# Relocations:



The Churches' report on forced removals in South Africa

*"Everybody has died. My man has gone and died, as have my daughters. They took my land away. The Lord has also gone, yes, I suppose he has also gone."*

Maria Zotwana
Elu khanyweni

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# Introduction

The removal and relocation of people in South Africa is a process so destructive of people and communities that it challenges us to action. Removals continue to take place on an immense scale, while the manner in which particular removals are carried out usually causes great suffering. This tragic process affects the lives of each one of us in some way.

For this reason we, leaders of Christian churches in South Africa, address this report in the first instance to everyone who lives in our country. If we remained silent we would betray our responsibility to God and his people. Secondly, we address Christians outside South Africa. We want the whole human family to know how division and suffering are inflicted upon the people of our land. For whatever injures one sector of humanity injures humankind as a whole.

As our starting point we recognise that God has created the world and sustains it, and that he is the true owner of the earth and its resources. At the beginning of Psalm 24 we read:

> The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it,
> the world and those who dwell therein.
> For it was he who founded it upon the seas and
> planted it firm upon the waters beneath.

Drawing upon this living biblical conviction, we hold that the land on which we live and depend for our sustenance in South Africa does not ultimately belong to any single person or any particular group of people. Instead, it has been entrusted to our care as stewards for us in meeting the needs of all. We are responsible to God for the way we use the fruits and resources of the earth to provide for all his people.

This perspective provides the basic orientation for this report, in which we try to understand and assess those features of the South African economic and political systems which cause so many people to be removed from their homes and relocated elsewhere. We begin by looking at the reality of removals: how three particular communities are affected, and the nature and extent of removals throughout South Africa. But in order to understand the whole removals policy, and not just express our outrage at some of its results, we need to examine its historical development and the purposes which it serves. We are then able to discern how the removal and relocation of people fits into the whole Bantustan[1] policy. Following upon this overall picture of the nature,

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origin and consequences of forced removals, comes a theological assessment of where this policy is taking us, and finally our conclusions.

[1] *Bantustan : Reserve; Homeland; Nation State.*

These are the terms which have been applied by Government officials at various stages of South African history to the areas set aside for Africans. "Reserve" was the earliest term used. Since 1948 "Reserve" has been superseded by "Bantustan" until 1959, then by "Homeland" and currently by "Nation State" to mark the different stages in the evolution of the Apartheid policy.

In this report "Bantustan" has been used generally to denote the 10 African reserve areas now named Ciskei, Transkei, KwaZulu, Kangwane, Qwa-Qwa, Bophuthatswana, KwaNdebele, Lebowa, Gazankulu and Venda. However none of the various terms are really satisfactory.

"Reserve" suggests a traditional agricultural sector which no longer exists. These areas are often "Homelands" of those given "citizenship" or relocated in them. They do not have the popular legitimacy to be called "Nation States". Therefore we have used the term "Bantustan".

CHAPTER 1

# Forced removals and relocation in South Africa

# The harsh reality: three case studies

## A removal takes place: the Mfengu of the Eastern Cape

Between November 1977 and January 1978, four hundred Mfengu families were forcibly moved 200 miles to the Ciskei. The Mfengu (Fingo) had lived in the Tsitsikama area near Humansdorp since 1835. They had been granted land rights by the Cape Colonial administration. Most of this land was given the status of a 'reserve' in 1958. Some agricultural 'betterment'[1] schemes were introduced by the government in the 1950's. Yet in April 1975 a parliamentary committee on 'homeland consolidation' recommended that they be moved. In May the House of Assembly adopted this recommendation. This meant the Mfengu would be moved to a relocation area in the Ciskei.

After this parliamentary decision, one community member reported:**"Some Ciskeian Cabinet Ministers told us to leave. They said we have our own place in the Ciskei, a land of plenty."**

A meeting was called for those agreeing to move. Fifty people turned up. These were offered agricultural land in the Ciskei. But most of the Tsitsikama people refused to move.

On 12th September 1976, the "State President issued an order for the removal . . . At the same time an order went out to the South African police to arrest and detain any person who refrained or refused to move."[2] Next month, a magistrate and a Bantu Administration official convened a meeting. The people were told the date of the move would be 15th November 1977. At this meeting the officials did not allow the removal to be questioned.

Over the next year the people tried to resist:

**"We attended meetings that were held and we pledged never to go to a place unknown to us."[3]**

But the removal squads arrived on 15th November as promised. The removals took place over two months. The community tried to fight the removals in court, but failed. In the end, resistance failed.

**"We tried to stay. But an official commanded his messengers to demolish our houses. Then we were evicted at gunpoint."**

[1] "Betterment" involved the division of all areas into separate residential, grazing and arable areas.
[2] *The Surplus People Project*, Vol 2, p.253.
[3] ibid, p. 253.

The SPP says: "During this period the police often arrived while the people were still asleep, surrounded their houses, forced them from their homes and shunted them onto buses and trucks early in the morning."[4]

An affidavit describes how one man accompanied the police to his house but refused to hand over his house keys, which would enable them to move him and his effects, because his children were at school and his wife was not at home. He alleges the door to his house was broken down by the police and his belongings damaged in the removal.

How were they transported?

**"We were brought on overloaded buses with children, and men were on GG trucks with furniture."**

They arrived at their relocation camp in the Ciskei: Elukhanyweni. They faced a series of shocks. They were given either tents or poor houses. A young construction worker describes his family's new house:

**"It's not a house, man. It's not even a pigsty. Two rooms — for eleven people. Do they think we are animals? We need privacy too, man, even if we are black."[5]**

Also, "Before the move, it seems, they were promised equivalent land, but the great majority ended up with just a house plot."[6]

No one was compensated for land or for unreaped crops. In addition during the process of removal people lost their animals or had to sell them at ridiculously low prices to white farmers. Stock brought to the Ciskei generally died or was stolen.

Poverty in Elukhanyweni is extensive. Indicators of this poverty are well documented by the S.P.P.[7] In conclusion, "the Humansdorp Elukhanyweni removal has condemned a community to a state where there is less land, and fewer jobs, lower wages, poorer diets."[8]

An old lady, Maria Zotwana, describes her situation thus:

**"We had no choice; the guns were behind us, then they bring us to this sad place. Here there is not enough food. I am hungry now, as I am sitting here. Everybody has died. My man has gone and died, as have my daughters. They took my land away. The Lord has also gone, yes, I suppose He has also gone."[9]**

[4] ibid, p. 257.
[5] *Star* 14/6/83, "All the Fingos want to do is go back home."
[6] SPP 2, p.258
[7] SPP Vol. 2, pp.247-281.
[8] SPP Vol 2, p.277.
[9] *Star* 14/6/83, ibid.

# A community under threat: Driefontein in the South Eastern Transvaal

"The government has already decided about the removal of Driefontein. They are not going to negotiate any further on the matter. It is finished." This was said by Mr Prinsloo of the Department of Cooperation and Development at a meeting with the Driefontein villagers on 19th March 1983. A man who had emerged as the main community leader replied:

**"That means the Government is now forcing us to move from this place. If the Government is not accepting any negotiation with us then we don't accept. The community is not accepting it. Thank you."**[10]

Two weeks later on Easter Saturday, this community leader, Mr Saul Mkhize, was shot dead by a member of the South African Police.

## Driefontein — a community

Driefontein is a small rural area in the south-eastern Transvaal, the home of 5 000 or more African people. It was bought by Africans before the 1913 Land Act was passed. It was freehold property to be held in perpetuity by the buyers and their heirs.[11]

Conditions in Driefontein are not ideal; many men have to become migrants to provide a reasonable income for their families. "None the less, crops are grown, making for a healthier diet; health conditions are good; wattle plantations provide fuel, in short supply or non-existent in many rural areas; houses and huts are well cared for; three schools exist, as well as 14 churches."[12]

There are about 200-300 landowners. The rest are either migrants or tenants on the landowner's land, or unemployed. There have been various community initiatives towards their common welfare: they built a clinic[13] and they "elected a community board to keep out trespassers and petty criminals."[14]

Driefontein related well to the surrounding white farms "until the mid-60's when some white farmers complained of competition for farm labour. Driefontein farmers offered workers accommodation and a bit of land to plough".[15] Families who thus became self-sufficient no longer needed to sell their labour cheaply to white farmers.

So though Driefontein is not prosperous, it would seem to be a community worth supporting and developing.

[10] *Cape Times*, 6/4/83.
[11] *Work in Progress* (WIP) 27, p. 27.
[12] ibid.
[13] SPP Vol. 5, p.192.
[14] *New York Times*, 6/3/83.
[15] SPP Vol. 5, p.192.

## The State against the people

The Government sees areas such Driefontein as 'black spots',[16] since they are an obstacle to the Bantustan policy, with its idea of distinct national 'homelands.'

The Government has advanced various reasons why the people of Driefontein must be relocated. These have included the following:

— Nearby white farmers were angry that Driefontein competed for farm labour.

— Driefontein is 'badly situated', and there is a need for 'homeland' consolidation.

—, The Heyshope dam, to be built on the Assegai river, would flood part of Driefontein. (In fact less than one third would be flooded.)[17]

The Government decided to act against Driefontein in 1965. The first steps were for people to number their homes, and householders to register their names. People took this to be a measure to improve postal deliveries.[18] The Government had twice in 1968 and 1975 sent a message to the Driefontein Community Board (DCB) that the removal would take place. But there was a lack of consultation — most people did not take the threat seriously.

Then in April 1981 the S.A. Development Trust notified the DCB that it intended to remove the people. After a while the DCB decided to go along with this. By mid-1982 about 500 people had moved 'voluntarily'.[19] In early 1982 the DCB also encouraged people to sign acceptance of the removal. The Department of Cooperation and Development had threatened that if people did not sign, they would not get any compensation for the removal.

Apart from threats, the Government used a variety of pressures to induce people to move. Some reported that "since people refused to move, the males can no longer get jobs on the mines" and "the magistrate refused to use people from Driefontein on the dam"[20]. The Government also offered to take people by bus to show them their relocation site at Lochiel. This offer was refused.[21] In August 1982 the Department of Cooperation and Development offered to give all landowners compensatory land — not only those with more than 20 hectare (ha), as is the rule.

This last strategy — to split the landowners from the rest of the people —seems largely to have failed.

In November 1982, under the watch of riot police a number of people designated 'Swazis' were taken to Lochiel in KaNgwane (the Government may still try to hand over KaNgwane to Swaziland). Then a number of 'Zulus' were taken to Babanango in Natal.

[16] See page 19.
[17] WIP 27, p.28.
[18] WIP 27, p.27
[19] SPP Vol. 5, p.189.
[20] SPP Vol. 5, p.192.
[21] Ibid, p.193.

The conflict intensified. In December resistance was consolidated through the election of a Council Board of Directors of Driefontein, chaired by Saul Mkhize. This council was elected by both landlords and tenants. Saul Mkhize had been writing to Dr Koornhof since 1981 to plead for proper consultation.

The Government marked the community graves, to prepare for exhumation. The people rubbed off the markings.

Police harassment increased. In February 1983 Mkhize's son was assaulted by people who identified themselves as police.

In March and April there were large meetings rejecting removal. At the second of these Mkhize was shot dead. The police claim the crowd had become riotous. Other accounts say that Mkhize offered to be arrested, and that the police were in no danger. 2 000 people attended Mkhize's funeral when he was buried in Driefontein. Many organisations opposed to Apartheid were represented.[22]

The bulk of Driefontein's people have not yet been moved. However, they can expect the Government to continue on their set course once the publicity has subsided.

## Relocation looms

People have been told that if they move, they will "get tents for six months and in that time they should build their houses." But

**"There are many old people who cannot build for themselves. They don't have sons and daughters to build for them. The people come back from Johannesburg when they are old."[23]**

Even if the Government does give landowners equivalent land area in the Bantustan, the tenants will be dumped in 'closer settlements'[24] where they cannot farm. They will have to sell their livestock. The landowners also do not want to move. As Saul Mkhize said to the *New York Times*:

**"Would they move white people in this way — by buses to barren land!"[25]**

[22] Much of this account from WIP. 27, article on Driefontein, which in turn uses the Black Sash 1983 conference document on Driefontein.

[23] *New York Times*, 6/3/83.

[24] A 'closer settlement' is a type of settlement established for African people on Reserve or Trust Land for residential puposes only. No agricultural land is attached. The facilities are far more rudimentary than those in a township, usually a communal water supply and latrines. Temporary accommodation only is provided. People moved from 'Black Spots' and white farms are usually accommodated in closer settlements.

[25] *New York Times*, 6/3/83.

# Onverwacht : creation of a rural slum in the eastern Orange Free State

Onverwacht, with a population estimated at 200 000, is the largest relocation area in the country. This total is expected to reach half a million. Onverwacht is situated in the Orange Free State, near Thaba'Nchu.

Onverwacht's first inhabitants arrived in June, 1979, after protests from Qwa Qwa about the harassment of Southern Sotho residents in the Kromdraai squatter area near Thaba 'Nchu in Bophuthatswana. Kromdraai was an illegal squatter settlement housing some 38 000 people, mostly Southern Sotho-speakers. During the 70s they had been driven by sheer desperation to build shacks in the area, as they had nowhere else to go; they had been endorsed out of the Orange Free State towns or been evicted from Free State farms, or had left these farms of their own accord because of the intolerable conditions and starvation wages. They were not welcomed by the Bophuthatswana authorities who frequently raided the area and demanded R40 or R60 fines. Children who were not Tswanas were not allowed to attend schools in Bophuthatswana.

**"My father was paid R5 a month on the farm plus mealie meal and sugar. He had worked there for a very long time and we were all born on the farm, then we decided to leave. We sold all our livestock and went to Kromdraai. There life was bad. We were subjected to arrest almost every day by the YB (Bophuthatswana) police. The fine was R60 for no offence at all. Our only crime was living in Kromdraai without a permit." — A** member of the Potsoane family.[26]

An agreement which had been arrived at on 7 February, 1977, by Bophuthatswana (prior to 'independence'), by Qwa Qwa and by the South African Government, was then put into effect. In the terms of this agreement that part of the Bophuthatswana as yet unfulfilled land quota, situated in the Cape and Transvaal, would be retained by the S.A. Government but transferred to the Orange Free State to enable the Government to make this additional land available to Qwa Qwa.[27]

Farms near Thaba 'Nchu were thus acquired from the white farmers and Southern Sotho people were moved to the rocky barren veld where their plots were marked by tin toilets. They were provided with tents for three months while they constructed their houses.

