

CONCLUSION

During the later 1940s both the state and capital became concerned about their inability to control the process of African proletarianization in Durban. The African proletariat was becoming more politically assertive. Along with a proletarian populism came struggles in which Africans tried to gain material and political advantage in an industrializing city that they were determined to make their home. Alongside city-wide conflicts came the development of the Mkhumbane shantytown society. Not only did this area constitute an ever present health threat. It was clearly apparent that the very growth of Mkhumbane was a form of resistance and assertion on the part of Africans in the city. Furthermore, the Mkhumbane shacklands became the central arena for an alternate African proletarian culture. This political culture was inimical to the interests of both the state and capital.

The state and capital were aware of the pressing nature of these issues, but this did not produce immediate consensus on how the situation could be transformed. Issues such as proletarianization, the conditions of waged employment, working-class housing and characteristics of the local industrial and commercial economy led to tensions within the state and capital over key features of the new broad policy which parties accepted as being essential.

As this new policy developed it became clear that both state and capital were attempting to restructure African working-class life and wage labour in Durban in ways which were directly linked to a projected path of economic growth. The class differentiation already apparent within the African proletariat could be sharpened, but in ways according with the interests of the state and capital. The local African labour force could be divided into migrant workers employed in more casualized and unskilled capacities whilst workers permanently resident in the city would move into more semi-skilled employment. Along with increased productivity would come higher African wages. A refashioned African working class living in the city would thus be able to afford the costs of new improved township housing. Furthermore increased African wages would result in those increased levels of consumer spending which local capital saw as the key to future economic growth.

As against the demands of the African proletariat to acquire the right to own land in the city, township housing would be on a non-freehold basis. Although the proletariat would be housed in the city, these townships should be built in areas on the periphery of Durban and adjacent to African reserve areas. As city residence rather than employment in Durban was and is the basis for political power in South African cities, the question of future African political power in Durban could thus easily be swept away through excising African residential areas from the city and their incorporation into African homelands.

However the linkages perceived by the state and capital between restructuring African labour and residence in Durban and future economic growth was often contradictory. Durban's industrial and commercial economy was not to grow significantly until later in the 1960s. Although the new pass law and labour bureau system was designed to both restrict African entry to the city and further enhance class distinctions among the

city's African labour force, local economic conditions and characteristics within the local labour market exerted a determining influence over the success of restructuring policies.

Yet through their very attempts to change the nature of African proletarianization, African waged employment in Durban and the destruction of shackland life and the removal of shack-residents to Kwa Mashu and then Umlazi, came changes in the nature of African politics in the city. Resistance to established authority and struggles for future gain became inter-linked in new and important ways. Although the African shantytown residents believed that through the riots of 1949 they had managed to gain control over shackland society, the weakness of the militant proletarian populism of the later 1940s was soon apparent. The municipality was easily able to acquire authority in the shacklands. Similarly, militant co-operatives waned while all attempts to alter African access to increased commercial and political power never made any substantial progress. The city had not been taken. But from the decline of proletarian populism came the emergence of a new trading class in the shacklands of Mkhumbane. Acquiring increased material wealth and politically ambitious, it was these entrepreneurs who were often the militant populist leaders of the later 1940s. Aligning themselves with the ANC, they acquired growing political power in Mkhumbane.






With the establishment of this trading class and changes over African access to the city and wage labour, changes developed in shack life. The already fragile shantytown economy was strained to breaking point. As access to profits derived from petty commodity production and exchange in Mkhumbane declined, so divisions emerged within the Mkhumbane proletariat. Within the Mkhumbane working class came a new interest in forms of trade unionism and a quest for a refashioned working class consciousness. These struggles took the working class out of merely a focus on residential life in into city politics but in ways different from the proletarian politics of the later 1940s. But these changes were in many ways limited by both the constraints of life in the shantytown, the perceived burdens of future life in Kwa Mashu and thus a need to resist all attempts to destroy Mkhumbane. Future struggles and present resistance were linked in contradictory ways.

