HOUSING & HOSTELS – CAPE

1994

D-day looms in Tafelsig squatter row

S/Times [C/Metro]

2/1/94

By NAZEEM HOWA

THE two-month-old standoff between the city council and squatters who are occupying houses illegally in Tafelsig, Mitchells Plain, is set to end this week.

Despite several backdowns by the city council in the past few weeks, indications are that the municipality will move this week to resolve the crisis

Although the city has imposed a "news blackout" on the problem, sources close to the dispute have confirmed that the council is determined to act decisively to end the standoff.

Thursday is the deadline agreed between the council and squatters for the last of the houses to be evacuated and indications are that firm measures will be taken to evict any illegal occupants that remain

Squatters are occupying 260 houses built in Tafelsig for coloured families who have waited for up to 15 years for council houses (124)

The illegal occupations have been condemned by parties and organisations across the political spectrum — including the ANC — and the council's tardiness in acting has been blamed for the deepening of the dispute.

The president of the ANC, Nelson Mandela, has made it clear that although his organisation is sympathetic towards those who are homeless because of apartheid, it does not condone the illegal occupation of other people's homes

Although the city council was granted a Supreme Court order last month to evict the squatters, the executive committee has chosen so far not to put this into force.

Instead, it has opted to negotiate with squatter leaders The talks have led to the squatters' agreeing to move to a site adjacent to the Tafelsig houses

Reneged

However, earlier agreements have not been adhered to In the most recent breaking of an undertaking, squatters refused to move out of 71 of the Tafelsig homes by December 23 so that the legal occupants could move in before Christmas

The squatters said they had reneged on the agreement because they were unhappy with the three-metre square wooden structures provided as alternate housing

They demanded larger structures — of at least six metres by three metres — with a floor and that additional gravel roads be provided in the area

After these demands, exco chairman Clive Keegan warned that the "full force of the law" would be used However, the squatters remained defiant and said they would use force against anyone who tried to evict them

Mr Keegan, citing the council's "news blackout", declined to comment yesterday

evictu

ARG 4/1/94. (124)

Six held as sheriffs execute court order

ROGER FRIEDMAN and ANDREA WEISS, Staff Reporters

SIX people were arrested as sheriffs began evicting squatters from 71 council starter homes in Tafelsig today.

They were held for trespassing after failing to comply with a court order, said police spokesman John Sterrenberg.

By 11 30am, 40 houses had been cleared of occupants and their possessions and two security guards were on duty in each A source close to the sheriff said there were eviction orders for 58 of the 71 houses.

Tafelsig Action Committee chairman Thandiswe Smile met community members briefly at mid-morning and said he was playing a "waiting game" to see what the council's next move would be.

Meanwhile, council contractors were moving on to the "school site" next to the houses and starting to build wooden bungalows for the squatters.

About 250 houses were illegally occupied two months ago. The 71 are being cleared in terms of a court order in favour of the city council.

Soon after dawn, a cordon was thrown around Tafelsig and 400 police, backed up by the army, moved in to protect sheriffs of the court evicting the squatters.

By 8 30am the contents of 10 of the 71 houses had been put on the street.

As soon as the illegal occupants were removed, the council sent in security guards.

A city housing branch official said it was "unfair to leave those guys alone in the houses", adding that she would try to get the legal occupants in immediately

Peace committee members were on the scene but in spite of action committee pleas for another meeting, the sheriffs continued emptying the houses

The police contingent, heavily armed and wearing bulletproof vests, stood by and helicopters circled.

As the evictions proceeded, a defiant Mr Smile said "These people cannot just kick doors down. They will have to be here 24 hours a day. This action of the city council will make problems for the legal owners as well. The police should leave the area We are not going out until we get a clear response from the council to our demands"

The action committee's demands revolve around the suitability of the wooden huts offered by the council as an alternative to the houses

Executive committee chairman Clive Keegan said today that the evictions had gone ahead only because the action committee had broken an agreement with the council

Under the agreement, the occupants of the 71 houses were to have left by 5pm on December 23 and to have handed keys to the council's housing office in Tafelsig the next day

The council had provided an alternative site-and-service scheme on land earmarked for a school and had offered to loan each household building materials worth about R720.

However, on December 23, the illegal occupants rejected the R720, demanding double plus material for proper floors

Mr Keegan said the squatters' failure to honour the agreement had created an "intolerable situation" that could not be allowed to continue

Mr Keegan said the council had no alternative but to implement the court orders it had obtained to evict the occupants of the first 71 houses The remaining illegal occupants would be given notice to vacate the houses they were in

Tafelsig squatters 'preparing to go'

124

CT 4/1/94

By PETER DENNEHY

ILLEGAL occupiers of 276 council houses in Tafelsig are reconciling themselves to having to move to sparsely serviced sites next door.

Committee leader Mr Julius Twesi showed the Cape Times a list yesterday linking names from the first 71 households due to move, to plots on the new land.

There were only 13 names on the list he provided, each written on to the list by the household head. But Mr Twesi said another copy was doing the rounds, and this contained more names.

One well-known name on Mr Twesi's list was that of Mr Thandisiswe Smile, who last week said in a newspaper interview that residents would simply put their goods back in their houses if they were taken out

"We are busy allocating addresses here to addresses there," Mr Twesi said yesterday. "This means the people are preparing to go to that side."

Mr Twesi was confident the council would still provide wooden shacks on the new land. All the now-breached agreement had required the council to do was provide a loan of R720 per household for building materials.

The council had earlier proposed to provide 3mx3m structures, which are "about half the size" of the illegally-occupied council houses, Mr Twesi said.

Tafelsig tenants move in

(124)

C.T. 7/1/94

By PETER DENNEHY

AFTER months of wrangling, legal tenants of several of the Tafelsig Area L council houses finally moved into their homes yesterday afternoon, just hours after the first 71 illegal squatter occupants were evicted in a dawn raid

The squatters were moved after a massive contingent of 400 policemen and army personnel surrounded the area All entrances to Area L were guarded The actual evictions were carried out by the acting Mitchells Plain sheriff and a dozen assistants

Many of the doors were kicked open when it was found that the council's keys did not fit

There was a scuffle over a peace flag which residents held over a doorway out of which goods were being carried They were allowed to continue to hold it up, but high

Five arrests

Shortly after 8am, when only four households had been evicted, a tense situation developed while occupier-leaders Mr Thandisiswe Smile and Mr Julius Thwesi tried to negotiate for more time and a police withdrawal

The council, in turn, tried to get the leaders to persuade people to remove their own possessions, but in the end the sheriff's assistants did most of the work.

Five people were arrested in connection with trespassing. One, a woman, received a swollen eye, allegedly from one of the sheriff's assistants The latter denied hitting her

The Peace Committee said yesterday the removal of the squatters was inevitable

The council said it had been placed in an intolerable situation when the occupiers broke their signed agreement with it.

● Pictures — Page 5

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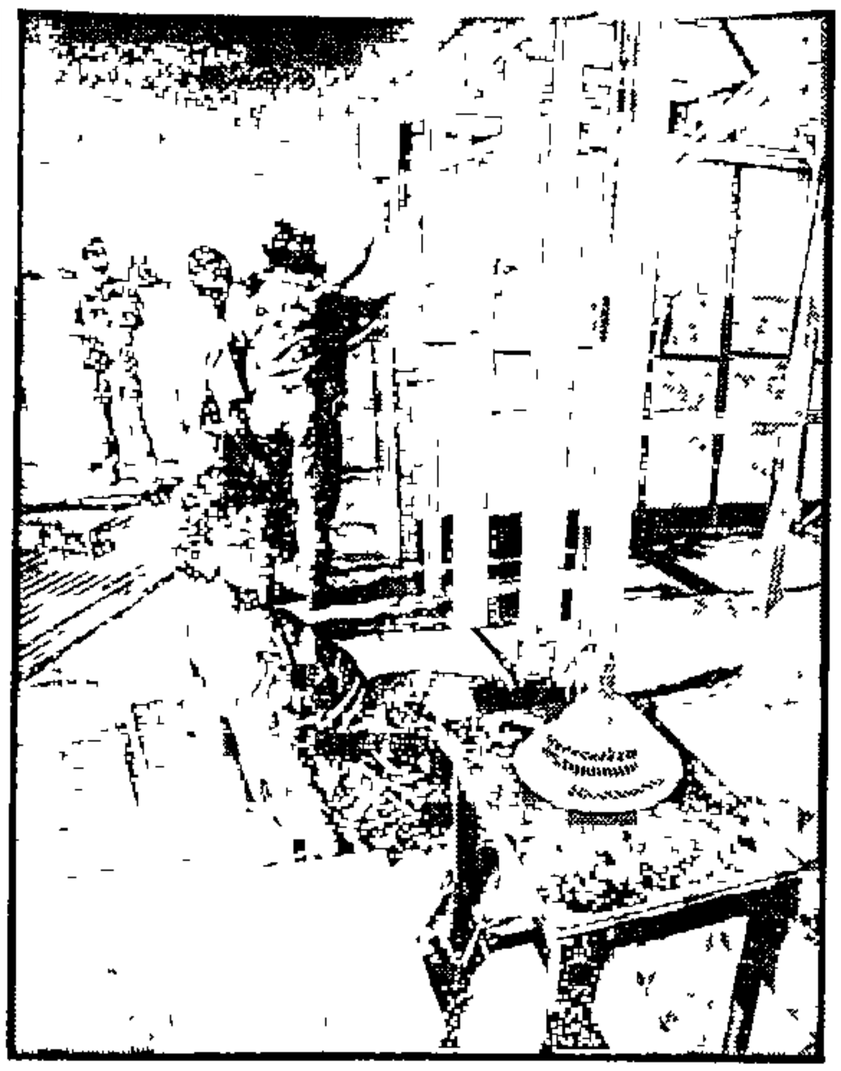
cow," but denied making the other statements.

Earlier Brazelle-Preston pleaded not guilty to the charge.

Magistrate Mr V R Gibson said: "Traffic officers have a thankless job and if there were no traffic officers there would be chaos in the city The court cannot and will not tolerate this kind of behaviour from the public."

The prosecutor was Mr A Bouwer. Brazelle-Preston was not represented



Picture ROY WIGLEY, The Argus

LENDING A HAND: SADF members help Tafelsig squatters to build temporary homes on the serviced site offered to them by the city council.

Soldiers help Tafelsig squatters build homes

(124) ~~(397)~~ ~~(304A)~~

KARIN SCHIMKE
Staff Reporter ARG 5/1/94

THE eviction of squatters from 71 houses illegally occupied in Tafelsig, Mitchell's Plain, ended in relative peace as SADF members put down their weapons and picked up hammers to help erect shacks for the homeless

SADF public relations officer Captain Johan Engelbrecht said he was approached by illegal squatters who asked for help to build shacks using wood and corrugated iron supplied by the city council

Some soldiers put down their weapons and headed into the open serviced site to start building, watched by squatters A few armed troops watched from a short distance.

The squatters' spokesman, Thandisiwe Smile, said he had asked the SADF to help because they were "wasting our tax money just standing around doing nothing

The SADF also brought in large pots of stew and rice to feed about 300 people but were told by Mr Smile that the squatters did not want the food

Mr Smile said "We are a responsible community and there are people who are more in need of the food than we are"

Squatters waiting for their homes to be erected said they appreciated the help but complained about the size of the shacks and the fact that they had no flooring

Doors and windows had not been supplied by late yesterday and some shacks did not have all the material needed to complete them

The final eviction of nearly 80 illegal occupants of houses in Tafelsig was postponed in the Supreme Court today, until February 10

● Report and pictures, page 15

District Six houses for 17 000

ARG 6/1/94

(From page 1)

124

people

Other land up for development includes the Culemborg-Black River area where more than 300 ha is being used for railway services

Land in and around the Bo-Kaap, including the former Defence Force base above Military Road, has been identified for potential housing while discussions are under way about Portnet land near the harbour

Consultants have rejected an aerial cableway up Signal Hill and their advice is likely to be followed when the city council makes a decision on the proposal in mid-1994.

Parking, public transport and general access to the city have been cited as some of Cape Town's biggest problems and a metropolitan planning study is under way

Tenders for building a parking garage for 250 or more cars under Riebeeck Square will be called for this month The council has also given the go-ahead for a 900-bay parking garage at Pier Place on the Foreshore

A light rail route between Cape Town station and the Waterfront has been mapped and the council proposes to extend the old Cape Town road grid across the old power station site

Alternative ways to complete the Foreshore freeways are being investigated and bus lanes will be introduced in Sir Lowry Road

On the conservation front, the Loader, Wandel, Maynard, Waterkant, Upper Bree, Church, Hout, Queen Victoria and Buitenkant Street areas and the Bo-Kaap are proposed as urban conservation areas

For the Lower Gardens, a policy plan has been adopted which recommends retaining residential areas, cancelling road widening, declaring conservation areas and upgrading public open space. A hold has been put on expanding business into the Upper Table Valley

The city planner's department is formulating a high-building policy to guide the siting, design and height of new tall buildings to protect the city's skyline This project is particularly relevant to the Foreshore where there are several undeveloped properties zoned for high-rise buildings.

The plans follow the City Bowl process plan which sought to get "stakeholders" in the city involved in finding ways of revitalising the central business district.

The consensus was that the City Bowl should be "transport-driven, flourishing, with people in the streets, housing and tourism, an 18-hour-active place with strong links to the sea, mountain and its historic buildings and precincts".

An inner city task group has been formed to steer the plan and architect Revel Fox has been nominated as chairman

—WICKET

District 6 heads big city facelift

ARG 6/1/94

124

ANDREA WEISS, Staff Reporter

HOUSES for 17 000 people in District Six are among several projects starting soon which will change the face of central Cape Town.

A city planner's department status report details some of the changes envisaged in 1994 — including parking for more than 1 000 vehicles, a taxi rank on the station deck, the expropriation of the Table Mountain cableway and a plan to protect the city's skyline.

The Community Land Trust to be launched soon will take over 39 hectares of vacant state and council land in District Six.

The trust's objective will be to secure and hold land for the provision of affordable housing.

It will set up non-profit development companies to plan and develop each area, the first being the District Six Company which will build low-rise high-density affordable housing for about 17 000

(To page 4, col 1)

OUT: Evicted squatter Ismael Jordaan has great difficulty manoeuvring his wheelchair through the sand outside the shack given to him by the city council. He is helped by Siphiwe Bevu and Lungsile Klaas

Smiles and heartbreak as real owners move in

Staff Reporter (124)

LEGAL Tafelsig residents who moved in to their houses after squatters were evicted are beaming, but there's bitterness and heartbreak on the other side of the tracks.

Taxi driver Moegamat Dreyer said he had waited 10 years for a house and held no grudge against the squatters who prevented him from moving in last month.

"I am very grateful . I have four children and a wife we have been moving from place to place," he said

Rosalyn Augustus also has four children and lived in a "tiny room" in Woodlands before moving to her own home this week

"I will begin by painting the house inside and out and laying carpets," she said

Shamilah Williams has been waiting for a house for nine years

"I feel satisfied and very happy," she said of her new home

"I am not bitter about the squatters . I'm sorry for them, but everyone must wait their turn"

Rieduwaan Fisher said he had hoped to move in by Christmas "but this is at least early in the new year".

Minus Klaas was evicted on Tuesday and moved to a 3 sq m shack provided by the city council on Tuesday night.

"It is very small, the ground is not level and the streets are in a shocking condition ARG 6/1/94

"I was not given enough corrugated iron sheeting and I'm convinced the whole thing will blow down in the next strong wind," he said

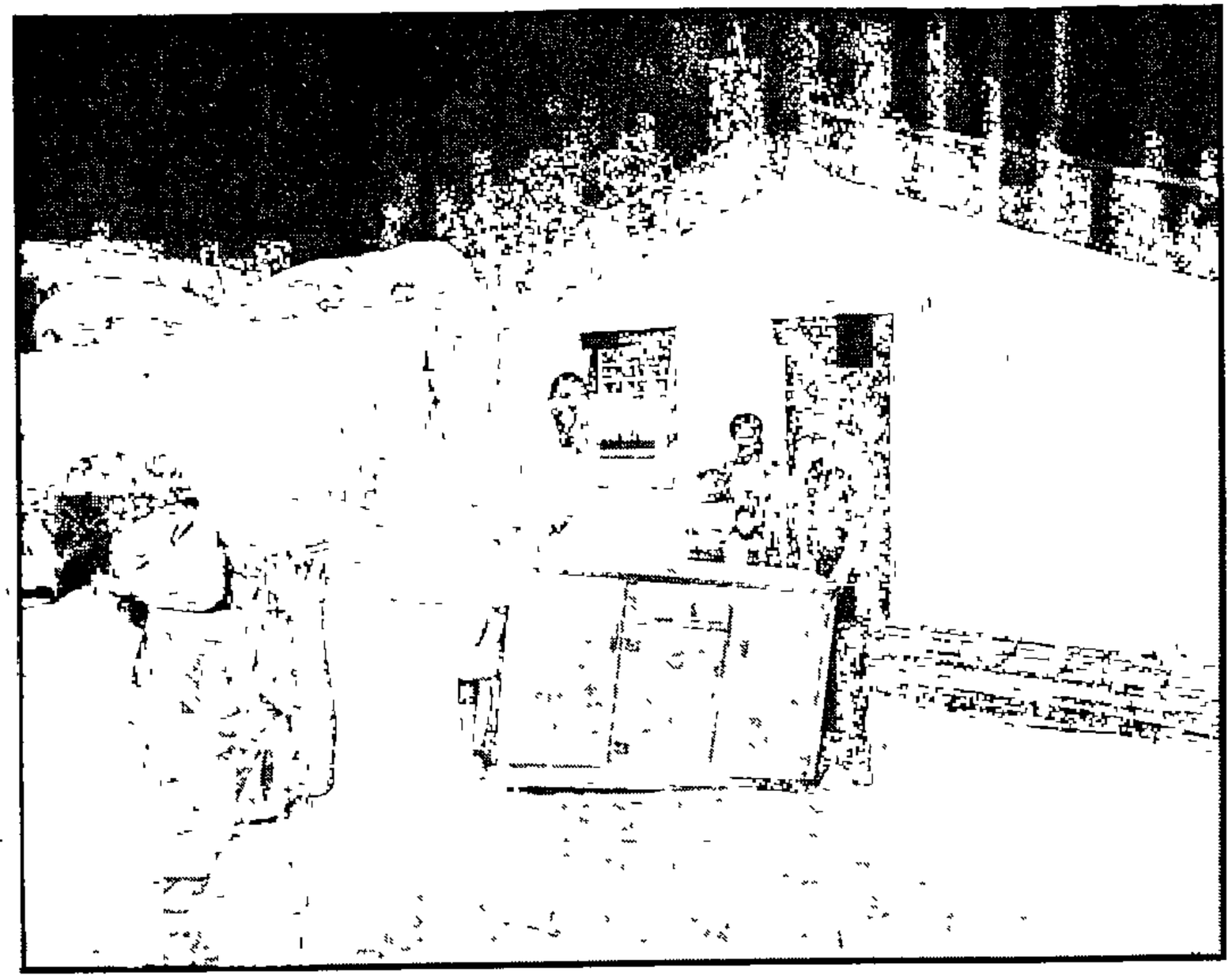
Socrates Ndaka agreed the shacks would not last long in the wind

"This house is not good. It's too small .... we are eight in my family. The shack I built in Khayelitsha was much stronger than this It was built on foundations," he said

Wheelchair-bound Ismael Jordaan said it was impossible to move all his belongings into his tiny structure.

"It is difficult to move the chair around in such a confined space too And I need assistance to go anywhere because I cannot get my wheelchair through the soft sand

"But what can I do? I have nowhere to go."



Pictures ROY WIGLEY The Argus

IN: The Fisher family are over the moon about being in their own home after eight long years on the waiting list.

Confusion as Tafelsig residents come and go

☐ Some families moved from house to house

ARG 6/1/94 (124)

ROGER FRIEDMAN
Staff Reporter

CONFUSION surrounded the occupation by "legal owners" of some of the houses vacated by Tafelsig squatters

Some families were moved from house to house while others allegedly took one look at the houses and decided against moving in

The squatters were evicted by sheriffs on Tuesday after a two-month stand-off between them and the city council

About half the empty houses were occupied yesterday, while evicted squatters settled on adjacent land provided by the council.

Council executive committee chairman Clive Keegan said it was "quite possible, given the circumstances on Tuesday, that one or two people were moved about in the confusion" But he emphasised that all the houses had been allocated before the squatters moved in

"Many people had already paid their deposits," he said

Interviewed at her sister's Sheila Road house, Christelle Williams said the family moved in yesterday.

"They put us in another house for the morning until the family in this house were moved away There was a whole mix-up people were being moved from house to house," Ms Williams said.

An evicted squatter who asked not to named said he arrived "home" on Tuesday evening to find his belongings on the pavement and a family had moved in.

But before he had time to move his belongings, the family moved out, saying they did not like the house — so he moved back in

Yesterday his possessions were back in the street and a security guard was in the house.

Tafelsig was rife with allegations that the council had been in such a hurry to get occupants into the vacant houses that it had ignored the waiting list in some cases

A yet-to-be-evicted squatter said she approached her new neighbours last night to be told "they had just been grabbed from nowhere"

The occupants were not home when an Argus team visited the house last night.

Tafelsig Action Committee chairman Thandisizwe Smile said he had information that at least one person was not on the waiting list

"This indicates discrimination, naked racism as well as the corrupt housing policy in the Western Cape

"If these allegations are substantiated, we will leave it to our political organisations to sort out," Mr Smile said

Mr Keegan dismissed the allegations as "absolute nonsense"

Start to District Six affordable housing

ROBYN CHALMERS

PLANS to redevelop Cape Town's District Six have been given the go-ahead with the construction of affordable housing for 17 000 people expected to begin within months. B/Day

A Cape Town City Council spokesman said 39ha of state and council land would be transferred to a land holding body. The government had bought up large tracts of private land in the area for the housing project. 7/11/94

"A community land trust will be set up shortly following discussions between the community, the council and the Cape Technikon, which has taken up much of the developed land in the area," he said. (124)

The trust would be launched with donor finance and would seek to acquire further land for the provision of affordable housing. "There will be eight trustees, two from government, two from the council and four from the community," said the spokesman.

The District Six development would provide low-rise, high-density affordable housing and associated facilities.

District Six housed about 600 000 coloured people before they were forcibly removed in the 60s and 70s to make way for white residents.

However, extensive tracts of the original 100ha of land were left vacant until three years ago, when a District Six steering committee was set up to investigate redevelopment.

SQUATTERS

Fm 7/1/94

Property under threat

(124)

Cape Town City Council turned tough this week and started evicting squatters from 276 council houses at Tafelsig in Mitchells Plain after squatter leaders allegedly reneged on an agreement to vacate voluntarily.

Backed by about 400 police and troops, sheriffs of the court moved in to clear possessions from 71 houses. The council planned to use security guards to secure the properties, until the legal occupants could move in, but squatter leader Thandisizwe Smile warned that evicted squatters would try to regain occupation

Notices to leave the remaining 205 houses within 14 days have been served on the other squatters. If they refuse they also risk forcible eviction.

Cape Town executive committee chairman Clive Keegan says the failure by squatters to honour the agreement reached on December 17 created an "intolerable situation" that could not be allowed to continue. "While the city council has attempted at all times to deal with this matter with tact and patience, we have an obligation towards approximately 276 families who have been on the council's waiting list for up to 15 years and have for two months been denied the opportunity to move into homes allocated to them "

The squatters were due to have been evicted before last month's agreement, following the collapse of earlier negotiations, but further talks led to what appeared to be an amicable settlement

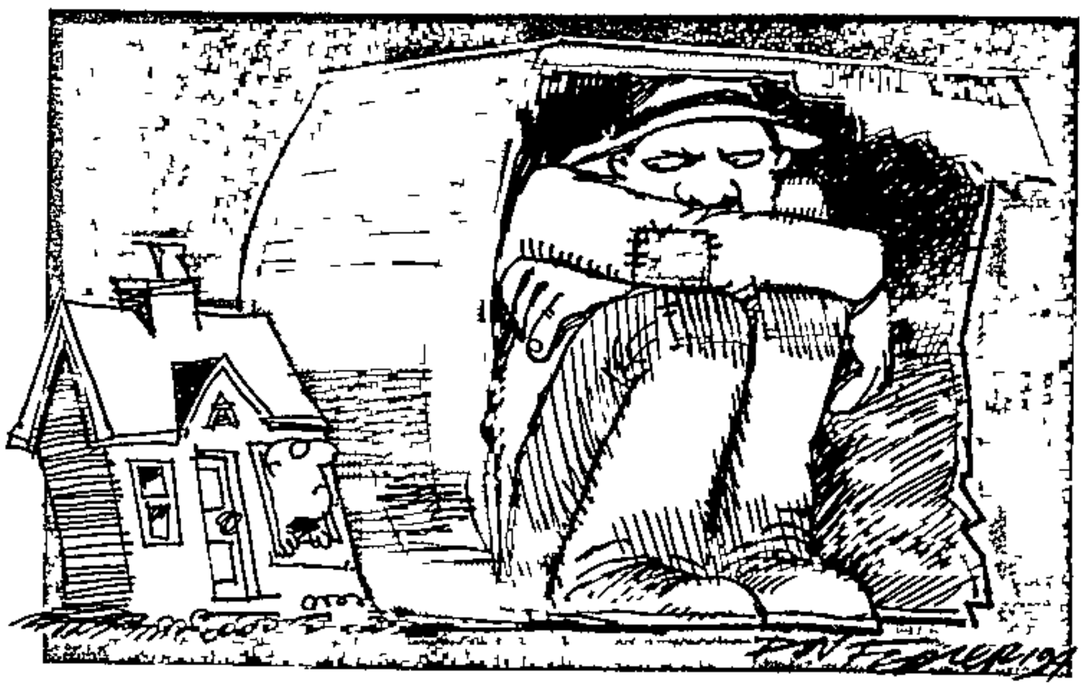
The crisis began in October when people from neighbouring Khayelitsha occupied the uncompleted Tafelsig houses, all of which had been allocated to families on the council's housing waiting list. In some cases deposits had been paid by prospective purchasers In terms of current policy, the council provides some housing — rented and for sale — to coloured people It is not responsible for black housing

Last month's agreement, signed by the council and a committee claiming to represent the squatters, included provision for 71 houses to be vacated by December 23 The council undertook to make available a nearby vacant site for occupation by squatters and provide building material worth about R720 for one occupant from each illegally occupied house.

The agreement also provided that if any of its terms were breached, the council could take whatever steps it deemed necessary to evict the squatters.

Keegan says on December 23 the squatters rejected the council's offer of material worth R720 and demanded double the amount plus material for a proper floor Under the circumstances, he says, the council had no option other than to act in terms of the agreement and implement the eviction order

☐ In Durban, an agreement was brokered by National Housing Minister Louis Shill to resolve the Cato Manor squatter crisis, which has dragged on since the beginning of November when shack dwellers from the black Chesterville township spilled over the N2 highway to Wiggins Road, Cato Manor, and occupied new houses allocated to low-income Indian families by the House of Delegates



But the squatters — there are now 1 200 families — are showing no signs of moving

Apparently they will stay where they are until alternative accommodation is provided by the authorities

The positive spin-off of the crisis is that large-scale housing development will, after long delays, begin at Cato Manor

The downside is that rewarding the squatters for taking the law into their own hands creates a dangerous precedent.

Durban management committee chairman Peter Mansfield argues that "this sort of issue will be much more manageable, once democratically elected national and regional governments are in place. A big part of the current problem is that many of those affected regard existing authorities as illegitimate "

☐ At Nooitgedacht, a controversial site north of Sandton, white residents have been manning overnight roadblocks to prevent squatters taking building materials to a settlement on nearby land ■

Thousands respond to council's rates survey

(124) CT 8/1/94

SOME 5 000 responses to the Cape Town City Council's survey on whether property rates increases should be kept below the inflation rate, or whether the council should improve its service levels instead

The survey was sent out with rates bills last week. Replies have been requested before January 15, but some leeway may be allowed after that

Mr Mike Richardson of the city treasurer's department said it was too early to say which option ratepayers supported although many included letters in their response to the survey

Eviction notices on Tafelsig illegals

CT 18/1/94 (124)

Staff Reporter

EVICTION notices were yesterday served on 200 families illegally occupying houses at Tafelsig, Mitchells Plain, the City Council confirmed last night

Those failing to comply would be removed by force and resettled on serviced sites and supplied with building materials valued at R720, spokesman Mr Ted Doman said

They have until the end of the month to leave

Mr Doman said the families against whom eviction notices had been served, had been in the homes since the first illegal squatters started moving out late last year

He said in December the council served notice against six families in the area, but when they had served these, another 70 had already moved in

By the time notices were served on the additional 70 families and they had been evicted, the number had swelled to about 200 families, Mr Doman said

Administrator orders valuation roll probe

ARG 18/1/94 (124)

☐ Commission to assess councillors' decisions

CLIVE SAWYER
Municipal Reporter

ADMINISTRATOR Kobus Meiring has appointed a commission of inquiry into whether city councillors and officials erred in drawing up last year's controversial valuation roll

The three-member commission, headed by retired magistrate P J Putter, will hold its first hearing on January 24

Appointed at council request, it will probe

● Possible wrong work methods, procedures and decisions by officials or councillors which led to the Supreme Court ruling the 1990 valuation roll was not correctly done,

● Which people and institutions were responsible for any erroneous actions, and to what extent they can be held responsible for fruitless spending,

● Whether the city council, at its annual budget meeting, noted drastic increases in valuations in parts of the municipal area and made sufficient adjustments to rates to alleviate hardship

Meanwhile, a city treasurer's report to the executive committee said 38 000 accounts eligible for rates relief were being checked, while 20 000 other adjustments made to rates accounts before the setting aside of the roll were still to be checked

Applications for pensioners' rebate schemes and a "growing number" of requests for refunds were still to be checked, the report said

City treasurer Eddie Landsberg has asked exco to allow an additional R65 000 to be spent on temporary staff helping to update accounts

Exco last year put a R40 000 limit on hiring 18 temporary staff to help with the project

Mr Landsberg said this allocation would run out by the end of this month

"If the requested additional funds are not set aside the tasks related to the setting aside of the 1990 roll will be delayed for an inordinate time," he said

Locals refuse to pay bills

(124)

Staff Reporter

MANDALAY residents who have had a longstanding dispute with Eskom over "exorbitant" electricity accounts have decided to stop paying the electricity company

Spokesman for the local committee Mr Thandile Gubevu said that at a meeting of 200 "angry" residents last night it had been decided that each family would pay R50 into a trust account

Once the dispute had been resolved the money would be paid to Eskom

Mr Gubevu said that since late last year each family had been paying R50 to Eskom to show that people were prepared to pay for their electricity

However, he said Eskom had accepted the R50 from people paying by cheque but not the money of those making cash payments

The committee had sought legal advice and the Stellenbosch branch of Lawyers for Human Rights was considering legal action against Eskom, Mr Gubevu said

Residents had also resolved to collect signatures for a petition which would be sent to Eskom's headquarters and to its chief executive officer

The committee would also "seek relief" through the national electricity forum

An Eskom spokesman could not be reached for comment last night

CT 19/1/94

Arrears up by R14,8 million

CT 19/1/94 (124)

'Cut off more homes' call

Staff Reporter

ELECTRICITY account arrears for the Cape Town metropolitan area have increased by R14,8 million during the past 12 months

A report by the city treasurer and city electrical engineer states that a high level of disconnections had been maintained throughout the period

Improvement

At yesterday's exco meeting, city treasurer Mr Eddie Landsberg recommended that the rate of disconnections be pushed up

According to the report submitted to exco, it was expected that arrears should show some improvement, although it appeared unlikely that the position could be substantially retrieved in the short-term "without recourse to more intensive recovery procedures"

"The recent tariff increase will inevitably have a continuing and increasing impact on future arrears and it may become necessary to accelerate the monthly disconnection programme above the present target of 12 000 in order to counter any further deterioration," it stated

The delayed despatch of a considerable number of consumer accounts during September and October 1993 resulted from the intermittent disruption in billing processes, they said

Report

This was the result of problems initially encountered following the introduction of a new meter reading system which had a "significant adverse impact" on the current arrears position, according to the report

A further report on arrears will be submitted to exco at a later date

DP welcomes probe into valuation roll

(124)

Political Staff

THE Democratic Party yesterday welcomed the appointment of a three-person commission of inquiry into the drawing up and implementation of the City Council's 1990 valuation roll CT 20/1/94

"This exercise will enhance the accountability of both public representatives and officials," said a statement issued by DP leader in the Western Cape, Mr Hennie Bester He also commended the City Council for requesting the commission

'R7m refuse bill but no homes'

(124)

CT 20/1/94

Staff Reporter

MORE than R7 million was paid by the Ikapa town council to a refuse removal company for services to thousands of houses which did not exist, a commission of inquiry heard yesterday

Senior accountant Mr Basil Berowsky said there were only 960 houses in the KTC squatter camp, yet SA Bio-Tech was paid for services to 8 263 houses

He said monthly cheques of about R456 000, for services to 10 squatter areas, were signed by town treasurer Mr Ian Grisdale and chief executive officer Mr J Olivier He said this was "very strange as the CEO never features in payment"

Mr Berowsky said Mr Grisdale "evaded" signing cheques after other waste removal companies asked why they had not seen a tender for the account

He added that cheques were always personally delivered by Mr Olivier and drawn immediately

Mr Hannes Smit, "a so-called computer expert" appointed to introduce a new computer system, knew little about computers and could not write a programme, Mr Berowksy said

• Mr Johan Nieuwoudt, one of the senior officials implicated in the irregularities being investigated, died of a heart attack on Tuesday evening

The commission continues on Monday

CPA pays R22m towards arrears

(124) ARG 25/1/94

CLIVE SAWYER
Municipal Reporter

THE provincial administration is to pay Cape Town City Council R22 million towards the debts of black local authorities

The first payment, R5 592 000, was made on December 21 Payments of R5,5 million each will be made in February, March, and April

But, the council says it will not drop legal action against the local authorities of Ikapa, Lingelethu West and Mfuleni

Summonses were served on the three local authorities on December 1.

The council last month reduced the water supply to Mfuleni and Ikapa and cut power to Ikapa administrative buildings

Deputy city administrator Gill Bolton said legal proceedings would not be withdrawn

"All the council's rights immediately to proceed with the actions and apply for default judgment, without any further notice to the local authorities, are expressly reserved in the event of any one of the scheduled payments not being made"

The council also reserved its rights to proceed with legal action, should "no further acceptable proposals" be made about settling the balance which would be owing after April

It is understood black local authorities owed the city council a total of R100 million before the first payment

Meanwhile, city treasurer Eddie Landsberg has recommended that the council renew a 12-month contract with a firm of debt collectors

Aza Credit was hired by the council in November 1990 to collect debts in Langa and Guguletu

Inquiry begins into rates rise debacle by council

(124) ARG 25/1/94

Municipal Reporter

RATEPAYERS had only "some understanding of the potential impact" when Cape Town imposed new municipal rates, town clerk Keith Nicol has told a commission of inquiry into the city's rates debacle

Mr Nicol handed the commission two boxes of documents related to executive committee decisions on the 1990 valuation roll.

The commission, headed by retired magistrate P J Putter, began hearings yesterday

Its brief includes determining whether anybody was to blame for the handling of the roll — which brought huge increases to property valuations — and whether more should have been done to alleviate the impact

Mr Nicol told the inquiry there had been several "public involvement sessions" before the adoption of last year's budget in an attempt to tell ratepayers of its implications

He said there had been "some understanding of the potential impact (of the valuation roll) without an exact idea of the impact on individuals"

The city council had been "fully aware" of the areas in which the shift in valuations was clearer.

There had been a big reaction only when people received their accounts, Mr Nicol said.

Handing in the boxes, Mr Nicol said they were records kept by the city administrator's department

Records of the city planner's and city treasurer's departments were available, he told the inquiry.

Hearings continue today.

Valuation task 'impossible'

(124) CT 26/1/94

Staff Reporter

PROPERTY assessors had been given the "impossible task" of completing a rates valuation roll within two years, city council chief valuation officer Mr Ray Stephan yesterday told an inquiry into last year's rates debacle

The commission of inquiry, headed by retired magistrate Mr P J Putter, was appointed at the request of Cape Administrator Mr Kobus Meiring to investigate possible erroneous work methods, procedures and decisions in the execution of the roll — and who is responsible

This arose from a Supreme Court ruling in October last year that the 1990 general valuation roll, which was put into operation on July 1, was not correctly implemented and that the council should revert to the 1979 roll

Objections

The commission has also been tasked to find out whether the city council, at its annual budget meeting, had noted drastic increases in some municipal areas and made sufficient rates adjustments to ease hardship

Yesterday Mr Stephan said that, before the rates valuations in 1979, they had last been valued in 1956 "We were given the impossible task in 1990 to complete the valuation roll in two years"

He said "much of our time" was taken up compiling a computer programme and appointing rates valuators Problems included difficulty in finding qualified valuators, and a computer programme written by a council programmer "who didn't know anything about valuations"

Mr Stephan said the council had received 15 000 objections to the rates valuation roll and there had been much criticism of the council for "waste of money"

● City Council spokesman Mr Ted Doman said yesterday a date for a new rates valuation roll had not yet been decided on

Atlantis: Mass action threat

Staff Reporter (124)

ATLANTIS residents facing evictions because of rental, water and electricity supply arrears have threatened the Western Cape Regional Services Council (WCRSC) with mass action unless the moratorium which expires at the end of January is lifted

CT 26/1/94

At a packed meeting in an Atlantis school hall on Sunday residents said "all the arrears of the African townships, especially Soweto", were to be scrapped, and demanded that their arrears also be scrapped

A mass demonstration was planned at the WCRSC's Wesfleur offices for next Monday

CAPE

1990 valuers not sworn in, inquiry into debacle told

☐ But it would not have made any difference, chief valuer claims

(124) ARG 26/1/94

CLIVE SAWYER, Municipal Reporter

VALUERS who worked on the controversial 1990 Cape Town valuation roll were not all properly appointed, a provincial commission of inquiry was told

City council chief valuation officer Ray Stephan said 22 consultants were hired by the city council to help with the valuation

Not all were sworn in by the provincial director of valuations because the council did not believe this was necessary, because final valuations were being done by council staff, who were properly appointed

And even if there been different procedures for appointing valuers, it would have made no difference to the result of the valuation, said Mr Stephan

Asked what changes he would want made to the valuation ordinance, Mr Stephan said it was not necessary to inspect each property

The valuation exercise, which led to last year's row, took three years and cost more than R4 million, only to be overturned by the Supreme Court after procedural errors were found

Mr Stephan said valuers had had "a major task' thrust on them in 1990 when the new valuation roll was commissioned.

Previous council efforts to hire additional qualified valuers had failed, he said

"Had there not been delays in getting staff, we would have been able to finish in July 1992," he said

The hearing, chaired by P J Putter, continues today

Rates fiasco: Exco blamed

CT 27/1/94 (124)

Values correct — treasurer

Staff Reporter

THE council should have fought to keep the new valuations roll as Cape Town could ill afford the loss of income, an inquiry into last year's R4 million rates debacle heard yesterday

The three-man commission of inquiry is being headed by magistrate Mr P J Putter

Senior department heads in the Cape Town City Council were "very disappointed" when the executive committee set aside the 1990 valuations roll in favour of the 1979 valuation roll on "moral grounds", city treasurer Mr Abraham Landsberg told the commission

He said the new rate adjustments (coupled with the new rebate adjustments) gave a true indication of business and residential property values — particularly along the Atlantic seaboard where 25 homeowners had their rates increased by 1 000% because of the high value of their properties

Mr Landsberg told the commission the executive committee had voted by one vote to increase the rebate from 26% to 35%

"I recommended they stick to a 26% rebate and not to push this up to 35% due to the economic circumstances in which the city found itself "

However he said the City Council had voted by 14 votes to 13 in favour of increasing the rebate from 26% to 35%

Mr Landsberg said "very high" rate increases of up to 1 000% involved only 25 properties in high-value areas This was out of a total of 184 000 properties in the Cape Town area, he said

"Those which showed no change or a reduction in rates amounted to approximately 32% of the total number of properties while those which had increases of above 40% represented about 20% of property owners "

Regarding the public outcry when the new roll was applied, Mr Landsberg said "Exco said in essence they were not primarily concerned with the implications of setting the roll aside but were primarily concerned if there were legal flaws If so, then they felt they were morally bound to set the roll aside

"Department heads felt that exco's emphasis should not have been on the implications of setting the roll aside but on whether there were legal ways to preserve the roll "

As a result, 30 000 rate accounts had to be re-adjusted to the 1979 valuation roll when the Supreme Court ordered that the 1990 roll be set aside

The hearing continues on Monday

City Council ignored its officials on valuation

(124) ARGUS 27/1/94

☐ Some wanted rates imposed

CLIVE SAWYER
Municipal Reporter

THE executive committee disregarded the advice of five top council officials — including three department heads — when it recommended asking for the 1990 valuation roll to be overturned, a commission of inquiry has heard

City treasurer Eddie Landsberg said he, the town clerk, city administrator, city planner and director of information services had urged the council to retain the new valuation roll

But exco had said it had a "moral" obligation to set aside the roll because of possible legal flaws

The committee had not been concerned with the implications of setting the roll aside

While new valuations had caused a huge row, valuation increases of 1 000 percent or more were found in only 25 out of more than 180 000 examples

Only 20 percent of Cape Town properties had their valuations increased by more than 40 percent

About 32 percent of properties had no increase, or their valuations were reduced

Mr Landsberg referred to a transcript of a council meeting where then mayor Clive Keegan repeatedly said to then exco chairman Louis Kreiner he (Mr Keegan) had heard exco had not properly considered the views of department heads

Earlier the council had overruled by 14 votes to 13 Mr Landsberg's advice to keep the residential rebate at 26 percent, instead of increasing it to 35 percent

The increased rebate would have been little help to poorer people, but would have had a bigger alleviating affect on rates of high-valued properties

Mr Landsberg said businesses had indicated they would have preferred the 26 percent rebate to be kept

Direct costs of the valuation exercise were R4 million

It would take "a tremendous amount of work" to calculate internal costs accurately Mr Landsberg estimated these were about R4 million

Thousands of accounts had to be adjusted after the roll was set aside by an order of the Supreme Court

The council had decided to send out accounts before the adjustment to avert a cash-flow problem

"The worst scenario was that nobody would pay accounts, I would be short of cash and would have to use investments and borrow (money) to bridge the gap," Mr Landsberg said

If this had happened, the loss of interest income could have been up to R30 million

By hiring 18 extra staff and reassigning others, lost interest income was reduced to about R1 million

Asked by chairman P J Putter what measures could be implemented to soften the impact of increased rates, Mr Landsberg said owners of properties facing huge increases could take second bonds

The city council could assist by allowing deferment of payments

Mr Landsberg said he and other department heads were unanimous in recommending the roll be preserved, using legal alternatives

Assistant valuation officer Emil Weichardt said the valuation roll had been accurate

Mr Putter quoted a newspaper report that city councillor and lawyer Norman Osburn had asked the court to set aside the roll without ruling on whether commercial buildings should be valued in terms of market value

Mr Weichardt said the central business district had "got on to the bandwagon" and had persuaded the Democratic Party to withdraw part of its grounds for wanting the roll overturned

Asked why not all properties had been inspected for valuation, Mr Weichardt said it would have been impossible to value all Cape Town properties within two years

"The only way was to use computer modelling"

Mr Weichardt said his department had "strongly" recommended the roll not be set aside

"We felt the valuation roll was done reasonably, in good faith, and was accepted by the valuation fraternity

"Only once the rates accounts were received did we get complaints, and the politicians got involved"

Asked why valuers were given only two years to complete the exercise, Mr Weichardt said "To this day we do not know"

Then city treasurer Don Geyer was told by staff there was not enough time to do the job, Mr Weichardt said

The inquiry continues on Monday

FM 28/1/94

CLIFTON BUNGALOWS

Much ado about nothing

Objections by the ANC are unlikely to delay the imminent sale of about 100 council-owned bungalow sites at Clifton on Cape Town's Atlantic coast

ANC leaders in the western Cape believe the sale should be frozen pending the transition to a more democratic system of local government But both the council and the site lessees argue that a commitment to sell was made more than seven years ago and the sale should not be delayed any longer

Last year the council agreed on a pricing mechanism *(Property* November 12) It decided that prices would be determined by current market value rather than a formula based on 1986 values escalated at 15% a year as was previously mooted Council-appointed valuers have completed their work and the proposed sale is expected to be advertised for possible objections within the next few weeks (124)

Clifton-on-Sea and District Bungalow Owners' Association chairman Geoffrey Hirschmann says anyone is free to object but he believes it would be grossly unfair to lessees to object on the grounds that the decision to sell cannot be taken until a new system of local government is in place

"The ANC has complained that there was no consultation with them on the issue But that's not correct In June 1992 the council postponed its decision for a month to allow for consultations with the ANC, the SA National Civics Organisation and the Cape Housing Advisory Committee

"In January and February last year there were further consultations between these groups and the council, and then it also had consultations with the Administrator."

Hirschmann says lessees have been living under a cloud of uncertainty for years For the past few months even the transfer of leases has been frozen, which has effectively stopped all trading in leases in the area

He says the perception that all Clifton bungalow owners are fat cats is unfair. There are some wealthy residents but most are not rich and many have been forced to sell other assets or make substantial financial commitments to raise the money needed to buy their sites. ■

SLP, communities agree over housing projects

By MAGGIE ROWLEY (124)
Property Editor CT 29/1/94

AGREEMENT has been reached between the Serviced Land Project (SLP) and local communities over which housing projects in the Cape are to be given priority

Housing expert and co-ordinator of the project Colin Appleton said that the first areas to be upgraded would be Crossroads, KTC, Millers Camp, Black City, Browns Farm and Lusaka

In addition, priority would be given to a number of new developments in Philippi East, Langa, Weltevreden Valley and southern Delft and funds for some of these were already available, he said

He said that 1 000ha of land was available within the SLP for development of residential sites for low-income families encompassing Langa, Nyanga, Guguletu and the many informal settlements as well as large areas of vacant land

Appleton said that over the past three years a coalition comprising all the community groups and public authorities in the areas had designed a project to cater for the upgrading of these areas and the provision of services.

"At present we can provide individual ownership of sites that at least have their own water supply and WC. The owner can build whatever kind of dwelling can be afforded and then improve it over time with support from the SLP

"If, however, the expected new national housingpolicy can provide something better this will be incorporated into the overall project"

He said each project will be managed by a committee comprising representatives of the communities and of the public authorities.

"We have been very encouraged by the synergy that has developed within the serviced land project and is now being manifested in the organisation of individual projects

"We expect the first project committee to be established within the next fortnight and for progress to be rapid

"We are all committed to creating at least 32 000 sites within the next five years so that those in need have something definite to look forward to"

He said the SLP was expected to cost at least R700m and as much of this as possible will be channelled into lcoal communities through emloyment creation programmes, the use of local contractors and the applicaiton of labour-intensive development techniques

Meanwhile, according to reliable sources the National Housing Forum and the Minister of Housing Louis Shill are close to finalising the names for the Regional Housing Boards

Each party has submitted six of their own names and are currently negotiating the remaining six. A final decision is expected by the end of next week

Sources said that the Regional Housing Boards were likely to be up and running by mid-February by which time an interim housing policy should have been finalised

35 Tafelsig squatters go, others agree to move out

CT 1/2/94

THIRTY-FIVE more illegal tenants of houses in the Tafelsig area have vacated the homes and another 38 have undertaken to move out (124) (307)

Yesterday was the Cape Town City Council's deadline for 98 illegal occupiers to leave the houses, and another 103 occupiers will be given notice shortly

An assistant city administrator, Mr Attie van der Merwe, said no action would be taken immediately to force the squatters out The council would await their response to the deadline, he said — Sapa

Director appears before valuation roll inquiry

Staff Reporter

THE director of valuations for the Cape Provincial Administration, Mr Louis Pretorius, told the commission of inquiry investigating the City Council's 1990 valuation roll that he had only become involved in the setting up of the valuations at a late stage

Mr Pretorius said yesterday that his involvement began at the last meeting about the valuations held in March 1993

He had approved of the procedures adopted for the drawing up of the valuation roll, he said

The deputy director of valuations for the CPA, Mr Ben Korf, also appeared before the commission and said that he had been satisfied with the method used for the valuation roll

The inquiry, headed by retired magistrate Mr P J Putter, was appointed at the request of Cape Administrator Mr Kobus Meiring

It is investigating possible erroneous work methods, procedures and decisions in the execution of the roll and is attempting to pinpoint who is responsible

(124) CT 1/2/94

The hearing continues today

Mamre's electricity network sparks debate

(124)

ARG 1/2/94

WHO should be in charge of the electrical reticulation of Mamre?

That seemingly innocuous — and perhaps not grippingly interesting — question sparked a mini-debate on the metropolitan future

The Western Cape Regional Services Council (RSC) has asked to take over electrical reticulation of the town

Asked to comment, the council executive committee said the entrustment "should be held in abeyance, pending finality on the restructuring of local government"

Exco said it was "in any event, not appropriate to classify the electrical reticulation of Mamre as a regional function"

Dick Friedlander challenged this, saying that whatever was decided should be in the best interests of the people of Mamre

He said electrical reticulation was to be a metropolitan function, and the RSC was to be replaced by a metropolitan council

Frank van der Velde said it was an "erroneous assumption" that the RSC was to be replaced by the metro council

The request was simply empire-building by the RSC

It had been suggested that electrification would be a regional, and not metropolitan, function

Mr Van der Velde said the RSC was to be abolished and a completely new structure set up in the form of the metropolitan council

Councillors voted 20 to one to oppose the entrustment to the RSC

More Tafelsig squatters evicted

(124)

ARGT 1/2/94

Pictures BRENTON GEACH, The Argus

EVICTED: Monica Leeu, mother of a three-month-old baby, at the new site after being evicted from one of the houses illegally occupied in Tafelsig.

EDWARD MOLOINYANE
Staff Reporter

TAFFELSIG was today teeming with members of the Security Forces and police as another batch of squatters was evicted from the council houses

The city council said that of the 98 families who had been given notice, 50 had already moved, and another 23 had agreed to do so. The remaining families would be evicted today.

All had been served with eviction notices which expired yesterday.

The squatters said at least five men were arrested yesterday as they ripped doors and windows from the houses to use as building materials at the new site nearby.

Khaya Maseko of the Tafelsig Action Committee, which represents the squatters, said the city council had failed to provide the families with building materials, as promised, in time for yesterday's deadline.

While the rest of the families had vacated the houses last week, he said, the eight could not leave as the council supplied only wooden frames without doors and windows.

Some of the families were not home when sheriffs removed their possessions from the houses today.

He said the situation was "very confusing" as the squatters had had to deal with three different groups of city council officials.

While one group had assured the squatters yesterday that they would not be evicted until all the building material had been provided, another group had a "different agenda".

"Most people went to work today believing they would have to leave only when materials had been provided, but the sheriffs just arrived and kicked open doors, before throwing people's possessions out," he said.

The mother of a three-month-old baby, Monica Leeu, said her boyfriend Winston Ntlonti was yesterday arrested by members of the Peninsula Security Guards who found him ripping a window out of a house to use at the new site.

Another squatter, Mrs Nomboniso Malima, said at least four men in her street had been arrested for similar offences.

ON THE MOVE . . . Squatters who illegally occupied houses in Tafelsig in October were yesterday forcibly removed. Here a man unloads his possessions outside his new shack home Picture CLIVE SMITH

Council didn't provide, say 'homeless' squatters

CT 2/2/94 (124)

Staff Reporter

UNDER a heavy police and army presence another 98 of the squatters who illegally occupied council houses in Tafelsig, Mitchells Plain, last October were evicted yesterday and removed to the nearby new site

The City Council said the operation had gone off smoothly. However, the squatters expressed dissatisfaction with the morning's events.

Mr Khaya Maseko of the Tafelsig Action Committee said the council had failed to provide the families with the building materials in time for yesterday's deadline

He said only the wooden frames and not the corrugated iron sheets were at the sites, leaving about eight families "homeless" and without shelter.

Council spokesman Mr Ted Doman said the council was not obliged to provide dwellings at the time of eviction. The council provided serviced land and a loan of R720 for building materials, he said

Mr Doman added that there were about another 90 squatters who still had to be moved

Reasons for overturning valuation roll 'unknown'

ARG 7/2/94. (124)

CLIVE SAWYER, Municipal Reporter

IT was disappointing the Supreme Court had overturned the 1990 valuation roll without citing the grounds on which it had done so, a provincial commission of inquiry heard.

Assistant city legal adviser Howard Firth said today his involvement with the "rates debacle" had begun when the council's executive committee had asked him to advise on rates relief for those hard-hit by the new valuation roll.

He said a last resort would have been to overturn the roll.

"I heard two bases for doing this were being punted. that valuers had not been properly appointed and properties had not been inspected."

At a subsequent meeting with other officials, it was agreed the question of appointments could be a "killer point" if seeking to overturn valuations.

Mr Firth said he had had a call from city councillor Norman Osburn asking about grounds upon which the roll could be found invalid.

"This put me in an invidious position because I advise the council and I was being asked to provide a councillor with a political position to provide ammunition to bring down the roll."

Mr Firth said "to this day" it was not known on what basis the roll had been overturned.

There had been anomalies in the roll, and 13 000 objections had been made to the valuation court.

New rates 'had to go'

CT 8/2/94 (124)

Staff Reporter

Morally and legally the City Council had no option but to go to court to have the controversial new rates system overturned, according to the city's assistant legal adviser, Mr Howard Firth

This was evidence yesterday before a commission of inquiry investigating possible irregularities in the execution of the valuation roll

Mr Firth said a new roll was being prepared "Turbulence among ratepayers" last year had placed tremendous pressure on the council

This had arisen from a Supreme Court ruling in October last year that the 1990 general valuation roll, which was put into operation on July 1, was not correctly implemented and that the council should revert to the 1979 roll

It was not known on what grounds the 1990 roll had been overturned, as no reasons had been given by the court.