All three parties stood to gain from the agreement. Qwa Qwa, the South Sotho homeland, stood to increase its power and area when it gained Onverwacht; Bophuthatswana was rid of thousands of non-Tswana squatters who refused to take out Bophuthatswana citizenship (Kromdraai was razed to the ground at the end of 1979 and most of its former inhabitants removed to

[26] D. Shange, unpublished research.
[27] Ibid

Onverwacht); and the S.A. Government took a futher step in creating compact ethnic areas in accordance with the apartheid policy.

Other inhabitants of Onverwacht have come from Orange Free State farms and towns and from the Witwatersrand and Vereeniging areas where they had no permits and no accommodation. The relocation area is laid out in sections, presently numbering eight. The sites are 30m by 15m in size. In the beginning all structures were hurriedly put up — tents, shacks, schools, a clinic, toilets and taps.

Many Southern Sotho-speakers came to Onverwacht believing that they were moving to a 'promised land' after their bondage on Free State farms or to escape harassment by Bophuthatswana authorities. Many people moved on the understanding that they could take their cattle with them, only to find that the plots were totally inadequate for livestock farming. They were forced to sell their cattle.

**"It is not that they don't see that they cannot have cattle in Onverwacht. They can see that through their own eyes. Experience has taught them that you cannot feed an ox with clay. They can see that the place is narrow and is becoming more and more crowded as people rush in. They cannot expect it to expand."** — Mr Rama Bodie, Minister of Interior, Qwa-Qwa Government, 1980.

There are very few employment opportunities in Onverwacht, so most people are forced to commute to Thaba 'Nchu (approximately 10kms away) or to Bloemfontein (60kms away) if they are lucky enough to find work in either of these places. The unemployment rate is very high.

Equally high is the infant mortality rate. After the first year of habitation children's graves exceeded those of adults in the cemetry. Schooling and health facilities are totally inadequate. Double sessions are held in the schools to cope with the number of children. For the whole relocation area there is one polyclinic. Most of the money earned is spent in Bloemfontein or in Thaba 'Nchu.

# An analysis of removals and relocation

These three case studies are representative of the vast removals programme. However, only by looking at the pattern of removals as a whole do the reasons for this programme become clear.

## The numbers affected

These typical cases depict the human aspect of forced removal and relocation. But it is the scale of the programme which makes it so grave a concern. So far about 3,5 million people have been removed. (This includes those

**Table 1**

## Total numbers removed or under threat of removal, in South Africa, between 1960 and 1982:

| | Removed | Under threat |
|---|---|---|
| Cape | | |
|     E. Cape | 401 000 | 477 000 |
|     W. Cape | 32 000 + 385 000 Group areas removals in Cape, end 1980 | Not Available + 36 000 Group Areas removals |
| O.F.S. | 514 000 | Not available |
| Natal | 745 500 | 622 000 |
| Transvaal | 1 295 400 | 605 500 |
| Totals | 3 372 900 | 1 740 500+ |

Source: Surplus People Project, Vol I p 8.

moved more than once.) This is larger than the forced migration of various Soviet peoples imposed by Stalin. Nazi deportations during World War II reached about 7 million: twice South Africa's present total. Though an estimated 2 million are still to be removed in South Africa (see Table 1). The Atlantic slave trade shipped about 20 million people.[28]

The process of forced removals and relocations, which has accelerated since the early 1960s, has brought the Apartheid dream of ten independent Black nation-states close to realization, although in the eyes of the state the map is still very 'untidy', since there are over seventy blocks of land distributed amongst the ten Bantustans.

The vast majority of relocated persons are Africans, but approximately 600 000 people of other race groups have had to move in terms of the Group Areas Act (See Table 3).

[28] *Encyclopaedia Brittannica*, 15th edition, Vol 12, pp. 186-7.

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# Reasons for removals

What reasons can motivate such a cynical and uncaring programme, on so vast a scale?

Many of the reasons for forced removals stem from South Africa's history, one in which the blacks have been dispossessed amidst the economic growth of the country. Chapter Two will provide a fuller historical account, while here we offer some preliminary reflections on the underlying causes.

## Economic reasons

Human greed is a powerful motivating factor. In the contemporary world money and property are increasingly accumulated in fewer and fewer hands. If producers are to succeed in constantly increasing their wealth, they must at least equal, if not eliminate, any competitors. A docile and subjugated work force, as well as the adoption of increasingly sophisticated technology, helps producers gain an edge over their competitors. Anyone who wishes to accumulate wealth is forced to fit into this economic system. Although this system may bring about social progress, so long as there are sufficient checks and balances to restrain individuals' profit-seeking, it is not 'designed' to do so. On the contrary, it is designed to produce larger and larger amounts of money in a few hands.

The economic expansion of South Africa has followed this system, with various enterprises — mines, industries and farms — seeking high profits for themselves and trying to eliminate competition. Removals have come as a direct consequence. For instance, in the 19th century Whites most often seized land held by Africans for economic gain. The scope of white ownership was increased by the 1913 Land Act, which prevented Black people acquiring new land. Legislation prevents Black people from being real economic competitors in 'White' areas. Their present role in these areas is to serve White-controlled economic interests. Otherwise, if the White economy does not require them, they become 'surplus' and so liable for removal. The Group Areas Act similarly prevents effective Coloured and Indian competition with Whites.

The modernization of the economy has led to increased removals, especially from the farms as mechanisation has lessened the demand for labour (See Farm Removals p.19). Urban employment opportunities are no longer growing so fast; again, due to more capital-intensive production. So the economy produces a 'surplus' population, which is dealt with by removal. Furthermore, removing people elsewhere avoids the responsibility and expense of caring for their maintenance and welfare.

## Political Reasons

Political democracy has always been regarded as a threat to the power of the

minority white population in South Africa. Furthermore, power-sharing on a political level would lead to economic sharing. To prevent this the state has always legislated to exclude Black people from political participation. The Bantustan policy is a means of preventing power-sharing, ostensibly by giving Africans 'political rights' in their own states. This policy also serves to direct opposition away from the central government. The new constitution of South Africa, approved by parliament and the White referendum in 1983, totally excludes Africans; it does not offer any channels for them gradually to participate in the processes of government in South Africa.

The aim of controlling the Black population leads to the policy of having as few Blacks as possible in White areas. Therefore families or individuals whose labour is not required are removed from the 86 percent of South Africa set aside for White occupation. Strict population control and continued White domination of South Africa outside the Bantustans has the support of most of the White minority group. Since the government aims to keep and increase its political support among the White electorate, the erection of Bantustans and removing people to them is a suitable political policy.

## Ideological reasons

An ideology is derived from an unquestioned set of attitudes and ideas which indicate and justify a particular line of action that is favourable to the person or group holding the ideology. Certain prevalent ideologies held by White South Africans encourage and justify the removal and relocation of other South Africans.

The first such ideology is White racism, which using spurious biological and anthropological theories, together with a falsified view of history, regards White domination as normal. It shows itself in a permanently aggressive (or fearful) attitude towards other races. It has led to many White people having no feeling for the rights, the sufferings and the potential of Black people. To them it seems acceptable that Blacks be wrenched away from their homes and dumped elsewhere.

Another ideology is unrestricted capitalism, which views all forms of 'modernization', wealth accumulation and economic growth as good, no matter what effect they have on other people. According to this ideology the function of workers is to sell their labour to employers; apart from that the workers are unimportant. Unemployment caused by mechanization is not considered a problem, except where it threatens security in the White areas. It is regarded as a problem only for the unemployed.

'Afrikaner nationalism' is another ideology used to justify removals. Since its victory in 1948 the National Party has used its power to ensure the survival of the Afrikaner nation at all cost. It has sought to maintain the racial 'purity' of the White people and the preservation of the chief symbols of the Afrikaans language and heritage. It emphasizes how the Afrikaners are a threatened people, requiring elaborate strategies based on the apartheid philosophy for

their survival. One such strategy is the forced removal of people whose presence is regarded as a threat. Their removal is justified as necessary for 'preserving the Afrikaner nation'. While no one will deny a people's right to exist, this particular nationalism denies the rights of others and presupposes domination on a racial basis over other peoples. Since this type of nationalism has increasingly come under attack, in reaction it has committed itself to developing a National Security State. The ideology of National Security regards the preservation of the state as the highest ideal; any and every means may be used to defend the state and the prevailing social order. Having taken this approach, Afrikaner nationalism does not explore other options for self-preservation. In terms of National Security it regards all its efforts to coerce and manipulate people into accepting the social order it imposes as justified. So long as the erection of Bantustans and the forced removal of people to them strengthens state security, it is regarded as unquestionable.

Afrikaner nationalism as an ideology has thus taken over the injustices of racism, economic and political injustice, inherited from the British colonial period. It now cements these together with unrestricted capitalism and the ideology of National Security. This in summary is the ideological outlook which allows for and appears to justify South Africa's programme of forced removals.

## Forced removals of African people

The largest number of people to have been affected by removals have been Africans. The removals have continued rapidly since 1960 with more than 3 million people becoming victims. The only obstacle has been resistance, in one form or another, from the communities themselves. The delaying, compromising and shelving of the proposed removals in specific areas has in the main depended on how strongly the affected community organised its resistance to the Government's programme. St Wendelin's near Mariannhill and Batlokwa near Pietersburg, are two of the few examples of communities that have strongly resisted and to date have succeeded in their efforts.

It is difficult to estimate exactly who is going to be moved. The latest plans contained in the Van der Walt Commission Report have been kept secret for reasons only the Government knows, although it is suspected that it wishes to prevent the planning of widespread resistance by communities threatened with removal and also to prevent White farmers demanding higher land prices.

People who are removed and relocated fall into various categories, the major ones of which are examined below.

**Table 2**

Estimated numbers removed and under threat of removal, by category 1960-1982
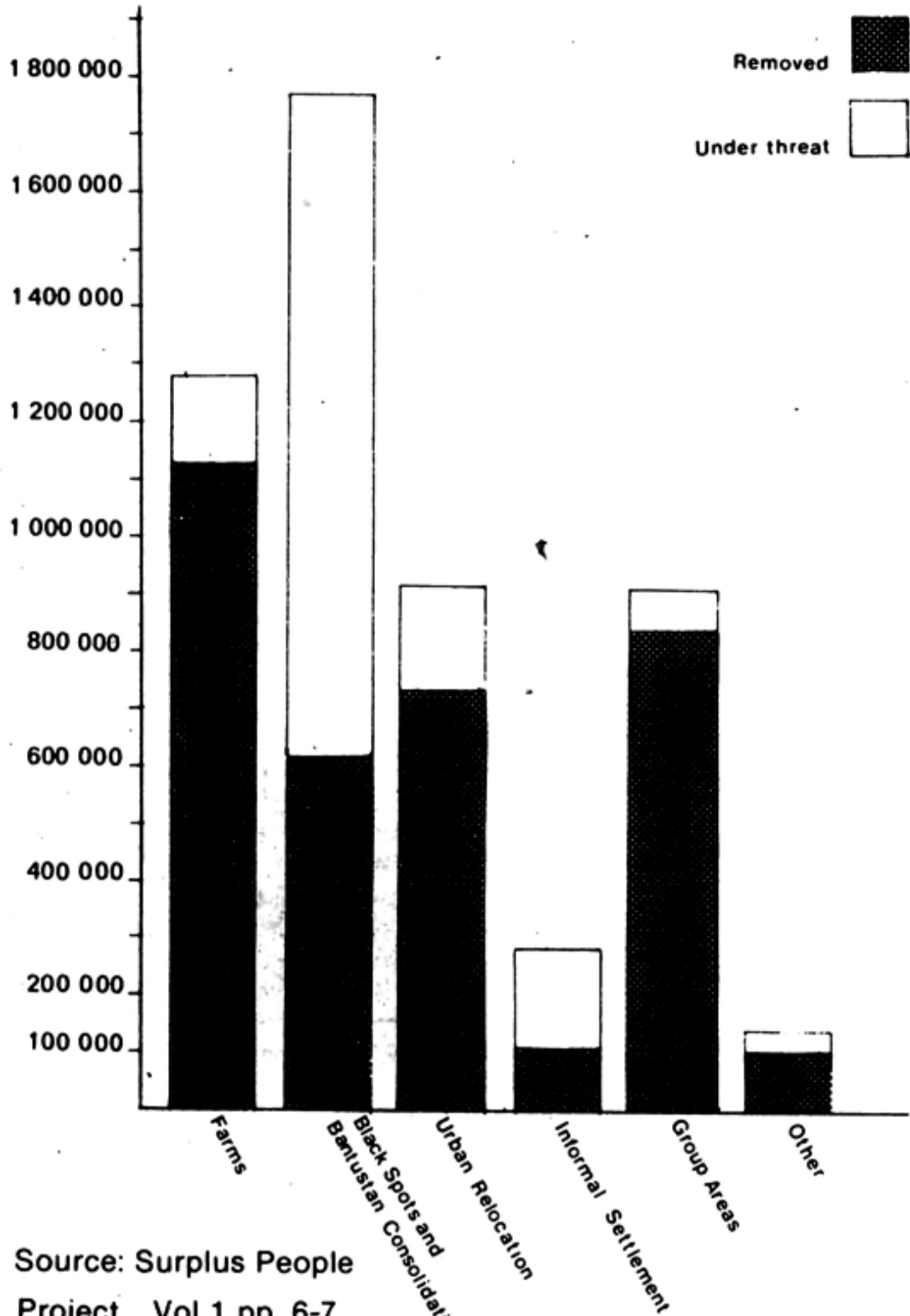


Source: Surplus People
Project   Vol 1 pp. 6-7.

# Categories of removal (See Table 2)

## Black Spot removals
'Black Spots' are those categories of land occupied by Africans but surrounded by White areas, usually farms. These so-called 'Black Spots' are either African freehold land purchased before 1913 or church owned land occupied and used by Africans. The 'Black Spot' is regarded by the Government as a 'badly situated' area occupied by Africans. As it is outside the reserves the inhabitants have to be removed to trust lands destined for incorporation into the Bantustans or to places already within tne Bantustans.

There are still many 'Black Spots'. In Natal alone there are at least 202 still under threat of removal. Among these are the other Driefontein and Matiwane's Kop, whose resistance to removal continues and has been well publicised.

## Urban removals and informal settlements
Many thousands of people have been moved, usually to Bantustans, as a result of the deproclamation and abolition of townships. In the Transvaal alone twenty-two black residential areas have been abolished since 1966.[29] Large numbers of squatters have also been removed from urban areas. Large informal settlements, or 'squatter camps', near the major towns have periodically been eliminated by the authorities. In the Eastern Transvaal people who are legally resident in an urban area, but without urban rights, are currently threatened with removal from the towns. Also in progress are removals of Black people from sites near the cities to other sites further away, but still in the White area. For instance, the whole black population of Cape Town is scheduled for removal to Khayalitsha, 43 kms from the city centre.