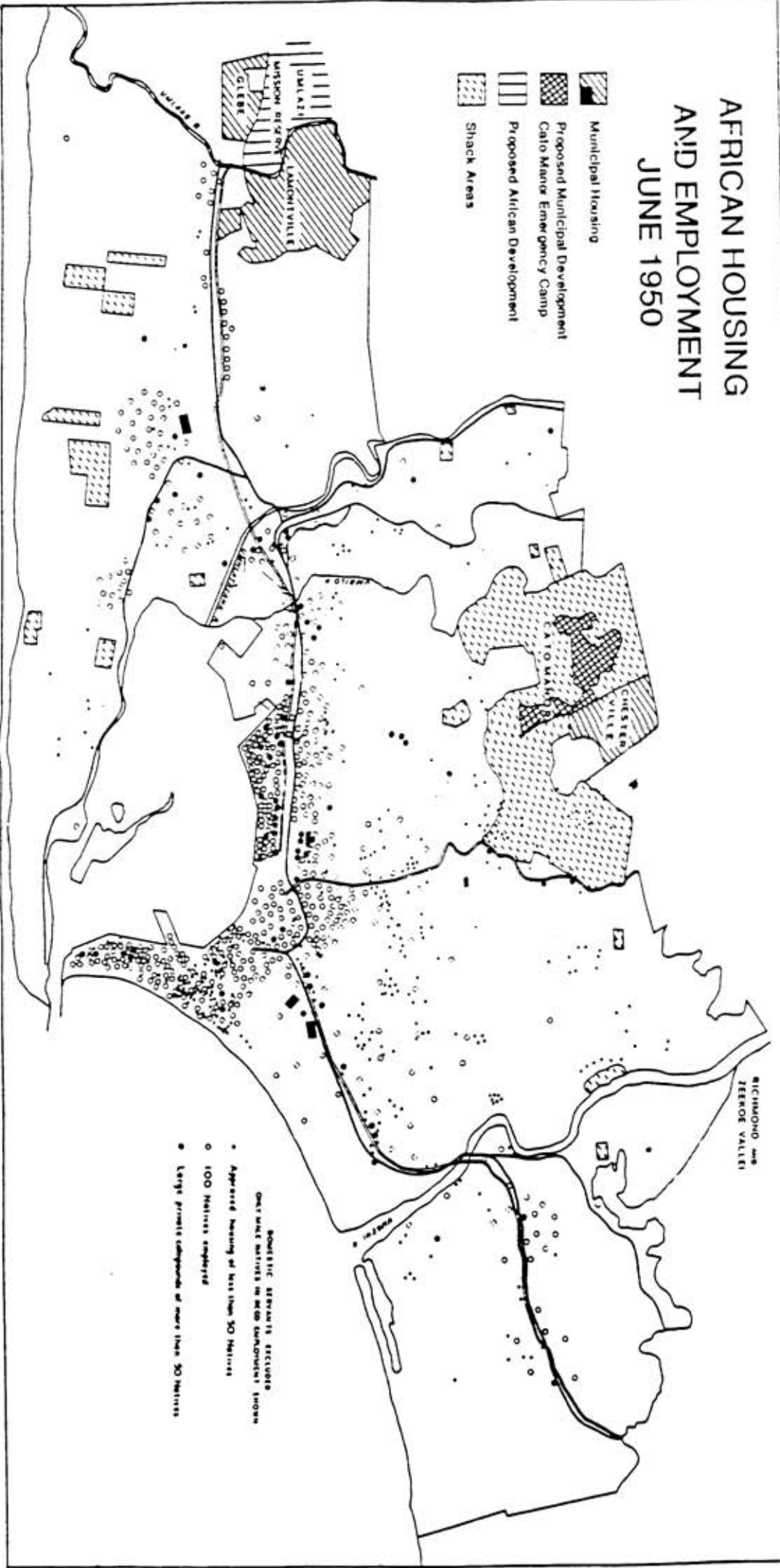
These complexities increased with the removal to Kwa Mashu. During the course of removals and resettlement shack residents went into the ANC and SACTU, both of which were to secure an increasing membership within Kwa Mashu. As the relocation of shack-dwellers to Kwa Mashu was to alter struggles between capital, the state and labour, so politics in Kwa Mashu altered. From the late 1950s onwards, township politics was to be fashioned by the various contradictory relationships between political and trade union bodies and residents, an ever more established trading class gaining increased influence within officially recognized local power structures and other forms of civic politics and the ambiguities within proletarian and working class perceptions of city life and struggle.

Maps

1. Durban, 1950
2. African Housing and Employment, June 1950
3. Industrial Durban, circa 1950
4. Pattern of Bantu New Towns and Related Industrial Areas, June 1966.