Mr Firth said his involvement in the "rates debacle" began when the council's executive committee asked him to advise on rates relief for ratepayers adversely affected by the new roll

He said he explained the options open to the committee and presented them with the "ultimate final solution", which was to have the roll set aside

The hearing will continue on Thursday

Non-paying tenants turn on mayor over evictions

(124) ARG 11/2/94

Staff Reporter

STRIFE over the non-payment of rent and service charges in Wellington townships has turned to confrontation

Sheriffs of the court moved to evict several households from Vanwyksvlei yesterday, but were turned back by angry residents. Belongings dumped in the street were carried back into the houses

Joe Pieterse of the Wellington Civic Association accused the Wellington Town Council of "somersaulting" on a deal struck on Wednesday night Mayor Johan Mouton said he was powerless to veto a council decision to act against defaulters

Mr Pieterse accused the council of misusing its powers Dr Mouton countered that people who could afford payments were making life difficult for those who could not

Mr Pieterse claimed that the mayor had agreed to keep the sheriffs away until Monday's meeting of the negotiating forum on local government

"They've got the names of 28 people on their list and promised they would leave it until Monday. Today's actions are completely contrary to the spirit of Wednesday's meeting," Mr Pieterse said

Dr Mouton said the council was owed "millions" of rands by defaulters and had begged the civic association and the African National Congress to work through the list of 28 to identify truly destitute cases

"The problem is that there are people out of jobs who obviously cannot pay, but others have jobs . the civic should sort out those who can from those who really cannot pay.

"At last night's meeting they asked me to stop the legal process against the 28, but I told them I could not overturn a council decision

"I am trying to arrange an urgent council meeting, but don't know whether I'll be able to raise a quorum In the meantime the process must continue

"It's a no-win situation and a bad problem I only hope we can get the ANC and civic to agree to concentrate on those who can pay. We require a gesture . they need to pay something then we can consider holding back on the others

"But unless we can strike such an agreement I am afraid there are no options open to us It's unpleasant and does not do our comunity any good," Dr Mouton said

Home sold for R10: Family 'destitute'

S1 Times [C/Metro]

A MITCHELLS PLAIN family is homeless and destitute after a bank repossessed their house just two years after they had put down a deposit of R30 000 — and then bought it for R10 at an auction.

By AYESHA ISMAIL

The bank then resold the house to an estate agent for R46 000

A tearful Mrs Denise Neethling, a mother of seven children, said she had pleaded with ABSA Bank not to sell her house, as she was trying to raise the money to pay the arrears

"They pushed me around all the time and then they took my house," Mrs Neethling said

A sale in execution was held at the sheriff's office in Wynberg on January 26 and the four bedroomed house was "bought by the bank for R10"

The house has since been bought by Chapman's Real Estate for R46 000

She said her husband Aubrey, who worked as a labourer and earned R300 a week, was retrenched in February last year

The Neethlings took out a bond of R40 000 two years ago on their home, which she says, was valued at R70 000

"I immediately notified the bank when my husband lost his job

"I continued to make payments with the money my husband got from the Department of Manpower and from the money I made selling fresh flowers"

She said she was three months in arrears and received a letter from the bank in January to say that they would repossess the house and that a sale in execution would be held on January 26

"I was in the process of making a plan to get the money but the bank would not co-operate," Mrs Neethling claimed

She claimed she visited the bank several times this year to try to save her house but nothing helped

"Mr Chapman, the estate agent, told us he had bought the house from the bank for R46 000 and that we should vacate the premises by the first week in March"

(124)

She said she did not know where she would go with her seven children and her 75-year-old mother

13/2/94

General Manager of Coporate Communications ABSA Bank, Alec Hogg, said they had tried to assist Mrs Neethling

"We did not grab her house We did what we could for her"

He said Mrs Neethling had, "over an extended period, failed to pay her bond and we tried to work out an arrangement," Mr Hogg said

He said because she could not fulfill her commitment, the bank had had no option but to repossess her house

"It takes about six months to a year for us to reposess a house as there are lengthy legal channels we have to go through first

"It is tragic, I feel for her, but we have a duty towards our depositors" He appealed to people to contact the bank as soon as they realised they could not keep up with their payments

Mr Chapman, who refused to give his first name, confirmed that he had bought the property

He said that according to the conditions of sale, the Neethlings should leave immediately

"I have told them they can stay there for a while," he said

DESTITUTE . Mrs Denise Neethling, far left, and her mother, Mrs Elizabeth Dreyer, 75, with her seven children Picture AMBROSE PETERS

Arrears bill tops R50m

(124)

CT 16/2/91

Electricity consumers warned

By PETER DENNEHY

THE City Council is cracking down on defaulting electricity consumers, with a total arrears bill to date topping R50 million

In a report before the executive committee yesterday, treasurer Mr Eddie Landsberg and city electrical engineer Mr Fred Berwyn-Taylor recommended that the number of disconnection orders should be upped by half The executive committee agreed, but the matter is still to be passed by the full council if it is to be implemented

Mr Berwyn-Taylor said last night that he was worried that the debt situation could "get out of hand"

At present, 12 000 or more disconnection orders are processed in each two-month billing cycle, but the officials want this raised to 18 000

Mr Landsberg and Mr Berwyn-Taylor also disclosed that

- Arrears for Cape Town's consumer area — which includes neighbouring areas like Milnerton, Fish Hoek, Simon's Town and Noordhoek — have increased by 40% over the past 12 months
- Officials who had been working with figures relating to "disconnection notices processed" found recently that only 61% of these resulted in the immediate disconnection of supplies

In the two-month period up to mid-December, nearly 22 000 disconnection orders were processed but this led to just 13 456 prompt disconnections

More than 2 000 accounts were paid as they were about to be disconnected

Mr Berwyn-Taylor said he suspected that some consumers held a naive belief that all debts to local authorities were to be written off in the new dispensation

More resources would be needed to achieve 18 000 disconnection orders per cycle, but some money to offset that would be received in disconnection fees

Mr Berwyn-Taylor confirmed that more than 18 000 people per cycle defaulted on their accounts

'City's property roll was correct'

(124)

CT 17/2/94

By PETER DENNEHY

FORMER exco member Mr Leon Markovitz said yesterday he had made an "incorrect decision" to go along with a court action last year to overturn a roll listing new municipal valuations of every property in the city

"We were placed under political pressure to proceed with the litigation," he told the rates commission of inquiry, adding that there was nothing wrong with the valuations that had been drawn up

The roll was overturned in court last year after an outcry among ratepayers

He said when it became clear that DP MP Mr Hennie Bester was going to take the matter to court, exco was advised that he would win There was nothing the council could do to stop the roll being overturned, as it had not been compiled exactly in accordance with the then-existing ordinance

Mr Markovitz believed former exco chief Mr Louis Kreiner — with whom he had had such differences that he eventually resigned — had been unfairly painted as "the villain of the piece" in respect of the rates debacle

Atlantis call to write off millions of rands' debt

ARG 17/2/94

124

SHARON SOROUR
Labour Reporter

ATLANTIS residents are demanding that outstanding service and rent debts amounting to millions of rands be written off before a municipality is set up to run the town

About 150 Atlantis Civic Association members marched from District Six to the Wale Street offices of the regional services council yesterday, demanding an "urgent" meeting with council officials and Administrator Kobus Meiring

Marching under the banner of the Pan-Africanist Congress, residents handed over a memorandum listing issues they wished to discuss, including

- Outstanding debt related to services and rent as well as "development" debt
- The immediate disbanding of the town's managing and industrial committees and the establishment of a municipality
- Immediate implementation of subsidised housing

Association chairman Roy Nagen said residents felt development debt of about R118 million and rent debt of R40 million had to be scrapped before a municipality was established.

"They must treat Atlantis like a homeland, and write off our debts, because that is essentially what it is — it was created to be a coloured homeland," he said

The residents were not necessarily members of the PAC, but the organisation had been the only one to respond to an appeal for transport to Cape Town and had provided buses

"We are telling people not to vote for any party until the debts have been written off the political parties are playing games with us, and we believe politics is less important."

Picture ROY WIGLEY, The Argus

ANGRY: Atlantis residents march in Cape Town

City 'can't afford' rates hike

(124)

CT 18/2/94

RATES should not be increased, but if an increase was unavoidable, it should not exceed the rate of inflation, the Chamber of Commerce told exco yesterday

Chamber of Commerce spokesman Mr Alan Leighton said the five-man delegation, led by Chamber president Mr Roland Hudson-Bennett, had met exco chairman Mr Clive Keegan and four members of his committee

"It is important to develop the concept of cost efficiency and to contain the cost of administration," Mr Leighton said

Poverty

Business rates in Cape Town were roughly double those of Durban and Johannesburg and about four times more than Pretoria and "we don't believe there is any scope for an increase in rates in the city", Mr Leighton said

Mr Keegan called the meeting "useful" and pledged that any rates increase, if warranted, would "be kept as low as possible"

He acknowledged that Cape Town's business rates were higher than Durban and Johannesburg, but said the city had to subsidise services to vast areas where there was poverty

The 1992/93 budget was R2 billion

City may face a metro levy

CT 19/2/94 (124)

Ratepayer will have to foot bill

By PETER DENNEHY

GREATER Cape Town will soon have a Transitional Metropolitan Council (TMC) with powers to impose a redistributive rates levy on every municipality under it

Cape Provincial Administration constitutional affairs director Dr Donald Craythorne said yesterday that what each municipality would have to pay to the metro authority would depend on its rates or total income

Whether the TMC would impose such a levy and how much it would be were still to be negotiated by the Cape Metropolitan Negotiating Forum (CMNF)

The ratepayers would have to pay for the levy — to be used for improving and restoring township services — in addition to their normal rates

The Local Government Transition Act says only that the levy shall be "equitable", but lays down no limit

The CMNF may place a limit on the amount of the municipality's contribution

Before negotiations on the levy start, the CMNF may have to change its composition to comply with the law

Dr Craythorne said all organisations on forums would have to state their membership

The forums themselves would decide who the legitimate role-players were

The role of the CPA was limited to granting recognition to forums that were properly-constituted legally

It had virtually no role in determining what type of local government transitional arrangement would be chosen by any town or city, how many councillors there would be or where municipal boundaries would be

Mediation

The forums themselves would have to decide on all these issues, Dr Craythorne said

Should they fail to reach agreement, however, the Administrator would arrange for independent mediation

If that failed too, the administrator and his advisory committee would have to take the decisions

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ANC acts to prevent Delft squatter invasion

ROGER FRIEDMAN (124)
Weekend Argus Reporter

THE African National Congress is mobilising its Cape Flats members to prevent squatters from occupying empty houses ahead of rumours of an imminent invasion in Delft. ARG 19/2/94

ANC regional secretary Lerumo Kalako said a group of people including squatter leader Thabo Bimba were seen scouting around Delft yesterday, threatening to re-occupy the houses vacated following police action in December.

They apparently told ANC officials they were looking at which houses to occupy.

Most of the houses filled during the first wave of illegal occupations have been completed and occupied by legal owners, but a new batch of houses is nearing completion.

Mr Kalako said he suspected the occupation of houses was a "National Party ploy" to scare Cape Flats voters.

"It is also coming increasingly to our attention that Mr Bimba is on the National Party payroll and they are using him. We cannot allow this to happen."

He said regional deputy secretary Chris Nissen was mobilising members of the Delft and neighbouring ANC branches to repel the squatters. "We are also trying to organise marshals," he said.

"It is preferable for us to stop this before it starts again."

Last night all was quiet in Delft.

■ This week Mr Bimba told Weekend Argus that township residents were desperate for houses and planned to take matters into their own hands "never mind what the ANC says".

News by R Friedman 122 St George's Mall Cape Town

Smartie Town squatters evicted from starter homes

(124) ARG 21/2/94

□ Police stand guard at Hanover Park development

DENNIS CRUYWAGEN and JOHN YELD
Staff Reporters

CAPE Town city council today ended the illegal occupation of 40 "starter" homes in Smartie Town, Hanover Park

Residents said the evictions began at 6 30am when security staff, backed by police, moved in to Smartie Town

Exco chairman Clive Keegan said the action "again illustrated how firmly we'll act against illegal occupations"

He said the council was aware of the housing shortage in greater Cape Town

"The theft of other people's homes is no solution We'll continue to act as we did in Tafelsig," Mr Keegan said

Internal Stability Unit members used Casspirs to seal off the area and non-residents were questioned before they were allowed in

Police were in the area, according to spokesman John Sterrenberg, "in a protection capacity because it's a known gangster area"

The coloured squatters, who moved into the sub-economic houses in November, refused to move unless the council provided them with serviced land and building materials

Some of the families who moved into the Smartie Town houses — so-called because they are painted a variety of colours — described their move as a pre-emptive strike "to prevent them from being occupied by blacks"

Council housing director Charlotte Sims was in Hanover Park to oversee the evictions

Mrs Sims said six of the 60 starter homes occupied were sold to occupants who qualified to buy them

Protracted negotiations then followed with the Hanover Park Civic Association and Smartie Town residents to end the occupation

Mrs Sims said community representatives gave the council an undertaking that the occupation would end

At a meeting on January 21, the council gave them until February 3 to get illegal occupants out

"We said we would act We also agreed not to act against 14 of the 54 illegal occupants because we would have assisted them in any case"

Hanover Park resident Anthony Daniels, who negotiated with the council on behalf of Smartie Town residents, slammed the evictions

"We've agreed to find a solution through negotiations, but the council is imposing its will on the people"

EVICTED: Two women sit outside the "starter" home in Hanover Park from which they were evicted today. Pictures DOUG PITHEY, The Argus

MIRROR IMAGE: An illegal occupant stands upset as city council security staff remove her furniture from a house in Smartie Town, Hanover Park.

COUNCIL HANDS OVER HOMES TO 60 000 CAPE TENANTS

EXCLUSIVE

Southeaster [Suppl. to South]

18/2 - 22/2/94

(124)

MY CASTLE: Lilian Prince and her grandson Brandon are happy that the council will give them the house they live in. **Picture: Shadley Lombard**

BY JOSEPH ARANES

THOUSANDS of Cape Town City Council tenants will become home-owners for the first time when the council starts giving occupants the ownership of their homes.

Two years ago the Minister of Housing in the House of Representatives sent a circular telling all local authorities to hand over houses valued at less than R7 500 to the tenants

People whose houses are valued at more than this, will be able to buy their homes less the R7 500 discount

City Council's director of housing, Mrs Charlotte Simms, said about 60 000 tenants will benefit

"We got the circular a while back, but because of the large number of units involved and because we had to redo our housing database, we will only be starting the process within the next month

"People in the process of buying their homes will immediately qualify to have the houses transferred to their names

"We will be transferring 500 houses in Mitchells Plain and another 500 in other areas to the tenants during the next few weeks "

Residents will have to pay transfer fees and those in arrears with their rent will have to settle the service charges on those accounts

Mrs Lilian Prince, who lives in Netreg, said "I heard the council is going to give the houses to the people, but thought it would take years — everything they decide to do takes years before it is put into practice

"I am happy about the decision as it will make our lives and the lives of others a lot easier

"Many people don't have fixed incomes and struggle to make ends meet My husband gets a disability grant and we must live off that

"But now that the house will be ours, we can smarten it up and my children, who have been on the waiting list for years, can extend the place and live with us "

Mrs Minna Tobias of Kreefgat said it was time the council gave the houses to people

"We have lived here for 18 years and most of my neighbours for almost double that, and we paid rent all these years We paid for these houses years ago

"The people are happy because now we will have a permanent place to call home, but we will only jump for joy once the papers have been signed "

Families threaten to move back into Smartie Town houses

ARG 24/2/94 (124)

☐ Squatters want real tenants in by 11am today

PIETER MALAN
Staff Reporter

FIVE of the families who were evicted from houses in Smartie Town near Hanover Park this week are threatening to move back unless the buildings are occupied by their real tenants by 11am today.

Last night security guards were still protecting some of the empty council houses

The five families — nine adults and 17 children — are living in a makeshift shack of wood and blankets, while their belongings are in a rondavel used as a store for building materials

A spokesman for the squatters, Hassiem Engel, said most of the 40 evicted families had moved back to where they had been staying before occupying the Smartie Town houses.

Five families were moved to the Tafelsig self-help scheme where the city council had given them building materials for shacks Another five were squatting in Smartie Town

Squatter Faldelah Williams said before the families occupied the Smartie Town houses they had lived in other people's backyards

"Now other squatters have moved to those backyards and we have nowhere to go"

She said the city council had promised them building materials if they could find places to build shacks

Mr Engel said some "legal" Smartie Town residents had agreed to allow the squatters to build shacks in their backyards, but the council had refused to allow this because they wanted Smartie Town to be a "model town"

A squatter said council housing director Charlotte Sims had promised them on Monday that "she will sort us out on Tuesday"

"But we are still sitting in the dirt and dust with our small children

"We will move back in — if the council cannot find people willing to stay in these houses, we are quite willing."

HOMELESS: Faldelah Williams, left, and Kamiela Rakiep outside the shack they share with seven adults and 17 children in Smartie Town. Picture PIETER MALAN, The Argus

Meanwhile, the families who were moved to Tafelsig have their own share of problems council workers yesterday demolished one of the newly-built shacks, saying it was "standing in the wrong place"

Paul Langeveldt said he came home from work last night to find the shack he had built on Monday a heap of corrugated iron and wood

His wife, Sharon, said council workers had demolished the structure with a crane, damaging the wooden beams and a door in the process

"They said the shack was standing on a golf course — but it was council workers who dropped us there on Monday, saying it was our new plot"

She said three other shacks were still on "the wrong plots"

"We are sick and tired of moving around I have small kids and I want to settle down now in a new home, even if it is just a pondok"

Provincial valuer slammed at inquiry into roll debacle

ARG 24/2/94 (124)

☐ Korf admits signing set-aside affidavit he had not read

CLIVE SAWYER
Municipal Reporter

CROSS-EXAMINATION of a city councillor by three council staff was part of the last day of evidence in a provincial probe into the valuations debacle

City councillor Norman Osburn was questioned by council valuers about what he understood by the term "inspect"

He had earlier told the commission that the Valuation Ordinance required all properties to be inspected

Asked by valuer Emil Weichardt how he would determine whether a property had been inspected, Mr Osburn said he was not a valuer, but a "drive-by" examination might be adequate

At the close of oral evidence, John van Niekerk, appearing for the council, argued that the council was not to blame for the saga which ended in millions of rands fruitless spending

Mr Van Niekerk said provincial director of valuations, B J Korf, had been responsible legally for ensuring that the roll was valid

In spite of this, Mr Korf had not spoken up against a move to set aside the roll, even though he thought the roll was legal

"I am horrified such a senior person did not stand up and disagree

"I am more horrified he deposed to an affidavit he did not bother to read," Mr Van Niekerk said

The affidavit was used in the Supreme Court to set aside the roll

Mr Korf had said he had read the document, but later admitted under cross-examination he had only signed it

"He said (provincial legal advisor) Badenhorst told him to, but Mr Badenhorst signed as commissioner of oaths," Mr Van Niekerk said

He said the cost of the overturned roll — previously estimated at more than R4 million — should not be recovered from councillors or any official

Councillors had attempted to provide relief for people hard-hit by the new valuations

"They did apply their minds, whether their decision was right or wrong"

F C Els, for the provincial administration, said the application had been "bulldozed" through without provincial lawyers having had time to examine it

City councillor Norman Osburn, replying to a question whether the roll had been overturned for political reasons in spite of being correct, said there had been "examples of unfairness"

He said several fellow councillors had looked to him in his professional capacity as a lawyer to help

"When it came to my notice that not all properties were inspected I felt uneasy"

Other lawyers had had misgivings about the roll, Mr Osburn said

It would not have been satisfactory to leave the matter to valuation courts, which would have taken years to hear all objections

In any case, valuation courts could review individual cases, but could not overturn the roll

Mr Osburn, also legal advisor to the Democratic Party, said the party had decided it had to take the initiative, and had asked the city council to join it in opposing the roll

Asked by commissioner Bernard Squire whether he was aware senior officials had said the roll should be saved, Mr Osburn said "I can't believe those officials were advised by lawyers"

He said flaws in the roll were "blatant and clear" and sooner or later it would have had to be set aside

Whichever political party controlled the city council, this would have been necessary "An illegal roll is an illegal roll," he said

Mr Osburn said there was unfairness because the way commercial properties had been valued was different to the method for residential properties

Chairman P J Putter Did you try to establish why there was a different approach?

Mr Osburn The reasons are set out in the application to the court

Mr Putter I have read that application and I am not satisfied it sets these out

Asked whether he believed the Valuation Ordinance required all properties to be inspected, Mr Osburn said its requirements could not be met without inspecting each property

Mr Putter said the Steyn commission report had warned that a new valuation roll would take longer than the 1979 roll because of the shortage of valuers and the number of properties

Mr Putter Do you believe it is possible to inspect 132 000 properties in two years?

Mr Osburn There was no report from the staff that it could not be done

Mr Putter Did you think they would inspect all the properties?

Mr Osburn said this was not his concern, because his role as a councillor was to take policy decisions

New regional board 'to tackle low-cost housing'

(124) CT 24/2/94

By MAGGIE ROWLEY
Property Editor

THE new regional housing board of the Cape of Good Hope, which held its inaugural meeting yesterday, was aiming to make a major impact on the delivery of low-cost housing in the region by the end of the year, chairman Johan Nel said

The regional housing boards, appointed for each of the four provinces, fall under the new National Housing Board All powers and duties of existing statutory housing boards and commissions will pass to these boards as of April 1 this year

In an interview Nel said that the first priority would be to find a new home for the board which would operate as an autonomous body in spite of being staffed by a secretariat drawn from all the previous housing departments.

Nel said the new structures would streamline the housing delivery process and cut much of the red tape which had hampered the process in the past

He said substantial progress had been made in the negotiations between the National Housing Forum and the Department of National Housing regarding a state subsidy scheme for low-income buyers

Progress was also been made on a new housing endowment scheme to reduce the risk to mortgage lenders and both these finance mechanism should be finalised shortly

"We are definitely expecting them to be in place when we open our doors to business on April 1," said Nel.

Under the new dispensation, policy proposals negotiated by the NHF and the Minister of Housing will be submitted to the National Housing Board which will also advice the NHF and the minister. Together these parties will be responsible for policy decisions

The role of the regional housing boards will be to implement policy decisions at regional level, evaluate projects and make recommendations on policy decisions to the National Housing Board

Nel said it was possible under these circumstances that certain policies would differ from region to region

The 18 member regional housing board consists of six members nominated by the government, six by the NHF and a further six agreed on by both parties.

The six government appointees are Nel, R Roberts, G D Bornman, J W Coetzee, G Power and W J Pick

Valuers 'could not visit all'

(124) CT 24/2/94

Properties rated by 'drive-by'

By PETER DENNEHY

MORE than 90% of Cape Town properties were inspected by driving past them, council valuation expert Mr Emil Weichardt told the rates commission of inquiry yesterday

Mr Weichardt is one of several valuers who has said there was little wrong with the new municipal valuations, since apart from inspections, valuers rely on various property records

He was cross-examining councillor Mr Norman Osburn, who played a major role in having the new valuations overturned

Mr Weichardt said Mr Osburn's consultation with him had been so brief that he had not been able to tell Mr Osburn that "probably 90% of properties were inspected by drive-by"

Mr Weichardt said private valuer Mr Andre Hablutzel had said an inspection could be done by a drive-by

One of the commissioners, Mr B V M Squire, said the commission had been told that a large number of properties had not been inspected physically since 1966, although new valuations had been based on property values in 1971 and 1979

Mr Osburn was questioned on why the most recent valuations roll had been set aside, when councillors should have known in advance that not all 160 000 properties could be visited in person by qualified valuers in a mere two or three years

Mr P J Putter, who heads the commission, read out sections of the council's own Steyn Commission report on rates that said visiting each property would be an impossible task

The council had been adamant that the new valuation be undertaken and done in two years, Mr Osburn said

Mr Osburn said the council had gone along with DP MP Mr Hennie Bester's initiative to set aside the roll because of a public perception that it had been unfairly drawn up

"It would have been overthrown sooner or later," Mr Osburn said

Had it been overthrown later, a "chaotic situation" would have ensued

The commission has completed its hearings Mr Putter said he hoped to report to the Administrator in about a week

All Tafelsig squatters evicted

(~~357~~) (124) CT 25/2/94

Staff Reporter

SQUATTERS were yesterday evicted from the 19 remaining illegally occupied Tafelsig council houses by the sheriff of the Supreme Court, police and the City Council's administration department's security branch.

Deputy city administrator Mr Attie van der Merwe said none of the squatters had to be forcefully removed and most were "just waiting for the trucks to move their belongings"

He said that earlier this month notices were served on squatters in the remaining 106 illegally occupied houses, calling on them to move to the specially serviced erven known as the 'School Site in Mitchells Plain.

Of the 106 families on which notices were served only 19 remained until yesterday

Meanwhile five Hanover Park squatter families yesterday threatened to move back into the Smartie Town houses from which they were evicted on Tuesday if the houses' legal occupiers did not move in by 11am yesterday

City Council spokesman Mr Ted Doman said the squatters had not reoccupied the houses by late yesterday afternoon because "police were keeping a close watch"

The council has laid complaints of trespassing against the squatters because they were refusing to move off a site next to Smartie Town and were preventing repair work

Housing consultant earns R207 an hour

CT 25/2/94

Staff Reporter

THE consultant who heads a steering committee given the task of forming a single non-racial housing waiting list for Greater Cape Town, among other tasks, is to earn R207 an hour

Yet there is a limit on how much consultant Mr Colin Appleton will be able to earn in this way, according to documents from the CPA before the Regional Services Council yesterday "A budget provision for six months has been allocated for this work amounting to R60 000"

His hourly rates also cover his secretarial costs Apart from drawing up a single waiting list, his committee must decide on which housing projects are priorities and can proceed immediately (124)

Sunday Nation editor queries circulation audit

B/Day 25/2/94

AMANDA VERMEULEN

SUNDAY Nation acting editor Gabu Tugwane lodged a query this week with the Audit Bureau of Circulation (ABC) about the paper's newly released audited circulation figures for July to December, the ABC said

Tugwane queried whether comparisons could be drawn with circulation figures for the same period in 1992, when the paper was published on Fridays and named New Nation

The paper changed its name and moved to Sunday publishing in August

Tugwane said Sunday Nation was a different product

The audited figures for July to December 1993 show Sunday Nation's circulation has dropped 33% to 38 709 from 58 153 when it was still New Nation.

ABC GM Syd Pote said he had not received any notification the paper was to be considered a different product Apart from the name change and the move to Sunday publishing, the paper had remained the same, he said.

An ABC source said Tugwane could request that New Nation's membership be suspended. This would allow him to apply for new membership for Sunday Nation. This would mean that no unfavourable comparisons could then be drawn with New Nation.

Industry sources said the paper's circulation had dropped because Sunday publishing was an overtraded market dominated by the Sunday Times

The Sunday Times's strength was cited by Argus management as a reason for the Sunday Star's closure last month.

Sunday Nation, funded mainly by the EC, needed a more aggressive marketing policy to compete with the Sunday Times, an industry analyst said.

Independent advertising consultants said the drop in circulation had been expected with the move to Sunday publishing and was not a cause for concern among national advertisers.

Newspaper distributor Allied operations manager Carl Ackerman said Sunday Nation's low circulation figures could be directly attributed to the dominance of the Sunday Times and City Press in the Sunday market.

Policy negotiations hold up hostel conversions

B/Day 25/2/94

EDWARD WEST

CAPE TOWN — A project to convert hostels and provide housing units for about 300 families on the Cape Flats has come to a virtual halt because the National Housing Board is in the process of negotiating a new housing policy

However, 29 converted hostel units would be handed over to families in Langa, Guguletu and Nyanga today

Project manager Hannes van der Merwe said other plans to turn hostels to homes for about 300 families — the first phase of a project to convert state-owned hostels on the Cape Flats only — had been held up because of negotiations relating to the future sustainability of housing standards and subsidies

The handover of the 29 units was made possible by an agreement signed by the Cape Provincial Council, Umzamo Development Project and Ikapa Town Council about 18 months ago

The CPA said the handover paved the way for conversion of more hostels on the Cape Flats But it said it was still waiting for the National Hostels Co-ordinating Committee to approve the scheme

Van der Merwe said divisive ethnic elements that characterised hostel occupation in Transvaal were largely absent in the Cape, where hostel dwellers were mainly Xhosa.

This made the conversion of hostels here easier, he said

Two killed in Bekkersdal

JOHANNES NGCOBO

TWO people were shot dead and several others were injured yesterday during running battles between Azapo and Inkatha Freedom Party members in Bekkersdal on the West Rand.

A police spokesman said a hand grenade had been thrown at a police patrol but no one had been injured.

Two people had died when residents retaliated after a group attacked a house, he said.

Bekkersdal residents said yesterday that they were staying away from work to protest against the violence

They were also protesting against the internal stability unit's continued presence in the township.

Residents' representatives claimed the stayaway was successful.

Brick and mortar to replace shanty shacks

(124) ARG 26/2/94

■ The grim era of squatter shacks is due to end as the Cape's new Regional Housing Board aims to replace shanties with solid houses.

DAVID BREIER
Weekend Argus Political Staff

VAST numbers of squatter shacks in the Cape will be replaced with rudimentary but solid brick-and-mortar houses as part of an ambitious long-term project of the province's newly-appointed Regional Housing Board

The plan is part of a new national housing strategy to be announced soon It is to include capital subsidies of up to R12 500 to households with monthly incomes of up to R3 000 on a sliding scale — the poorer the household the bigger the subsidy

Board chairman Johan Nel disclosed the plan to phase out the shanties as part of the strategy to tackle the Cape's vast housing backlog He was speaking to Weekend Argus after the new board's inaugural meeting in Cape Town this week

"We will succeed, but it will be a massive task," said Mr Nel, adding that the genuine legitimacy the board enjoyed in the community would give its work a major boost

The new board has wide community support as its 18 members were jointly-appointed by the government and the National Housing Forum (NHF) and includes a number of ANC members Its vice-chairman is Basil Davidson, of the ANC, a professional town planner

Mr Nel, who is also managing-director of Communicare in Cape Town (formerly the Housing League), said controlled squatting or "site-and-service" schemes had not worked for his organisation

When controlled squatting was first introduced in the 1980s, the authorities assumed that people who built shacks on serviced sites would upgrade their dwellings spontaneously into more solid houses, but little such upgrading had taken place

Mr Nel said it was too much to expect people returning home tired after work to spend their free time building houses, while most could not afford the building materials either "It does not work in practice," he said

The plan to replace the Cape's huge shack settlements with brick-and-mortar homes forms part of a vast national strategy to build hundreds of thousands of houses in the new South Africa every year

Minister of National Housing and Public Works Louis Shill is expected to announce details of the plan within days after meeting the NHF

It is understood his announcement will include a government subsidy scheme, and indemnity insurance for private sector lenders — to encourage their return to financing township housing after burning their fingers on bond boycotts in recent years

The state subsidy is expected to be based on a sliding scale, with a maximum subsidy of R12 500 per person

The subsidy is expected to cover the provision of services like water, sewerage and electricity, as well as building materials

Chairman of the National Housing Board Joop de Loor said the cut-off point for households to qualify for the subsidy was likely to be a monthly income of R3 000 He said this meant most black households would qualify

Dr De Loor said details of the private sector loan guarantee system were still being worked out

Housing sources said indemnity insurance — to guarantee private sector loans in the face of political and other risks — is expected to be financed from a premium charged on new mortgages Mr Shill floated the idea last year amid some controversy

Mr Nel cautioned the public not to expect houses of a high standard, as there were economic limitations

"People cannot expect to receive R50 000 or R60 000 houses," he said

"But it could give a kick-start to the economy," he added, predicting the multiplier effect would benefit the entire economy

Mr Nel said the new housing board would cut red tape by enabling houses to be delivered more directly He said it would allow for both the use of building contractors and for owner-builders

There would be scope for home ownership as well as for rented houses, he said

Mr Nel said the "social compact", which had been built up between community organisations and developers, would help to decide on priorities and design details

This week the World Bank cautioned South Africa against overspending on the financing of serviced sites, which could absorb as much as 40 percent of investment capital

The six government-appointed members of the Cape Regional Housing Board are Mr Nel, engineer Graham Power, as well as builders R Roberts and W J Pick, National Party politician Gerrit Bornman and former House of Representives housing director Billy Coetzee,

The six NHF representatives include Mr Davidson, W A Jacobs of Crawford, and four from the Eastern Cape — B Skosana, M Kebeni, K Tsotsobe and M Ndzotoyi

The six jointly appointed by the government and the NHF are C S Appleton of the Serviced Land Project, NP politician Alex van Breda, as well as D Sassman, R Low of Murray & Roberts, H Minott and H Green

The National Housing Board and boards for the four provinces were set up recently through the same 18-member formula But new provincial boards are due to be established after the April elections to represent the nine provinces

'Pie in the sky' building scheme investigated

ARG 26/2/94

(124)

JEAN LE MAY
Weekend Argus Reporter

■ A Durbanville developer, Afri-Unity Homes, is being investigated by the Harmful Business Practices Committee.

SCORES of people have paid deposits and monthly instalments to a Durbanville developer who promised to negotiate with local authorities for land on which to build cheap houses for them — but lawyers consulted by Weekend Argus have described the scheme as "pie in the sky"

The lawyers said the agreement signed by hopeful homeowners appeared to be a contravention of the Banks Act and the Estate Agents Act

Moreover, Weekend Argus has established that no negotiations were taking place with local authorities in any of the areas specified by the developer

The developer is Afri-Unity Homes of Durbanville Centre, Durbanville It claims to be a subsidiary of Blue Quest International, of the same address

The scheme is being investigated by the Harmful Business Practices Committee, chairman Louise Tager told Weekend Argus yesterday

Professor Tager warned people to be very careful about handing over money until they were sure of what they were getting in return

Workers at an Athlone clothing factory were among those who fell for the scheme

One of the workers, who asked not to be named, said a representative of Afri-Unity talked to people at the factory just before the Christmas holidays "when people had their pay and bonus cheques"

Several workers signed agreements and paid deposits, she said

They were now getting letters of demand for instalments, although they could not establish from the company when or where their houses were to be built

"They never said anything at all about getting bond finance"

A factory manager told Weekend Argus that an employee who earned R600 a month had signed an agreement and later found that he was expected to pay an instalment of R450 a month

In the agreement, Afri-Unity undertakes to "negotiate and facilitate the purchase and transfer of land from the local authority in one of three locations chosen by the applicant and shall also attempt to negotiate sufficient finance to enable the applicant to purchase the aforesaid land and build a house"

The initial non-refundable registration fee is R180 Thereafter the applicant undertakes to pay a monthly "contribution" for 24 months to accumulate the deposit for the house

Afri-Unity deducts 20 percent from each instalment as "commission and collection charges" The agreement also specifies that if an applicant falls into arrears the developer will return the amount paid, less 20 percent

The applicant also acknowledges that the developer has sole discretion in the allocation of erven

In an interview at his office this week, Johan Swart, business development manager of Afri-Unity, told Weekend Argus that the company was negotiating for land in Atlantis, Eerste River, Mitchell's Plain, Strandfontein, Mbekweni and Durbanville

A piece of land near Fisantekraal, Durbanville, was specifically mentioned

The company was working closely with the civic associations, he said

However, spokesmen for all the local authorities mentioned above assured Weekend Argus that no negotiations were taking place with either Afri-Unity or Blue Quest for land for low-cost housing

Weekend Argus was unable to trace a civic association spokesman who had had contact with Afri-Unity

Danie Lucas, chairman of the Durbanville branch of the ANC, told Weekend Argus yesterday that the ANC definitely did not support the Afri-Unity scheme

Mr Swart said the company intended using an innovative building system called Stack a Block

The system had attracted attention overseas and directors of the company were leaving for the Far East next week to sell franchises there, he said

The Stack a Block building block did not have SA Bureau of Standards approval, he said

Aubrey Bell of the Agreement Board, which works with the CSIR and issues certificates for approved building materials, told Weekend Argus yesterday that no certificate had been issued for the Stack a Block system

In a telephone interview yesterday, Afri-Unity director Abdul Kadir told Weekend Argus that the company was aware that it was being investigated by the Harmful Business Practices Committee, but that "it had no problems with it"

The company was not registered under the Banks Act, he said

He did not agree that the agreement signed by applicants was questionable He added that it had been drawn up by lawyers

Mr Kadir said Afri-Unity did not have a registered trust account, but all of the money received from applicants was paid into a Durbanville bank account

Directors of Afri-Unity, according to records with the Registrar of Companies, are

Frans Stander, 34 Bracken Heights, Brackenfell, K P M Handke, of 33 Albany, Oak Avenue, Kenilworth and A M Kadir, 142 Coronation Rd, Maitland

Directors of Blue Quest International are Mr Stander, Mr Handke and Dr Gerrit Verster

Objections 'won't help'

(124) CT 26/2/94

Staff Reporter

THE 611 objections by Milnerton residents will "not make any difference to the controversial Du Noon development", a Milnerton council official said yesterday

Deputy town secretary Mr Pieter Groenewald confirmed he had been handed the objections by Mr Rob Reeve, a spokesman for the ratepayers and residents of Table View, Richwood and Bothasig

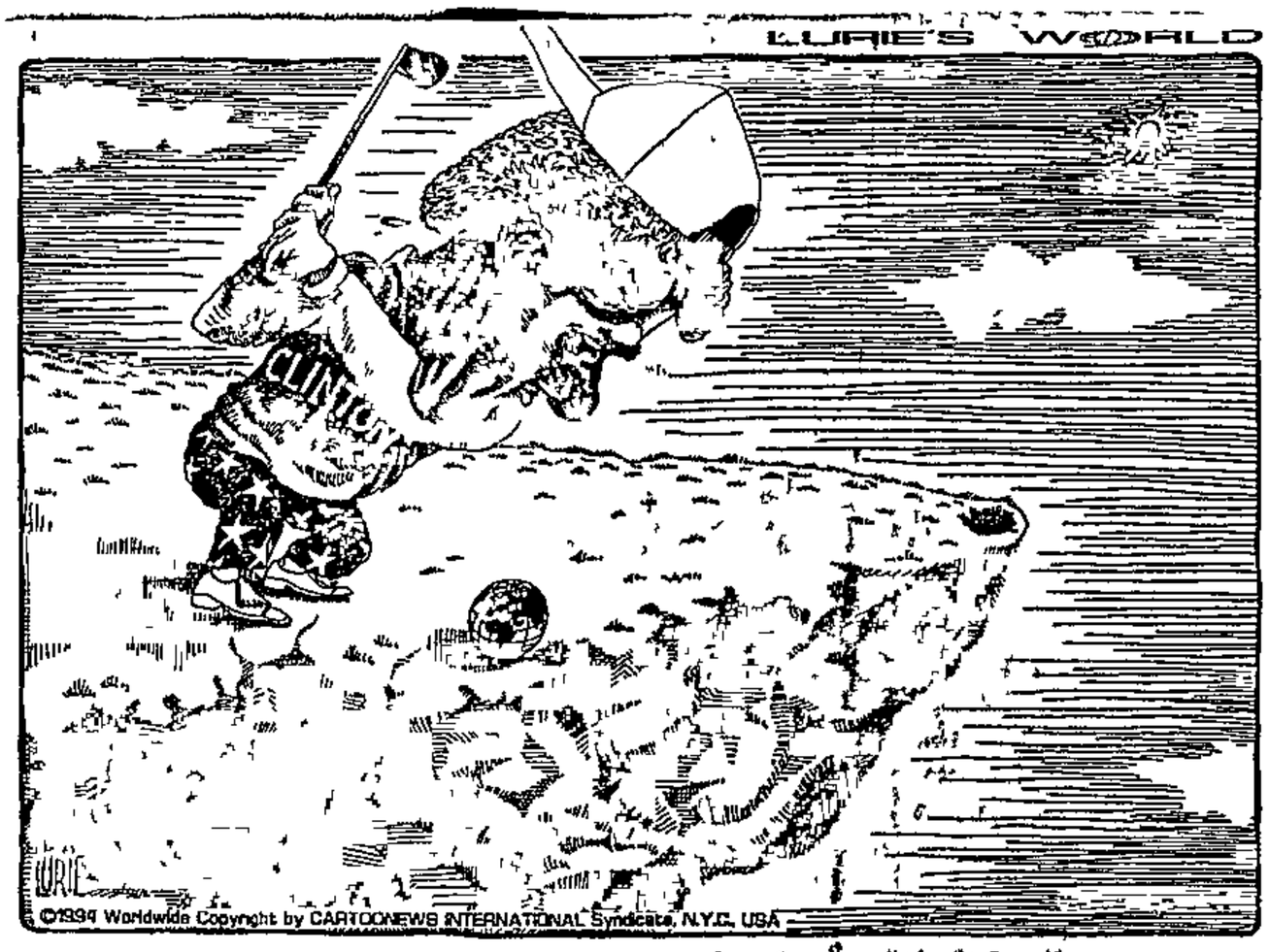
The objections regard the municipality's proposal to borrow R37,22 million from the National Housing Commission to finance the development

Mr Groenewald said the objections would "not change anything" as it was too late for a change to the proposal

"We're not going to get away from urbanisation We have to go ahead with the development," he said

Mr Reeve said Mr Groenewald's comments showed that "public opinion means nothing to these people (the council) at all"

Ratepayers would like to see an ombudsman appointed to assess the Du Noon issue and a referendum to be held to test public opinion, he said



New Housing Company establishes local division

CT 1/3/94 (124)

By MAGGIE ROWLEY
Property Editor

THE New Housing Company (NewHco) has established a Western Cape division as part of a restructuring to position the non-profit organisation for the expected role it is to play in the provision of housing under a new government

As part of its restructuring, NewHco has also merged with the Cape Town's Headstart "not for gain" association set up to research and design models for inner city regeneration

John Weaver, currently CEO of the Transvaal operating division who will be heading the Cape Town operations from April 1, said in an interview that Headstart had now become a division of NewHco holding

"This facility will be of central importance to the work of NewHco because of the scale and complexity of its task. The Headstart team will focus its attentions on research and methods and approachers to the housing delivery process for the benefit of NewHco and all delivery agencies," he said

Weaver said the question of end-user finance was currently delaying the delivery of affordable housing It was hoped that a risk reducing mechanism, currently being explored by the National Housing Forum and Department of Housing, would be finalised shortly

Newly appointed chairman of NewHco Ish Mkhabela said that the call to provide one milion houses over the next five years was definitely realistic and possible

"Provided that government subsidies and mortgage loans are available and an appropriate development environment exists after the elections, the housing delivery sector will be able to meet the required challenge bringing one home on stream every three minutes

He said NewHco, as a NGO (non-government organisation), had been responsible for the delivery of more than 20 000 homes providing shelter for more than 100 000 people since its inception in 1991 through its divisions in the Transvaal, Natal, the Orange Free State and Eastern Province

CE Rod MacGillivray said they believed that community-based developers would be at the forefront of the reconstruction work that lies ahead

"We therefore initiated changes designed to ensure the Section 21 group was credible and responsive to the needs of its stakeholders and that the firm is properly resourced to meet the challenges ahead"

He said in addition to the merger with Headstart to form a new division of NewHco, a new operating division, NewHco West Cape, had been established after considerable discussion with community-based partners in and around Cape Town resulting in a number of joint venture projects justifying the opening of a full time office

These changes, he said, had been made in anticipation of a new, rational housing policy directed at assisting poorer South Africans to gain shelter, the first aspects of which were announced by Housing Minister Louis Shill last night

Milnerton hostile to plans for Rietvlei 'from the start'

ARG 1/3/94 (124)

☐ Developers were not allowed to present their full case — claim

JOHN YELD
Environment Reporter

MILNERTON municipality was "hostile" to a proposed development on the northern banks of Rietvlei from the outset and did not allow the developers to present their full case before trying to expropriate the land, says property developer Iain Hirschson

The municipality believes the Transnet-owned land is an essential part of the new Rietvlei nature reserve and has applied to the Administrator of the Cape for permission to expropriate But no decision will be taken until an environmental impact report is submitted

Mr Hirschson's company was commissioned by Transnet to investigate options for its two Rietvlei properties, acquired in 1969 as a source of dredging fill for the new Table Bay container dock

The developers came up with an initial scheme to build about 350 housing units on 11 hectares of the 166 ha properties, backfilling to raise this above the one in 50-year flood line

Mr Hirschson said two presentations had been made to the full council and one to council staff but the municipality had "stopped it dead"

He added "We weren't allowed to get to the stage of being able to resolve any issues with Milnerton because of their hostility

"They should have gone through the whole process first and then weighed it up"

His company was convinced the 11 ha area could be developed

"We don't consider this to be part of the wetlands area and we're absolutely in favour of the wetlands being preserved — we don't believe they should be touched," said Mr Hirschson

"But most of this area (the 11 ha) is builders' rubble and it's full of alien vegetation

"There's nothing of any biophysical value that in our opinion would prevent development here"

The fact that the proposed development was below the 1 50-year flood line was "a real issue", Mr Hirschson said "But it's an engineering issue and it's not an insurmountable problem"

The municipality had recently approved Table View extension 7, which was also below the 1 50-year flood line, he said "And that area actually borders the wetland, so there is a precedent for this (type of development)"

As a trade-off for allowing the development, the balance of the property would be given to the appropriate authority free, Mr Hirschson said

The developers would establish new public facilities — such as a boating clubhouse — and upgrade others, including a boardwalk across the narrow finger of land forming the south-eastern boundary of the deep-water area and an appropriate environmental education facility at the edge of the wetlands

"Public access to the vlei would never be denied"

Benefits of the proposal would include Milnerton not having to use any taxpayers' money to expropriate the land from Transnet

In addition, cash contributed from other sources — such as Caltex — could be used to manage the new reserve instead of being used for capital costs

The developers would also contribute a financial "kick-start" for a trust fund to manage the new Rietvlei reserve, Mr Hirschson said

Refuse supervisor causes big stink

Municipal Reporter

REFUSE removals in RSC areas in the southern suburbs and Belhar were interrupted yesterday when about 250 cleansing workers from the Schaapkraal Road depot in Ottery stopped work in protest against the alleged actions of a supervisor (124) CT 1/3/94

A spokesman for the workers, Mr John Steyn, said the workers had a problem with a supervisor whom they alleged treated them badly

Mr Steyn claimed that what was happening was not a wildcat strike The workers who had stopped work were still at the depot

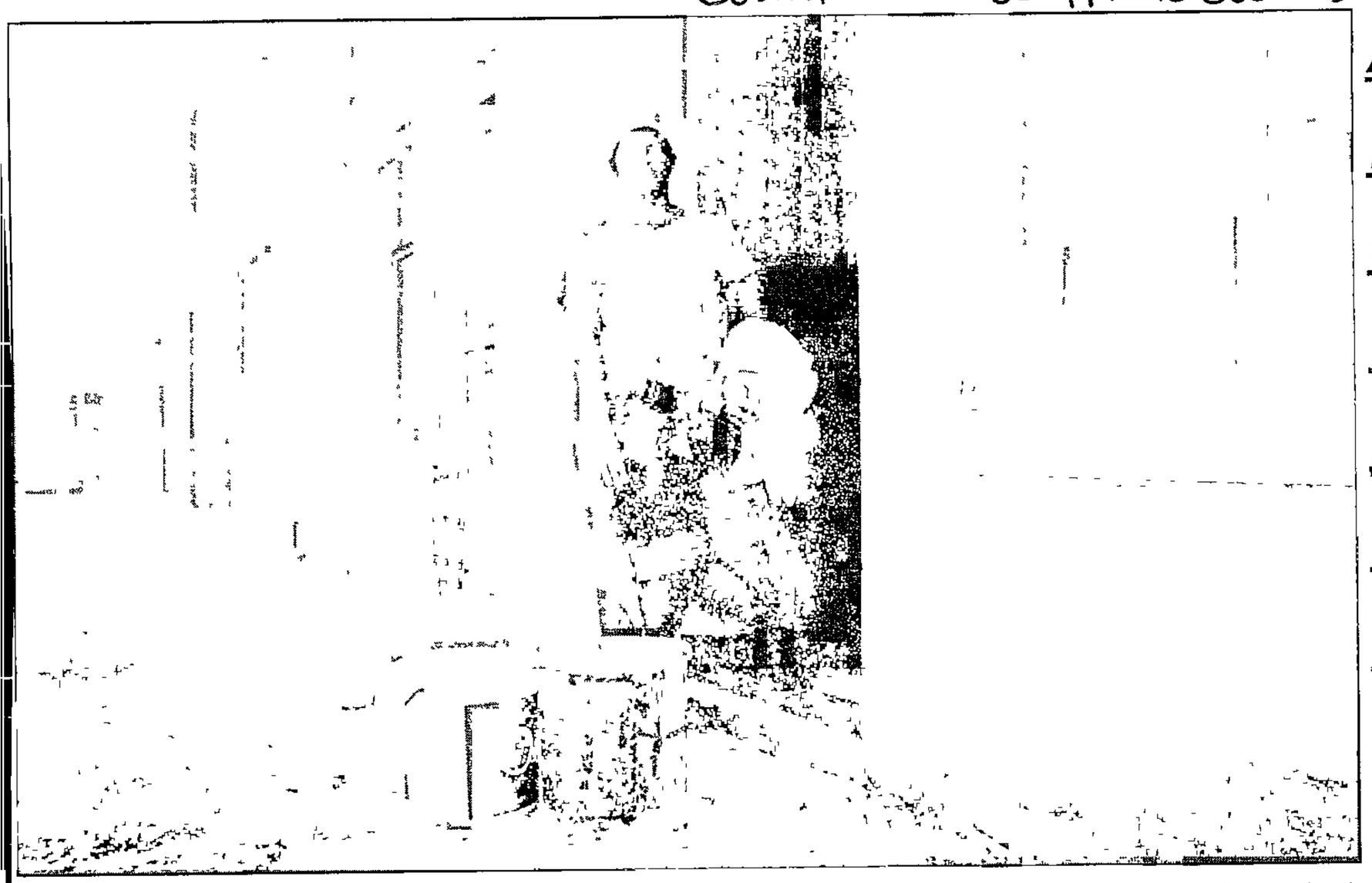
"The atmosphere was such that the supervisor left the camp to find refuge at another camp," Mr Steyn said

Mr Steyn said the areas affected by the work stoppage were Belhar and the RSC area between 5th Avenue, Grassy Park, and Strandfontein Drive

'OUR DIGNITY IS RESTORED'

Southeaster (suppl to South) 11/3 - 15/3/94

At last! Hostel dwellers get a place they can call home



HOME AT LAST: Nolindile Tshaka has moved into her newly built family unit

Photo: Shadley Lombard

(124)

BY SABATA NGCAI

With a broad smile Mrs Nolindile Tshaka turns the key to open the door to her home.

After living in a Guguletu migrant hostel for 22 years with her husband and six children, Mrs Tshaka finally has a place to call home

She moved into a new family unit in Guguletu last week The units were built in consultation with community groups as a model to show how hostels could be upgraded

In the hostel the Tshaka family shared a tiny room with four other people There was space for six beds and the children slept on the cement floor

The Tshaka family's new double-storey home has three bedrooms

For the first time the family has its own kitchen, bathroom and toilet An overjoyed Mrs Tshaka said the new homes were "a victory for migrant labourers"

"Our long-lost dignity is now restored," she said

In the hostel her greatest concern was that her children slept on the floor

"I was even more concerned when they had to wake up very early to make way for the adults preparing to go to work," said Mrs Tshaka, struggling to hold back her tears

"What I thought would be a painful wound for life is now beginning to heal"

For Mr Vincent Baloyi, the new units mean an end to the indignity of racism

"The family units will help heal the wounds of racism caused by the government," Mr Baloyi said

"I hope this will also help to integrate us into the community at large"

Council targets rates increase at 9,5%

(124)

ARG 17/3/94

CLIVE SAWYER
Municipal Reporter

THE Cape Town City Council has set a target rates increase of 9,5 percent, close to inflation.

Latest figures put inflation at 9,9 percent, but a new figure is due to be released soon.

The rates increase, to take effect from July, could be revised when the council debates its budget in May.

The executive committee yesterday held a special meeting to which all councillors were invited.

Exco chairman Clive Keegan said ratepayers had said in an opinion survey rates increases should be kept as low as possible.

Mr Keegan said department heads would be given far greater responsibility for managing their budgets, which would lead to greater accountability.

Officials warned it could be difficult to maintain services at present levels with a 9,5 percent rates increase.

Some councillors, reacting to economists' predictions of a 7 percent inflation rate, said the increase should be limited to this.

Contributing factors to the 9,5 percent increase included wage hikes last year, which were higher than the council had budgeted for.

Exco spokeswoman Gill Bolton said it was expected the city council would be told to contribute some of its income to the new metropolitan government. At this stage it was not known how large this contribution would be.

At a briefing to exco, economists said the economy was being "held hostage" by the uncertainty of the political future, in spite of the 1989 recession being over.

The low oil price, higher gold price, and lifting of the oil embargo were favourable factors but Foreign reserves were weak, but could be cushioned by International Monetary Fund loans.

Interest rates could fall, probably in two reductions of 1 percent each, but were expected to rise again next year.

Private sector unemployment was high and pay increases were low.

Inflation was at its lowest for 21 years, and the trend was expected to continue.

Clean-up plan for townships

(124)

Political Staff

THE ANC is to launch a clean-up campaign on Saturday in the streets of Guguletu, Nyanga, New Crossroads and KTC CT 16/3/94

The major "Big Better Life Clean-Up" would begin at Nyanga Terminus at 10am, it said in a statement

All participants would be issued with refuse bags and gloves

The community would be asked to join them in picking up bottles, tins, paper, and other litter and to return the plastic bags to the terminus.

At the end of the campaign, at 1 pm, the participants will be addressed by the ANC leadership about the importance of the clean-up and the role of all communities in working together to improve their own environment

Call to write off R1,2-m debt

Municipal Reporter

THE Paarl local government forum has agreed to ask the town council to write off water and electricity arrears of more than R1,2 million

Paarl and Mbekweni councils are to amalgamate from April 1

The forum said all debts incurred before February 2, the date the Local Government Transition Act was promulgated, should be written off.

People will be expected to start paying for services.