Some African townships close to a White town or city have been included within a Bantustan by redrawing the boundaries to include them. In this instance, there is no physical removal of people, but the township residents have lost their Section 10 rights to live within a White urban area. They now become daily commuters from the Bantustan and are thus forced to enter the contract labour system. Such townships have been handed over to the Bantustan authorities. Umlazi, KwaMashu and Ntuzuma in the Durban area, Mdantsane near East London, Madadeni and Osizweni near Newcastle, Esikhawini at Richard's Bay, and Ga-Rankuwa and Mabopane near Pretoria are examples.

## Farm removals
Hundreds of thousands of African people have been removed from white owned farm land as a result of the earlier outlawing of 'sharecroppers' and the more recent abolition of the 'labour tenancy' and 'registered squatter' sys-

[29] Surplus People Project, Vol 5, p.122.

tems. In the process, farmers have either chosen to adopt or been forced to use capital intensive mechanized farming methods. Machines to sow and reap, to thresh, to package and load have been introduced. Chemical sprays have cut down weeding, and automatic feeders reduced labour requirements. All these changes have lessened the need for both regular and seasonal workers, so farmers now employ only a small nucleus of wage labourers. The result is that many people are pushed off the farms. They cannot go to the cities because of the pass laws, so they become targets for relocation. Besides those evicted as the result of redundancy, others have left, being dissatisfied with working conditions, while others have been removed as a result of the 1964 Amendment to the Development Trust and Land Act. Consequently the numbers of those removed from farms since 1960 has swollen enormously.

Squatters (those Africans living illegally on white farms or without the owners' permission) have formed a large proportion of farm removals. Between 1964 and 1969 a total of 34 325 squatters were moved off S.A. farms. The Labour Tenancy system was phased out very quickly after 1964 in both the Transvaal and O.F.S. In Natal however, the system was more entrenched and eviction was more difficult; nevertheless during the 1970s an estimated 300 000 labour tenants were moved off Natal farms, in the process losing their access to land and their means of livelihood.

## Influx Control measures

Only those black people with Section 10 exemptions may live in white cities and towns. The Urban Areas Consolidation Act lays down that no black person may remain in any white town for more than 72 hours unless he or she has lived continuously in that town since birth or has worked continuously in registered employment in one job in the same town for ten full years or has lived with a permit in one town for fifteen full years. These people are usually referred to as 'qualified urban blacks'.[29]

The wives and children of qualified people who reside with them in a black township in a white area are also entitled to Section 10 exemption. This right has been reduced and restricted in terms of the Laws on Co-operation and Development Amendment Act which became law on August 26, 1983.

All other Black people may only remain in towns if they are given a permit to work.

Influx control is being enforced with ever increasing rigidity. The current policy is that available jobs must be offered to urban qualified people. Employers are not allowed to requisition workers from rural and Bantustan areas

[30] In the 1983 "Rikhoto judgement" the Supreme Court ruled that contract workers could qualify as urban residents under the same terms as others. Since 1968 contract workers have had to return to the rural areas each year to renew their contracts. This was aimed at excluding them from eventually qualifying for urban residence. The effect of the judgement will however, be limited due to the introduction of the Orderly Movement Bill in Parliament in 1984.

unless there are no urban people to do the work. As the only legal way for Bantustan residents to obtain work in the white areas is through the requisition/recruitment system, there is ever increasing unemployment in all the Bantustans.

In spite of Dr Koornhof's statement in Washington in 1979 which was in part: **"I detest the dompas. That thing must be ousted totally and completely from my country,"** pass law arrests are on the increase again.

1980: 108 499 arrests for offences related to the production of passes and influx control.

1981: 162 024.

1982: 206 022 (an increase of more than 90% over 1980).

In the same year in which he made that statement, Dr Koornhof increased the fine which can be imposed on the employer of an unregistered black worker from R100 to R500.

In the Orderly Movement Bill, which has been postponed to 1984, the penalties for the offence are raised to R5 000 or 12 months imprisonment.

In the 1983 session of Parliament, legislation was passed which raises the penalty for the offence of trespass from a fine of R50 or three months imprisonment to a fine of R2 000 or two years imprisonment. More than 98 000 people were arrested for trespass in 1982. They are not included in the above figures for pass law arrests. The Trespass Act is used as an additional tool in the armoury of influx law enforcement. People are forced by hunger and poverty in rural areas to move to town. Influx control measures force them back again.

## Bantustan consolidation

The ten separate ethnic areas (that for the Xhosa being futher sub-divided between Transkei and Ciskei Xhosa) are in broken tracts of land. The S.A Government is attempting to create a semblance of acceptability by placing them together in some way. For instance, the approximately 40 pieces of KwaZulu must be 'consolidated' into ten pieces.[31] The process of consolidation involves excising land from one community of Africans and giving it to another, or effecting an exchange of land with a white (farming) community.

## Border adjustments

In the process of consolidating the Bantustans, their borders are redrawn so that one gains while another loses. The Department of Cooperation and Development will expropriate a piece of land formerly under the control of a given Bantustan. The central Government then administers it, pending its being handed over to the new Bantustan administration. This has already been happening with the creation of Kwa Ndebele. An area called Moutse has been excised from Lebowa, and it to be incorporated into Kwa Ndebele. The 76 000 people of Moutse are largely Sepedi speaking and bitterly opposed to being incorporated into Kwa Ndebele, which is destined for 'independence'

31 Surplus People Project, Vol. 4 p.2.

shortly. They do not want to become citizens of an alien Bantustan, and then lose their rights to South African citizenship as well, when Kwa Ndebele becomes 'independent'. (After a meeting with the leaders of the two Bantustans concerned, the central Government left them with the problem it had created of deciding to which Moutse should belong.)

## Strategic considerations

Venda people living along the Limpopo River which forms the border with Zimbabwe and people living along the Natal/Mozambique border have been moved in order to clear areas for S.A. Defence Force border patrols.

The proposed incorporation of the Ingwavuma and KaNgwane areas into Swaziland, so strongly resisted by the people living there, appears to have been motivated partly by strategic considerations. An enlarged pro-Pretoria Swaziland would become a buffer between Natal and Mozambique. At the same time hundreds of thousands of black South Africans would no longer be the responsibility of the South African Government. This matter was still in the hands of the Rumpff Commission when this paper was written.

## Infrastructural demands

In this category people are removed to make way for game reserves and dams. What is noteworthy is that the people affected are:
— not consulted, but simply notified by Government officials;
— not allowed to choose where they wish to go, as is the case when Whites are expropriated;
— not moved to a site close to the new infrastructure, such as a dam, where they could benefit from it;
— but required to move into a distant Bantustan.

It is also evident that because of its generally uncontroversial nature (eg. the country certainly needs dams), removals in this category have been used to hide the real motives. For example, the Kosi Bay game sanctuary in the Mozambique border area of Northern Natal has undoubtedly been extended for strategic purposes; the planned dam in the Driefontein area could have been built in several other places; the Woodstock Dam, near Bergville, necessitated the removal of three Black Spots and Reserve Land. In this last case the people resisted and have remained on farms bought for them in the area — a victory.

# The forces used to remove people

Once the order is given that people must move, various forces can be brought to bear to make sure they comply with it. The following are some of the more obvious methods used.

## Ethnicity

Differences in language and culture are a daily part of South African experience. An Afrikaner and a German belong to different 'ethnic' groups, as do an English person and an Italian, a Xhosa and a Mosotho, a Zulu and an Indian. The Government treats the differences within the 'white' community as unimportant — and this seems to be the correct approach. But for the black community, the Government uses ethnicity as a great divisive factor.

In the process of consolidation, land occupied by mixed ethnic African communities is expropriated by the Government and given to one of the Bantustans. The persons living in the expropriated area who refuse to fall under that particular ethnic government are told that should they want to move from the area, land would be made available in their respective 'ethnic' Bantustans. The mixed ethnic community concerned, who had probably been living peacefully together for decades, not unnaturally start to quarrel over the question of identities and some start moving to their Bantustans.

Examples of areas where this has happend are:

**Thaba Nchu** — where members of the Southern Sotho ethnic group were forced to move to Onverwacht because of harassment by Bophuthatswana officials;

**Winterveld** — Where non-Tswanas are unable to get pensions and have been forced to move to Kwa Ndebele and other homelands;

**St. Wendelin's** — which is presently settled by Zulu people but has been earmarked as an Indian area, in this way aggravating the tensions which sometimes exist between the two communities.

## Landowners pitted against tenants

In some areas, for example Winterveld, landowners on the five or ten hectare plots had allowed tenants to settle on their land for a monthly fee instead of farming the land. The large maiority of tenants were not Tswana citizens and were subsequently declared to be illegal squatters. The landowners are being forced to evict them or else face stiff fines, and in this way they act as Government surrogates in the removal process.

## 'Persuasion'

Frequently people, though they may belong to different ethnic groups, see no reason why they should leave the place where they were born and bred, whether a township, a 'black spot', or a squatter camp. But the government, by a policy of neglect directed towards the settled community and the parallel provision of incentives and facilities within the borders of the nearest Bantustan seeks to persuade them to move. These include the right to buy property, to live permanently in the area, or to have work opportunities in border industries. Other incentives include clinics or school facilities and the right to a pension. People are thus persuaded to move 'voluntarily' to a place allocated to them in the Bantustan by the disparity between their present amenities and what is made available there.

## Insecurity/intimidation

Insecurity is very much related to the force of coercive persuasion. Usually the attempt to stay in one's place of birth is made very risky. In towns people may grow tired of pass raids; in the black spot there may be the threatened loss of all compensation for their houses should they be expropriated and physically forced to move. Individuals and sometimes community leaders are rewarded for moving. The empty shells of houses they leave behind cause uneasiness among those who remain. Town dwellers may be intimidated by the security police or informers. In such situations people or communities are said to 'choose' to leave their accustomed place for that allocated to them. Residents of Driefontein (black spot) near Piet Retief, Huhudi (township) in Vryburg, St Wendelin's near Mariannhill, Kromdraai in Thaba'Nchu, have all felt these forces 'persuading' them to move.

Past experiences have left people with their morale at a low ebb.

**"I had to come here for peace. I was moved this way and that way, slept in the veld, because my pass did not allow me to live there, they said. I am tired . . ."** Thus an old woman in Kwa Ndebele.

## The appointment of co-operative chiefs or headmen

Over and over again in Black Spot removals the people tell of the authorities' recognition of a person as headman who will agree to the removal. Once that has happened, no matter how overwhelmingly the people demonstrate that the man is not their chosen leader, the government negotiates only with him. It claims that the whole group is represented by him and that through him they have agreed to move voluntarily.

## Brute force

Sometimes when the above mentioned incentives fail to lure people to their 'homelands', brute force may be used. This happens in spite of Dr Koornhof's assurances during the Crossroads struggle that force would never be used again. The glaring example of this is what happened to the Nyanga squatters in Cape Town.

# Removals affecting the Coloured and Indian populations

The Group Areas Act No. 41 of 1950 imposed control countrywide over all inter-racial changes in ownership and occupation of property not already governed by the 1913 and 1936 Native Land Acts; it also empowered the state to decide where members of the different racial groups should live and trade; and created machinery to enforce its decisions.

Used in conjunction with the Population Registration Act No 30 of 1950, which classified all people from birth into one of four racial groups, it became a prime instrument of mass uprootal and dispossession of Coloured and Indian people, some Africans and a small number of Whites.

It led to the destruction of Cato Manor, Durban; South End, Port Elizabeth; District Six, Cape Town; Fordsburg, Vrededorp and Pageview, Johannesburg; and countless integrated suburbs and villages throughout the country, and to the creation of dormitory towns or ghettos such as Chatsworth, Newlands East and Phoenix in Durban; Lenasia, Eldorado Park and Ennerdale in the Transvaal; Mitchell's Plain and Atlantis in the Western Cape. The whole new structure of Government in South Africa embodied in the 1983 Constitution Act is based on the Population Registration Act and the Group Areas Act which will inevitably continue to be applied and enforced.

## Historical background

The idea of separate land areas for different race groups has its roots in the 19th century. The 1846/7 Natal Commission for Locating the Natives began the process, with the Boer Republics soon following suit. The policy was extended to Indians in the S.A. Republic (now Transvaal) in 1885, when they were confined to certain town districts only, and in 1891 Indians were totally excluded from the Orange River Colony (now Orange Free State).

In Natal, with its much larger and stronger Indian population (mobilised in the early 20th century by Gandhi) the process was slower: the Durban Land Alienation Ordinance 14 of 1922 and Ordinance 5 of 1923 covering all Natal towns, were restrictive but did not prevent Indian 'penetration'. Fears of the latter, particularly of economic competition, led the Smuts Government to pass the Trading and Occupation of Land (Transvaal and Natal) Act No 35 of 1943, the 'Pegging Act', which controlled and virtually froze property transactions between Whites and Indians for three years. Then came the Asiatic Land Tenure and Indian Representation Act No 28 of 1946, the 'Ghetto Act', which drastically restricted Indian ownership and acquisition of property outside certain specified areas and tampered with their franchise rights.

In the meantime, in 1939, after the Cape Municipal Congress had resolved in favour of segregated residential areas, Prime Minister Hertzog had referred to possible legislation; but Coloured people remained free of such restriction and removal until the Group Areas Act was passed.

Since 1950 the Group Areas Act has been amended several times and consolidated twice (1957 and 1966). In 1962 control passed from the Department of Coloured Affairs to the newly created Department of Community Development, soon to rival the S.A. Bantu Trust as owner of expropriated property and — it might further be claimed — slum landlord of Apartheid's victims.

25

## Extent of removals

By December 31, 1981, 120 000 families comprising almost 600 000 people had been moved.

A total of 4,5 million whites had 866 group areas comprising 774 000ha, 2,6 million Coloured people had 604 group areas comprising 95 000ha and 0,8 million Indians had 274 areas comprising 48 550ha.

A 1976[32] study showed this meant that only 1 in 500 of all white families had been affected by Removals by comparison with 100 of every 500 Coloured and 160 of every 500 Indian families.

With segregation of business districts, Coloured and Indian traders were also disqualified from continuing trade activities, but removals were slower. By 1976 only one third of the 5 078 disqualified Indian traders had been relocated. The consequent uncertainty for those not yet removed has also led to hardship, for example in the Grey Street area of Durban, where certain concessions were announced in June 1983 (perhaps to win support for the new constitution).

Vast sums have been spent on relocating Indian traders in Community Development-owned oriental plazas in Johannesburg and Cape Town, their commercial weakness revealing the triumph of ideology over economic wisdom. District Six (Cape Town) removals and redevelopment have already cost R27 million, plus loss of revenue; and Pageview (Johannesburg), which is to have 660 sub-economic units for whites, will have cost some R36 million.[33]

No wonder one Government commission after another (Theron, Cillie . . .) has found 'The Group' as the Group Areas Act is popularly termed, to be the burning point of bitterness and alienation in Coloured and Indian communities.

