rental bill to tenants will increase. The net effect being that the rates hikes will not necessarily have an impact on the profitability of properties."

Property sources say, however, that with increased rentals, tenants might be forced to look elsewhere when leases come up for renewal. The sources say some properties have declined by as much as 15% in recent months.

The picture, however, is very different for landlords who have signed gross leases with tenants. "In this instance, the full rental escalations are fixed at a specified rate per square metre, which means that the burden of the increase will be realised directly by landlords and their net income will be diminished accordingly," says Osborne.

The value of properties is determined by the rent that tenants are prepared to pay. If landlords do not increase rentals to take into account the higher rates, rental income on some properties will decline, as will the value of the property.

However, should landlords increase rentals to cover the higher rates, Sandton could become less attractive.

Although gross leases are not that common, the reduced income could affect property values and Section 33 of the rating ordinance could be invoked.

# Randburg rate boycott gets to talking stage

Residents question why city has to have four levels of government instead of saving millions of rands

Star 14/10/96

BY ANNA COX

Randburg residents are to meet Northern Metro Council officials today to negotiate over the rates increase

In the meantime, the boycott would remain in place until satisfactory answers were given and results achieved, said Northern Rates Lobby (NRL) spokesman Margaret Ramsay

Rates in Randburg have risen by an average of 285%

Ramsay said the NRL had premises at 10 Burke Street, Randburg, where people could receive assistance with queries regarding the withholding of payment of rates. They were being asked to pay only for services

Gauteng MEC for Planning, Development and Local Government Sicelo Shiceka said last week he would be willing to hold discussions with all concerned parties, not only those in Sandton, when he announced that discussions would start this week with Sandton residents

Meanwhile, Craighall and Craighall Park residents, who have announced they would also be joining the boycott, are questioning why Johannesburg has to

have four levels of government

Chairman Chris Anderson said the Greater Johannesburg metro council was facing bankruptcy and Johannesburg was continuing to take out new loans to support ever-increasing deficits

"If the TMC were abandoned, about R1,2-billion would be released and this would wipe out the deficit

"Rates could be reduced and the disadvantaged communities could receive really meaningful assistance and upgrading," Anderson said.

He added: "If the TMC were disbanded now, its function could be replaced by co-ordinating committees representing the present

**Money could be used to help needy**

substructures

"The money saved could be used meaningfully and the ratepayers would not have to worry about the threat of ill-considered rates hikes in the future," Anderson said

Sandton residents, meanwhile, will have to wait for a day to be set aside this week for their meeting with authorities. Talks are scheduled to start between ANC provincial and local authorities and Sanfed this week, but the date has yet to be announced.

# Businessmen to pay rates during talks

(127)

Star 15/10/96

Democratic Party to put forward  
proposal in bid to defuse conflict

By ANNA COX  
Sandton Bureau

The Sandton Chamber of Commerce has defused the impact of a rates boycott by deciding to make full payments while negotiations between the residents' association, Sanfed, and local government continue.

Businesses in the area provide about half the rates collected by the council and boycotters had hoped their support would be influential. Chamber president Andrew Spalding said today most major businesses were paying.

Although he would not comment further on the meeting held between the chamber and the Greater Johannesburg Metro Council last week, he said they would meet officials again soon.

Liberty Life, which owns R1,5-billion of property in Sandton, is paying old rates plus a 20% increase and its services in full.

A statement issued by chairman of Liberty Life Properties Wolf Cesman says that these payments have been made pending the outcome of negotiations between various interested parties.

He said that at no time has Liberty Life recommended a rates boycott.

He said the company's attorneys had addressed a letter to the Eastern Metropolitan Council (EMC) and Greater Johannesburg Metropolitan Council (GJMC) objecting to the increases and in-

forming them that according to the Local Authorities Rating Ordinance they were obliged to have a supplementary valuation of the properties, because the rates increase had decreased their value.

Meanwhile, Gauteng Premier Tokyo Sexwale has agreed to meet the Democratic Party tomorrow to discuss the boycott.

The DP would put forward a proposal of reducing the rates in the rand from the present 6,45 cents - which has resulted in average increases of 243% for residents - to a more reasonable 4,5c rate, which would meet all running expenses for the EMC as well as make a fair contribution of R220-million to the GJMC instead of the R438-million currently being demanded from the Eastern council, DP provincial leader Peter Leon said.

"The DP view is that the premier's own proclamation empowers the substructures to draw up their own budgets and to set variable rates in the rand to suit their own circumstances, rather than the uniform rate of 6,45 cents currently being imposed by the ANC on all four Johannesburg substructures," he said.

■ A meeting held yesterday between Randburg residents and Northern Metro Council finance strategic officer Mogotodi Mokoena was amicable but did not resolve anything, said Northern Rates Lobby spokesman Margaret Ramsay.

# Sandton businesses reject rates boycott

(127) B0 15/10/96

## Gavin Duvenage

SANDTON businesses have come out against the rates boycott, and most have committed themselves to paying full rates increases while negotiations continue.

However, it is still not clear whether Liberty Life Properties, owner of Sandton City, has called off its boycott.

Sandton Chamber of Commerce and Industry president Andrew Spalding said this week the chamber had met city officials to discuss the rates increase. The chamber told the Greater Johan-

nesburg Metropolitan Council and the eastern metropolitan substructure that it did not support the boycott.

Spalding said the chamber would meet council officials again soon and would "decide on what options to pursue". He said that discussions so far had been successful and he hoped the issue could be resolved through further negotiations.

The chamber — of which Liberty is a part — had taken a decision to pay the full rate of 6,45c in the rand. Previously, Liberty and a number of other businesses

had paid the previous 2,65c in the rand plus 20%, which they said was a market-related increase.

It was claimed that Liberty Life Properties chairman Wolf Cesman said at the weekend that the institution was committed to the boycott. However, the Gauteng provincial government said Liberty had said it would begin paying Cesman did not respond to inquiries yesterday.

Gauteng local government spokesman Prince Hamnca said Liberty had indicated it would no longer refuse to pay the full amount of its rates.

# Councils lose out on hostel fees

BO 16/10/96 (127)

Ingrid Salgado

SEVERAL former black local authorities in Gauteng had lost large amounts of money due to low collection rates of hostel fees from residents, Gauteng auditor-general Shauket Fakie said yesterday.

Speaking after hearings by the Gauteng public accounts standing committee, Fakie said local structures' average

recovery rate from hostels was between 10% and 15%. In Soweto, 7,4% of potential income from hostels was collected during 1993/94.

Fakie said many authorities were trying to rectify the problem but the success of these initiatives would be evident only in a year or two.

Problems within local government were rates and service arrears, the absence of asset regis-

ters and failure by the authorities to prepare and submit their financial statements.

Public accounts committee members yesterday quizzed local government officials on questions raised in a report by Fakie on local authorities' accounts for the 1994/95 year.

The report found that the former Daveyton city council could not submit vouchers to substantiate

payments of more than R6m during this period.

Outstanding motor loans to former employees worth R36 000 were not recovered while salary increases, appointments and overtime payments had not been authorised. A commission of inquiry has been set up to probe the problems in Daveyton.

The committee also heard that the former city council of Diepmeadow, Soweto, had accumulated a R165m deficit by June 1994. The situation had improved when the northern and western substructures took control of Diepmeadow.

Steps were being taken to secure hostel fees by upgrading hostels into family units and negotiating with residents.

Fakie said his report had uncovered several cases of potential fraud and theft. In most cases, commissions of inquiry had yet to determine whether fraud or theft had in fact occurred. Although many payments were bona fide, unauthorised expenditure created "ripe ground" for individuals to misappropriate money.



# Sexwale to take legal advice on Sandton rates increases

By ANNA COX  
Sandton Bureau

(127) Nov 17/10/96  
could be used to lower the rates

Gauteng Premier Tokyo Sexwale has agreed to take legal advice on the Greater Johannesburg Metro Council's attempt to take over the Eastern Metro Council's estimated surplus of R438-million and the 94% increases that ANC, NP and IFP councillors voted themselves last month.

He has also agreed to facilitate the negotiation process related to the high rates increases and said the way forward should be through discussion.

This resulted from yesterday's meeting with the DP, which handed him a memorandum expressing concern over the handing over of the surplus.

The DP believes the surplus

The party also expressed its concern about the ANC allegedly breaking the law by passing resolutions, such as the increases in the councillors' allowances, without taking a two-thirds majority vote, and more recently by approving the purchase of furniture worth R900 000.

DP spokesman Peter Leon said he was satisfied with the meeting.

"I don't think the premier was fully aware of the situation and we are happy he has appraised. I think he has realised that if the matter of the increased rates goes to court, the budget of the entire metro could collapse," he said.

After the meeting a heated argument ensued between the ANC and the DP. They were unable to agree on a joint press statement.



# End to rates row in sight (127)

Ingrid Salgado  
2017/10/196

GAUTENG premier Tokyo Sexwale gave support to negotiations between greater Johannesburg's eastern metropolitan substructure and ratepayers after meeting local and provincial DP representatives yesterday, spurring hopes that an end to the Sandton rates boycott could be in sight.

The ANC-led provincial government and DP representatives said afterwards they believed the groundwork for an agreement had been laid.

Gauteng DP leader Peter Leon hailed the talks as a "breakthrough", saying Sexwale had agreed to facilitate the negotiations process. "We will take him up on that offer."

Sexwale said he wanted to avoid legal action being instituted against the eastern substructure by ratepayers.

Litigation could have the effect of setting aside the budgets of both the substructure and greater Johannesburg's metropolitan council.

DP Johannesburg leader Anchen Dreyer said her party would ask the eastern substructure to commit itself to negotiations with residents.

The DP tabled a memorandum at the meeting, pressing for a revision of the transitional metropolitan levy to 4,5 cents in the rand for the substructure's residents, down from 6,45 cents.

Gauteng DP leader Peter Leon, left, and provincial MP Ian Davidson leave premier Tokyo Sexwale's office yesterday after a meeting to discuss the Sandton rates crisis.  
Picture TREVOR SAMSON

# Rates meeting looks doomed to failure

By ANNA COX  
Sandton Bureau

A meeting between the Eastern Metro Council and Sandton residents planned for next Wednesday to resolve the rates boycott appears to be doomed to failure because ratepayers have labelled it another "talkshow" and have set preconditions for the meeting to succeed

Dissatisfied with the manner in which the meeting was organised, and that no agenda for the meeting had been finalised by yesterday, the Sandton Federation of Ratepayers (Sanfed) faxed a list of "minimum requirements" to Gauteng MEC for

Local Government Siculo Shuceka.

These include an independent chairman, a clear agenda, that local government should have a clear mandate to approve any binding agreements, that timeframes be set, that there should be an immediate moratorium on increased rates, and that no legal steps would be taken against residents in arrears

To show residents' lack of faith in the outcome of the talks, Sanfed has decided to continue its legal proceedings against the Eastern and Greater Johannesburg metro councils, saying it will encourage residents to continue their rates payments boycott

(127)

STAN 18/10/96

# Govt's housing plan receives a cautious nod

BD 21/10/96 (127)

Lukanyo Mnyanda

THE building industry has cautiously welcomed a government task team's recommendations that government should be directly involved in the provision of high-density housing.

But representatives also felt the document could have been made more widely available to allow sufficient consultation, which they felt would have added value to the process.

The report emphasised joint venture projects between government and the private sector.

The MD of Stocks & Stocks subsidiary Homes for SA & Gauteng, Alex Leonsins, warned that densification might not turn out to be the most affordable option in the long term.

Dense housing would be built on expensive land with each unit costing at least R40 000. "This won't cause a remarkable change in housing delivery," he said.

Leonsins said the cost of finance was still the biggest obstacle to accelerated delivery, and the

report did not do enough to address this. He was also sceptical about the ability of local authorities and employer corporations to match government's R15 000 subsidy "rand for rand" as envisaged in the report.

Condev chairman Chris Cudmore said he was disappointed that there was "very little interaction" with the private sector when the recommendations were compiled. "The details have not been discussed much with the private sector. I think we could have added value to the process."

Group Five executive chairman Theunis Kotzee welcomed the move towards rental and social housing as a "fantastic move forward." We have been saying this for years. This step is the beginning of delivery seriously getting off the ground.

Building Industries Federation of SA executive director Ian Robinson also welcomed the recommendations, which he said had resulted from extensive discussions between government and the private sector.

# Sandton rates boycotters to meet tonight

(127) MAY 21/10/96

Sanfed to decide whether to attend 'talk show' set up by authorities

By ANNA COX  
Sandton Bureau

The Sandton Federation of Ratepayers (Sanfed) will decide tonight whether to attend a meeting between residents and the Eastern Metro Council on Wednesday to discuss the rates boycott.

The meeting was arranged following a recent announcement by Gauteng MEC for local government Sicelo Shuceka that the authorities were finally prepared to hold talks with residents.

Sanfed, however, is unhappy about lack of information regarding the meeting, labelling it another "talk show". It is unhappy at the way the meeting has been organised and the fact that there is no agenda available.

It demands an independent chairman, timeframes, an immediate moratorium on increased rates, an assurance that no legal steps would be taken against residents who were in arrears; and that no interest on overdue accounts

would be charged. Spokesman Brian Stolzenberg said "Sanfed members will be attending in their capacity of chairmen and members of individual residents' associations, but we will decide on Monday night whether Sanfed, as an organisation, will be represented."

Johannesburg DP leader Anchen Dreyer has also questioned the status of the meeting, saying that although it has been called by executive committee (exco) chairman Nkele Ntingane in her official capacity, the matter has never been discussed at exco or any other council meetings.

"The first we heard about it was when we read it in the press. We know nothing about it, but, as members of exco, we should have discussed this matter, let alone been informed about the meeting," she said.

The Wendywood/Gallo Manor Residents' Association will hold a public meeting tomorrow night at 7.30 at the Wendywood Primary School to discuss community matters and the rates boycott.

## DP councillor suspended over arrears

By ANNA COX

The Democratic Party has suspended Eastern Metro councillor Walter Mojapelo because he is more than three months in arrears with his municipal rates account.

DP Johannesburg leader Anchen Dreyer confirmed this and said it was regrettable.

"We have been pursuing this matter at Greater Johannesburg Metro Council level since June and I stand firm on my insistence that defaulting councillors should be removed," she said.

Dreyer said the law clearly stated that councillors who were more than three months in arrears cease to hold office. "If this means a member of my own caucus is a casualty, so be it."

The DP has released figures showing that 11 of the 55 Eastern Metro councillors are in arrears ranging from R3,49 to R9,587.

Chief executive officer Canzi Lisa said it was possible that a councillor who appeared to be in arrears did not have an account with the council, and that the figure referred to household arrears.



# Fracas over Masakhane post

Democratic Party questioned the wisdom of relaunching the campaign before a provincial co-ordinator had been appointed (127) SAM 23/10/96

By HOPEWELL RADEBE  
City Desk

The post of provincial co-ordinator for the Masakhane campaign has been advertised by the Gauteng government - a full month after the payment campaign was re-launched in an attempt to revive it.

The role of the co-ordinator is to act as a link between the provincial government and local authorities and to oversee the functioning of the plan which aims to get people to pay for their municipal services.

DP member of the Gauteng provincial legislature, Ian Davidson, questioned the wisdom of

relaunching the campaign before the appointment of a person responsible for its effective implementation, especially at a time when "a total amount outstanding in Gauteng in respect to rent and services is R2,42-billion".

Davidson accused development planning and local government MEC Sicele Shuceka of not giving Masakhane the priority the campaign demanded.

Shuceka's spokesman, Prince Hamca, said the first advertisement for the post appeared in March. The services of a previ-

ous provincial co-ordinator had been terminated earlier this year and the appointment of a new staff member was thwarted by a provincial cabinet reshuffle, he said. Responsibility for

Masakhane was shifted from another department to become part of Shuceka's portfolio.

Hamca said a shortlist of candidates had been produced after the first advert. The department then appointed a person to assist with the arrangements and planning for the relaunch on a monthly contract.

## Councillors are the foot-soldiers of the plan

"It was unfortunate the process of appointing the provincial co-ordinator had to be delayed, but now the post has been re-advertised and an appointment is expected soon," said Hamca.

Responding to Davidson's accusation that Shuceka was not treating service payments as a priority, Hamca said the MEC was indeed serious about localising the campaign and would soon embark on roadshow rallies in five regions of Gauteng to muster support from councillors and civic associations.

The focus of the relaunched campaign would be the councillors, who are to be seen as Masakhane's "foot soldiers".

# Owner, tenants clash

Claims that Sanco-backed residents  
vandalised flats and refused to pay rents

BY ANDISWA NYOBOLE

(123) How 24/10/96

A row is brewing between the owner of two buildings in Yeoville and tenants who belong to the South African National Civics Organisation (Sanco) over rent payments and the conditions of the buildings.

The owner of the two blocks, Aubrey Levert, has claimed that Sanco members vandalised his buildings after he had failed to meet delegates about tenant complaints relating to the condition of the buildings.

He claimed he was unable to renovate the apartments because of a rent boycott and rampant vandalism by Sanco-backed tenants.

He also claimed that Sanco was intimidating residents into refusing to pay their rentals.

Sanco has denied the allegations.

Sanco spokesman Portia Zini denied the claim, saying tenants were refusing to pay rent because the condition of the two buildings did not warrant the high

rentals Levert demanded

Tenants at Rosal Court have also claimed that the families of four tenants, who died as a result of a gas leak in the building, had been thrown out of the flats.

Levert, however, said nobody had died as a result of the leak, which he maintains occurred after Sanco-supporting tenants had vandalised the building.

A defiant Sanco has, in turn, claimed that Levert is unable to maintain the buildings and should, therefore, sell them to the municipality.

Sanco has also blamed the United North East Civic Association (Uneca), to which Levert turned for help, of killing non-paying tenants.

This followed the death of a tenant in Beacon Royal, one of Levert's buildings, in May. Tenants at Beacon Royal claimed that the man was killed by Uneca members.

Uneca spokesman Charles Boyles said the man had been a gangster and had been killed while trying to attack a security guard at the building.



THUYS DULLART

Unhealthy conditions ... this room at Beacon Royal flats in Yeoville is home to more than nine people.



# Sandton rates dispute - task team given 10 days to report

BY ANNA COX  
Sandton Bureau

A significant breakthrough towards resolving the Sandton rates dispute was achieved last night when ratepayers and provincial and local government officials resolved to form a task team, mandated to present a report within 10 days

The meeting, tense and hostile at first, was calm after residents, Sandton business representatives, property owners and sectional title owners decided to form the task team

Gauteng local government MEC Siculo Shuceka, who chaired the meeting, said the main issues the team had to consider were:

- The review of the budget,

- The legal implications of non-payment,
  - The redistribution of the estimated R438-million surplus which the Eastern Metro is expected to pay to the Greater Johannesburg Metro Council,
  - Uniform rates payments and
  - The financial implications to consumers and local government
- Shuceka said he was pleased

with the progress made and said it had been a "ground-breaking" meeting for all parties

It was vital for the issue to be resolved and for the task team's recommendations to be implemented immediately, because the crisis was discouraging investors, he said.

He said the outcome of the Sandton crisis would have far-

reaching implications for the provincial and national governments in terms of the development of the constitution.