Paarl council has put a moratorium on evictions for municipal arrears, effective until the debt question has been settled

The non-racial transitional council will consist of 22 members, half each from statutory and non-statutory groups (124) ARG 18/3/94

Refuse pick-up 'sporadic'

(124)

Municipal Reporter

CAPE TOWN's city health department has expressed concern at the apparently sporadic nature of refuse collection in parts of Langa and Guguletu

Both these suburbs are run by the iKapa Town Council, the administration of which has been thrown into turmoil in the past two weeks

The turmoil is thought to be partly the result of an inquiry into alleged corruption on the part of council officials, and partly due to a feeling among staff that major changes in local government are imminent

Mr Tolly du Toit, director of environmental health for the Cape Town City Council, said he had sent out staff to check on what was or was not going on yesterday CT 19/3/94

Assistance from the Cape Town city council would only be given if the residents and the municipal workers wanted such an intervention

Homeless help themselves

CT 21/3/94

WHILE government officials and party politicians are making "loud" promises about housing for the poor, the poor themselves are not standing idle

In Khayelitsha a group of 280 women and six men are showing the way in people-driven housing development

The group, called the Victoria Mxenge Housing Savings Scheme, is one of 12 similar schemes in the Cape Peninsula linked to the SA Homeless People's Federation (124)

The group, realising that banks have failed to make housing finance available for poor women, has set up its own simple savings systems

"Step by step the women have developed their own organisational ability to drive a housing development scheme," the group said in a statement

A tract of ground has been secured in the Philippi area on the Cape Flats and the capacity of the group to borrow, to save and to manage money has enabled them to negotiate with donor organisations for bridging finance — Sapa

Inflation-linked rates rebates for some people

CLIVE SAWYER, Municipal Reporter (124)

GEORGE — A change in the law means certain classes of people can get inflation-linked rates rebates ARG 24/3/94

Pinelands mayor Ron Strybis told the Cape Province Municipal Association that councils required provincial administration consent to give rebates to classes of people

Decision-making on rebates should be delegated to councils, he said

Until now, the law had said only people who earned less than a certain sum could get rebates

This had been changed to link rebates to inflation

● Fees are to be set for lodging appeals against town planning decisions by councils

A suggested R1 000 fee was rejected as too high by the CPMA executive committee

Appeal bodies will decide on application fees

● The association has proposed changes to the system of subsidies for local government from central and provincial government

It said councils should be given extra sources of income when new functions were delegated to them

● Councils will be consulted when applications are made to provincial government to open Tattersall clubs and totalisators

The provincial administration said legislation on gambling on horses and other sports was being drafted

● Street people cannnot be forced to do community service, the Cape Province Municipal Association was told

This spelt the end to a proposal by Cape Town City Council

Association vice-president Louwtjie Rothman said he had seen street children doing garden work while on a study tour of local government in South America

A Cosatu delegate on the same tour had objected to child labour, Mr Rothman said

"What is the better of the two evils?

'Langa stinking as rubbish piles up'

(124) CT 30/3/94

Staff Reporter

LANGA was becoming a "serious health hazard", as residents were dumping rubbish in any open space they could find, says Mr Price Siqwane, public relations officer for the Committee of Ten.

Refuse collection services normally provided by the crisis-ridden iKapa Town Council had stopped, Mr Siqwana claimed.

He said the township was "stinking", with blocked sewerage pipes and rats running riot.

But Mr Deon Adriaanse, chief executive officer of the iKapa Town Council, denied that rubbish was not being collected "An inspection was held 10 days ago and Langa was as clean as it's been in many months."

Electricity and water tariff rises sought

(124)

ARG 7/4/94

☐ Special meeting set to debate recommendations

CLIVE SAWYER
Municipal Reporter

ELECTRICITY tariffs will go up nine percent and water five percent if the Cape Town City Council accepts official recommendations

The recommended increases were to be debated at a special meeting of the utilities and works committee today

To balance the council's budget, electricity should go up 15 percent and water by 7,5 percent

Drawing money from the tariff stabilisation fund and bringing forward implementation of electricity increases by three months will keep increases to recommended levels

Electricity profits will supply R76 million to the rate fund — a financial move under threat by national proposals to remove electricity distribution from municipal control

In a report on the water tariff increase, city treasurer Eddie Landsberg said capital spending on the Palmiet water project would be R95,9 million this financial year and R51,3 million in 1994/95 Most of this capital spending was being financed over the long term, which meant the council had to build up its bulk water reserve fund

Mr Landsberg said factors in calculating the increase were

- Reduced costs because of changes to finance arrangements,
- The need to keep the increase affordable, and
- The need to encourage water conservation

Water restrictions, which resulted in lower income, meant the amount to be drawn from the tariff stabilisation fund was R960 000 higher than expected

Earlier calculations were that water prices would go up by 7,5 percent, but the increase had been reduced by taking R6 million from the tariff stabilisation fund

In line with policy decided last year, there would be no increase in tariffs for the first 30kℓ a quarter, Mr Landsberg said

For consumption of more than 30kℓ a quarter, tariffs would rise 6,5 percent Where bulk meters were installed, the increase would be five percent

In a report on the electricity price rise, Mr Landsberg and city electrical engineer Fred Berwyn-Taylor said contributing factors were an increase in operating costs and the expected Eskom increase

Spending on staff pay was set to rise by about 12 percent, which included spending on extra staff for disconnection duties and the installation of pre-payment meters

The report said a slightly higher increase was to be imposed on domestic consumers than on commercial and industrial users

City council electricity tariffs for "large users" were higher than those of neighbouring electricity undertakings Large businesses and the Cape Town Chamber of Commerce had complained

Domestic users were being subsidised by large users by about R8 million a year

"Establishment of metropolitan structures in the near future is likely to result in strong pressure on supply authorities to levy a standard tariff for domestic consumers, which would cause a steep increase for them"

The report said it was expected Eskom tariffs would rise by eight percent

The treasury had set aside R1,75 million for coal and R600 000 for oil in next year's budget for emergencies This allocation was lower than in previous years

To balance the budget, an electricity price rise of 15 percent would be needed

"An increase of this size is unacceptable and the date of the increase should be brought forward to August because this will allow the overall average increase to be reduced to nine percent and still yield the necessary income"

Domestic tariffs would go up 10 percent and large user rates by 8,1 percent

The proposed tariff increase would allow a contribution to the rate fund of R76,67 million, 10 percent of the proceeds of the sale of electricity This was in accordance with State guidelines, the report said

The council would levy "grossing charges" on electricity accounts of more than R125 including value added tax paid after due date

Cape Town faces rise in water and electricity bills

B/Day 8/4/94

EDWARD WEST

CAPE TOWN — Electricity and water tariff increases of 9% and 5% respectively are being considered by Cape Town's city council

City treasurer Eddie Landsberg said in a report that a 12% rise in wages and an increase in staff to manage pre-payment meters was behind the electricity tariff increase (124)

The establishment of metropolitan structures was likely to result in strong pressure to levy a standard tariff on domestic consumers It was considered prudent to impose a slightly higher increase on domestic consumers than commercial consumers

Eskom's electricity tariff increased 7% in January and was expected to rise a further 8% next January

Electricity tariffs should rise 15% from December 1 1994, but this was considered too steep a rise The suggested date of implementation of the price rise was put forward to August.

Capital spending on the Palmiet water project would be R95,9m this year and R51,3m in the 1994/95 financial year.

At a public meeting yesterday, Water Affairs and Forestry spokesman Peter Pyke said an additional water resource scheme would be needed to meet Cape Town's needs by 1998

Desalinated sea water, which would have to be considered eventually, would cost 20 times as much as water from the Palmiet project.

Hawkers' chief pulls out of poll

B/Day 8/4/94

STEPHANE BOTHMA

AFRICAN Council of Hawkers and Informal Business chief Lawrence Mavundla has withdrawn his name from the Federal Party list because of intimidation.

In a letter to Federal Party leader Frances Kendall, Mavundla said "My family has persuaded me to give up the Federal Party as a candidate They have lost four family members in one year; they don't want to lose me or my kids."

The Federal Party said Mavundla had hired a bodyguard after announcing his candidacy but that he no longer felt the move was adequate

Mavundla was scheduled to appear as a feature speaker at the Federal Party launch last week, but failed to appear.

Master of ceremonies Des Lindberg said the reason Mavundla was not present was because of the violence following last Monday's march in central Johannesburg by thousands of supporters of Zulu King Goodwill Zwelithini.

Mavundla told the party that he could not afford to be away from his family for even one day, but said he would return to the Federal Party after the election "if I am still alive".

Kendall said the party had faced similar problems before.

"Several black intellectuals and business leaders, who supported us, told us that they could not put their names on the list because of intimidation. One withdrew from the list just minutes before the deadline," Kendall said.

She called on other party leaders to publicly condemn intimidation and to guarantee the rights of black candidates to run for any party they wished.

Report by S Bothma, TML, 11 Diagonal St, Jhb

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B/Day 8/4/94

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New address for treasury

SUSAN RUSSELL

THE City Treasury is moving from the Johannesburg City Hall to Braamfontein to make way for the PWV Regional Parliament

A department spokesman said rates and service accounts could still be paid at the old rates hall, but other treasury functions were being moved to Jorissen Place, corner of Jorissen and Bertha Streets

A temporary help number (407 7349) would operate from today.

The transportation department had also closed its City Hall bus coupon office. Facilities at the Vanderbijl bus terminus were to be extended, and a coupon van would sell tickets outside the City Hall from April 27-29.

Utility prices likely to go up in July

(124) CT 8/4/94

WATER tariffs must be increased by 5% on average from July 1, and electricity by 9% on average from August 1, the Cape Town City Council's utilities committee resolved yesterday

The resolution still has to be passed by the full council

Both proposed tariff increases exclude VAT. In the case of water there will be no increase for those 16% of consumers who use less than 30 kilolitres a quarter The water will still cost 84c/kl

The next category up, those who use more than 30kl but under 130kl, will pay 6,5% more than they do at present This comes to an average 5% increase overall Those in flats without individual meters will pay 5% more

The electricity tariff increase is a disguised 15% increase City electrical engineer Mr Fred Berwyn-Taylor's report to the committee spelled out that a 15% increase would be needed to balance the budget

However, this is usually introduced at the beginning of January, or close to that date By bringing the implementation date forward, the increase can be dropped to 9% on average

While the electricity increase averages 9%, for domestic consumers it will be 10%

More increases for domestic users are on the way, according to Mr Berwyn-Taylor He said strong pressure was expected on supply authorities to implement a standard tariff for domestic users in the future, and this would lead to "a steep increase for the council's domestic consumers"

At the moment, household consumers are subsidised in Cape Town to the amount of R8 million a year This had led to complaints from big firms and the Chamber of Commerce

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Cape Town's electricity charges are set to climb

ARG 8/4/94 (124)

Municipal Reporter

ELECTRICITY charges in Cape Town are set to climb steadily and could leap overnight if Eskom withdraws a special discount.

The discount is given because of an oversupply of electricity in the national grid.

Eskom compensates the Cape Town City Council for keeping the Athlone power station in mothballs. But when national demand for electricity matches supply, the discount will fall away.

"If this happened today, it would bring an immediate three percent increase in electricity tariffs," said city electrical engineer Fred Berwyn-Taylor

He said that at present it would cost the council more to generate electricity at the Athlone power station than to buy power from Eskom.

"We are paying R15 million a year less than it would cost us to purchase at Eskom's standard rate"

The power station was paid for and had "20 years of life in it".

In a budget debate yesterday, utilities and works committee member Clive Bilski noted that the station cost R34 million a year in administration and wage costs.

"Is that really necessary?" he asked.

Mr Berwyn-Taylor said the council would have to decide whether it was cost-effective to run the station when it became liable to pay the full Eskom tariffs.

If the station had to be put into use immediately, standby staff could generate one-third of its capacity "comfortably", and half at a stretch.

Asked by committee member Tony Powell whether he thought Eskom would want the station closed, Mr Berwyn-Taylor said this was likely.

"They would like us to close it because while we have it they have to give us a discount." It was probable Eskom wanted to be the sole supplier of electricity in the country.

Mr Berwyn-Taylor said yesterday's tariff increase of 9 percent from August was meant to soften the impact of the rise needed to balance the budget

Calculations had shown that a 15 percent increase was needed. Bringing forward the implementation date of the increase would "soften the impact, but we cannot escape it".

Mr Berwyn-Taylor said business and industrial electricity users had complained that their higher tariffs subsidised domestic users.

Phasing in uniform tariffs for all users would take several years, he said

Phasing out of the contribution to rates from power profits would also begin

This year, 10 percent of power profits, about R77 million, will be used to subsidise rates This subsidy could disappear if electricity distribution is removed from municipal control.

● The Athlone power station is being readied for emergency use should the national electricity grid fail during elections.

But the station would not be able to cope with Cape Town's electricity demands, said Mr Berwyn-Taylor

The station could supply up to 90 megawatts Peak consumption in Cape Town is 700 megawatts.

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Council effort to stave off turmoil affects services

☐ Low rates increase hits departments

(124) ARG 8/4/94

CLIVE SAWYER
Municipal Reporter

A DETERMINED effort by the Cape Town City Council to stave off political and financial turmoil by keeping the rates increase low is taking its toll on all branches

Draft budgets for cleansing, electricity, fire, water, traffic, stormwater and street works were passed by the utilities and works committee yesterday

The items are part of the council budget to take effect in July — the deadline for setting up a transitional metropolitan council

The only significant change to the utilities budget was a slight adjustment to keep 22 street sweepers on council books, a move inspired by councillors anxious to defuse public ire about dirty streets The committee will ask the executive committee to help it fund a further 50 cleansing posts

Exco chairman Clive Keegan urged the utilities committee to keep the operating budget under control and to avoid increasing rates by more than 9,5 percent

"To go beyond this figure could lead us, given last year's so-called rates debacle, into political turmoil we would be hard put to survive"

Committees could decide as a matter of policy to increase spending on certain operations but would have to cut spending elsewhere This was in line with the new exco's policy of delegating greater policy power to standing committees and departments

Deputy city treasurer Peter Lever said the budget had been drawn up to fit the present local government dispensation, but was capable of being adapted when restructuring took place.

Key points in the utilities "mini-budget" included

- An electricity tariff average increase of 9 percent — but because this is being implemented three months earlier than usual, it is effectively a 15 percent increase
- A water tariff rise of 6 percent — but tariffs for consumers using less than 30 kilolitres of water a quarter will not go up as an incentive to save water About 16 percent of consumers use less than 30 kilolitres a quarter
- A warning that withdrawal of a discount by Eskom for bulk electricity sales to the council could mean an immediate rise in electricity tariffs
- The possibility that collapse of the sewerage system in Ikapa townships could cause fouling of Cape Town's stormwater drains — a huge health hazard
- Cutbacks in river clearing could mean Cape Town drains would overflow next winter, bringing flooding
- The withdrawal of emergency aid for roadworks from the parking areas development fund, from which R9 million has been siphoned since July, to prevent the fund going into deficit
- The net cost of fire services, paid from rates, will rise by 20 percent because of reduced provincial subsidies

Utilities and works chairman Ian Iversen said his committee had "squared" the budget on the lines required by exco, but there could be no improvement in services

Plan for low-cost homes land

(124) CT 9/4/94

Staff Reporter

THE Cape Provincial Administration and Western Cape RSC are to identify land in the Cape Metropolitan Area for low-cost housing

The public will take part in the project, which will be undertaken by the CSIR

The manager of the CSIR's Cape regional office of roads and transport technology, Mr Andries Naude, said yesterday "The criteria to determine suitable land for low-cost housing will not be undertaken by people sitting in a backroom, but will involve negotiation with the relevant stakeholders"

He said a computerised Geographic Information System would help classify land into categories of development suitability, with emphasis on travel distances and job opportunities

Areas that should be kept for agriculture or conservation would be screened out by the computer

"We will have a library of information to call up if people say we should consider some particular aspect," Mr Naude said

The project is aimed at a negotiated three-phase programme specifying the amounts of land that should be released in each sub-region for various housing categories

Flat dwellers accuse Council of neglect

Southeaster (Suppl to South) 8/4 - 12/4/94

(124)

BY JOSEPH ARANES

RESIDENTS of Heideveld's Doreen Court are angry with the City Council which they claim is not doing enough to maintain their block of flats.

Mrs Ellen Stellenboom said ugly cracks on her walls are always showing and her home is always damp

"This building is very old and is slowly falling apart My whole house is full of cracks and when it rains the water streams in, spoiling my carpet and I must move the beds and other furniture away from the walls," Mrs Stellenboom said.

Mrs Esther Petersen said she moved in about three years ago and found her flat a complete mess

"The council's repair team came and repaired the window panes and some of the cracks in the walls They also ripped up the tiles I had laid on the kitchen floor," she said.

"They left the place in a mess and never came back again. For the past year I visited the local housing office on numerous occasions and complained, but nothing was ever done

BARELY LIVEABLE· Esther Petersen's floor tiles were ripped out by council workers and never replaced

"My kitchen floor is still a bare slab of concrete I don t have money to replace the tiles "

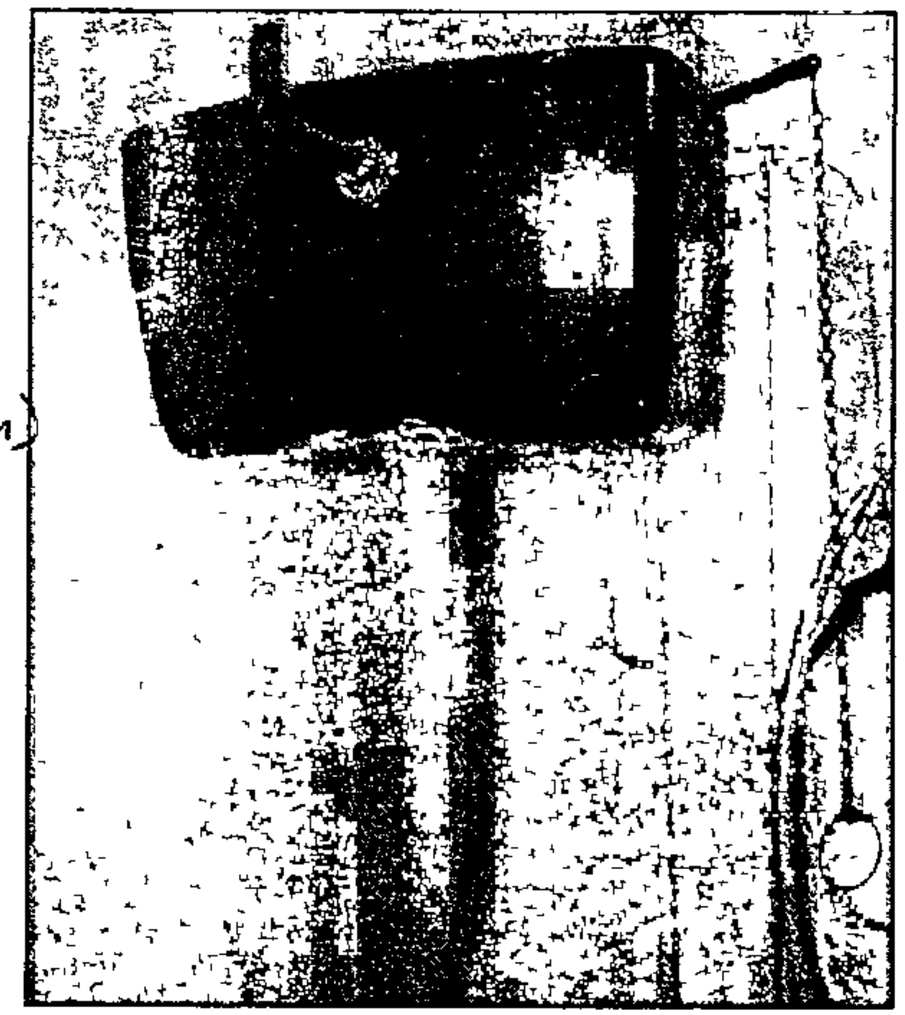
Most other residents complained about huge cracks criss-crossing Doreen Court faulty plumbing and leaks They all feel the court is in desperate need of major repair work

Mr Jacobus van As who moved into the court in 1968 said his wife was asthmatic and her condition got worse the longer they lived there

"This place is continually damp and in winter, it leaks and is terribly cold," Mr Van As said.

"When the wind blows, I'm not sure if the door is going to be ripped from its frame or if a burglar is trying to get in I reported these things to the council many times, but nothing is ever done to repair it.

"They first want the whole building to fall on our heads before they are going to do something And I'm sure we don't have to wait too long for that to happen."



TAKING A LEAK: A toilet in Doreen Court is constantly damp because of a leaking roof

Director of Housing Mrs Charlotte Simms said the council has a comprehensive programme to repair the flats, but funds are very limited

"We are doing essential repair work and a certain amount of upgrading, but because of the vast amount of units, it is difficult to maintain all the flats at once.

"People must also take responsibility for damages they cause," Mrs Simms said.

Flat dwellers all over the Peninsula are up in arms because they believe the council is not making their homes liveable

The council is in the process of transferring most cottages to tenants, but have decided not to sell the flats

A Manenberg community worker, Mrs Louise Abrahams, said it was time the council realised they built the flats years ago and have not once done major repair work on the structures.

"The flats are their responsibility and they must maintain and repair it," Mrs Abrahams said.

Mrs Simms said with the selling of the cottages there was less revenue coming in and only a small percentage of rent was set aside for repair work and upgrading

"We have started a comprehensive programme and although I'm not saying it is perfect, we will get around to fix the buildings," Mrs Simms said.

R1,2m for houses in Valhalla Park

BY JOSEPH ARANES Southeaster (Suppl to South)

A NEW R1,2 million low-cost housing project for Valhalla Park was approved for development by the City Council last month and work on the site has started.

The project, off Angela Road, will create jobs for some of the area's unemployed and provide 43 houses

Residents of Valhalla Park on the council's waiting list will get priority when the units are allocated

Valhalla Park Civic Association chairperson, Mr George Rosenberg, said his organisation was delighted the council had at to the wishes of the people

"For months we negotiated with them to provide decent housing for us and, with the clinching of this project we succeeded," Mr Rosenberg said

"The council originally wanted to build starter houses with a fairly big living room and bathroom, but have now agreed to construct two-bedroomed, semi-detached houses

"Another good thing is that local builder, Mr Solomon Williams who owns Williams Builders, will build the homes Mr Williams undertook to employ as many of the area's unemployed as possible for the project"

The first phase started two weeks ago when council workers started preparing the site and laying drains (124)

The council also undertook to construct gravel roads and provide street lighting for the project.

Mr Williams said the contract to build the homes gave him the opportunity to give something back to the community

"At the same time people must remember I'm running a business and although I will try to employ as many of the area's unemployed as possible, I am looking for qualified people who can deliver quality work," he said

"People must be realistic and realise I have a responsibility to the council to deliver the houses within six months"

The second phase, building the houses, will begin in the next two weeks and the houses will cost around R30 000 each

'CONTAINER CITY' BLUES

Southeaster (suppl. to South)

BY JOSEPH ARANES

USING containers to house people on a temporary basis might be a good idea, but when steel boxes are used as a permanent solution to a housing crisis, it can make life unbearable.

CONTAINERS: People are sick of living in these steel boxes

1514- 19/4/94

More than a year ago the Bellville municipality housed 16 families in containers at its sewerage treatment plant in Sacks Circle The council promised to find alternative accommodation within six months

Today these families are still living in their "container city"

Many have tried to make their abodes attractive and liveable, with gardens

But they need a decent house to call home

Mr Lukas Thomas, 56, said they paid the municipality R80 a month rent and the containers are all they have to show for it.

"They promised to find land and build us houses, but after the six months expired, we were told we could live here for as long as we liked

"This place is so small that my family cannot live together My daughters were given their own container," Mr Thomas said

His neighbours are just as angry

Mrs Margaret Bezuidenhout, a mother of four, said living in the container was unhealthy and her children were always coughing

"The families share three communal toilets and get our drinking water from taps connected to the outside walls of these toilets," Mrs Bezuidenhout said (124)

"The toilets are often blocked We are forced to use the facilities because there is no alternative

"In winter the containers are as cold as freezers and when it's hot, it's like living in an oven We are tired of living like this "

Her neighbour, Mrs Loretta Beukes, said there was no room for privacy She and her husband dress, wash and sleep in front of their children

"Visitors have to sit on the floor because there is no space for chairs

"Many of us sold our furniture when we moved in because of the lack of space

"We don't want to live like this and we are not looking for free housing We are paying rent to live here and are prepared to pay for alternative accommodation

"There is no space for our children to play. We are forced to accompany them to school because they have to walk through bushes and across the station to get there It is very dangerous living here," Mrs Beukes said.

A spokesperson for the Bellville municipality, Ms Sue Vellema, said they were aware of the plight of the people, but did not have any houses available for the families

"The problem is a scarcity of land in Bellville to build low income houses," Ms Vellema said

"The only solution will be for the municipality to build high-rise, high density flats if we are to overcome the present crisis and hopefully things will improve after the elections," she said

Write-offs keep Atlantis afloat

(124)

CT 21/4/94

Municipal bills cut by R150m

Municipal Reporter

ATLANTIS residents have had about R150m knocked off the amounts they owe on their houses and municipal services they have received, according to Mr Jac Rabie, a member of a cabinet working group investigating problems in the suburb

While much of the debt write-off has already been announced — such as the R7 500 once-off capital subsidy for council houses that have not yet been sold — some of the concessions are new

Mr Rabie's private secretary, Mr Louis le Roux, denied that any of the write-off was an election sweetener

"This decision has nothing to do with elections or politics," he said

However, he did concede that part of the debt write-off was a "once-off gift from the government to the people of Atlantis"

He was talking of a further discount applying to council houses, over and above the R7 500 discount This concession would cost R49m

Atlantis residents simply could not afford their houses and many were struggling terribly because the unemployment rate there was about 60%, Mr Le Roux said

The total housing loan debt of the suburb of Wesfleur had been reduced by 15% This concession cost R20,4m, he added

The R7 500 once-off capital subsidy scheme for those who wanted to buy the council houses they lived in would cost the state some R34m

Arrear services charges owed to the Western Cape Regional Services Council would be "depreciated" In effect, this meant that an amount of R13,3m would be written off

Overdue rates would be handled by the administrator of the Cape in terms of the agreement on finances and services

"The amount there is R11,08m," Mr Le Roux said

About R7,7m in instalment payments on housing would be written off, as would about R2,2m in rent arrears

Manenberg NP leader 'jumps' housing queue

ROGER FRIEDMAN, Staff Reporter

THE leader of the National Party in Manenberg "jumped" the 40 000-odd city council housing waiting-list and is illegally occupying a flat in the area

The African National Congress has "condemned the illegal occupation" and called for immediate council action "so that those suffering for years on the waiting-list can receive priority"

Council spokesman Ted Doman said "the director of housing is aware those premises are illegally tenanted"

But the council had decided not to evict "illegal occupants" who occupied houses before a February 1993 cut-off date

"Hundreds" of council houses were presently illegally occupied across the Cape Flats "for a variety of reasons" by people who had "jumped the waiting-list queue", Mr Doman said

Meanwhile, at the centre of the storm, Manenberg National Party district council chairwoman Marlene Russo said she and her family's occupation of the flat was "not in the true sense illegal" and appealed for her personal life to be kept out of politics

Mrs Russo said the ANC "must get lost They are so worried about not getting votes that they are prepared to try all kinds of petty things" ARGT 21/4/94 (124)

"Leave my personal life out of it. Look into how many people (the ANC) put into houses illegally," Mrs Russo said

(News by Roger Friedmann, 122 St George's Mall, Cape Town)

Tenants allowed to buy RSC houses

(124)

Municipal Reporter

TENANTS of Western Cape Regional Services Council are to be offered the chance to buy their houses as part of a government-sponsored scheme

Cape Town City Council earlier warned that the government's scheme — which offered buyers of council houses a R7 500 discount — had fewer benefits than earlier schemes.

RSC tenants were told the new scheme applied only to houses built before last June It does not apply to flats

Participation in the scheme is voluntary. ARG 22/4/94

If buying the house will cost more than R7 500, tenants will have to apply to banks and building societies for loans at market rates.

NP leader will not be evicted

(124)

Staff Reporter

THE City Council will not evict Manenberg's NP leader for jumping the 40 000-long council housing queue and living illegally in a council house CT 25/4/94

A spokesman confirmed district council chairwoman Mrs Marlene Russo was an illegal tenant

"There are hundreds of illegal tenants in council housing in Manenberg from all political persuasions," he said

"The council took a decision not to evict illegals if they had taken up occupation before February 1993"

The ANC has condemned the illegal occupation and has called for action by the council

New low-cost house plan

(124) ARG 23/4/94

■ A new low-cost housing unit has been designed by a Cape Town builder and is expected to be the answer to the housing shortage.

TOM HOOD

HUNDREDS of low-cost housing systems have been developed but most failed, either because they were not so low cost after all or because the house did not meet the buyer's expectations

A Cape Town builder, Mike Hill, set out three years ago to find the best means of housing the poor His steel-framed starter home failed as people were not ready or willing to devise their own walls

He then built 100 conventional houses, which worked well enough, but became too expensive for the target market

The conclusion People wanted a "brick" house with a cavity wall that they could afford

He got the Portland Cement Institute in Goodwood to devise a timber-framed wall panel that could plaster into a cavity wall

At the same time Pregtech, a member of the Harwill Group, a local manufacturer of resin-impregnated fibreglass mesh, developed a product designed to receive a plaster, chiefly to be used in replastering damaged walls

So Mr Hill decided to attach the mesh to a timber frame, making a cavity wall that was mostly manufactured in a factory and at low cost

After a few months of testing, a system was established and patented Two South African and two French investors joined the company and Readykit Housing was born SABS structural and rainwater tests were passed with flying colours, said Mr Hill

The show house at the Cape Showgrounds, Goodwood was built in two weeks using five labourers and a carpenter supervised by the Western Cape Training Centre at Epping, which wrote a training course in the erection skills required

The 1m wide wall frames also contain the window and door frames as well as the electrical conduit One layer of fibreglass mesh is attached to each face of the 76 mm thick frame Once plastered, a strong and effective cavity wall results

Buyers can acquire the entire house in kit form from about R320 a square metre or purchase it frame by frame

A kit for a two-bedroom house, including plumbing and electrical installation, sells for R14 600 and can be fully erected for less than R18 000

The design allows for growth, starting with a single room of 3m², although the standard designs are for houses of one two, or three bedrooms

Readykit Housing has started operating in Cape Town and intends to expand to the Reef and Natal before the end of the year

□ **WORK IN PROGRESS:** The Readykit house taking shape, showing fibreglass mesh walls

□ **READY AND PAINTED:** The showhouse at the Cape Showgrounds, Goodwood

□ **SOARING DEMAND:** The R1 million sale this month of the 10-apartment Alphen Hill block in Wynberg was part of a soaring demand for sectional title flats, says Jenny Chambers, manager of the Realty 1 Durr branch in Kenilworth. The block was sold to the Dandak-Lewin Development Trust. Flats will be sold at prices from R145 000

Maize more profitable, smoking conference told

Municipal Reporter ARG 3/5/94

MAIZE is a more profitable crop than tobacco, farmers have been told at a conference on tobacco and health

The tobacco lobby has said its crop provides jobs and profits worldwide.

The information about the all-Africa conference, held in Harare last year, was tabled at the Cape Town City Council's amenities and health committee meeting yesterday

Zambian agricultural consultant Ronald Watts told the conference there were 53 crops and land uses which should be developed in Africa.

These included export horticulture, fruit, ostrich farming, nuts and fibre crops.

Of these, maize was estimated to yield 36 percent more profit a hectare than tobacco.

And, of the 44 African countries producing tobacco, only half exported any.

The average deficit balance of trade deprived some of the world's poorest countries of precious foreign exchange.

Last year Zimbabwe had its lowest returns ever from tobacco auctions because of international oversupply and falling demand.

Abattoir sale saga continues

Municipal Reporter

THREE companies may join forces to buy the Maitland abattoir from the Cape Town City Council

The companies are Abacor, Renown and Buccaneer, the amenities and health committee was told

Members of the committee, including Arthur Wienburg and Leon Markovitz, said they were frustrated because the abattoir saga had not been finalised

According to a city administrator's report the abattoir lost almost R500 000 last month.

"If abattoir management is not capable of addressing problems, we should get in management consultants, or our own organisation and methods branch, to stop the rot," Mr Wienburg said

Mr Markovitz said he would "lay his head on a block" that the abattoir would not be sold.

There seemed to be no contingency plan about what would be done should the abattoir not be sold, he said.

R9-m rent arrears: Business as usual for debt collectors

Municipal Reporter (124) ARG 3/5/94

IT is business as usual for debt collectors trying to recover R9 million worth of rent arrears in Cape Town City Council housing estates.

Housing chairman Neil Ross said that in spite of speculation about arrears being written off, it would be wrong to raise expectations

People who had been "handed over" to debt collectors were those the council believed could reasonably be expected to pay, he said.

The accounts of more than 17 000 tenants in council estates are in arrears.

Mr Ross said the council was obliged to repay loans for housing development.

● More than 800 representatives of local authorities are expected to attend a briefing on May 26 on new national housing policy.

Speakers at the briefing will include the new provincial minister of housing.

May 6 to May 10 1994

NO PLEASURE LIVING IN THE 'LOST CITY'

Southeaster (Suppl to South) 615 - 10/5/94

BY JOSEPH ARANES

HIGH rents, poor quality houses and a list of other grievances has forced a rent boycott in new Tafelsig, say residents.

The area has been dubbed "Lost City" because it is completely cut off from the rest of Mitchells Plain

There are no schools, playing fields, churches, parks or recreational facilities at the Lost City

RUNNING OUT OF SPACE: A Tafelsig resident is forced to take her washing machine outside because the house is too small

(124)

Postal and telephone services are non-existent Residents collect mail from the town centre

Chairperson of the New Tafelsig Ratepayers Association, Mr Andries Mondsinger, said political parties rushed to the area to score points when their homes were occupied by illegal tenants

"None of the parties are prepared to help us now that we are faced with huge instalments and repair bills," he said

"Our rents range from R300 to R450 a month excluding electricity and water Delft houses cost the same to build and are just as small as ours, but residents there pay half the rent we are charged "

Mr Mondsinger said his association held numerous meetings with the Cape Town City Council and organised marches to the Minister of Housing's office to raise their concerns and grievances, but nothing was done

"People are sick and tired of living like this Everybody knows what our problems are and because no-one is prepared to help us, we decided to boycott rents," Mr Mondsinger said

Mother of four, Mrs Fatima Hendricks, said because the house is small her eldest son could not move in with the family and lives with her mother

"For 10 patient years we waited for a house and now our family can't live together to enjoy it As a mother I feel terrible about it," Mrs Hendricks said

Mrs Beverley Dooling said her rent was R428 a month and her family spent hundreds of rands to make the house liveable

"The council promised us months ago they would build decent houses for illegal tenants now squatting on our door steps

"We don't have problems with them, but must there be some sort of disaster before the council finally realises they need to build houses for the people there as well?"

Chairman of the council's housing committee, Mr Neil Ross, said council could not reduce rents as amounts were set by government

At a meeting with residents, he said they would qualify for the council's R7 500 discount scheme which would reduce repayments

Mr Ross also said it was hoped that proper houses would be made available for illegal tenants living in temporary houses

Woodstock housing project launched

(124)

CT 17/5/94

Property Editor

AN "INFILL" housing project is to be launched in Woodstock by the New Housing Company (NewHco), which recently opened an office in Cape Town and merged its operations with the Headstart Organisation

Situated in Devon Street, the project — NewHco's first in the city — will comprise six units on stands of 97,5m² each to be developed at a total cost of R366 000

Units including, all costs and land, will be selling from between R48 550 to R73 650

This project will be followed by a second infill project in Dublin Street, Woodstock where a total of 30 units of about 60m² will be built

CE of the Cape Town operation, John Weaver said their sales agreements were worded to preclude speculation and limit the resale of units for a 12 month period Buyers, he said, would be required to live in the houses.

A special feature of the Devon Street units, he said, were that they could extended from 28m² to 59m² by buyers at a later stage

Weaver pointed out that the units in both developments qualified for the first time homebuyers subsidy in that they were would be selling for under R65 000 for the unit and plot

While a new subsidy scheme has recently been announced for those earning below R3 500 a month, and is being implemmented by the national and regional housing boards, it applies only to group and mass projects and not to individual applicants

Until such time as this is revised the first time homebuyers subsidy is still in operation.

Weaver said NewHco, which is the development arm of the Cape Town operation, had pioneered new concepts in housing in the Transvaal and was looking to make a significant impact on the Cape market

They were currently also looking at other projects and presently have four in the melting pot which together will provide 550 units

The Section 21 company, he said, had also been one of the largest providers of serviced sites for the Independent Development Trust having delivered more than 20 000 sites

For further details contact John Weaver 418 3070

Spurned homes for ministers

CT 17/5/94 (124)

They will pay market rates

By PETER DENNEHY

SEVEN controversial ministerial residences in Walmer Estate, on the edge of District Six, are to be rented out to members of the new government — if they want them

The luxurious houses, built at a cost of R5 million in 1986, have never been occupied The government has been wanting to sell them for over two years

In the days of the tricameral parliament no minister wanted to occupy them

Nearly eight years ago several organisations joined forces to protest against the ministers living there

Mr André Meyering, head of the parliamentary section of the Public Works Department, said yesterday that rentals for the properties should be determined by today, and reported to the new minister, Mr Jeff Radebe

Yesterday the whips of all the major parties attended a meeting in Pretoria at which they were asked to compile "protocol lists" (or pecking orders) to a sub-committee of officials whose job it is to offer the ministers housing

The ministers will have to pay for the housing themselves, at market-related rates

There are 35 ministerial and deputy ministerial homes in Cape Town, according to Mr Ian Duncan, superintendent of Groote Schuur Estate

Pretoria has 27

The Walmer Estate houses have been added to the stock of ministerial homes in Cape Town because there are now 27 cabinet ministers, 12 deputies, and a few other dignitaries, including the parliamentary Speaker and the President of Senate

According to the Melamet Commission report, of which President Mandela approves, the president and his deputies may choose not to live in an official residence, but this will not entitle them to additional pay

Mr Mandela and his deputy presidents will still each have an official car that goes with their office, according to the Melamet Commission Report — which is expected to be formulated into law soon after Parliament convenes later this month

Major dispute erupts over plots of land in flats buffer zone

ARG 19/5/94

☐ Wounds of apartheid continue to fester

(124)

ROGER FRIEDMAN
Staff Reporter

APARTHEID has come and gone but the wounds of the policy, not least the Group Areas Act, continue to fester.

About 650 plots in Tambo Square — a previously unoccupied buffer zone between (black) Guguletu and (coloured) Manenberg — were awarded to members of the Tambo Square Civic Association, who are squatting in KTC, by the Cape Provincial Administration in 1990 after a protracted struggle

Another 265 plots were never allocated

The civic association lodged a deposit with a major construction company for houses to be built on the 650 plots but the parties have been bickering over terms ever since

In the meantime, sites with plot numbers were allocated to KTC families Streets, street lights and sewerage pipes were installed but nobody moved on to the land

Until this week, that is, when residents of backyard shacks across the road in Manenberg began occupying the sites

"They say the Guguletu border is Silverstream Road (which borders Tambo Square) but I say there are no borders in the new South Africa I have every right to live in Guguletu," squatter spokesman Raymond Isaacs said yesterday

Two shacks were completed — and their coloured "owners" installed — on Monday before the KTC families realised what was happening

Yesterday supporters of the Manenberg People's Association geared themselves to build another 50 shacks Meanwhile, the "rightful owners" converged on Tambo Square to reclaim their land

The Manenberg would-be squatters and the KTC families are pinning their hopes for a solution on a meeting of all concerned on Monday

Accusing the people's association of being a National Party front, chairman of the Tambo Square Civic Association Themba Beja said "This is no time to fight It is a time for talking and helping one another"

Mr Beja accused the Manenberg police of siding with the squatters in spite of alleged assurances that the land would be cleared of squatters by yesterday

Nelson Mabija of the Tambo Square Housing Committee — which is affiliated to South African National Civics Organisation — spent most of yesterday with lawyers

He said 650 plots had been allocated and their future was non-negotiable Manenberg squatters were welcome to negotiate with the CPA for the other 265 plots.

"We are prepared to advise them on how to conduct the negotiations We have no problem with them as long as they stay off our 650 plots. We have already laid charges of trespassing against the two (families) who have moved in."

A lawyer said he and his clients were eager to avoid racial tension, but it was up to the provincial government to "do their work and remove those people"

Ismael Simpson of the Manenberg People's Association said supporters of his organisation had fought for the right to settle at Tambo Square since 1984 when they called themselves the Manenberg Muslim Society

The fact that he was a National Party member had nothing to do with the issue as his supporters included ANC members, Mr Simpson said

His supporters were prepared to negotiate for the 265 unallocated plots but in the meantime would move in anyway They would be prepared to move to other plots after the conclusion of negotiations

Meanwhile, would-be squatters busied themselves with marking out "their" turf and digging foundations

But Mr Beja said that moving in before negotiating was "provocative" and would not be tolerated

"We know these people need housing but they are fighting in the wrong direction

"Through our lawyers we are seeking our deeds of ownership and will then pursue eviction orders Then the police will be forced to act"

Manenberg squatters to leave square

CT 20/5/94 (124)

Staff Reporter

COLOURED families squatting illegally on Tambo Square, a pocket of land in Manenberg earmarked for black occupation, agreed yesterday to vacate their shacks which will be taken down with the help of the Cape Provincial Administration (CPA) today.

A CPA spokeswoman said two of the three families had agreed to leave voluntarily yesterday following the intervention of provincial housing minister Mr Gerald Morkel, who said he would not hesitate to evict the illegal occupants.

The Manenberg ANC and Civic Association threatened to take legal action earlier this week if the squatters were not removed from the area which was allocated to 650 squatters in neighbouring Guguletu in 1990.

The legal tenants have not yet moved across as they are still raising funds for the construction of brick houses on the site which borders Silverstream Road.

The CPA said they were "sympathetic" towards the three destitute families who occupied the land on their own initiative after being evicted from backyard dwellings last week.

The spokeswoman said the CPA had offered to help the families find rented accommodation similar to what they had lost, but were emphatic that no further illegal settlement would be allowed on the land.

Housing body welcomes squatters announcement

ARG 20/5/94 (124)

ROGER FRIEDMAN
Staff Reporter

THE KTC-based Tambo Square Housing Forum has welcomed the announcement that Manenberg families squatting on land on the Manenberg/Guguletu border are prepared to move

A spokeswoman for the Cape Provincial Administration said today that the three squatting families had agreed to move as soon as they were provided with alternative accommodation

About 650 sites were allocated by the CPA to the forum in 1990 after a lengthy struggle A further 265 sites were never allocated. This week backyard shack dwellers from Manenberg started moving on to plots allocated to the forum

Their move was rejected by the ANC and Manenberg Civic Association who said that, in spite of the acute housing shortage, the principle of not occupying land allocated to others had to apply

The CPA spokeswoman said the Urban Development department was urgently seeking alternative accommodation for the families today They would be provided with housing "of a similar standard to what they used to have"

The department was emphatic that illegal occupations would not be tolerated, the spokeswoman said

News of the agreement between the CPA and the squatters took the Tambo Square Housing Forum by surprise today

Their spokeswoman said they were see what was happening before seeing lawyers later today Charges of trespassing were laid with police on Tuesday

"We will be very happy if they move But we don't say they have to go away They can use the other 265 plots as long as they are not disturbing us in our area"

The forum intended to speed up stalled negotiations with their building contractor in the light of the occupations "because we see that if we carry on delaying we could lose that field".

Faldiera de Vries of the Manenberg Civic Association said the would-be squatters could not be blamed for their actions as many had been waiting for housing for more than 10 years

"It's through no fault of their own that they find themselves in the position they're in.

"The National Housing Board needs to seriously address the housing issue This is definitely not going to be the last incident of this nature."

Ms De Vries suggested that squatters occupy vacant land in Manenberg rather than resort to grabbing already-allocated land

Bold 'homes for all' plan

By NAZEEM HOWA

WESTERN Cape housing minister Gerald Morkel has developed a bold plan to build 20 000 new houses a year over the next five years to reduce the huge 200 000-house backlog in the region.

"The only hurdle we still face is funding — but I am more than optimistic about raising the capital," he said this week S/Times

Mr Morkel envisages that the private sector will contribute two-thirds of the funding needed, with the government providing the balance [C/Metro]

The ANC's reconstruction and development programme, too, focuses on housing as a priority and Mr Morkel believes this will ensure that his housing budget will be adequate 22/5/94

"We'll spend about R1-billion a year over the next five years," he said

"Housing must be one of our priorities Political change in this country will mean nothing if we don't start addressing the quality of people's lives" 124

Subsidy

Areas which have been identified for future housing developments include Khayelitsha and Delft

Mr Morkel welcomed the continuation of a subsidy scheme started by the previous government

"People earning less than R1 500 a month are eligible for a R12 500 subsidy, while those earning between R1 500 and R2 500 will receive R7 500 A R5 000 subsidy will be awarded to those earning between R2 500 and R3 500"

He also expressed support for the extension of the government indemnity scheme which provides guarantees to lending institutions that award loans to lower-income earners

He planned to build on the work he had previously done as housing minister in the House of Representatives

"I managed to provide 15 000 houses during the past financial year Increasing that to 20 000 will be quite difficult, but well within our ability," he said

Mr Morkel plans to involve "all the players" in his housing plan

"We've learnt from experience that including everyone in the planning and development means that there'll be no squabble between the parties later on," he said

He expects implementation of the housing plan to lead to a boom in the building industry which, in turn, will help the Western Cape's economy take off

Squatters leave Tambo Square

(124) CT 23/5/94

Staff Reporter

COLOURED families squatting illegally on Tambo Square, a pocket of land in Manenberg earmarked for black occupation, agreed yesterday to vacate their shacks which will be taken down today with the help of the Cape Provincial Administration.

A CPA spokeswoman said two of the three families had agreed to leave voluntarily yesterday after the intervention of provincial housing minister Mr Gerald Morkel.

The Manenberg ANC and Civic Association threatened to take legal action earlier this week if the squatters were not removed from the area, which was allocated to 650 squatters in neighbouring Guguletu in 1990.

Problems

The CPA said they were "sympathetic" towards the three destitute families who occupied the land on their own initiative after being evicted from backyard dwellings last week.

Owner of the Rylands bushland, Mr Kanthi Patel, said last night he was forced to evict the squatters after five or six years of "endless problems" came to a head last Sunday when a property owner chased burglars into the bush, and was attacked by them.

Mr Patel, a property developer, said there had been numerous confrontations between the squatters and the community of Rylands, who believed he was harbouring them.

SQUATTERS EVICTED FROM 'BOUGHT' LAND

Southeaster (suppl. to South) 27/5 – 31/5/94

BY SABATA NGCAI

MANENBERG squatters who occupied land reserved for Guguletu residents last week agreed to leave after they were threatened with eviction.

Three families built shacks on land allocated for Tambo Square residents.

They voluntarily left after the Cape Provincial Administration (CPA) threatened to evict them

The Manenberg People's Association, Tambo Square Housing Committee, Ikapa Town Council and the CPA will meet this week to negotiate land for the squatters.

The serviced land has been vacant for three years, but Tambo Square residents have already paid deposits of R1 500 for plots and foundations have been laid for houses.

Last week about 50 Tambo Square residents marched to the area to see what was happening on their land.

While a few Manenberg residents tried to provoke marchers, they remained peaceful

"This march is peaceful, we are not here to fight but to see for ourselves what is happening," one of them said (124)

Manenberg resident Mrs L Marinus shouted at them, saying "black people" should not "discriminate against coloured people".

She said the land was for everyone and called on all people to live together in peace and harmony.

"Mandela said people should mix together," Mrs Marinus said. "There is no black and white heaven, God created all people, both black and white"

Manenberg ANC member Mr Armien Arrison explained that Tambo Square residents had paid deposits for the land.

He said the land was not meant for one racial group, but it was meant for all people.

"People should follow the correct procedure of getting to the area," he said

KEEP IT CALM: Manenberg ANC member Armien Arrison, right, cools down heated tempers at a march in the area last week *Photo: Roger Sedres*

The squatters who occupied the land complained they had been evicted from backyard shacks in Manenberg

Mrs Marrianne Nero said she was forced to erect her shack after she was evicted by her landlord because her children were playing in his yard

R650 m for new housing plans held up by wrangle

S/Times
CC/Metro
29/5/94

A SUM of R650-million is enmeshed in a constitutional tangle instead of being used for housing in the Western Cape — all because the provincial legislature is still without any executive powers a month after the elections

The provincial legislature is among the nine provincial governments in the country which are all suffering a "power vacuum" because of constitutional conditions attached to the transfer of powers to provinces

By NORMAN WEST
Political Reporter

As a result the money that has already been approved by the previous government for housing, is "lying idle" instead of being used for much-needed housing and other projects, says Mr Gerald Morkel, leader of the Western Cape Provincial Legislature.

(124)

Mr Morkel, who was yesterday chosen as one of three deputy chairmen of the NP in the Western Cape, said it would take "a long time" before the newly-elected provincial legislatures had all the powers and functions "conditionally" assigned to them by the interim constitution

Meanwhile, provincial Cabinets were carrying on in purely administrative roles without any real executive powers, he said

Mr Morkel, who is Minister of Housing in the Western Provincial Legislature, said Western Cape premier Hernus Kriel — as well as the other eight provincial premiers — had already approached State President Mandela for the powers promised them in the constitution

He disclosed that in a meeting with national Housing Minister Joe Slovo last week "certain provincial premiers" were unhappy about the hold-up of the devolvement of executive powers to them by the new government.

He said, however, only the Western Province, Natal/KwaZulu and the PWV Legislatures could convince Mr Slovo they had the infrastructure to handle provincial executive powers.

He said because the six other provincial legislatures lacked the infrastructure, Mr Slovo indicated that provincial powers would be put on hold and handled by Cabinet ministers until all were ready to take over their administration

"We in the Western Cape Legislature are unhappy about this and the matter will be discussed at the Western Cape Cabinet meeting on Wednesday as we cannot afford to be tied down because of the incapacity of other provinces to handle functions

Mr Morkel said each of the nine provinces would have to first "pass two tests" before they could claim real powers:

- They must prove they are capable — and have the necessary infrastructure — to handle each of the 21 functions stipulated in the constitution,
- The Commission for Administration and the Commission for State Expenditure must certify they have the necessary treasury in place to handle their budgets — an amount of R7-billion in the case of the Western Cape

Rates subsidy to continue

Municipal Reporter (124)

CAPE TOWN residential ratepayers who suffered when the most recent property valuation roll was overturned in court will continue to be subsidised in the forthcoming financial year, and in the next one

The council's annual budget was postponed this week after its officials discovered a legal problem not of the council's own making CT 30/5/94

But according to documents drawn up to form part of Thursday's budget, the council proposed to transfer R3,5 million from an "accumulated surplus" account to cover the cost of continuing the subsidy

Most residential ratepayers benefited from the overturning last year of the most recent (1990) valuation roll, but about 32 000 would have had to pay less had the updated roll not been overturned

In the forthcoming budget, some limits are to be placed on the extent of the rebate For example, nobody may get a discount of over 40% on what they would have had to pay had their property not been residential

Rent arrears nearly R10m

(124)

Staff Reporters

RENT arrears in the Cape Town City Council's housing estates have now risen to nearly R10 million, as uncertainty persists over whether some arrears may be written off CT 2/6/94

Total rental arrears in the Cape Town municipality are R9,8m — over 50% more than a year ago

Manenberg alone accounts for R2,2m of these arrears This is 72% of the annual rental due from council flats and houses in Manenberg

In an agreement reached in the Kempton Park negotiations in January this year, rent arrears notched up in black local authority areas up until this year will be written off

This agreement has not been extended to coloured areas

Mr Gerald Morkel, Minister of Housing in the regional parliament, said last night that it was unfair to write-off rent arrears in one area of the country and not in another

"I will definitely be taking the matter up," he said

Housing talks wanted soon

Municipal Reporter

MEETINGS with ministers of housing Mr Joe Slovo and Mr Gerald Morkel are to be sought urgently by a senior City Council delegation

Housing committee chairman Mr Neil Ross said he wanted to ensure the government would continue paying out the old subsidy for well over 1 000 houses in schemes already under construction

Mr Ross said that if the council signed any new agreements with individuals coming into existing schemes, it wanted to be sure that it was not left R20 million out of pocket if the government decided the new subsidy would apply

Council wants Slovo to clear up confusion about government housing policy

(124)

HRT 21/6/94

SHARON SOROUR, Staff Reporter

CAPE Town City Council's housing committee has called for urgent talks with national and provincial housing ministers to thrash out major problems over how the government's new housing scheme will work.

Fresh concerns about the government's plan were raised at a housing committee meeting yesterday.

Chairman Neil Ross said meetings should urgently be arranged with housing minister Joe Slovo, regional minister Gerald Morkel and the council's bankers to clarify certain issues

Deputy city administrator Attie van der Merwe said a main concern was whether R34-million in government funds — for schemes approved before the new subsidy system was applied — would be forthcoming

The committee was also worried that

- The regional housing board was not aware of several parts of the new housing scheme policy
- There were still no guidelines on collective ownership, rental subsidies and bridging finance
- The policy "contains no tangible benefits for developers at the bottom end of the market"

Commenting on the availability of allocated funds, committee vice-chairman Norman Osburn said "We have no reason to be suspicious . but we want an assurance that the commitment given will be honoured"

Mr Van der Merwe said it was estimated that only R20-million of the R34-million approved for state housing would be needed during the 1994/1995 financial year

The remaining R14-million would be required in the next financial year

Projects affected included the Mitchell's Plain self-help project, which was progressing slowly.

The committee was concerned that if the subsidy was applied to half-finished state funded projects, the new homeowners would not be able to cope with the financial burden this would entail

"Starter houses in Mitchell's Plain cost R28 000 but the new capital subsidy is R12 500, which leaves about R15 000 outstanding which the buyer will now, theoretically, have to find — probably from a bank or building society.

In terms of a government decision, after March 15 all subsidies move to the new subsidy scheme, to cover houses with a maximum purchase price of R65 000.

Households with a combined income of up to R1 500 will get a once-off subsidy of R12 500, those earning between R1 501 and R2 500, a R9 500 subsidy and a R5 000 subsidy will be available to households earning between R2 501 and R3 500.

Households with an income of more than R3 500 will not be eligible.

MPs angered by high rent

CT 8/6/94 (124)

Political Staff

MPs angered by having to pay almost 900% more for their rented homes during the parliamentary session than their predecessors did, are planning to fight the increases

Many claim they can hardly come out on their salaries after paying for two homes

Their discontent could develop into a full-blown row if the auditor-general tries to "maximise state assets" by charging rent for a full year instead of the four months when Parliament sits

Top of the range among the 700 homes spread between the villages of Acacia Park, Laboria Park and Pelikan Park, is a small and neat three-bedroomed unit with basic furniture and beds, a fridge and stove

Market-related

For this and a daily bus ride to and from Parliament, MPs in the old tricameral parliament paid between R120 and R140 a month

If the Melamet Commission recommendations are accepted, new MPs will pay market-related rentals (with bus levy) of between R780 and R1 380 a month

Mr Andre Meiring, head of the parliamentary division of the Department of Public Works, admitted that compared to a "typical upper-middle class white home in Bloemfontein", a first impression of the official homes would probably give senior MPs and their wives "the willies".