## Social disorganisation

In *Urban Relocation and Racial Segregation,*[34] Maasdorp and Pillay have documented and analysed the effect on Indian South Africans, and, in *Outcast Cape Town*[35] Western has exposed at the personal as well as the greater societal level, the destructive effects of insecurity, uprootal, fragmentation and dispersal of closely knit communities, and the crippling effects of existence of the Cape Flats townships. But Western goes further than Maasdorp and Pillay in maintaining that for the Coloured people there was an added trauma in the obliteration of District Six. It was "their space at the foot of Table Mountain (which) was one true source of pride in themselves as a distinguishable ethnic identity." He sees the destruction of District Six as a "humiliation that leaves an aching lacuna in self-concept and self-esteem and a profound and bitter resentment."

[32] Theron Commission Reports.

[33] *Frontline,* December 1982.

[34] G.C. Maasdorp and N. Pillay, *Urban Relocation and Racial Segregation,* Natal University, 1977.

[35] John Western, *Outcast Cape Town,* Human and Rousseau, Cape Town, 1981.

## Table 3

White, Coloured and Indian families, moved under the Group Areas Act until December 1981



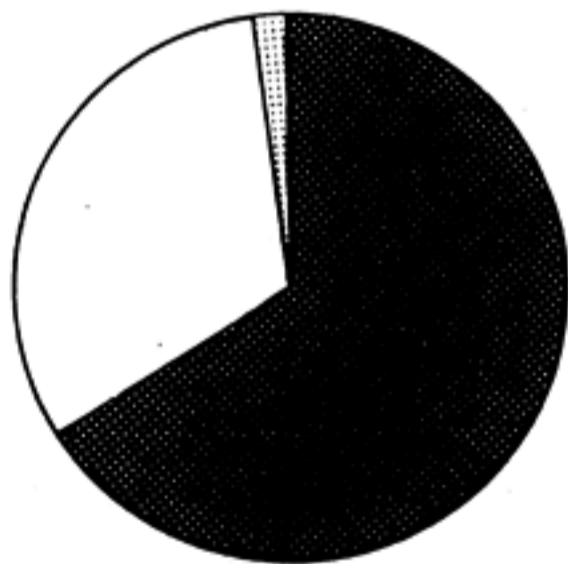**CAPE PROVINCE**
Total: **66 428** families removed

**TRANSVÅAL**
Total: **23 420** families removed  a

**ORANGE FREE STATE**
Total: **2 300** families removed

**NATAL**
Total. **28 639** families removed

■ Coloured

☐ Indian

▨ White

**SOUTH AFRICA**
Total: **120 787** families removed
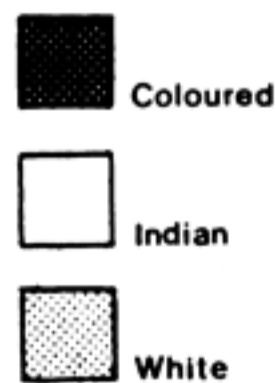
Source: Survey of Race Relations in South Africa, 1982, SAIRR 1982, p. 339.

Western uses the term "ethnic identity" not in the negative and racially exclusive sense found in apartheid ideology, but in a way that is historically affirmative of the mingling of peoples from many lands and cultures and the emergence of a unique South African amalgam in the "Mother City".

Is the real meaning of Group Areas legislation very far from that which Plaatje, Abdurahman and others saw in the 1913 Natives Land Act when they repeatedly described it as "a stealthy war of extermination"?

# The Church and the land

As churches examining our own involvement in the struggle over land (see next chapter), we admit that our witness has had faults. Various dioceses parishes, religious congregations and missionary bodies acquired land with the aim of establishing self-supporting missionary undertakings, and providing schools and hospitals for the people. In many cases they wished to possess land in order to be in a position to subdivide and sell to Christian communities of peasant farmers. These aims were well meant and often productive. But sometimes the church's relations with the broader society in which they were working were too naive. Their concerns were rather inward-looking; they were not critical of the colonial system and often hardly noticed that the land they acquired had only recently been taken by conquest from the people they intended to evangelise.

Often enough, the aims envisaged were not realised and subsequently there were occasions when church bodies showed no sensitivity in dealing with the people living on their land, even evicting them or at least asquiescing in their removal.

This was largely due to the belated development of social concern in the churches, a feature not restricted to South Africa. This also accounts for the slow response of the churches to the many removals carried out by the government and its declaring land to be for the occupation of one race group only. Consequently, although not usually able to prevent these measures, church bodies have not always shown that they stood by the victims. They have remained silent and inert while many Africans were forced to become homeless wanderers.

Most church bodies have been guilty of these faults to some degree. On the other hand, it must be recognised that there have been instances of the church making serious attempts to develop the land for the benefit of both those settled there and the population of neighbouring areas. These efforts and plans are to be warmly commended and others encouraged to emulate them.

## Some facts about church land in Natal
The Natal of the 19th century was one of the most intensely evangelised areas

of Africa. According to the Surplus People Project Report[36]: "This is a subject requiring further investigation . . . because in many instances the churches on whose land these communities are established need to be awakened to their social responsibilities towards them".

Church owned land was of three types. Of these, two still exist — black spots and church farms.

**Mission Reserves** were areas set aside by the colonial government for African occupation under the authority of various churches. The first Mission Reserve was established in 1856. The number increased to nineteen. Twelve were owned by American Board (Congregational Church), four by Lutherans and one each by the Anglican, Catholic and Methodist churches.

The Mission Reserve consisted of a mission station or glebe, usually built on approximately 1 000 ha (often of the best land), plus 12 000 to 16 000 ha of land jointly held in trust by the Mission Board and the Secretary for Native Affairs. The land was used by the local African population and could be sold to individual land owners who in this way attained a good deal of independence from chiefs and other forms of white control. Consequently the colonists and government officials were opposed to Mission Reserves and in the 1890s the system of selling land to individual Africans was stopped. In 1903 by means of the Mission Reserves Act, the Mission Reserves were brought under the control of the Natal Native Trust. The mission stations, however, were allowed to retain their land.

**Mission Black Spots**. Church properties which later became black spots were acquired in two ways:

The churches or mission societies bought the properties on behalf of their African congregations, sometimes with money raised by the congregations for establishing mission communities; or individual Zulu kings or chiefs allowed churches or mission societies to establish missions on tribal land for the purpose of starting schools. These properties were later ceded by the colonial or Union government to the churches.

African residents on mission black spots can be more vulnerable than their counterparts on freehold land, as the church is the legal landowner and all negotiations about expropriation and compensation take place between the government and the church. In many instances the occupants of the land have not been consulted or been given compensation in the case of removals. In other instances, however, the churches have actively supported their congregants' resistance to removal.

**Church farms**. It appears that church owned commercial farms form the largest category of church land. In Natal two of the largest landowners are the Evangelical Lutheran Church and the Catholic Church. Commercial farms were established to provide a steady income for the church and missions. Some of these farms have steadily encroached on land used by mission communities either evicting the people or reducing the area of their crops.

36 "Forced Removals in South Africa" Surplus People Project Report, Vol. 4.

On the other hand not infrequently the community has been permitted to take over more and more of a farm on the basis of tenant occupancy. On occasion this has been allowed to develop without control, resulting in overstocking and overgrazing and conflict between tenants and mission. Where Africans on mission farms have not been tenants but farm workers some have been evicted by church authorities in order to comply with the Development Trust and Land Act as Amended in 1964. By and large mission farms, especially in recent times, have not been a great success.

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**Table 4**

## Summary of mission black spots removed 1948-1982

| | |
|---|---|
| Anglican | 1 Bivane |
| Church of Scotland | 1 New Scotland Road |
| Lutheran | 5 Georgenau, Inyane, Nazareth, Nkindini, Rietbult/Gombe |
| Methodist | 1 Evansdale |
| Roman Catholic | 5 Alva, Amakhasi, Dumbe, Mariannhill (part), St Francis Xavier |
| Total | 13 |

## Summary of mission black spots under threat (June 1982)

| | |
|---|---|
| Anglican | 2 KwaMagwaza, St Chads |
| Church of Scotland | 1 Impolweni |
| Lutheran | 6 Isihlengeni, Khumalo's Kraal, Mfule, Rosenstein, Stendahl, Zendelingspost |
| Roman Catholic | 4 Inhlazuka, Mariannhill (part), Mariathal, Reichenau |
| Total | 13 |

## Status not known

2 KwaMondi, Nkombe (both Lutheran)

## Likely to be consolidated

1 Emangweni (Lutheran)

Source: Surplus People Project Vol 4, p. 132.

# The effect of removals on family life

Removals uproot families and destroy homes. Any person's experience of removal largely derives from its effects on their family. The forced removals ordered by the State have no concern for the problems of family life; nor do they respect the delicacy of its structures.

A family is a group of people whose behaviour is closely interrelated. Its members develop expectations of each other, and the family develops through their striving to establish a healthy and workable balance in their relationships. They look to each other for support, healing and growth. Forced removals, however, profoundly attack and undermine the delicate balance of family life. They sever the continuities a family has built up, and offer few prospects for its further growth. If a family migrates voluntarily, having weighed up the prospective gains as greater than its losses, this usually gives it an enhanced sense of self worth. People who choose to move are seeking an improved situation, and so will have the energy to cope with forming a new identity as the situation demands. But this is lacking with forced removals; they frequently induce hopelessness and damage people's self esteem both personally and as a family. Removed people feel threatened, powerless and unable to cope with their bewildering predicament. The fact of being coerced into moving accentuates this damage.

Inadequate or polluted water supplies, a shortage of productive land, an inhospitable climate and a lack of suitable housing are frequent and well known features of resettlement camps. People's basic survival is threatened, and this leads to great strain in the family. It weighs heavily on parents if they are unable to provide for their children. Even if a family does not face actual starvation, they are still unlikely to enjoy full health, since resettlement camps are designed for mere survival with only a toilet, a tin hut or tent, and commuter transport being provided. To avoid destitution some family members become migrant workers, but that splits the family and causes further stress. Usually conditions in relocation areas are so meagre that a family cannot enjoy a sufficient standard of living to maintain itself in good health. Any family or community that was formerly living somewhat above the minimum level for survival is likely to experience relocation as a debilitating loss.

Many rural families are fairly 'traditional', having a close relationship to their land, a family life that extends to many relatives, and patriarchal authority. For the traditional family, the land is the habitat of the ancestors, the place where they are looked after. Removal to different land, or especially a small plot, causes deep trauma. Also the 'housing' pattern of a relocation area may cause confusion and strain. For instance, if a son who had his own house before, now has to move in with his parents again. Sometimes the extended family is broken up, sometimes too many people are pushed together. Traditional authority, vested in older males, is also threatened. For example, the

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father to whom everyone looks may be shattered by his powerlessness, his loss of work and inability to provide for his family. If he becomes a migrant worker, this will be the same for the family as losing its head. The children, particularly the boys, will grow up without a male on which to model themselves. If circumstances force the father to become an illegal migrant, his self esteem is further damaged. As the men enter the migratory labour system a step forced on them by relocation, new responsibilities are thrust on the women at home. With a major crisis, such as the death of a child, a frequent occurence in relocation areas due to poverty and disease, they are likely to pack up and migrate to town illegally. Under these stresses many turn to drink, and so use up the funds that should support the family.

A further threat to families in relocation areas is their lack of protection and security. At times people who do not know one another are squashed together. There is no commonly recognized authority, eg. a group of elders, that can deal effectively with their disputes and problems. Policing is inadequate. Any sense of authority and direction may be lost, and so violence and anti-social behaviour erupts. There are neither 'traditional' nor 'modern' means for dealing with the community's problems.

Removals also cut across both the informal education that takes place within the family and formal schooling. When the family is under stress, separated or split up by migratory labour, it cannot supply dirction and assurance to the young. Relocation also breaks children's contact with the significant members of the community, eg. its elders, who would normally set them a pattern and standard of life. Likewise, their schooling is upset, especially when the relocation area has no or only inadequate school facilities.

Many other aspects of community and family living are damaged through removal and relocation. For instance, a family may lose contact with their church or congregation. Patterns of recreation, especially those fostered by settled villages, schools and churches, are destroyed and vanish. The regular social controls on drinking lose any effectiveness they had.

Here we must ask: how do families react and respond to removal and relocation? Many are often simply unable to cope. Aggravated poverty leads to fatalism, or to antagonism towards those who still have resources. When people are overwhelmed with various stresses, the body's immunity system breaks down and so their resistance to disease lessens. The prevalent sense of anxiety and fear leads people to despair of ever being properly healthy again. Although many relocated families do overcome their dazed condition and survive all these threats, that is due to own resilience or community support, and not because of the State caring for them.