Sandton Federation of Ratepayers spokesman, Brian Stolzenberg, said he was pleased negotiations had begun and that some progress had been made towards finding a solution to the rates crisis

SAW 24/10/96

2. BUSINESS DAY, Monday, October 28 1996

# Trust expects bond payments to resume

Robyn Chalmers

THE SA Housing Trust expects about 75% of the 15 000 defaulters on its books to resume payments on November 1, the deadline imposed under an agreement between the trust and the SA National Civics Organisation (Sanco). Trust subsidiary Khayalethu Home Loans' network and operations GM Siza Khampepe said there was growing support for the agreement signed last month between Sanco and the trust to end the four-year bond boycott of loans totalling R500m.

"Sanco members and some non-

aligned members will mobilise on November 1 and march to Khayalethu Home Loans' offices in a show of strength to make their first payments in more than four years," he said.

Khampepe said that as November 1 was the final deadline for defaulters, and the organisation had followed a range of workshops with communities, those failing to meet the deadline would face eviction.

However, in an attempt to avoid evictions, the trust and Sanco had implemented a mechanism to rehabilitate those who continued with the bond boycott. Uncooperative defaulters would be evicted.

Sanco said that co-operative defaulters who were unable to meet their payments would be assisted by being provided with alternative accommodation or their payment terms would be renegotiated.

Sanco had faced resistance to the agreement in some areas, with defaulters accusing the organisation of "selling out" to business, but Khampepe said these problems were being ironed out.

In terms of the agreement, signed between the trust and Sanco, defaulters would pay 80% of their original instalments for the first six months would

depend on the value put on their homes by an "evaluation process".

Sanco said the six-month transition would give defaulters time to adjust to having to pay.

The trust announced last month that it would be restructuring into three entities to deal with the non-payment of home loans, boost low-cost housing delivery and broaden the lending base.

Under the new structure, Khayalethu would operate as a separate, independent company, focusing only on converting non-performing loans to performing loans in the shortest possible time.

(127) 6528/10/96

New breed of fund managers

# R100-m boost for rental sector

(127) sawetan 29/10/96

**By Joshua Raboroko**

A NEWLY formed Johannesburg housing company is to spend R100 million to provide rental accommodation for more than 10 000 homeless people near and in inner city areas over a five-year period

The programme, which includes converting commercial buildings, upgrading and refurbishing existing residential properties, has already started in Joubert Park, Hillbrow and Jeppe

Addressing a Press conference in Johannesburg yesterday, JHC's chief executive Mr Taffy Adler said the company would provide accommodation for more than 2 000 homeless people at the cost of R30 million this year

The company has been established in the form of an unlisted public limited loan stock company. The initial major shareholder is Kagiso Trust

The company aims to target low income people who earn between R1 000 and R3 500. These people will also be expected to apply for the capital subsidy of R15 000 from the housing board

The company also seeks to provide up to 160 elected community leaders with basic training in the legal, financial, technical, social and organisational aspects of rental housing over the five-year period

It also seeks to provide up to 500 construction workers with competency-based modular training in various construction skills while employing them in the process of developing housing over the period

The company will also support and train up to 25 small black contractors while employing them on housing projects and providing up to 250 construction workers with basic literacy and numeracy training



Flatland revamp ... Patricia Tabata and her 2-year-old child Nhlanhla, who live in a flat in a rundown Joubert Park building, are among the people who will gain from an ambitious scheme to upgrade accommodation in central Johannesburg.

## Low-income earners to benefit from inner city plan

By BONGIWE MLANGENI

The revival of Johannesburg's inner city will start in earnest this week when the Johannesburg Housing Company (JHC) launches a multimillion-rand project to provide affordable rental housing in the area.

About 10 000 low-income earners living in derelict buildings in the city would benefit from the project, JHC managing director Taffy Adler said yesterday. The

project coincides with the ministry of housing's recent plan to provide rental housing on a large scale.

According to Adler the project would bring relief to people who are earning between R1 000 and R3 500 a month, and who want to live in decent accommodation near their places of work.

He said the company - funded by the European Union, the Flemish government and a Government housing subsidy scheme -

would convert commercial buildings to residential ones, upgrade existing flats and build about 240 three-storey flats in Jeppesstown.

JHC has already bought three buildings which have about 250 one-and two-bedroom apartments in Joubert Park and Hillbrow. Renovations have already started in one of the buildings.

JHC planned to have provided 2 000 rental units in the city by the year 2001, Adler said. "We want to provide high quality accommo-

dation far better than what exists in most buildings now," he said.

Rents in the revamped flats would range from R250 a month for a single room, sharing communal facilities, to R650-R700 for two-bedroom apartments.

Adler said the project would also benefit residents because they would be given advice on how to save money so that they could afford to buy their own houses in the future.

About 500 people would also

be offered training on how to revamp and build the new houses.

Adler said the housing department had allocated subsidies of about R17-million for the project, R10-million would come from the RDP and about R40-million would be used to convert and refurbish buildings, he said.

Shareholders in JHC include the Building Industries Federation of South Africa and the South African Black Contractors' Assistance Programme.

(127) Star 29/10/96

# The hell-hole these women call 'home'

No one dares leave her room after dark, for fear of becoming the hostel's next victim

By ANITA COX  
City Desk

The passages are so dark at night you can't see your hand in front of your face. The stench of urine is unmistakable. So is the scratching of rats as they scurry across the floor.

In the Alexandra women's hostels, home to between 4 000 and 6 000 women, life is a daily struggle against heat or cold, overcrowding, leaking roofs, blocked toilets, broken stoves and, of course, against illness. And if you survive that, there's always the threat of rape and murder to keep you awake at night. Stray bullets from the neighbouring men's hostels have already killed two women.

No one responds to the nightly screams of terror. No one dares venture into the dark corridors at night for fear of becoming the next victim.

The overcrowded rooms serve as bathroom, diningroom and bedroom, each section crudely partitioned by curtains and tablecloths. Up to eight people live in rooms intended for two. Visiting children have to sleep on the dirty floors. Privacy is at a premium and fights break out if one resident invades even a portion of another's small domain. Because there is little space to stow away precious possessions, theft is rife.

The women make feeble attempts to keep the bathrooms clean, but with an average of 40 people sharing three bathrooms, it is a daunting task. Toilets are cracked and broken, pipes leak and the stench becomes unbearable, especially in summer.

Thousands of window panes are broken and the rooms are at the mercy of winter winds and summer showers.

Because electricity is unreliable, some of the women have wound long extension cords from neighbouring properties through the hostels' windows and along the corridors to power their heaters. However, when it rains, the illegal connections become death traps.

Rain is not welcome here. Women and children fall ill with bronchitis, flu and chest infections as the rain soaks their beds when they sleep.

To make matters worse for the women on the ground floor, squatters have built shacks against the hostel walls, blocking out light and air. During summer the heat becomes unbearable.

Although the women try their best to keep the communal kitchen clean, it is an-

Star 30/10/96

NATASHA PINCUS



Humble corner ... Josephina Maredi is one of the thousands of women who live in Alexandra's women hostels, where they have to contend with overcrowding, loss of privacy and a lack of facilities, as well as the ever-present danger of being raped or even murdered.

other health hazard. Because so many windows are broken, the kitchen is exposed to the elements and birds. The stoves seldom work and burns are not uncommon.

Free-flowing water is available outside. But no one seems to know or care whether it comes from a burst water pipe or sewage pipe.

"Conditions are bad here," says Josephina Maredi, who has lived in one of the hostels since 1988. She shares a room with three other women and sometimes their children.

"We are always scared. There is no maintenance. Everything is broken and dirty. We cannot bathe or shower because the bathrooms are so dirty and because we fear for our safety. So we fill buckets with cold water and wash in our rooms in front of all the other women."

"This is a bad place. We do not live like women. We want a clean place so we can have some dignity. If it was rice, we would pay rent, but why should we pay when things are so bad?" she says.

The women are angry. Forced by circumstances to stay in the hostels, they feel that their dignity as home-makers has been undermined. They are also frustrated at the authorities who, they claim,

have still not responded to their demands to improve living conditions at the hostel. Only 8% of the women pay rent. Many say they refuse to pay until conditions improve.

Johanna Monegi arrived in Alexandra in 1992 from Rustenburg. She cannot find work.

"The councillors do nothing. Since 1972 nothing has been done here. People always come here and walk around and promise to do something, but nothing ever gets done. The police also don't help us," she says.

"We get raped and beaten and shot. We have no lights at night. We fight for space all the time. When it rains we get wet and we get sick. We do not want to cook in the kitchens because the stoves don't work and we burn ourselves. In the winter we get very cold."

Political tensions are contributing to the already fraught situation. While most of the hostel dwellers are ANC supporters, they have divided into factions, each holding its own meetings and gathering its own support.

Urban planning and development committee chairman Siza Njikelana says the hostels' problems are not being ignored. A task team, including representa-

tives from the South African National Civics Association, the Alexandra Property Owners' Association, the Displacedes' Crisis Committee, the Reconstruction Area residents, councillors and officials of the Alexandra administration, has been formed to tackle the issues at Alexandra's three hostels.

Njikelana says priorities include maintenance and interim upgrading of the services, security, re-establishment of proper management and the formulation of a code of conduct and house rules.

"The Greater Johannesburg Metro Council has approved the recruitment of dedicated security staff, which are at present receiving training. Preparations are being made to install access barriers at entrances and permanent security is still under investigation," he says.

The interim upgrading of electrical distribution is also under investigation.

"We have been advised by Metropolitan Electricity that the supply to the complexes is adequate for current and future distribution. The problem of unreliable supply is related to distribution within the complex, overloading of circuits and illegal taps. About 1 800 broken window panes have already been replaced," he says.

# List of solutions to rates boycott

(127)

By ANNA COX  
Sandton Bureau

*stm 30/10/96*  
The Sandton Federation of Ratepayers (Sanfed) has submitted a list of short-term solutions to the task team formed by provincial authorities to resolve the rates crisis

The federation said the list was submitted as "quick-fix" solutions while the more time-consuming issues, such as re-examining the budget, were still being looked at

The short-term proposals include the reversal of charges, interest and penalties, and the waiver of any legal action against Sandton ratepayers who have not paid any or all rates since July 1

Although the task team has taken a decision not to speak to the media, public documents released by Sanfed show that, as a long-term solution, the federation has put forward several proposals on behalf of its residents. These are

■ A residential and sectional title rebate

of 80% - as opposed to the current respective 60% and 35% rebates

■ A commercial rebate of 50% - as opposed to the current zero rebate.

■ All rebates to be retrospective to the beginning of the fiscal year

■ The reduction of the Greater Johannesburg Metro Council (TMC) levy from R438-million to R75-million.

■ Rates should be determined as a result of the budget

■ The Eastern Metro Council to formulate its own budget in accordance with its own needs

■ The TMC levy should be equitable and pro rata to rates across the substructures

■ There should be full devolution of power from the TMC, except for the provision of bulk services

The task team will hold its second meeting today. It was given 10 days - until November 1 - to submit recommendations to Local Government MEC Sicelo Shuceka

# The happiness of living as a family in previously all-male quarters

BY FIKILE-NTSIKELELO MOYA

City Desk

Gugulethu Vilakazi no longer has to sleep with one eye open, ready to flee into the night, in fear of police catching her with her husband in his all-male hostel

This is because, for the first time in South Africa's hostel history, families are allowed to live together in re-

vamped units that used to be men's hostels

The revamp is part of the Gauteng government's transformation of the hostels. According to the provincial housing and land affairs department, nearly 19 000 units in Gauteng have already been converted into family quarters

For Vilakazi, staying with her husband in Sowero's Mzimhlophe hostel for the past eight years was an act of defiance. What is accepted as a right by most married couples was an illegal adventure for many who were divided by the migrant labour system

"I was tired of having to find a room in the township or a flat in town when I needed to spend time with my husband," Vilakazi said. She and her husband share the two-room "apartment" with their two children

The hostels look better now than when she arrived. Walls that were smeared in blood during pitched battles between

JODI BIEBER



**Togetherness ... Gugulethu Vilakazi (left) and Lindiwe Miya have been able to live with their husbands and children in the Mzimhlophe hostel without fear of breaking the law since the hostel was converted into family units.**

township residents and hostel inmates are now painted in cheerful colours. Interiors, once grim, dark and neglected, have been given face-lifts and electricity has been provided.

"Now we have bathrooms right inside our homes," she said, referring to the ablution facilities provided inside each unit

The family previously washed in small bath dish and had to forsake privacy

because of lack of space

Hostel residents used to have to share taps and communal toilets which were always filthy because "they belonged to no-one and so no-one wanted to clean them"

# Shelter plan 'goes terribly wrong'

## Renovated building promised so much, but it's derelict and dangerous

By BONNIE MURKIN

**W**hen night falls at Turkish Baths - a shelter for about 250 homeless families - friends become foes, neighbours turn into strangers, and women and children become victims of rape and abuse.

Only in February, the residents officially renamed this place Nibo Ya Mahau, meaning a "house of mercy". Now residents call it a "hellhole".

The white building at the corner of Niggeret and De Villiers streets in downtown Johannesburg became a haven in January to a group of homeless people who two years ago had invaded the Red Cross building a few blocks away.

Their relocation came after the Johannesburg Housing Trust for the Homeless (JTH) decided to make them the first beneficiaries

of a housing project. In this project, JTH planned to convert unused industrial buildings into transitional homes.

The families at Turkish Baths were supposed to be an example of how homelessness, affecting about 8 000 people in the inner city, could be addressed.

Before they moved into their new home, the walls were repainted, damaged toilets and sewerage pipes were fixed, and there was electricity - conditions better than the dark and derelict Red Cross building. The upgrading was funded by the Greater Johannesburg Metro Council which paid R200 000 to revamp the vacant building, owned by the Public Works Department.

Despite JTH's good intentions, life has been merciless in this overcrowded shelter which lacks privacy and is divided by cardboard boxes, sheets of cloth and

corrugated iron. **(A7) Star 30/10/96**

"We are breeding a generation of thugs and futureless citizens," says resident Betty Ishabalala.

She refers to the project as "a plan that has gone terribly wrong". Most people are unemployed, she says, and most children do not attend school.

At night children and women jump at every sound as they are targets of rapists and molesters. "Most people are always drunk and troublesome. Theft is another big problem - you can not leave your food on the table."

But even worse, someone was killed last month, someone was stabbed, and this week a woman was raped, she adds.

Residents say current living conditions do not tally with what they were promised when they moved in. They expected to have security and identity cards to pre-

vent overcrowding. JTH also promised them training on various jobs skills such as plumbing and primary child care.

"Everything is breaking up. We are sleeping in corridors, some in toilets," one resident says.

Walking around the building, one is hit by a strong musty smell and loud music. The floors are dirty and toilets blocked.

JTH co-ordinator Mapule Sebone admits the project has turned into chaos. "Only a few people pay the R10 a week we had agreed on to maintain the building. We are facing a real crisis."

She says the trust is still waiting for about R280 000 subsidy allocation from the provincial government to turn the building into family units. "We are not giving up," Sebone says. Next week the trust will discuss resolving the problem.



Hard times - Lorraine and Anta are oblivious of the miserable life around them. Betty Ishabalala, a resident at Turkish Baths, is worried about their future.

THEMBA RADEBE



## Doornkop Masakhane payments up by 50%

(127) Stan 1/11/96

The Masakhane payment campaign is succeeding in an informal settlement in Doornkop, where payments are up by almost 50%, a meeting of the Western Metro Council earlier this week heard

Masakhane is a presiden-

tial campaign aimed at improving rates and service payments in areas that previously received no services. Doornkop payments increased from a paltry 25% in January to 55% in August

People have been encouraged to pay for their services

by the council after a vigorous communications campaign, said chief executive officer Geoff O'Connell

Dobsonville councillor David Mahlaba urged the council to play its part and improve its billing system. - Staff Reporter

## Chance to register on housing list

(127)

Star 1/11/96

Johannesburg residents living in unsatisfactory conditions can start applying at council offices to be on the housing list for council-owned housing or land, Greater Johannesburg metro council according to planning and urbanisation committee chairman Lindsay Bremner

Residents who were on the previous waiting list will have to re-register because of the council's decision to move away from the racially inclined housing lists compiled in the years before last year's local government elections.

Hostel dwellers, domestic workers living on their employers' property and

shack dwellers were also invited to apply to be listed. Registration is free.

More than 88 000 people have already registered and the council expects 200 000 people to have registered by the December 15 deadline.