"But in the past they've all adapted and actually come to like the set-up," he added The villages have maximum security with police controlling entry and exit, communal swimming pools, tennis courts and a civic hall

Mr Meiring said he thought comments by Mr Ronnie Kasrils, MK's former chief of intelligence, that Laboria Park was like "a ghetto" was "tongue-in-cheek"

Exco tackles new rates valuation

(124)

ARG 9/6/94

☐ Officials favour existing ordinance

SHARON SOROUR
Municipal Reporter

THE thorny issue of a new rates valuation — and whether it should be in terms of the 1993 property valuation ordinance — comes before the city council's executive committee today

Exco is expected to take urgent steps to get the ball rolling on which ordinance is used to govern the valuation because the new decree comes into effect on July 1

If the council opts for a general valuation in terms of the existing 1944 ordinance, the decision will have to be sanctioned formally by provincial authorities before then

If it fails to do so, it will have to use the new ordinance.

A special council meeting is likely to be called next week.

Council officials — in a bid to prevent another rates furore — apparently believe the existing ordinance is the better option.

Assistant city administrator Gill Bolton said the new ordinance was not problem-free

"At least, if we proceed with valuations with the existing ordinance, we know what we're heading for because there are still numerous legal difficulties with the new ordinance

"It doesn't seem to have solved the problems at all .. physical inspection of properties is still required and there are difficulties with interpretation," said Ms Bolton.

Problems with the new ordinance were not even envisaged by provincial officials

"The director of the valuations was a province official and his staff did not even envisage the problem," she said

Council and province officials had since been looking at the new ordinance together in a bid to clarify problematic aspects.

Some council officials believed province "hoped Cape Town would be the guinea pig of the new ordinance"

Last year's rates crisis provoked a new look at the valuation ordinance

"The existing ordinance has been around since 1944 and has been amended several times But, people were looking at new things and decided a new ordinance was called for"

RSC spends millions on plots

Municipal Reporter

MILLIONS of rands have already been spent by the Western Cape Regional Services Council on providing serviced plots in Crossroads, KTC and Miller's Camp, and millions more have been committed for the same purpose

The RSC has announced that it is providing R40 million towards the Serviced Land Project, which aims to improve the lot of shack and hostel dwellers in areas including Nyanga, Philippi and Driftsands

Services such as water, sewers, drainage and roads have already been provided, at RSC expense, to 340 plots in KTC at a cost of more than R2m, and to 423 plots in Miller's Camp, Nyanga, for R4.6m (124) CT 9/6/94

The latter figure includes the cost of a sewerage pump station

In Crossroads, electricity is being supplied to 1 200 plots, in a project nearing completion

It has cost R3,9m

Six kilometres of roads in Crossroads have been tarred, provided with kerbs and properly drained at a cost of R1,6m

The relatively new informal housing area of Philippi East has had bulk water, sewerage and drainage connections made at a cost of R2,6m

SQUATTERS CAN 'BUY' SHACKS

Government housing subsidy scheme will also help people in informal settlements

BY SABATA NGCAI

SQUATTERS can now "own" their shacks, regional housing officials have announced, after deciding how to spend the government's R12 500 per family subsidy scheme in informal settlements.

The residents will be able to buy serviced sites for "approved shacks" A spokesperson for the housing ministry, Mr Sam Dodgen, said "wood and iron shacks were the only approved structures"

"This doesn't mean we encourage people to live in shacks," he said

The total cost of the serviced land and the structures would not exceed R12 500 per household

At the moment serviced sites are only available for rental The new scheme allows for ownership

A spokesperson for the Cape Provincial Administration (CPA) said proposals for a rental scheme were still to be drafted by the Department of National Housing and the National Housing Forum

The subsidy has been divided into three categories:

- The maximum amount is R12 500 for people who earn up to R1 500 a month. (124)
- The subsidy for people earning between R1 501 and R2 500 a month is R9 500
- For those earning between R2 501 and R3 500 a month the subsidy will be R5 000

Initially the government wanted to build about 20 000 houses on serviced sites The fact that funds have not been allocated and the strict prerequisites will reduce the number of houses which can be built

This is made worse by the fact that the Department of National Housing and National Housing Forum have not yet decided how supplementary subsidies will be handled

Morkel needs cash

Tight-fisted leaders slow Cape's urgent housing plans

(124) ARG 11/6/94

DAVID BREIER
Weekend Argus Political Staff

☐ National housing minister Joe Slovo has been accused of passing the housing buck to provincial housing ministers who have no power or money to solve the housing crisis.

ALTHOUGH the Western Cape plans to build 40 000 houses a year at an annual cost of R1,8 billion to solve the province's accommodation crisis, central government has not yet given it the powers or money to do the job.

Provincial housing minister Gerald Morkel said this week the province needed money to prepare the way for a five-year, R9 billion project to build 200 000 houses in a bid to wipe out the backlog of 181 000 houses

"I can't wait for a year or two I need the money now to buy land and train artisans," he said

Earlier this week national housing minister Joe Slovo urged provincial housing ministers to identify land suitable for temporary and permanent housing Mr Slovo also called on them to work out a strategy to deal with land invasions by squatters

"It's easy for Joe Slovo to pass the buck and say it must be done by provincial ministers, but we are sitting with absolutely no powers," Mr Morkel said

He said before the elections the Cape had in the pipeline projects worth R650 million, but even these were being held up

"There is little we can do as long as all the power and money is with national housing," Mr Morkel added

Mr Morkel also accused the African National Congress in the provincial parliament of putting a spoke in the wheel of housing progress

"All these ANC guys are doing is trying to retard progress," Mr Morkel said

He said ANC spokesman on informal settlement Chris Nissen had failed to accompany him on a tour of squatter areas in what should have been a show of national unity

But Mr Morkel backed Mr Slovo's strong stand against land invasions by squatters

"I have a very strict policy, be it on land or houses. I cannot allow people to invade or take over other people's land or houses

"I know it won't be easy. We are making our best effort, but if they invade personal property, where does it end?

"I must agree with Joe Slovo I am glad he came out strongly, so at last this message can come out

"But Joe Slovo must take part of the blame for what is happening in Johannesburg The ANC promised a million houses

"They built up expectations and they have got to deliver We can only deliver if they give us money, but we haven't got the powers yet let alone the money"

Mr Morkel said an immediate start had to be made on buying land for new housing and training artisans who had left the building trade as a result of the slump

He said building was fine in boom times, but many artisans had since left the industry and were reluctant to come back

The Western Cape, however, was fortunate in that it had a strong body of officials with expertise which it inherited from the old system

"We are streets ahead of the others. All we need is the money to get this expertise going. I have a body of officials to work with who are worth gold to the province," he said

Future housing schemes would incorporate permanent homes, but in the meantime Mr Morkel was establishing site-and-service schemes.

In the Cape Town metropolitan area, plans were far advanced for 36 000 serviced sites in areas such as Delft, Khayelitsha, Crossroads, Guguletu and Nyanga

"We are just about ready to take off," he said

These projects were non-racial and were being conducted through a "social compact" with civic and community organisations

They were for low-income families with an income ceiling of R1 500 a month

Mr Morkel said that when the national subsidy scheme of R12 500 a family was in operation, it would be essential to achieve maximum transparency to avoid conflict

For example, a contractor might be able to provide services for R12 000 and leave only R500 for the actual house Another might be able to provide services for R10 000, and leave R2 500 for the house. He said it was vital to operate through a tender system to prevent vested interests misusing taxpayers' money

Ratepayers carry an 'unfair burden'

ARG 15/6/94 (124)

☐ Regional government urged to help

SHARON SOROUR, Municipal Reporter

THE regional government should show its commitment to the people of Cape Town by making funds available for urban development, lifting an unfair burden from the shoulders of ratepayers

This is the opinion of David Erleigh of the Southern Suburbs Ratepayers' Association and the Good Hope Alliance

Commenting on the possibility of an extra 10 percent being added to the 9,5 percent rates increase, Mr Erleigh said Cape Town ratepayers already subsidised metropolitan services directly "as well as extensive development contributions to upliftment".

"We are not easily able to afford more. Cape Town's assets, transferred to the Cape metropolitan negotiating forum, should therefore be credited in favour of our ratepayers," he said.

He said the association was "surprised" that the levy of 10 percent was not incorporated in the budget No leeway had been catered for

If bulk services handled by the council, such as electricity, were transferred, the rate could increase by 23 percent

"With the creation of a transitional metropolitan council, ratepayers will lose benefits and there will be a phased-in increase which will be prejudicial because we are already paying for bulk services"

The association was concerned that ratepayers would pay 10 percent more without getting a rebate

The issue had not been debated at the Cape metropolitan negotiating forum, and the council should have "considered the prospect through negotiations six months ago".

Ratepayers in Cape Town were having to pay much higher rates than those in, say, Fish Hoek or Pinelands.

"We can't have a scenario where we pay high rates and a levy, it's not fair I am also not suggesting people who pay low rates because of tight management controls should be lumped with an extra burden," Mr Erleigh said

The rates base was not adequate to pay for the development of an infrastructure, and that contribution had to come from central and regional government

Double blow for city ratepayers

ARG 15/6/94 (124)

Council refers to Exco on new rates valuation

Municipal Reporter

THE Cape Town City Council has failed to agree on which ordinance to use to do a new general valuation

At a special meeting yesterday the council referred the matter back to the executive committee

Exco will hold a meeting at the end of the month to which all councillors will be invited, to decide whether to do a general valuation in terms of the current valuation ordinance of 1944 or the new 1993 property valuation ordinance

After the Supreme Court last year set aside the 1990 general valuation roll, which was intended to replace the 1979 roll, the 1979 roll had to be used

The roll was dated and needed replacing

The new ordinance comes into effect on July 1

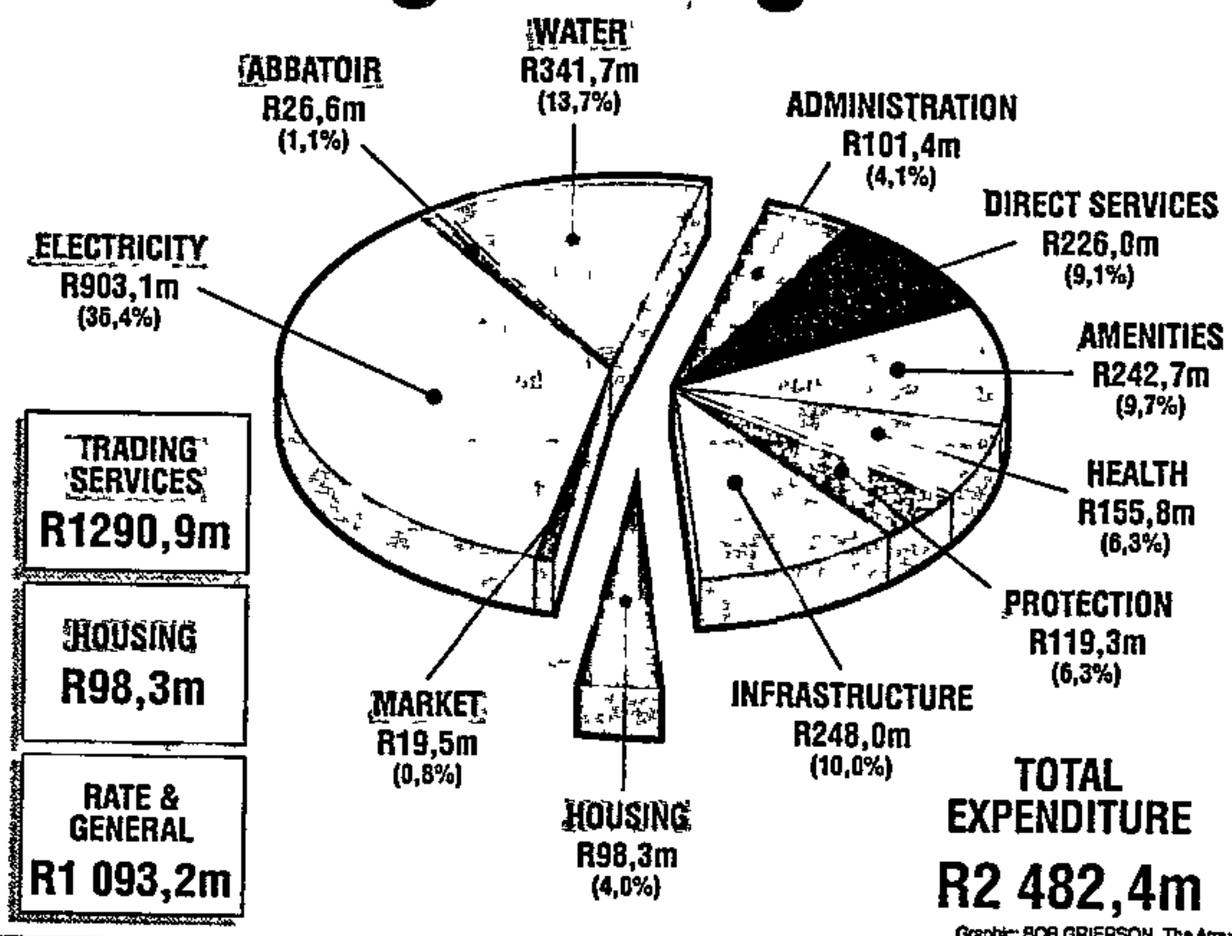
In the debate

● The council also approved a general sewerage tariff of 1,071 cents in the rand in relation to property valuations

● The council also agreed to increase monthly rentals of council letting units, excluding old age units, by R10 from July 1

● Rates rebate scheme for the elderly The lower band of income scale will be increased from R700 to R770 where a rebate of 50 percent would be granted, and the raising of the present upper limit from R1 100 to R1 170 where the rebate was equal to 10 percent

Budget at a glance



SPENDING GUIDE: This chart shows the total municipal budget at a glance

Housing is a problem

Municipal Reporter

THE council has allocated R47,5 million in its capital budget for housing — an increase of 50 percent on last year — but, has warned that funds to provide low-cost housing "are a matter of concern"

The budget report says state funding made available to address the backlog is inadequate.

But, the council hopes more money will be allocated by the new government.

In the meantime, 50 percent of the proceeds of the sale of Clifton bungalow sites will be transferred to the social development capital fund

In terms of the operating budget, the housing service will need expenditure of R50,8 million, an increase of 17,9 percent.

The contribution from rates to the housing service has been increased from just over R7,5 million to R9,5 million next year, but an increase in rents still will be required

'Murder' of city decried

THE "murder" of Cape Town as a legislative capital will destroy any attempt to use the annual budget as a tool to create growth in the city, says exco chief Clive Keegan.

Robbing Cape Town of parliament would have dire financial implications, and attempts to improve the quality of life would be "severely undermined and compromised"

Mr Keegan said. "This budget is about the financial viability of Cape Town and this will be undone if the political status of the city is destroyed"

The devastating effect of moving parliament could not be over-emphasised, and the loss of the "global diplomatic status" and "political tourism" it brought to Cape Town would strike at the "very heart of the region's economic viability"

While the budget did not provide for financing a campaign to ensure Cape Town retained its capital city status, it would be handled on an ad hoc basis

☐ 9,5% increase to be followed by 'possible' 10% wealth levy

SHARON SOROUR
Municipal Reporter

CITY ratepayers can expect a double blow this year with an almost immediate rates increase of 9,5 percent and a possible extra 10 percent metropolitan wealth redistribution levy

At the Cape Town City Council annual budget meeting last night, councillors voted by 20 to 2 to adopt capital and operating estimates of R2,5 billion

Council executive committee chairman Clive Keegan vigorously defended the annual budget as "fiscally responsible and financially prudent" in the face of a three-pronged attack from dissident councillors.

Exco member Neil Ross warned that the "holding" budget would not improve services. A transitional metropolitan council, expected "within months", would need extra capital from each council in the greater Cape Town area.

Objections and criticisms were raised by Leon Markovitz, Kenny Penkin and Arthur Wienburg

Mr Markovitz said the budget was "done with mirrors" He accused exco of plundering the water account to keep the rates increase at 9,5 percent.

Mr Penkin said the council should not approve the budget as assets in the books of the city council were not properly valued.

Outspoken Mr Wienburg said the budget was "inflationary instead of zero-based"

He said 41,1 percent of rates income was spent on salaries, almost double that of the city of Bellville.

The council was overstaffed and overpaid its staff.

"Exco has adopted an irresponsible and lavish capital development programme which puts huge strain on the operating budget. As a result, capital charges amount to 17,8 percent of the operating budget," he said.

"We go on spending money like an incontinent man incapable of controlling his bladder"

Mr Wienburg said the "way out" was to put a brake on capital expenditure

Responding to the budget debate, Mr Keegan said. "If Milton Friedman had written that (budget) speech, if Margaret Thatcher had signed it and Unicorn Press had printed it, Mr Wienburg would still have registered his vote against it."

Mr Wienburg's facts were incorrect in respect of Cape Town's apparent top-heavy ratio of staff costs

Bellville had no staff in the field of water provision, which was carried by Cape Town and other local authorities in the metropolitan area

Bellville had no electricity generation staff costs, no housing staff, no abattoir or market staff, nor did the city provide staff for beaches which people from all municipalities used

"The situation between Cape Town and Bellville is utterly incomparable"

Referring to the "holding" budget, Mr Ross said. "The establishment of metropolitan government will lead to substructures having to deliver an additional rate because of the financial requirement that people in the metropole pay for the upliftment of others.

"The costs outlined are formidable and it will cost hundreds of thousands from ratepayers so that the legitimate expectations from people in black local authorities are met."

Deputy mayor Llewellyn van Wyk said people did not realise the "very real predicament" South Africa had faced economically

Containing costs main aim of 'realistic' budget

Municipal Reporter

EASING the burden of cash-strapped ratepayers and containing the costs of running the city are the main aims of this year's "realistic" budget

pirical background and a foretaste of the economic climate to justify the budget," Mr Keegan said

This had resulted in a "realistic" budget and budget increases

Extra cash for low-cost units

(124)

By PETER DENNEHY
Municipal Reporter

NEARLY 50% more money for low-cost housing has been included on this year's Cape Town municipal capital budget than last year's, and further funds are expected from the government

Yet the council's total housing arrears are now more than R17 million, an increase of R7m from a year ago This includes rent arrears and outstanding payments in the council-administered home-ownership schemes

Arrears have been increasing monthly by nearly R600 000

"The recession and the recent announcements by the state regarding the possible write-off of arrears have definitely exacerbated the problem," the council said

Payment arrears increase

Any write-off would, however, only affect the "capital" portion of payments rather than the usually far larger part of each monthly payment that pays for services

According to budget figures released last night, R47,5m has been allocated for low-cost housing in the coming year The council also plans to use half of the nearly R60m that could be generated by the sale of Clifton bungalows as "social development capital".

For capital costs, R9,5m from rates (two percent of rates) is to be contributed to the housing service, in partial compensation for the deficit run up by the council housing estates

The council resolved that monthly rentals of its 27 000 remaining flats and houses will each increase by R10 from the beginning of next month Old age "units" are spared this increase

Administrative charges for home-ownership units — still run by the council although tenants have bought the houses — will rise by R2,50 a month, to R21, also with effect from July 1

Clash looms over arrears in townships

(124)

ARG 16/6/94

Political Correspondent

A MAJOR clash is threatening between the Nationalist-dominated Western Cape government and township civics over mounting rent and service charge arrears

And Western Cape Local Government Minister Peter Marais warned that people and organisations who had not accepted that the National Party was in control in the province might need reminding of this "forcefully very soon".

He said the accumulation of new debts would "not be tolerated".

While he would seek answers through negotiation, "it must be understood that the mandate to govern the Western Cape belongs to the NP".

"This fact has obviously not yet registered in the minds of individuals and groups"

Mr Marais said that unless civics and other organisations "free themselves from the principle of making townships ungovernable, economic development will become a hollow promise"

Delft homes 'breed death'

South 17/6 - 21/6/94

By Edwina Booysen

A DELFT family believes that their 10-week-old baby Charlene Engeland died because of the poor and unhealthy condition of their house.

Three other babies, it has been claimed, have died under similar circumstances.

Charlene died last week after developing a cough, which her father, Mr Apools Engeland, is convinced was caused by cold and damp.

"There is no ceiling in the roof and the walls are cracked and unplastered so that the house is continuously cold," he said. "The slats of the roof are cracked and when it rains the inside of the house is wet Our baby was strong and healthy when she was born Only after she came home that she got sick."

Mr Engeland said Charlene developed a severe cough two weeks ago His wife, Belinda, rushed Charlene to the Red Cross Hospital where she was examined, given medicine and discharged. "The next day we took her to our family doctor who also gave her medicine and she was fine," he said.

"A week later, on Saturday night when we went to bed, Charlene was sleeping peacefully. But on Sunday morning she was dead."

According to the death certificate she died of pneumonia

The ANC branch in Delft is campaigning to make the "poor conditions and unhealthy houses" an issue of public debate because, it says, three other babies in the area died in similar circumstances.

The ANC and the people of Delft have tried over a period expose the living conditions in Delft, an ANC statement said "We will do everything in our power to assist the Engeland and other families in Delft. Although we respect our new government our struggle in the Western Cape will and must continue to avoid this pain." (124)

Rates up, quality down

Municipal Reporter

MILNERTON'S property rates are to go up by just 7,5 percent from July 1 — but ratepayers were warned that service standards would inevitably drop in future (124) CT 14/6/94

Mr George Mellet, chairman of the budget sub-committee, made these announcements during the annual budget speech yesterday afternoon

Sewerage charges are to go up 5% to R37,62 per month, refuse charges 9% to R27,36 a month, and water 8% to R1,22 per kilolitre for the first 40kl, he said

As in the case of Cape Town, no funds were provided on this year's estimates for either a Metropolitan Council levy, or as a contribution towards Olympic Games infrastructure

An additional financial burden on the council would result in "the general lowering of standards of the various services provided", he said

(124) 18/6/94

Housing problem

■ The new South Africa has rung in some changes in the once-divided suburb of Tafelsig

ADELLE HORLER
Weekend Argus Reporter

AFTER the eviction row earlier this year, the Mitchell's Plain suburb of Tafelsig is now an example of how two once-hostile communities can live together in peace

But a scratch beneath the smoothe surface reveals a tangled tale of complaints, boycotts and misunderstandings between the city council and both groups of residents — legal tenants and squatters who were evicted after occupying houses

Tafelsig hit the headlines early this year when the illegal occupants of 276 empty council houses were evicted and moved nearby to the proposed site of a school

The story of their illegal occupation inflamed racial emotions before the election and is thought to have gained coloured support for the National Party

Today the rightful tenants have taken possession of their houses and the former squatters have settled into their wood and corrugated iron shacks

Children and dogs play in the streets, neighbours chat over fences, but while the city council says everybody has settled in, both the legal tenants and former squatters are dissatisfied

"The council is not responding to the real needs of the people," said Khaya Maseko of the Tafelsig Action Committee (TAC) which represents the squatters

"There are no clinics, no schools and no churches When we complained about the taps and roads, the council replied with a R25 service charge for the water and toilets"

The school site is equipped with basic services one toilet for every seven plots and one water pipe for 20 plots

But, the council says, the squatters agreed to the R25 service charge before the evictions

"That charge was part of a memo of agreement that was drawn up in December and signed by the council, the illegal tenants, the existing tenants and representatives of the peace committee," said Hans Smit, director of the council's Project Management Services

"We can show that the council has most certainly met every promise set down in terms of the agreement We have met all parts of the deal and in fact gone further

□ **COMPLAINTS:** Members of the Tafelsig Action Committee, from left, Mandisa Dlanjwa, Khaya Maseko and Yvonne Lungcuzo, represent the 276 families who have settled in shacks close to the council houses they occupied last October They are fighting to upgrade their site

□ **TOILET TREK:** Thelma Mdlalo, a 62- metres from her shack, visible in the with six

"There is street lighting and all structures have access to electricity in a subsidised, prepaid meter system"

TAC member Yvonne Lungcuzo countered "We don't mind paying the R25, but lots of people from other areas pass this way and use our toilets and water Is it fair that we pay for them as well?

"With so many people using one toilet, our health is being affected

"The water is also far away and the taps are the kind you must keep pushing, you can't just turn them on So in bad weather you must stand there pushing in the rain And this morning the water was brown How clean is it?

"There is not even a public phone If you need to make a phonecall, you must catch a taxi into Mitchell's Plain"

The legal tenants of the council houses echoed the call for more facilities

"They gave me a post box, but what for?" asked Andries Mondsinger, chairman of the Area L Residents' Association

"They don't deliver here If I want my letters I must spend R2,40 on a taxi into town and back

"Anything we need, like a hospital or the police, we must pay to go there We at least need a mobile police station and a mobile clinic for the children The facilities must come nearer to the people"

The existing amenities, however, are seemingly not being paid for

Several legal tenants have yet to pay the deposits on their houses and many are not paying their so-called "rent" or bond instalments

And some residents benefitted from the illegal occupation of their homes

"Before the squatters came you had to pay a deposit before you could move in, but then the council woke up and started putting people in before they had paid their deposits, just so that they wouldn't be occupied again," said Mr Mondsinger

Another problem for the legal tenants is that the bond instalments are too high — up to a third of their gross monthly incomes

Mr Mondsinger, whose house is called "Hou Moed", is one of the many people who are fighting to pay

"Many people the rent for the council or the must reduce the who can't should have a sonable," he said

"We feel we're deal In less for a house when out one-bedroomed"

The council, hand, says all what the costs fore they moved

problem unites

(124)(307) ARG 18/6/94

□ **SANDY SITE:** Mandisa Dlanjwa outside some of the corrugated-iron shacks that house squatters evicted from council houses in Tafelsig The site has one toilet for every seven plots and a tap for every 20 families

Pictures: DOUG PITHEY Weekend Argus

mittee, from left, Mandisa sent the 276 families who they occupied last October. site

□ **TOILET TREK:** Thelma Mdlalo, a 62-year-old pensioner, has to walk about 50 metres from her shack, visible in the background, to the single toilet she shares with six other families

back

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Mr Mondsinger, whose house is called "Hou Moed", is one of the many people who are fighting back by refusing to pay

"Many people can't afford the rent for the houses The council or the government must reduce the rent for those who can't manage it We should have a rent that is reasonable," he said

"We feel we're getting a raw deal In Lentegeur they pay less for a three-bedroomed house when ours are two- or one-bedroomed"

The council, on the other hand, says all tenants knew what the costs would be before they moved in

"We are not unsympathetic to the problem, but each applicant had an individual interview, before they were put into a house We told them of the bond instalments, maintenance and rates," said Neil Ross, chairman of the housing committee

"If the costs were too high, they should have said No, I can't afford to live there' But it is understandable, because of the housing shortage people tend to ignore the financial side If you're desperate, you go in with blinkers"

According to Mr Ross, the parameters of the bond instalments were determined by the state, which is in the process of changing its policy Depending on the date of occupation, some rates may change

The legal tenants questioned the issue of arrears

"These are repossessed houses Why must we pay for a house when other people have lived here already? They stayed here for five months without paying a cent to the council," said Mr Mondsinger

"We want the council to take off the arrears because of the people who stayed here rent-free It's happened in other areas, why not here?"

The council does not have the power to write off arears

"The question of how the state is going to handle rental arrears is still to be negotiated No national decisions have yet been made," said Mr Ross

Housing policy indecision at national level is also affecting the school site tenants

There is a misunderstanding between the former squatters and the council over the details of the housing policy subsidy scheme in terms of which up to R12 500 a structure will be allocated to upgrade the site

This is a one-off subsidy that does not have to be repaid, although tenants will have to pay rates and municipal charges

"The exact nature of the upgrade is still to be negotiated, but it will probably cover services like water, roads and a sewage connection for everyone, and 'top structures', meaning actual housing assistance," said Mr Smit

'Unfortunately the new policy has major problems and it cannot be implemented until they've been sorted out We're ready to go, but we can't do anything until the policy gaps are worked out'

The former squatters are not impressed

"This new policy doesn't address our needs," said TAC's Mandisa Dlanjwa

"They're going to deduct from the R12 500 money for the land and sewage facilities so we'll own the land, but we don't want to be landowners, we want homes We want to use the money to build decent structures"

It is unclear whether the council and former squatters have adequately discussed the details of the new policy

According to the council, the policy has been explained at public and private meetings and staff have had two meetings with school site residents in the last week, but the TAC says there have been no formal meetings with the council since the election

One issue though, where the council, the legal tenants and the former squatters all agree, is that the once-hostile groups of residents bear no grudges towards each other

"We've got no complaints," said the TAC's Ms Dlanjwa

Ministers warm to posh mansions

By NORMAN WEST
Political Reporter

MINISTER of Housing Joe Slovo, minister Jay Naidoo, Secretary-General of the ANC Cyril Ramaphosa and former Transkei leader and now ANC MP, General Bantu Holomisa, may soon move into the controversial Walmer Estate ministerial complex

Highly-placed parliamentary sources said they were among the ministers, deputy ministers and cabinet ministers who have shown an interest in living in the complex

The controversial seven-unit complex of ministerial mansions was built in the P W Botha era for coloured ministers who were members of the ministers' council of the now-defunct House of Representatives

CONTROVERSIAL HOMES The Walmer Estate ministerial complex Picture JUSTIN SHOLK

(124)

Advertised

They were never occupied after protests by residents in the area, who said that having ministers of the tri-cameral parliament as neighbours could constitute a security risk.

The houses were last year advertised for sale through public tender, but all the bids were rejected by the Department of Public Works as "too low"

The houses will be allocated to their new tenants next week when parliamentarians and senators converge on Cape Town on Wednesday for Finance Minister Derek Keys' tabling of the first Budget of the new parliament

The complex comprises seven luxurious face-brick houses on the slopes of Devil's Peak in an area abutting District Six

It has spectaculr views over Table Bay harbour and sports an olympic-size swimming pool

Mr Andre Meyerling, head of the parliamentary section of the Department of Public Works, said yesterday the names of the new occupants would be known later this week

He confirmed that the new tenants would include ministers and deputy ministers

He said Minister of Home Affairs Dr Mangosuthu Buthelezi would also be shown the Walmer Estate houses as an option

Some interested parliamentarians and senators had already been on a tour of the complex, Mr Meyering said The homes were traditionally offered on a basis of seniority

Langa 'a week away from serious disease'

Municipal Reporter (124) ARG 22/6/94

LANGA is only a week away from the outbreak of serious disease because of a breakdown or complete lack of services to underdeveloped areas in the Western Cape, says Cape Town city council executive committee chief Clive Keegan.

He said there was virtually "no movement" in metropolitan negotiations and issues like the breakdown of services could not be addressed while authorities were trying to make local government legislation "workable"

"The city is running into very, very heavy water, and there is no movement at all — it's desperately dangerous," he told a meeting of the University of Cape Town Graduate School of Business Association

Mr Keegan said in older parts of Langa, "the streets are awash with human faeces"

"Langa is only a week away from the outbreak of serious disease and we cannot turn to these issues while we are try to make the (Local Government Transition) Act workable"

Although the Act was designed to lay the foundation for a process of upliftment and the provision of services to areas where they had collapsed or where non-existent, little progress had been made

"Unless the Act is amended or a new piece of legislation is introduced, we will get badly bogged down at the cost of legitimate and effective local government and the upliftment of people's lives."

The fact that the city council continued to operate "as the remaining bastion of racial structure" was damaging the city

Langa rubbish removed after health warning

(124)

ARG 24/6/94

☐ Residents welcome Keegan's concern

JOSEPH ARANES
Staff Reporter

HEAPS of stinking rubbish have been removed from Langa in the wake of city council executive committee chairman Clive Keegan's warning that the area was only days away from an outbreak of disease

While local residents have welcomed the exco chairman's concern, they have also pointed out that their health and that of their children began deteriorating several months ago when rubbish first piled up.

Residents ascribe the potentially hazardous pile-up to a lack of drainage and other services by the Ikapa Town Council as well as an influx of people from rural areas

The Ikapa Town Council in turn acknowledges it has been unable to provide services as a result of strikes, maladministration, corruption and other problems that have been highlighted during the past year

The streets of Langa are littered with garbage, rotting fruit and vegetables and other materials which contribute to a continuous, overwhelming stench

After recent rain, the streets have been awash with a dirty sludge which made it difficult for some residents to reach their homes

However, following Mr Keegan's statement, a clean-up began this week

One of the residents who decided to act was Bethell Jonas

Rake in hand, he took to a polluted field near his home, gathered the rubbish in the centre of the dump where it was collected by a front-end loader that travelled through the township, loading its unhygienic harvest on to a municipal truck

"It's time some of us started cleaning up this mess before we are all drowned in dirt," Mr Jonas said

"Nobody comes around to collect the refuse here anymore The place stinks and it is unhealthy for our children to play here"

Another resident, Zoleka Mhilontio, said the area was worse after the rain

"The authorities must clean the streets, tar them and build a proper drainage system They must also collect our garbage on a regular basis so people won't empty their bins on the fields," said the housewife

Misile Mngomeni blamed the problem on an influx of people from rural areas and an ineffective Ikapa Town Council

"Thousands of people stream into the city monthly looking for jobs but usually find nothing and end up squatting on any available land because there are no houses for them

"They create more garbage and with all the problems we have with the town council not collecting our refuse, it spills over into the streets and on the few open spaces we have

"Everybody was complaining about the area and the health hazard it had become, but nothing ever gets done about the mess

"Children and adults are already sick from living in these conditions and if the town council does not have the resources to clean the area, then the city council must step in and play its part because we are part of the greater Cape Town area," Mr Mngomeni said

Ikapa spokesman Charlton Rayi agreed that the situation in Langa and other townships was "appalling" and said the proposed metropolitan council should take over the duties of his council "sooner rather than later"

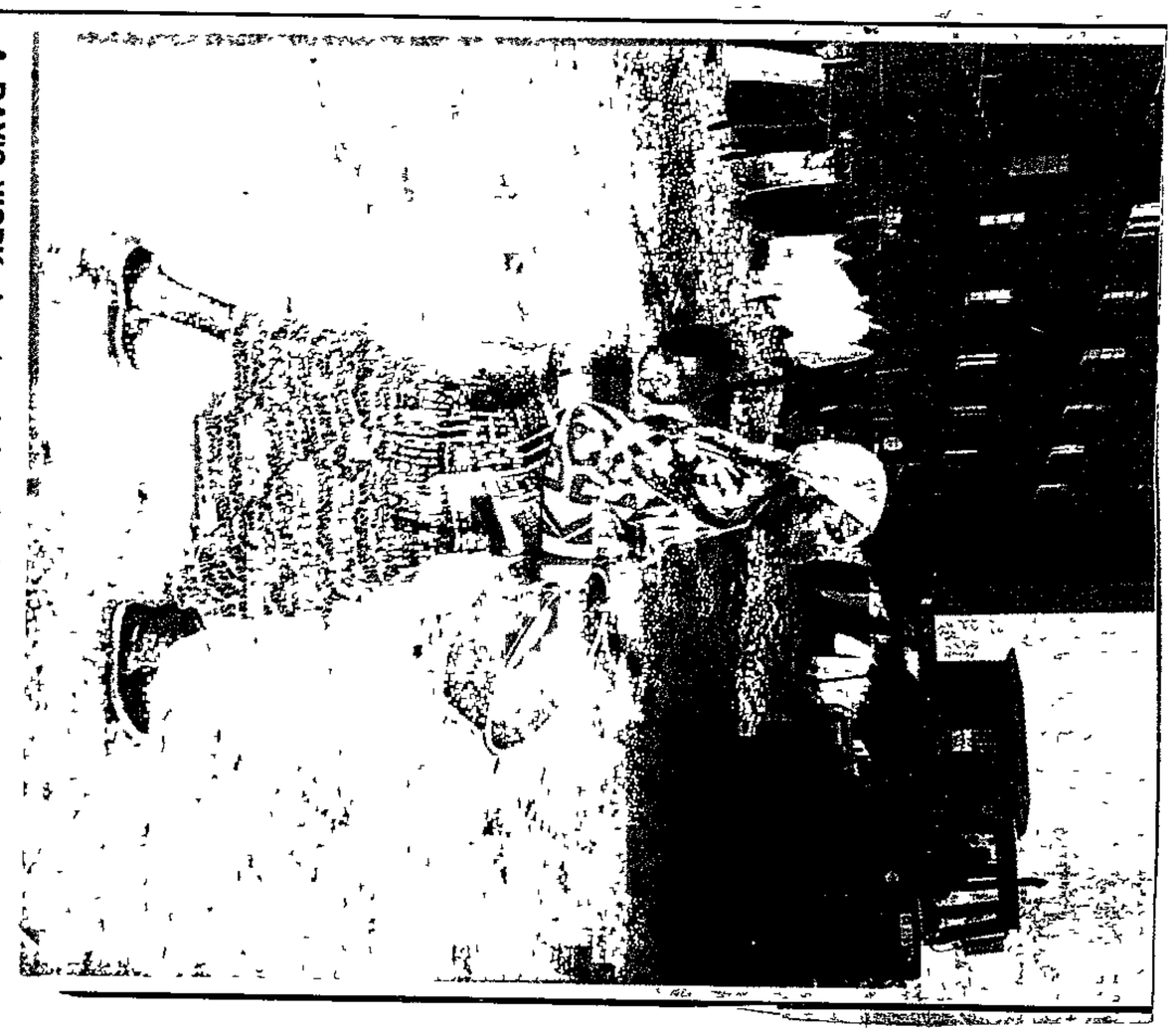
"Our services in the areas are not up to date because of all the problems the council experienced during the past months

"We were hit by strikes and allegations of maladministration and corruption All this upset our applecart and prevented us from providing a proper service

"We have broken-down trucks parked in our yards which we can't repair because we don't have the money and the few that are operational cannot render the service to our satisfaction"

Pictures LEON MULLER The Argus

RUBBISH DUMP: A stray dog looks for pickings in a pile of rubbish collected in Langa Rubbish heaps have been removed from the township after warnings that the area was only days away from an outbreak of disease



A DAY'S WORK Angelina Lukas finishes hanging her washing on a communal line while a front-end loader moves in to take the rubbish from a clearing near her home

Troubled waters

BY SABATA NGCAI

HEIDEVELD residents are fuming over the Cape Town City Council's decision to put water channels at their doorsteps.

Residents of Grace Court said the council should have put the pipes in the middle of the courtyard shared by two blocks of flats

Council spokesperson, Mr Hans Smit, said the work was still in progress and engineers "will sort out the problem".

Blind and wheelchair-bound residents of Grace Court are concerned that they could trip over the channels and hurt themselves.

The channels were built to carry rain water, which usually collects in the courtyard, away from the flats (Suppl to South)

But now the ugly concrete sloots are right in front of peoples' front doors Southeaster

If the channels get blocked by dirt, residents will be forced to clean them or live with the stench

Mrs Lea Lewis is wheelchair-bound. When the stinking drains get blocked on her doorstep, she will not be able to clean it

"It is impossible for me to get out of my wheelchair and remove the rubbish," Mrs Lewis said

Parents are scared their children will fall over the channels and hurt themselves

"This place is dark at night There are no lights and it is easy for children to fall over and get injured," Mrs Lorraine Joshua said

"If these pipes were put in the centre, it would be much better," she said 24/6 - 28/6/94

A spokesperson for the South African National Civics Organisation, Mrs Patricia White, condemned the action taken by the city council as "arrogant, unilateral and distasteful". (124)

***STRANDED:** Lea Lewis can't clean the drain at her door*

WINTER HORROR

Council tenants battle against slime and slugs

BY VICKY STARK

A PLACE THEY CALL HOME: Slugs revel in the moisture under Robert Van Reenen's carpet. Photo: Roger Sedres

AT A "house of horrors" in Beacon Valley, mould grows on the walls and slugs breed under the carpets.

Mr Robert and Mrs Helena Van Reenen have lived in this hell hole in Aintree Crescent for five years.

"As soon as the cold weather sets in, this house becomes unliveable. It hasn't even started raining yet, and the mould has started. When it rains, slime runs down the walls," said Mr Van Reenen

"We paint this place every year and replace the rotting doors and it costs a fortune," Mrs Van Reenen said

Money spent on furniture is also wasted

"This lounge suite is damp and rusted," Mrs Van Reenen complains.

"In the kitchen my fridge and stove are rusting And in the three bedrooms, water drips from the ceiling onto the bedding Everything we have either rusts away or smells miff."

As the wet carpet is peeled back in the lounge, Mr Van Reenen points to a hole in the floor.

"I wanted to see what was causing this wetness so I made a hole in the floor There's no plastic under this foundation and I think that's causing the problem," he said.

He feels that the city council's attempts to waterproof the house do not go far enough. "They've waterproofed an outside wall, painted half of the inside wall with traffic paint for an eyeblind," Mr Van Reenen said.

(124)

"I think they know the problem is the missing plastic under the foundation But for them to admit that, would mean they'd have to tear the house down and rebuild it and that's too much effort

"Our health suffers badly and we're in and out of the doctor's surgery every two months Our five young grandchildren who live with us suffer from sinus and chest complaints

"We can't go on like this All we want is a decent place to live "

City Council spokesperson Mr Ted Doman said the council would be happy to move the Van Reenens to another house

"We can't find the root of the problem until they move out of the house," he said "Our records show that they wanted to stay in Beacon Valley Thus far there has not been accomodation available there If they are prepared to move to another area, they will be placed much sooner."

Delft roof faults to be probed

124

Staff Reporter

REGIONAL Housing Minister Mr Gerald Morkel promised outraged Delft residents yesterday that a private investigation would probe why more than 20 Delft houses lost their roofs in the recent storms

Several people were injured when asbestos roofs caved in on sleeping families and concrete-brick walls collapsed Mr Morkel's department is also investigating reports that a baby was killed in one house by falling bricks

Community representatives met Mr Morkel at his city office yesterday after about 150 angry residents marched on the Delft community centre demanding an explanation CT 29/6/94

The Regional Services Council said residents had wrongly directed their anger at them as the building of the houses had been supervised by the House of Representatives

Delft homes 'should be rebuilt'

Staff Reporter

DELFT home-owners should demand that their houses be rebuilt to their own specifications, Mr Leonard Ramatlakane, Western Cape Minister of Roads, Transport and Public Works, has told those whose new homes were severely damaged in Sunday's storm

About 40 families have been living in the Delft Community Centre since Sunday

Mr Ramatlakane told them last night that they should demand that their homes be rebuilt to withstand winter weather

The homes were "worse than pig sties"

Mr Ramatlakane said a survey had found that a house with a kitchen, bedroom, lounge and toilet cost R25 000 to build He was disgusted that Delft residents had been charged "R36 000 for a 'vark hok' measuring 4m²"

The developers should be investigated for overcharging owners, he said They had to answer for their poor workmanship and the prices they had charged

Mr Ramatlakane asked the private sector to contribute to alleviating the plight of the poor in the Western Cape

CT 30/6/94 (124)

Man-made disaster in Cape of Storms

WM 1-7/7/94 (124)

Houses quickly built before the election crumbled in the face of the Cape's worst storms in decades, reports **Mondli waka Makhanya**

AS violent rains swept away dwellings in Cape townships this week, people looked to the sky, blamed the weather and lamented the natural tragedy But ultimately it was a man-made disaster

The torrential winter rains were — according to the Weather Bureau — the worst the Cape had seen in decades It destroyed houses, blocked major roads disrupted construction in the greater part of the Western Cape and led to the first national disaster declared by President Nelson Mandela since taking office

But the rains bring annual misery to the shack settlements and the townships, and it was here that the pain was most deeply felt.

"We are living in water " said one resident. Like many of his fellows, he had lost his furniture and his shack was deluged with mud

The sewage system collapsed in many of the townships leaving a raw stench in the air In Nyanga East settlement Mandela narrowly avoided treading in a puddle of human faeces after the long-drop toilets overflowed Residents were forced to relieve themselves next to the toilets or head off to the nearby bushes

"We can't live like this," said one resident, Sani "At least Mandela has now seen it for himself I have to walk a long distance to the bush to *kak*. I used to do that as a child in the rural area but I am grown up now "

In the coloured township of Delft and Eindhoven, the low-cost housing built by the House of Representatives simply crumbled before the storms Cement bricks disintegrated and ceilingless asbestos roofs were blown away

Water, water everywhere .. Floods caused extensive damage to Cape roads PHOTO: NIC BOTHMA

Bitter residents of this strongly National Party-supporting area complained that the two roomed houses — in which cooking water is obtained from the toilet/bathroom tap — were built to coincide with the election Most residents had moved into the houses "that the NP built for us" in the last six months fuelling suspicion that they were a vote-buying tactic.

Bettie Matthysen had been living in her new house for three weeks before the roof was blown away and the windows blown out on Sunday night "I'm not going to live here any more Next time I might die "

Falling in the first few months of the Mandela government and at the launch of the much-touted Reconstruction and Development Programme this year's rains made victims adamant that such a disaster would not happen again.

On Wednesday the government s mandarins were on hand to promise exactly that. Housing Minister Joe Slovo told people that the "tombs" they lived in would be replaced with more than a million decent homes over the next five years

Minister without Portfolio Jay Naidoo was there to tell them the new government cared about them and would reconstruct and develop their neighbourhoods

Joe Modise was there to tell them "your defence force" would restore their abodes

In their midst stood the lonely figure of former House of Representatives cabinet minister Abe Williams, whose erstwhile administration — the subject of much scorn in the past week — built the flimsy housing in coloured areas Ironically it is his Welfare and Population Development department which must provide the infrastructure to implement the salvage operation other ministers promised

One politician who was nowhere to be seen was the Cape regional premier, the National Party s Hernus Kriel

Riddle of the Apollo Sea's disappearance

Mondli waka Makhanya

INVESTIGATORS working on the sinking of the Apollo Sea off the Cape coast are pinning their hopes on finding a survivor to explain the mysterous demise of the cargo ship

The Apollo Sea has been identified as the source of the lethal oil spill which inundated all the major beaches on the Cape west coast last week, causing damage to marine life in the area that may take 10 years to repair The cost of cleaning the beaches — which will take at least three months, potentially running into the holiday season — has been estimated at R5-million.

About 20 000 endangered jackass penguins were contaminated with oil on Dassen and Robben Islands, prompting a massive rescue operation by the South African National Foundation for the Conservation of Coastal Birds. The birds were airlifted to Milnerton and Rietvlei to be cleaned and force-fed.

The Apollo case may never be unravelled as investigators have almost no leads Neither the "black box" found on a Cape beach on Tueday nor the distress signals sent by the ship to China on Monday night offer any clues Other relics of the ship recovered include a life-raft and a life-jacket covered with oil.

It is now presumed that Apollo captain Quiao Li Gen and his crew of 35 men are dead, having left no message or survivor to tell the story of what happened in one of the mysterious sea disasters of recent times The last time the ship was seen was on Monday afternoon as it left Saldanha Bay carrying over 3 000 tons of fuel and gas and heading for China.

A few hours after she sailed, distress signals were sent to a Chinese port, but it took five days before the South African authorities came to hear of them.

By that time the oil spillage was out of control, driven down the coast by prevailing winds Marine officials are dumbfounded as to why they were not notified of the signals

The most popular theory is that the 21-year-old ship fell victim to bad weather and ran aground somewhere near Robben Island.

"Bulk carriers have that tendency," explained Department of Transport spokesman Captain William Dernier "At some stage they just roll over and die " But this is contradicted by the fact that the ship was inspected by DOT officials in Saldanha as recently as January and given a clean bill of health.

Another theory, which has been discounted by navy and DOT officials, is that of a hijacking — the Beijing owners of the ship immediately suspected this when they heard of the ship's mysterous disappearance Local marine officials say a hijacking in Southern African waters is highly unlikely Mutiny by the crew has also been suggested.

"One would have to think they were not very smart to try something like that in the kind of weather conditions we have at this time of the year," said one source

Tsafendas to be released from prison

Stefaans Brümmer

DEMITRIO TSAFENDAS (76), assassin of apartheid architect HF Verwoerd, is to be released from Pretoria Local Prison after 28 years as state patient

The cabinet decided on Wednesday to release Tsafendas — who spent longer in jail than President Nelson Mandela — into a mental institution said Captain Bert Slabbert spokesman for Correctional Services Minister Sipho Mzimela

Slabbert said the institution could not be identified "for security reasons"

The institution and timing of the transfer would be decided in consultation with the Department of Health.

Tsafendas, a parliamentary messenger at the time, was judged psychologically unfit to stand trial after he stabbed Verwoerd to death in parliament in 1966

He was said to be plagued by a "tapeworm" that drove him to stab the Nationalist prime minister

The cabinet decision follows calls by the National Association of Democratic Lawyers (Nadel) and Lawyers for Human Rights for his release on humanitarian and compassionate grounds

Said Nadel "There is no other more compelling case than that of Tsafendas "

Demitrio Tsafendas Poses 'no danger to society' PHOTO: STEVE HILTON-BARBER

Jody Kollapen of Lawyers for Human Rights who has often visited Tsafendas said the prisoner was still plagued by the "tapeworm" but was in good health, communicative and posed no danger to society

Slabbert said Tsafendas' position "has been under consideration for quite some time also under the previous government. It just came to a head now"

Recently — after the *Mail & Guardian* published the first picture of Tsafendas (above) — a Department of Health spokesman said Tsafendas' psychological state "has not improved to the extent that he can be discharged"

Wrangle over shooting

Stephen Laufer

SAFETY and Security Minister Sydney Mufamadi's statement to parliament this week on the March Shell House shooting in which eight Inkatha supporters died cast a veil over a behind-the-scenes wrangle between the ANC and police over the incident.

Sources familiar with the investigation indicate Democratic Party leader Tony Leon s claim that "the picture painted by the minister of rosy co-operation is at variance with the facts" is correct and that the SAPS has been stonewalled by the ANC

But a spokesman for ANC secretary general Cyril Ramaphosa said the police had not stuck to their side of a deal with President Nelson Mandela "Firearms were to be handed over for testing on condition the police investigation was directed equally at discovering Inkatha s role in the situation

"It is untrue that the ANC has withdrawn its undertaking to hand over the weapons, but the police have asked for much more than was agreed — sworn statements by all security personnel, for example "

The spokesman said there had been little indication that the SAPS had moved to investigate Inkatha. "We don't see any evidence of even-handedness "

Ramaphosa had taken the matter over and was in contact with Witwatersrand SAPS commissioner Koos Calitz and Judge Richard Goldstone because it was felt it was no longer appropriate for Mandela to deal with the issue

WM 1-7/7/94

Probe into 'racist' study notes

WM 1-7/7/94

Chris Louw and Paul Stober

"MISLEADING, insensitive and inaccurate" education material is being probed by the Department of Education and Culture (DEC) and the Education and Training Forum.

Hugh Davies, chief of the Education Co-ordination Service, said this to a parliamentary standing committee this week, in response to last week's *Mail & Guardian* story revealing the blatantly racist views contained in study notes of Success Correspondance College, South Africa's largest distance learning institution.

The DEC has distanced itself from the notes.

Success said the notes were based on a DEC handbook. But it emerged this week that the publishers of the book, *Introduction to Criminology*, had dropped controversial chapters on "Race and Crime" and "Sex and Crime" from its 1991 English edition.

Success's Andre du Toit said the chapters appeared in his 1982 Afrikaans edition. "If there is no curriculum change, our lecturers draw up the notes. We trust them to get the most recent prescribed books. They are the experts," he said.

Matters of Fact

LAST week s analysis of the election failures of the PAC and Azapo described author Saths Cooper as the founder president of Azapo The founder president was in fact, Curtis Nkondo and Cooper was president in 1985-6

●The previous week, the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation was erroneously described as ANC aligned It is firmly non-aligned

Delft: Slovo meeting Mandela over probe into housing damage

(124) ARG 1/7/94

ROGER FRIEDMAN
Staff Reporter

MINISTER of Housing Joe Slovo is making recommendations today to President Mandela on the appointment of an independent committee to investigate the "atrocious" housing development at Eindhoven, Delft

Twenty new houses in Eindhoven lost their roofs and a further 70 were structurally damaged in heavy weather on Sunday.

Meanwhile, a bunfight has erupted between regional housing minister Gerald Morkel, of the National Party, and ANC cabinet ministers Mr Slovo and Jay Naidoo.

Mr Morkel accused the ANC of raising false expectations

"After yesterday's (Wednesday) expectations there are people in Delft wanting to move to bigger houses and I don't know where those houses will come from

"Like the million promised houses (under the government's reconstruction and development programme) I don't believe it's possible"

In a press statement issued yesterday Mr Morkel accused the ministers of "the very limit of arrogance" after not being invited to join the presidential tour of disaster areas on the Cape Flats this week

"Jay Naidoo's statements yesterday (Wednesday) where he speaks of criminality and everything else is not something I'd expect from a politician at that level," Mr Morkel said

Mr Slovo responded "On the face of it the Delft project is quite unacceptable Steps I am proposing to the president include launching an investigation into the entire Eindhoven project

"I would also like to assign a group to investigate what we can do to try to turn Eindhoven into a normal community," Mr Slovo said

"Those houses are absolutley atrocious in size, and the only access to water is in the toilet

"We are going to see what we can do now"

Mr Slovo admitted it was preferable that Mr Morkel accompany the president and his entourage on their disaster area tour

But, the president had called on his ministers to join him at a cabinet meeting just before setting out Time had been short

ANC/NP row over houses

(124) CT 1/7/94

By CHRIS BATEMAN
Political Staff

A BITTER political row erupted over the 90 storm damaged sub-economic homes at Delft yesterday, with local NP Housing Minister Mr Gerald Morkel accusing two ANC ministers of "arrogant cheap politics"

The verbal slanging match is set to claim victims after Minister without Portfolio Mr Jay Naidoo yesterday announced a probe into the construction of the Eindhoven, Delft homes, simultaneously labelling the project "outright corruption"

Mr Morkel promptly released his own report, commissioned just hours after Sunday's heavy storms, and labelled national Housing Minister Mr Joe Slovo's talk of "criminality and incompetence" as "the limit of arrogance"

Mr Slovo and Mr Naidoo made their initial allegations during Wednesday's presidential tour of the storm-ravaged Cape Flats

Mr Morkel said he was furious at being "neither informed of nor invited" on the tour

He said consulting engineers Liebenberg and Stander concluded that structural failure was due to sustained wind speeds of 34 metres per second (120km/h), approaching the maximum building code design speed of 40m/s

The engineers' report said the design code was based on winds of this speed occurring once in 50 years — but failed to say if homes met this specification

Roof design had allowed air to penetrate under the eaves, creating pressure which blew them off The homes are also situated on an "exposed edge"

There was "anchorage failure due to incorrect ties" and a "lack of understanding of the code of practice required" for flatter roofs

Mr Morkel said most damaged homes had been built in the past three months He said the ANC minister's comments resulted in Delft residents demolishing damaged homes in the expectation of bigger and better ones

Numerous government committees were complicating matters, whereas the housing project's insurers accepted that damage was caused by "an act of God" and not by negligence or poor building — and undertook to meet obligations

Mr Morkel promised to have claims of poor building standards investigated

Of the 6 400 houses at the housing project 20 had their roofs blown off Seventy showed signs of roof movement or structural damage

Tenders had been called for and it was hoped repairs would begin on Monday

Mr Morkel said the previous government's subsidy scheme had allowed decent houses to be built for poorer people, with Mitchells Plain a good example

Farmers want dam water to be released

Supreme Court Reporter

FRANSCHHOEK VALLEY farmers, who fear the Wemmershoek Dam will overflow, have applied to the Supreme Court to order the City Council to release some of the dam's water.