# CHAPTER II
# A history of dispossession
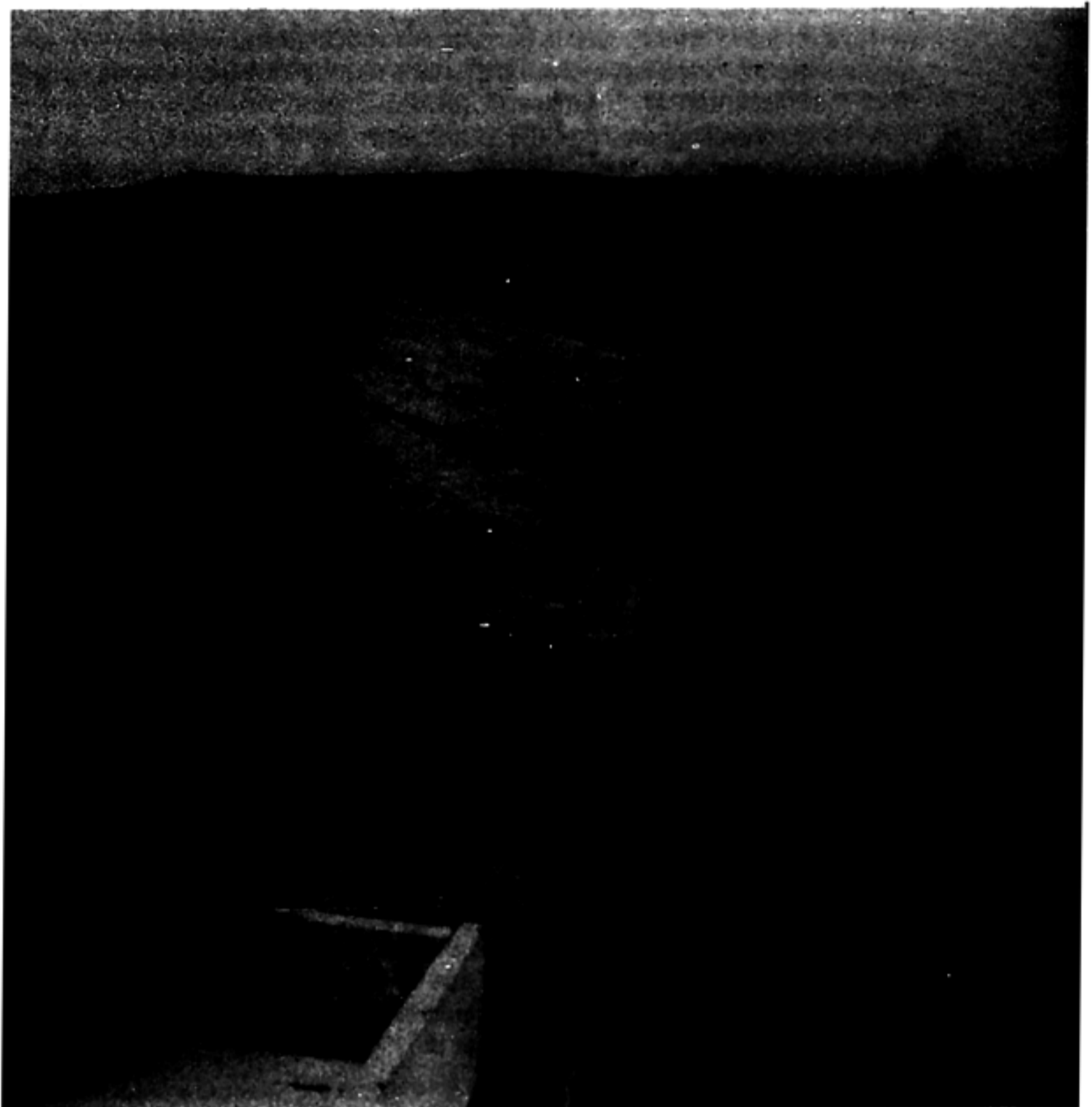
# The struggle over land

Despite what many South Africans believe and are still taught, the first inhabitants of the country were black. Bantu-speaking peoples[1] were settled in South Africa well over a thousand years before Jan van Riebeeck arrived at the Cape of Good Hope. Remains of their Iron Age farming communities can still be seen in the Transvaal at Phalaborwa, Melville Koppies and Zeerust. In Natal such remains can be seen at Karridene, and in the Eastern Cape at Umazazana. When the first whites sailed round Africa in the late 15th century, many if not most of today's Bantu-speaking peoples of Southern Africa were already settled in areas suited to herding and agriculture. Successive governments in South Africa have ignored this fact, and have helped to spread the myth that black and white arrived in the sub-continent simultaneously.

In 1652, representatives of the Dutch East Indies Company arrived to establish a refreshment station for ships travelling to and from the East. Before long permanent settlers started establishing farms and centres of trade. Their first encounter with the indigenous population was with the Khoikhoi people (Hottentots) who were mainly herders as well as hunters and cultivators. The second group they encountered was the San (Bushmen) who were hunters and gatherers.

Both Khoikhoi and San peoples valued the land highly as the basis of their subsistence. The settlers, however, disregarded the rights of the Khoisan, and seized the land for their own.

The first war between the whites and the Khoi over land erupted in 1659, and there was violent conflict in every decade of the following century. But by the mid-18th century, the original trading relationship between the settlers and the Khoisan had become one of master and servant. Having lost most of their cattle and land, the Khoisan were forced to work for the Whites. The Whites added to this labour force by getting slaves shipped in from Java, the East Indies, Madagascar and Mozambique.

As the Whites moved northwards in search of land and labour as well as political autonomy and goods to trade, they encountered a third group of people: the Bantu-speaking communities. These were better organised and more sophisticated than the Khoisan. They were herders and agriculturalists. Their land was communally owned and their production was dependent on the labour of members of the household. Many of them correctly perceived the Whites as a threat to their resources and their political independence, so the 19th century was also a period of bloody warfare. Before 1870 there were at least four zones of major conflict. There were almost one hundred years of war between settlers and Xhosas in the Cape in which huge seizures of Xhosa land were made. There were battles between Whites and Zulus in which the Zulu Kingdom ceded Natal to Britain. In the Free State there were struggles

[1] Africans in South Africa might prefer to say they are (i-) *Sintu-speaking*.

between Trekkers and the Sothos in which the Trekkers acquired the rich lands of the Sothos. The victory of the Voortrekkers over the Ndebele in the Transvaal led to the Boers' claim to all land north of the Orange and Vaal rivers by right of conquest.

During this period of frontier warfare, a number of racially defined land areas were marked out. These included:

**The Kat River settlement**. This was formed in the eastern Cape in 1829. The Khoisan families settled there were expected to act as a peasantry[2] and to serve as a military buffer zone between white farmers and hostile Xhosa chiefdoms.

**An area near Grahamstown**. In 1835 Mfengu refugees, fleeing from the disruption caused by the rise of the Zulu Kingdom, entered the Cape. They were allocated an area near Grahamstown, where they too formed a convenient barrier between Xhosa and settler communities. They became the first sizable peasant community in South Africa.

**Natal Reserves**. By 1864, 42 reserves had been established in Natal, totalling some 836 509 hectares of largely inferior farming land. When these reserves were laid out in the 1840s, they were intended to be for an African peasantry producing cash crops. The reserves were also established because the settlers were numerically, financially and militarily weak. Therefore they had to rely on indirect rule through chiefs to maintain their authority over the African people. The chiefs obtained large amounts of land for their services.

In the **Transvaal and Free State** the territorial rights of the indigenous population were ignored by the politically powerful white farmers. About one percent of the Transvaal land area and about half a percent of the Free State were allocated to Africans as treaty areas and reserves.

The farmers of the Cape and Natal were also opposed to the establishment of rural locations on the grounds that this reduced their ability to obtain labour. Like the farmers in the northern provinces, they were opposed to the competition offered by African peasants, who from the early 19th century were making a successful living from selling crops and animal products to traders. But as long as the interests of merchants and absentee landowners were dominant, farmers were obliged to suffer the creation of a black peasantry, and to import much of their agricultural labour from distant places like India and Mozambique. All this changed dramatically with the discovery of diamonds and gold and the entrance onto the scene of powerful labour-hungry mine owners.

# Land and labour

## The mining revolution and segregation
The years from the 1870s to the 1930s were crucial in the transition to a

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[2] A large group of peasants; peasants were cultivators who derived their living primarily from the land but who also produced a small surplus which they sold.

modern economy in South Africa. It was in this period that a mass black labour force was created, following the mineral discoveries.

"The ultimate end is a self-governing white community supported by well-treated and justly governed black labour from Cape Town to the Zambezi," wrote the British High Commissioner in 1899.[3]

Africans were certainly aware of the measure designed to transform them from cultivators into labourers. These measures included the conquest and incorporation of the remaining independent African societies such as those of the Zulus, the Pedi and the Pondo in the late 19th century. (Unlike earlier crusades against the indigenous peoples, which had been motivated by a desire for land and trade, these new conquests were more motivated by the desire to squeeze labour out of the African economy, by gaining control of it.) Linked to this, there was a barrage of measures against the peasantry, such as anti-squatting legislation, land restrictions and state support for white farmers. In addition there was, of course, the imposition of hut, pole and labour taxes, as well as the tightening of pass and vagrancy laws. These assaults on the African population were so successful that the Witwatersrand mine labour force soared from 3 000 workers in 1887 to over 100 000 Africans in 1899. This was the beginning of the migrant labour system, which has lasted to this day and which forms the basis of the lives that millions of South Africans lead.

The provisions of the notorious 1913 Natives' Land Act illustrate well the way in which white mine owners and farmers set about creating a black labour force. Firstly, the Act reduced the Africans' ability to survive outside the wage market by defining a mere seven percent of the total land area of the country as reserves, and severely limiting Africans' rights to purchase or hire ground outside this area. Secondly, with rulings such as that forbidding sharecropping[4] in the Free State, it aimed to reduce the farm labour shortage by making the peasants on farms into labour tenants[5] or wage labourers. Thus by rigidly restricting the land which blacks could work on their own account, the Act contributed to the on-going process by which black cultivators and peasants were being transformed into labourers for white mine owners and farmers.

Yet it is important to note that the Land Act did not completely strip Africans of their land. By setting aside the reserves, employers were able to force the

[3] *Economy and Society in Pre-Industrial South Africa*. Edited by Shula Marks and Anthony Atmore, Longman 1980, p.36.

[4] Sharecroppers — or cash tenants — were African peasants who lived on a white farmer's land; they used their own seed and implements to farm a portion of the land. In return they gave one third or one half of their crop to the farmer. This system was completely abolished by the 1970s.

[5] These were African families who worked for a white farmer for a certain length of time each year, from 3 to 9 months, in return for the right to live on the farm and cultivate and graze a certain portion of that farm. The system was abolished in 1979 therefore necessitating the removal from the farms of thousands of families who had then become illegal. Most farmers were allowed to keep 5 families only, the able-bodied members being required to work as wage labourers.

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amilies of migrant workers to support themselves in the rural areas, and to pay the migrant workers wages which were barely adequate for themselves alone. They were also able to shift the burden of social welfare — the care of the unemployed, the sick, the aged and the children — to the reserves. In addition, they were able to set up influx control, and to reduce the risk of urban unrest by forcing blacks who were not workers back into the rural areas. As early as 1897, the Transvaal Commissioner for Native Affairs, Sir Godfrey Lagden, had grasped the value of the reserves for these purposes, and stated that an African . . .

"... **cannot go with his wife and children and his goods and chattels onto the labour market. He must have a dumping ground. Every rabbit has a warren where he can live and burrow and breed, and every native must have his warren too."[6]**

Thirty years later, however, these human 'warrens' were grossly overstocked, overcrowded[7] and overutilised. There was also a growing problem of landlessness. The 1932 Native Economic Commission decried their state of under-development, and warned that the reserves were accommodating indebted, malnourished and impoverished people.

Because of this, the 1936 Native Trust and Land Act increased the area of the reserves from seven percent to thirteen percent of the land area of South Africa (this was a long delayed promise of the 1913 Act). The reserves had to be small enough to force Africans out onto the labour market, but large enough to fulfil economic and political functions for the employers of migrant workers. So by 1936, Africans had access to the amounts of land in the form of reserves indicated in Table 5.

# Labour control and dispossession
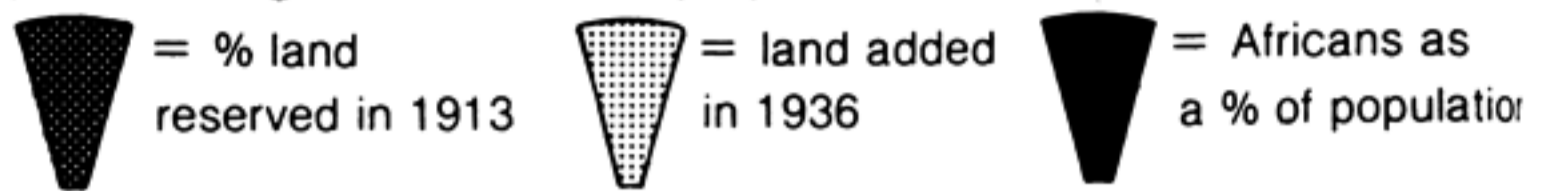
## Industrialisation and Apartheid

As Table 5 shows, the land available to Africans was still not nearly enough for their needs. At the time of the 1946 strike of 60 000 black mine workers over wages, the vast majority of migrants to the mines did not have land in the reserves. So as it became increasingly difficult to supplement low urban wages with rural production, migration to the towns soared, especially around the years of the Second World War. Since the Government and employers were not prepared to spend money on facilities and services for these new urban-dwellers, squatter settlements mushroomed. A militant trade union movement also developed. Black workers were publicly showing that they would no longer tolerate starvation urban wages and urban influx controls when the situation in the countryside was so risky. There was also a mass

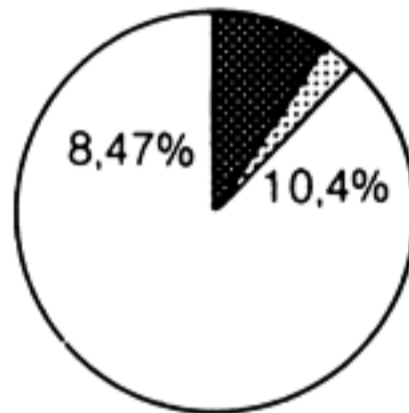[6] Colin Bundy, *The Rise and Fall of the South African Peasantry*, p.242.
[7] In the first decade of the 20th century, the average size of white farms was 800 to 1200 hectares. After the delimitation of the Zululand reserves in 1907, the ratio of the rural population to land acreage was 1:184 for whites and 1:8 for Africans.
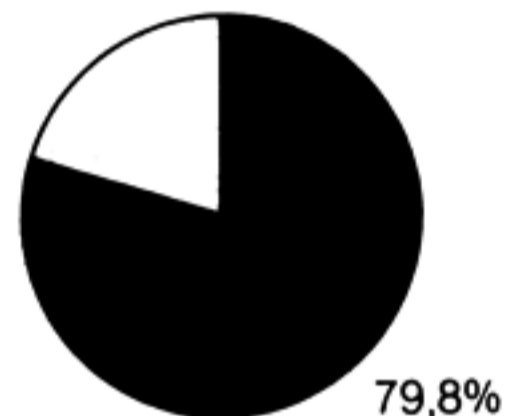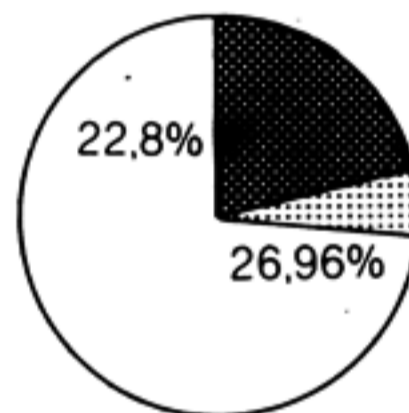
## Table 5

Land reserved for Africans and Africans as a percentage of the 1936 population

▼ = % land reserved in 1913    ▼ = land added in 1936    ▼ = Africans as a % of population

**Cape Province**

8,47%    10,4%

57,9%

**Natal**

22,8%    26,96%

79,8%

**Transvaal**

3,22%    18,14%

73.2%

**Orange Free State**

0,48%    1,00%

68,8%
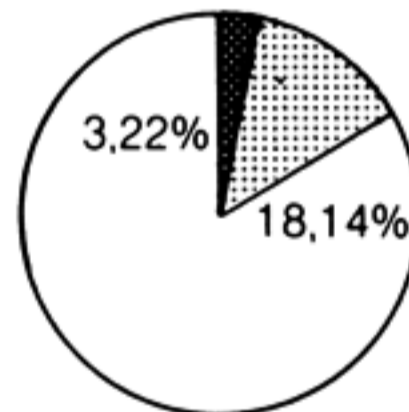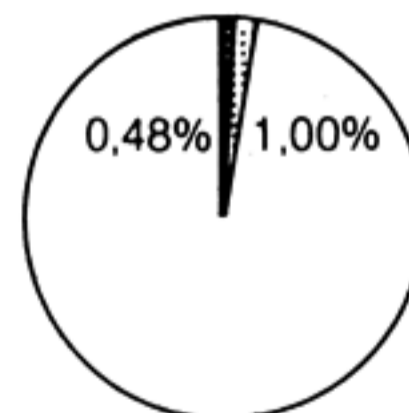
Source: M. Lacey, *Working for Boroko*, Ravan 1981, p. 25.