Bremner said the council would use guidelines set by the provincial government in placing people on the list in priority order. The guidelines include family circumstances, income levels, marital status and whether applicants were on a previous waiting list. She said applicants had to bring their identity documents and particulars of offspring. - City Desk

# DIY for a better

(127)

## Way of life

By Bongive Milangeni

Finding a job and living in healthier conditions has always been Sylvia Ndlovu's dream one that has turned out better than she thought

The hard-working mother of three is one of 40 residents employed by the Seven Buildings Company to carry out renovations to seven buildings purchased by tenants in Joubert Park in February

The company made history when it became the first to receive R5,9-million from the Government's institutional housing subsidy. The subsidy was used to buy the blocks of flats, which about 2 000 tenants rented and battled more than six years to gain ownership of

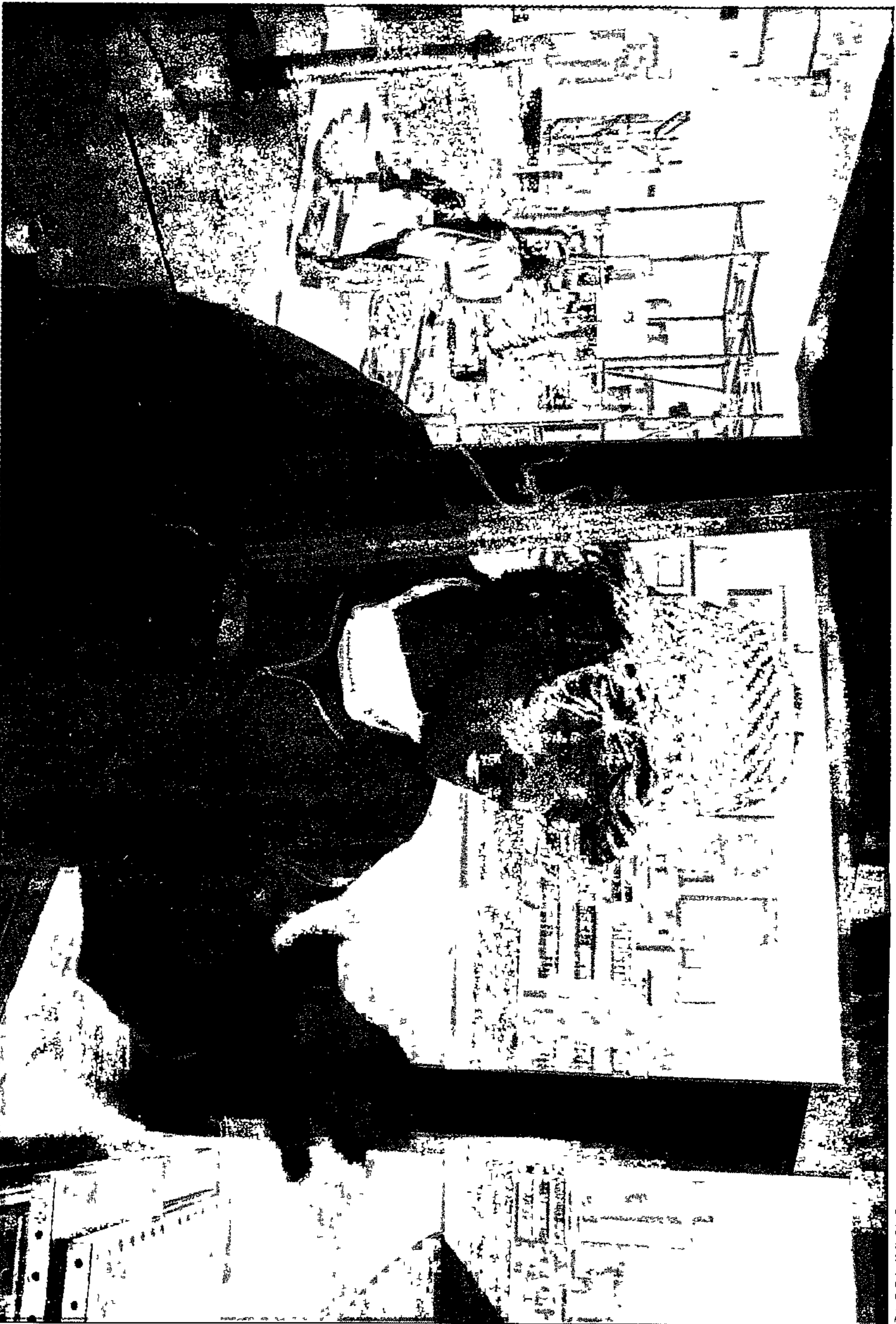
"For the first time I am looking forward to a happier life," says Ndlovu, who cleans Brankome Towers - one of the seven buildings - for R30 a day

"Not only are we owners, but we are creating jobs," she adds proudly

However, being owners has not been easy. When the project started, the residents had no skills to manage the buildings and they also had to raise money to revamp the dilapidated blocks

But they managed to resolve this problem. A R4-million loan from the Inner City Housing and Urbanisation Trust brought relief, and experts are assisting and teaching them how to manage the buildings

But another hurdle remains. The project is stilled by non-pay-



**A better life . Sylvia Ndlovu is happy about the changes in the block of flats where she lives since the Seven Buildings Company took over and started to maintain seven blocks of flats in central Johannesburg.**

is no longer seen as the "trustworthy comrade" but the "ruthless landlord" by some tenants after the company served eviction orders to some residents who did not pay rates

The monthly rates vary from about R350 for one bedroom to R750 for a two-bedroom flat

households are in arrears amounting to about R500 000, he says

"We receive 80% payment but we need over 90% to pay back monthly instalments and the loan which has a 15% interest rate"

To address the problem, the company produces a monthly

age residents to pay their rates. Residents' meetings are held twice a month

"We will continue with evictions if there is no payment and majority of the residents," says Nyoni

pany has achieved some of its goals. About 40 people are employed by the project and 38 others are subcontracted by the company involved in upgrading

Sewerage pipes, leaking roofs, water tanks and electricity are being upgraded. Some residents

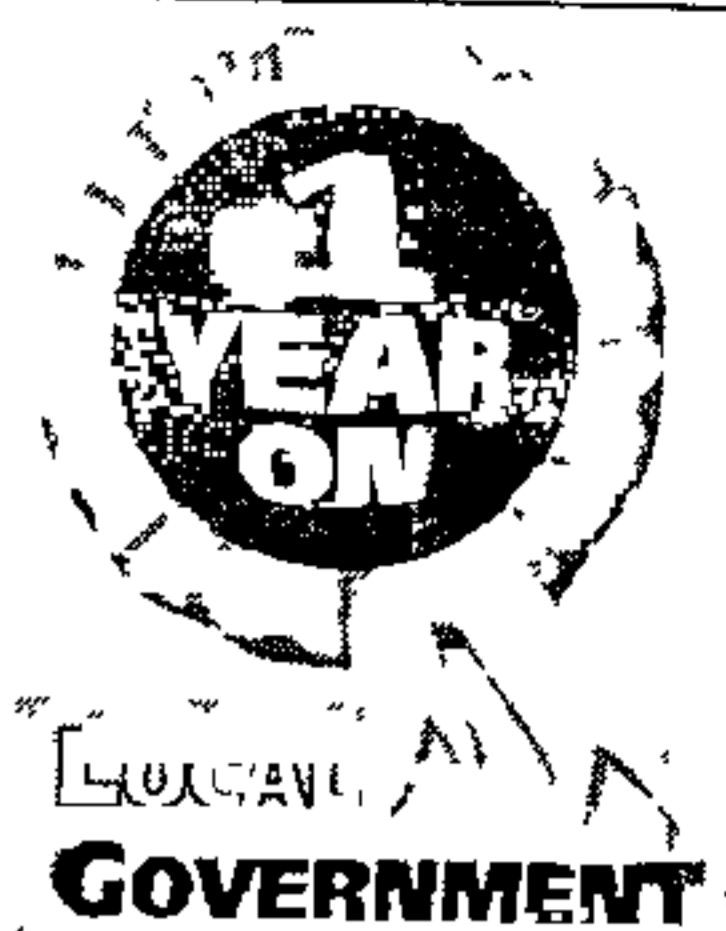
and plumbing skills while others receive training on basic administration skills

"There has been more progress than problems. The process is slower than we expected but we are not in jeopardy - there is enough money to see the project through," adds Nyoni

# Townships express mixed reactions to councils' delivery on promises

(127) Star 6/11/96

Many now have water and electricity, but it is difficult not to complain about services



CITY DESK

Township residents seem reluctant to admit it, but services provided by their local councils have become more visible in the past year since South Africa's first democratic local government elections

Before the elections, the ANC's opponents scratched the wound of what was generally known as "non-delivery" to score points on the election battlefield, but the ruling party remained clear that without a legitimate third tier of government, it could not fulfil many of its pre-1994 election promises

Local councils in Greater Johannesburg and on the East Rand have spent much of this year cleaning house in an attempt to transform staff structures and conform administrations to the new boundaries proclaimed by the premier just before the November 1 elections. Much of the work they have done in the past year has not directly affected their constituents, but listening to township dwellers' comments, it would not be correct to say councils have spent the year fiddling

A resident of Doornkop near Dobsonville, Gloria Ntamo, said "I am happy to have electricity and water. The street has been tarred and that has reduced the dust"

In Snake Park — her township's informal name based on the prevalence of snakes in the area — the council has provided communal water points this year

But it is difficult not to complain about services in this dusty, remote township. Toilets have been erected, but when they are not emptied regularly they stunk in the summer heat

Billy Rathando said "Toilets are al-



Basic amenities ... Miriam Sithole of Ivory Park is one township resident who has received water-borne flush toilets as councillors begin to deliver

ways getting blocked and when you look for the council workmen, they are never there. They (the council) came last year with papers for us to sign to get flush toilets, but up to now they have not come back to us"

In Alexandra, things are also looking up. Fifteen-year-old Elizabeth Masuku's life improved significantly when a library — a symbol of peace

between warring political parties — was erected earlier this year

"I come here every afternoon and it is quiet. At home I find it difficult to study for exams. Now I am sure I am going to pass," she said

A cemetery with 7 400 new sites was opened last month and community leader Linda Twala said this brought a lot of happiness to many

Alexandra residents

"We are now very happy to have additional space for our dead. This is very important for us to have a cemetery close to home. We are grateful to the authorities for finding us this land"

Earlier this year, Alexandra was racked with upheaval because of land invasions on the Far East Bank. The

land invaders were moved and development has started taking place. Chief executive of the Eastern metro council Canzi Lisa said many houses were now complete and work had started on a school. Lizzie Kgomo is one of the people who will move into a house there soon

"We are seeing the houses being built and I know that I will soon be in my own home with my four children. I am excited and I can't believe it is finally happening. The government has delivered on its promises," she said

Lisa commented that R1,9-million had already been spent on improvements to the electricity system. Loading problems had been addressed by the installation of miniature substations and the upgrading of the medium-voltage network between the Marlboro and Vasco da Gama substations

Across town in the south, Soweto residents are also noticing changes

"I don't know if it is a council initiative, but for the first time in the 10 years that Protea North has existed, we are going to have a shopping centre here," said Andile Mabandla. He also praised the creation of a recreation park in the area and "a few street lights" as other positive developments

Fana Molefe of Dobsonville said he was aware that some areas had improved, but said nothing had changed in his street. "People whose houses were built after ours already have their streets tarred, but ours is as dusty as ever"

Thembekile Hlongwane of Ivory Park applauded the Greater Midrand Council for bringing water into "each and every household"

## Masakhane payment campaign shows success in some areas, but fails in others

BY HOPEWELL RADEBE  
City Desk

Actonville in the Greater Benoni area on the East Rand recorded an 81% payment level last month signalling support for the Masakhane campaign led by local councillors

Payments in other townships in the jurisdiction of the Greater Benoni Council, however, have declined. Payments in Wattville and Tamboville fell between March and September

Greater Benoni's biggest township of Daveyton has also not moved from its 24% mark in the past six months

These township residents have been beaten even by their hostel neighbours, who reached a record 95%

Chief executive officer Hennie Botha said the council believed the campaign would bear fruit in time

Benoni city residents were still outperforming their township counter-

parts with a 99,28% payment level

Botha said Wattville hostel residents' payment level of 5% was disappointing. This was despite the council's approval of a R12-million upgrading scheme for infrastructure and electrical rewiring

He said the council would con-

struct new pay-points inside both hostels premises and would soon be opening an additional pay-point in Etwatwa section in Daveyton

Township councillors were expected to complete their schedule of Masakhane roadshows aimed at encouraging people to pay for services

## EMSS expects solution to rates crisis in a 'few weeks'

(127) Star 7/11/96

By ANNA COX

Sandton residents must be reassured that the Gauteng province is giving the Sandton rates crisis all the attention it deserves, said MEC for local government Sicelo Shiceka

Shiceka has denied that no progress has been made in crisis talks with Sandton residents and business over the rates' boycott

The deadline for the task team to return to him with recommendations on how to resolve the crisis, was 10 working days, which excluded weekends, from the first meeting

This meant the team had until tomorrow to come up with solutions, he said

"We believe the team has made tremendous progress, and it will reach its targets

"The Gauteng provincial government will then look into the recommendations

"We have undertaken a number of initiatives to resolve the problems in Sandton Premier Tokyo Sexwale has already given

his support for the discussions. We believe a solution will be found in the next coming few weeks

"We are committed to finding a solution that would be in the interests of everyone in the EMSS," said Shiceka

In the meantime, the Sandton Federation of Ratepayers agreed at a meeting of all the 23 chairmen last week that the rates' boycott would intensify and that preparations for legal action would continue until the demands of Sandton ratepayers are not only met, but implemented

Sandton Help Office spokesman John Lambson said in a bid to further the interests and deal with the concerns of ratepayers in the Sandton areas, its help office would become a permanent facility which would be open weekdays from 9am to 1pm from next year

"There are a number of issues other than rates that need on-going attention. We must become proactive and never again wait for a crisis to develop before acting together," he said

# Rates team works up a sweat to beat court action threat

(27)

By JACQUI REEVES

*Star 9/11/96*

Sandton rates task team members were last night working feverishly to avoid threats of court action by the Sandton Chamber of Commerce next week

Sources within the task team say business representatives are frustrated by the lack of progress on the matter

"Business stands firm on its opinion that the budget of the Eastern Metropolitan Substructure was decided in an unconstitutional manner and will fight the issue in court if it is not satisfied with the meeting's results," a source said

Local Government MEC Sice-lo Shiceka gave the negotiators two weeks in which to report to him. The team had until last night, Shiceka's deadline, to present him with its solutions

At the start of these negotiations, the Sandton Federation of Ratepayers (Sanfed) submitted a "quick fix" list of solutions

## Attention

These included the reversal of charges, interest and penalties, and the waiver of any legal action against Sandton ratepayers who had not paid rates since July 1

This week Shiceka denied that no progress had been made in sorting out the rates crisis, saying the situation was receiving "all the attention it deserves"

Sanfed spokesman Brian Stolzenberg told the *Saturday Star* that the organisation's demands had not changed

"We are still questioning the legality of the budget"

"Along with this we are pressing for the removal of the flat rate and an increase in the rebate that will bring the increase in line with general inflation," he said

Sanfed also submitted a list of long-term proposals to help solve the boycott crisis

These included a residential and sectional rebate of 80% - opposed to current rebates of 60 and 35% respectively - a commercial rebate of 50%, and for all rebates to be applied retrospectively from the beginning of the fiscal year



**WE'RE STAYING PUT:** Shorty and Antonia Francis outside "their" house in Davidsonville

PHOTOGRAPH TJ LEMON

## Illegal occupiers won't leave despite council pressure

By TOMMY MAKOE

127 Stan 9/11/96

Twelve Davidsonville, Roodepoort, families have illegally occupied "their promised houses" to stop the Western Metropolitan Substructure (WMSS) from selling the properties, which they claim they cannot afford.

The families said they took over the R70 000 houses out of frustration because they had been on the waiting list for a long time. They said they could afford the houses only if the R13 000 deposit sought were reduced to R4 000 and the R1 300 instalment reduced to R700 a month.

"It is not that we do not want to pay, but most of us here earn below R2 000 a month and we all want the houses," said one of the residents, who did not want to be identified. She said the houses had been built for them.

Another resident, who also refused to identify himself, said the houses were not worth the asking prices because they were built on a mine dump.

WMSS officials, who last week unsuccessfully served letters demanding the families vacate the houses within 24 hours, said they were prepared to negotiate a solution with individual families only if they vacated the houses.

"We cannot negotiate with them if they are still occupying the houses because we cannot allow such an action to go on. If we allow them, other people in other areas will do the same thing," said WMSS executive committee chairman Strike Ralegoma.

He said the council's legal advisers were yesterday in the process of drawing up court papers to apply for eviction notices as none of the illegal occupants had left. He said a plan for repayment could be worked out with individual families.

### Settlement

But the families have rejected the council's terms for leaving the houses.

"Where should we go if we go out of these houses?" asked one resident.

Davidsonville councillor Allan Morris said that serving people with eviction orders would not solve the problem.

"I am in no way supporting the illegal occupation. These houses are for sale, they must be paid for. And the people are prepared to do so. I believe there can be a settlement without evictions," said Morris. Any settlement reached between the two parties had to satisfy everyone.

Boycott gaining momentum in Randburg

# Sandton ratepayers to step up boycott as task team falters

The Randburg rates boycott has been gaining momentum over the past few weeks, according to Northern Rates Lobby (NRL) spokesman Margaret Ramsay

An office has been set up to assist ratepayers wishing to withhold payments

NRL representatives have held meetings with Northern Metro Council officials during the past few weeks and the general consensus was that the meeting was "concrete, to the point and friendly"

Ramsay said councillor Stan Thusim had agreed to put a proposal before the executive committee to seek an official response on the rates crisis

Once there was a response, the NRL would be asked to attend further meetings to negotiate the rates increases

A public meeting to discuss the boycott will be held on November 19 at 6pm at Robin Hills Primary School

Committees to make recommendations missed their Friday deadline

By **ANNA COX**  
Sandton Bureau

The Sandton rates boycott, which has already resulted in payment levels dropping from 98% in June to 64% in September since it began on July 1, is set to intensify following the failure of the task team to come up with recommendations

The task team, established by MEC for local government Siculo Shuceka, consists of provincial and local authorities, residents and business. It had been given 10 days to come up with resolutions to resolve the crisis, but by the deadline on Friday, no recommendations

had been made

Provincial and local authorities appeared to have no understanding of the issue central to the rates boycott, said Sandton Federation of Ratepayers spokesman Brian Stolzenberg

Commenting on the failure of the task team to come up with any recommendations, Stolzenberg said the central issue was that the rate in the rand had to be reduced

Three subcommittees have now been appointed to look at hardships of the new rates on residents, whether the budgetary process was followed correctly, and the valuations of properties. However, there was no guar-

antee that these committees would come up with acceptable solutions

In the meantime Sanfied was planning to step up the boycott. "We will continue the boycott and intensify it until it is resolved to our satisfaction," Stolzenberg said

Sanfied has asked for several short-term solutions while negotiations continued

These include the reversal of charges, interest and penalties and the waiver of any legal action against those who had not paid rates since July 1

However, none of these recommendations was accepted by the task team, said Stolzenberg

People would be encouraged to continue with the boycott

He said that because most boycotters were approaching three months' arrears, Sanfied had asked the sheriff's office to advise them of any potential legal actions against ratepayers. Legal action against the Greater Johannesburg and Eastern metro councils was looming, said Stolzenberg

Alexandra rates payments for September remained at 5% and Sandton's had dropped from 98% in June to 64% in September

Eastern Metro Council officials are refusing to comment on these figures



# 'War refugees' still homeless

## More than 1 000 Tokoza families still 'in exile' three years after battles end

By **HOPWELL RADEBE**  
City Desk

**M**ore than 1 000 Tokoza families who struggled to survive during the East Rand "war" are still suffering three years of exile in another part of the township. Their patience is eroding as local government struggles to evict the people who illegally occupied their houses.

Fikile Hlatshwayo lived in Tokoza's Ward 7, which The Star selected last year as one of its key wards to monitor its election success. She was expecting to be back in her house soon after the local government election because she believed "councillors would have the power to evict those who had occupied my house illegally".

The occupation of houses which were vacated by "war refugees" like Hlatshwayo has been the greatest headache for the councillors who won the three Tokoza wards that straddle Khumalo Street, once the epicentre of

the fighting

The Star revisited the area and found Hlatshwayo still homeless and desperate. She said councillors who won Tokoza's wards 7, 8 and 9 knew these wards constituted one of the most explosive election areas on the Reef.

"I thought they had a plan to resolve the matter and return the houses to their rightful owners; that's why I voted," said Hlatshwayo angrily.

After the violence in the run-up to the local government election, hostel indunas allocated scores of empty homes in this area to homeless IFP supporters' families.

The legal owners of these houses, who were mostly ANC supporters, could not return be-

cause their homes were - at the time - falling inside "enemy territory".

Although complete peace has since been restored, local councillors and officials in control of the Special Presidential Project - which is meant to restore peace by rebuilding houses and infra-

structure destroyed in the violence - have to date failed to resolve the problem amicably.

Project co-ordinator Mike Morkel said that 447 damaged houses were repaired at a cost of R8,9-million. A further 463 houses were earmarked for repair, but only 51 had been handed back to their rightful owners.