Mr James Antony Golding and St Augustine Vineyards (Pty) Ltd sought an order calling on the City Council to take all necessary steps to prevent loss of life or harm to property as a result of water discharged from the dam, which is already 94,6% full

They also wanted the court to order the council to override an automatic facility which only opens the gates when the dam is 100% full.

Mr Golding said his house was about 100 metres from the Wemmers River bank and his labourers' houses were about 30m from the bank There was also a caravan park accommodating 50 people close to the river.

The council said any suggestion that people's lives were in danger was "extremely exaggerated" and should the council release water now it might be liable for damages arising through flooding.

The hearing continues today

'IT'S NOT OUR JOB'

Local councils won't act on flood disaster

BY SHANNON NEILL, SABATA NGCAI AND GAVIN MONTGOMERY

SHACK dwellers on the Cape Flats bore the brunt of the high winds and heavy rains which caused severe damage and flooding throughout the Peninsula in the past week.

Yet not a single local authority is assisting people who need help most.

The storm ripped off roofs, flooded homes and flattened shacks Streets are flooded in places and properties are littered with corrugated iron, bricks, chipboard and pieces of wood

On Monday families were cleaning out water, repairing roofs and sifting through the wreckage of their homes.

The Cape Town City Council says it is not providing assistance to African township residents because it has not received any request from the Ikapa Council which is the governing body there.

Alderman Clive Keegan said municipal services in the city's disadvantaged areas are close to collapse and communities face a "grave risk of disease, starvation and even loss of life"

Desperate people whose houses were flooded or destroyed have to rely on help from non-governmental organisations, private companies and concerned individuals

According to Mr Keegan, private companies and individuals have provided "something in the region of R100 000"

The Red Cross says Langa, Nyanga, Crossroads and Guguletu have been the worst hit by the floods and rain

Mr Keegan said the council had been aware for some time that the sewerage system in the Ikapa area was badly corroded and could collapse at any time

Flooding has made the problem much more serious.

Due to "political problems" the council has not done anything about it

Mr Keegan admitted there could be a major health crisis if the system collapsed Killer diseases such as typhoid fever are spread by contaminated water

The Cape Provincial Administration sent officials to pump out flood water in the townships (124)

A spokesperson for Lingelethu West Town Council claimed the damage in Khayelitsha is minimal.

Yet SOUTHEASTER saw shacks which were blown down, a supermarket roof lifted off and thousands of wet homes. People asked for help at almost every home visited by reporters.

Mr Johan Basson said he had gone through the township and "there were no floods"

"Only a few people had damaged roofs," he said "They did not ask for any help

"We only give help when people ask for it" 117-5/7/94

He said the town council had sent loads of sand for people to level surfaces

More rain and wind are forecast for the rest of the week

DEVASTATION: Monica Ngendle guards the ruins of her neighbour's home at the Samora Machel squatter camp after the storm *Photo: Yunus Mohamed*

Southeaster (Supp to South)

Homes in reach of lower income pocket

COMMUNICARE is raising cash to build affordable homes for the lower-income sector by selling plots and houses in the popular residential growth area of Kuils River (124)

More than R3 million has been spent on servicing 88 plots at Rouxville neighbouring the prestige Amandelrug ARG 27/1/94

The erven, from 570m² to 1 400 m², are selling fast at R50 000 to R58 000, the company says Funds generated from sales will be used to provide affordable homes to the lower income sector

In lower Kuils River, at Fairdale, undeveloped land is being serviced at a cost of R2,1 million and 83 affordable homes will be built

Although building starts this month, 40 houses have already been allocated to employees of the Simba Group, which has assisted its workers to pay their deposits and ancillary costs

Communicare general manager Mike Louw said "Without the wonderful assistance of their employer, the Simba staff would never have been able to own these homes"

Mr Louw said there was no shortage of plots for building houses in Kuils River Fairdale could provide 3 000 homes

Communicare has yet another project in the pipeline for the area Details will be announced soon

Anger over red tape grows

ARG 2/7/94 (124)

DALE KNEEN
Weekend Argus Reporter

IMPATIENCE and anger are growing over new red-tape delays to build mass housing for the poor after the Delft fiasco, in which Cape storms smashed shoddy sub-economic housing

The government is to investigate construction contracts at Delft while the powerful National Housing Forum wants builders to be forced to guarantee to repair defects

Experts have claimed the wrong building materials were used at Delft and workmanship was sub-standard

Of the 6 400 houses at Delft, 20 had their roofs blown off last weekend

A report by consulting engineers Liebenberg and Stander said the roof design of Delft houses had allowed air to penetrate under the eaves, creating pressure which blew them off

There was "anchorage failure due to incorrect ties" and a "lack of understanding of the code of practice required" for flatter roofs

Ministers Joe Slovo (housing) and Jay Naidoo (without portfolio but with responsibility for reconstruction and development) described the shattered homes as "concrete tombs" and "man-made disasters" and announced an investigation

Now pressure is mounting on them to bypass reconstruction and development programme (RDP) bureaucracy to provide affordable housing as soon as possible

The RDP includes the requirement that housing projects be stalled until widespread consultation has taken place, but the winter is making homeless people impatient

A government White Paper on the RDP is being prepared and is expected to be tabled only next month, said a spokesman for Mr Naidoo

The deadline for organisations to make submissions which will be used to formulate the White Paper was on Thursday, but it is likely that it will be extended until mid-July Mr Naidoo said RDP funds would be available from September

Mr Slovo, announcing a summit in September to discuss the RDP White Paper, said the nation would have to tolerate squatting until a coherent housing programme could be put in place

But BMI construction company managing director Llewellyn Lewis said that while the idea of having widespread consultation was laudable, it could prove to be a time-consuming exercise that prevented houses being built

"When the urgent target is to build up to 350 000 houses a year, these processes will no doubt prove to be time-consuming obstacles in the way of performance," he said

The Independent Development Trust, which has submitted its assessment of its capital subsidy scheme to those formulating the White Paper, said bureaucratic procedures delayed many of its projects

It's Operation Delft as soldiers, police, health workers and MPs help

JOSEPH ARANES
Weekend Argus Reporter

IT was all hands on deck as various relief agencies and volunteers regrouped in the Delft Civic Centre to devise ways of bringing much-needed assistance to hundreds of residents forced to vacate their homes because of storm damage.

The civic centre across the road from the Eindhoven suburb which bore the brunt of the storm, was a hive of activity as people dished out food, blankets and dry clothes.

Health department workers were carrying in more medical supplies as National Defence Force members came by to check if things were under control before they moved out again.

Social workers and others from government departments moved around the hall taking notes from the people — and somehow it all seemed so orderly.

But, many of the families who now live in the centre were upset. ARG 2/7/94

Reports from the police and the area's neighbourhood watch had just come in.

A man was arrested in Eindhoven the previous night after he was caught allegedly breaking into their abandoned homes and removing fittings and furniture. 124

Neighbourhood watch co-ordinator James Brown tried to calm the people and told them the local school had made some of its classrooms available to them to store furniture.

"The police will increase their patrols in the area and will search the bushes to see if any of the stolen goods were hidden there. We will also continue with our patrols."

Mr Brown said he was angry because the man they had caught lived in the area "How can you steal and rob from people whose lives are already in shambles? How could he call us his neighbours if this was the way he treated us?"

When the mobile clinic opened its doors, the waiting room filled quickly with mothers and their babies, all waiting patiently to be helped.

Sister Yvonne Simons said all their resources and supplies were given by the regional services council and the Cape Provincial Administration after President Mandela and other Ministers visited the area

"On the whole, the people are quite healthy — we are just treating coughs and colds — nothing too serious. We don't expect a major outbreak of disease."

In Eindhoven, people used the watery winter sunshine to dry their washing, mats and other soaked goods

The army also used the break in the weather to place sandbags on the roofs of some of the undamaged houses.

Shaheed Stemmet moved into his "dream house" three weeks ago and today all his immediate neighbours abandoned their houses and moved to the civic centre because their roofs were blown off

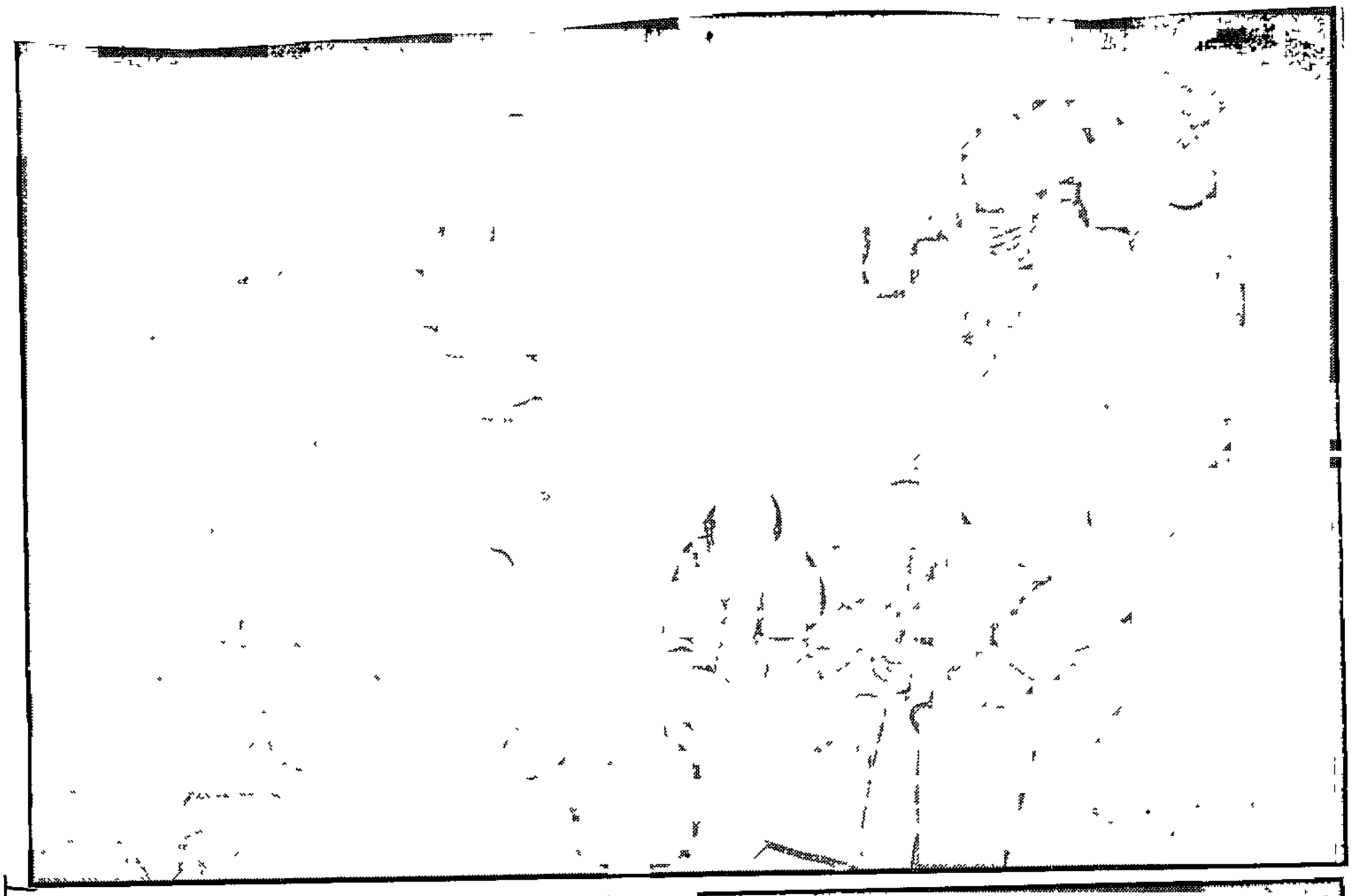
"I would like to move out of my house as well because we don't feel safe sleeping in it, especially when the wind blows.

"My roof leaks, the walls are all cracked and water seeps in through the floor. My 18-month-old daughter already gets treatment for tuberculosis — what is going to happen to her? Can she survive living under these conditions?" he asked.

Mr Stemmet said the problem with the houses in the Eindhoven section of Delft was that they were built on a filled-up swamp.

"When it rains, the high water level forces the ground to move and this destabilises the foundations of our houses and causes walls to crack and bricks to break

"When the wind blew and it rained, a number of houses came tumbling down. The government must do more than just patch up the houses, they must strengthen the structures or build alternative homes for us."

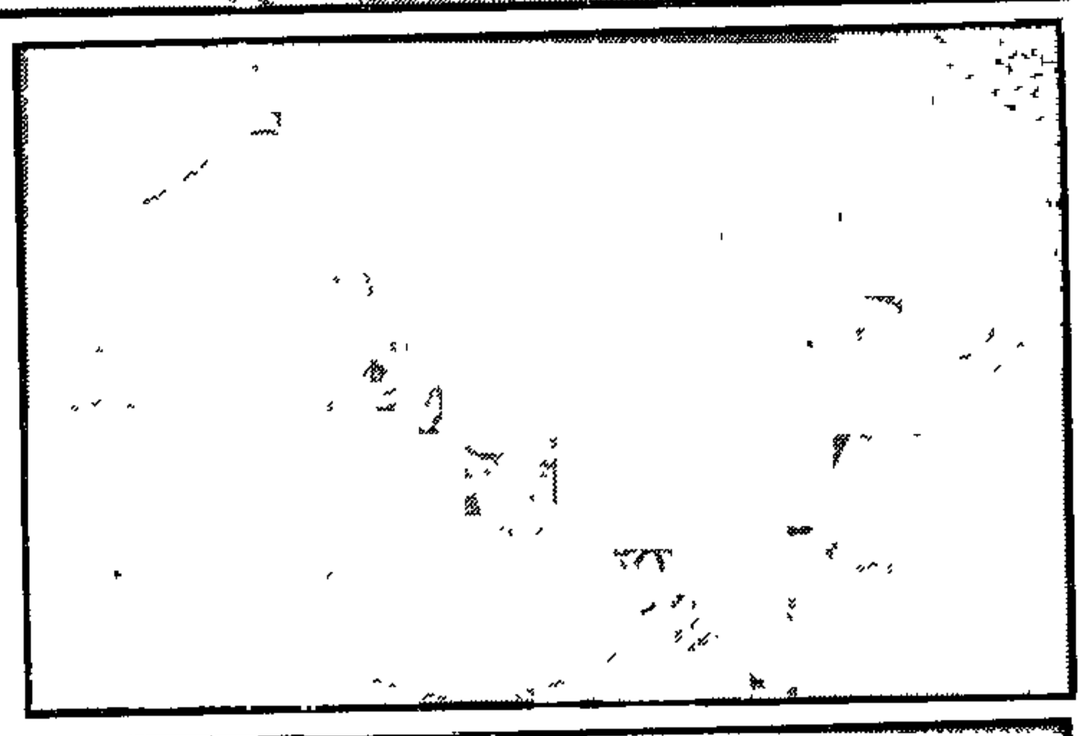


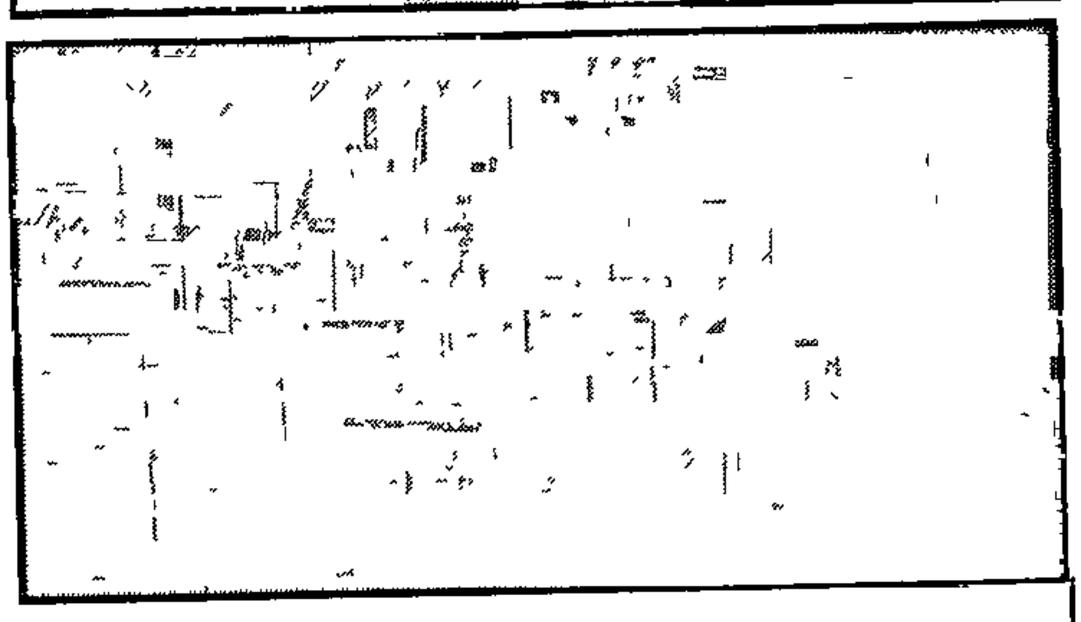
Pictures ANDREW INGRAM, Weekend Argus

☐ **RISE AND SHINE:** A group of children in Delft, above, awaken to a cup of hot porridge

☐ **BREAKFAST:** Gamieda Lakay and Gadija Francis, right, dish out porridge to the families who spent the night in Delft Civic Centre

☐ **WASH DAY:** Delft residents, below, take full advantage of the sunshine to dry their washing





Cape families' loss highlights need for consumer protection

(124) (BL) ARG 2/7/94

Weekend Argus Business Staff

THE disastrous loss of homes by Cape families this week highlighted the need for more consumer advice and protection for people buying a house for the first time

One problem facing first-time homebuyers is the fact that there is nothing to stop anyone calling himself a builder, or forming a building company

A large number of small contractors do not belong to any association such as the Master Builders' Association, so it is difficult to control them, said Mark Massyn, president of the South African Institute of Building

People mostly affected by defective workmanship were owner-builders, he said.

The Delft houses were built by contractors, so there should be some recourse

If people had problems with contractors building their houses, the institute could be contacted to send someone to inspect work or arbitrate

"We provide that kind of service If they think they have a problem we could get someone to have a look at it," said Mr Massyn.

"We could put them in touch with one of our lawyers at a lower cost. If they think something has gone wrong we could help them to get the whole thing processed.

"If they are thinking of building and don't know how to go about it, we could help them to select the proper contractor

"We would contact a number of our members at basic remuneration depending on what needs to be done Large numbers of our members are building consultants"

Just as artisan and manpower resourses needed to be replenished for the housing drive, there was an equally great need for well-trained construction managers in the mass housing sector, he said.

The institute's role as education and training facilitators in the new South Africa would become even more important than in the past

When the Reconstruction and Development Programme comes on line, there will be a shortage of builders and so much work that people will need to be protected, says Norman Abraham, an attorney with the Housing Consumer Protection Unit.

Quality control left much to be desired — not only with small builders, but also big companies, and most low-cost housing.

"We are preparing a set of rules that must be adopted to protect the consumer," said Mr Abraham

"We want to leave it to the building industry themselves to try and control quality, otherwise we will point out the things that must be done and if they are not, the government will be asked to legislate."

Mr Abraham said lost deposits formed the biggest single problem, with R8 million reported lost by low-income families to unscrupulous developers.

This was how much had been lost on the Witwatersrand alone, and was only a small proportion of what went on countrywide.

The possibility of consumer protection was being investigated by a joint committee of the National Housing Forum and National Housing Department.

One suggestion was the creation of a Property Board, on similar lines to the Estate Agents Board.

"When people are desperate for houses, they are easily duped by crooks. Some people open an office, place an advertisement and queues of people go to them in the hope of getting a house. People queue to hand over as much as R7 000 or R8 000 of hard-earned cash and then never see it again."

Building industry steels itself for shady dealers

(124)

ARG 2/7/94

Weekend Argus Business Staff

HOUSE builders and consumer organisations are steeling themselves for an invasion of fly-by-nights who hope to make fortunes out of the government's plan to build hundreds of thousands of houses.

The collapse of low-cost houses in this week's storms over the Cape Flats highlighted problems that could arise again

Householders complained of bad building and poor use of materials in the Delft area, while the cost of repairs and on-going maintenance could be crippling.

They said roofs were tied to the walls with wire — the industry norm is to have roof trusses bolted to the walls — and mortar between bricks could be scraped out by fingers.

Solid walls as used in some Delft houses were not suitable for the Cape weather, said Charles Pritchard, Cape chairman of the Clay Brick Association.

It was essential to build with cavity walls to keep out cold and water penetration

"Significantly, recently constructed houses suffered most damage. This endorses our long-held opinion that there is nothing intrinsically wrong with these so-called economic housing units

"Short cuts taken in construction of these houses makes a mockery of the frugality shown in choosing cheaper masonry products," he said

"Using them incorrectly has resulted in huge expense for the homeowners. It is no use constructing this imitation of permanent housing that will consistently fail, disappoint and eventually trigger slums."

Ian Robinson, executive director of the Building Industries Federation, said the Association of Mortgage Lenderstold the construction industry they wanted some low-cost defect insurance and thought the construction industry should sort it out.

Two schemes existed, both run by Fedsure group. One was designed for use by Bifsa members and was prepared to cover only 30 000 low-income group houses.

"We are exploring the possibility of other entrants. We are exploring with estate agents and the Consumer Council a self-insurance scheme where a central fund is established.

"Everybody would pay into it and the fund would meet the cost of defects."

NP's Morkel in the eye of a storm

S/Times [C/Metro]

(124)

3/7/94

By NAZEEM HOWA

THE inclement weather which left several Western Cape families homeless this week has blown into a major political storm between regional housing minister Gerald Morkel and several national cabinet ministers.

At the centre of the storm are claims by National Party member Mr Morkel that national housing minister Joe Slovo and minister without portfolio Jay Naidoo were "politicising a once-in-50-years storm".

Mr Morkel also complained that he had not been invited to join a visit to the storm-ravaged areas by a delegation led by State President Nelson Mandela. The President was joined by several cabinet ministers, including National Party member Abe Williams.

Promises

Mr Morkel accused the ANC leaders of promising residents of Delft new, better-quality homes to replace those damaged in last week's storm, as part of its local government election campaign.

He warned yesterday that promises "made by ANC leaders in the process of declaring disaster areas are not attainable in the present economic climate".

"One such expectation is that people whose homes have been damaged will receive a three-bedroom house within the next month," Mr Morkel said.

He warned that it would be impossible to meet such promises within the constraints of the present budget.

According to Mr Morkel, the promise of better houses spread through Delft like "wildfire".

"Residents whose houses were not damaged in the storm then started demolishing their homes. Construction workers who were sent to repair houses were chased out of the area by armed residents," Mr Morkel claimed.

He said the provincial housing department was restricted to operating within a budget that was tabled in Parliament.

"The subsidy scheme is based on a capital subsidy of R12 500. The cost of sites on the Cape Flats (excluding bulk services and earthworks) is between R7 000 and R8 000 for erven of between 160 and 250 m². This leaves about R5 000, which is far from enough to build three-bedroom houses," Mr Morkel said.

Ebrahim Rasool, the regional minister of health, welfare and social services, said the fact that shanties in neighbouring areas had withstood the storm was an indictment of the NP's housing policies.

"Those specific houses were built in a great hurry just before the election to ensure that the NP won votes," he said.

Mr Rasool said the President had invited national ministers who would be playing a central role in managing the disaster to join him on his tour of inspection.

"There was never any attempt to exclude NP ministers. In any case, visits to disaster areas by regional ministers should never depend on being invited on a presidential visit," he said.

Delft site 'approved by govt'

(124)

CT 4/7/94

Staff Reporter

THE Delft Construction Company has claimed that houses it built in Eindhoven — which had their roofs ripped off in storms a week ago — were repeatedly approved by government authorities

In a statement last night, a company spokesman said government building inspectors had inspected and approved the construction work of each house on at least three occasions during construction and again on completion

He said a consultant engineer's report had "not as such identified the construction work as being the cause for damage to the roofs"

One of the factors responsible was that wind speeds had measured more than 120km/h — thereby approaching the maximum design speed of forty metres per second (144km/h), he said

'Competitive'

The spokesman said construction of the 22 semi-detached units which lost their roofs was also supervised by qualified foremen, and this number only represented 5% of the houses constructed by the company in the Eindhoven-Delt project

These houses were built at the "highly-competitive" price of about R317 per square metre, which amounted to about R6 000 per house, measuring 19m² with a ceiling, he claimed

Bid to repair houses prevented — minister

ARG 5/11/94

PIETER MALAN (124)
Staff Reporter

WESTERN Cape Housing minister Gerald Morkel says his hands are tied — people living in Delft community would not allow him to repair their storm-damaged houses.

Twenty roofs in Eindhoven were blown off and another 70 structurally damaged.

Mr Morkel said Delft people were preventing repairs, claiming they had been promised three-bedroomed houses.

The minister last week accused the African National Congress of raising false expectations after a tour of the disaster area by President Mandela and National Housing Minister Joe Slovo

Mr Morkel was quoted as saying after the presidential tour that people wanted to move to bigger houses and he (Mr Morkel) did not know where the houses would come from.

It was impossible to knock down the existing houses and build new ones

"What about all the other homeless people in the area?" said Mr Morkel.

The minister also complained that he did not have the power to address the housing backlog in the province.

"These powers are all vested with the national government — legislation to enable provincial governments to do something about the problem will be passed only during the next session of parliament"

'Illegals' to be asked to leave

Municipal Reporter

PEOPLE illegally occupying government houses in Scottsdene, near Kraaifontein, will be asked to evacuate the properties, says the Western Cape Regional Services Council.

Chief executive officer Daan van den Berg said the illegal occupations were causing "serious problems".

The houses were built with state funds and were allocated to people according to a waiting list. 124

Several meetings had been held with the occupants to address the issue.

"At the last meeting it was decided that all residents living in houses funded by the state and managed by the RSC would be asked in writing to co-operate," Mr Van den Berg said. ARGUS 7/94

Belhar sit-in over houses

Staff Reporter

MEMBERS of the Belhar Civic Association (BCA) held a sit-in at the local RSC offices last night to protest against the "unfair" allocation of houses and the local management committee. (124) CT 6/7/94

BCA spokesman Mr Kenneth Kelly said members wanted the committee to resign because they were "corrupt" when allocating houses

Homes were allocated to people who had been on the waiting list for only five months while others on the list for up to 14 years were given none, he claimed.

BCA members, who vowed to continue the sit-in until the committee was removed, still occupied the offices early this morning

Committee spokesman Mr Desmond Poole said last night the RSC and not the committee allocated houses

Kriel asked to approve Silvermine housing plan

(124)

ARG 7/7/94

☐ Scheme to rezone land bordering nature reserve

SHARON SOROUR
Municipal Reporter

GOVERNMENT-OWNED land bordering the Silvermine Nature Reserve may be rezoned for a controversial housing development if the city council gets the green light from Western Cape Premier Hernus Kriel

The council's town planning committee yesterday agreed to ask Mr Kriel to approve the rezoning application so that the land could be subdivided — but it slapped stringent conditions on the development

The land, at the southern end of the Constantia-Tokai Valley, is on the lower slopes of the Steenberg mountain, bordering Ou Kaapseweg to the west, Westlake golf course to the north and council-owned public open space abutting Boyes Drive to the east

The property includes the naval headquarters, with blocks of flats which accommodate navy staff

Several objections have been raised by concerned parties, including the Local Council of Constantia Valley, property owners and Cape Nature Conservation

If Mr Kriel agrees, the proposal will have to be ratified by the council

Developers proposed dividing the land into eight "precincts" ranging in size from 3 ha to 7 ha, separated by roads and open space with vegetation

The idea was to develop at least four of the precincts, but the committee agreed with recommendations by the city planner to restrict building to two

Only land north of Protea Road was found suitable for development

The committee agreed that the rest of the property should remain a natural undeveloped area

Between 240 to 300 one- or two-storey homes would be allowed on the least visible portion of the "developable" area Only 40 one-storey units would be allowed on the most visible part

The future owner would be responsible for upgrading and extending stormwater, sewerage, electrical or other services

Motivating the development, MLH Architects and Planners said the property was serviced for residential development and would be sold to a single buyer, resulting in "cohesion of development" and control over issues such as landscaping, public open space and services

They said the government had given an assurance that funds from the sale of the property would be used to buy additional land or to service other state-owned land

"Every effort" had been made to limit the visual impact of the development, including reducing the proposed residential density

A master plan for the property was drawn up two years ago by the Department of Public Works

With the exception of the naval headquarters, situated in the middle of the site, the government no longer needs the land

The chief motivation for rezoning is that the land is fully serviced for a housing development

In a report, the city planner said the whole development would be highly visible against the Peninsula Mountain Chain and was not suitable for low-income housing because of its location

The town planning department also assessed the development against issues raised in the Reconstruction and Development Plan — of the country and of the Western Cape

The areas approved for development were well-screened by existing vegetation and not visible from the valley

The city planner felt the location and form of the development should be in character with development in the valley and respect the environment of the valley

Tenants in Scottsdene jump queue

Municipal Reporter

FIFTEEN houses in Scottsdene, near Kraaifontein, are being illegally occupied

A Regional Services Council (RSC) spokesman said yesterday that legal tenants in the RSC-owned rental scheme sometimes moved out and handed over keys to new tenants who were not next on the waiting list

The new tenants then moved in illegally

"The situation has continued for at least a year, but the RSC is now addressing it," the spokesman said

Letters had been sent to all legal tenants, informing them that if they end their tenancy they have to hand in their keys.

It is understood that steps will be taken to end the 15 illegal tenancies.

Belhar sit-in despite RSC assurances

CT 7/7/94 (124)

Municipal Reporter

A SIT-IN at the Regional Services Council (RSC) offices in Belhar is continuing, despite an assurance to the protesters that the RSC rather than the management committee would now allocate new or vacated houses to people on the waiting list

Mr Norman Carpenter, chief of housing administration for the RSC, said he and manco chairman Mr Desmond Poole had reported to the 11 protesters that from now on the RSC would make the housing allocations

Belhar Civic Association spokesman Mr Kenneth Kelly has said residents wanted the management committee to resign after alleged irregularities in the allocation of houses

Mr Carpenter said that despite the concession, civic association members were continuing their occupation of the cash office

"They are demanding Mr Poole's resignation, and they want control of the management committee offices for use by the community," Mr Carpenter said

Vrygrond gets off the ground

Municipal Reporter

THE first steps have been taken towards developing the 500-family informal settlement at Vrygrond, near Marina da Gama

City planner Mr David Daniels suggested to the town planning committee yesterday that his department should be permitted to enter into negotiations in a proposed Vrygrond development forum The committee agreed

Negotiations will determine whether the land should be transferred to individual or joint ownership

250 houses proposed for vacant Silvermine land

CT 7/7/94 (124)

LAND near Silvermine that has stood serviced but vacant for two decades may soon have over 250 houses on it

Yesterday the City Council's town planning committee recommended that regional premier Mr Hernus Kriel should be asked to grant a rezoning which will facilitate development of the property

Part of it can be seen on the left as one drives from the end of the Blue Route towards Ou Kaapse Weg

When Silvermine Naval Complex was built 20 years ago, the lower portion of the property was serviced for the development of a residential township for 810 families of naval staff

With the exeption of a few houses, this never took place Ownership was never transferred, so the council still owns the land It was never incorporated into Silvermine Nature Reserve or the Cape Peninsula Nature Area either

Now the state says it no longer needs the whole property, so it wants some to go to the nature reserve, and the 96ha rest to be sold on the market to a single developer of middle- to upper-income housing and sports facilities.

One firm of architects proposed more than 120 houses could be built on the property

Delft task group to begin probe

(124)

Political Staff CT 8/7/94

PUBLIC hearings for a government task group probing the controversial and storm-damaged Delft Housing project will begin this weekend — reporting to President Nelson Mandela and Housing Minister Mr Joe Slovo by July 18

The group aims to assess the current Delft "living environment" and propose improvements and analyse what went wrong to enable recommendations for future developments

Report back

Tomorrow from 11am, submissions will be taken at the Voorbrug Secondary School from community organisations, housing authorities, contractors and sub-contractors

On Sunday Delft residents can make their views known at Voorbrug Secondary (2pm) and Rosendal Primary School (4pm)

The task group will give a full report back to the community on its findings on Saturday July 16 at Voorbrug

(Suppl. to South

8-12/7/94

BUSINESS — *Making it work for you*

A HOUSE YOU CAN TRUST

(124)

BY EDWINA BOOYSEN

MANY people with low incomes are being ripped-of trying to buy houses.

Hard-earned savings are being lost and for many people the dream of owning a home is being shattered by crooked developers, government officials or estate agents

Thousands of rands a year is swindled by con artists, according to the Housing Consumer Protection Trust (HCPT), which was formed last year to teach homeowners about making the right decisions before buying or building homes

"The HCPT provides a free advice network and is running a national education campaign to help avoid these incidents," said Mr Mandla Mdludlu, Western Cape HCPT legal adviser "The HCPT was formed to stop the rip-offs in the house-buying market."

The trust was founded by the South African National Civics Organisation (Sanco), the Urban Foundation, Lawyers for Human Rights, the Legal Resources Centre and the Urban Sector Network and one of the major funders is the Estate Agents Board.

Mr Mdludlu said the housing shortage in South Africa had lead people to act out of desperation.

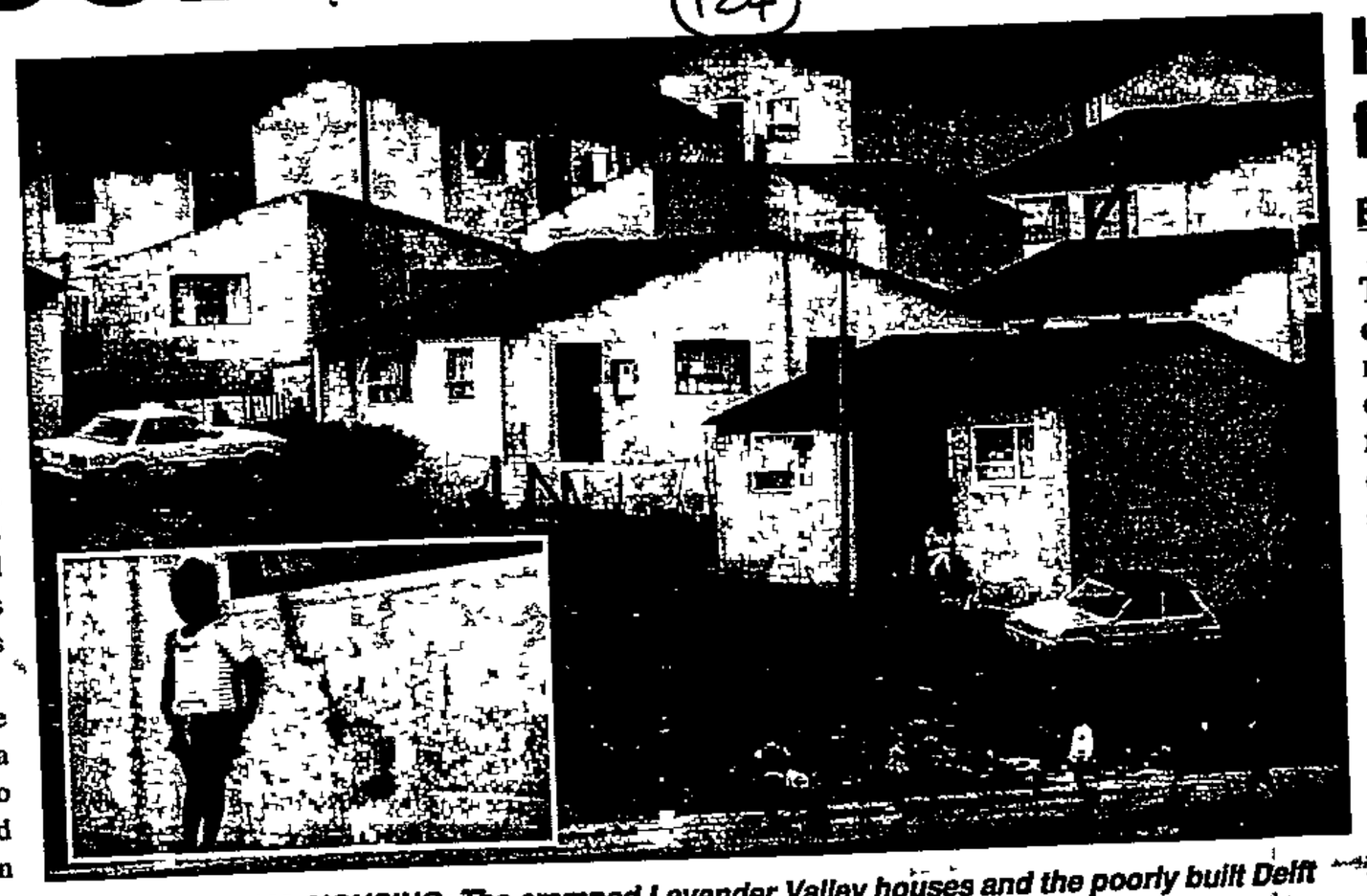
"Expectations have also been raised that the new government, through the Reconstruction and Development Programme, will be providing houses for all — a fact which un-scrupulous operators may well use to exploit clients "

The HCPT supplies an advice network and toll-free number where people can get the necessary information before buying

"We want to teach consumers to ask advice before they buy or sign anything or hand over money to anyone," Mr Mdludlu said.

"One call to 'the home buyer's friend' will answer all your questions and help you make the right decision."

Mdludlu can be contacted at 477006 or call the national toll-free number on 0800-111-663.



CONTROVERSIAL HOUSING: The cramped Lavender Valley houses and the poorly built Delft homes (Inset)

Home's far from own

BY SABATA NGCAI

TOWNSHIP residents could wait up to 12 years or more to get the ownership of houses transferred to them under the new government subsidy scheme, says the Cape Town City Council.

But the South African National Civics Organisation (Sanco) says it is unacceptable and has demanded that the houses be transferred "as speedily as possible"

According to a senior treasury official, the process is "not as easy as people think" Several steps have to be taken before transfer of ownership can be completed.

The council says it interviews 60 people a day Residents should take their receipts to show they are up to date with rent and service charges

Then the tenant has to fill in application forms Residents have to pay transfer costs to the director of housing. For houses valued at less than R7 500, transfer costs are R300, minus a government subsidy of R150. For houses valued at more than R7 500, tenants are required to pay R400, minus a R150 subsidy

Then the tenant goes to the council's attorneys to complete transfer forms The forms are registered with the Deeds Office and the tenant becomes a rightful owner.

R340m slice W Cape homes

(124)

By PETER DENNEHY

THE Western Cape will get about R340 million from the central government for housing in the coming year, local housing minister Mr Gerald Morkel said yesterday.

The nine housing ministers had jockeyed for slices of the R2,2 billlion housing cake when they met national Housing Minister Mr Joe Slovo on Friday.

"We were looking at about R340m for the Western Cape province, for the year," he said.

This was not all new money from the current year's budget "A lot of it is tied up, or already in the pipeline, or money from last year."

Meanwhile, the regional government has moved swiftly to repair storm damage in Delft.

Mr Morkel said he had given the go-ahead to have the houses repaired.

The houses are insured by the state, so the residents will not have to foot the repair bill.

All 400 houses of the type that lost their roofs are to be strengthened at state expense.

Three companies had already tendered to do the work.

The provincial government had provided R314 000 for immediate disaster relief and given R916 000 to 12 local authorities for repairs.

The Delft housing scheme had been a good one, Mr Morkel said. It had provided 6 800 houses costing about R14 000 each.

● Sexwale, Slovo to meet on housing — Page 2

● Community Bank backlash — Page 2

Ru

TRADE VISIT . . . President Nelson Mandela a moment during a short news conference in Pr South Africa.

Heseltine or

JOHANNESBURG. — The UK's Board of Trade president Mr Michael Heseltine arrived in South Africa yesterday on a five-day mission to promote investment and trade between the two countries.

Mr Heseltine, leading a delegation of UK construction, industrial and telecommunications business leaders, said that he hoped the visit would help forge partnerships.

He met President Nelson Mandela yesterday, and is to meet Finance Minister Mr Derek Keys today to sign the Commonwealth Development Corporation's operating agreement. He is also due to sign an investment protection agreement with Trade and Industry Minister Mr Trevor Manuel.

Accompanying Mr Heseltine are 68 senic incl Cabl the E ish T

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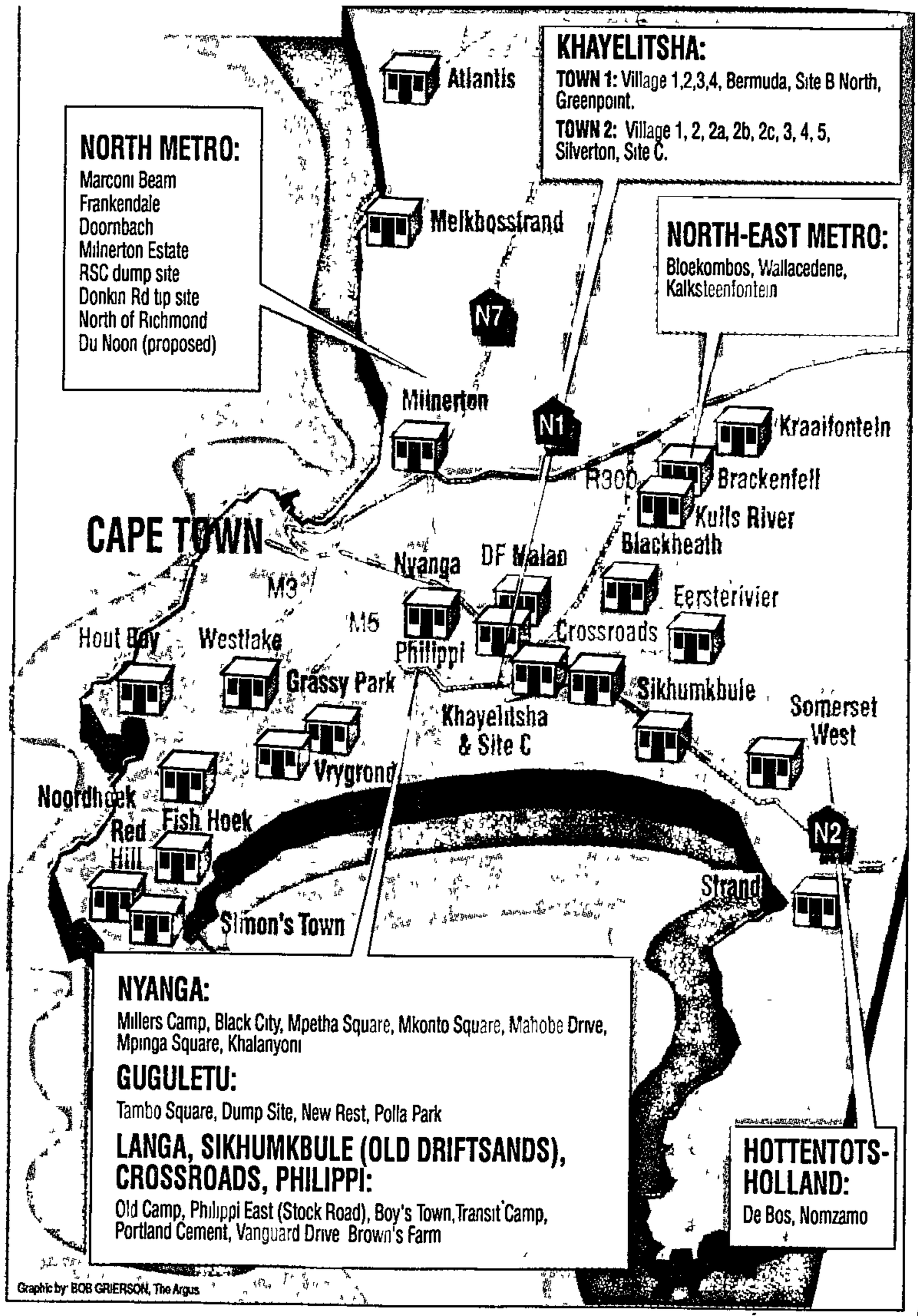
(124)
9/7/94



Squatting on the edge — a

on the edge — a massive challenge

ARG 9/7/94

(124)

■ The 140 000 people living on the edge in greater Cape Town's squatter camps remain a big challenge for the government and local authorities, reports **DI CAELERS**.

A STAGGERING total of about 140 000 people live in greater Cape Town's squatter settlements. Of these, tens of thousands have no services other than a tap.

And that's only the official statistic.

In fact, movement both into the city and between squatter camps as a result of violence or social forces means population figures can at best be guesstimates

There is, however, no guesswork involved in the realisation that the government and local authorities have a lot of work to do in the Western Cape to realise the aims of the reconstruction and development programme.

Figures provided by the Western Cape provincial administration, the Cape Town City Council and other local authorities put the squatter population figure at 140 000 based on the assumption that about four people live in each shack.

Development is continuing in squatter areas which the province is upgrading into serviced sites where people can at least expect tarred roads, lighting, flush toilets, running water and drainage — but still no formal housing.

And gone are the days of forced removals; today the entire developmental process is discussed with the community, ensuring mutual co-operation and ongoing community consultation.

Fanie Naude, community services regional director for the Western Cape, says. "The most important aspect of the developmental process is community participation. This ensures that the specific community is involved in decision-making and continuous consultation with regard to the development of their area."

He points out that the latest statistics show no "marked increase" in the population of informal settlement areas.

Western Cape provincial areas presently include Bloekombos and Wallacedene in Kraaifontein which collectively have a population of 18 200, Sikhumkbule (old Driftsands), home to about 500 families, and Masiphumelele at Noordhoek, with about 3 000 people

Nomzamo, with 1 812 sites, is the new home of the community that previously lived at Waterkloof, near Somerset West, who were resettled at the Strand in April.

Hout Bay's Mizamoyethu Village, which accommodates families that were already living on site, is being developed in accordance with a layout plan approved in October 1992 and its 500 sites house more than 2 000 people

The southeastern part of the metropole has the greatest concentrations of people

In Nyanga about 45 788 people live in settlements including Mpinga Square, Mahobe Drive, Mkonto Square, Millers Camp, Mpetha Square, Black City, KTC and Khalanyoni

In Guguletu about 5 900 people have settled at Phola Park, New Rest, Tambo Square and a dump site

There are 14 645 squatters in Langa.

The local authority for this southeastern sector, Ikapa Municipality, put the number of "backyard families" here at 66 625 people.

The Crossroads area, including Old Crossroads, Philippi East (Stock Road) and Boys' Town, has a collective population of about 29 000.

In Boys' Town there are 2 400 sites, Old Crossroads has about 950 shacks, 874 formal houses, 600 serviced sites and another 600 basic sites, and in Stock Road about 700 sites are on the planned school site and another 697 service sites are alongside

Khayelitsha's structure plan shows about 48 973 people living in Site C, 44 813 in Town 1 Village 3 (Trevor Vilakazi), and 53 714 in Town 1 Village 4 or Victoria Mxenge The rest of the sprawling township accommodates about 154 529 informal settlers

In the Cape Town City Council area the two major squatter camps include Vrygrond, near Marina da Gama, and Vygiekraal at Athlone. Both are serviced site areas and are home to 2 378 and 222 people respectively

There are also 41 shacks off Vanguard Drive in Mitchell's Plain and another 42 people live informally at Pelican Park

The northern part of the metropole, which will include the controversial Du Noon informal settlement, has about 4 000 people living in 1 069 shacks at Marconi Beam

Delft people take up offer

By GRAHAM LIZAMORE

DELFT residents have given a lengthy and vocal response to the government's invitation to air their grievances on the massive project — seen by the previous government as a model for low-cost housing

Development in Delft began in 1989, but after the recent storms and the subsequent tour by a shocked President Nelson Mandela, a panel of experts was set up to report back and make recommendations by July 18.

Yesterday, the project was criticised by various residents' committees, who said the 7 000-unit town was too far from Cape Town Home loan repayments, as well as water and electricity tariffs were too high

Mr Benedickt Kabab, of the Delft Liaison Forum, said poor people were encouraged to move to Delft from more crowded areas but with the recession many were retrenched, causing severe social problems in the community S Times [Cimelto]

Mrs Marie Jacobs told the panel she did not want to move to Delft but was told that unless she agreed she would be removed from the waiting list

Speakers insisted on community involvement in any future development The task group will report back to Mr Mandela next week

10/7/94 (124)

ANGRY RESIDENTS Mrs Shaheeda Samaai, secretary of the Delft branch of the South African National Civics Organisation, yesterday presented a list of complaints to the President's task group investigating housing in the area.

Picture CLIVE SMITH

CT 11/7/94 (124)

Delft residents list complaints

By CELEAN JACOBSON

ANGRY Delft residents presented a long list of bitter complaints to the President's task group investigating living conditions in the storm-ravaged area at a lively meeting there yesterday

Recent storms damaged and flooded scores of Delft homes and after President Nelson Mandela's visit there he appointed a task group to investigate the living environment in the area

At the meeting, attended by about 300 people, a resident protested that "the penguins were being treated more humanely than our people"

Others complained of living in "varkhoks"

Many were concerned about sick children

As residents complained about leaks and mould, Mrs Mitta Webb showed the panelists a shoe covered in thick mould

Mrs Shadeeda Samaai of the SA National Civics Organisation said that in an area with 66% unemployment it was unacceptable that people had to pay high deposits for structurally unsound houses which violated health regulations

She said houses had only one door and one window, which were safety hazards and meant poor ventilation

Refuse should be collected at least twice a week instead of once and service fees should be included in rates

The nearest hospital was Tygerberg and there was a "desperate need" for a 24-hour emergency service

Other complaints were about "the poor excuse of a police station" and a lack of recreational facilities

Mrs Felicity Williams has been living in the Delft Civic Hall for the past two weeks because the roof on her house is in danger of collapsing

She, like the other residents, is demanding the houses be demolished and rebuilt correctly

The task group will report back to the President on July 18

Local unity plan for 'beleaguered' Langa

CT 11/7/94 (124)

Municipal Reporter

COMMUNITY leaders of Langa have decided to unite in the hope of forming an Interim Government of Local Unity for the suburb, Committee of Ten public relations officer Mr Price Siqwana said yesterday

He was frustrated that a strategic management plan — in terms of which surrounding local authorities will assist beleaguered Langa — had not yet come into operation.

This is partly because of uncertainty over who rules the suburb and what the community reaction to intervention will be

Services in Langa are in a poor state, particularly because the iKapa Town Council has collapsed This was followed by another collapse in the suburb's administration under a welter of allegations of corruption

Mr Siqwana said yesterday that he had already approached the Cape Metropolitan Negotiating Forum, suggesting that the Committee of Ten should form an interim town council

He had not yet received a reply but felt that it was advisable to establish as representative a body as possible

On Monday last week, the SA National Civics Association in Langa met the Committee of Ten, and decided to call a meeting of all organisations in Langa at 6 30pm on Wednesday this week in the Langa Civic Hall

CT 13/7/94 (124)

Subsidy row — council slammed

By GLYNNIS UNDERHILL and YAZEED FAKIER

THE City Council and the regional housing department have clashed over the "old" government's housing subsidy programme that was to have given thousands of Cape Flats tenants their own homes

The issue came to a head yesterday when the Cape Areas Housing Action Committee (Cahac) criticised the City Council for the delays in transfers of council housing in Alicedale, Athlone, Mitchells Plain and other areas

The government, in March this year, invited occupants of council houses in Cape Town to come forward if they wanted to acquire ownership of the homes and benefit from a R7 500 subsidy scheme

The scheme was an extension of a decade-old campaign to sell off council houses, but a senior council treasury official says that ownership will be approved only when all arrears are fully paid

But a shocked Mr Sam Dodgen, chief ministerial representative for local housing minister Mr Gerald Morkel, said the council's stance was "very upsetting"

"The idea is that we are pushing for home-ownership If a person in arrears is denied access to the scheme, then it defeats the whole purpose"

Many of the tenants would have been provided with a free house once they had obtained the government subsidy, as many houses were priced at less than R7 500, he said

Cahac spokesman Mr Joey Marks said a "fruitful meeting" with Mr Morkel had convinced the committee that the delay had not come from his department

● Provincial Minister of Housing Mr Gerald Morkel said he was "shocked and outraged" when told the news late last night, after his return from a meeting in Pretoria

Mr Morkel said rental arrears could "easily" be taken out of the R7 500 housing subsidies

"The City Council could be less insensitive and more accommodating to the plight of the poor", he said

He would take the matter up with the council "first thing in the morning"

'Spies' smooth path of RDP

ARG 14/7/94

☐ Plan 'the key to stability'

MICHAEL MORRIS
Political Correspondent

INTELLIGENCE service "spies" are to play a critical role in meeting the ANC-dominated government's primary policy goal ... implementing the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP).

Sources in the twilight world of intelligence believe that this — along with keeping tabs on activities on the ultra-left and ultra-right political fringes — will be their single most important function in the next few years.

The successful implementation of the RDP is being seen as a key element of ensuring social and political stability

Agents in the regions have already been briefed to shift their focus towards this objective

They include operatives from the National Intelligence Service (NIS) — many of whom were widely discredited for their role under the National Party government — as well as members of the ANC's security and intelligence department, and those of three of the four former homeland governments

Their task is likely to involve pinpointing potential trouble spots and highlighting priority projects.

"If agents believe a project will defuse tension in a particular area, they will probably give it priority status over a project of lesser importance elsewhere," a source said.

Such recommendations would not necessarily be applied automatically, but would be intended as a guide to policy-makers

"It is not a question of spying on people, but of identifying flashpoints that should receive priority attention.

"There is a perception that intelligence services are just in the business of spying, but there is a lot of overt collection of information — from departments and other services — which we analyse in order to come up with products for the policy-maker," the source said.