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political movement, in the form of the ANC, that was gaining strength.

In response to these challenges, certain concessions were considered. In the 1930s and 1940s there was a dramatic change in the structure of the South African economy. The contribution of industry to the national income outstripped that of agriculture in 1930, and overtook mining in 1943. Large-scale industrialists (who often had foreign links) were less dependent on cheap migrant labour, and more interested in developing a stable, better skilled and more efficient labour force. So they discussed a series of compromises in the 1940s, incuding the relaxation of pass laws, the recognition of African trade unions, and the encouragement of permanent urbanisation of blacks who worked in the cities.

This, however, did not happen. When the National Party came to power in 1948, it concerned itself more with the interests of farmers, struggling Afrikaans industrialists and white workers, rather than with those of large-scale employers. There were acute black labour shortages suffered by those unable to offer the wages and conditions that the bigger manufacturers were able to offer. This problem was tackled in a number of ways. Firstly, certain legislative and administrative measures were implemented to speed up the process of transforming tenants on farms into wage labourers. Secondly, influx and efflux controls were tightened and labour bureaux were established. So although the reserves had effectively lost their economic function of supplementing low urban wages, they gained the role of acting as control posts through which labour was channelled to unpopular, low wage sectors. At the same time the Apartheid policy intended to rid the urban areas of as many Africans as possible, allowing only those who worked in towns to remain. The reserves were to be resuscitated as the 'homelands' of the African population, and as the areas where people were to exercise their political rights.

This political function of the reserves existed since the 19th century, but was greatly expanded. As the protest and membership of the Congress Alliance soared in the early 1950s, the State began to cast around for alternative forms of political leadership for blacks. It began to build up the administrative and repressive powers of Chiefs and headmen located in the Bantustans, and to give a tiny group of black traders and farmers a stake in the economic *status quo*. This process has today culminated in the so-called 'independence' of the Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda and the Ciskei. These are under the leadership of an alliance of 'traditional' leaders and a black middle class desperately promoting ethnic values.

Thus the policy of 'divide and rule' is now promoted through emphasising ethnic rather than racial differences. The whites — whether they speak English, Afrikaans, German or Portuguese — are taken as one ethnic group. Africans, however, were divided into eight such groups in the 1950s, and since then two more have been discovered. Thus there are now ten 'homelands' in South Africa (see Table 6).

## 'Surplus' people: the 'homelands' and the South African economy

The massive population increases in the 'homelands' over the last ten years indicate the importance of another function which 'homelands' continue to fulfil: that of accommodating Africans who are not labourers. The Apartheid government used several measures to make this happen. Most important was the implementation of the relocation programme, which meant that millions of blacks were to be moved out of the urban and 'white' agricultural areas, to the 'homelands'. Along with this a plan was formulated to try to revive the economic capacity of the 'homelands'.

This plan took shape with the report of the Tomlinson Commission in 1955. The Commission report spoke of widespread poverty and of the fact that virtually none of the Bantustan population could make a living in these areas. Their solution was twofold: on the one hand for the agricultural capacity of the Bantustans to be improved through a policy of betterment, and on the other hand to establish industries in these areas.
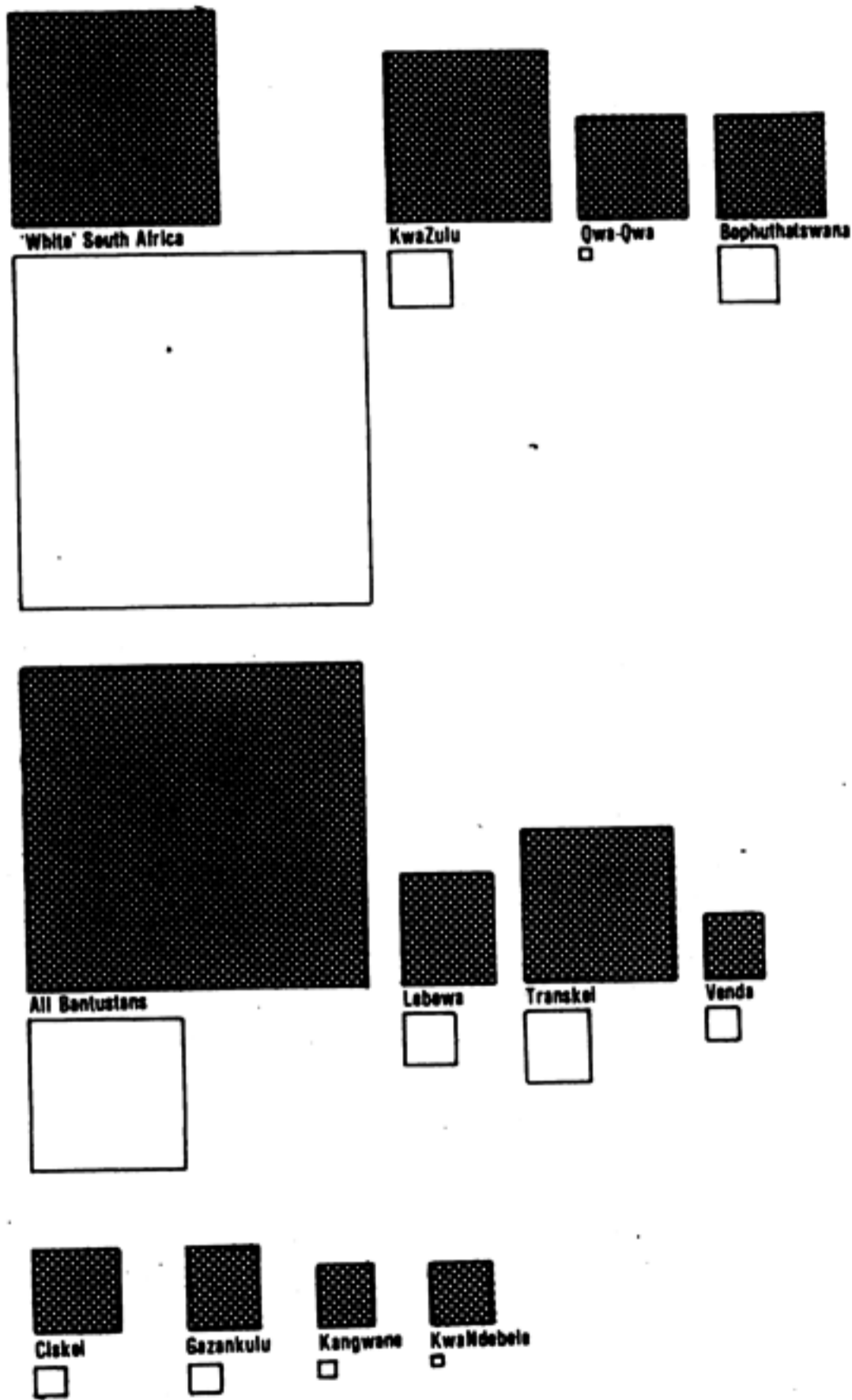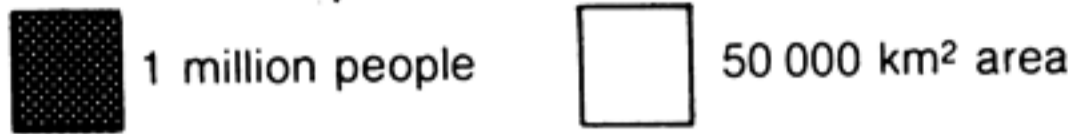
These two recommendations were difficult to implement — and the government rejected them on grounds of the large expenditure they demanded. But betterment and industrial development slowly went ahead. Betterment involved the division of all areas into separate residential, grazing and arable areas. This meant that many households whose fields and homesteads were close together would have to move physically in order to fit in with the new system. The implication of this was relocation on a large scale for the rural population. In addition, in the process of reorganisation many thousands of people lost all access to land.

The policy of industrial development was also problematic. Industrialists did not want to move out into barren areas far from adequate transport and other facilities, so concessions had to be offered to them. These included exemption from minimum wage legislation in South Africa. This means that wages could be extremely low, and the Bantustan populations, out of dire economic necessity, were forced to accept employment and these starvation wages. As late as 1980 people working in Babelegi in Bophuthatswana were being paid R5 per week for factory work!

The Bantustans have become increasingly relevant in the last 25 years in their function of accommodating Africans who are not labourers (See Table 6). This new importance can be related to changes in the South African economy. Partly due to measures taken by the National Party in the 1950s, agriculture has changed from a backward sector suffering from chronic labour shortages to a relatively mechanised, capital-intensive sector dependent on a small number of permanent wage-workers. Like most industrial enterprises —which have themselves become increasingly monopolised and

## Table 6

The areas of the Bantustans and the official populations.



■ 1 million people     □ 50 000 km² area

'White' South Africa

KwaZulu

Qwa-Qwa

Bophuthatswana

All Bantustans

Lebowa

Transkei

Venda

Ciskei

Gazankulu

Kangwane

KwaNdebele

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dependent on foreign investment — farming concerns and agribusiness[8] have been more and more concerned that there should be semi-skilled workers available. They do not want a mass of cheap unskilled labourers. As a result, a rising rate of black unemployment has become endemic to South Africa over the last twenty years. Although unofficial estimates put the number much higher than the figure of 1-1, 85 million African unemployed in 1976 (10,2-18,6% of the labour force), even these scaled-down estimates have caused business people and state officials considerable concern. Their fears of urban unrest, and their desire for streamlined profitability, explain why 'surplus' blacks —the unemployed, the old, the sick and the children — are to an increasing extent beng dumped in the rural peripheries of South Africa, out of sight and all too often out of mind.

Thus the main role played by the reserves has changed dramatically over the last 150 years. In the 19th century, they served primarily as military buffer zones and as sites for a growing peasantry. From the discovery of diamonds and gold to the middle of the 20th century, they served largely as labour pools with the added advantage that families at home theoretically supplemented urban wages which were barely adequate for the migrant worker himself. And from the 1950s, they have served as sites for canalising labour, for redirecting political consciousness into narrow ethnic channels, and for receiving blacks not needed by white employers.

As these changes in emphasis have occurred, conditions of life in the Bantustans have declined continuously for most of the people. Today, the Bantustans are characterised by mass unemployment; by poverty so desperate that the position of the residents is worse than that of the inhabitants of any other part of Africa except perhaps the 'Sahel' countries.[9] & [10] They are characterised by outbreaks of diseases such as cholera, bubonic plague and typhoid, and malnutrition so far advanced that about a fifth or more of the children die before the age of five.[11] In contrast to what occurred in the 1940s, the privileged urban blacks are granted access to basic health services. But the majority of the African population face the much worse prospect of being trapped in the Bantustans in a vicious cycle of unemployment, starvation and despair. This is the cycle into which 'surplus people' are continually being dumped.

[8] *Agribusiness* — is the process by which small farms are bought by the big business companies, and consolidated into huge farms which are run in a highly capital-intensive way — i.e. most of the work is done by machines. The farms are owned by companies based in the cities or in other countries.

[9] *Sahel countries:* These countries into which the southern part of the Sahara desert is moving fast. They include Mauritania, Mali, Upper Volta, Niger, Chad, Sudan.

[10] J. Leewenberg, *Transkei: a Study in Economic Regression*, The Africa Bureau, London, 1976.

[11] There are no accurate overall statistics. Some studies which together give an indication are:

— C.H. Wydenham and L.M. Irwig, *A comparison of the mortality rates of various*

population groups in the Republic of South Africa.

— *S.A. Medical Journal,* Vol 55, p.769.

— Barbara Richardson, *Studies on South African Bantu and Caucasian pre-school children: mortality rates in urban and rural areas,* in transactions of the Royal Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene, Vol 64, No 6.

— V.K. Knutzen & D.E. Bourne, *"The reproductive efficiency of the Xhosa",* S.A. Medical Journal, Vol 51, p.392.

— G.M. Westcott & R.A.P. Stott, "The extent and causes of malnutrition in children in the Tsolo district of Transkei", *S.A. Medical Journal,* Vol 52, p.963. Westcott and Stott show about 30% of children dying before the age of two in their area of survey.

— E. Shvenyane et al "A Demographic and Socio-Economic Profile of a Rural Black South African Community." *S.A. Medical Journal,* Vol 57, p.539.