Morkel said the Greater Alberton Council temporarily reversed its decision of serving eviction or-

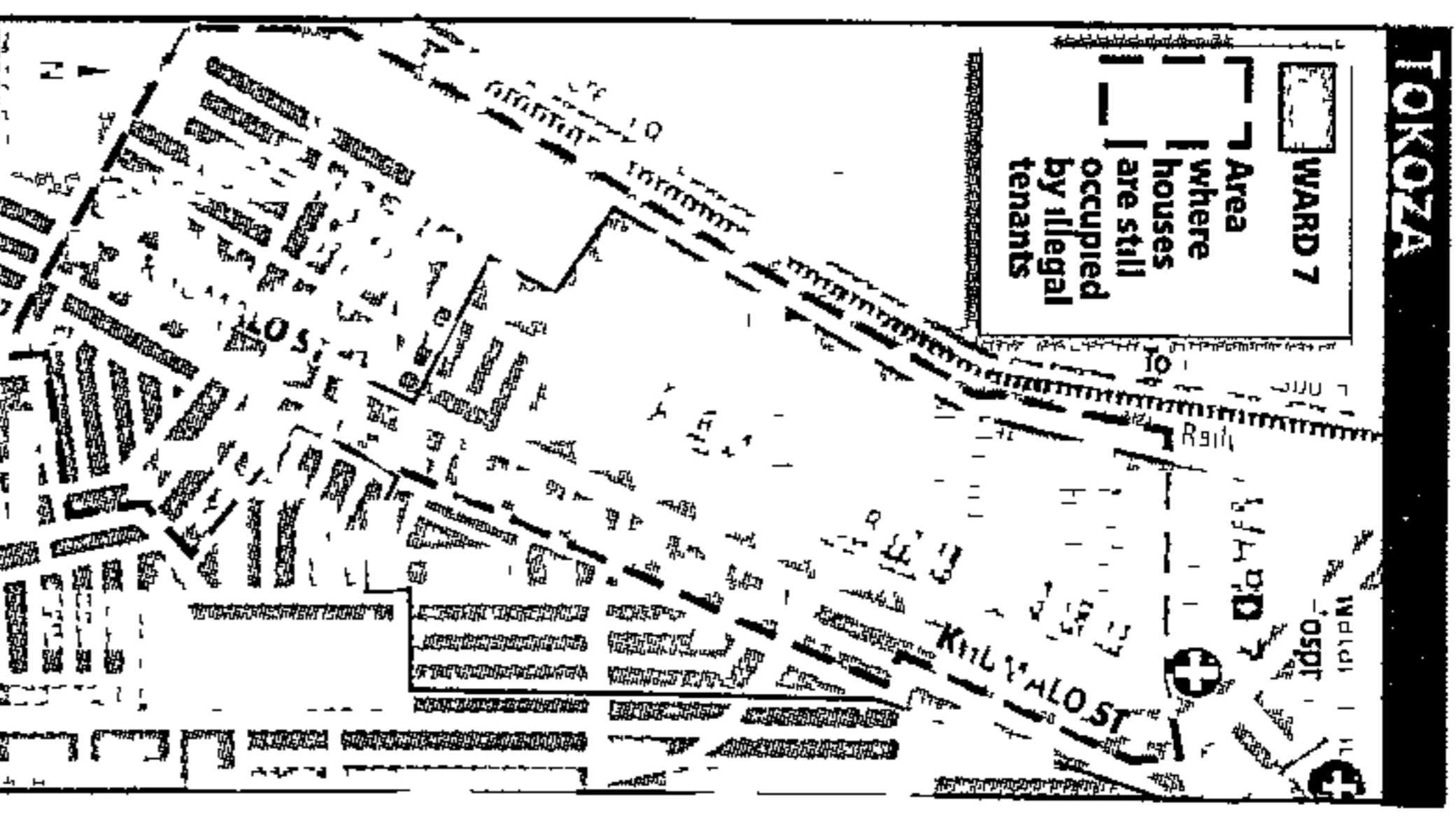
*1987 Nov 11/1986*

ders on the illegal tenants because municipal officials were threatened.

"The illegal tenants are taking advantage of the soft approach the council has adopted and are banking on their large numbers to defy the law".

Illegal tenants like Ndlela Mkhize, who has brought his family to live with him in Gauteng, said they understood the plight of the displaced families. They were prepared to leave but the council also had to find them alternative houses because they no longer had shelter. Most illegal tenants' former shacks and rooms in the hostels had also been occupied by "unknown newcomers".

"Councillors should build houses on a massive scale to accommodate all of us. The new Government is supposed to serve every one irrespective of political



affiliation," added Mkhize. Morkel said two years of negotiations with illegal tenants had proved fruitless and pressure from displaced families was increasing. "It is understandable owners are also running out of patience, and any possible explosive situation must be avoided."

# Sandton rates war: threat to cut services

Star 12/11/96 (127)

MEC warns 'we are fighters, we have just come from a war situation - Sanfed has not'; properties could be attached

By ANNA COX  
City Desk

The gloves are off in the Sandton rates battle, with local government MEC Sicele Shiceka threatening to attach property and cut services if the Sandton Federation of Ratepayers (Sanfed) continues "undermining negotiations"

He accused Sanfed yesterday of having a hidden agenda and political aspirations and gave the group until the end of this month to "meet me equally" - or face tough action.

"If Sanfed wants war we will give it to them. We are fighters who have just come from a war situation - Sanfed hasn't. We are ready to take the war on," he said.

Shiceka accused Sanfed of having no interest in resolving the crisis. He threatened to instruct authorities to start attaching properties of rates defaulters and to cut off services - a move that would create hardship not only for household residents but also for businesses, whose investments would be harmed.

Sanfed responded by saying there was a judicial system and legal procedures which had to be followed before properties could be attached. The cutting off of services would be illegal because residents were still paying for services.

"If they try and cut off services, we will slap an urgent interdict on them," said Sanfed treasurer Brian Stolzenberg.

Shiceka threatened to remove Sanfed members from the task team if they did not abide by the ground rules, one of which was not to speak to the media.

He said some issues had been resolved, but there was still disagreement on rebates, the amount of rates in the rand payable, the consequences of charges on services and quality of services, the legal standing of the budget, and the legality and constitutionality of the boycott.

Sandton business and property owner Errol O'Brien said negotiations had taken place over a lengthy period in good faith but had not been fruitful. Legal opinion had been obtained and it was found that the budgets of the

Eastern Metro Council and the Greater Johannesburg Metro Council were illegal in that certain statutory procedures in setting the budget and the rate in the rand had not been followed.

Because of the deadlock, certain property owners in Sandton would shortly make an application to the courts to have the budget and the rate set aside, O'Brien said.

"It is in the interests of everyone to crystallise the matter."

Sanfed spokesman Frank Crosswell said he was surprised at the "inconsistency" of the Gauteng government.

"The accusations are startling. Our sole objective is to represent the 35 000 ratepayers there are in Sandton. None of us has political ambitions.

"We also find it strange that the minister is making these threats against Sandton residents when there are thousands of transgressors who have not been paying for years and yet no action has ever been taken against them.

"We wonder if the same war threats and draconian statements have been made against them."

# Gauteng considers cutting services to boycotting Sandton residents

Ingrid Salgado

THE Gauteng government threatened yesterday to remove the Sandton Federation of Ratepayers from a task team set up to resolve the Sandton rate-boycott if it continued to threaten legal action and to break an agreement not to speak to the media.

Provincial development planning and local government MEC Sicele Shueka also warned he would consider instructing local authorities to halt delivery of services such as water if the

boycott continued.

This followed Shueka's announcement yesterday that the only outstanding issues to resolve were rebates, the rate to be paid in the rand based on property value, whether the budgets of greater Johannesburg's eastern metropolitan substructure and transitional metropolitan council were legal and the boycott's legality.

The team which presented proposals to Shueka on Friday had until the end of the month to resolve the issues. A subcommittee would draw up

plans for the next 12 months. Shueka said he would not allow the ratepayers to continue to property valuations. The budgets of all Gauteng cities and towns should also be reviewed this month.

Shueka said the government would consider reducing the rate in the rand if it did not affect the quality of service delivery or the ability to extend services to disadvantaged areas. He was confident the matter would be resolved by the end of November. Shueka accused the association of

wanting to be seen as the saviour of the people of Sandton in order to win over ratepayers for the next local government elections. The association wanted to exacerbate the rates problem due to "political ambition", after having fallen out with DP councillors. The association, which represented about 35 000 residents, made a lot of noise, but was not a major stakeholder, he said. Reports that business had threatened legal action were untrue as the sector was committed to negotiations and continued to pay rates.

(127)  
He would instruct the task team to expel Sanfed if it continued breaking an agreement not to speak to the media. Anyone who violates the ground rules agreed on must be removed.  
Sanfed spokesman Brian Stolzenberg said the group would have "no alternative" but to take legal action if the task team did not resolve conflict around the rate in the rand. "That is the main problem and they have not addressed that." He also said the association had never agreed to refrain from speaking to the media.

# Rates-boycott frustration

BY JACQUI REEVES

The Sandton rates boycott, now in its fifth month, looks set to deepen unless next week's meeting of the task team successfully addresses the unresolved rate-in-the-rand and rebate issues

Spokesman for the Sandton Federation of Ratepayers (Sanfed) Brian Stolzenberg told the *Saturday Star* that none of the federation's suggestions towards a solution had enjoyed any response from the authorities, despite Sanfed's commitment to reaching an out-of-court solution.

"We offered possible solutions but no one has yet responded. We have had no feedback on the suggestions, which has caused especially business to become more vociferous in their decision to take court action," he said.

Stolzenberg said Sanfed was becoming frustrated by the demands being made on it by the authorities - demands he said not even the authorities themselves were adhering to

"They have been throwing stones at us for consulting the press, but then they announce this week's meeting through the newspapers"

Stolzenberg reiterated Sanfed's willingness to find a solution to the boycott issue, but said it would not be intimidated by government threats to cut services. He was referring to a statement by MEC for Planning, Development and Local Government, Sicelo Shuceka, earlier this week that threatened to cut services and attach property if the rates boycott did not end.

"Residents have been paying for their services, so the services could not be cut and their property could not be attached. Our attorneys have also shown that the process leading to the attachment of property involves a letter of demand, followed by a summons, which the resident then defends with a letter which goes to the courts. The final decision to attach property is then made by the judge, and the entire process can take up to 18 months," Stolzenberg said

(127) Star 16/11/96

# Sandton team will attempt to resolve rates crisis

By ANNA COX  
Sandton Bureau

Another meeting of the Sandton task team – set up by Gauteng MEC for local government, Sicelo Shiceka, to resolve the rates boycott – is to take place tomorrow night in an attempt to salvage negotiations after last week's slanging match between Shiceka and the Sandton Federation of Ratepayers

Meanwhile, the Democratic Party has stated that the Human Rights Commission, to which it submitted the Sandton rates problem for consideration, has provisionally declined jurisdiction and referred the matter to the public protector

"Although the public protector has been inundated with complaints

of a similar nature from around the country, I have requested that this particular complaint be prioritised

"As the Eastern council is home to many significant stakeholders, including a number of large companies which are of importance to the economy of the country as a whole, a resolution of the dispute could contribute significantly to progress nationally," said councillor Gary Pienaar

Shiceka has given the task team until November 30 to come up with recommendations, failing which the Government would step in, he said

Shiceka last week made "war threats" against residents who were boycotting payments. He also threatened to cut off services and attach properties if the Sanfed did not

meet him "equally" to discuss the crisis. He accused its members of having political agendas and of undermining and attacking the negotiation process

Sanfed retaliated by saying that, despite statements by the minister that certain issues had been resolved, this was not true. Sub-committees had been set up to investigate certain issues but had not yet come up with solutions

Sanfed also lashed out at him for his threats against Sandton residents "when there were thousands of transgressors who had not been paying for years and yet no action had been taken against them"

► Spotlight on shacklands

(127)

Star 18/11/96

# Masakhane revived in the West Rand

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Sowetan 18/11/96

By Sonti Maseko

DARK skies and a drizzle on Saturday could not dampen the spirits of about 500 people who attended the relaunch of the Masakhane campaign in the West Rand

The people, from the West Rand townships of Bekkersdal, Westonaria, Randfontein and Krugersdorp, converged on Donaldson Dam in Westonaria for a rally organised by the Gauteng department of development planning and local government

The rally was also supported by all four mayors from these areas, who pledged their support for the campaign and to accelerate economic development in the West Rand

The department's media liaison officer, Mr Prince Hamca, said the rally was part of a concerted effort by the government to revive the campaign, with a focus on "taking Masakhane back to the people"

"In the past the campaign faltered

because it seemed to be driven only by the government. This time we are taking it back to the people and the councillors will be the foot soldiers of the campaign," Hamca said

Gauteng MEC for development and planning Mr Sicelo Shiceka told the rally that councillors would sign a pledge to pay for services

## The poorest area

He said the West Rand was the poorest area in Gauteng with more shacks than houses

However, he chastised the people for not paying rent and service charges while other communities such as the so-called "coloureds", Indians and whites paid for their services

"When you do that (not paying) you are fighting President Mandela's government. You are killing the Reconstruction and Development Programme because there will be no money to build houses and no jobs," he said

# Northcliff to challenge high rates

Residents gear up for battle as  
developers try to take advantage  
of administrative vacuum in suburb

(127) Star 18/11/96

BY SHIRLEY WOODGATE

Upmarket Northcliff is launching a vast network of township-type civic-association cells across the area as it prepares to join the four-month-old Sandton rates boycott.

Residents are also gearing up to squash a flood of rezoning applications threatening to change the face of Blackheath, Berario, Fairland, Northcliff and its extensions.

Once the communication cells have been set-up by the newly formed Northcliff Residents and Ratepayers Association, more than 5 000 households in the Northern MSS will immediately be mobilised to fight rates hikes of up to 300%.

The first salvo in the battle against the council was fired last week with the formation of the NRRA which appealed for R25 donations from each household.

Committee member Theuns Botha said the organisation had thrown its full weight behind Sandton's fight.

He warned that unless the entire community united to fight the twin threats of excessive rates and rezoning, they would be squashed by the authorities.

A flood of applications already submitted to town planning officials included plans for a taxi rank near McDonalds in Blackheath, and proposals to link Roodepoort,

and Cresta via widened Pendorring and Weltevreden roads and 14th Avenue, he said.

Developers had set their sights on having land on either side of the three arterials rezoned to build mass accommodation which he described as "cheap, highrise buildings".

High on the hill, residents in Frederick Drive were selling up because of the intrusive Worlds View development and rezoning applications were being lodged in Bernard Drive, the meeting heard.

NRRA chairman Peter Manwaring said at the inaugural meeting on Thursday that the current rates hikes were merely the beginning, and that further "dramatic" increases were planned.

Developers had seized the opportunity during an apparent lull in council decision making to make huge inroads on residential areas, and high-density housing was already being planned on the Weltevreden/Pendorring triangle, he said.

Councillor Hendrik Smut said applications for rezoning, including hotels and shops right up to the top of the hill, were being processed by council officials.

"The time to object is now, otherwise you may wake up to the sound of bulldozers next door," he said.

Telephone Botha at 622-0999 or 082 886 9999 for details.

NAASHON ZALK



Home at last . Mbali Tulu, the child of one of the new home owners on Far East Bank, in Alex, smiles at the thought of her own home.

## Happiness for disadvantaged people is a new home in Alex

(127) Star 20/11/96

By ANNA COX  
Sandton Bureau

Tears flowed down Hazel Hadebi's cheeks as she stepped into her new home on the Far East Bank of Alexandra on Monday

She was one of the first recipients of a new home from the Gauteng Province

"I am so happy I am going to move in tomorrow I have been waiting for six years for a home of my own. I was born in Alex, but I had to move into a shack with my four children because there was nowhere else to go," she said

Patrick Khoza has been waiting for a home for 15 years He also lives in a shack with his wife and four children

"God has helped us - today we are very happy," he said

Recipient families were not the

only happy ones around Local building contractor Moses Dlamini, who previously worked for a construction company as a bricklayer, has built eight of the houses himself He was used as a subcontractor by the province

"I employed 12 workers I have learned a lot - we had training from province and now I have a good track record This has opened doors for me and I also made a bit of a profit," he said

The official opening of the Far East Bank housing project on Monday was a far cry from the scenario on the same site five months ago when police, the sheriffs of the court and the army were on the scene firing rubber bullets while removing some 3 500 squatters who had taken illegal occupation of the land

The official opening was by

MEC for Housing and Land Affairs Dan Mofokeng

The project involves the construction of 4 500 houses, plus schools, commercial and recreational development and clinics

Disadvantaged people who qualify for the government subsidy of R15 000 have been given preference with the one-bedroom homes Those who want larger homes can apply for bonds from financial institutions which have agreed to finance the loans

Although the houses are not yet complete, residents are being encouraged to move in because of vandalism Water and sanitation already exist on the site and electricity will be connected by the end of the week

Said Mofokeng "The critical housing shortage in Alex with its high population density repre-

sents a microcosm of the problems that beset this province with regard to the provision of housing for an ever-increasing populace"

In Alex, the provincial government was faced with a complex historical legacy of forced removals and the stripping of freehold rights, and it was on this basis that the Far East Bank was chosen as a special pilot project of the department's housing programmes, he said

"What's special is that province has chosen to contract small and emerging builders from previously disadvantaged communities to build the houses Any housing project should also contribute to the socio-economic well-being of the surrounding community through job-creation and other economic opportunities," said Mofokeng



# Success of Alex project gives rise to hope that Gauteng housing drive is taking off

By BLACKMAN NGORO

A former squatter settlement that gave birth to a housing project on Alexandra's Far East Bank this week has sparked renewed hope that Gauteng's housing drive is taking off.

Gauteng Housing MEC Dan Mofokeng this week handed five tenants keys to their newly built homes on the Far East Bank. So far, local contractors have completed 140 low-cost, four-roomed houses at R34 000 each. Ultimately, phase one of the project will have 900 such houses, with phase two consisting of 3 000 cluster-type houses.

Recent figures show that Gauteng had spent 79,2% of its annual housing allocation by September.

Western Cape, which coupled its 1995 figures with those of this year, had spent 94,1% of its allocation, while Free State was second with 84%, followed by Northern Cape with 71,3% and Mpumalanga with 66,4%.

Three provinces lag behind. Northern Cape has used only 14,6%, North West 25,9% and KwaZulu Natal 31,4%. However, the issue of KwaZulu Natal was coupled with the freeze of subsidies by the Ingonyama Trust Act. This situation has since changed.

boards. According to housing director-general Billy Cobbett there are 200 000 applications still awaiting additional information before processing. Once this is completed, the number of subsidies issued by the national Department of Housing will increase from 362 000 to more than 500 000 this year.

This is considerably higher than last year, when R900-million was spent on subsidies.

This year's figures should not mask the fact that 39 000 houses out of the 362 000 are said to be at one stage or another of construction.

Cobbett also said there were 137 000 housing subsidies "blocked" nationally and 56 000 others were about to be released.

## Three-tier system

"I'm going to take back from those provincial governments monies which they don't use even if they had committed them. I will commit the money to other projects. This is the best way of unlocking provincial projects," said Cobbett. "The SA housing programme is famous for starting then stopping, starting then stopping."

The three tier-government system has been cited as the main reason for blockages in housing delivery and there have been constant calls for local authorities - mainly responsible



**READY TO GO:** Workers touch up one of the 140 new low-cost houses in Alex for delivery of basic infrastructure and services - to be given powers to administer subsidies.

Housing Minister Sanku Mthembu-Mahanyele is confident that most councils will be accredited without a

problem. However, she is concerned that some councils will experience problems such as a lack of capacity and

PHOTOGRAPH ANTON HAMMERRI

skills as well as limited resources

On the West Rand, Krugersdorp is proving that local councils can be an effective conduit for the housing subsidy scheme. According to Krugersdorp Transitional Local Council RDP liaison officer Tsepo Meje, Kagiso extensions 9 and 14 will see phenomenal development before the passing of the housing draft bill - which will accredit local councils to give housing subsidies to those who qualify - early next year.