Legislation — based on a White Paper now being drafted — is expected to be tabled soon to provide for the integration of the intelligence services — NIS, the ANC's security and intelligence department, and the intelligence services of Transkei, Venda and Bophuthatswana — as well as setting the parameters of its functions.

CRASH TRACK: An overturned front-end loader lies next to railway lines today after colliding with a goods train at the level crossing at Klipheuvel station near Paarl The driver of the front-end loader was seriously injured. Picture: OBED ZILWA, The Argus.

Man badly injured at rail crossing

Staff Reporter

A MAN was seriously injured today when his front-end loader and a goods train collided at a controlled level crossing at Klipheuwel station near Paarl.

He was taken to Tygerberg Hospital after the accident at 7.34am on the Bitterfontein-Saldanha goods line.

Spoornet spokesman Yvette Olwage appealed to road users to heed flashing warning lights at level crossings.

She said: "The crossing's red warning flashing lights were functioning and fully operational at the time of the accident. There was also a railway guard with a red flag on duty

"The injured man was a member of a road maintenace team who have been carrying out repairs in the area for about a month and was fully aware the railway line was still in use."

● An woman was found dead next to the railway line between Lakeside and Steenberg stations at 8pm yesterday. She is believed to have been struck by a train while crossing the tracks. Anyone able to identify her is asked to go to the Salt River mortuary.

● Two men were killed last night when their car ploughed into the back of a lorry while it was turning on to the N1 between Brackenfell and Kraaifontein. The car was crushed under the trailer of the lorry and mechanical jaws had to be used to free the men.

Repairs halted at Delft

(124)

ARG 14/7/94

Staff Reporter

WESTERN Cape Housing Minister Gerald Morkel has halted repairs on storm-damaged houses in Delft where residents have demanded that their homes be rebuilt, not repaired

Mr Morkel said contractors had been warned by the Delft crisis committee not to enter the area as they could be hurt

"Repairs were duly put on hold," he said

"The crisis committee was kept informed of all intended work at all times They indicated their support for the repair action," said Mr Morkel

"In the meantime the building contractors are ready to start with repairs but cannot fulfill their duties until their own safety is ensured"

Residents, who stopped attempts to repair their homes during the past three days, say they will not allow repairs until they have seen a recently commissioned task group report on the Delft low-cost housing project.

Heinrich Robertson, of the Delft suburb, Eindhoven, said residents were waiting for the task group report-back meeting to the Delft community on Saturday and would not allow any work to be done on their houses until then

Work starts on housing programme

CT 14/7/94 (124)

By CHRIS BATEMAN
Political Staff

WORK on the Western Cape's first low-income housing project under a new R12 500 subsidy scheme — a 339-home suburb in Worcester — is to begin immediately, acting Premier and Housing Minister Mr Gerald Morkel announced yesterday.

Mr Morkel's Housing Board yesterday approved the ground-breaking private enterprise scheme on serviced (and donated) Worcester council land

The 35m² homes will cost R13 500 each, which effectively means that prospective owners will have to raise R1 000, for which a bond would cost about R15 per month, Mr Morkel said.

Those who qualify for the R12 500 subsidy will be anyone earning less than R1 500. A sliding scale dictates that people earning less than R2 500 will get a R9 000 subsidy and those between R2 500 and R3 500, a R5 000 subsidy.

Mr Morkel said the purchase price of R13 500 at Worcester would have been "impossible" without the local council having donated the land and appealed to other councils to follow this example.

Worcester council will be able to recoup some services costs through charging tariffs which will bring the monthly cost to the new home-owners to "well under" R100, Mr Morkel predicted.

Council to cut power to 18 000 a month

ARG 15/7/94

HENRI du PLESSIS
Staff Reporter

(124)

CAPE Town city council is to step up electricity disconnections to 18 000 a month in the face of a R58,6 million backlog of bills

Deputy city electrical engineer Gordon Munro said: "We do not want to come across as heartless, particularly in winter, but people must realise services cost money.

"We are trying to find a solution to this problem, but if you consider what the interest alone on R58,6 million is, you will understand the position we're in.

"The deficit is rising, and rising fast."

Mr Munro said the council also planned to step up the installation of pre-paid meters

"People get into a routine when they begin missing payments, or pay only part of their account Before you know it, it has run up to a point where they will never catch up, and they are put on our disconnection lists.

"It seems as if people are unable to budget for their electricity when they get monthly accounts With the dispenser it is like putting petrol in your car If you only have R15, that is what you put in and you know you can drive only so far.

"We install the dispensers free of charge, which already saves the consumer some costs."

Mr Munro said illegal reconnections were also increasing alarmingly.

Mr Munro said anybody who wanted a pre-paid meter could apply to the council by calling ☎ 0800 220 440 toll free.

"With a dispenser, you can really budget," he said.

R60m owed to city for electricity

(124)
CT 15/7/94

By PETER DENNEHY

CITY electricity consumers owe the City Council almost R60 million — and a third of domestic users are in arrears

A shock report from the city treasurer and electrical engineer showed arrears from businesses had also increased alarmingly — by 25% in five months

Arrears for both domestic and business consumers have increased by R4,3 million in a month, to R58,6m — the highest increase on record

And council officials may beef up security for staff carrying out disconnections after a worker was threatened with an AK-47 at a Langa hostel

Deputy electrical engineer Mr Gordon Munro said workers were "hesitant" to work in the hostels as they had also been threatened with knives

Yesterday's monthly report from the treasurer and electrical engineer said that over a third — 5 216 out of 15 164 — of "commercial consumers" were behind with their payments, and arrears by businesses had increased by more than 25% in five months

The report said just over 13 000 disconnection orders were carried out each month The council's target was 18 000

Progress towards this was hampered because operations could not always be carried out in some high-risk areas without adequate support from the council's security branch, the report said

"On two recent occasions disconnections in Bonteheuwel have been aborted to avoid serious confrontation with local residents"

An executive committee spokesman said yesterday there would be an investigation to see if it would be cheaper to hire or buy a more secure vehicle for the disconnector teams

It was difficult to say if the vehicle would still be needed in 18 months, the report said, because good progress was being made in installing pre-payment meters

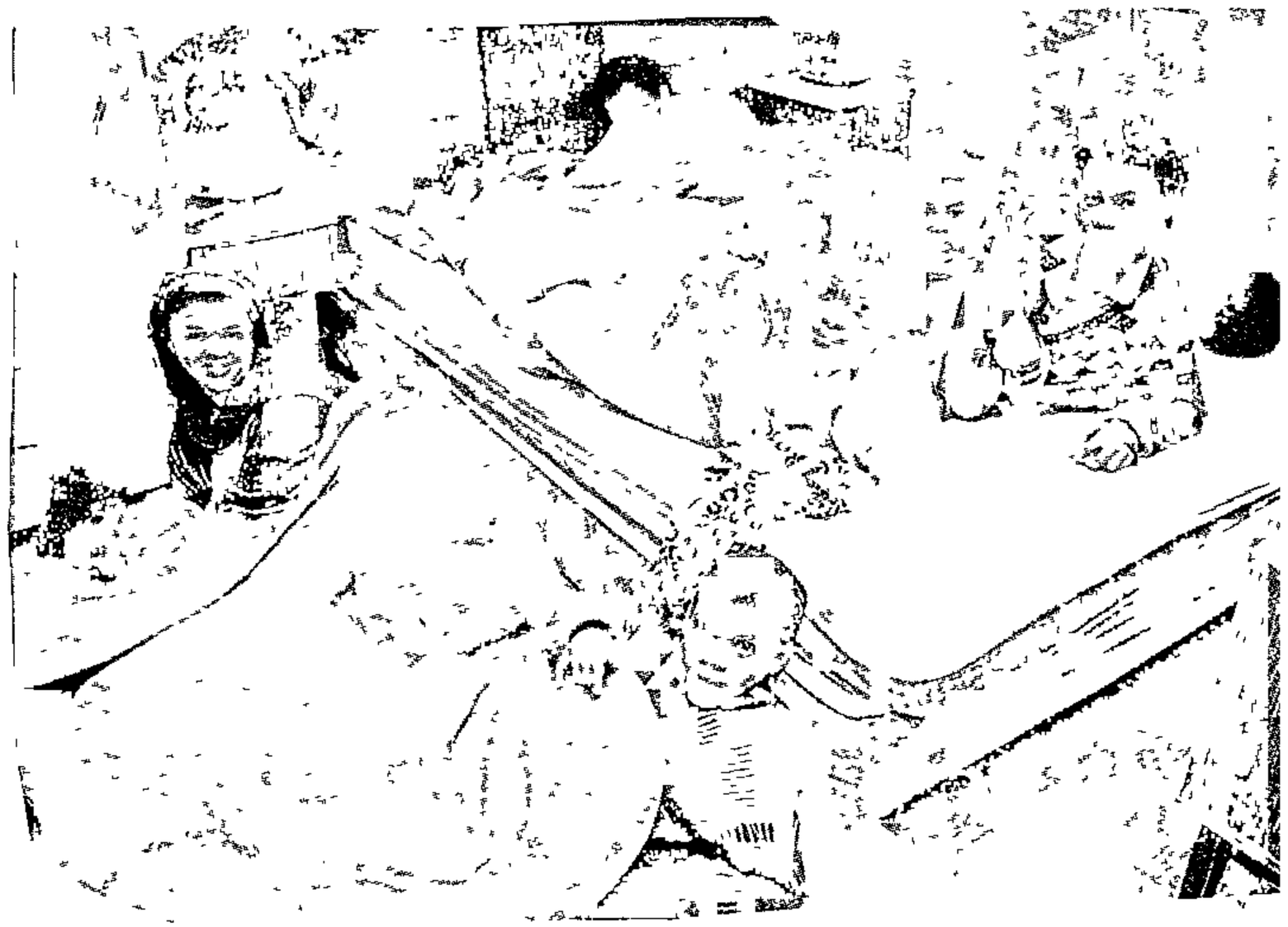
And a special meeting will be held next week to hasten the installation of pre-paid meters in hostels

FREE JULY 15 TO JULY 19 1994 A SOUTH PUBLICATION

HOUSING SQUEEZE

Cape Town families forced to sleep 14 in one room

(124)



LIKE SARDINES: The Wagner, Mathee and Lemon families crowd into a one-bedroom flat shared by 14 people every night *Photo: Roger Sedres*

BY SABATA NGCAI

THE waiting list for homes gets longer and overcrowding on the Cape Flats gets worse — and there seems to be no end in sight for some.

Sick children and elderly people are crammed like sardines into single-bedroom council houses

In Manenberg, SOUTHEASTER found 24 people sharing a two-bedroom house in Ruth Court The house's living room has been converted into a third bedroom.

The City Council's housing director, Mrs Charlotte Simms, said the council did not create the problem "The people created the problem themselves "

Mrs Simms said there was a shortage of houses and people would be accommodated when new houses are built

The poorly-built Ruth Court flat is home to 10 adults and 14 children from three families — two families are illegal tenants who are on the council's waiting list Most of the children sleep on the cold cement floor

Among them is three-year-old Steven Simons who was born mentally disabled. His mother, Miss Susan Simons, believes he is sick because she used to worry about the living conditions in her home during her pregnancy.

"There is not enough breathing space, not enough space to sleep," she said

The child's condition worsened after birth. "He is growing very slowly," Miss Simons said. "My son cannot develop in an area like this "

Another tenant in Ruth Court, Mrs Maria Graaf, has had heart problems since 1989 Her condition has worsened because she has to use the stairs She applied for her own house in 1986 and is still on the waiting list

She described her living conditions as "not fit for human beings but more of a pigsty"

"That is why I am sick," Mrs Graaf said "The city council is turning a blind eye to our plight

Her four daughters and sons-in-law also live in the flat

Another one-bedroom house is shared by 14 people from three families. the Lemon, Wagner and Mathee families Nine children and five adults squeeze into the bedroom every night.

A double bed accommodates two adults and four children while another family shares a mattress on the wooden floor

The third family sleeps in the lounge every night

Three-year-old Arnold Lemon has a chest infection He often has colds

"Children cannot stay under such bad conditions," said his grandmother, Mrs Elizabeth Lemon

"They have no chance to develop and will never be able to enjoy their childhood

"We will never be in good health again as long as we remain crowded in a single bedroom house."

Axe falls on housing scam

'Hopeful Cape homeowners grossly misled'

ARG 16/7/94 (124)

■ Marketing plans of Durbanville developers Afri-Unity Homes and Blue Quest International were "outright deceptive and fraudulent," says Professor Louise Tager of the Business Practices Committee.

JEAN LE MAY

Weekend Argus Reporter

THE government has shut down "pie in the sky" operations of Durbanville developers Afri-Unity Homes and Blue Quest International following a Weekend Argus exposé earlier this year.

Minister of Trade and Industry Trevor Manuel closed down the housing operators in a notice published in the Government Gazette yesterday

The business practices of the two companies and of their directors were declared unlawful in the gazette

The move follows an in-depth investigation by the Business Practices Committee of the Department of Trade and Industry

In her report committee chairman Professor Louise Tager said an unknown number of hopeful homeowners had been "grossly misled".

An escalating clause in one of the documents signed by prospective homeowners meant that an instalment of R100 a month could amount to more than R3 000 a month over 10 years

'The plans of (director) Stander and his associates were grandiose and unattainable Stander's impossible dreams could never be realised," she said

"Their marketing mechanisms were plans to obtain money from desperate consumers

"This could have been started by accident or by design If by design, the plans were outright deceptive and fraudulent.

"Stander built castles in the air, moved into them and mesmerised his associates into moving in with him

"The firms promised that

■ Turn to page 3

Homes scam

(123) ARG 16/7/94

■ From page 1

they could supply houses to their clients In fact, no houses could be supplied"

In yesterday's notice Mr Manuel forbade the two companies and their directors Frans Stander, Kurt Paul Horst Handke, Abdulla Mohamed Kadir, Jan Johannes Swart and any employee, representative or agent to continue business operations

Disregarding the order carries penalties, on conviction, of R200 000 fines and/or five years in jail

Weekend Argus has disclosed, in a series of articles, that the two companies accepted money from scores of people for houses which did not materialise

The scam started soon after factory workers received their bonuses last year, when scores of them paid deposits on houses to be built Many have paid instalments without receiving anything in return, while others have tried without success to get their money back

Lawyers consulted by Weekend Argus described the scheme as "pie in the sky"

Furthermore, Weekend Argus disclosed that Mr Stander was being investigated by the commercial crime unit of the police for his activities in another liquidated company, Stan Global House

Later, the companies claimed to be on the point of establishing connections with a Chinese company which Weekend Argus found did not exist

During investigations of Afri-Unity and Blue Quest the Business Practices Committee found that "no books at all existed, not even the rudiments of a cash book

"All transactions were on a cash basis, and five savings accounts were operated Cash slips showed that money was used for magazines, groceries and petrol

"According to Stander the losses of Afri-Unity and his personal living expenses were financed by a friend, Dr G H J Verster This was confirmed by Verster

"Expenses for a trip to the Far East to explore a market for brick-making equipment were partially financed by cash withdrawals from Afri-Unity accounts "The financial records of the firms are chaotic Not all cash received was banked Cash not banked was used to pay expenses"

(124) ARG 16/7/94

Houses on the way but a way it is like

JEAN LE MAY
Weekend Argus Reporter

■ About 200 000 houses for the homeless will be built in the Western Cape in the next five years, says provincial minister of housing Gerald Morkel.

WESTERN Cape Housing Minister Gerald Morkel has quashed any idea that the mass delivery of houses would begin immediately following this week's national government allocation of R164 million to the province.

However, he was confident about 200 000 houses for the homeless could be delivered in the next five years, he said in an interview

This would more than cover the existing backlog of about 181 000 homes

Houses could be provided at the rate of 40 000 a year, including self-help houses on serviced sites, he added

National Housing Minister Joe Slovo said the money allocated to the provinces represented half the year's housing budget, plus money left over from last year Another allocation would be made at a date still to be decided

However, said Mr Morkel, expenditure already committed by the Western Cape amounted to R357,3 million This meant there would be a shortfall even if the national housing department later allocated an amount close to R164 million

This was by no means certain because an interim formula had been used by the National Housing Board and this could be changed

Housing projects were distributed throughout the region, said Mr Morkel

Some of them, he said, were at Grassy Park, Matroosfontein, Hout Bay, Uitsig, Macassar, Swellendam, Vredenburg, Somerset West, Mitchell's Plain, Lavender Hill, Belhar, Bonteheuwel, Grabouw, Plettenberg Bay, Khayelitsha, Delft south, Driftsands, Crossroads, Philippi and Worcester

They included serviced sites on which self-help houses could be built in the scheme operated by the Serviced Land Project

There would be constant consultation with communities in line with the recommendations of the government's reconstruction and development programme, he said

A task force appointed by President Mandela, Mr Slovo and Jay Naidoo, Minister Without Portfolio in charge of the Reconstruction and Development Programme, was investigating the Delft housing development and would make recommendations next week for future projects

"As I see it, communities must get together, decide what sort of houses they want and submit proposals relevant to what they can afford," said Mr Morkel

"There is a R12 500 subsidy, but in most areas a serviced site will cost R10 000 That leaves only R2 500 for the house Buyers then can arrange with a private institution to borrow the remainder.

"There is a problem at the lower end of the market because the bigger institutions don't deal there. I'm told loans of R1 500 to R6 000 are not worthwhile because of the administration costs involved

"We're hoping there will be more bank support if the mortgage indemnity scheme proposed by Mr Slovo can be negotiated

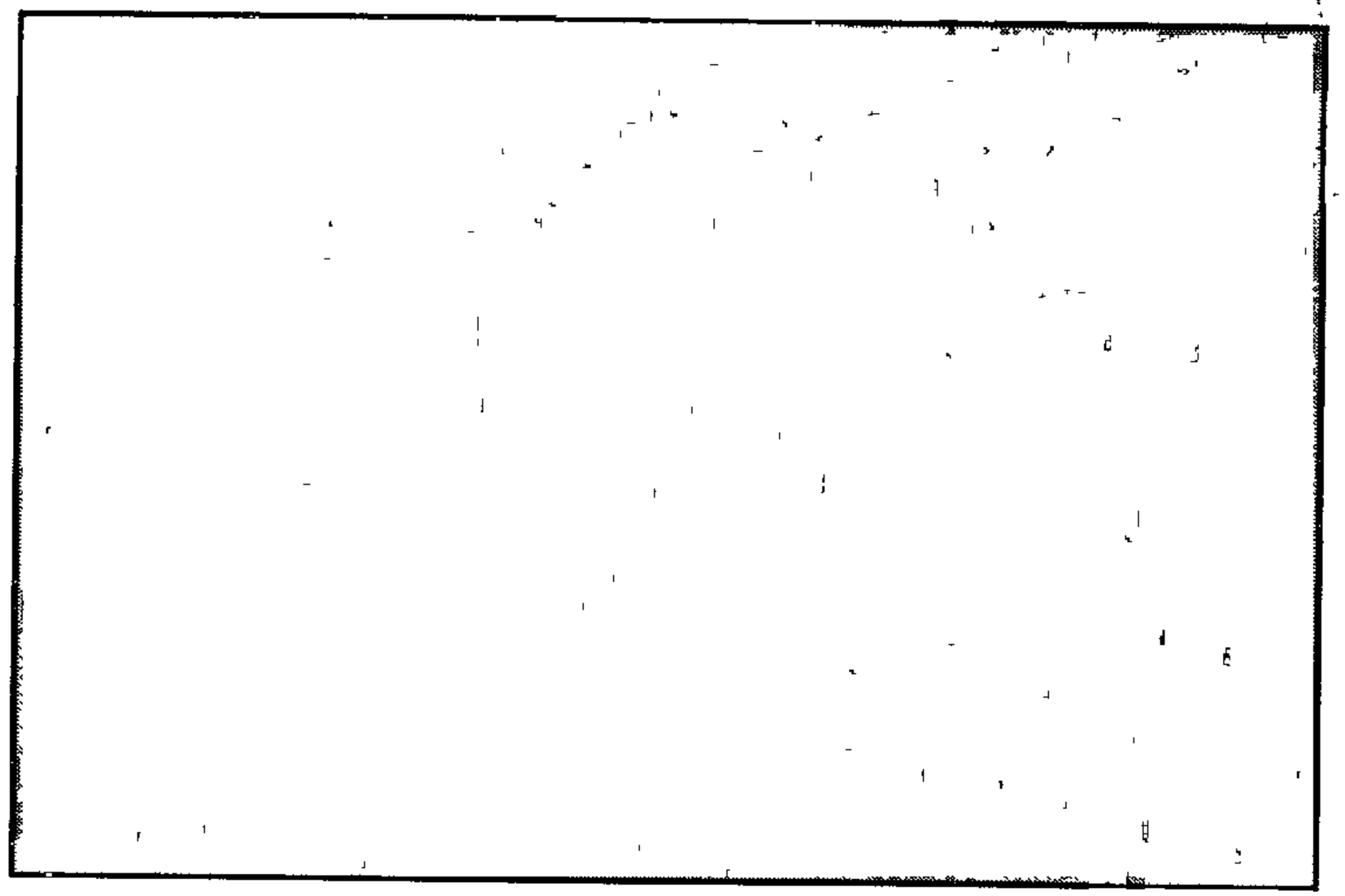
"And, we also are looking at establishing a development bank of our own here in the Western Cape There are investors overseas who may be prepared to give us low-interest loans for housing.

"There is some talk that the subsidy scheme may be extended from project-based to individual housing There will be a government White Paper on housing at the end of July which will shed more light on these issues"

Mr Morkel said "a great deal can be done with self-help housing I often wonder if people realise just how much"

"There is a project in Calitzdorp where very nice 52 sq m houses have been put up for R14 000 That sum buys the land and the materials and buyers hire their own labour and put in the rest of the capital, sometimes through loans from an employer or a developer Many companies give housing loans to employees, and I urge the private sector to get more involved in this way

"I'd like to see more municipalities do what the municipality of Worcester has done They gave the land for a housing project and now, with the R12 500 subsidy, 35 sq m houses are being put up for R13 500"



□ **HOUSES GALORE:** These houses at Delft are under the spotlight as an example of what can be done by providing sites and subsidies.

Former Cape leader of NP in the spotlight

Township housing job gets adviser in Heunis

ARG 16/7/94

(124)

VUYO BAVUMA
Weekend Argus Political Staff

■ Former Cabinet minister Chris Heunis has popped back into the limelight as legal adviser to a development company that wants to take control of a multimillion rand township housing project.

OFFICIALS from four community organisations have set up a development company to try to control a multimillion rand housing project in the Western Cape's disadvantaged communities.

The officials, who are from the Western Cape Civic Association, the Western Cape United Squatters Association, the Western Cape Community Organisation and South African National Civic Organisation, formed the Peninsula People's Compact about two months ago

They are being backed by a consortium of civil engineering companies, including HillKaplan Scott Inc,who are hoping to win the contracts once the People's Compact body succeeds.

The legal representative of the Peninsula People's Compact is former Cape leader of the National Party and former cabinet minister Chris Heunis, who has a law practice in Somerset West

Some of its officials include Conrad Sandile, dubbed a mysterious witness in the Goldstone Commission into the Crossroads violence, and Lizo Kapa, ex-regional chairman of SANCO, and WCCA's Wilson Sidina, who also works for a trade union.

Mr Conrad is employed by HillKaplan Scott on a contract basis.

The Peninsula People's Compact wants to replace the Holistic Settlement, a private company that co-ordinates the Service Land Project, which works on providing thousands of houses in various areas, including Brown's Farm, KTC, and Nyanga informal settlements

Recently it submitted applications to the Regional Housing Board for developing several areas in the townships It is still waiting for the result

For the past two years the settlement has had a residents development committees to facilitate the process of consultations with all parties in the areas to be developed.

In the past violence in the squatter camps, especially in Crossroads, flared up because of a lack of consultation on the development

Last month three affiliates of the company accused the Holistic Settlement of being "undemocratic and incompetent" though they appreciated the work it carried out in the past two years

They also demanded in writing that Colin Appleton (head of the settlement) should stop co-ordinating the SLP's work

A letter from Wecco said it wanted its "executive to get the monies that are handed to Mr Appleton because it would act as facilitators of SLP".

"We appreciate his work .. but due to the amount of monies given to him every month, we the executive of Wecco ask that these monies be handed to us as we will be acting as the facilitators."

In a similar vein the the Western Cape civic association said it was "unhappy with the undemocratic role of the Holistic Settlement and his staff of going to our constituencies without consultation".

It said. "We appreciate the work he (Mr Appleton) has done so far (but) we feel he is incompetent to do his duties and undermines us."

"So we feel that the best for him is to resign as co-ordinator and let the organisations take over"

However, sources within the settlement pointed out that these bodies were invited to several meetings but failed to turn up

Mr Sandile did not return calls to Weekend Argus

Fears fuelled by housing 'hijack'

S/Times [C/Metro]

17/7/94

PEACE in Cape Town's squatter settlements is once again under threat following an attempt by a community-based organisation to "hijack" a R500-million housing project in several black townships.

By JESSICA BEZUIDENHOUT

Three civic organisations, which joined forces last year to form the Peninsula Peoples' Forum, have applied to take over the multi-million rand Service Land Project (SLP), which is being run by the Cape Provincial Administration (124)

The merging of the Western Cape Civic Association (WCCA), the Western Cape United Squatters Association (Wecusa) and the SA National Civic Organisation was initially heralded as a major breakthrough for peace in violence-wracked areas

Although there is no concrete evidence, there is a growing suspicion in some circles that community-based organisations are being used to front for large companies hoping to get a toehold in the lucrative project

Sources revealed that the housing secretariat of the CPA has expressed concern about this possibility and has drawn up a code of conduct to eliminate it

An application by the unified body, the Peninsula Peoples Compact (PPC), to the Regional Housing Board, to take over housing development projects, has sparked fears of renewed violence if permission is granted

Township residents are outraged at the PPC's application, especially because of the involvement of several controversial leaders who were previously implicated in township violence

Among those who signed the application are controversial squatter leader Mr Jeffrey Nongwe and Mr Conrad Sandile, who acts as technical advisor to the PPC

Local Peace Committee chairman Mr David Mkize said regular interzonal Sanco branch meetings revealed that ordinary members were "quite disturbed" about the involvement of former "warlords"

Mr Mkize said the "all-inclusive" PPC was initially formed to oversee the implementation of developments in the townships

"However, the organisation now seems to have plans to switch from its role as watchdog to that of developer," he said

The SLP plans to develop housing on more than 1 000 hectares over the next five years, at a cost of over R500-million

"Development is taking place too slowly," Mr Enoch Madywabe, the general secretary of Wecusa and one of the signatories on the application to the Housing Board, said this week

Mr Johan Nel, chairman of the Regional Housing Board, confirmed the application by the PPC and said it was under review

Move angers Morkel

Political Staff (124)

THE central government "freeze" on repairing storm-damaged Delft homes has angered Western Cape Housing Minister Mr Gerald Morkel.

The residents are unhappy with the provincial government's move to repair homes in terms of insurance contracts, as they want new homes.

Mr Morkel said that but for "cheap politicking" the residents would be back in their homes at no cost to them

CT 18/7/94

Housing projects get R26-million boost

(124)

SHARON SOROUR
Municipal Reporter

HOUSING projects in the Cape Town municipal area have received a R26 million boost from the provincial government. ARG 19/7/94

Neil Ross, chairman of the city council's housing committee, said Housing Minister Gerald Morkel had allocated the money for the completion of projects.

At a housing committee meeting yesterday, Mr Ross emphasised that the money had been allocated for "roll-over" projects and was not sufficient to finance new housing projects

Members of the committee met the minister last week More money was expected to be allocated to housing at a later stage, he added

Meanwhile, arrears in payments on council houses have topped R9,3 million, according to a report handed to the committee

Of the 35 880 homeowners, only 16 926 had paid their instalments in full, while 4 079 owed one month's instalment, 4 256 owed one to two months' and 10 619 — nearly 30 percent — owed more than two months' instalments

Rent arrears — up to June 7 — fared no better, with R10,1 million outstanding Arrears in Mitchell's Plain were at R1,6 million, those in Manenberg stood at R2,2 million with Kalksteenfontein arrears amounting to R1,7 million.

Only 10 660 tenants renting houses from the council — about 40 percent — had paid their rent in full and 5 276 — 20,22 percent — owed one month's rent or less, amounting to R373 428

Tenants owing more than one month's rent totalled 11 489, amounting to R9,8 million

Initiative on Vrygrond settlement

(124)

Municipal Reporter

THE development of the Vrygrond informal housing settlement in Muizenberg East is on the cards with the council's housing committee agreeing in principle to upgrade the area.

A final decision will have to be ratified by the city council.

About 500 families live on the 52 hectares bounded by Drury Road and Prince George's Drive.

The city planner's department has embarked on a new initiative to work with all the stakeholders, including community representatives. A forum will be set up to facilitate the development.

The Vrygrond community will be drawn into the process. Housing and related services will be provided.

Committee chairman Neil Ross said the provision and funding of bulk services had to be addressed, and the boundary of the area to be developed had to be fixed.

ARG 19/7/94

The committee agreed, in principle, that the executive committee mandate the city planner's department to negotiate with the community on the proposed development forum.

The objectives would be to fix the boundaries of the redevelopment with the area now known as Vrygrond, and to plan for the upgrading and development of the area.

Tenants owe council R10m

CT 19/7/94 (124)

Over R3m up on last year

Municipal Reporter

THE amount of rent arrears owed to the Cape Town City Council has risen to over R10 million for the first time

According to monthly statistics placed before the housing committee yesterday, over 60% of the council's 26 000 tenants are in arrears

Last year, the total debt was R6,7m and more than 10 000 tenants had paid in full

It was revealed last week in another committee report that electricity arrears have climbed to nearly R60m, and more than a third of commercial consumers are in arrears

A local credit insurer said that although the country was coming out of recession, many people were "about 12 months behind the economic cycle"

Economist Mr Luke Doig of Johannesburg said insolvencies of persons or partnerships had been on a downward trend countrywide for 15 to 18 months

Civil debt appeared to have reached a ceiling last year

But the figures for companies were still getting worse, he said

A local credit investigator said yesterday that debt payments had improved since the election

"I don't think that many more people have jobs," she said, "nor is it due to their having more money But people are optimistic and happier We deal mostly with those of middle- or lower-income"

Central Statistical Services reports 308 company liquidations in May, which would have been the highest monthly total for years, had it not been exceeded by this year's February figure of 314

According to the Information Trust Corporation, the number of civil judgments for debt against private individuals countrywide in April, May and June this year were 33 00, 41 000 and 47 000 respectively

These figures are very similar to those for last year

Occupiers

● Another council report before the housing committee yesterday said cash had been collected for service charges for only two of the 218 informally-built houses on the school site in Area L, Tafelsig

It was to this site that illegal occupiers of houses were eventually persuaded to move

Each household is supposed to pay R25 a month, but between mid-May and mid-June only R50 had been collected out of the R5 450 that was due

Province backs new rates valuations

SHARON SOROUR
Municipal Reporter

THE Cape Town City Council has the go-ahead from the province to use the 1944 property valuation ordinance to compile a new valuation roll — but requests for two key concessions have been turned down.

(124) ARG 20/7/94

The provincial government has refused to waive the sampling procedure and has not assured the council the voters' roll will be valid until the 2001/2002 financial year.

The council executive committee will appeal to provincial authorities against this decision

Last year's rates fiasco resulted in the 1990 valuation roll being set aside by the Supreme Court The outdated 1979 roll was then revalidated

Council assistant valuations officer Emil Weichardt said a general valuation using the 1944 ordinance would take four years

"We then want to be able to send out rates accounts using that valuation for at least the next four years," he said.

"We don't want to be told a year after completing the roll the ordinance is not valid and we have to begin the whole process again"

Provincial authorities said they could not grant the request to waive the sampling procedure "as sampling gives a good indication of land values in the area", and because of the last fiasco they thought it necessary to retain this step in the valuation process

The province could not guarantee that all valuations under the 1944 ordinance would be valid until the 2002 as the new 1994 ordinance, which came into effect on July 1, ruled that the premier could call for revaluations "at any stage"

Mandela urged to take dramatic action

(124) ARGUS 20/7/94

☐ Delft crisis: Call for 3-month moratorium on rent arrears

MICHAEL MORRIS
Political Correspondent

PRESIDENT Mandela has been urged to take dramatic measures — including a three-month moratorium on legal action on rates and rent arrears — to prevent a "crisis" in the Delft housing scheme from turning into a "disaster"

This is the essence of a detailed report drawn up in just over two weeks by a special task group appointed by Mr Mandela, Housing Minister Joe Slovo and Minister Without Portfolio Jay Naidoo

It has found while the delivery of 7 000 housing units in just over four years and in a difficult political climate "deserves special credit", Delft is "not sustainable as a long-term housing model for low-income communities"

But, in spite of major problems in Delft, the task group believes the huge housing scheme "can be nursed back to good health"

Collectively, the task group says, the problems in Delft "have become a crisis and, without significant intervention, could become a disaster"

An executive summary presented at a briefing to Mr Slovo, Western Cape Housing Minister Gerald Morkel and others was released yesterday The full report was not available to the Press

It recommends that a three-month moratorium be placed on all new development, payment of loans to government authorities and legal action against non-payment of loans, pending transfers and bond registrations, as well as non-essential repairs to houses, to allow for a thorough rethink of all the financial and administrative systems that apply in Delft.

It urges the government to "use their best offices" to secure a similar moratorium to cover loans from private financial institutions in cases where there is a fear or threat of foreclosure.

It also calls for

● The appointment, in consultation with "representative community structures", of a "suitably qualified" town administrator to assume responsibility for the delivery and administration of municipal services.

● The provision of emergency funding of R2 million from the National Housing Board "to be put at the disposal of a democratic and inclusive community structure to enable the community to play a leading role in restructuring Delft"

It suggests that an "assessment team" be appointed to decide, during the three-month moratorium, which houses in Delft should be rebuilt and which repaired, and that every element of the proposed planning and design of Delft and Delft South be reviewed to "create an acceptable and integrated living environment"

Mr Slovo said these recommendations would now be discussed with Mr Mandela and the government would then decide what action to take.

The task group found.

● The Delft model is "financially bankrupt", with loan repayments running at only 20 percent. If it were a private commercial business "it would by now be under judicial management if not liquidated",

● In urban planning terms, Delft has "serious shortcomings", tending to "marginalise" the lower income community it houses.

● In physical planning terms, it has "resulted in an environment that is expensive, hostile and lacking in choice"

● Delft is "moribund" from a community point of view, leaving people with a sense of anger, distrust and dissatisfaction, and with a feeling that they are "worse off" and of "having been cheated"

● Technically, Delft "suffers from a lack of multi-disciplinary integration" and while many aspects are "quite appropriate", others, including the "quality of the finished housing product", are not.

The report says the process of arranging the housing design and construction is "suspect" in terms of "design, quality of end product, space utilisation and supervision"

This, the task group found, "is at the coal face of the community's discontent"

Housing ball to begin rolling soon — Slovo

Political Correspondent

FAR-REACHING legislation to set the mass housing ball rolling is expected to be tabled in parliament soon, says Housing Minister Joe Slovo.

It would set guidelines to determine how national housing funds should be spent by the provinces, but would not restrict the "creativity and initiatives" of regional governments in their housing planning.

Mr Slovo was speaking at a briefing on the report of the government-appointed task group that has spent weeks studying the 7 000-unit Delft housing scheme as a potential model for mass housing

The task group, led by engineer Bev Mitchell, found that Delft was not a "sustainable model"

It reported the "fundamental concept of developing large-scale housing initiatives on the periphery of urban settlements is flawed and should be very seriously reviewed"

The task group's key recommendations for future mass housing are:

● Creating a demand-driven, community-oriented, housing delivery system integrated with existing urban areas, "now that South Africa is a rights-driven society"

● Housing subsidies should provide access to finance and create a demand for houses.

● Using subsidies as a form of credit within a financial system that attracts commercial funds, and using funds to create the opportunity of "growing a city and not just constructing houses"

● Ensuring affordability and sustainability are the cornerstones of the model.

● Placing emphasis in planning on "growing the city to absorb the newly urbanising and lower-income communities"

It warns that "mass housing provision *per se* is not the way to kickstart the economy"

It could lead to greater urban inefficiencies and a further loss of natural competitiveness.

'Shoddy finance institutions must share the blame'

Political Correspondent

HOUSING Minister Joe Slovo has claimed "shoddy" financial institutions and housing developers must share blame for the country's multimillion-rand rent and bond boycott debts.

He acknowledged that some of the boycotts were politically inspired, but said there was a "well-grounded perception (in the townships) that developers, builders and some of the financial institutions have not matched up to their responsibilities"

A fresh World Bank report had corroborated this view, he said.

Affordability was also a factor in the non-payment of bonds and rents.

Speaking at a briefing on the Delft task group report, Mr Slovo said the problem was a "large" one and would not be solved "overnight"

The government's approach was to attempt to "create the conditions, the general framework, in which people will begin to meet their obligations in paying bonds and rents"

"We will not be able to create this overnight, but we hope it will not take too long to create the climate in which people will respond."

He said the government was aware "of what has been going in the construction industry

"The delivery of shoddy products and poor quality and factors of that sort have had an influence on communities' willingness to match their obligations." He cited a World Bank report which said "poor banking and not political considerations were a determining cause of defaults in the black community"

Mr Slovo said. "It is a complex problem, and we will be working with the private sector, and with the communities, to begin to address it."

Slovo lists Delft deficiencies

EDWARD WEST

CAPE TOWN — Black community bond and services arrears resulted from shoddy products, poor banking and poverty, and were not just politically motivated, Housing Minister Joe Slovo said yesterday.

He was referring to a World Bank report he had just received

Slovo was commenting at a report-back on the investigation into the Delft housing project on the Cape Flats, which showed that only 20% of owners of the 7 000 low-cost houses erected over a four-year period, at a cost of R200m, were believed to be repaying housing loans.

Slovo said government was attempting to create a general framework for people to begin meeting their obligations in terms of bonds, rentals and services payment as soon as possible. Legislation laying down the "norms and standards" of the national housing policy would be tabled in the next session of Parliament, which starts next month, he said

The Delft project, previously perceived to have been a model on which future low-cost housing schemes could be based, was investigated by government after many of the houses were damaged in recent storms It was found that the project was in continual crisis The storms, it appeared, were just the last straw B/Day

Ted Mitchell, chairman of the task group which conducted the investigation, said the project had no financial accountability and was bankrupt. 20/7/94

And in urban planning terms it tended to further marginalise the lower income community it housed (124)

Administratively the project also failed

The task group recommended a three-month moratorium on development at the project, bond payments, transfers and legal action and repairs, so that a full audit could be conducted.

Slovo said the recomendations would be assessed by his department.

Minister slams 'carping' Delft housing report

(124) ARG 24/7/94

MICHAEL MORRIS
Political Correspondent

WESTERN Cape Housing Minister Gerald Morkel has hit out at the damning Delft report, strongly criticising the way it was drawn up and presented, and demanding to be consulted on its recommendations

He also cast doubt on the substance of the report, saying it was easy to criticise, and warned it "creates irresponsible expectations which may not be possible to bring to fruition".

The row over Delft follows the release earlier this week of a hefty report by a government-appointed task group which spent just over two weeks studying the Delft scheme. They concluded that the 6 800-unit housing scheme was "in crisis" and that urgent measures were vital to prevent a "disaster".

While it praised some elements of the scheme, it was critical of virtually every aspect of the scheme's conception, design and administration.

Mr Morkel said he was not consulted at any stage about the work of the task group and that when he was invited to a meeting to discuss the report this week, he discovered "it was actually a Press conference".

He said the report was released without comment "from the responsible authorities" and this led to the creation of perceptions which could not easily be changed.

It was "regrettable", he said, that in the "emotive atmosphere prevailing after the worst storm in 50 years which severely damaged 22 of the 6 800 houses in the project an investigation of this nature should be commissioned in the way in which it has been done".

"I am of the opinion that it was not possible to have come to a balanced finding in the two weeks allowed for the investigation because information gained from the Delft residents was done while emotions ran higher than reason".

He did not believe it was "fair" that the positive aspects of the scheme should be "completely overshadowed" by the negative ones

Mr Morkel said many of the suggestions presented in the report as "solutions" had not been tested and the financial implications of the recommendations had not been quantified

"There will surely be a lot of fruitless expenditure if certain actions must now be stopped. In view of the scarcity of financial resources, I must warn that the report creates irresponsible expectations which may not be possible to bring to fruition."

He said his department was committed to "rectifying what is wrong" and will continue providing houses for people — "notwithstanding flaws in the system".

But, he added "If our sin was to provide houses for our people on this basis, then I am of the opinion that we should go on 'sinning' ... until such time as the subsidy system can be changed."

Morkel defiant on Delft

(124)

By CHRIS BATEMAN
Political Staff

A DEFIANT and "unhappy" local Housing Minister, Mr Gerald Morkel, yesterday defended the controversial Delft project, vowing to "continue sinning" until the subsidy system could be changed.

He was reacting to the Slovo Commission report, released on Tuesday, which found the storm-damaged project to be "unsustainable, financially bankrupt and moribund"

CT 21/7/94

Mr Morkel said the former House of Representative's housing department had achieved "a resounding success in providing affordable housing for close to 7 000 families during an extremely difficult period and within the confines of political, financial and other cardinal constraints".

While he was prepared to "rectify what is wrong", he added: "If our sin was to provide houses for people on this basis, then I believe that we should go on sinning."

Mr Morkel appealed to Mr Slovo not to take any decisions on the report's recommendations "without full and proper consultation"

He would "insist" that contracts already awarded for the repair of the damaged houses (which the report wants frozen) "continue as agreed"

The Slovo report created "irresponsible expectations", Mr Morkel said

Suggestions presented as solutions had not been tested and were "only theoretical"

Six arrested in housing violence

(124)

CT 21/7/94

Crime Reporter

POLICE arrested six people in connection with assaults, arson and an attempted murder in Driftsands, near Khayelitsha, yesterday after violent incidents in connection with alleged misappropriation of housing funds.

At least 16 shacks have been set alight and eight people assaulted in an alleged row between supporters of the National Party and other organisations who believe NP provincial legislature member Mr Johnson Nxobongwana has misappropriated money set aside for housing.

NP members believe the protest is an attempt to drive them out.

A police spokesman said five men and one woman were arrested.

RESIDENTS STORM COUNCIL OFFICE

Southeaster (suppl. to Sowetan)

BY SABATA NGCAI

ANGRY Lavender Hill residents staged a sit-in at the local rent office on Monday to protest against a "unilateral decision" taken by the Cape Town City Council to increase rents by R10 with effect from July 1.

Residents had a placard demonstration outside the rent office while waiting for council officials to address them.

Residents stormed into the rent offices when it appeared that the council would not speak to them.

City council spokesperson, Mrs Dolce Parks said the councillors had other commitments and could not "be expected to drop everything and rush to Lavender Hill"

She said they would attend to the matter "when they get time".

DOWN WITH RENT: Lavender Hill residents protest against rent increases outside the local rent offices shortly before they staged a sit-in inside the offices
Photo: Roger Sedres

The residents said they were not prepared to pay the rent because they were not consulted when it was increased

"I'm too poor to afford such a big rent increase," said pensioner, Mrs Marie Meyer

"The council should have consulted with us. There is no way that I can pay rent from the meagre old age pension"

Mrs Ruth Balentine said she was only getting a R13 pension increase and could not afford a "huge" R10 rent increase.

Civic association spokesperson, Mr Charles Daniels, said the residents would remain at the rent offices until the council officials address them (124)

Residents' demands include the scrapping of rent arrears, more staff in local clinics, upgrading of the area and that all pensioners pay a set rental of R50 a month

● The Hanover Park Civic Association says it has received more than 2 000 signatures in a petition from residents opposed to the rent increase

A spokesperson for the civic association, Mr Errol Davids, said the petition would be used to support the residents' demands when they meet the city council this week.

Girls' school rioters teargassed

Langa plea to minister on clean-up

Political Staff

CONCERNED Langa residents have appealed to Environment Minister Lerumo Kalako to speed up plans to clean up their polluted township to prevent an outbreak of disease

Mr Kalako has been urged to expedite the installation of proper drainage and to ensure regular refuse removals in the township, where 120 000 people live in a five square-kilometre area (124)(a)

Residents say Langa is a breeding ground for health problems resulting from flooded and littered streets

Mr Kalako visited the township yesterday for a tree-planting ceremony at the Tsoga Environment Resource Centre, after which he faced 700 residents at a scheduled meeting

Mr Kalako has had similar meetings with communities in other townships during the past few weeks

Mr Kalako assured Langa residents that he would convey their grievances to other ministries and said his own ministry would soon put the finishing touches to a clean-up campaign ARG 22/7/94

He urged residents to set up committees to co-ordinate their campaign

The city council has warned that serious diseases could break out in the township at any time because of the piles of rubbish strewn in the streets

The dirt was subsequently removed but many sections of the township, especially near the hostels, are still badly littered

R6 m arrears in Delft debacle

(124) ARG 23/7/94

JEAN LE MAY
Weekend Argus Reporter

HOMEOWNERS in the storm-damaged suburb of Delft are about R6 million in arrears on subsidised housing loans given them by the government, Weekend Argus found this week

The houses were built with taxpayers' money channelled into the project by the Development and Housing Boards through the now-defunct House of Representatives

The report of a Delft task force — hurriedly put together early this month to probe what went wrong in the storm-damaged suburb — said in its report published this week that of 6 800 home loans, only 20 percent were being repaid.

Provincial Housing Minister Gerald Morkel has reacted angrily to the report

His view, and that of his officials, is that it was not fair of the task force to describe the project as "bankrupt" and "moribund" when the reason for this was that people who bought state-subsidised houses had not paid for them.

The task force, which was appointed by President Mandela, said in its report that although the non-payments were regarded officially as a rent boycott, it had been found that income declarations on which subsidised loans were based had proved unreliable

It also recommended that the community should apply for R2 million in emergency support from the National Housing Board.

Meanwhile Weekend Argus has been told that the provincial Department of Housing is confident that repairs to the damaged houses will be authorised by Housing Minister Joe Slovo.

The task force recommended a three-month moratorium on payments, transfer of houses and further construction, pending an in-depth investigation into the financing, planning and design of Delft

Of the 6 800 existing houses, only about 500 had been registered in the names of the owners since the project started four years ago

The task force's report was critical of the concept and planning of the Delft project, although it praised the delivery of close to 7 000 houses at exceptionally low cost in just over four years at a time of admitted political tension

■ The real reason why storm-hit Delft could be described by a task force as "bankrupt" and "moribund" was that people were not paying for their state-subsidised houses, says the provincial housing department.

Much of the 40-page report consists of often-repeated criticisms — that under the apartheid system communities were made to live in inadequate houses, too far out of town with bad transport, expensive local shops, nowhere to work and nothing to do in their spare time

In a survey made for the task force by the Direct Action Group, most responses were negative

Of the houses themselves, people complained that they "did not know the problems", that the house they had bought was "not the same as the show-house", that they couldn't afford payments and that they had "no real choice"

Officials maintain that conditions were clearly explained to buyers, saying that initially there was a rush for housing in Delft.

Last year, many complaints about the construction of the houses were passed on to auhorities, with allegations that the houses were damp in winter and that walls were cracking.

The task force said the biggest problem was the "suburban" nature of Delft, in which "residents had neither residential privacy and private outdoor space associated with suburbia, nor the convenience and cost savings associated with more urban conditions"

"It is the worst of both possible worlds," said the report.

"Population density was so low that adequate levels of commercial and social facilities would be impossible to generate," said the report

High-rise, high-density housing closer to the city was the real answer, it implied

However, the official attitude is that surveys made before the project was started found that "people wanted to live on the ground

Doctors exploring ways to back government plan

B/Day 25/7/94

KATHRYN STRACHAN

PRIVATE doctors are exploring ways to help the public health sector provide free services to pregnant mothers and children under the age of six in line with government's new health plan.

In an attempt to relieve the burden on already overextended state facilities, Medical Association of SA (Masa) spokesman Dr Ivan McCusker said experts in health care management had been commissioned to develop practical proposals for these services to be provided by private doctors as well.

According to Wits University's Centre for Health Policy, almost 60% of doctors in SA were in the private sector

Masa planned to present its recommendations to Health Minister Nkosazana Zuma next month

The organisation believes GPs' involvement should be both voluntary and affordable to government

McCusker said the recent implementation of free medical care for pregnant mothers and children under the age of six, who were not covered by medical aid, showed signs of overwhelming a system which was already overburdened and inadequately staffed.

He believed the adequate provision of medical care could only be provided to the disadvantaged sector of the population with the assistance and co-operation of doctors in the private sector.

Private GPs, working from their consulting rooms, would form the basis of the plan.

These GPs would probably be those not already involved in providing service to the state in the form of session-holding or part-time district surgeons

Specialist and hospital services could be provided from a number of sources, depending on available capacity, he said.

Various payment options were recommended, and both the mechanisms and level of payment had to be seen as the medical profession's pro deo contribution to the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), said McCusker.

This plan would be financed by the RDP and private donations — if they were available The feasibility of establishing a trust fund to support the payments would also be studied.

McCusker said Masa was currently assessing health care resources and evaluating the manpower and financial implications of the plan in order to present government with a meaningful proposal.

Housing scheme at 'critical' stage

EDWARD WEST

CAPE TOWN — Representatives of a consortium of local authorities, community groups and political parties will meet Western Cape government officials tomorrow to discuss a proposed R500m housing scheme on the Cape Flats B Day

The scheme's project manager Colin Appleton said at the weekend the plan — to provide houses and serviced sites to 36 000 families — had reached a critical stage 25/7/94

Most land identified by the scheme had been acquired and was in the hands of local or provincial authorities or the national housing board

But agreement on funding through the provincial authority was vital if the project was to get off the ground

"Our concern is that funding will spin out too late and people will lose confidence in the project," Appleton said The issue would be raised at the meeting with provincial housing minister Gerald Morkel (124)

The project hopes to attract squatter families in Crossroads and its environs, backyard shack dwellers in Guguletu, Nyanga and Langa as well as those not catered for in hostels conversion projects.

Appleton said some "social compacts" — required in terms of the government subsidy scheme to ensure that communities were involved during implementation — still had to be finalised

Delft residents in placard demo

Political Staff (124) ARG 26/7/94

ABOUT 60 irate people from Eindhoven, Delft, held a placard demonstration in front of parliament gates today and demanded to see Housing Minister Joe Slovo

Some said they wanted proper houses because they were sick of living in poorly built cold houses which flooded in wet weather

They also claimed that this week two babies had died of TB because of the housing conditions.

The residents' protest comes after scores of houses in Eindhoven were damaged in heavy rain a month ago

A government investigation condemned the shoddy workmanship of the houses and also promised to improve them

In drizzle today, the residents danced and chanted "Slovo, we don't have roofs" and "Slovo, my toilet is my home".

Others carried placards which read "Sick promises cause pain"

Abe Swarts of Eindhoven Crisis Committee said the residents wanted the authorities to act

"We aren't prepared to stay in such messy condition any more we want the government to give us proper houses as they promised."

Housing delegates meet today

(124) CT 26/7/94

By CHRIS BATEMAN
Political Staff

TOP delegates from the local housing industry, township communities and political parties will today discuss a proposed R500 million housing project with Western Cape Housing Minister Mr Gerald Morkel

The manager of what is being called the Serviced Land Project (SLP) Mr Colin Appleton yesterday expressed fears that unless "substantial funding" was provided "fairly quickly", further "land invasions" could occur

He explained that cleared land being prepared for site and service sites was often occupied by house-hungry shack dwellers, complicating any further progress

The aim of the project is to provide houses and serviced sites to 32 000 of the most deprived Peninsula families

The SLP aims to cater for 26 distinct communities involving 36 projects and upgrading 8 236 sites with 21 356 smaller sites part of a phased "greenfield" project to cater for "overflow" people not accommodated in upgrading

Among the communities targeted are Greater Crossroads, Driftsands, Millers Camp, KTC, Delft and backyard dwellers in Guguletu, Nyanga and Langa

Delft's wooden house option

By CHRIS BATEMAN
Political Staff

WOODEN bungalows will almost certainly be erected on the properties of storm-damaged Eindhoven Estate homes in Delft after a crisis meeting there today between angry residents and provincial housing director Mr James Slabbert

This follows a march yesterday on provincial and national housing offices in Cape Town by the Eindhoven crisis committee (ECC) to demand that "politicians find us decent accommodation"

A month after the June 26 gale blew roofs off 18 homes and damaged another 100, repairs on the homes have yet to begin

The impasse is a direct result of independent and conflicting recommendations in probes commissioned first by provincial Housing Minister Mr Gerald Morkel and then by his national counterpart, Mr Joe Slovo

Provincial housing media spokesman Mr Sam Dodgen said the wooden bungalows were single-roomed and 18 metres square and his department was considering including their cost in the eventual housing package CT 27/7/94 (124)

W Cape farm housing unacceptable — Kriel

CT 27/7/94 By BARRY STREEK
Political Staff

(124)

THE condition of housing for farmworkers and their families on many farms in the Western Cape had not yet achieved acceptable modern standards, Western Cape Premier Mr Hernus Kriel said yesterday

"We must actually admit this," he said in the city at the annual congress of the Western Cape Agricultural Union

Mr Kriel said the provincial government did not want to shift the problem to farmers alone

Housing boss apologises

Political Staff (124)

THE leader of the Slovo Commission probe into the storm-damaged Eindhoven housing project, Mr Bev Mitchell, yesterday apologised to the community for the month-long delay in setting up temporary wooden homes for them

Although his task force, which was highly critical of the project, has now disbanded, members travelled with provincial housing director Mr James Slabbert and other provincial officials yesterday to brief the Delft community

● Housing ills — Page 6 CT 28/7/94

'All I want to do now is get out and into my own place'

ARG 29/7/94 (124)

PIETER MALAN, Staff Reporter

IN Orinoco Street, Eindhoven, Henry Engelbrecht busies himself with paving the "stoep" in front of his corrugated iron shack.

A few metres from the shack is the shell of what was his mother's home before the roof collapsed during last month's storm that blew off 25 roofs in the area.

Many of Mr Engelbrecht's neighbours sought shelter in his backyard shack to escape from the gale-force wind and pelting rain during the horrifying night of June 26 and 27

"Even this shack is better built than those houses."

Ironically his efforts to pave the stoep in front of his shack, using broken bricks from damaged houses in the street, is also the only major "repair" work in progress

About two weeks ago efforts to start repairing the houses were stopped by homeowners who were adamant that they want the houses to be demolished and built from scratch.