CHAPTER III

# The Bantustans: Overseers of population control
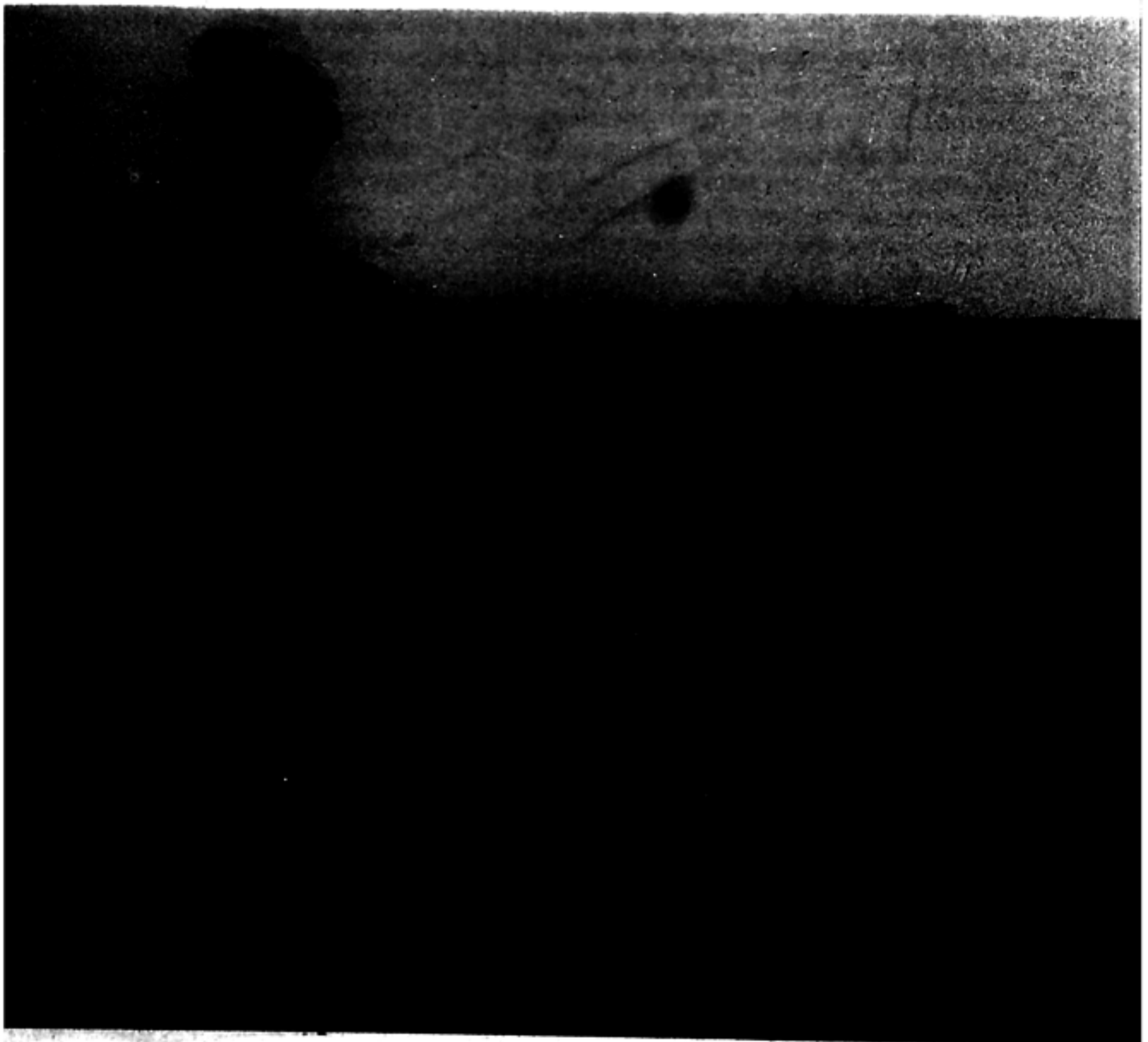
# Relocation and the Bantustans

It should be clear that forced removals and relocation are closely linked to the existence of the Bantustans. We have seen in the historical section how the bantustans came into existence. Firstly they were a consequence of the seizure of African land. Secondly, they were 'reserved' for Africans by the 1913 Land Act so that migrants' wages could be low, supplemented by some agricultural production. Later the Bantustans became a tool for controlling the rate of urbanisation in 'white' South Africa, and for moving unemployment away from 'white' farm and industrial areas, which were being increasingly mechanised. Finally the Bantustans have been used to try to divide and defuse African nationalism and resistance in general.

All these functions of the Bantustans relate to the control of Africans in the supposedly white areas. Forced removals to Bantustan relocation camps fit exactly into this function. Without the existence of these Bantustans, relocation would be very difficult for the Government to carry out. The racist definition of South Africa's land area prevents Africans from getting full land rights in most of the country. So they can be removed. The Bantustans provide a geographical location in which removed people can be placed, and confined through passes or passports and influx control laws.

The immorality of removals is compounded by conditions in the Bantustans, and linked to their real function. At the end of the second World War millions of Germans were moved from Eastern Europe into the restricted boundaries of post-1945 Germany. This involved great hardship, but it did not create a State in which there was mass poverty. On the economic level the move was not lastingly destructive. In contrast, the situation in South Africa's Bantustans show clearly that in general these removals are very harmful to most of the relocated people's economic interests. We have already discussed this to some extent in the last chapter, and in two of the case studies.

We also need to consider what function the Bantustans have at present. This will help to evaluate the type of life into which relocated people are being moved, and the general legitimacy of the Bantustans, especially as relocation attempts to legitimize the Bantustans through causing most Africans to live in them. In 1960, 40 percent of Africans lived in the Bantustans; in 1980, 53 percent did as a result of relocation.[1]

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[1] Charles Simkins, *Four essays on the past, present and possible future distribution of the Black population in South Africa*, SALDRU (University of Cape Town.) p.57.

# The economic role of the Bantustans

## Social security

The idea that the Bantustans are the areas where the African population supports itself has been revived once again. This time there is no pretence that the majority of the people can live off the land. There is acceptance that remittances are a major source of income. Social welfare facilities are made the responsibility of the Bantustan. Pensions and disability grants are paid out by Bantustans and unemployment insurance is paid there. But as any Bantustan dweller knows, the time taken for people to get their money, and the meagre amounts that are available, mean that this function is not carried out in an efficient and adequate way.

The Bantustans rely for most of their income on grants from the Central Government and when inadequate money is allocated, the needs of the majority of the population for schools, housing and other services and facilities are always allocated the smallest amounts.

This inadequate allocation of funds brings us to another economic function.

## Support for the Bantustan rulers and bureaucracy

When the idea of political independence for the Bantustans was developed, it was intended to divide and rule South Africa's people on a number of levels. The most obvious is the Balkanisation of South Africa as a whole, but also, internal division on the basis of access to wealth and resources has become increasingly important. And here it is the vast majority of ordinary people who are the losers.

The rule of Pretoria-controlled Bantustan leaders is propped up by their own bureaucracy, army and police forces. For them to feel that their job of 'governing' millions of poor, even starving people is worthwhile, they have to receive very good payment. Thus Bantustan civil service salaries are relatively high, and there are numerous perks, such as shares in development corporation industries; preferential access to trading licences, large houses at subsidised costs, and expensive cars. As a result, a class of people is emerging who are loyal to the Bantustan rulers and who can be relied on to support the *status quo*, and repress local populations if necessary.

## Monopoly capital investment

We mentioned earlier that the industrial decentralisation policy has not been as successful as was hoped. But recently there has been a new development in some Bantustan areas. This is the entry of giant companies into particular sectors, mainly those dealing with agricultural production and processing of commodities such as sisal, cotton and tobacco. Those enterprises are often highly mechanised and sometimes pay workers badly. Through this penetration of big business into agriculture, the local people are still exploited while

making a handsome return for the companies. They have even less control over their economic lives than before.

## Labour supply

As explained earlier, one of the major economic functions of the Bantustans has always been the supply of labour to the major sectors of the South African economy.

With growing unemployment in urban areas, this has recently become a function that is declining in significance. The Riekert Commission, set up to report on matters related to influx control in the wake of the 1976 uprising suggested a local labour preference policy to reduce the numbers of urban unemployed and to try and reduce the numbers of people in urban areas.

The implementation of this has meant that fewer and fewer migrants are likely to be recruited to work in urban areas. Because town and city residents do not see the unemployed masses in the 'homelands', being out of sight, they are out of mind.

It is still possible for some people from the Bantustans to find forms of work in, or near urban complexes. The Bantustans still supply considerable labour to the mines and to the sectors of employment least popular with urban dwellers, e.g. the railways, municipalities, farms and foundries. Bantustan labour is being used to do work that nobody else will do.

In addition, the mines have stopped using so much 'foreign labour' and instead are using labour from the Bantustans. So men from the Transkei and Lebowa for example, are being recruited as miners instead of from Mozambique or Malawi. The ease with which migrants can be recruited and dismissed is also used by employers and the Government as a threat to workers not to go on strike. The Government is creating a class of 'commuters' who live in the Bantustans and travel to work in the common or 'white' areas on a daily basis. This has the advantage of ensuring a supply of literate, settled and semi-skilled labour for the white economy. But the social costs of their production are shifted to the Bantustan government. In terms of privileged access to jobs, this commuter group comes just behind those with urban rights. Restrictions similar to those in force in white areas, but imposed by Bantustan authorities, prevent people from the more remote areas moving to the commuter-dormitory towns.

## Conclusion

It is clear that the economic function of the Bantustans has changed dramatically since the early years of the century. Where they once subsidised the payment of cheap wages to migrants on the basis of their families' agricultural activities, one of their major functions now is to use them as dumping grounds for the unemployed, the aged and the sick — in short, for all those people who are not useful to industry or other big concerns in urban areas.

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There has also been a shift from their predominantly *economic* function to their present role, designed to secure *political* control of the rural population.

The mass influx of people into the Bantustans as a result of the Government's relocation policy, has intensified this need for political control and at the same time further undercut any potential for economic viability of these areas.

# The role of the Bantustans in the concept of total strategy

"Total stragegy is the comprehensive plan to utilise all the means available to a state according to an integrated pattern in order to achieve the national aims within the framework of the specific policies. A total national strategy is, therefore, not confined to a particular sphere, but is applicable to all levels and to all functions of the state structure." (Defence White Paper 1977:5)

'Total Strategy' is the South African Government's answer to the 'Total Onslaught' which it sees being waged against it. It is a recognition that South Africa is engaged in 'Total War' and that all state activities must be interpreted in that context.

The Bantustan police and armies, trained by their counterparts in the SAP and the SADF, are backed by a mass of repressive legislation. In the past few years the following battalions have been formed: 121 Battalion (Zulu), Battalion 111 (Swazi), Battalion 113 (Shangaan), Battalion 112 (now the Venda army) and Battalion 21 (inter-ethnic), which is based in Johannesburg between Soweto and the Vaal triangle black townships. Bophuthatswana, Venda, the Transkei and the Ciskei also have their own police forces and armies. Those of the Transkei are trained by the former head of the Selous Scouts in Rhodesia, who is assisted by former Selous Scouts.

Propaganda, an essential part of total strategy, is widely disseminated in the Bantustans by the various departments of the South African and independent' governments through media such as newspapers, leaflets and radio. The propaganda is directed at South Africa's 'enemies', the 'terrorists', the 'communists' and the ANC. Some of the local population is led to believe that life is better in their 'independent' countries or in their relocation areas than in the places from which they were moved.

At the same time the ANC is active in the country and also trying to win the 'hearts and the minds' of the local people. Since 1976 there have been more than 150 ANC strikes on selected targets in South Africa.

But despite South Africa's attempt to create on a massive scale the policed 'protected villages' as the 'homelands' have been described, they create

unprecedented levels of rural dissidence, and support for guerillas passing through.

A Constellation of Southern African states consisting of states friendly to and economically dependent on the South African Government is the ultimate goal of the Bantustan policy. These states would act as buffers and make penetration into white South Africa by guerillas of the liberation armies more difficult. At present the 'Constellation' consists only of South Africa and the 'independent' Bantustans, the Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda and the Ciskei.

The formation of the Constellation of states is a counter move to the formation of the Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference — the SADCC — which was founded in 1980 with the intention of liberating the nine Member Frontline States from their dependence on South Africa.

## The illegitimacy of the Bantustans in the eyes of the ordinary people

To those who suffer economic and social loss through resettlement in Bantustans, the Bantustans can at best have limited legitimacy. To those excluded from an urban area because of their Bantustan 'citizenship', the Bantustans can have no legitimacy. The same must be felt by those who know of repression by Bantustan police. Blacks who spend their lives and labour in 'white' South Africa, but are politically powerless and voteless, must see Bantustans as a political obstacle. All those in the country who have non-racial political beliefs will similarly reject the Bantustans. All in all the large majority of South Africans do not accept the Bantustans.[2]

## The illegality of the Bantustans under international law

Since 1976 four South African Bantustans have achieved 'independence' under South African law, but none of these entities has been recognised as a new State by the international community. In South Africa supporters of Apartheid tend to view this non-recognition of the Transkei, Ciskei, Bophuthatswana and Venda as a political gesture; but this attitude displays an ignorance of both the rules of international law and its nature.

In international society courts do not play the same role that they do in domestic law. Consequently there is no international court of law to pronounce on the lawfulness of territorial change or the creation of a new state. Instead it is left to states individually or collectively to declare their understanding of international law on this subject by recognising or by not recognis-

[2] For instance in the 1982 Bophuthatswana general election only 38% of the registered voters in the Bantustan actually voted. In the urban area of Johannesburg the figure was 24% of registered voters. But only 6% of those eligible to vote had bothered to register. (*Sowetan* Oct 25, 1982 and *SA Forum*, No 22, 1982).

ing the new state. Non-recognition by a state therefore constitutes a statement by that state that in its judgement the new state has come into existence in violation of international law.

No state has granted recognition to any of the 'independent homelands'. On the contrary, the international community, in a rare display of unity, has announced its intention of withholding recognition. The reason for this is clear. In the judgement of the international community the creation and continued existence of these 'states' is contrary to contemporary international law.

The creation of the independent Bantustan violates two principal norms of international law: the right of a people to self-determination, and the prohibition on race discrimination.

Since 1960 the right of a people to self-determination has been accepted as a legal right under international law. Although the content of this right is not absolutely clear, it can broadly be defined as the right of a people living within defined boundaries to freely determine their own future. The maintenance of territorial integrity is important and it is generally accepted that this right is to be exercised within existing boundaries in order to prevent territorial fragmentation. This is largely aimed at the prevention of attempts to redraw the map of Africa along tribal lines.

In terms of the right of self-determination all South Africans should be permitted freely to determine their own political future within South Africa's pre-1976 borders.[3]

Apartheid or self-development thus violates the right of self-determination in several respects. It denies the right of the blacks to decide on their political future within one territorial unit. Instead it compels them to seek self-determination in small territories carved out of South Africa by the South African Government itself.

At the same time the creation of such states destroys the territorial integrity of South Africa. Moreover, it is highly questionable whether even those blacks living in the homelands have freely given their support to the creation of such states in the elections prior to 'independence'.

The Charter of the United Nations clearly prohibits discrimination on grounds of race. So do successive international agreements, such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination of 1965. Repeated resolutions of the United Nations have confirmed this prohibition. Apartheid is clearly incompatible with this prohibition; a fact which has been confirmed by numerous UN resolutions, an Opinion of the International Court of Justice and by the 1973 Convention on the Prevention and Suppression of the Crime of Apartheid.    The 'independent' Bantustans are designed to further the ultimate goal of Apartheid: that is, a South Africa in which there are no black South African citizens or nationals (the correct international term),

[3] 1976 was the year the Transkel became independent. This changed South Africa's borders, in the eyes of South African law. The independence of Bophuthatswana, Venda and Ciskel further complicated the picture.

but only black 'aliens' working in South Africa who bear the nationality of one of the 'independent' Bantustans. For in this way the Nationalist Government seeks to escape its moral obligation to extend political rights to all South African citizens or nationals.