Krugersdorp is one of only a few local councils countrywide currently administering the subsidies which fall under the authority of the provinces.

"We've started giving out the subsidies by servicing stands, and providing the top structure and a roof. The applicant will then be responsible for the brick or the steel structure holding the roof," Meje said.

Cobbett said the draft bill would be submitted to the Cabinet in January, and hopefully would be approved in April so that it could be ready by July when local government budgets come into effect. Those budgets would then contain subsidy allocations for administration by the councils.

National Housing Board chairman Ishmael Mkhabela supports the role local councils are going to play in the housing delivery programme.

"In the first place, there were no

127) Xmas 23 11 96

plan was drawn up) which gave reason for the housing boards to be the face of the Government at provincial level. But since then, and because municipalities are closer to the people and more representative than the boards, they should be able to enumerate government housing policy to the people more easily," said Mkhabela.

Mthembu-Mahanyele this week attended a Mortgage Indemnity Fund report-back where officials gave renewed hope of an upswing in housing delivery in the new year.

The MIF and Servcon were established in 1995 through a record of understanding between the Department of Housing and banks in an attempt to get financial institutions to start lending in the townships.

## 'Untouchable'

About 52 000 new housing loans, with a value of R4-billion, have been given in areas which had become inaccessible due to violent political activity. Despite the success of this scheme, some areas - such as large parts of Tembisa - remain "untouchable" for the MIF, mainly because of the unsatisfactory security situation.

For the local authorities about to take on the task of housing delivery, this is but one of the challenges they will have to tackle head-on.

# Payment figures are misleading, says Sandton Federation of Ratepayers

(127) Star 25/11/96

By ANNA COX  
Sandton Bureau

The Sandton rates boycott has not collapsed and payment figures released by the Eastern Metro Council are misleading, according to Sandton Federation of Ratepayers (Sanfed) chairman Peter Harmsen.

He was reacting to figures released by the council at the weekend stating that payment levels had risen from 64% in September to 88% last month. Harmsen said these figures probably included the payments of services which Sanfed had encouraged residents to pay in full.

"We have always advised residents to pay for services. Another factor is that Sandton residents have not embarked on a full boycott - many are still paying old rates only, some old rates plus 10% and some old rates plus 20%.

I would like to know how many rates accounts are, in fact, being paid in full. I believe that these figures are misleading," he said.

Harmsen said the chairmen of all the 24 ratepayers' organisations were consulted on a regular basis and asked to get a mandate from their residents on whether to continue the boycott.

"The answers we are getting back from all associations is that residents want to continue the boycott and, in fact, intensify it.

"Our rates-help office constantly gets calls of support from residents who are boycotting and our postboxes are full of letters of support," he said.

Eastern Metro Council spokesman Keith Peacock said the calculations had been done in the same manner as in previous months and had included services. The calculations showed that an amount of R44 034 414 of an expected R52 681 457 had been received, he said.

# Council cuts water supply to non-paying households

Deborah Fine

THE ANC-dominated Boksburg-Vosloorus council has taken a tough stand on the non-payment of services, electing yesterday to cut off water supplies to at least 4 000 households in the area which have failed to pay for services over a protracted period

The move comes only days after Gauteng provincial legislature NP member Derek Christophers accused municipalities in the province of showing "great reluctance" to force the issue of non-payment and recover millions of rands in arrears for fear of possible political consequences

Boksburg-Vosloorus ANC town councillor Gwede Mantashe said the council had opted to switch off the water supplies as part of default proceedings because payment levels in Vosloorus were running at about 23%

The council had lost more than R100m in revenue, and non-payment was severely retarding the delivery of urgently needed projects in the area

The council had specifically chosen to cut off water supplies because it was felt that this was preferable to attaching properties.

BO 28/11/96 (127)  
While the council was not allowed to deprive people of water, it was entitled to switch off water supplies to individual houses because people would still have access to water through community taps

Unfortunately some households which had paid for services had also been "caught in the cross fire", and the council was working to remedy the situation. The water would remain switched off for "as long as necessary"

Mandla Zwane, East Rand branch president of the SA National Civics Organisation, condemned the council's move as "insensitive and irresponsible". He accused the council of being as reactionary as the NP.

Zwane said he believed the council would achieve far greater payment levels through joint "positive payment awareness programmes" rather than "this negative approach"

He was surprised by the council's move as Sanco had organised a march next Saturday during which residents would descend on the council's offices en masse to pay for services

Zwane warned that the move could create health hazards, and said residents had not been warned in time.

# Sandton rates rebels expecting summonses and are ready to resist

By ANNA COX  
Sandton Bureau

The Sandton Federation of Ratepayers (Sanfed) has warned boycotting residents to expect summonses demanding rates payments from the Eastern Metro Council within the next few days.

Sanfed treasurer Brian Stolzenberg said he had obtained information that the council had sought legal opinion on how best to sue defaulters.

He said Sanfed attorneys were prepared to deal with any legal action and warned residents not to be frightened off by the council's "bullying tactics".

"Our attorneys have been expecting this move and are prepared to take the necessary action if any residents receive summonses they must contact our Sandton Rates Help Office who will immediately give them legal assistance," he said.

Sanfed had approached the sheriffs of the Randburg and Midrand magistrate's courts who had undertaken to give them a complete list of summonses which had been issued.

He stressed that Sanfed was adamant to see the boycott through and would not give up until an acceptable and reasonable settlement was reached. Business had so far spent R130 000 on legal opinion and was in a position to start acting.

Eastern Metro Council executive committee deputy chairman Sol Cowan said the normal credit control system for all defaulters throughout the substructure was being taken.

And at a press conference on Wednesday, Eastern Metro Council chairperson Nkele Ntshingane said good progress has been made in discussions with organ-

sations in Sandton regarding the rates boycott.

She also said there was an increasing acceptance that the council had been acting legally and that the equalisation of the rate in the rand was not illegal.

"It is the intention of the Greater Johannesburg Metro Council to ensure that there is a just and fair system of rates within the metro." This is consistent with the position of the council

which is grudgingly acknowledged.

"Many people have continued to pay their rates in spite of a campaign against the democratically elected council. The responsible attitude of those residents is to be commended."

Where ratepayers had genuine difficulties paying for rates and services they should bring this to the attention of the relevant local council, she added.

(127) ANN 29/11/96

# Houses for Africa – but it's a tough task

(127) CP 1/12/96

HOUSING is a tough issue, but people from Gauteng should rest easy in the knowledge that Dan Mofokeng, the province's MEC for housing and land affairs, is in charge. **SEKOLA SELLO** spoke to this whirlwind dynamo who is ensuring that South Africa's housing shortage is taken care of promptly.

**S**tung by criticism that it has failed to deliver many of its pre-election promises, the Gauteng government is quietly beaver away at solving one of SA's major problems the housing shortage

On the wall in the office of the province's MEC for housing and land affairs, Dan Mofokeng, is a large map with areas shaded in various colours. Dotted all over the map are areas where houses of various types are to be built – sub-economic, high-rise and swanky two-bedroomers

These houses may look modest, but for millions without decent homes they are a leap into modernity

A brief chat with Mofokeng and a look at the map leaves little doubt about the enormity of the task with which he is faced. He states that to eradicate the province's housing backlog would require R18 billion. He does not need to tell anyone that that sort of cash is hard to come by

Undaunted, Mofokeng vows that, "I am going to show the old government that they were not serious about delivery. They claim they used to build about 32 000 houses a year throughout the country. We will beat that record within a year in one province."

Mofokeng would not make this sort of boast lightly – two years ago Premier Tokyo Sexwale burnt his fingers badly when he claimed Gauteng would build 100 000 houses within a year

Mofokeng says from early next year, people will see



MEETING THE DEADLINES Dan Mofokeng, MEC for housing and land affairs, is getting houses built

more projects beginning. Infrastructure (roads, sanitation, sewerage, electricity and water) is being laid in a number of areas marked for development, while many informal settlements are being upgraded

He is still smarting from the criticism to which his Premier was subjected. "We might not have built the number of houses we had promised, but the fact remains that in our province we build more than the other provinces put

together," he reminds

Money is also rolling in. Apart from R680 million allocated by central government, the private sector has also pledged over R1 billion. Yet, it was not always easy to get the private sector to cooperate

Mofokeng says it took nine months of painstaking negotiations with the private sector to bring them on board. Suddenly, all the building companies are presently on board – LTA, Murray & Roberts,

and Minerva

Gauteng's projects go beyond merely putting up houses. Part of the operation is to develop small and emerging entrepreneurs through partnerships with established contractors like LTA, while providing work for the locals

Not a single area of Gauteng has been left out. On the East and West Rand, in Soweto, the Vaal Triangle, Pretoria, Cullinan/Bronkhor-spruit and Alexandra township, houses are going up

One of Gauteng's most ambitious projects is to build an estimated 4 000 houses in Protea Gardens between Soweto and Mofokeng in a matter of months. Already, 200 houses are ready for occupation

Gauteng government spokesman Manase Sefatle says that contractors in this area have given assurances that they intend building at least 300 houses a month. If they live up to this promise, Mofokeng's hopes of delivering 32 000 units a year could be realised

But this will not eliminate the backlog nightmare in the province. As long as there is unemployment in the country, thousands will continue the trek to Gauteng – South Africa's economic heartland

Last week Mofokeng launched the Far East Bank Project near Alexandra, to build an estimated 4 000 residential units

Last year Mofokeng looked perhaps a little overweight, irascible and older than his 36 years, today he looks slimmer and younger – and one could not hope for a more amiable MEC. No guesses why

## Rates row goes on despite deadline

By ANNA COX

Sandton Bureau

(127)  
Star 2/12/96  
The deadline for the task team established by the Gauteng MEC for local government to find solutions to the Sandton rates boycott expired at the weekend without finality being reached

The Sandton Federation of Ratepayers said, certain, recommendations on minor issues had been reached but there had been no agreement on the main issue, which was its demand for the lowering of the rates

The Eastern Metro Council said progress had been made and that recommendations had been handed to the relevant MEC, Sicele Shuceka

There has been no official statement on whether Shuceka has accepted the recommendations, but his spokesman Prince Hamnca said a statement would be released today

Shuceka threatened last month that the province would step in if the team could not find solutions by the end of November

Sandton Federation of Ratepayers chairman Peter Harmsen said that because no concrete solutions had been found, the boycott would continue. On Saturday, Sanfed hired an aircraft to fly over Sandton with a message on its tail calling on residents to intensify

the boycott

In the meantime, residents and the Democratic Party are claiming that the Eastern Metro Council is deliberately misleading the public by withholding crucial information from it and by stating that rates payment for October had increased to 88%, indicating the boycott had failed.

Councillor Alan Fuchs said, he, and certain residents had asked for a breakdown of figures of account holders in Sandton to show how many of the accounts sent out had been paid partially or in full. He had not yet received a reply from the council.

"By withholding this information - which is readily available - the council obviously doesn't want to show how many people have not paid and that the boycott is in fact in full swing. I am disappointed that we are being misled," he said

The council released a similar breakdown for August, he said.

The Star also asked for the breakdown of the billings but has been told by the council that the figures are not available

Communication executive officer Keith Peacock said a special computer program had to be loaded on to the council's system and the full report of breakdown figures would be available only at the end of next month

NEWS NATIONAL

# R18 million facelift for hostels

By Joshua Raboroko

THE Greater Johannesburg's southern metropolitan sub-structure is to upgrade five hostels, including the former single women's hostel in Mzimhlophe, Soweto, to the tune of R18 million. The projects are Jabulani (R3,29 million), Mapeta (R2,8 mil-

## Five Soweto hostels to be converted into family units by next year

lion), Dfateng (R2,5 million), Nancefield (R4,5 million); Mzimhlophe (R2 million) and Dube (R2,5 million). Most of the upgraded hostels are to be

converted into family homes in an attempt to reduce the housing shortage that is reaching alarming proportions in Johannesburg and the city's surroundings. According to SMSS statistics about

100 000 people are on the waiting list for homes, while there are more than 53 informal settlements in Soweto alone. The estimated population of Soweto is two million.

At a Press conference in Soweto yesterday, SMSS executive for strategic urban development Mr Lawrence Boya said the first phase of the project, which entailed upgrading 185 bunks in

the hostels, was completed in August. The project included upgrading ablution facilities, electrical supply and structural improvements. An estimated R15 million has been allocated to start the second phase of the programme to start early next year. During this phase 95 dormitories will be converted into self-contained and maintained units.

(127) Sowetan 5/12/96

# Council to house the homeless

(127)  
seweran 5/12/96  
By Joshua Raboroko

THE Greater Johannesburg Transitional Metropolitan Council plans to accommodate homeless people temporarily in reception areas before embarking on massive building of low-cost houses next year

The reception areas have been identified as a short-term solution in an attempt not to prejudice 200 000 people living in some 85 informal settlements who have been on the waiting list for more than 10 years

Executive chairman of the Southern Metropolitan Substructure Mr Prema Naidoo said yesterday that people accommodated at reception areas would be registered and carry access cards to allow them into the site

Naidoo said that this would be done to exclude opportunists who might have seen this as a way of gaining access to land to which they were not entitled

The concept of reception areas was introduced by the Gauteng MEC for development planning and local government Mr Siceko Shiceka as a solution to stamp out land invasion



# IFP threatens widespread unrest over evictions in Tokoza

(127)

ARGUS CORRESPONDENT

ARG 6/12/96

**The Inkatha Freedom Party in Tokoza says it will make Gauteng ungovernable if the Alberton Town Council carries out a threat to evict IFP members occupying houses illegally in the East Rand township without finding "suitable" alternative accommodation.**

IFP chairman Sipho Sithole said yesterday it was unfair that the council should evict the illegal occupants and make no mention of moving them back to the houses from which they were forced out in other sections of Tokoza.

Residents moved into the houses in the notorious Khumalo Street at the height of the political violence in the early 1990s after fighting in the areas where they lived.

Mr Sithole said the illegal occupants had widespread support across party structures in Gauteng and the IFP would

stage "destabilising" protest marches until their demands were met.

About 1 000 Tokoza residents yesterday attempted to march on the Alberton Town Council to protest against the evictions but ran into trouble when police fired teargas at them after they chased council workers trying to evict the illegal occupants.

Police fired stun grenades into the marchers, some of whom carried assault rifles, as they tore down barbed wire barricades put up to stop them.

The Gauteng housing department supported the evictions which it said paved the way for the completion of the Kathorus project, a re-development plan for Katilehong, Tokoza and Vosloorus.

Police spokesman Deon Peens said the army and the SAPS would patrol the area throughout the night. He said no one was injured during the skirmish with the marchers. The situation remained tense late yesterday.

# IFP threat to make Gauteng ungovernable

(127) Star 6/12/96

Fury over coming eviction from illegally  
occupied East Rand township houses  
without alternative accomodation offer

By MIKE MASIPA

A large security force moved into Tokoza at sunrise today as the Alberton council prepared to make another attempt at evicting squatters illegally occupying houses in the East Rand township's Phenduka section.

Following yesterday's clashes between squatters and police, Gauteng provincial administration spokesman Themba Maluleke said they had prepared a "heavy security presence" before moving into the area around Khumalo street.

Although no further incidents were reported during the night, police said they were leaving nothing to chance, particularly after the local IFP branch yesterday threatened to make Gauteng ungovernable if the Alberton council evicted people without finding them "suitable" alternative accommodation.

Sipho Sithole of the IFP said yesterday it was unfair that the council should evict the illegal occupants and make no mention of moving them back to their houses, from which they were forced out in other sections of Tokoza.

Residents moved into the houses near the notorious Khumalo street at the height of the political violence in the early 1990s.

Sithole said the illegal occupants had widespread support across party structures in Gauteng, and the IFP would stage "destabilising" protest marches throughout the province until their demands were met.

About 1 000 Tokoza residents tried to march on the Alberton

council yesterday to protest against the evictions, but ran into trouble when police fired teargas on them after they chased council workers who were trying to evict the illegal occupants.

Police fired stun grenades at the heavily armed marchers as they tore down a section of barbed wire put in the middle of their route. Police managed to contain the marchers, who blocked a busy road leading into central Alberton and demanded the council address them. This was followed by negotiations between police officers and IFP MPL Gertrude Mzizi as to whether the marchers should be allowed into central Alberton armed as they were. The marchers refused to be searched individually.

The negotiations fell through when Mzizi and the marchers objected to the presence of Vuyani Mpofo, an ANC leader and official of the provincial safety and security department who, they claimed, was giving orders to the security forces to shoot them.

The town council refused to meet the marchers, saying they had been given the opportunity to oppose the eviction order in court but failed to do so.

Mzizi persuaded the protesters to return to Phenduka section and said "residents would solve the problems their own way".

The Gauteng housing department has declared its support for the evictions, which it said paved the way for the completion of the Katorus project, a redevelopment plan for Katilehong, Tokoza and Vosloorus. The department said 600 houses in Phenduka had been illegally occupied. The council was going to evacuate 191 by Monday.

# Mandela hails completion of state-aided houses

By Audrey Sekwakwa  
Nov 6/11/96

President Nelson Mandela marked the completion of the first 200 government-subsidised homes in Protea Glen, Soweto, yesterday by handing over the keys of the 200th house to its new owner, Justina Mokoena.

The houses, in Extension 11, have been built as part of a R1,3-billion project to construct about 30 000 government-subsidised houses to be completed by the end of the century. Mokoena, a general assistant worker at Johannesburg Hospital, and a single mother of two, hails from the Free State and has always wanted a house of her own. She has been living in a shack since arriving in Gauteng in search of work in 1979. Her house, built at a cost of R68 500, has been subsidised to the tune of R9 500 by the Government.

The project has enabled people with an income of less than R40 000 a year to own a house. Speaking at the ceremony attended by Housing Minister

## Proud owner handed key to home in Soweto

Sanku Mthembu-Mahanyele, Gauteng MEC for Housing and Local Government Dan Mofokeng and Gauteng Premier Tokyo Sexwale, Mandela said the Government was on track with its plan to build a million homes within five years.

He said the number of subsidies being granted nationally each month had leapt from about 500 in 1995 to about 6 000 this year, and that if the average family consisted of five people, then about 30 000 people a month were benefiting from the subsidy scheme each month.

"Today we can witness the success of one project among almost a thousand across the country since the subsidy scheme was implemented," Mandela said.

He added that 139 000 low-cost houses had been built since his government came to power. Mandela said the Free State, Western Cape and Gauteng had already spent their housing budgets for the year and that the Housing Ministry was likely to have spent its budget by the end of this financial year.

# Back in their homes, owners still live in fear

(127)

Illegal tenants are returning to Tokoza houses at night, even in the presence of police

Star 6/12/96

By HOPEWELL RADEBE  
City Desk

**R**uth Mkhize has just returned to the house in Tokoza she abandoned under duress. Even though it has been two years since the end of violent conflict between Inkatha Freedom Party-aligned hostels and the ANC-aligned township, she still lives in fear.

Mkhize lives in Khanyile Street next to the Tokoza hostels, three blocks from the notorious Klumalo Street. Her home was one of about a thousand houses taken over by hostel dwellers.