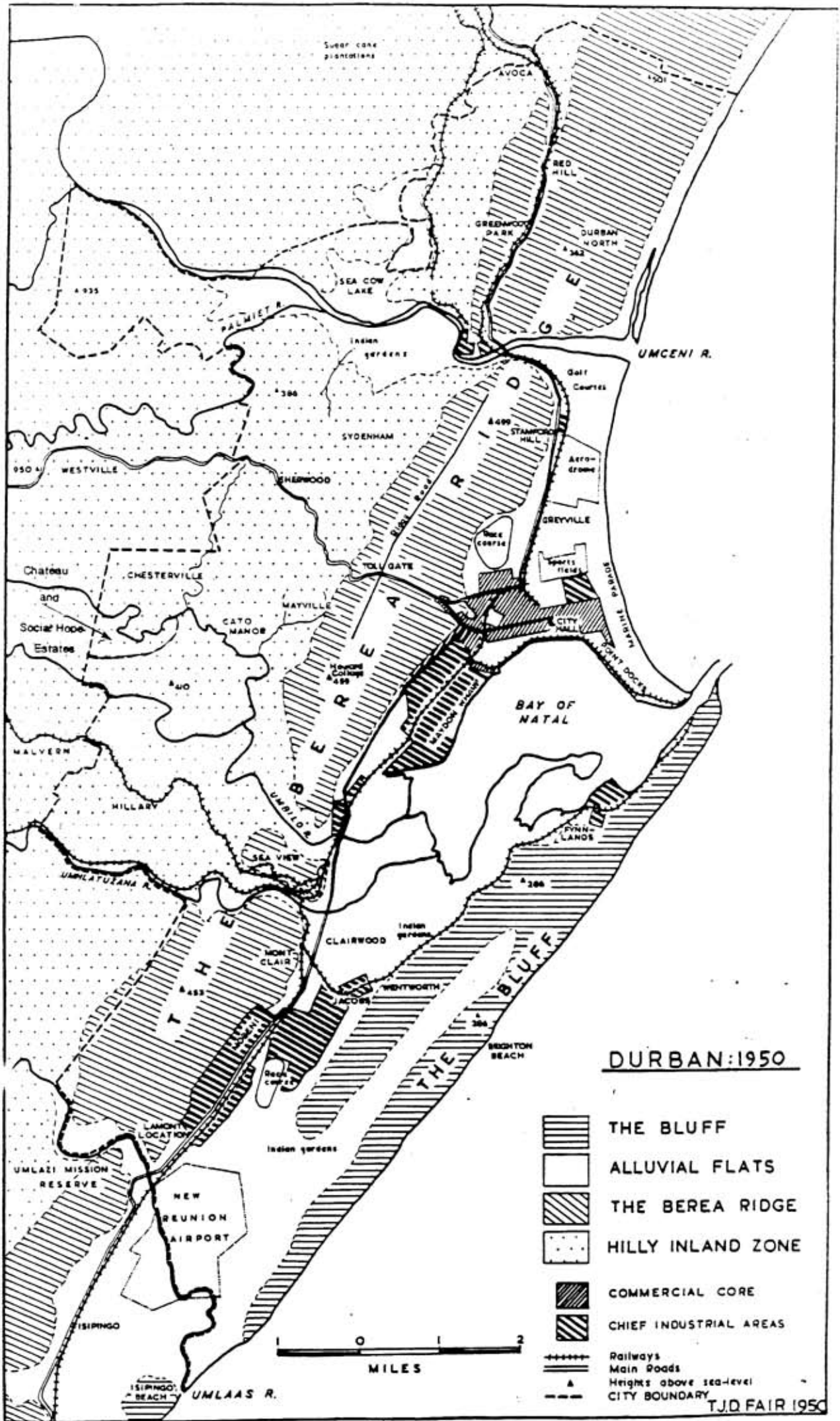
AFRICAN HOUSING AND EMPLOYMENT JUNE 1950

-  Municipal Housing
-  Proposed Municipal Development
-  Cato Manor Emergency Camp
-  Proposed African Development
-  Shack Areas