"How can you put a new roof on rotten walls," asked Lavona Felix, deputy chairperson of the Eindhoven Housing Crisis Committee.

Resident André Philander, compared the houses in Eindhoven and the horse stables at Milnerton.

"Both our houses and the horse stables were built with the same kind of concrete block, so why are the stables dry inside when it rains? I'll tell you why — these houses were shabbily built."

Mr Philander is one of 27 homeless families who has stayed in the Delft Community Hall for the past month

"After four weeks of staying here, all I want to do now is get out and into my own place again," said Mr Philander.

The communal kitchen area is on the stage

Crisis Committee chairman Michael Roman was busy making himself something to eat.

He said the latest plan was to get each family a wooden house that could be erected in backyards.

"The idea is that you then stay in this wooden house until your own house is ready, but you must pay R3 500 for the house"

After this became known other Delft residents — whose houses had not been damaged in the storm — said they also wanted wooden houses for their backyards

"The political in-fighting in Delft must stop now," said Mr Roman

Mr Roman said the issue had become a political football between the African National Congress and the National Party.

"Parties must stop scoring political points — those who lost houses during the storm must be helped first"

R1,2-bn housing project for Flats

(124) ARG 29/7/94

CLIVE SAWYER and
MICHAEL MORRIS
Political Correspondents

A R1,2 billion project to provide sites for 36 000 Cape Flats families within five years has been announced

The serviced land project has been on the drawing board for about four years but has been delayed several times by difficulty in securing community agreement

Serviced sites will be provided for low-income families in Philippi, Crossroads, KTC, Miller's Camp, Brown's Farm, Driftsands, Weltevreden Valley and Langa.

Western Cape Housing Minister Gerald Morkel said the provincial government had R200 million to kick-start the project and was confident of securing the remainder of the money from the RDP fund, other government departments and the private sector

The project, preparations for which began in 1991, will be a key element of the Western Cape's contribution to the RDP

Work on infrastructure has started

The project is scheduled for completion in March 1999

Facilitators of the project have been working for months to broker an agreement between groups ranging from squatter leaders to private landowners and provincial authorities

While talks have stalled more than once since the project was first mooted, good progress has been made since the election

Mr Morkel was given the go-ahead to announce the project at a cabinet meeting on Wednesday

Large parts of the cost of the project will be taken up by development of infrastructure

Installation of services, drainage and electricity will cost about R706 million

Community facilities, including halls, libraries, schools and clinics, will cost about R592 million

The green light for the project is a ray of hope for communities hard-hit by winter flooding on the Flats

The project will be regarded as part of the Western Cape's contribution to reconstruction and development

Provincial sources said National Housing Minister Joe Slovo had backed the project

Delft: Morkel threatens court interdict

(124)

MICHAEL MORRIS
Political Correspondent
and PIETER MALAN
Staff Reporter

ARG 29/7/94

WESTERN Cape Housing Minister Gerald Morkel warned today that if anyone tried again to stop repairs to storm-damaged Delft houses he would seek a court interdict "or get the police out there"

Mr Morkel said he had ordered repair teams back to Delft for the third time today

Previous attempts had been met with resistance from residents who insisted they wanted new, and not merely repaired, houses

Now he was determined to see the houses were repaired

"At the end of the day, I have to take the final responsibility I will not allow our contractors to be prevented from getting in there"

Any attempt to stop them would be met with a court interdict or police action

He added "If I had been allowed to go ahead and repair the houses, people would have been back in their homes weeks ago"

Mr Morkel disclosed that the repairs were being done by "one or two" contractors, including the one who had built the houses

Initially, four contractors responded to tenders for the repairs They agreed, in talks, to work together, but after residents resisted their efforts, some pulled out

Residents have urged Western Cape Premier Hernus Kriel to visit Delft to see how little has been done to alleviate their plight

"We voted for him — he must help us now," said Eindhoven Housing Crisis Committee chairman Michael Roman

Twenty-seven families who lost their homes are still squatting in the Delft community hall — more than four weeks after the disaster

Kick-start for Cape housing

SUCCULENT SNOEK Fishermen made good catches of snoek this week and prices dropped from about R16 to about R9,50 at Kalk Bay yesterday Seen at Hout Bay are fishermen Mr David Du Plessis (left) and Mr Harold Lanaga Picture CLIVE SMITH

36 000 new homes for poor

(124)
CT 29/7/94

By CHRIS BATEMAN and ANDRE KOOPMAN

LOW-COST housing in the Western Cape will get an R1,8 billion kick-start today when the Serviced Land Project (SLP) aimed at providing 36 000 homes for the "poorest of the poor", is launched.

Western Cape Housing Minister Mr Gerald Morkel is expected to launch the project

The revolutionary SLP headed by development consultant Mr Colin Appleton, involves erecting low cost housing units and self help assistance on prepared sites for squatters

Mr Appleton would not comment on the project last night, saying he did not want to pre empt the minister's statement

The greater Cape Town area's massive housing backlog has been exacerbated by differences between home hungry township supporters of the ANC, PAC and NP, which have all but frozen local housing development for the past five years

In terms of the now scrapped Coloured Labour Preference Policy and influx control regulations the NP government refused to build homes for Africans

This led to huge squatter settlements inhabited by migrants mainly from Transkei and Ciskei

These commnities are now in line to benefit from the project They include settlements at Brown's Farm, Miller s Camp, Old Crossroads and KTC, Black City, Lusaka, Delft, Khayelitsha and Langa

The project is designed to run until March 1999 but may exten beyond this if unexpected problems crop up

The SLP was developed in the last three years It is a coalition of community groups and public authorities across the Peninsula

The most difficult work has een in forming social compacts" to ensure that each of the project s myriad schemes is acceptable to its community

Today's announcement is expected to include improvements to the project, which until early this year provided for ownership f serviced sites on which people could erect their own dwellings and improve them

Besides houses the project includes day hospitals, creches, primary and high schools and community centres

Building and site preparation is expected to begin within weeks

● National Housing Minister Mr Joe Slovo was recently involved in a bitter power struggle with PWV Premier Mr Tokyo Sexwale over housing in that province and it was expected that a similar situation could develop in the NP-controlled Western Cape

Canvassed

However ANC housing experts said last night they did not want to make housing for the poor a political football

But it was felt that Mr Morkel would attempt to extract maximum political mileage over the development, especially since he received a drubbing from Mr Slovo recently over the Delft housing fiasco

Mr Basil Davidson vice chairman of the Regional Housing Board and prominent ANC member said last night that he believed it was time to "push ahead" with the scheme

It was the result of a ' long negotiated process' which had been intensively" canvassed at grassroots level

1,8-bn plan for housing in the Cape

Star 29/7/94

■ OWN CORRESPONDENT

Cape Town — A R1,8 billion project to provide housing for 36 000 Cape Flats families within five years was announced today

The serviced land project has been on the drawing board for about four years but has been delayed by difficulty in securing community agreement

Basic starter houses will be provided for low-income families in informal settlements in Philippi and former Ikapa administration areas

Included in the first phases of the project will be the building of 698 houses in lower Crossroads and 434 in Miller's Camp

Provincial Housing Minister Gerald Morkel was given the go-ahead at a cabinet meeting on Wednesday to announce the project, which should be completed in March 1999. (124)

The green light for the project is a ray of hope for communities hard-hit by winter flooding on the Flats.

Health disaster 'waiting to happen'

Sowetan 29/7 - 2/8/94

By Shannon Neill

"THEY should just put a roof over the whole of Delft and proclaim it a TB area," were the words of a resident who believes the damp, mouldy houses are a health disaster waiting to happen

Last week Red Cross medics monitoring people staying at the Delft civic centre said most of the children and many adults had chest infections and cold and damp related illnesses.

Ms Sylvia Adams moved into her house six days before many of her neighbours' homes were destroyed in the storms She's not sure if she's lucky her home survived the storms

"The house leaks so badly that last night I had to empty the buckets four times Water pours in between the roof and the top of the wall It's like a waterfall

"At night I'm too scared to sleep What if the roof lifts? I have small children in the house," she said

Her nine-year-old son Adrian has not attended school because of chest complaints after the rain A six-year-old child, who is in her care, has been sick since they moved in

Mr Leslie Maree and his wife, Katrina, moved to Delft three months ago The leaks in the roof force them to sleep with two tubs on their bed to catch the water that pours through the roof

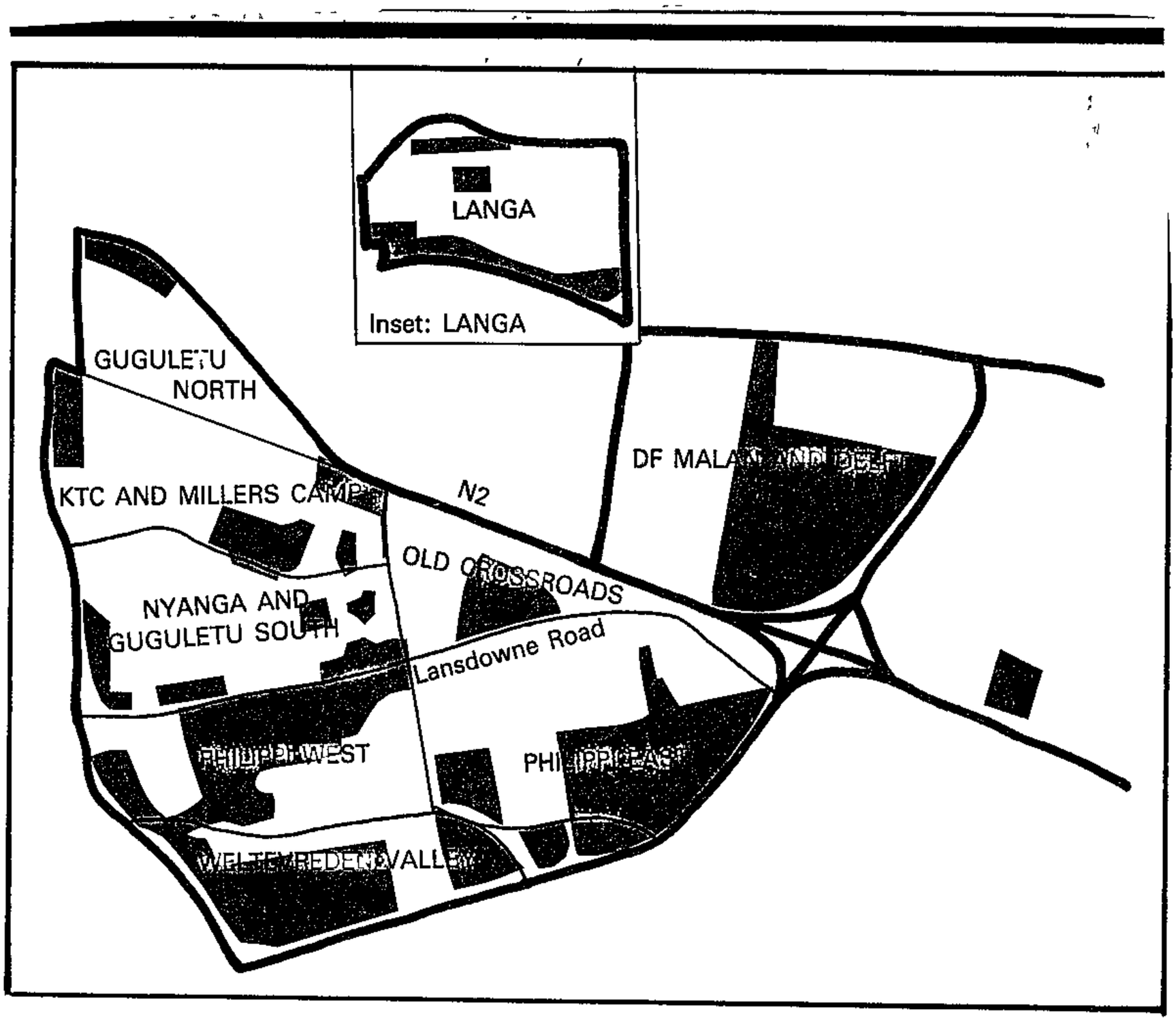
HEALTH HAZARD: Leslie Maree empties basins of water while his wife Katrina sleeps in their damp bed

"We can't move the bed because then we'd have to climb over it to get to the toilet (124)

"The ceiling is wet and the house is cold This place is so unhealthy they might as well put a TB hospital up here in Delft," he said

He took a loan for R31 000 for the house His house cost about R15 000 He does not know where the balance of R16 000, meant for community development, has gone

"There sure isn't any sign of a community here," he said



UPGRADE . . The R1,23-billion Serviced Land Project to revamp the Peninsula's townships is due for completion in five years It will include 36 000 serviced sites, shown here in red.
Courtesy of HOLISTIC SETTLEMENTS

Subsidies for site owners

CT 30/7/94 (124)

By CHRIS BATEMAN
Political Staff

MORE than 7 000 owners of serviced township sites are in line to qualify for a R5 000 "topping up" subsidy from late September, Mr Colin Appleton, project manager of the Peninsula's R1,23-billion housing scheme, disclosed yesterday.

He also said that half of 30 crucial township Resident Development Committees (RDCs) in the newly boosted Serviced Land Project (SLP) were already in place, allowing site and service provision to begin

Mr Appleton said 7 061 people who qualified under the former government's subsidy scheme now stood to benefit from the new R12 500 income-related subsidy

This translated into a R5 000 "topping up" for residents in Lower Crossroads, Millers Camp (1 and 2), KTC (1 and 2A), Brown's Farm (Villages 2,3 and 4), Driftsands and Tambo Square

Mr Appleton said National Housing Minister Mr Joe Slovo was expected to make an announcement on the R5 000 "topping up" in late September

Logjam

The entire R1,23bn Serviced Land Project aims to provide 36 000 Peninsula sites by March 1999, eight years after initiation

The scheme includes 31 community halls, 18 sports fields, six libraries, 10 advice centres, 27 pre-schools, 178 primary schools, 134 secondary schools, 162 hospitals, 19 community health centres and seven clinics

At a press conference to outline how the "logjam" had been loosened in low-cost housing provision, Provincial Housing Minister Mr Gerald Morkel said R200m was immediately available to "kick-start" the SLP

The project, the biggest ever undertaken in the Western Cape, had been "carefully calculated and costed — this is not pie in the sky," he said.

He warned against creating high squatter expectations.

The project was income-driven and 40% of squatters were jobless

Mr Appleton said earthworks were nearly complete in Philippi East, structure planning had been done in Weltevreden Valley and advertisements placed for bulk earthworks in Southern Delft

Cape to implement R1,3bn housing plan

EDWARD WEST

CAPE TOWN — The R1,3bn housing programme for disadvantaged communities in Cape Flats squatter areas would constitute a major part of the province's reconstruction and development plans, Western Cape housing minister Gerald Morkel said at the weekend

Announcing the programme, Morkel said a recent study showed that the housing shortage in the region amounted to 181 000 family units Unemployment was about 40%, which would limit the ability of many to build houses under the national capital subsidy scheme

Stellenbosch-based Medium Term Forecasting Associates (MFA), which conducted research in the construction industry, said the project would boost ailing low-income housing construction activity in the Cape

Activity in the only other project of significance in the Cape, the Delft housing project, had tapered off, MFA director Johan Snyman said

Morkel said the project, based on the Serviced Land Project initiated in 1991, was viewed as a priority by the national government and financial assistance would be sought from the special RDP fund

Implementation of the project, which aimed to provide serviced sites and houses to 36 000 families, would proceed immediately B/Day

The project was only part of the RDP strategy for the whole province, and other projects, such as the establishment of a community bank, would complement existing projects

About R200m had already been committed, which project manager Colin Appleton said would tide the project over for the next year to 18 months The cost of land, planning, infrastructure and the residual values of capital subsidies amounted to R706m. 118194

The cost of the holistic elements to the scheme, including community halls, sportsfields, libraries, schools and housing resource and advice centres, amounted to R592m.

The province would take primary responsibility for implementing the project (124)

Construction work tenders would be called for, also bearing in mind the need to build capacity among community-based contractors, Appleton said.

Bungalows for Delft families

(124) CT 1/8/94

Staff Reporter

THE erection of 27 wooden bungalows to accommodate hundreds of Delft residents left homeless after the recent flooding will begin on Thursday

Western Cape Minister of Housing spokesman Mr Sam Dodgen said yesterday that three 18m² Wendy houses would be erected every day The houses would cost R3 500 each, he added

He said homeless people, whose houses had been badly damaged in the storms and who were being accommodated in the Delft Community Hall, would be allowed to move into the bungalows as they were completed

They would later move back into their own homes once they had been repaired

He said they had already received four tenders to repair the fewer than 50 houses at Delft damaged in the storm Others which had not been badly damaged had already been repaired

At present only 27 houses of the 7 000 were uninhabitable, he said

Experts inspect damage to homes in Delft

(124)

ARG 3/8/94

PIETER MALAN
Staff Reporter

A TEAM of housing experts has started inspecting houses in Delft to determine what repairs are needed to houses damaged in a storm almost six weeks ago

A spokesman for the Western Cape Minister of Housing, Sam Dodgen, said yesterday the inspections started on Monday and "workers from the four building contractors will follow close on their heels to start repairs"

But during a visit to Delft yesterday it was evident no repair work had yet been done — except for the efforts of one family to secure their rattling asbestos roof in a stiff south-easter

Kanita Essop's home was one of the Eindhoven houses damaged in the storm, but because the damage was not major she could stay on while waiting for the repair teams

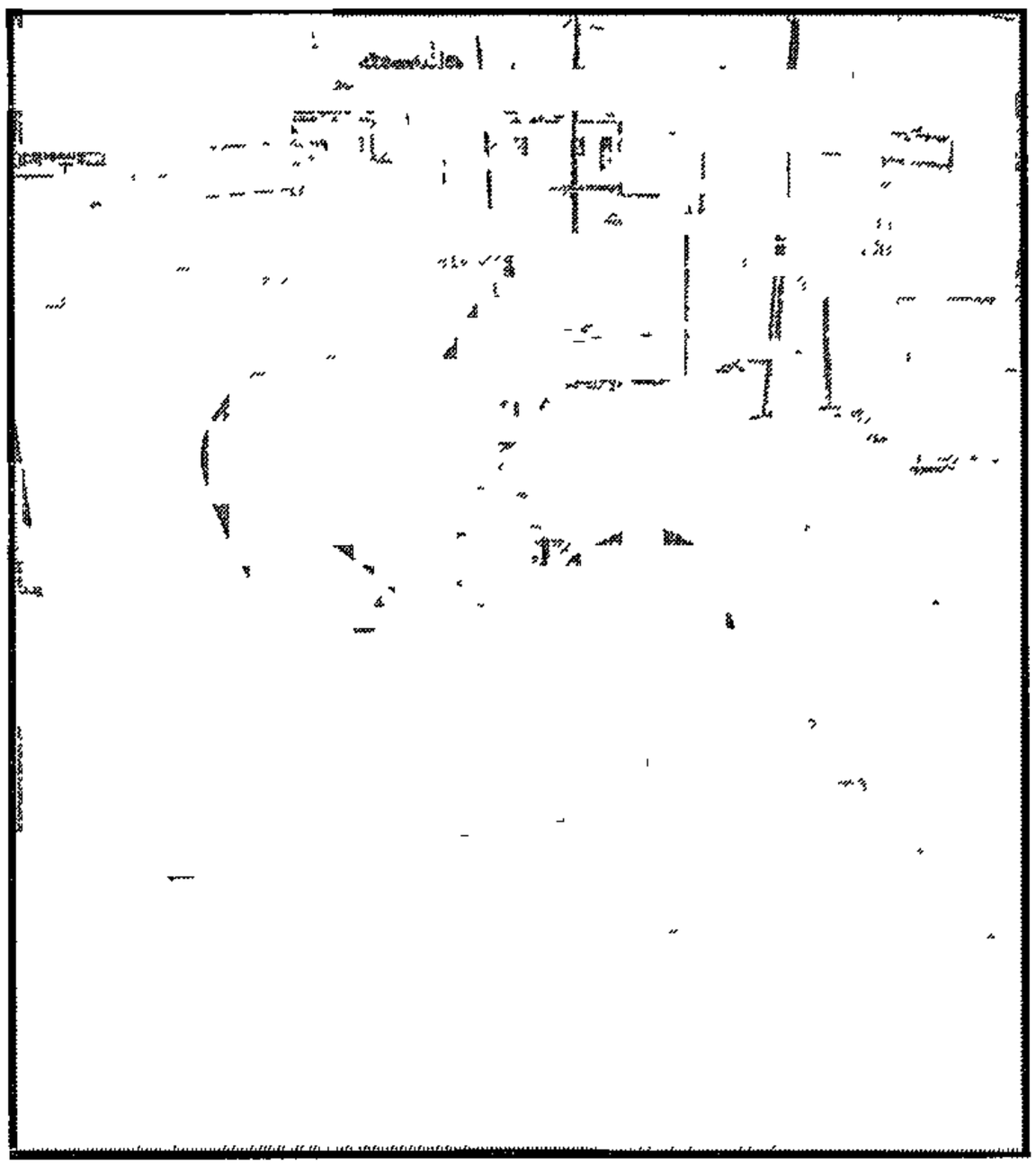
But almost six weeks after the disaster they had not yet arrived and Mrs Essop — fearing another storm might lift the roof from the rafters — was filling black refuse bags with sand to place on the roof yesterday

Earlier efforts to repair the houses were bogged down by residents who insisted their houses be replaced

Last week Western Cape Housing Minister Gerald Morkel warned that he would seek a court interdict if anyone tried to halt the repair work again

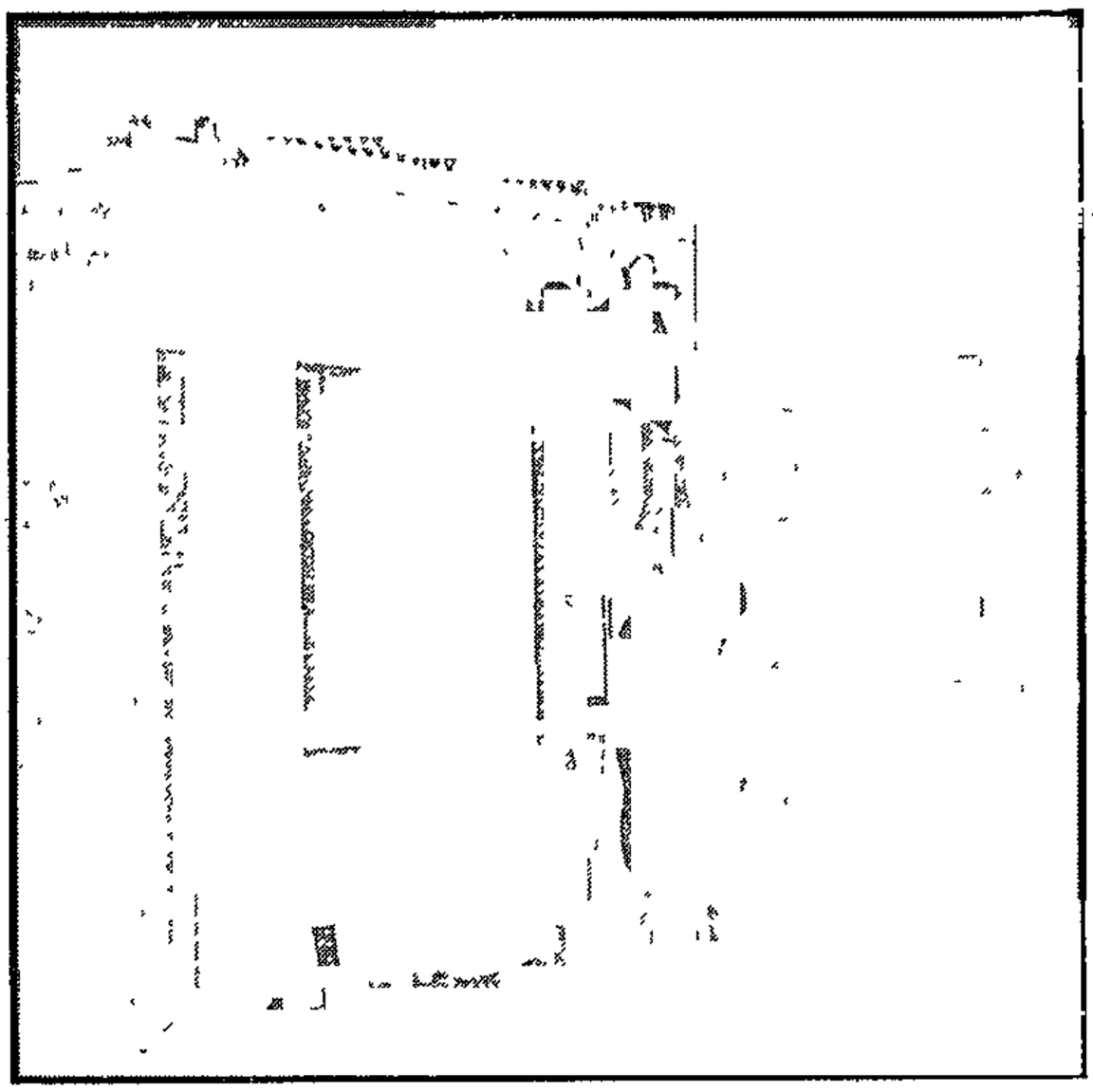
Yesterday Eindhoven Housing Crisis Committee chairman Michael Roman said they had finally agreed to accept the repaired houses

Wendy houses will be built in the back yards of the damaged structures and homeowners squatting in the Delft Community Hall will start moving in from tomorrow when the first ones become available



FIDDLING ON THE ROOF: Majtie Essop places black refuge bags filled with sand on the roof to hold down loose asbestos sheets

Pictures PIETER MALAN, The Argus



EMERGENCY REPAIRS: Kanita Essop and a few helpers do some emergency repairs to their Delft home

Delft row still rages

South SB - 9/8/94

By Shannon Neill

CONTROVERSY remains around the Delft houses despite statements by the office of housing minister Mr Gerald Morkel, that it has been sorted out

Chairperson of the President's Task Group, Mr Bev Mitchell, said there was agreement that urgent interim measures be acted upon

He denied the task group and national housing minister Mr Joe Slovo had agreed that houses which collapsed in the storm should be repaired as a final solution, as claimed by Morkel's office

"We agreed that all the structures on the site must be made safe and the people living in the Delft Community Hall must be housed

"No other recommendations have been decided upon," Mitchell said (124)

Spokesperson for Morkel, Mr Sam Dodgen, said those residents who had been accommodated in wooden huts would have an option to buy them once their houses are repaired

"If they don't want them the huts wil be stored for another emergency"

Council wants R12-m for power

124

LENORE OLIVER
Staff Reporter

ARG 8/8/94

THE Cape Town city council has asked the government for R12 million to upgrade the electrical network in Guguletu and Langa, while 80 percent of households in these areas are responsible for electricity account arrears of R21 million

At the moment an upgrade is in progress in Langa to supply electricity to residents who do not have it at present and to provide secure supplies to those consumers whose supply is regularly interrupted due to overloading

City electrical engineer Fred Berwyn-Taylor said the bad state of the electrical network in Guguletu and Langa was attributable to political unrest which made it dangerous for maintenance and development teams to work in these areas

At the same time continued vandalism was taking its toll

Mr Berwyn-Taylor was reacting to a letter from a Guguletu resident who complained about frequent power failures

"The high level of non-payment of accounts has resulted in an arrears amount of R21 million for these areas Only 20 percent of consumers are not in arrears," Mr Berwyn-Taylor said

He said the upgrading programme was being carried out in close liaison with the community and a marketing campaign had been launched to bring the council's subsidised electricity connection policy to the notice of prospective consumers

For the installation of a prepayment meter and "ready board" (comprising three plugs, points and a light) consumers pay R35

"Local people are employed for the installation of new cables, thereby providing some relief for the unemployed in the area"

Mr Berwyn-Taylor said R12 million had been requested under the government's Reconstruction and Development Programme to upgrade the electrical system in Langa and Guguletu

"Until such time as these funds become available the electricity department is utilising its own funds for the (upgrading) programme"

Any electricity problems can be directed to the electricity department depot ☎ 637 1240

Auditor will probe schemes at Driftsands

(124)

CT 9/8/74

Political Staff

AN independent auditor is to check allegations of mismanagement or fraud in community fund-raising schemes initiated under Driftsands leader and provincial MP Mr Johnson Ngxobongwana

Announcing this yesterday, Police Services Minister Mr Patrick McKenzie said the appointment had been approved in principle by a cross-party committee set up to defuse violence in the area

With another (unoccupied) home set alight late on Friday, the tally of gutted homes in Mr Ngxobongwana's Driftsands stronghold over the past 23 days now stands at 30

Mr McKenzie said a police/community forum was essential and he had asked that the community hold elections for a separate committee Members have traditionally been appointed by Mr Ngxobongwana, a former Witdoek leader

"We've also moved the new mobile police station to a neutral site (at the camp entrance) and removed resident special constables who were patrolling the area, replacing them with outside men," he said

A nine-person conflict resolution committee comprising equal numbers of PAC, ANC and NP members is being consulted on Driftsands issues

Minister in call to scrap arrears

(124)

CT 11/8/94

Municipal Reporter

A MORATORIUM on prosecutions for rent and service charge arrears ought to be considered, Western Cape Minister of Local Government Mr Peter Marais said yesterday

He was responding to representations made to him by Sanco, Cahac, National Party branch members, the Joint Civics Associations and others, that service arrears should be scrapped within the Cape Town City Council and RSC areas

Arrears amount to well over R100 million

In suburbs which used to have black local authorities, arrears accumulated prior to January 20 have already been scrapped Now activists are lobbying to have this extended to include coloured areas and black areas served by white local authorities

Mr Charles Basson, of the SA National Civics Organisation (Sanco) in the Western Cape, said his organisation had had a very successful meeting with Mr Marais on Monday

Sanco had pushed for the scrapping of all arrears from the apartheid era

Mr Basson and Mr Basil Nefdt of Sanco said Mr Marais had agreed that guidelines should be negotiated with regard to scrapping the arrears, and that in the meantime there should be a moratorium on all evictions and legal action against residents who were in arrears

Present legal action should be cancelled, they said, and those in prison on charges relating to such debts should be released

The moratorium should also apply to the RSC and Cape Town City Council areas

City treasurer Mr Eddie Landsberg said he agreed that the matter had to be discussed in order to avoid inequities

Council and residents heading for clash

BY SABATA NGCAI

RESIDENTS will reconnect their electricity as soon as the Cape Town City Council disconnects it, civic associations warned.

The resolution was passed at a mass meeting of civics last week.

Spokesperson for the Athlone District Civic Association, Mr Errol Davids, said the council failed to honour its side of an agreement reached with residents last year. Southeaster

He said it was agreed that residents would pay off their current electricity account and pay R10 a month on their electricity arrears.

"The city council now disconnects electricity and demands people pay more than half of their arrears before it can be reconnected," Mr Davids said. (124)

"Even if people manage to pay, the council takes time to reconnect."

Last week the council warned that consumers who paid their accounts after due dates will have the supply disconnected.

The council said it was a criminal offence for consumers to reconnect electricity and threatened to take legal action against them

It also threatened to remove cabling from premises, which would result in extra costs for which consumer will be liable

Mr Davids said if the council decided to take legal action, the residents will also take legal action against it for breach of agreement. (Suppl- to South)

He accused the council of being insensitive to the plight of residents "Many people get disability grants or old age pension and therefore cannot afford to pay their arrears in full," Mr Davids said.

Residents also resolved to march to the city council offices to highlight their plight 1218 - 16/8/94

Mr Davids said people want to tell the council that "they will not pay R10 rent increase while living in slums"

The date for the march is still to be decided

Clampdown on power bills

(124) CT 12/8/94

Staff Reporter

IN a shock move, the City Council has begun cutting off electricity for non-payment of accounts a mere two weeks after the due date.

Previously it was possible to "roll over" or delay paying an electricity account by a month, but now the council is up to date in its disconnection programme and a whole new set of those who do not pay on time are being caught.

Electricity department sources said yesterday it has only been within the past month or so that people have had their supplies cut off just two weeks after the due date shown on the account.

The one-month "period of grace" on payments — which people have come to rely on — had never been official council policy, said deputy city treasurer Mr Ron Grace yesterday.

Mr Grace said it had been com-

No more 'one month grace'

mon for people to "roll over" their electricity accounts, by ignoring them for a month and then paying the arrears on a new bill.

In this way, they would in effect get a month's worth of credit from the council.

"Basically the policy is that we can disconnect any day after the due date," he said.

Two weeks after the due date of one bill, the next bill was formulated, Mr Grace said. If the first bill has not been paid the account "falls into the disconnection net".

"A lot of people are pretty shocked," he said.

But he defended the new policy, saying arrears figures which stood at over R50m have recently dropped by R1,5m.

The policy applies to everyone, regardless of where they live or their colour, he said. In the past this was not the case.

Recently caught was Ms Jill Thorne of Mowbray, who wrote to city electrical engineer Mr Fred Berwyn-Taylor saying she was outraged by the way he administered his department.

She had paid her account 13 days late, she conceded, but this was due to irritation at having to pay rates, water and electricity accounts separately. She had received no notification of the impending disconnection, other than the standard warning printed on the bill.

She wanted the council to check whether a bill had been paid, immediately before disconnecting the power supply.

"One expects at least one month's grace," she said.

Driftsands groups meet McKenzie

CT 15/8/94

Political Staff

WESTERN CAPE Police Minister Mr Patrick McKenzie is due to meet delegates from two groups in Driftsands today to discuss a final audit of a residents fund begun in 1991, worth tens of thousands of rands (124)

The fund represents monthly amounts of R15 for water and R25 for electricity, collected from each of hundreds of families over three years

Mr McKenzie said a structure would also be created for a police/community forum to introduce acceptable community policing

At least 30 people fled the strife-torn Driftsands squatter camp on Friday night and refused to budge from the Durbanville police station

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R300m reprieve for civic debtors

CT 16/8/94 (124)

A MORATORIUM on prosecutions to recover about R300 million in unpaid service fees and rentals was announced yesterday by Western Cape Premier Mr Hernus Kriel

"The central government will be approached to contribute to the writing off of rent and service arrears," he said at the opening of the Western Cape Legislature

Mr Kriel said the central government had written off R67m of the so-called black local authorities debt but nothing off the R234m so-called white local authorities debt.

"Brown, white and Asian population groups are still being asked for payments and this is nothing but blatant discrimination," he said

He called on local authorities and regional services councils to immediately impose a moratorium on all prosecutions for service arrears, retrospective to January this year, and to suspend all jail sentences already imposed

They should try to collect all debts incurred thereafter

He reassured local authorities that he was engaged in urgent talks with the central government for financial support.

Mr Kriel appealed to consumers to accept their civil responsibility and to start paying

"Non-payment can no longer be a political tool for change"

Mr Kriel's statement was not supported by local officials last night.

Cape Town city treasurer Mr Eddie Landsberg said a moratorium would not help matters, while RSC treasurer Mr Philip Schenck would not confirm whether the RSC would write off service arrears

"Our council's position is that we ourselves cannot write off anything, because we only work as agents for local authorities," Mr Schenck said

"It should be the decision of each local authority concerned"

● Cape plans White Paper on RDP — Page 2

Service arrears may be written off - Keegan

(124) ARG 16/8/94

SHARON SOROUR
Municipal Reporter

THE Cape Town city council is prepared to negotiate the writing off of service arrears with the central government "at the earliest opportunity", says executive committee chairman Clive Keegan.

Mr Keegan was responding to a call by regional premier Hernus Kriel yesterday for local authorities to put a moratorium on service fee arrears

Opening the Western Cape parliament, Mr Kriel said the central government had agreed to absorb the cost of the R67 million arrears owed to black local authorities

Mr Kriel said it would be "blatant discrimination" if the R234 million arrears owed to white local authorities were not written off as well, and the central government would be asked to write off the sums

He asked city and town councils to put an immediate moratorium on prosecutions of defaulters who were in arrears for service fees up to and including January 1994

Mr Keegan said if the central government was prepared to "make good any losses — which means the ratepayers of Cape Town don't pick up the tab", the city council would negotiate "at the earliest opportunity"

But he said it would be "grossly unfair to expect Cape Town ratepayers — of any colour — to pay for the writing off of service charges

He said it was "all very well to write off arrears", but the council's water arrears were paid to the Department of Water Affairs.

Cape Times

ARG 16/8/94 (124)

housing for the poor

R8m for Guguletu project • District Six rebuilding starts in January

CLIVE SAWYER and ANDREA WEISS, Staff Reporters

HOMES for Cape Town's homeless and dispossessed are a step closer with an R8,1 million housing project for the people of Tambo Square and the rebuilding of District Six starting in January.

Building of 650 houses at Tambo Square in Guguletu starts on Thursday after the community raised a total of R120 000 towards their first homes

Housing minister Gerald Morkel's announcement of the Tambo Square project in the provincial parliament today marks the end of years of struggle by the community to get their own homes.

And in an announcement marking the end of the "windswept wasteland" of apartheid, premier Hernus Kriel told the provincial parliament "District Six must go back to its people."

Not all the land required was in state hands "This has delayed us and my proposal is to do the redevelopment in phases," said Mr Kriel

The cost of redevelopment will be about R50 million, of which R20 million will be needed for the first year.

A report submitted to the central government asking for funds said the project would mean provision of high density, low-rise, affordable inner-city housing and community facilities for those who had been socially, politically and economically disadvantaged

"The project aims to contribute to restructuring the city and to redress social injustices by providing housing close to the centre of Cape Town," said the report

It was not known how long construction would take.

The project was widely supported as a result of years of negotiations between the authorities, the community and former residents of District Six, the report said

The new Housing Company Western Cape chief executive officer, John Weaver, said that while it was highly desirable to develop District Six, the January date sounded "very optimistic" given the difficulties in providing affordable housing.

There were also other issues, such as people who had been removed from District Six who were seeking restitution

● Announcing the Tambo Square project, Mr Morkel said the regional housing board had approved the development project, which will be overseen by Cape Utility Homes, a non-profit organisation

Services to the value of R1,9 million were already in place, including water reticulation, sewage pipes, stormwater drains and roads.

The project also makes provision for nine business erven, 17 public and communal erven and 10 erven for parks and streets.

Small loans as well as mortgage loans will be provided by Future Bank, Community Bank, Khayalethu Home Loans, Standard Bank and First National Bank, Mr Morkel said

Job creation and employment would be the cornerstone of the development

The Tambo Square community consists of families who were hounded in the early 1980s from KTC, where they built their shacks at night and dismantled them in the morning

They later lost their homes in the violence that tore Crossroads apart in 1986 and again in 1988 when they moved to waterlogged land which they named Tambo Square, opposite the Guguletu Day Hospital.

After the mothers of the community staged a five-day sit-in at the CPA offices in 1990 the authorities promised R1 million towards housing and land was allocated in November that year

OPPOSED ... Brentwood Park Ratepayers' Association chairman Mr Willem Burger, in a tracksuit, last night told followers of ousted Driftsands leader Mr Johnson Ngxobongwana that residents are opposed to their squatting nearby. Picture CLIVE SMITH

CT 16/8/94 (124)

Driftsands: Tense stand-off

By WILLEM STEENKAMP

CONFRONTATION last night between residents of Brentwood Park, Blue Downs, and followers of ousted Driftsands leader Mr Johnson Ngxobongwana, who have been settled nearby, was deferred last night after residents decided against forcibly removing the squatters

The National Party-supporting squatters, who were last week driven from Driftsands by ANC and PAC supporters, had been housed at Durbanville police station until the weekend, when they were moved to Du Noon at Milnerton

However, ANC- and PAC-supporting factions there opposed their presence, and they were yesterday moved with the help of Durbanville municipality to a spot between the R300 and Brentwood Park.

Last night residents opposing the squatters' presence met and resolved to tell the squatters they were not wanted They did this, and heated exchanges followed

Later, Brentwood Park Ratepayers' Association chairman Mr Willem Burger told the angry residents he would meet Mr Ngxobongwana today and speak to Housing Minister Mr Gerald Morkel on the issue Mr Morkel said last night he had instructed a new site be found today.

"These squatters are not cattle — they are people," Mr Morkel said

Special paying arrangements

CT 16/8/94

Municipal Reporter

WHILE some electricity bill defaulters are cut-off within days of the due date, others run up bills of thousands

A complainant who wished to remain anonymous made these claims yesterday (124)

Asked whether this was true, and how it was possible to get such treatment, council public relations officer Mr Ted Doman said thousands of people who had difficulty paying for large electricity debts had offered to pay by arrangement

These arrangements varied, but one feature that remained constant was that each month's account had to be paid, along with some portion of the arrears

Residents demolish shacks

(124)

CT 17/8/94

By WILLEM STEENKAMP

RESIDENTS of the Blue Downs suburb of Brentwood Park, some armed and others with dogs, last night converged on about 100 Driftsands squatter refugees who had settled nearby and broke down their shacks

The squatters, who were driven from nearby Driftsands last week and whose attempts to settle in Durbanville and Milnerton were thwarted, were settled next to Brentwood Park earlier this week

But some local residents vowed at a meeting on Monday to move the squatters last night if local Housing Minister Mr Gerald Morkel reneged on a promise to move them by then

They started dismantling the shacks about 6 45pm yesterday and removing belongings to a site in Delft

Squatter spokesman Mr Nicholas Galanga said the squatters, although upset at having to move again, were willing to move to the Delft site if they would not again be moved from there

Brentwood Park Ratepayers' Association chairman Mr Willem Burger said residents were taking action, after they were "not allowed" to meet Mr Morkel and Police Minister Mr Patrick MacKenzie

Shortly after the residents began moving the squatters' belongings, NP MP Mr Prince Gobingca arrived and told the residents they would be "very, very sorry" today and their homes and furniture would be taken away from them However, when Mr Gobingca was told the Delft site included access to water and toilets, he said "Oh, that's good" and began chatting to some residents

About 9pm Lieutenant-Colonel Johan Vorster of the internal stability division, accompanied by a string of police vans and a Casspir, arrived After listening to Mr Burger and Mr Galanga, Col Vorster said he could not remove the squatters from the CPA-owned land as police had not received a complaint from the CPA

Col Vorster suggested that residents stop the removals and allow the squatters to stay for the night, and he would "personally" contact Mr Morkel today to resolve the problem

Most of the residents refused to stop the removals and challenged the police to arrest them, but eventually relented on condition that the squatters be removed by 6pm today — or they would again take action

650 families to get houses in Guguletu

(124)

CT 17/8/94

By CHRIS BATEMAN
Political Staff

SOME 650 families living on serviced sites in Tambo Square, Guguletu, are to be provided with homes in an R8,125 million development project, local Housing Minister Mr Gerald Morkel announced yesterday

The project has been initiated by the community, which was founded by refugees from the strife-torn KTC squatter camp in 1988

The community has appointed Cape Utility Homes, a non-profit organisation, to act as agents in fund applications and management after their 41 hectares of land were serviced by the CPA last year at a cost of R1,9m

Also announced yesterday was a proposal to rebuild District Six starting in January

Premier Mr Hernus Kriel told the provincial parliament "District Six must go back to its people"

He said not all the land needed to rebuild the community shattered under apartheid legislation was in state hands, which had delayed the process His proposal was to do the redevelopment in phases

He said the cost of the redevelopment would be about R50m

Plans for Cape Flats next week

CT 19/8/94 (124)

By BARRY STREEK
Political Staff

PLANS for the rebuilding and restoration of Cape Flats townships are to be announced on Monday, Minister without Porfolio Mr Jay Naidoo said yesterday.

He could not give any further details at this stage

Mr Naidoo was approached after President Nelson Mandela said in Parliament that plans had been finalised for the rebuilding and retoring of townships on the East Rand and the Cape Flats, in Duncan Village (East London), Port Elizabeth, Bloemfontein and townships in kwaZulu/Natal

Mr Mandela said the areas of focus would primarily be those affected by violence

"An effort has been made to ensure balanced geographic distribution, while taking into account areas where there are structures to implement the programme .

"The biggest single project to be funded by the RDP is the rehabilitation and extension of municipal services and infrastructure in urban and rural areas," Mr Mandela said

● Mr Naidoo re-affirmed the government's commitment to cutting the budget deficit before borrowing from the expected 6,6% of gross domestic product in fiscal 1994/95

He was commenting on Mr Mandela's 100 days speech to Parliament, which contained no new major economic policy initiatives

Mr Naidoo told reporters that fiscal discipline would take precedence over theRDP

POLITICS

Doomed to drift

Politics turns lives of Driftsands squatters into a nightmare journey

(124) ARGU 18/8/94

National Party MP Johnson Ngxobongwana has warned unless the Driftsands squatter issue is amicably addressed, the resulting conflict could lead to "a second Natal" This week it appeared Mr Ngxobongwana's plea had fallen on deaf ears. **Staff Reporter JOSEPH ARANES** investigates

Pictures OBED ZILWA, The Argus

NEED TO GO: An elderly Driftsands squatter, living in the Blue Downs bush, leaves a meeting to answer a call of nature There are no toilets so the only answer is to dig a hole in the ground with a spade

PROTECTED: Monica Fakela does her washing out in the open at the Driftsands squatter camp while a police Casspir parks in a road separating the squatters from other residents in the area.

POLITICAL intolerance and a lack of decent housing may be the cause of the Driftsands squatters' troubles but finding an acceptable solution seems just as problematic

For the past two months about 350 people, including many children, have had their lives turned upside down because of their political allegiance, without politicians lifting a finger to help

Their troubles started before the elections when, under the leadership of former Witdoek leader and current National Party MP Johnson Ngxobongwana, they moved to Driftsands, a serviced site across the N2 from Khayelitsha.

The site has roads, electricity, water, toilets and a container school but ideological trouble followed the group and soon many of the shacks went up in flames.

Some Pan Africanist Conthe dispute but no solution was found

Subsequently 46 NP supporters' houses were burnt, allegedly by ANC and PAC supporters, and the community was split.

During the past few days the NP-supporting families have been drifting across the Cape Flats like the sands after which their settlement was named.

A spokeswoman for the group, Nozuko Matha, said their problems started about two weeks ago when their gress and African National Congress supporters in Driftsands allege Mr Ngxobongwana and his committee who control the area have misappropriated money they handed him for the building of proper houses

Some residents left the National Party and demanded that a new committee be elected because they felt Mr Ngxobongwana discriminated against non-NP residents.

They marched to the Kuils River police station to report houses were set alight by ANC and PAC supporters who wanted them out.

"We were forced to move to the Bulelani Primary school and lived there under police guard, but the people continued to threaten and insult us so some of us decided to move to open land in Durbanville."

Last Thursday 30 squatters were arrested in Durbanville and spent the night at the police station after trying to set up camp about a kilometre from the town

The next day police escorted them back to Driftsands

Early on Sunday the group moved to the Du Noon site in Milnerton but were given one minute to leave by local community leaders.

Mrs Matha said "It was funny because they were also black people telling us to move"

On Sunday night they moved into the bush next to the R300 opposite Delft and immediately encountered more trouble with the local Brentwood Park Ratepayers' Association

The chairman of the association, Willem Burger, said the problem was not racial but political and had to be resolved by politicians.

"But they are all running away from it and are now making their problems our problems because we must get the people to leave as we can't have them squatting opposite our homes

"The regional housing minister Gerald Morkel said they are not cattle but he has allowed them to be herded around from pillar to post without addressing their problem."

On Tuesday night about 30 residents moved into the bush and tore down the squatters' houses and dumped some of their possessions on an open field in Delft.

Police were called in to stop the residents from forcing the people off the government-owned land but no officials were on hand to resolve the dispute.

Meanwhile, Brentwood Park residents have vowed to have the squatters removed from the bush.

Brentwood Park resident, Mark Paulse, said. "There is no water and there are no toilet facilities. They are knocking on our doors asking for help

"This situation cannot be allowed to carry on and I am sure the government will only act if someone loses a life. But they must take full responsibility if it happens because they are causing a racial conflict here."

But Mrs Matha said the squatters were not prepared to move.

"We are sick and tired of moving from place to place. We want to stay in one place and build our families and community

"We joined the NP and the ANC and PAC threw us out of our homes Although Mr Ngxobongwana said he was fighting for us, we are very confused and don't know who or where to turn to"

New site found for Driftsands refugees

(124)

Staff Reporter

PROBLEMS between squatter refugees from Driftsands and residents of Brentwood Park and Blue Downs were resolved yesterday when a new site for the squatters was found CT 18/8/94

The squatters, who were driven from Driftsands last week, incurred the wrath of Brentwood Park residents when they settled nearby this week.

On Monday night residents gave them an ultimatum to move within 24 hours On Tuesday night they broke down the squatters' shacks and began moving their belongings, but were stopped by the police

Yesterday a new site for the squatters, about 2km from where they had settled, was found by CPA Land Development Department deputy director Mr Ricky Schelhase

Townships face R89m deficit

(124) CT 25/8/94

By PETER DENNEHY

DETAILED Strategic Management Plans (SMPs) for iKapa, Khayelitsha, Crossroads and Mfuleni show that the four are expected to run up a combined cash flow deficit of R89m in the present financial year

The four separate SMPs constitute the first phase of the Reconstruction and Development Programme in the Western Cape

Municipal services in the four black townships almost collapsed last year due to political, financial and management crises SMPs were worked out to keep services going with the help of expertise from neighbouring municipalities

Based on present expenditure and income levels, the SMP financial teams reported yesterday, the shortfalls would be as follows

iKapa (comprising Langa, Guguletu and Nyanga) R55m, Khayelitsha R29m, Crossroads R2m, and Mfuleni R3m

In addition, the SMP itself needs to spend R46m in little more than a year Some of the money is needed for training, some for new appointments, and a whole lot of it for clearing stormwater drains Cape Town City Council chief development engineer Mr Mike Marsden said services in the townships were in a disastrous state

Flooding on June 27 was a direct result of the neglect of infrastructure maintenance, he said There was great deal of leakage out of water mains below roads in the iKapa area Stormwater drains were so blocked that modern jet and vacuum equipment could not clean them, especially with the low water pressure there

Instead, the old bucket machine system had to be brought out of storage — winches drag buckets from manhole cover to manhole cover, scooping up rubbish along the way Sixteen kilometres of stormwater drains in iKapa have to be cleaned this way

Deputy city treasurer Mr Neville Lomnitz said the Western Cape legislature had agreed to write off the R71m that the townships owed for bulk services — mostly water, and sewage treatment charges — as at the end of January

Since then, however, another R29m in bulk service debts had been run up If this burden kept on increasing, it would be beyond the capacity of Cape Town municipalities to support it, Mr Lomnitz said

Picture ROY WIGLEY, Weekend Argus

□ **COMMUNITY CARE:** Exchanging refuse for food parcels has got disadvantaged communities cleaning up their streets in return for improved nutrition. Here Communicare's Wayne Casson shows the amazing response from Wallacedene residents while Loretta Wagenaar inspects her food parcel.

Trash-for-food campaign cleans up squatter camps

(124) ARG 27/8/94

DI CAELERS
Weekend Argus Reporter

FIVE bags of refuse equals one parcel of good, nutritious food in Wallacedene squatter camp.

This is the food-for-trash programme introduced by non-profit organisation Communicare to clean the area and feed the residents at the same time.

The project nets hundreds of bags of garbage each week according to Communicare spokeswoman Karin Moore, who said it was being run jointly with the Department of Health which financed the groceries.

The clean-up plan is just one branch of Communicare's social upliftment efforts in the Western Cape's informal settlements, with housing its major priority.

Wallacedene — which is named after Communicare's newest director Wallace Mgoqi — also recently benefited with the upgrading of its crèche, funded by the Provincial Administration of the Western Cape to the tune of R27 000, which turned into a big community effort using the labour of residents via the organisation's job-creation programme.

Similar services and programmes also are provided to 24 000 people living at Bloekombos, Hout Bay and Noordhoek.

At Manenberg and Vygieskraal, they have converted 10 containers for use as soup kitchens, crèches and job-creation centres.

"In spite of the unrest experienced by local authorities in many of the township and informal housing areas in the past, Communicare has had no problems of any sort in any of its administration areas and is accepted by the community it serves," said Ms Moore.

HOME AT LAST . Mr Isgak Williams, Ms Gloria Sagadu and their child Beauty, 3, were overjoyed to get their new site at iLingelethu near Malmesbury on Saturday The couple, who have been living at a nearby municipal compound for eight years, were one of 557 families allocated these serviced sites on the outskirts of the town in a random draw The sites all have a toilet, a tap and an electricity outlet connected to a prepaid meter The community's celebration culminated in an ox-braai donated by local businesses Picture CLIVE SMITH

Plots for 557 Cape families

CT 29/8/94 (124)

Staff Reporter

HUNDREDS of Malmesbury families living in a municipal compound were allocated new serviced plots near the town at the weekend.

The 557 families, whose site numbers had been chosen at random from a container, roamed the area with maps in search of their new homes.

The allocation process went smoothly and, as everyone will be paying the same amount for services, sites were swopped by mutual agreement

The project, a joint venture between the CPA, local community organisations, political organisations and the Surplus People's Project, was started four years ago

Each of the new sites at iLingelethu has its own toilet, tap and electricity connection for a pre-payment meter, and the roads are tarred.

The new scheme is about 10 minutes' walk from the old compound where the families had lived in shacks.

181 000 houses needed

CT 31/8/94

(124)

HOUSING is needed in the Western Cape now for 181 000 families, according to waiting lists, and this number is expected to grow to 200 000 within five years, regional Housing Minister Mr Gerald Morkel said last night

Speaking in the Civic Centre on the occasion of the Institute of Housing's Western Cape Housing Person of the Year Award, Mr Morkel said that these figures meant that in the next 4½ years, 40 000 housing units a year would have to be built if the problem was to be completely overcome

"I believe it can be done We have the will to do it But it will need the co-operation of all role-players," he said

"Even if we don't achieve that at the end of the day, we will have given it our best shot"

New system helps check on electricity payment

Municipal Reporter

THE time between paying the Cape Town City Council for electricity and the payment being reflected on its computer will be reduced by a new computerised receipting system

Mr Ron Grace, deputy city treasurer, said this yesterday in answering queries about grievances over electricity cut-offs

He said the new system would cut the present delay of up to 48 hours down to less than 24 hours

Several Steenberg residents complained this week that their electricity supplies had been cut off "after they had paid" CT 1/9/94

Mr Grace said it was impractical for the person who cuts off the electricity to check just before a cut-off whether a resident had paid

Where it turns out that a person had paid in full by the time the electricity was cut off, the reconnection is done without any penalties being imposed (124)

Grabouw housing crisis leads to service payment boycott threat

LIBBY PEACOCK
Staff Reporter

MEMBERS of the Grabouw Community Organisation have threatened to stop paying for services and to occupy a piece of land set aside for the homeless

This follows claims that the community's housing crisis is not being addressed by the municipality.