Many people living near the hostels left their homes in the early 90s and took refuge in the homes of relatives. Others rented backyard rooms elsewhere in the township.

The Greater Alberton Council this week began evicting illegal occupants from the homes that had been taken over. But the safety of legal owners moving back cannot be guaranteed.

"I am supposed to be happy for being back in my home after three years, but I keep getting this feeling that the people who were evicted might come back," Mkhize said.

A resident who was afraid to give her name said illegal tenants were returning to the houses at night, even in the presence of police. Police say a long-term political solution is needed, while critics suspect some police officers may be co-operating with the illegals.

Themba Maitleke, manager of the Katorus special presidential project, said 15 houses had been cleared of illegal tenants, one of whom was arrested last week for shooting at police.

He said he understood residents' feeling of insecurity because no one could guarantee their safety.

Police visibility has been maximised by a number of new satellite police stations in the area, but a "neighbourly spirit" would take time to be rebuilt. Maitleke said some houses

had remained empty for a longer period than expected after evictions because some owners were reluctant to come back and others could not be found.

The abandoned houses were so badly damaged during illegal occupancy that, in a special presidential project, Reconstruction and Development Programme funds of up to R147-million were spent on rebuilding infrastructure in the area and repairing damaged houses.

But now some residents complain about the conditions of their renovated houses, claiming the illegal tenants have damaged them once again since renovations. The painted walls are ruined and electric fittings have been stolen or vandalised, they say.

Maitleke said those reoccupying the houses after being evicted would be charged with trespassing and contempt of court.

"I hope the judicial system will assist the project in this regard and impose strict bail conditions to deter others from going back," he added.

## Hostile hostels will hopefully become more hospitable

By FIKILE-NTSIKHELELO MOYA  
City Desk

The appalling living conditions in Soweto hostels will be drastically improved now that the Southern Metro Council has received R18-million from the provincial housing board for refurbishment.

Dube, Jabulani, Mapetla, Lafateng and Nanosfield hostels have already been refurbished and the lighter paint shades have

already made a difference to the lives of inmates who have had to live within grim, dark walls for years. The upgrading began in February.

Next on the revamping list is the Orlando West women's hostel, to be tackled early next year.

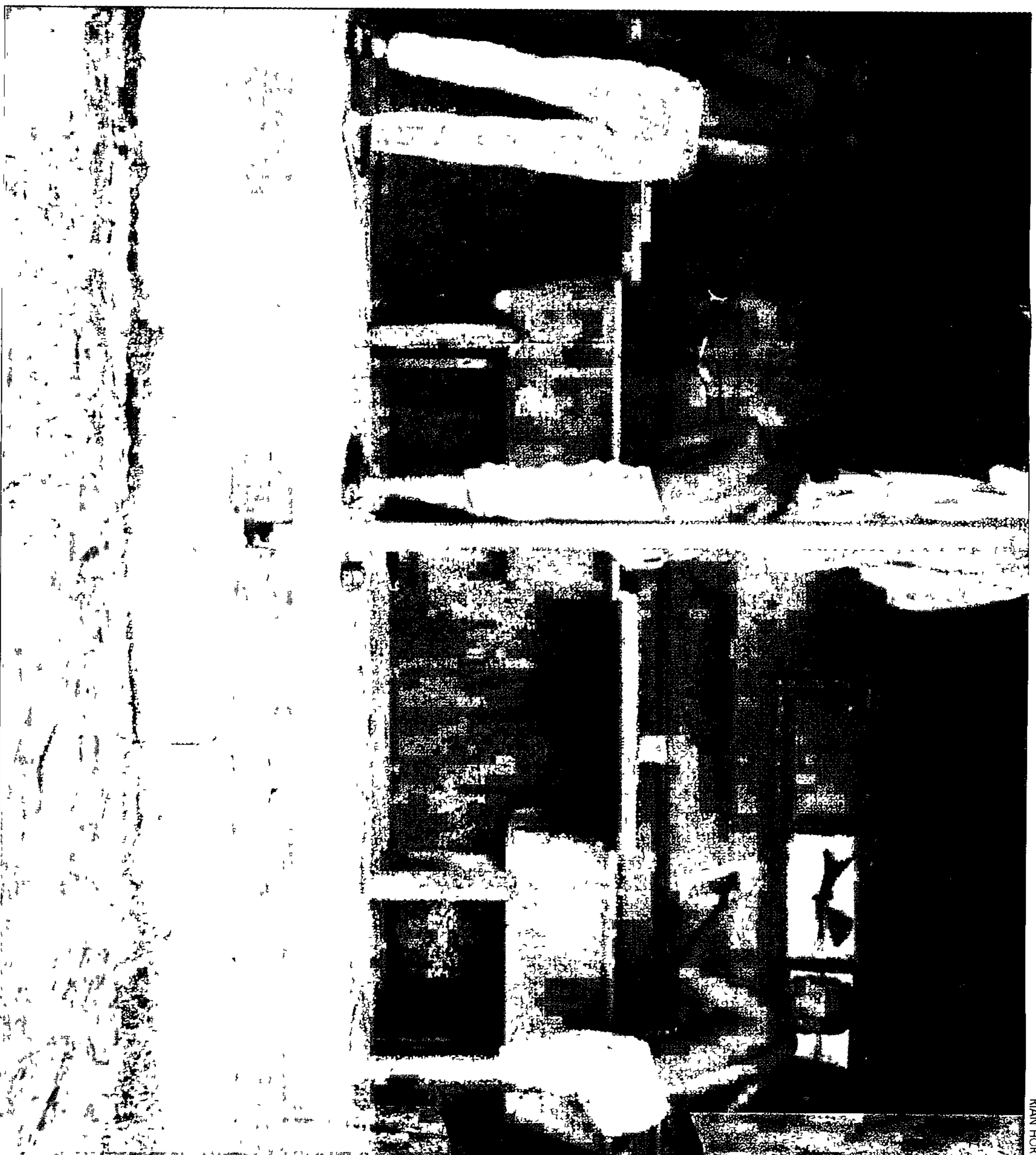
Men's hostels are to be transformed from bungalows shared by 16 men to two-roomed family units.

Each will have proper electric-

ty plugs and switches - a far cry from residents being electrocuted by uncovered wires.

Councillor Jeremiah Mphohlo said most of the workers employed to do refurbishment were hostel residents, but care had been taken to ensure that township residents did some of the work.

"We involved township residents because we want to integrate the hostels back into the community," he said.



The struggle continues... democracy has brought little change to the lives of thousands of Tokoza hostel residents who still have to wash themselves in basins outside public toilets. According to a hostel leader, water supply is irregular, there is no electricity, and the sewerage system is blocked.

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6/12/96

## Our homeless treated unfairly, says IFP

By HOPEWELL RADEBE

Inkatha Freedom Party leadership in Tokoza hostel has accused the Greater Alberton Council of insensitivity and unfairness for evicting only IFP members from homes invaded after the East Rand war three years ago.

IFP leader Alfred Msomi said the council was considering only ANC war victims wanting to return to their homes, although both ANC and IFP members had been exiled and their abandoned houses illegally occupied.

"We have our thousands of IFP exiles crammed into Tokoza hostel, and others living like sardines in about 700 of these abandoned houses of former ANC members near the hostel.

"Maybe the project (Katorus special presidential project) was to develop and better the lives of only ANC members," said Msomi.

He said the council had not bothered to draw up a list of the IFP's homeless people or to establish the number of people in the hostel to plan for their resettlement. Yet it continued to evict people from the abandoned houses, expecting them to "go back where they come from."

But the evictions, according to Katorus project manager Themba Maluleke, came because pressure from dis-

placed families was mounting and months of gentle persuasion and negotiations with representatives of illegal tenants had proved fruitless.

The council had to act decisively to protect the 447 houses, repaired at a cost of R8,9-million, by handing them back to their rightful owners. Another 463 houses are being repaired.

Msomi said the war had equally ravaged everyone's lives in Katle-

### 'Project to better lives only of ANC members'

hong, Tokoza and Vosloorus. It had displaced almost everyone who was seen to be on the wrong side of the party controlling that area. However, the plight of IFP members, especially those living in and around the IFP hostel, was being neglected.

Another hostel leader, Andreas Mthetwa, said ANC leaders were concerned only about renovating township residents' property with the project funds.

"The houses of many IFP members who live in the middle sections of the three East Rand townships were burnt and family members were killed or expelled.

"Twelve blocks of Khalanyoni hostel were razed to the ground and hundreds of people took refuge in the comparatively much smaller three sections of Tokoza hostel," said Mthetwa.

The hostel leadership, at first, was persuaded by its followers to destroy the abandoned houses. But lack of accommodation in the overpopulated hostel forced them to review their actions. They allocated the empty houses to destitute people.

Until then, the houses had been used by attackers who hid in them, and it was thought that occupation would decrease the chances of the attacks continuing.

Msomi said living conditions were unbearable. Since the war, almost 80% of the windows had been broken, water supply was irregular, there was no electricity, the sewerage system was blocked and roads were muddy.

"We, the so-called 'imidlwembe' (hooigans), are forced to live in this pigsty. Alternative arrangements should have been made before we were kicked out of those houses."

# Sandton rates row heads for courts

(127) Star 6/12/96

By ANNA COX AND SAPA

A group of Sandton's commercial property owners - including financial insurance giants Liberty Life, Sanlam and Commercial Union - have filed an application in the Supreme Court to set aside the budgets of the Greater Johannesburg Transitional Metropolitan Council and the Eastern Metropolitan Substructure

The group represents an investment of about R4,2-billion in the Sandton area and some of the country's largest property owners

The property owners say the budgets were not drawn up in accordance with statutory procedures and that contributions by the Johannesburg council are ultra vires.

"We will also show that Sandton rates have increased by between 250% and 385% (from a base of 100%) compared to a national average increase of about

10% and that this will hurt property values, push down returns and drive investors away," group spokesman George de Bie, said at a press conference yesterday

The application to the court was made by Strauss, Scher Attorneys of Sandton on behalf of Fedlife Assurance Ltd (Fedlife Assurance), Holding 24 Strathavon (Pty) Ltd (Tiber Bonvec), JDB Beleggings (Edms) Beperk (Stanprop), Liberty Life Association of Africa Ltd (Liberty Life), Momentum Property Investments (Pty) Ltd (Momentum Life), 100 Grayston Drive Property (Pty) Ltd (Investec), Rivonia Annex (Pty) Ltd (Kirschmann-Hurry Properties), Rycklof-Beleggings (Pty) Ltd (Sanlam), Terama (Pty) Ltd (Commercial Union) and Clearstream Properties (Pty) Ltd (JCI/Amplats Pension Funds)

De Bie said the court action was the culmination of a months-long struggle with the authorities

but he would not comment on the ratepayers' boycott, other than saying they were not part of it.

Johann Strauss, of Strauss, Scher, said the respondents would have until December 23 to file intentions to oppose. Then, he said, they would have three weeks to issue answering affidavits

In a statement, the consortium of Sandton businesses said "Given the failure of the authorities, business reluctantly considers that the only way to resolve the issue is to submit it to the courts."

Brian Stolzenberg of the Sandton Federation of Residents' and Ratepayers' Associations (Sanfed) told Sapa that between 75% and 90% of the Sandton residents were not paying rates

Communications officer for the Eastern Metro Council Keith Peacock said that it was unfortunate that legal action had been taken when discussions were continuing

# Emotions flare as police evict illegal tenants from Tokoza

ARG 7/12/96 (127)

OWN CORRESPONDENT

Johannesburg - There was no sweetness on Sweetkhoza Street yesterday as more than 15 members of displaced people's families assisted police and the sheriff to evict illegal occupants of more than 40 houses at Tambo Section in Tokoza.

To date just over 110 houses have been cleared of illegal occupants

Yesterday nearly 100 heavily armed police officers kept peace in the inherently volatile township as members of the Inkatha Freedom Party taunted them.

Two men were led away on different occasions. Both were detained for about two hours at Tokoza police station.

Groups of irate women, who vowed to avenge the evictions, urged each other: "Leave them to remove the things. So what? We will get back right in later."

As the police accompanied the sheriff, Johan Gertzen, shots were fired at the contingent, but there were no injuries and police did not return fire.

Evicted people accused displaced people's family of stealing small items such as pieces of clothing. One of the workers assisting with the eviction was led away by the police after they discovered soap in his pocket and overalls he had dressed himself in over his own clothes.

As the day wore on residents became increasingly agitated by the presence of the media, hurling insults at a photographer. The sheriff is to continue with about 60 evictions on Monday.

# Gunshots greet Tokoza evictions

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By BLACKMAN NGORO

There was no sweetness on Sweetkholo Street yesterday as more than 15 members of displaced people's families assisted police and the sheriff in evicting illegal occupants of more than 40 houses at Tambo Section in Tokoza.

So far, more than 110 houses have been cleared of illegal occupants. Yesterday, nearly 100 heavily armed police kept peace in the volatile township as members of the Inkatha Freedom Party taunted them.

Two men were led away on different occasions. They were both detained for about two hours at Tokoza police station before being released.

Groups of irate women, who vowed to avenge the evictions, urged each other "Leave them to remove the things. So what? We will get back in later."

As the police accompanied the sheriff, Johan Gerzen, shots were fired at the contingent.

As the gunshots rang out, streets quickly emptied and police took cover. There were no injuries. Police did not return fire as things quietened again.

On Thursday, Gerzen was prevented from leaving the local police station by the illegal occupants.

Evicted people accused the displaced family members of stealing small items such as pieces of clothing.

One of the workers assisting with the eviction was led away by the police after they discovered soap in his pocket and that he had dressed himself in overalls over his own clothes.

Sipho Mazibuko of Sabi Street in Tambo Section, who helped move belongings from his father's illegally occupied house, vowed to move back into the home he grew up in.

However, he was not going to do it immediately. "Look at how it is? Who can move into these houses with such a hostile crowd?"

Evicted Doreen Zikalala was calm when Gerzen arrived at her house.

"Do you know what is happening?" she was asked.

"Yes," she replied as she accepted the warrant of eviction which recommends the evicted person find accommodation at local hostels. It also warned that those who moved back in would be considered trespassers.

As the day wore on, residents became increasingly agitated by the presence of the media, hurling insults at a photographer.

The sheriff is to continue with about 60 evictions on Monday. According to reports, an IFP delegation from Gauteng will meet IFP leader Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi to brief him about the situation.



**UNDER FIRE:** Police take cover as gunshots are fired during evictions in Tokoza yesterday. No one was injured and the operation continued. So far more than 110 houses have been cleared of illegal occupants. PHOTOGRAPH: TJ LEMON

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# Business warns

# of pullout over rates squabble

BY JACQUI REEVES

Blue-chip companies are poised to move out of Sandton because of "exorbitant municipal rates increases", business leaders warned this week.

And cheaper business centres in places like Randburg, Pretoria and Midrand stand to gain the property investments worth R4.2-billion that grants such as Liberty Life, Commercial Union and Sanlam have invested in Sandton.

The warning of disinvestment comes as a Sandton business coalition begins court action against the rates increases announced in June under the new Eastern Metropolitan Sub-structure.

As the EMSS prepares to defend the court action, Greater Johannesburg Transitional Metropolitan Council (GJTM/C) corporate services committee chairman Patrick Flusk announced yesterday that more than 18 000 objections had been lodged against the property values listed in the new valuations roll, which contains 440 000 valuations.

Of these, 10 000 have been lodged in the EMSS alone.

Although Sandton commercial property owners say their greatest concern is their own investments, some have admitted that the big corporations would not be the only ones to suffer because of the rates hike.

"As property owners, we are going to have to make up the extra money that we will now be paying for our rates," one businessman said.

"Many companies will try to do this by pushing up their rents, which will in turn force tenants to charge more for their goods and services."

The business coalition has filed an application in the Rand

Supreme Court to set aside the budgets of the EMSS and the GJTM/C

The coalition will argue that the budgets were not drawn up in accordance with statutory procedures, that they are *ultra vires* and that contributions levied on the EMSS and the Northern MSS by the council were also invalid.

Property valuations, from which rates are determined, provided the initial spark which has culminated in the Sandton rates boycott. However, the coalition has distanced itself from residents' rates boycott.

Flusk announced yesterday that valuation board hearings, where objectors' concerns would be heard, would start early next year.

Although this week's legal move by the Sandton business coalition could spell trouble for the legitimacy of the EMSS and GJTM/C budgets, Flusk said the valuation board would continue as normal.

"We have heard that we are being taken to court. Once these papers have been served on us, we will decide on what action needs to be taken. I am, however, very confident we followed the right procedures. We are law-abiding people."

The 90-day period for objections came to an end on September 30. Since then, the four individual substructures have been receiving applications for members to sit on the different valuation boards.

While the rates boycott continues to gather momentum, one thing that remains uncertain is when the valuations board will finish its job.

"It is impossible to say when it will be completed. It is going to be a long process," said George Nel, executive officer of the valuation process for Greater Johannesburg.

Leaders of the Sandton business coalition say they are acting in the interests of their investors - to guarantee optimal returns.

"We represent the interests of a very large constituency across the entire country - more than 80% of all non-residential property investment is undertaken by life insurers and pension/provident funds. As their trustees, it is our duty to act in the utmost good faith to protect their interests."

Gauteng MEC for Development Planning and Local Government Sicele Shiceka told the *Saturday Star* he was still studying the documents detailing the court action, and would answer the coalition's actions on Monday.

"Some of the people in these companies have, in the past, shown themselves to be narrow and racist and have contributed little to the transformation process, but I will first carefully consider their arguments and motives before commenting further," he said.

Brian Stolzenberg, spokesman for the Sandton Federation of Ratepayers (Sanfed), said the organisation was thrilled that big business had taken a stand.

He said Sanfed did not plan to take the same route as the business coalition, but would make a single "test case" when the first summons was issued.

**Randburg, Midrand stand to attract giants like Liberty Life, Commercial Union and Sanlam**

## ◆ Rates row

(127)

Star 7/12/96

"When the first ratepayer receives a summons, we will take that case through the full extent of the law"

"Once the case has been resolved, we hope to have set a precedent that will help further residents in their cases," Stolzenberg said

The National Party yesterday came out in support of business's move, saying legal certainty was necessary around the rates issue

"We would further urge that the judicial process be fast-tracked as a matter of urgent public importance. This is necessary to break the (rates) boycott which is negatively influencing the council's coffers and to bring about certainty in the area where the risk factor for residents is removed," said NP regional chairman Daryl Swanepoel

He added that the task team set up by the provincial government to investigate these matters was not making progress

"We welcome the legal action because of the certainty, the prerequisite for stable and good governance, that will be established"

# Squatter camp killings after 'muti murder'

127

Dispute that started in a spaza shop erupted into faction fighting which spread to hostel and claimed 32 lives

THEMBA HADEBE

By PATRICK PHOSA  
AND XOLISA VAPI

Shocked residents of the Freedom Park squatter camp north of Rustenburg, where fighting claimed 32 lives over the weekend, are divided over the reasons for the violence.

Police initially said 37 people were killed, but said yesterday some death reports had been duplicated.

Basotho and Batswana residents believe the bizarre wave of killings was sparked off by "a ritual-related murder" of a Mosotho man by a Xhosa tuckshop owner.

Xhosas and Mpondos in the North West squatter camp say the violence erupted after four Basotho-speaking men attempted to rob the Xhosa tuckshop owner.