DOMESTIC SERVANTS RESIDUES
 ONLY WHITE NATIVES IN RED ENCLOSURE SHOWN

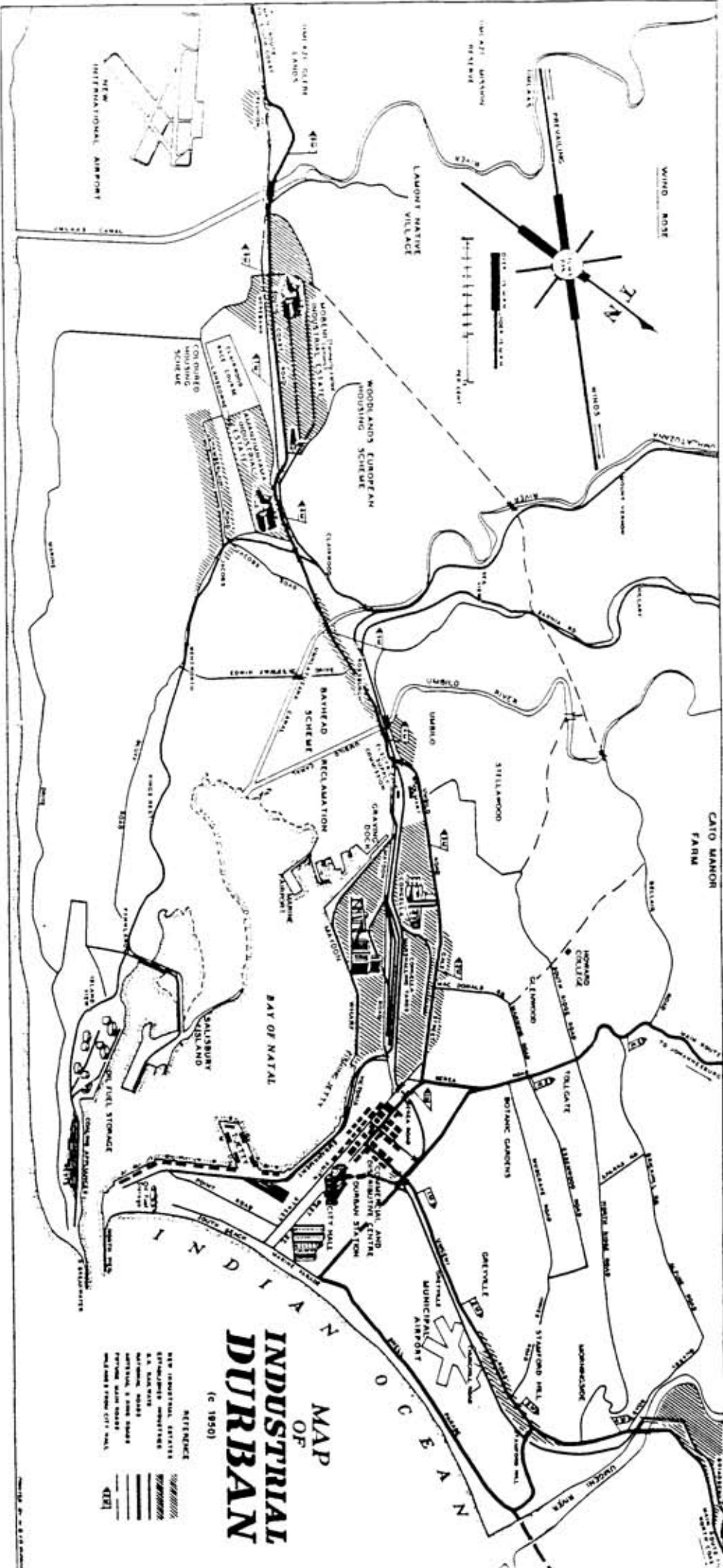
- Appressed housing of less than 50 Natives
- 100 Natives employed
- Large premises compounds of more than 50 Natives



DURBAN: 1950

-  THE BLUFF
-  ALLUVIAL FLATS
-  THE BERE A RIDGE
-  HILLY INLAND ZONE
-  COMMERCIAL CORE
-  CHIEF INDUSTRIAL AREAS
-  Railways
-  Main Roads
-  Heights above sea-level
-  CITY BOUNDARY

0 1 2
MILES



MAP OF INDUSTRIAL DURBAN

(c 1950)

REFERENCE

- NEW INDUSTRIAL SITES
- EXISTING INDUSTRIAL SITES
- RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT
- RECREATIONAL SITES
- INDUSTRIAL ZONE
- PORTLAND CEMENT ZONE
- RAILWAYS & TRAMWAYS





NOTATION

- BANTU NEW TOWNS STONE AREA
- ▭ PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT TO 1967
- ▭ EXISTING INDUSTRIAL AREAS
- ▭ EXISTENTIAL INDUSTRIAL AREAS

PATTERN OF BANTU NEW TOWNS AND RELATED INDUSTRIAL AREAS

BANTU HOUSING INVESTIGATION
JUNE 1964

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