When a Bantustan becomes 'independent' all blacks associated with it by language or culture are deprived of their South African nationality. Already eight million black South Africans have been deprived of their South African nationality or 'denationalised'. This mass denationalisation not only violates the prohibition on the deprivation of nationality on grounds of race, inherent in the role of non-discrimination, but it also provides evidence of the South African Government's determination to use the Bantustans 'independence' to rid itself of its black citizens/nationals and thereby to achieve the final goal of Apartheid.

Bantustans' independence thus violates important rules and principles of international law. Non-recognition seeks to confirm the nullity and illegality of these 'states' in contemporary international law.

# CHAPTER IV

# Some theological considerations

The whole policy or demarcating Bantustans and removing people to them touches a variety of theological and moral issues, since in practice it affects every dimension of human living.

# The separation of peoples

The Bantustan policy rests upon the division of the African population of South Africa into ten separate communities, each with its own cultural identity and supposedly irreconcilable national characteristics. These are thought to be so different that they cannot share the same territory either with one another or with white and coloured people. Those who divide the African population in this way do so largely from an attitude of racial prejudice, based on greed and human hatred. Although as a matter of fact there are cultural and racial differences amongst the population of South Africa, these differences do not readily coincide with the division of black people into ten separate communities marked off as something quite different from the white, coloured and Indian population. Many Black people have a mixed tribal and racial ancestry, speak several languages and enjoy a culture that draws from many sources. Over several generations the process of industrialisation, urbanisation and modern communication, as well as participation in a common monetary economy, have increasingly shaped people's culture and way of living. The division of the black population into ten units is an artificial imposition rather than a reflection of traditional African life.

This policy of separation or Apartheid with its emphasis on separate ethnic and racial groups is based on the idea that people of different backgrounds could never live together in peace unless they each held their own separate territory. In both theory and practice the ideology of Apartheid is a denial of the power of God to bring about reconciliation between peoples. It sets at naught the Christian teaching that "in Him [Christ] all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross" (Col. 1: 19f). It runs counter to Jesus' breaking down "the dividing wall of hostility" (Eph. 2:4), so as to create through his death one new community. Apartheid holds other people at a distance, for fear that if one came to know them, cooperate and share with them, one would have to change oneself. The erection of barriers between people may exclude the pain of having to learn change oneself, but it also excludes the joy and mutual enrichment that comes from new life in a shared community. In this way separation is a defence measure to avoid going forward to the reconciled and united world that God wished to bring about through our human efforts at understanding and cooperation.

The grand Apartheid scheme of Bantustan demarcation is a consistent policy of preventing understanding, thwarting sharing and frustrating reconci-

liation between people. The classification of an individual according to his or her racial and ethnic background comes to have more importance than the person. Differences between people are accentuated, barriers erected and opportunities for·communication closed, with.the result that people become suspicious and antagonistic towards one another on a group basis. The Apartheid policy then appears to be needed for keeping warring groups apart. But in reality it is itself a contributory cause of social conflict and group antagonism. because it systematically prevents the reconciliation and mutual enrichment of people whom it judges to belong apart.

# A·policy of dispossession

The combination of legal measures, brute force and administrative coercion by which black people have first been deprived of their ownership of land and property in South Africa, and then subsequently many of them removed from their homes, amounts to a consistent policy of dispossession. The result of removing people from their homes and lands, and relocating them elsewhere, has been to cut off their means of livelihood. Through relocation, black people have lost much of the capital they put into their property and land. Their share in the productive forces of the economy has been steadily reduced, especially when this has impinged upon the economic advantage of whites.

The activities of the authorities and of those who have gained land and property, or eliminated their economic rivals, through such legislation as the Native Land Acts and Group Areas Act have been well described by the prophet Micah:

*They covet fields, and seize them; and houses, and take them away; they oppress a man and his house, a man and his inheritance. (Micah 2:2)*

Although legal means have been used to remove people from their land and households, such legality is not in accord with justice, and is not endorsed by most people. Systematically destroying people's homes and cutting off their settled means of livelihood, with small compensation, runs counter to the common good and is a travesty of justice. This prompts us to repeat the question of Augustine: *"Once justice has gone, what is a government but large-scale brigandage? Likewise what is a band of brigands but a government in miniature?"* (The City of God, IV, 4)

Those responsible for the removal of black people from the towns and cities, from farms, and from so-called 'black spots' fall under the stricture of Isaiah.

> Woe to those who join house to house
> who add field to field,
> Until there is no more room,
> And you are made to dwell alone in the midst of the land.
> The Lord of hosts has sworn in my hearing:

*"Surely many houses shall be desolate,*
*Large and beautiful houses, without inhabitant. (5:8f)*
Isaiah's prophecy applies with particular reference to those who 'legalise' dispossession, when he continues:
*Woe to those who call evil good and good evil*
*who put darkness for light and light for darkness,*
*Who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter!*
*Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes,*
*And shrewd in their own sight! (5:20f)*
The last words quoted aptly apply to those who boast of changing the map of South Africa and ensuring that there will be no black South Africans. In letting their own wisdom and shrewdness blind them, they invite calamity for all.

# Economic restrictions

Not only the erection of Bantustans, but also the laws governing labour and other economic activities in the common area of South Africa, called the White area, have increasingly deprived black people of their share in the economic prosperity of the whole region and have steadily excluded them from meaningful participation in the economic system. They may be retained or dismissed as workers in the common area, depending upon economic conditions. Also they are more and more excluded from having a say in shaping the conditions under which they work or in directing the economy of which they are a part. This type of economic policy runs counter to our understanding as Christians of the rights and dignity of human beings entrusted by God to work the earth for the benefit of all.

. This first point to remember is that the land and all the goods of the earth —both natural resources and human constructs — can never be possessed absolutely by any human being. They belong initially to their Creator, and mankind receives them on trust to use and enjoy so that the lives of all may be sustained and enriched through human work. No person or government may rightfully make laws that permanently and absolutely exclude one section of humanity from owning land or other means of production. No one person, group or government owns anything in so absolute a sense that other members of the human community can be totally excluded from sharing either in the benefits produced from it or having some say in how it is used. Those who own land, industry, property or monetary wealth are entrusted with directing its use, so that its productivity will benefit not only themselves but also society at large. There is no other foundation upon which the right of ownership can be ethically based. It is a perennial temptation to forget that land and other goods come as a gift and to imagine that one's power and initiative have brought them about. The book of Deuteronomy warns:

*"Beware lest you say in your heart, 'My power and the might of my hand have gotten me this wealth.' You shall remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you power to get wealth." (8:17f)*

This God-given power is not an unrestricted one, allowing people to gain as much as they can for themselves and to forget others. They are to remember the fatherless and widows, not expelling them to lands they have never seen. They are not to pervert the justice due to the sojourner or migrant. Nor are they to remove their neighbour's landmark, so as to take land from him or declare that it is not his and that he must go.

Secondly, the policy of dividing the country into Bantustans distinct from the common area (called the 'white' area) is an arrangement that enables the central Government and other employers to take advantage of black people's labour and of their contribution to production, while excluding them as full human participants in the whole economic system. Black people from the Bantustans working in the common area, whether as migrant labourers or as commuters, are accepted for their labour output, but are not regarded as human subjects sharing in the direction of the whole work process. So long as they are required as work-units they are admitted, but as soon as they are no longer needed they are endorsed out or relocated. This policy only admits the value of their work in the objective sense of what they produce, that is, their production; but it fails to give any value to them as the *subjects* of work, that is, as people. Pope John Paul II affirms that "the primary basis of the value of work is the human person" (Laborem Exercens, 6), and that work is 'for people', rather than people for work. However, when people are working in an economic system in which they have no rights, no permanent claims and are largely excluded from holding any property at all, they are only regarded of value because of their labour power. Once that is secured they are dispensable. Because they are counted as coming from a foreign country, they have no security of tenure or residence, and no plans are made for their work to build them up as human beings in a human community. They are denied effective access to society's accumulative capital, built up mainly through their labour over the past century. Bantustan workers employed in the common area are not building up a society for themselves and their children, but only for those with rights of possession and tenure there.

Thirdly, the common ownership of land and the earth's goods takes precedence, especially in cases of dire need, over any set of arrangements or private property. "The right to private property," Pope John Paul II reminds us, "is subordinated to the right to common use, to the fact that goods are meant for everyone." (Laborem Exercens, 14) No system of land or property holding can be justified which excludes any person or sector of the population from enjoying some share in its productive benefits.

Most relocation areas in the Bantustans are far removed from the towns and cities, but the fact that they are not seen does not excuse us from ignoring their needs and poverty. The sick, starving, homeless and destitute have a claim on

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the wealth of the country. This means that as Christians we are obliged through relief work to support those with little or no means of livelihood of their own. But, although donations of money and goods for relief are frequently necessary, our obligation to feed those suffering from malnutrition and starva- tion, to provide water for those without proper supplies, to clothe those in rags and to care for the sick, does not stop there. We have to confront the whole system of laws, customs and economic practices which reduce, or keep people in poverty on such a massive scale. Unless we also accept our responsibilities of working for radical social change of this socio-economic system which reduces people to the margin of existence in relocation areas, we are maintaining our prosperity at their expense. Real love of Christ, and of the least ones with whom he especially identified himself, calls not only for donations to relieve distress, but for efforts to alter the social conditions that force human beings into such desperate situations in a relatively wealthy region of the world. If we overlook those conveniently hidden away in squatter camps and relocation areas we can expect to hear the Lord's words:

*Truly, I say to you, as you did it not to one of the least of these, you did it not to .me. (Mt. 25:45)*

# Removals and relocation, acts of folly

A community builds itself up through its work: it erects houses, it demarcates fields or gardens for its members, it establishes schools and communal centres, it sets up churches, and it cultivates its own art and entertainment. Through all this co-operative activity which builds upon the labours and products of previous generations, people come to find themselves. They. establish themselves with a certain identity and common unity. In such a fairly stable atmosphere children readily gain a true sense of who they are and what they can and should do, because their parents know where they belong and what belongs to them. Although no community is perfect, and there are always limitations in the way a community builds itself up, the social fabric that it constructs is essential in the creation of a sane and sound life for its inhabit- ants. People, when they build up their social fabric, fulfil their destiny as human beings and in this way participate in the creative work of God's wisdom that "builds herself a house" and invites people to "walk in the way of insight" (Proverbs 9: 1 & 6). The very wisdom by which God made the world is described as "rejoicing in his inhabited world, and delighting in the sons of men." (Proverbs 8:3)

The disruption of communities through removals and relocations destroys the wisdom and good sense embodied in the community. If people are forced to move, are separated from community ties, lose the property which they and their forebears have built up, are exposed to the elements and disease in ways

they are not used to, then their whole being is dislocated. Their sense of personal worth and social identity is threatened, and sometimes even lost. All this takes place because the pattern of wisdom inherent in their lives has been destroyed, and will take generations to build up again. Such destruction is accelerated when people have been relocated several times and had their dwellings knocked down repeatedly. The full effects and repercussions of forced or induced removals will not be seen for many years; the devastation caused within people through wrecking the established wisdom of a community may take generations to manifest itself fully and take even longer to heal. In this light, the policy of destroying people's places and way of living, and then relocating them in no place of their own choosing, can only be described as an act of folly that tries to thwart the wisdom of God, as it manifests itself in human affairs.

# The destruction of marriage and family life

The establishment of Bantustans and the forced relocation of black people in them makes it increasingly impossible for them to live as families near their places of work. Not only the migratory labour system but also the need for breadwinners to spend many hours commuting long distances to and from work, at considerable expense, systematically destroys family life. This runs counter to both the need to produce a psychologically healthy and stable society, and the respect due to the bonds of marriage and family life. The 1982 Conference of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa condemned "the iniquitous system of migrant labour which flouts the work of our Lord ("What God has joined together, let not man separate"), and destroys the life of the families involved." Likewise Pope John Paul II speaks of the relation of society to family and aptly describes the South African situation when he says:

"Institutions and laws unjustly ignore the inviolable rights of the family and of the human person; and society, far from putting itself at the service of the family, attacks it violently in its values and fundamental requirements."

He continues: "for this reason, the Church openly and strongly defends the rights of the family against the intolerable usurpations of society and the State."[2]

Although the building up and maintaining of a healthy family life is primarily the responsibility and joy of each married couple, even their best efforts are

[1] Conference Minutes, VII, 2(a).
[2] *Familiaris Consortio*, (1981), 46. See further *Charter of the rights of the family*, Vatican City (1983).

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negated as the dominant economic and political forces of South African society operate against them. As the crisis caused by dispossession, relocation and migratory labour deepens, the defence — both for oneself and for others — of each family's rights to exist and progress as a family becomes an increasingly demanding form of Christian witness.

# Conclusion

This report shows clearly that the policy and practice of forced removals and relocations is in no way related to the wisdom or needs of the people it affects immediately. It is the result of the Apartheid concept of separation of people and leads to a worsening of social and economic conditions. These in turn give rise to resentment and in many cases an increase in crime. The Apartheid policy contradicts the Christian principles of love for one's neighbour and unity in Christ. Furthermore it violates tenets of international law.

Motivated by the love of Christ and its corollary, love of neighbour, the Church, all Christians and indeed all people of good will are under a moral obligation to do whatever they can to stop the policy and practice of forced removals.

**We therefore pledge ourselves to resist forced removals, and to support those who do not wish to be compulsorily relocated or who have suffered because of forced removal. We call on all Christians and other people of goodwill to join us in so doing.**

In all healthy societies a government is constantly reminded that the test of success in governing is whether the social conditions of the people under its rule are improving or not. This report makes it clear that in the matter of such removals; government in South Africa has been sadly at fault and as a result there is widespread misery and suffering among many millions of its people.

**We deplore this evil and demand, in the name of Christ in whom we profess our faith, that the government cancel immediately any further plans for removals or relocations.**

The land and all the goods of the earth can never be possessed absolutely by any human beings. They belong in the first place to their Creator, who gives them to the people as a trust to use and enjoy so that the lives of all may be sustained and enriched through human work. All the land in South Africa should be shared for the greatest benefit of all the people.

**We therefore pledge ourselves to continue trying to persuade the Government to acknowledge its failure in carrying out a sacred trust from God. We urge it to appoint an independent commission to plan firstly for a rapid rate of urbanisation and the termination of influx control, and secondly for the acquistion of land outside the Bantustans for the purpose of settling those who have been rendered landless and who are without any other means of survival.**

Such a process of settlement will necessitate a reversal of the policy instituted in the 19th century and applied with increasing severity by successive South African governments. It will entail the repeal of the Natives Land Act of 1936, the abandoning of the Bantustan policy and the restoration of full citizenship rights in a common South Africa. This is the only way to begin a healing process through which the will of the Lord for our unity and not our separation can be done.

In addressing this report to ourselves, we must acknowledge and confess our own failure to till the land and care adequately for the people in the past.

# Acknowledgements