MmaTebogo Makhele, a Lesotho national whose husband works at the Wildebeesfontein South mine about 500m from the informal settlement, said the body of the Sotho man who was killed by a Xhosa spaza owner had been mutilated beyond recognition.

Makhele said the body had been slashed into pieces and pressed with a hot iron, was tied with ropes, and that the private parts had been removed.

A Xhosa squatter, Makhosandile Nomvalo, said four armed Sotho men arrived at the spaza shop and demanded that the owner sell them beer, even though he had already closed, and wanted to rob him.

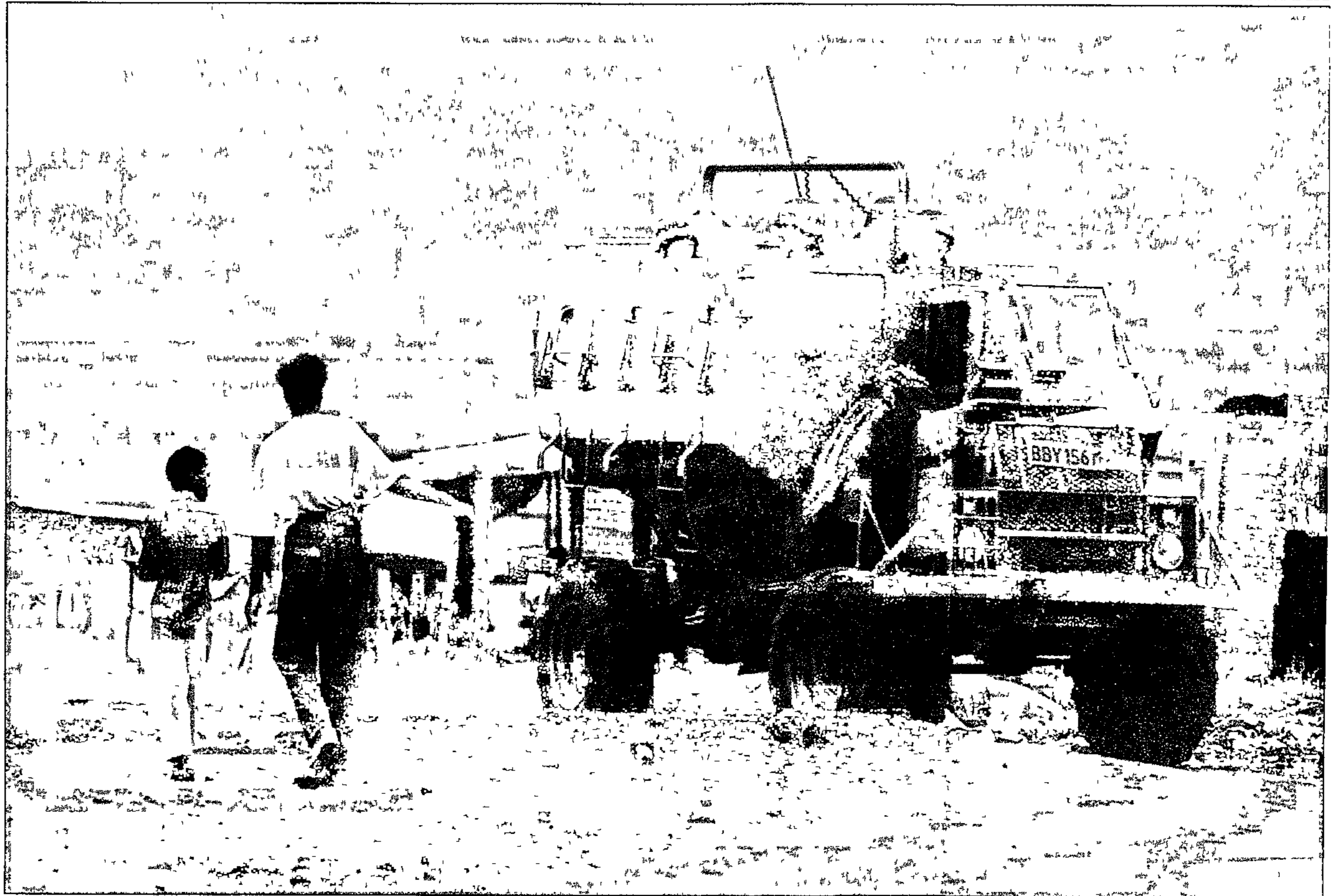
He said the armed men threatened to shoot the spaza owner, but three of them fled after the owner pretended to pull a gun. The spaza owner grabbed one of the men and slashed him until he died.

After the killing of the Mosotho man, a mob of Sotho, Tswana and Shangaan-speaking men ganged up against Xhosa and Pondo-speaking men.

They first killed the spaza shop owner, sparking off fierce ethnic fighting.

The situation was tense but calm at the squatter camp yesterday.

Dressed in boots and overalls, miners moved from the camp to



On alert ... soldiers in an armoured troop carrier patrol the Freedom Park squatter camp near Rustenburg, following the death of dozens of people at the weekend.

work at the mine, without any incident.

About 200 police and 50 soldiers from the South African National Defence Force have been deployed at the camp and mine.

Police spokesman Captain Belinda Kleynhans could not confirm whether the violence had been sparked by ritual killing.

Wildebeesfontein senior human resources manager Humphrey Olifant said the leaders of the factions had committed themselves to peace and would desist from engaging in clashes.

# Metros run out of time in rates row

Star 12/12/96 (127)

Closing of courts for recess delays

Sandton commercial property owners bid to have budgets set aside

By ANNA COX  
Sandton Bureau

The Eastern and Greater Johannesburg metro councils have until December 23 to respond to the Supreme Court application made by Sandton commercial property owners to have their budgets set aside.

However, the courts are in recess between December 15 and January 15 so the matter cannot be heard at that time.

The property owners, including Liberty Life, Sanlam and Commercial Union, together own property interest with a land value of R1-billion and an aggregate investment value of R4,2-billion.

Under the auspices of the Sandton Chamber of Commerce, they initiated research into the financial implications of the budgets and on their legal status.

They claim, after being briefed on the methods of compiling the budgets by Greater Johannesburg Metro officials, that the budget-making process was defective and therefore the legal validity of the budgets and the rate of 6,45c/R1 was *ultra vires* and void.

In a statement by the property owners, spokesman Dr Chris Westinghouse said the excessive Sandton rates would drive investors away.

He said the increase could not be recovered by an increase in

rentals when renegotiating leases or entering into new ones.

Attempts to do this would result in an exodus of tenants, which would result in a lower return on existing and future investments and consequently have a significant impact on the value of commercial developments.

Rates in Sandton were now much higher than in neighbouring areas, where increases had been substantially lower.

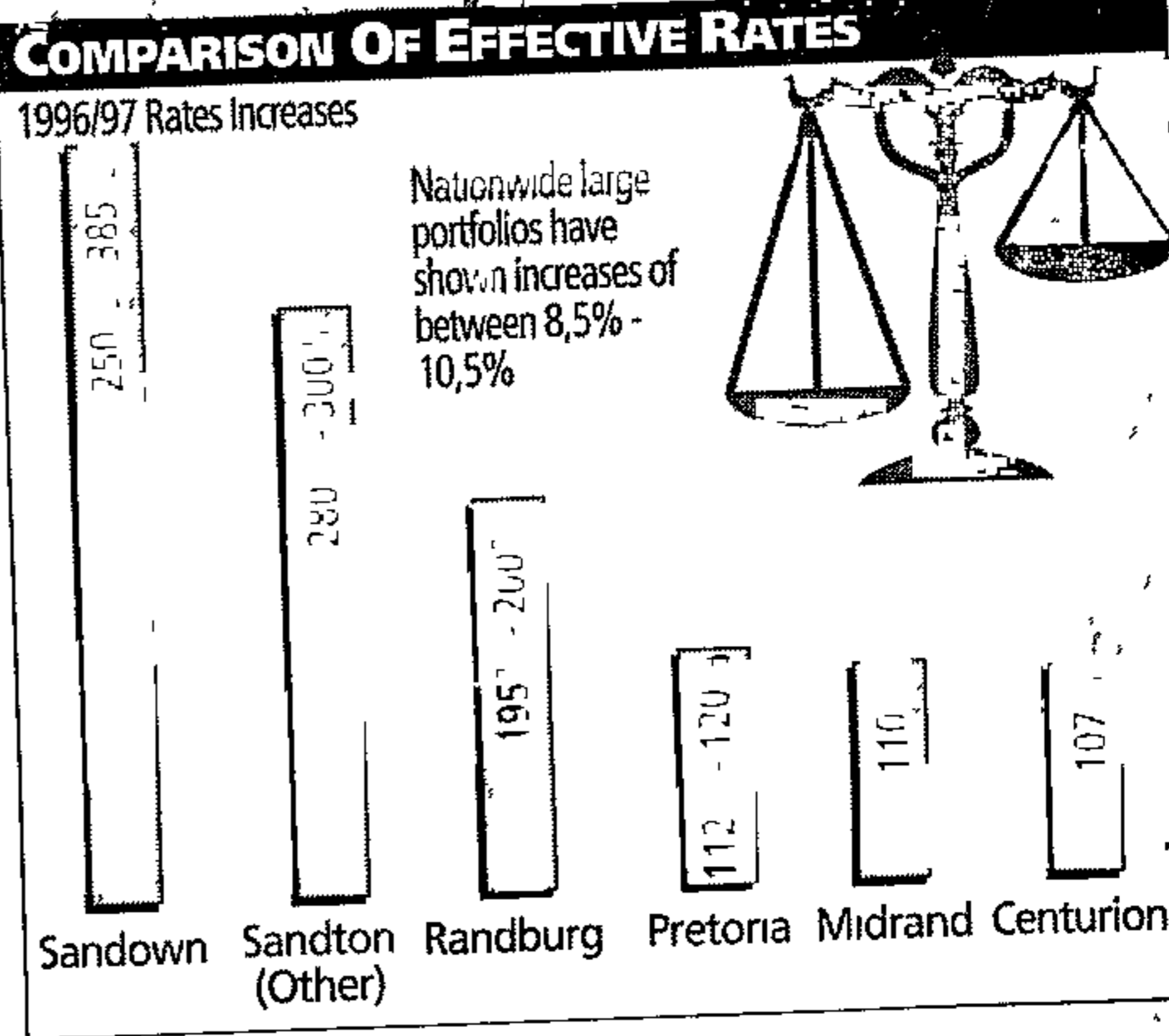
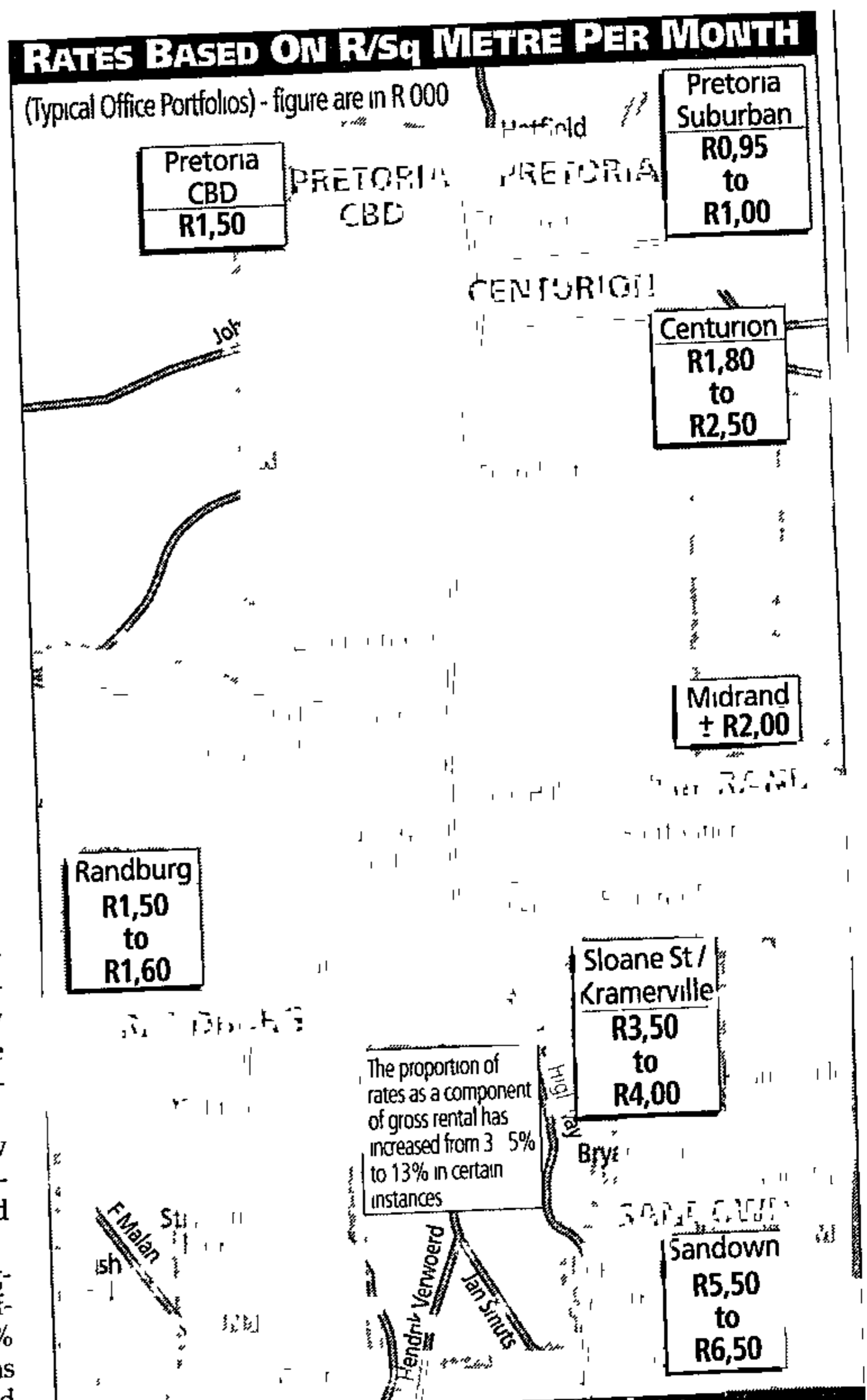
Nationwide, said Westinghouse, the average increase in effective rates was between 8,5% and 10,5%. The net result was that Sandton was being priced out of the property market by excessive rates increases of up to 385%.

Westinghouse said commercial property owners represented investors in the Eastern Metro Council area whose assets were derived from insurance premiums and pension fund contributions from the man-in-the-street.

They therefore represented the interests of a very large constituency across the entire country.

More than 80% of all non-residential property investment was undertaken by life insurers and pension provident funds.

"As their trustee it is our duty to protect their interests and to ensure that they derive optimal returns on those investments."



# Thousand homeless threaten to occupy land

Retrenched miners and domestic workers in Florida are among those affected by Western Metro decisions

**BEATRICE MOTSI**  
City Desk

More than 1 000 homeless people in Florida have threatened to occupy land by force if the Western Metro council (WMSS) continues to go back on its promises to provide them with accommodation

A site in Vlakfontein, southwest of Roodepoort, has been earmarked for a housing project to settle the homeless, and the metro council plans to purchase all the property from the present owners

Charles Holomisa, chairman of the Florida Civic Association, said "Five homeless people died due to the severe cold this year and people need housing"

He said many retrenched mineworkers and domestic workers were unemployed, and lived under railway bridges, in parks and church buildings, adding that he was ready to negotiate to ensure that 150 families were given

alised they had made a mistake they vacated the houses

Holomisa said they, too, were prepared to occupy land and fight evictions

Strike Ralegoma, chairman of the council's executive committee, said: "We have kept an open door for the Florida civic association to come to the WMSS and give suggestions"

He said the council was compiling a housing waiting list and some members of the civic were on the housing list. He said the council was looking for a building to provide temporary accommodation for the unemployed

Ralegoma said the council was still in the process of buying land in Vlakfontein where the 5 000 units were to be built

## Council is compiling a housing waiting list

sites before Christmas

Davidsonville residents on the West Rand recently occupied 19 council houses. They initially threatened to resist attempts to evict them, but when they re-

(127) Star 12/12/96

# Johannesburg council to invest R65m in housing programme

Ingrid Salgado

THE Johannesburg metropolitan council will invest R65m to build houses under its rapid land development programme, topping up Gauteng housing board subsidies by up to R12 250 a housing unit.

The council, which last week approved the new financial scheme, would create a housing company to administer and maintain its housing stock, the council's strategic programmes co-ordinator John Spiropoulos said yesterday.

The company would administer loans from the council and provincial housing board, and could obtain low-cost finance

from the private sector to lend to end users

A housing fund would provide lending guarantees to financial institutions. The council had already started negotiating with banks.

The council's additional investment will give poorer households a minimum house size of 30m<sup>2</sup>, increasing to 60m<sup>2</sup> for those earning more than R1 500 a month. Extensions are permitted.

Initially about 5 500 households will benefit from the scheme.

They form part of communities that will be resettled in five pilot areas — near Lombardy East in the eastern metropolitan sub-structure, Nuhurana and Liefde en Verde in

the south and Bloubostrand and Marocoladal in the north.

The council's planning, urbanisation and environmental management committee chairman, Lindsay Bremner, headed the financial scheme as the most significant resolution passed by the council since its birth a year ago.

The plan would make housing delivery affordable and accessible, and respond to surrounding communities' fears of property devaluation by providing quality housing.

For example, Lombardy East's host community recently withdrew objections to the development in their area partly because of the model.

Spiropoulos said the council would in future inject between R70m and R80m a year into the housing fund.

Its current R65m investment excluded amounts set aside for bulk infrastructure. In terms of loan structures, tenants would pay up to 25% of their monthly disposable income.

The council's loan per unit included electricity charges, rates and an administration fee. The housing company would collect rental and repay loans to financial institutions on behalf of tenants.

Houses would be partly owned by the council, which would charge a form of rental with a view to purchasing

Tenants were able to buy out the council's share in their homes at any stage and could sell through the open market.

A mixture of housing, including cluster developments, would cater for different income groups.

The council did not wish to create "low-income housing ghettos", Spiropoulos said. The overriding plan was to intensify use of existing infrastructure and land, and provide housing close to places of work.

The council could not estimate when houses in the pilot projects would be ready. Although discussions in the Lombardy East area were far advanced and construction could begin by the new year, sites

(127) PD 12/12/96

in the southern substructure still faced legal obstacles.

Bremner hoped those opposed to projects in the south would soften their attitudes as the process unfolded.

Spiropoulos said tenders for construction in each area would be invited as soon as agreement was reached between all parties and bulk infrastructure was in place.

He said the council had obtained a commitment from Gauteng's housing board to direct subsidies through the new housing company.

It was possible that a new subsidiary regime would allow the council to access R15 000 per housing unit across the board.

# Scheme to get low-cost homes accepted in suburbs

Star 12/12/96 (127)

Lombardy East residents accept Rapid Land Development Programme after reassurances from council; other areas in south and north still negotiating about their fears

By **KARIN SCHIMKE**  
City Editor

The Johannesburg Metro Council has devised a scheme to develop the five areas identified in the Rapid Land Development Programme (RLDP) for low-cost housing in a way that will not affect property values, as has been feared by home-owners in the areas.

At least one community has already agreed to the proposal and the council is hoping that residents of the other affected suburbs will be won over to the scheme.

Residents of Lombardy East in the Eastern metro council recently decided not to appeal against the decision to go ahead with the RLDP development in their suburb, after lengthy explanations of what the development would actually entail.

Residents of Naturena and Liefde-en-Vrede in the south and Bloubostrand and Maroeladal in the north, however, are still busy negotiating.

Most of the residents of these five suburbs objected to plans to move people living in crisis areas (like on flood plans, in seriously over-crowded conditions or on

dolomitic land) to their suburbs, on the argument that their property values would be severely and adversely affected.

There were concerns about informal houses being built on unserviced land and about increased crime and traffic.

The initial idea was to first move the people to designated

“**Not only will property values be stable, they will increase**”

areas and to then install infrastructure, but this changed.

Councillor Lindsay Bremner of the council's planning, urbanisation and environmental management committee, yesterday announced the council had approved an investment of R65-million into housing for RLDP in Greater Johannesburg.

The money would be used mainly to set up a housing company to administer and maintain the housing stock.

“Regarding property values, we feel confident that in the long run, not only will property values be stable, but they will increase in value. We don't want to see a drop in property values but cannot continue to put poor people in places far away from infrastructures,” she said.

The R65-million that will be invested by the council will be an extra amount over and above the national housing subsidies.

The houses – of which there are several models that residents can build on to – will be built to “an acceptable minimum size and quality”.

A housing company is to be established to administer and maintain the housing stock and set up on-site housing support centres to help residents with extensions and improvements.

In terms of Johannesburg's RLDP, about 5 500 houses are to be built according to this scheme.

Time frames depend on when and whether agreements are reached between the councils, residents and the beneficiary communities.

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# Objections over low-cost housing

(127) Sametran 13/12/196

By Joshua Raboroko

THE GAUTENG provincial government and the Johannesburg Metropolitan Council have identified five areas for the Rapid Land Development Programme for low-cost housing in the wake of fears by home-owners that their properties will be devalued.

These areas are Lombardy East, Naturena, Liefde-en-Vrede, Bloubosrand and Maroeladal, where residents have objected to squatters near their houses.

Most of the residents in the suburbs have argued that their properties would be affected severely by the building of informal houses on unserviced land.

They were also concerned that the crime rate would soar.

GJTMC urbanisation and planning executive Mrs Lindsay Bremmer yesterday said the council had approved R65-million for the programme in the city.

The money would be over and above the subsidies from the Government.

It would be invested into a housing company to administer and maintain stock. It was envisaged that 5 500 low-cost houses would be built next year.

Residents of Lombardy East have decided not to appeal against the decision to go ahead with the programme after lengthy talks.

## Devalue properties

Residents of Naturena, Liefde-en-Vrede, Bloubosrand and Maroeladal were continuing talks with the council following fears that the building of low-cost houses in their area would devalue their properties.

Gauteng MEC for development planning Mr Sicelo Shiceka said the move was an indication that the Government was serious in its attempts to stamp out the problem of housing shortages.



# flares at Thokoza

M+G 13-19/12/96

(127)

The evictions taking place in Thokoza have resulted in the IFP threatening to destabilise Gauteng. **Stuart Hess reports**

**E**VICTIONS in the East Rand township of Thokoza are being hampered as people evicted earlier this week are returning to the houses

No action has yet been taken against them, but there is a discernible tension in the township. The police and army are patrolling the area in strength.

Some journalists were stoned on Wednesday but no one was hurt. Inkatha Freedom Party provincial leader Themba Khoza sent out messages on pagers falsely claiming that the police had killed residents and that bodies were lying in the streets.

Ten of the 16 residents evicted by the police on Wednesday moved back to the houses the next morning. Meanwhile, the Alberton town council is continuing with further evictions in other areas of the township.

IFP leader in Thokoza, Siphon Sithole, demanded that the council immediately stop evicting residents.

The tension in Thokoza is being exacerbated by former African National Congress-aligned Self-Defence Unit (SDU) members who are assisting the town council with the evictions, said an officer from the local police station who refused to be named.

"Some of the men who are evicting people are reservists who belonged to the SDUs," he said.

He said the IFP was unhappy about the reservists evicting residents because "they favoured the ANC." Prior to the general elections in 1994, the SDUs were known to be aligned to the ANC, while the IFP was supported by the Self-Protection Units (SPUs).

IFP members — supported by former SPU members — clashed with police amid the continuing evictions in the township this week. Three people, including IFP youth league leader Thabani Dlamini, were arrested and charged with assault



**Homeless: Evicted Thokoza residents say the police, manipulated by the ANC, are 'making people angry'**  
PHOTOGRAPH SIDDIQUE DAVIDS

after a group of nearly 200 IFP supporters tried to stop the evictions.

The Alberton Town Council began on November 28 to evict residents staying illegally in houses. According to the council, more than 500 families are to be evicted. "Those people forced the real owners out of their homes and have lived there since 1993," said council representative Themba Maluleka.

"They attacked the legal residents and forced them out of their homes, they should go back to where they came from," he added.

Maluleka said the former residents were presently staying in squatter camps outside the township and plans were in place to return them to their homes.

"About 100 families have already been evicted. We would love to complete the evictions by Christmas, but the current problems we are experiencing means that will probably have to change," said Maluleka.

Negotiations regarding the illegal occupation of homes had been taking place for almost two years, he said. Evictions would definitely continue regardless of the negotiations with the IFP, which were still continuing up to early this week.

People evicted this week said they had no idea why the council was removing them from "their homes"

One said: "This is basically a war against the IFP."

"We have stayed here a long time and everything was peaceful, the police are only making people angry and more violence will occur," said Simons Shongwe, who was evicted this week.

**H**e was one of six residents at Dube Street told to vacate their houses. He said he did not know what to do with his belongings which were left in the front garden.

Shongwe said he moved into the house because nobody was living in it at the time. "The house was empty, my family needed a place to stay. Nobody gave us any trouble until the police came here today."

Shongwe wants the government to provide him with another house. He said he would stay with neighbours or possibly build his own shack.

The IFP this week threatened to destabilise the province of Gauteng. "The ANC are using the police to get their revenge on us," said Sithole. "The ANC accused the IFP of working with the police in 1992 and 1993, now they are using the police to enforce their authority."

"They [the ANC] could not get rid of the Zulus in 1993 but now that they are in power they want to assassinate IFP leaders," Sithole said.

The IFP had never denied that people occupied houses illegally, but believed the government's current action was "outrageous".

# Alexandra land claims could hold up new housing

(127) Mar 13/12/96

Conflict drove people away and others occupied their homes

By ANNA COX  
Sandton Bureau

**L**and restitution claims in the Beirut area of Alexandra could delay plans for the re-development of the area

Planning of the area, now known as the reconstruction area, is to start next month by consultants appointed by the Eastern Metro Council.

However, if land restitution claims by people displaced from the area due to violence in 1992 are not settled, construction work will not be able to start, said urban planning and development manager Eric Saunders.

The area formed a buffer zone between the IFP-aligned hostels and greater Alexandra during violence. ANC supporters living in the area were forced to flee their homes which were then taken

over by others. Of the 661 displaced families about 22 have already lodged claims for the return of their properties.

There have also been claims on the land on which the hostels are built.

Many of these displaced families have been living in overcrowded and appalling conditions in recreation and church halls, and municipal buildings.

Most will be relocated to land in Lombardy East in terms of the rapid land development programme - a local authority project to house people living in desperate conditions.

Saunders said that if the claims of the displaced in the RCA were validated, no development could take place on that land. The council, however, had formed the RCA Consultative Forum and would be looking at offering claimants

compensation or alternative land. Consultants will start the special planning for the RCA next month and it is expected to be complete by the end of February.

Although definite development plans had not been made for the RCA, medium-density developments with light industry and commercial developments were being looked at. The two hostels for men would be integrated into the long-term planning.

"Although people are fully entitled to the restitution of their land, the claims could block development from which the entire community would benefit.

"We are looking at finding a way around the restitution also because of practical problems in restituting properties which have been divided up and dwellings having been built across site boundaries," he said.

# IFP illegal occupants retake houses at night

(127) Star 13/12/90

## Inkatha initiated legal moves yesterday to get evictions suspended pending outcome of interdict against council

By MIKE MASIPA

The IFP claims to have introduced "eviction by day, re-occupation by night" tactics in its campaign against the court order won by the Alberton Town Council to evict illegal occupants of houses in the Phenduka section of Tokoza on the East Rand.

IFP MP Themba Khoza said yesterday that illegal occupants were moving back into the houses as soon as police and council officers had disappeared round the corner.

The Star witnessed several instances which confirmed his claim people moved back into houses less than an hour after they had been evicted by men from the sheriff's office who are protected by police.

However, some did wait until nightfall to reoccupy houses they had taken over from the rightful occupants who had fled political violence in the early 1990s.

Khoza commended the police's behaviour yesterday, saying it showed a marked improvement from Wednesday, when police clashed with protesters.

He said the IFP had initiated legal moves yesterday to get the evictions suspended pending the outcome of an application for an interdict against the council.

He said the party had already written to the council to notify it of the legal action.

The sheriff of the court, Johan Gertzen, said there was nothing he could do about people reoccupying the houses at night. He said his job was only to carry out the eviction order.

After that the police had to deal with those who reoccupied the houses because then it became a case of trespassing.

Gertzen said a total of 65 evictions had been carried out since the whole operation began two weeks ago.

This leaves Gertzen with another 235 houses to evacuate in a

section in the neighbourhood of Khumalo Street, which was notorious for its high levels of political violence in the early 1990s.

Gertzen said the evictions would shift to other sections of Tokoza in a bid to clear the 600 houses believed to be illegally occupied throughout the township.

Police confirmed that there were no incidents recorded during yesterday's evictions, which saw 18 more houses being evacuated.

Absent from the proceedings yesterday were heavily armed thugs, who have been demonstrating against the evictions since the sheriff first entered the large township.

Khoza, however, said his party leaders had not abandoned their efforts to get the evictions stopped.

He said that there was a swelling display of sympathy across Gauteng, evidence of which was a march in Zonk'Zizwe in KwaThema, Springs.



Not parting with teddy ... a young woman hangs on to a valued toy as police and council workers move in to evict families from occupied houses in Tokoza yesterday.

# Sandton body to take legal action

## Over valuations

By Anna Cox  
13/12/96  
Sandton Bureau

The Eastern Metro Council faces another court action early next year from the Sandton Federation of Ratepayers over the valuation of properties in the suburb.

Sandton spokesman Brian Stolzenberg said the task team set by Gauteng MEC for Local Government Sisoelo Shuceka had found that there were inconsistencies in the valuations of properties but had recommended that the Valuations Board be used to rectify this. Sandton however would not accept this and was insisting that a whole new supplementary valuation take place, said Stolzenberg.

"Our investigations revealed many anomalies and inconsistencies. The valuations were supposed to have been done equally throughout greater Johannesburg but we have proof that they were not."

"The basis of the budget was that all valuations were done in the same manner. We will exercise our constitutional rights to enforce a supplementary valuation," he said. Sandton chairman Peter Hartman also said the proposals tabled by Sandton had not been given serious consideration and that the task group had not made progress on the substantive matters.

# Gauteng's medical staff get ready to deal with abortions

## MEDICAL CORRESPONDENT

The Christmas holidays are proving a headache for Gauteng health officials rushing to have clinic nurses and doctors at about 20 hospitals, ready to implement the Choice on Termination of Pregnancy Act in just eight weeks' time.

The Department of Health announced on Wednesday that President Mandela had signed the abortion Bill, considered one of the most liberal in the world, into law. It will come into effect on February 1.

"The time line is very short. But we can't say to women in need that we aren't ready, so go and have your baby," said Gauteng's Chief Director of Health Programmes Dr Carol Marshall.

Women will be asked to go to their local primary health care clinic for diagnosis, information and counselling on contraception, but the termination will be performed by the doctors in hospitals, she said.

The list of hospitals performing the abortions would be finalised on Wednesday. Meetings have been held with primary care nurses and further discussions will take place with hospital superintendents next week.

Marshall said there was no clear estimate of what the demand would be. The department would be producing leaflets for the clinics, which explain the patient's rights, the procedure and list hospitals which would perform the abortion.

Terminations up to 12 weeks would be carried out by a dual therapy: women would first be given a tablet to start the process, and would return as an outpatient the following day for a 10-minute manual vacuum aspiration (MVA), under light sedation and anaesthetic by a doctor, with an attendant to support the patient.

MVA involved inserting a catheter attached to a special syringe into the cervix. The syringe creates a vacuum as the plunger is pulled back causing the foetus to be sucked out. Termination from 12 to 20 weeks was a more significant in-patient procedure under anaesthetic. Patients would again be given medication to start the process and doctors would then do a surgical curettage, Marshall said.

# No holidays again for Johannesburg's fire, ambulance, police and traffic officials

Johannesburgers not leaving the city this festive season should note that on four public holidays, services will not be performed.

On the Day of Reconciliation (December 16), Christmas Day (December 25), the Day of Goodwill (December 26) and New Year's Day (January 1) administrative and non-emergency services will not be available.

The fire, police, ambulance and traffic departments will be operating around the clock. Buses will run according to the weekend timetable.

Handy holiday numbers:  
 ■ Greater Johannesburg Metro Council Emergency Numbers: 24-hour complaints hotline 403-2626 or 403-3226, Ambulance: 999 or 10177 (24 hours a day) or

484-1616/7, Fire 624-2800.  
 ■ Sandton/Alexandra, Crisis Control Centre 883-2800, Ambulance/Traffic department 882-8914/33 or Alexandra 440-1231  
 ■ Roodepoort, Ambulance/Fire/Rescue 999/672-6605/472-3570  
 ■ Randburg, Ambulance and Fire 999/789-1111/2  
 ■ The Khayalarni Metro Council

area: Kempton Park/Tembisa Council, Fire Brigade/Ambulance 999 or 975-1111, Traffic/Security/Police 394-2233  
 ■ Greater Midrand Council, Complaints hotline (General enquiries number) 313-7783, Emergency Control Centre 805-3121  
 ■ Edenvalle Council Emergency crisis centre 999/452-1111; General enquiries 609-8700.

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## FOUR THE RECORD

The Madam & Eve competition grid supplied to The Star by the organisers and published on Wednesday was incorrect. They apologise to readers for the inconvenience. The correct grid appears today on Page 10.

# IFP pulls out of RDP projects on East Rand in protest at evictions

BY NEWTON KANHHEMA

The Inkatha Freedom Party has suspended its participation in all Reconstruction and Development Programme and presidential projects on the East Rand in protest against the eviction of members illegally occupying houses belonging mainly to ANC supporters who fled the violence of the early '90s.

However, the ANC has vowed to continue the evictions, intending to clear the area by Christmas Day.

"The IFP can exercise its democratic right to apply for an interdict but we will oppose that application," said local ANC leader and Alberton council executive committee chairman Louis Sebege.

IFP leaders were behaving irresponsibly and were dragging their membership into trouble

with the law, he said

"We have laid criminal charges against all those who have gone back into the houses they were occupying before they were evicted by the sheriff. We are not laying any criminal charges against the IFP but against illegal occupants, so they must advise their members correctly."

IFP leaders in Phenduka section were patrolling the area last night, considering their next move in the wake of the arrest of two members who returned to the houses from which they had been evicted.

Local IFP leader Siphiso Sithole said, "We know the ANC is in power. Let them do what they like. If they want to evict us or kill us, let it be so. How can you tell people that we are working with the government and yet the same government harasses them?" The party, in an applica-

tion for an interdict lodged yesterday, had asked for a moratorium on evictions until alternative accommodation had been found, he said.

The IFP's provincial organising secretary, Thabang Dhlamini, said the party would suspend its participation in RDP and presidential projects until it was satisfied that the ANC had come up with a compromise.

IFP leader Themba Khoza said last night that this was a form of protest.

Members would also launch mass action, which would include marches, he said.

Meanwhile, Sapa reports that the Gauteng departments of land affairs and housing and of safety and security said yesterday they fully endorsed the Tokoza evictions.



STAKING A CLAIM: Beatrice Tangiting exchanges words with a youth occupying her Tokoza home

PHOTOGRAPH TJ LEMON

## ◆ Evictions

A joint statement by the departments appealed to the community to co-operate with the Alberton council and security forces to ensure that the evictions proceeded smoothly.

Safety and Security MEC Jessie Duarte and Housing and Land Affairs MEC Dan Mofokeng appealed to the community to desist from behaviour that could lead to confrontation. Anybody who moved back into a house after being evicted would be charged with trespass. The evictions did not continue yesterday, but council spokesman Themba Maluleke said this did not mean they had been postponed indefinitely.

The occupants of at least 65 houses had been evicted since November 28. On Thursday at least 18 houses were cleared by sheriff Johan Gerzen with the help of police and security force members. Many of the people evicted moved back that night.

(127) Star 14/12/96

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# Building hopes for delivery of low-cost housing scheme

(127) Star 18/12/1986

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## Ratepayers want to avoid creation of another Ivory Park

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**By HOPEWELL RADEBE**  
City Desk

**D**elivery of low-cost housing for the homeless in the Khayalami Metropolitan area will improve next year provided disputes between the council and ratepayers can be resolved.

Mayor Isaac Mahlangu said the housing backlog was massive. He said R19-million had already been spent in Tembisa, and the provincial government had ap-

proved funds for the development of the Winnie Mandela squatter camp and the completion of Operation Mayibuye housing programme in Midrand.

But the Mayibuye project came to a halt after a Supreme Court interdict was sought by Midrand ratepayers in September.

Mahlangu said R15-million had already been spent on the project, which is aimed at settling about 1 800 families.

The ratepayers also invited an architect to draw an alternative plan of proper low-cost housing.

They hoped their alternative would help maintain their property values and avert the council's plan of providing only serviced sites without proper structures.

Consultant Geof Richardson said "We want to avoid the creation of another shack town like Ivory Park." They regarded the council's scheme as "yet another creation of a squatter camp."

# Pretoria city council plans survey to beat nonpayment

Stephané Bothma

PRETORIA — The city council has started a R250 000 research project aimed at assuring residents that their monthly municipal accounts are based on accurate water and electricity meter readings.

The Human Sciences Research Council and the SA Bureau of Standards, as independent institutions, had been requested by the council to conduct research on the problems experienced with the nonpayment of services accounts, a council marketing and communication directorate spokesman said yesterday.

"The aim of the phased research, to be done from January over a period of six months, is to determine the accuracy of meter readings and to assure residents through scientifically reliable research that their monthly accounts are accurate," he said.

Although an agreement had been

reached that the community would pay for services such as water and electricity on the basis of actual consumption as opposed to flat-rate payments, a number of residents still did not pay.

"Some residents perceive the accounts as not being realistic in terms of their household usage and they place the blame for high accounts on either the perceived inaccuracy of the meters or the meter-reading process."

Some residents had no complaints about the accuracy of the readings, but refused to pay for other reasons. These included a culture of nonpayment, unemployment, lack of a nearby pay-point or the assumption that the council was not geared to take action against them, the spokesman said.

"The council is convinced that this survey, which cost R250 000, will ensure that any possible irregularities are corrected and perceptions of residents changed in a positive way towards paying for council services."