Last week a blaze in the Water Works squatter camp gutted about 200 shacks and two small children burnt to death when two huts in the Rooidakke settlement caught fire on Friday.

Grabouw Community Organisation president Dennis Marinus last night addressed a packed meeting where a representative housing forum for the town was to be established.

The forum was not formed, but representatives of the various community organisations present were to meet again today to continue talks.

In a memorandum read out to the meeting, the organisation claimed that eight municipal homes in the "white section" of the town were being sold to occupiers for between R1 300 and R1 800.

The organisation was "disgusted" that this could happen while the promise of home ownership remained a dream for the town's many shack dwellers. They also called for the resignation of town clerk Valdor Dudley and "all officials involved".

The memorandum also called for all arrears and debts to be written off and said members of the community had decided to stop paying for services.

ARG 6/9/94

124

Flats to get slice of R300m urban project

By BARRY STREEK, Political Staff

THE Serviced Land Project on the Cape Flats is one of the seven urban renewal projects that will benefit from a R304,6-million budget RDP allocation during the current financial year, Minister without Portfolio Mr Jay Naidoo announced yesterday

Mr Naidoo said he could not say exactly how much would be allocated to the project as this was subject to further negotiations and the submission of a business plan

Former Minister of Housing Mr Louis Shill said last year that R4 billion in funds allocated for housing, including the Serviced Land Project, had been blocked by political in-fighting (124)

These funds will now be used

Mr Naidoo said the Serviced Land Project would focus on upgrading of infrastructure, land servicing, job creation, housing and community facilities CT. 7/9/94

The other six projects are for communities in the East Rand, kwaZulu/Natal, East London, Port Elizabeth and the Free State

Non-payment addressed

124

Staff Reporter

IF local authorities were to remain viable, the culture of non-payment for services would have to be addressed, iKapa commissioner Mr Wallace Mgoqi said yesterday

Speaking at a press conference, Mr Mgoqi announced the appointment of a special team to investigate the administration and management of the beleagured town council, which has been the subject of a commission of inquiry

If the government was to be properly supported, services would have to be paid for, but there would have to be changes that were visible to the community, Mr Mgoqi said.

CT 9/9/94

Township rubbish 'disastrous'

(124)

JOHN YELD ARG 9/9/94
Environment Reporter

RUBBISH dumping and littering in black townships are reaching "disastrous proportions", creating unacceptable health hazards, says Deputy Environment Affairs and Tourism minister Bantu Holomisa

Speaking in Soweto today at the launch of an environmental reconstruction and development campaign by the National Environmental Awareness Campaign (NEAC), General Holomisa said he hoped the initiative would be the start of a countrywide clean-up.

"We appeal to regional powers, municipalities and other non-government organisations to help in addressing the appalling conditions in our townships, where rubbish dumps have created situations which are unacceptable and hazardous to people's health"

Urgent attention had to be given to repairing and streamlining the waste collection process so that the removal of rubbish from townships could start immediately.

"We will be remiss if nothing is done and if we think that this dismaying situation can be left until after the elections next October, because this state of affairs will have reached disastrous proportions."

The NEAC organisation had been successful in Alexandra, General Holomisa said, urging regional authorities and municipalities to follow the NEAC's example

South Suppl.

A tale of two townships

80/9 - 4/10/94 (124)

BY VICKY STARK

COUNCIL workers were collecting dirt and sweeping streets this week in Bonteheuwel while in nearby Langa residents were cleaning the area themselves.

Mr Anthony Dyaka of Langa said no matter how hard they tried, Langa couldn't stay clean.

"We don't even have dirt bins," he said.

Another resident, Mrs Eunice Mgaga, has initiated a clean-up operation in Langa

"We don't have money to pay the council so we decided to do it ourselves," Mrs Mgaga said.

An Ikapa worker said the council did not have resources to cope.

"Two dirt trucks and a couple of rakes and spades aren't good enough," he said.

On the other side of Vanguard Drive, Bonteheuwel resident Mrs Francis Mahaney said she believed City Council workers were "inefficient".

"They throw the dirt bins in the road after they empty them, and we have to go and fetch them," she said

Mr Allie van der Schyff, also of Bonteheuwel, praised the work done by the council

"They work okay I can't complain And I'm happy to pay," he said

Mr Clive Adams said conditions in Bonteheuwel could get a lot better

"But compared to Langa, we're much better off It's so unfair," Mr Adams said

Council rethink on electricity cut-offs

ARG 9/9/94 (124)

☐ Users tell of disconnections after payment

ANDREA WEISS
Municipal Reporter

THE Cape Town City Council is reconsidering its controversial policy of disconnecting electricity without warning.

Recently the council's electricity department embarked on a blitz to make up a R60 million shortfall in electricity bills — but users are crying foul as they come home to dark houses even though, they believe, they are up to date with payments.

Executive committee chairman Arthur Weinburg has vowed to take the matter up with the city treasurer — particularly as people who believe they are up to date have been disconnected

He said this did not mean that the city would cease disconnections for subscribers in arrears, but it was "unacceptable" to have paying users disconnected

Problems apparently bedevilling the process are a computer which does not register payment for 48 hours, bank drafts which are delayed and a tardy postal service.

Most recently about 50 households in Lentegeur were disconnected after they failed to pay bills which the householders allege never arrived.

Lentegeur resident Brendon Meyer said his power had been cut although no bills had been received in July

And in another stinging attack, Western Province Surf Life Saving Association secretary Liz Schlimmer has written to The Argus complaining that her power was cut off even though she posted a cheque at least 11 days before the due date.

Attempts to trace the cheque failed and the Schlimmers had to pay a R22,80 penalty when they went to repay the bill. Payment on the original cheque had to be stopped.

"Does the electricity department not give their clients their democratic right to prove their innocence before finding them guilty?" she asked.

"Is one not given the opportunity to sort out the problem, especially when you know, and keep trying to explain, that you did not default on purpose?"

Fears of apartheid local poll threaten progress

ARG 9/9/94

Municipal Reporter

FEARS that municipal elections next year will be held along old apartheid lines are threatening to set back progress in the Cape Metropolitan Negotiating Forum by several months.

The non-statutory caucus, made up of groups unrepresented on local authorities, are worried that the National Party provincial government will refuse to commit itself to a non-racial municipal election

Non-statutory caucus spokesman Mzukisi Gaba said there was a concern that what was happening in the Western Cape was not falling into line with the rest of the country.

"Apartheid should not be entrenched, and the disadvantaged should not be trapped in backyards of poverty They should be integrated into the life of the city," he said.

The negotiating forum has reached a broad agreement on a deal which has been dubbed "the package".

Both the statutory caucus, representing existing councils and management committees, and the non-statutory caucus have supported the package, which envisages substantial revision of the inner boundaries of the metropole into new local authorities, which would cut across racial and class lines

But the package suggested that in the "pre-interim" phase, the old boundaries would be retained for the purposes of appointing new councils consisting of representatives from both camps on a 50 50 basis.

However, indications are that although the provincial government is pushing for the new councils to be formed, it is unwilling to guarantee that new boundaries will be drawn up in time for municipal elections in October next year

The outer metropolitan boundary is also waiting for provincial approval

4 held in twin drug swoops

Staff Reporter

FOUR people were each granted bail of R5 000 today after being arrested for allegedly possessing Mandrax worth R300 000.

Three of the arrests followed a police search of a house in Mandalay, Mitchell's Plain where, they said, they found 11 000 tablets worth R242 000 in a steel trunk.

Theresa Doephu, 30, Thenbika Tobi, 29, and Paul Maburga, 34, were arrested.

Police also searched a dwelling in Khayelitsha and seized 650 Mandrax pills. Lillian Lundu, 53, was arrested.

The four appeared early today in Mitchell's Plain Magistrate's Court, where they were granted bail of R5 000 each and released.

● Police seized a stolen 9mm

Electricity arrears battle being won by home meters

(124) ARG 8/11/94

Municipal Reporter

PREPAID electricity meters are helping the city council win the arrears battle

The council is installing 200 energy dispensers a day — and is looking at ways of stepping up the delivery rate, because of demand

The policy of putting meters into the homes of people who are in arrears is helping the council to recover some of the R60 million owed for electricity bills.

Graphs made available to the utilites and works committee show that the council recovered R240 000 in arrears in September using this method.

A total of almost 30 000 meters have been installed to date, with 12 613 consumers awaiting installations.

Areas where the meters have been fitted include informal settlements

When new meters are installed, consumers pay off their arrears by paying extra for their electricity. Once their debt is paid off, the meter charges them the normal rate for electricity.

900 houses targeted daily for power cuts

BY SABATA NGCAI

Southeaster

THE Cape Town City council has begun disconnecting electricity at homes which are in arrears — targeting over 900 houses a day.

This excludes the 25 disconnections daily in Guguletu and Langa which also depend on the council for power

Council spokesperson Mr Ted Doman said it was difficult to disconnect in these townships because cables have to be removed after power is cut off

"In the past, when we disconnected electricity in those townships, people reconnected it," Mr Doman said "We are now removing cables and they will have to pay to have cables re-installed"

Mr Doman said it was easy to disconnect up to 900 houses daily in all other areas because they did not have to remove any cables

Cape Town consumers owe the council more than R60-million in electricity arrears

The council is encouraging people who have had their electricity cut to install energy dispensers which allow consumers to buy electricity in advance (Supp. to South)

Over 40 000 dispensers have been installed free of charge.

The council hopes to make the dispensers accessible to all its estimated 250 000 electricity users

A family of five should buy R60 electricity for a month

Fourteen percent of the amount bought in advance will be used to recover arrears 4/11 - 8/11/94

Mr Doman said this was the "only convenient" way the council could recover arrears

Each meter will be programmed to deduct the required percentage to pay the arrears (124)

For example, if a consumer buys electricity for R200 a month, R28 will be used to cover the arrears

Mr Doman acknowledged that it would take a long time to settle the huge amounts owed.

Thousands wait: Key to housing cash box missing

JOSEPH ARANES
Weekend Argus Reporter

(124) ARG 10/9/94

MORE than 120 000 families are in desperate need of houses in the greater Cape Town area but the local authorities say there is little they can do without funding from the government.

A spokesman for regional Housing Minister Gerald Morkel said the minister's hands were tied and he could proceed with projects only when the government gave power to unlock the housing funds.

"But negotiations are at a very sensitive stage and the minister feels it is inappropriate to comment on the matter at this stage."

Mayor Patricia Kreiner said the city council had 43 000 families on its waiting list and the number was increasing by an average of 370 families a month

In the past year the council constructed only 640 dwellings with a further 285 under construction. "This does not even make a dent in the waiting list," the mayor said.

City director of housing Charlotte Simms said the council received only enough money last month to complete its existing projects — 400 units in Mitchell's Plain and 200 houses in Lavender Hill

"We can think of starting our other projects only when we get new money from the National Housing Fund in the next financial year," she said.

The former tricameral houses of parliament have a combined waiting list of 24 000 families.

Cape Town's black local authorities say they have so many people wanting houses that it makes no sense to keep a waiting list

The three councils, Ikapa, Crossroads and Lingulethu West, have more than 50 000 families living in informal squatter settlements and backyards

A spokesman for the Lingulethu West Town Council said: "We have thousands of people living on land earmarked for churches, schools and other facilities and only when funds become available to service land, do we move them off after consultation

"But the continuous influx of people from other areas and the lack of government funds allocated for housing are making our task impossible."

Western Cape Premier Hernus Kriel has told the regional legislature that the province had a housing backlog estimated at about 180 000 units and although plans were in place to start projects, it was not possible to start building in the current financial year.

Mr Kriel said only 4 000 units would be delivered in the current financial year and 17 000 sites would be prepared for houses

Council keen for housing discounts to be taken up

(124) ARG 13/9/94

JOSEPH ARANES
Staff Reporter

ONLY half those living on city council estates and who qualify for a government discount of R7 500 off the price of homes have responded to invitations urging them to apply

Robert Bendle, a private consultant contracted to the council, told a housing committee meeting yesterday: "The system is working well.

"We send out 200 letters each week to residents, but only 50 percent respond."

People living in houses on council estates automatically qualify for the discount if they agree to take transfer.

Mr Bendle said the council initially had tried to identify those who did not have arrears and whose house value was less than the discount.

"In certain areas, like Bonteheuwel, 64 percent of tenants responded, but in other areas the figures were low."

In Mitchell's Plain, where, on average, the discount equalled about half the selling price of the house, residents had responded poorly.

He said the council could not increase the number of letters posted weekly because they did not have staff to interview an increased quantity of people responding favourably.

Mr Bendle said: "I am not sure why residents are responding so poorly, even in areas where they will get the house free if they take the discount"

R20m owed on council houses

CT 13/9/94 (124)

By PETER DENNEHY

THE City Council is giving leeway to defaulters on rental and home ownership agreements despite arrears owed to it from housing schemes in the Peninsula totalling R20,7 million

Only seven owners and their families have been evicted in the past year — and all of them are back in the houses Six of them have paid small amounts, and the sheriff was prevented from acting against the seventh

However, housing committee chairman Mr Neil Ross issued a firm warning that there would be no mercy on anyone who illegally invaded 100 nearly-complete new

Defaulters not being evicted

council houses in Tafelsig, Mitchells Plain

"We have information to hand that people are considering invading," he said "There will be no grace period and no bargaining"

In another development yesterday, the housing committee approved a joint venture between the council and the Mercantile Bank Limited, in terms of which thousands of householders will be able to take legal transfer of ownership, and benefit from a R7 500 government subsidy, provided they take a private loan for the balance of their owings

A harder line may be implemented when the bank takes over from the council as the householders' creditor

Mercantile Bank general manager Mr Alan Greenside was asked at yesterday's housing committee meeting about his institution's debt-collecting procedures

"We have standard practices we use to try and collect," he said "We don't intend going around breaking people's legs"

South

Evicted get preference for their original homes

(124) ARG 14/9/94

JOSEPH ARANES
Staff Reporter

FAMILIES who are on the Cape Town City Council housing waiting list and who were forcibly removed from areas affected by the Group Areas Act are given first preference when their original homes are vacated

The council has reiterated this policy in the wake of accusations of favouritism by a Hanover Park family

Father of two Rodney O'Connor said he had applied for a council house about 10 years ago and was still waiting, in spite of regular visits to the housing office

"I am forced to raise my family in overcrowded conditions but my wife's friend, who applied for a house about three years ago, was given one in Diep River last week"

Mr O'Connor said staff at the Hanover Park housing office had told him houses were going to families on the waiting list

Director of housing Charlotte Sims said Diep River was one of the areas where evictions took place

"People moved to Lavender Hill, but, since the scrapping of the act, only the original tenants are given the chance of moving back into their old homes when they become available."

R18-m housing project creates work for 450

☐ 'Shining example of partnership'

(124) ARG 14/9/94

ANDREA WEISS, Municipal Reporter

FUTURE public works projects will go the labour-intensive route to create urgently needed jobs

This was the message from Public Works Minister Jeff Radebe on a visit to the R18 million Bloekombos construction project, which will house about 1 800 families from the nearby squatter community

Mr Radebe said he would reveal details of these projects in his budget vote in parliament on Friday

The Bloekombos site-and-service scheme is the first accredited project to apply a framework agreement devised by the National Committee for Labour Intensive Construction, including industry and labour representatives

Also known as the Chris Hani branch township development, the project has employed about 450 people from the community

This compared with the usual 70 or 80 people who would have been brought on site to complete the project, according to the contractors

Once work was done, workers would be given certificates testifying to the skills they had obtained on site, to help them seek jobs elsewhere

The Southern African Bitumen and Tar Association, Ninham Shand, Power Construction, Haw and Inglis and the Western Cape Training Centre are involved

At Bloekombos, a representative development committee was elected and was involved in the appointment of contractors The committee also established needs, such as that for an on-site creche to free women for some of the work

Wages are established on a "task-basis", each task about a day's labour Groups who work quickly earn more

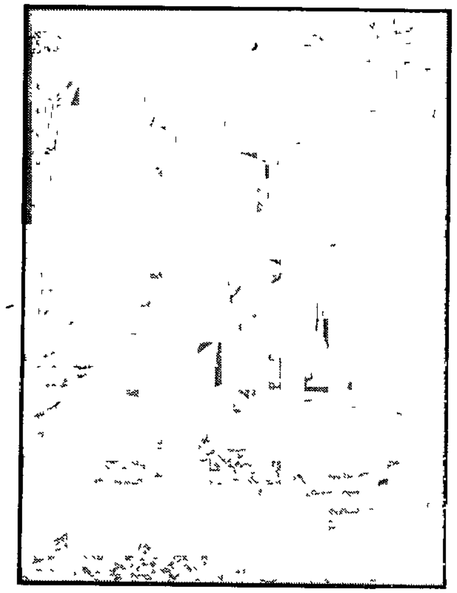
All materials, such as concrete blocks for building toilets, are made on site and heavy duty work is done with the minimum of machinery

During his visit, Mr Radebe congratulated everybody involved in the project for "marvellous work".

He said it was a "shining example" of a partnership between business, labour and the civil engineering community

His department would ensure all line-function departments would employ labour-intensive methods on public works-commissioned capital projects

Many of these projects would be aimed at areas hard hit by unemployment, such as the Eastern Cape, Northern Cape and KwaZulu



DIGGING IN: Public works minister Jeff Radebe, above right, and his provincial counterpart Leonard Ramatlakane, second from right, assist workers at the Bloekombos site-and-service scheme

Pictures: LEON MÜLLER, The Argus

ROAD WORKS: Bloekombos squatter camp residents, left, complete a road in the new site-and-service scheme as part of a labour-intensive project to combat unemployment

R5bn in council housing debts 'irrecoverable'

(124)

ARG 14/9/94

Political Correspondent

HOUSING loans totalling about R5 billion owed by local authorities will have to be written off because they are "politically irrecoverable", the parliamentary public accounts committee was told today

The fund had only five people to cope with administering about 11 000 loan accounts

A new national housing strategy will be announced within weeks, making it possible to decide staffing needs

The national housing fund is owed about R281 million a year in capital charges but gets only about R18 million a year

Housing director-general Billy Cobbett said the government was redefining its role in housing

Talks were being held with the association of mortgage lenders about extending private sector involvement in providing credit for housing

New houses for Tambo Square residents

(Suppl. to South)

BY SABATA NGCAI

ON AUGUST 30, Tambo Square residents started building their own houses on a piece of land allocated to them near Manenberg.

The housing is for more than 650 former KTC residents now squatting at Tambo Square, Guguletu

Squatters had grown tired of waiting for houses, so decided that if each family contributed R100 toward a trust fund they could start a building project themselves

The fund has now reached about R80 000, having been substantially added to by churches, and is administered by attorneys.

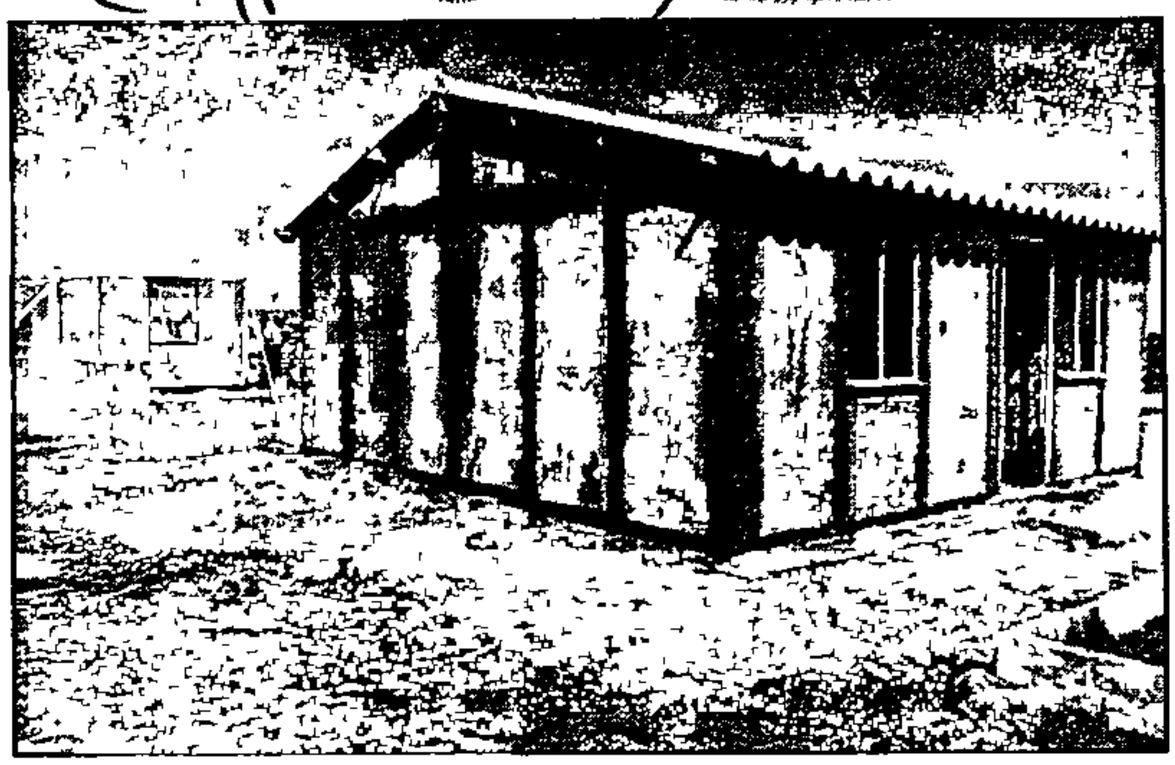
Many of these squatters have struggled for years for permanent houses.

In 1990 they staged a series of sit-ins at the offices of the Cape Provincial Administration (CPA), demanding houses.

The CPA responded by making a piece of land available for squatters to erect their shacks, and promised to supply toilets.

The Tambo Square residents rejected the proposal and demanded permanent houses instead

The houses they are building now, with the assistance of Cape Utility Homes, are constructed from wood covered by a cement-like substance



HOME AT LAST: Tambo Square's new houses are under construction *Photo: Roger Sedres*

Cape Utility Homes also builds brick houses, and foundations have already been laid for those who can afford these homes

Tambo Square Housing Committee chairperson Mr Goodman Mavata said residents will make use of the government subsidy negotiated by the National Housing Forum and the Department of Local Government and National Housing. People earning below R1 500 a month can apply for a subsidy of R12 500, as long as their house does not cost more than R65 000. (124)

Mr Mavata applauded the construction company for providing much-needed jobs.

The first Tambo Square residents hope to move into their houses by mid-September.

Home again

THE missing Mitchells Plain beauty queen, Deidré Nelson, has returned home.

Miss Nelson, 18, returned to her parents' home last week after disappearing on August 18

She is reportedly in good health No foul play is suspected

Eagle Park or rat's nest?

BY EDWINA BOOYSEN

EAGLE Park, a section of Pelican Park, is becoming a rat's nest, a resident says, with vagrants occupying empty houses in the area.

Several houses in the self-help scheme section, some partially completed, are still unoccupied two years after foundations were laid and at night vagrants from the area sleep in the homes

Eagle Park resident Mr André Pillay (not his real name) said the community is plagued by break-ins Dagga smoking is a regular occurrence, he says

"We are having endless problems with the vagrants and the bad elements in the area," Mr Pillay said

"We regularly hear gunshots There are always drunken brawls, and whenever you open a window you smell dagga"

He said residents were afraid to go out alone at night for fear of being attacked They would certainly not let their children walk around the area

"The empty houses are dangerous There is no way to know who might be lurking there and what their intentions are," he said

"These houses have no sanitation areas The squatters turn our yards into toilets

"It's unhealthy and we've complained to the health authorities, but they don't do anything"

The homes are not fenced in and this makes it easy for vagrants to move into the homes

"These people are very bold A week ago my family and I went to bed around 11 30pm and less than five minutes later someone was tampering with the back door," Mr Pillay said. "When I went to look, two guys ran off across the yard"

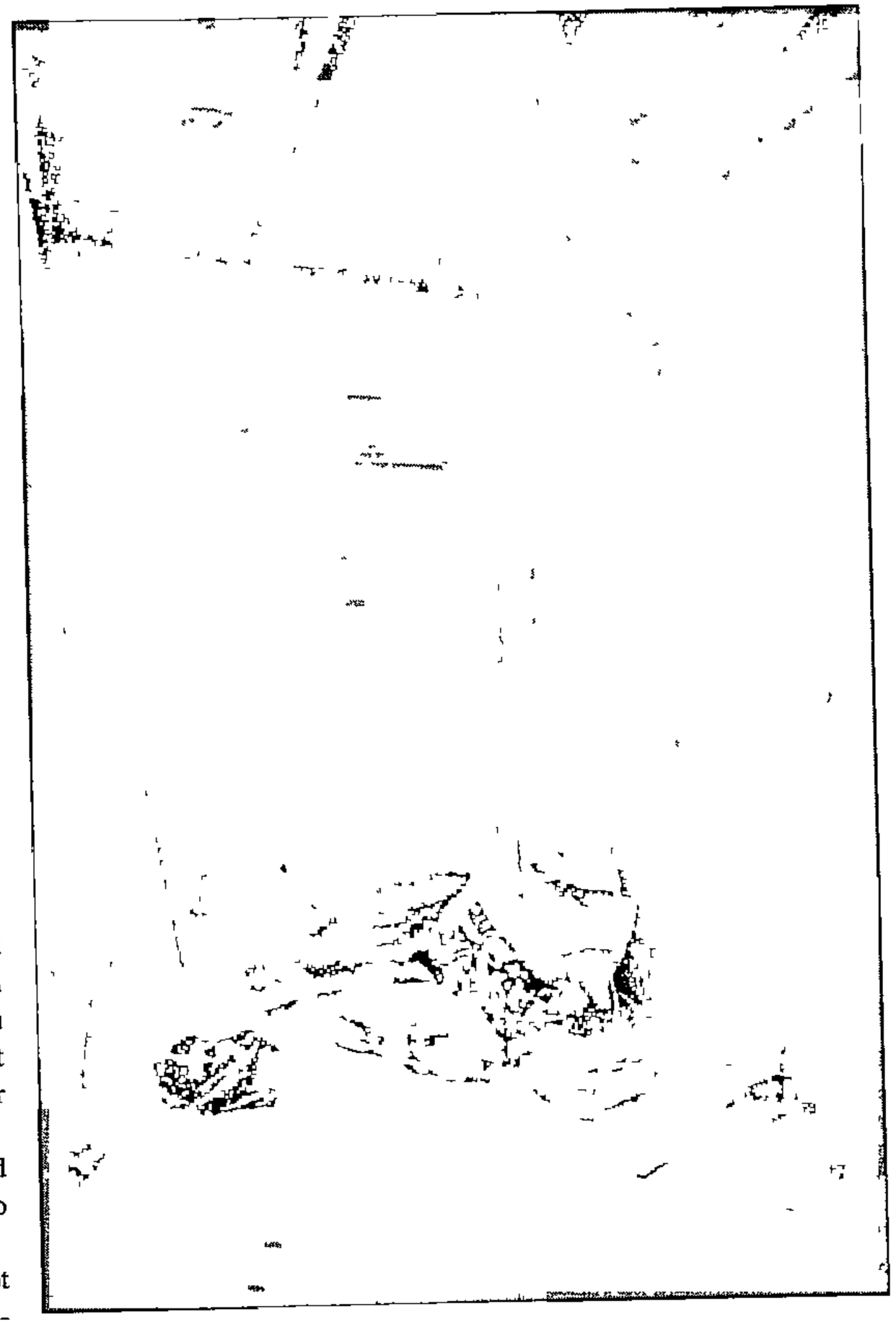
The self-help project was initiated by the former House of Delegates (HoD) for people who could not afford to buy plots or homes from a building society

"The target group was people earning between R750 and R1 200 a month," Mr Pillay said (124)

"There are about 12 unoccupied houses However, when you approach the HoD they tell you that it is not their problem and that the House of Delegates no longer exists

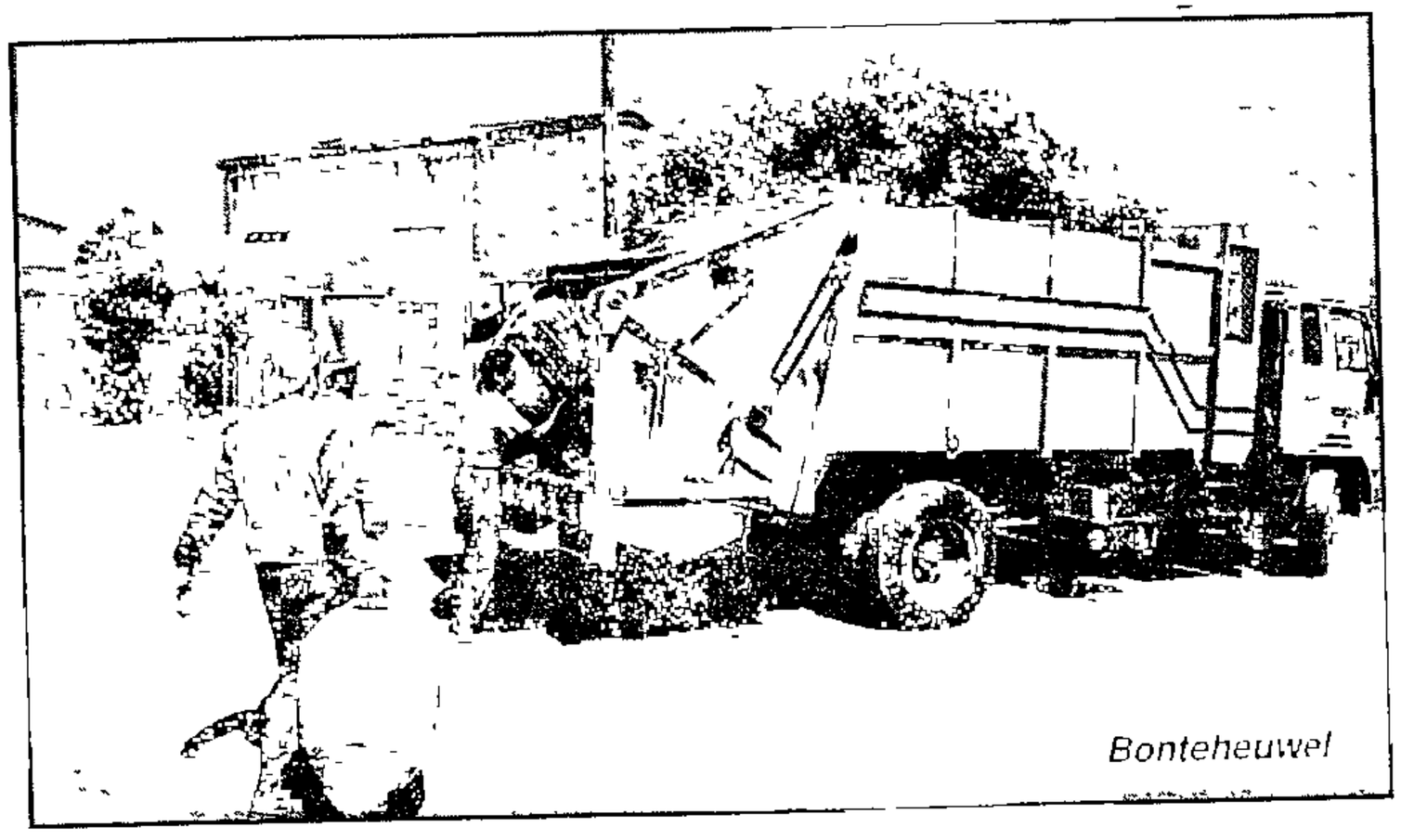
"But the staff is still there and they still occupy the offices, so what are they doing?"

The House of Delegates does not exist and it could not be determined who is responsible for Eagle Park



HOUSEHOLD GOODS?: Vagrants have occupied an empty house which is littered with clothes and rubble


Langa


Bonteheuwel

THE BIG DIVIDE IN ARREARS

BY SABATA NGCAI

LANGA and Bonteheuwel are only separated by a road, but the services and amenities provided in the two areas make them worlds apart.

Yet, the scrapping of rent and service charge arrears only in African townships in January this year sparked controversy

Coloured communities are demanding that their rent and service charges arrears should also be scrapped

The South African National Civics Organisation (Sanco) has repeatedly said the scrapping of arrears should begin with the most disadvantaged areas

They pointed out that the previous government supplied some areas with superior municipal services while others got practically none

African townships were areas where services were not rendered at all, Sanco said

A survey of Langa and Bonteheuwel illustrated clearly the sharp difference between services in former coloured and African townships

(124)

Both townships have matchbox houses, but there is a big difference in the infrastructure of the two

Langa was built in the 1920s, for 40 000 people Bonteheuwel was built in the 1960s and has a population of more than 50 000

Bonteheuwel is administered by the Cape Town City Council and Langa by the Ikapa Town Council

Langa is one of the dirtiest townships in Cape Town Mounds of rubbish remain uncollected because of the collapse of services at Ikapa Town Council

Langa has one swimming pool, one community centre, one civic hall, one soccer field, one rugby and one cricket field

The township does not have a single park or playing facility for children

Langa residents pay R18,50 a month in service charges

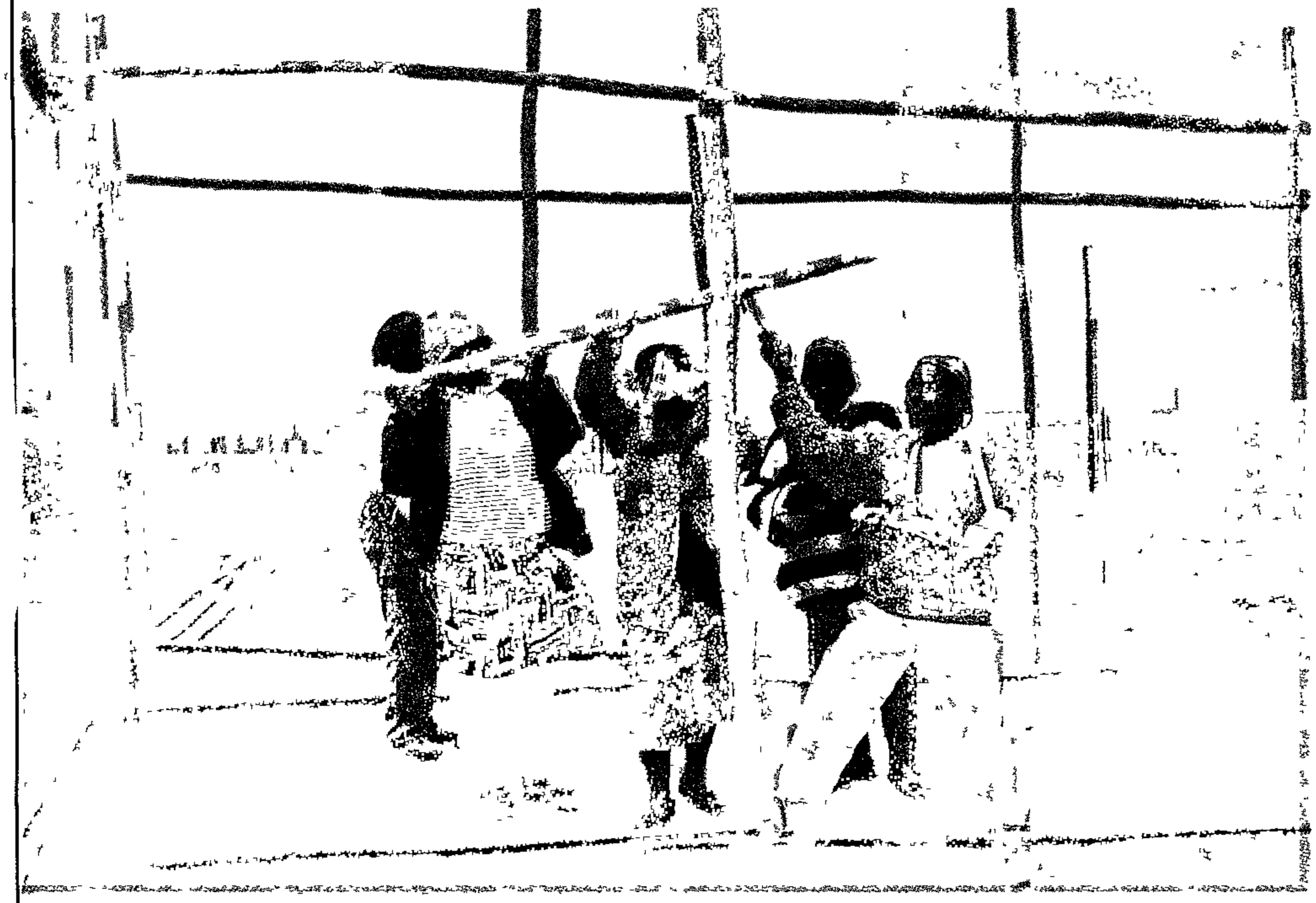
Bonteheuwel enjoys a wealth of community facilities and services

It has 11 formal and six informal soccer fields provided by the Cape Town City Council

There is a rugby field, 10 netball courts, two cricket fields, 13 playgrounds, four parks, a library, a swimming pool, two tennis courts, a civic hall and three community centres

Refuse is collected regularly, roads are resurfaced when necessary and council-owned houses are maintained

Residents' pay R85 to R100 a month for rent and amenities



NEW TIMES . This joint effort could ensure quick results for Mr Harrison Bhanqo, front Picture AMBROSE PETERS

Serviced sites a 'new beginning'

By JESSICA BEZUIDENHOUT

ENDLESS rows of minute concrete structures containing toilets may not excite the average person looking for a house — but for one group of people in Malmesbury they signal a new beginning

This week more than 500 serviced sites were allocated to shack-dwellers from the only black township in the town, with the excited residents hard at work erecting "improved" informal homes on their properties

For one man, Mr James Mangena, "this is just the small beginning" He plans to build his first real house on the plot

His new plot is 160 m² — big enough to build a house, he said

He said he would stay in the informal house on one side of his plot until he could afford to start building his new house from the other end

The rows of newly-built toilets are a sign of hope to people who until now had to stay in squatter settlements lacking basic sanitation or delapidated ex-hostel rooms often shared with several other families

Another new resident, Mr Harrison Bhanqo, has been sharing two small rooms at the old township hostel with three other families All these families have since received new sites and Mr Bhanqo is also proud that his family will have a house of their own (124)

"It will be some time before I can build a real house, but it will be much better than the hostels," he said

Malmesbury municipal engineer Mr At Botha said the demarcated sites were built at a cost of several million rand The work was done by the municipality and funding came from the new provincial government

To eliminate the possiblity of fighting over the sites, 550 numbers were put in a box and people drew the number of their new plots, he said

Mini house brainwave!

(124)

A NEWLY designed house made from two containers by a Cape Town company was an instant hit this week when it was launched to Western Cape municipalities.

By JEREMY WOODS

The house, made by Containerised Housing Projects of South Africa (Chopsa), is being seen by municipalities as an answer to the Western Cape's housing crisis.

Mr Raymond Benatar, a director of Chopsa, said on Friday "We have orders for 1 600 units from municipalities in the Western Cape The big challenge now is to move into full production and fulfill those orders."

The house, which shows no signs of being constructed from two containers, received a warm response from municipal officials when it was officially launched on Thursday evening.

One official said "This could be an answer to the major housing problems that most of the municipalities share It is a very pretty house, fully equipped, which I think anyone would be proud to own"

The house, which is being sold for R17 800, has two bedrooms, a bathroom with a shower, toilet and basin, as well as a modern kitchen and small lounge

The bedrooms, lounge and passages are all carpeted and the house is designed to hook into all main services.

For those owners who cannot yet afford electricity, the Chopsa house has a parafin-based water heating system that provides constant hot water

The house has a proper roof, plastered walls and an insulation system that keeps the interior cool in summer and warm in winter

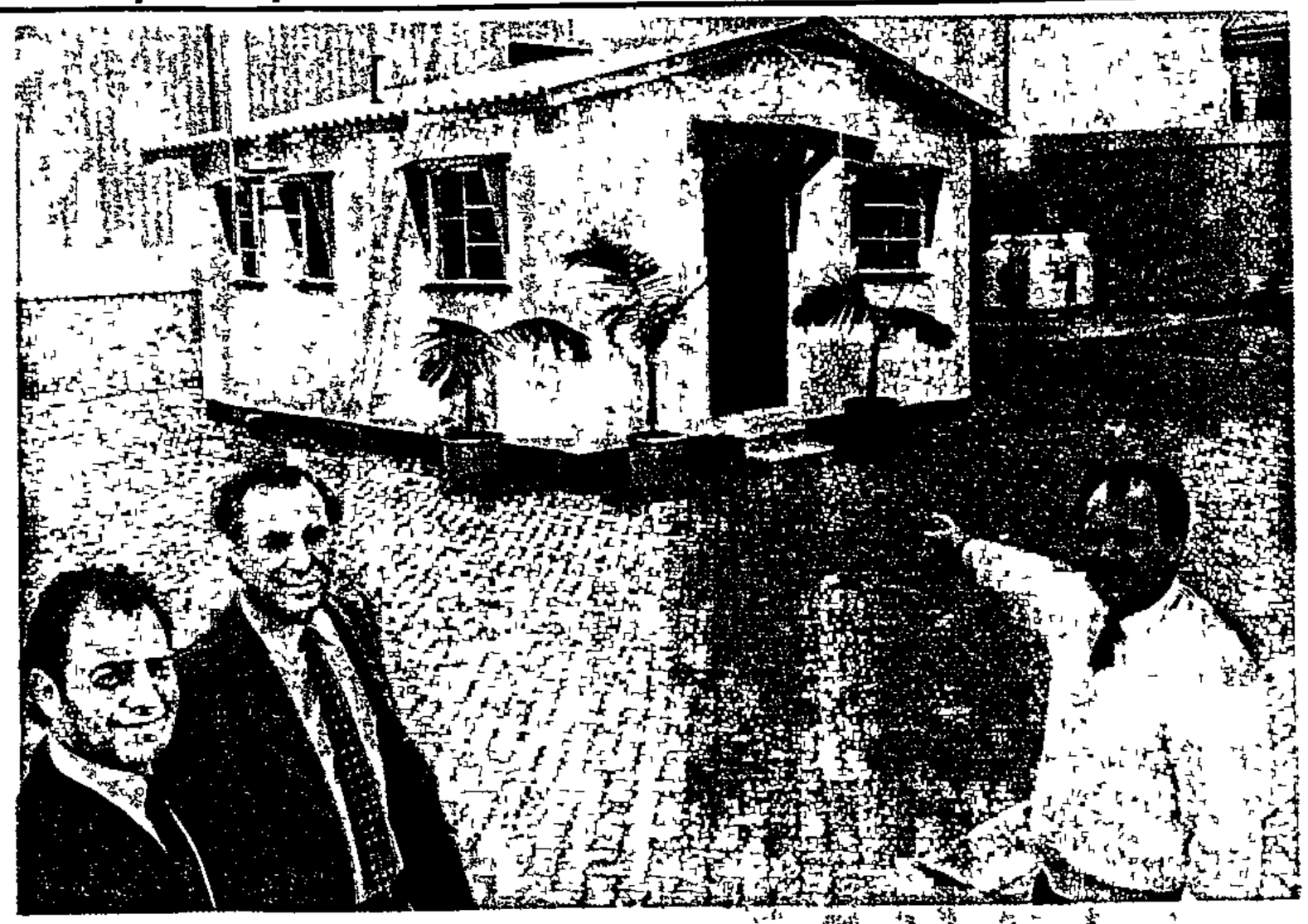
The structure of the house can also be enlarged.

"We have designed it rather like a lego system, so that as a family grows and its needs expand, the house can grow as well" said Mr Benatar

The idea for the house was originally developed in Israel, where a similar system was developed to house the flood of Russian immigrants who arrived there four years ago

"We wanted to give the owner of the property a house he can be proud of and judging by the reaction of the municipalities, I think we have acheived our objective We think our houses can make a real contribution to the housing problems in the Western Cape," added Mr Benatar

Initially, it was planned to manufacture some 150 houses a month, but Mr Benatar said he and his team would spend the weekend working out how production could be increased to meet the high demand



PRETTY AS A PICTURE From left, Isaac Benatar, Yossi Shoshani and Raymond Benatar with Chopsa's house Picture AMBROSE PETERS

Price cuts a motorist's mirage?

'Scrap Cape Flats service arrears'

CT 19/9/94 (124)

THE Cape Areas Housing Action Committee (Cahac) said last night it would embark on protest action if service arrears on the Cape Flats were not scrapped

Cahac spokesman Mr Joey Marks said demands for arrears to be written off in coloured areas had "fallen on deaf ears"

Service arrears had been scrapped only in black areas so far, he said, and Cahac questioned the government's commitment to the constitutional principle of non-racialism

Cahac had "a strong feeling of solidarity" with the Reiger Park community on the East Rand, where protests over arrears turned violent last week

If Cahac's appeals went unheard, it would embark on a programme of public protest, but it would be peaceful, Mr Marks said

● Police maintained a heavy presence at Reiger Park near Boksburg after clashing with residents who burned the township's electricity accounts office on Saturday

Police said at least 14 members of the crowd were injured when police fired at them with rubber bullets, birdshot and teargas about 3am

Residents had thrown petrol bombs and stones at police and had attacked firemen on their way to the burning offices, which were gutted

Police said residents had also tried to disarm a policeman Three of the injured are in a stable condition at Boksburg/Benoni Hospital, which had reported 14 casualties

About 300 Reiger Park residents marched to the Boksburg town council to deliver a memorandum calling for a flat rent of R45 and water and electricity arrears to be written off

The demonstration proceeded peacefully, police said, adding that the coloured township had been quiet since the early morning fighting — Staff Reporter, Sapa

Polite warning before cut-offs

By PETER DENNEHY

"GOOD" electricity consumers will be getting a warning phone call or letter before their lights are cut if they miss one payment, the City Council has decided.

Executive committee chairman Mr Arthur Wienburg said at a press conference yesterday the council was trying to do what any business would do — treat its good customers well.

There were regular payers in all areas, he said.

Mr Wienburg said those who had not had their electricity cut off in the past 15 months would be regarded as "good customers". City treasurer Mr Eddie Landsberg said that, contrary to popular belief, the council was not concentrating its disconnections in any particular area.

Arrears from Langa and Guguletu, which the council supplies, had grown by 27% to R21,5m in the year from July '93 to July '94. Arrears in the sub-economic housing estates had grown 28% in the same time, to R22,8m.

(R24)

Arrears in the rest of the city, however, had grown by 48% to R14,5m.

Mr Landsberg said it would not be fair to the city as a whole to write off electricity debts.

CT 20/9/94

Positive response

Council telephonists would try to reach these consumers if they missed a payment, and if unsuccessful a letter would be sent as a reminder.

In the meanwhile, the electricity supply of a usually-good payer will not be disconnected

The new "polite warning" system has been in operation since Wednesday last week.

Council spokesman Mr Ted Doman said a sample of 196 "good payers" who had defaulted had been used. Of these, 86 had been reached by telephone, and 80% had responded positively to the call.

Mr Landsberg said the ten telephonists who deal with disconnection-related calls could be doubled in number.

The introduction of the "polite warning" system follows a wave of outrage from residents as the number of electricity cut-offs has risen to over 15 000 a month out of a total of 250 000 consumers.

Among those who have been recently caught in the disconnections net are many of the 25 000 people who used to "roll over" their accounts.

Many others, however, merely go on holiday and return to find themselves without electricity. On average, the due date of a bill is 17 days after the council sends it out

Wienburg assurance on power arrears

Pg 2 24/4/94 (124)

ANDREA WEISS
Municipal Reporter

RESIDENTS with a good record of timely bills will get a warning before their power is cut off.

But the power of regular defaulters could still be disconnected without warning.

This is the news from the electricity department to disconnected people whose accounts stepped up a campaign to connect R60 million owed to the city, but many people were in arrears.

The disconnections blitz is part of a campaign that began to date.

About R80 million owed to the city was cut off in the city's bottom line.

complained by ratepayer representatives and the committee, Arthur Wienburg, the council would tendered executive chairman of the council lasted about 22 minutes.

At a press conference at which they were up to date.

thought they were up to date.

Wienburg also promised that members would be sent out to anybody who was cut off unreasonably.

Communicate better with users — including users who have not called about a new policy of calling users before they are in arrears in the discontinuing in the disconnection.

● Recommend telephone lines be disconnected before the city's bottom line.

● Have more complaints about the city's 250 000 users, most of them subject to disconnections because of electricity arrears.

● High accounts to alert users when they are in arrears.

● Have the city's bottom line be sent out to anybody who owed to the city treasurer, usually after the month after the city's bottom line.

In practice, the city treasurer, which is a special arrangement with payments can also be sent out.

People who are having problems with the city treasurer accounts can also make a special arrangement with payments which is a fortnight after the city's usually comes in arrears.

But Mr Wienburg pointed out that many people who are in arrears.

Sutter to pay off their accounts had a "roll over" payment of R6 million.

But Mr Wienburg also promised that interest was not charged on the city's bottom line.

Mr Wienburg said that the city would be no interest charged on the city's bottom line.

Of the city's 250 000 users, most of them were subject to disconnections because of electricity arrears.

The city was also losing a year in lost interest because of electricity arrears.

He said the municipality had not given permission for the march but police had allowed it to proceed "so that the matter could be over and done with"

Council will not scrap arrears

B/Day 20/9/94

EDWARD WEST

CAPE TOWN — The city council would not write off electricity arrears as such a move would be unfair to its paying consumers, city treasurer Eddie Landberg said yesterday

The council was aware of an agreement by government earlier this year that services arrears would be written off before January 20 The council had not yet recovered funds from government in terms of this agreement, but the amount was likely to be only a small portion of the arrears

Total arrears in Cape Town had risen to R58,8m at the end of July 1994 from R44m at the end of July the previous year There were about 90 000 consumers in arrears, 86 000 of which were domestic consumers.

At the end of July 1994, the Langa/Guguletu area owed R21,5m in arrears, R22,8m was owed in sub-economic housing areas where the council had made repayment arrangements, while the rest of the city owed R14,5m. (124)

Landberg blamed the arrears on political factors and the economy Communication between the council and consumers would be improved

☐ Sapa reports that Transvaal Local Government Association head Frans Lourens said Eskom should write off all electricity arrears.

Lourens said the issue was a matter of contention in many local government negotiating forums and was delaying local government reforms.

Education spending problems identified

B/Day 20/9/94

KATHRYN STRACHAN

NEW research on SA's education system, conducted by the World Bank and the ANC-linked Centre for Education Policy Development, has identified many areas of inefficiency despite the substantial increase in education spending in recent years.

The study, released last week, identified inefficiencies in teacher education colleges, where in some departments' per capita costs had risen to well above the level of public spending in SA's best universities.

SA had spent a significant and growing share of total budget resources on education over the past seven years

Public education spending had grown from nearly R10bn in 1987 to more than R27bn this year, representing a rise in education's share of total budgetary resources from 22,9% to 24,4%.

As a percentage of GNP, education spending increased from 5,8% to 7,3% over the study period Comparisons with other middle-income countries indicated that this level of spending was relatively high

In real terms, spending had increased at approximately 5,2% annually, outpacing annual population growth of 2,2%

Racially, spending remained extremely unevenly distributed and had not kept pace with inflation

Despite progress towards equalising recurrent expenditure in the various racial departments over the past five years, spending continued to be characterised by glaring disparities

The study was undertaken because of concern about the quality and availability of information on public expenditure on education The research allowed education planners to recognise the enormous effect of past spending patterns

"It provides the most comprehensive picture yet of the scope and patterns of education spending in the past, and provides a solid basis for assessing proposed policy changes in the future," the researchers said.

The study found that as education in SA historically had been racially divided, spending had been inequitable and planning had been based on ideology rather than on need.

The study also found that the schooling sector absorbed more than 70% of total recurrent expenditure, rising steadily from 71% to over 76% during the study period The largest single share was allocated to primary education

Spending on universities was next in line, although the share spent on this programme had fallen from 13% in 1987/88 to 10% in 1991/92.

Public spending on teacher education and technikons remained fairly constant at about 3% while the budget share targeted at technical colleges fell from 2% to 1,5% between 1987/88 and 1991/92

However, very limited public resources had been allocated for pre-primary and remedial education (around 0,4% for each) and adult and vocational education (down from 0,5% at the start of the period to 0,3% at the end).

Spending on teacher salaries had grown faster than overall education spending, with some departments' salaries constituting more than 90% of schooling

This trend meant there were very few resources left for capital development, educational materials and support

School feeding scheme in trouble

B/Day

NOMAVENDA MATHIANE

THE school feeding scheme which kicked off on September 1 has already run into problems, according to submissions made yesterday to the PWV health standing committee by the National Nutrition and Social Development Programme.

While more than 20 companies have applied to service 146 schools in the PWV region, only two have the capacity to do so, while a lack of telephones at schools, bad roads and poor directions to schools have caused delays in the distribution of food to some outlying areas.

Programme director Marie Steyn said her organisation was looking at obtaining the services of local entrepreneurs and food vendors to prepare and distribute food at schools.

In some areas, children received stale bread because the slices of bread had been buttered days before they were served. 20/9/94

Regarding the adult feeding scheme, she said her department had a budget of R68m, but had already received applications for R300m in assistance for next year.

Steyn said unemployment was the major cause of the hike in the budget.

Although the scheme was funded by the nutrition programme it was operating through non-governmental organisations which sometimes experienced problems from political parties "Before the elections some people pressurised non-governmental organisations into not catering for other groups of people."

Recipients of funds from the programme are trained in bookkeeping, encouraged to obtain three quotations before making purchases, and encouraged to buy from local retailers They are then given a "kickstart" advance of 25% of their budget.

The programme targets families living below the subsistence line, children under two, the chronically ill and the unemployed.

The food parcels consist of milk, maize meal, bread, sunflower oil, sugar, coffee or tea, syrup or jam, tinned fish and vegetables

Strict monitoring controls on distribution and accounts had been instituted, Steyn said. In the Orange Farm district alone, 18 cases of fraud were reported to the police.

Council will not scrap arrears

B/Day 20/9/94

EDWARD WEST

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At the end of July 1994, the Langa/Guguletu area owed R21,5m in arrears, R22,8m was owed in sub-economic housing areas where the council had made repayment arrangements, while the rest of the city owed R14,5m. (124)

Landberg blamed the arrears on political factors and the economy Communication between the council and consumers would be improved

□ Sapa reports that Transvaal Local Government Association head Frans Lourens said Eskom should write off all electricity arrears

Lourens said the issue was a matter of contention in many local government negotiating forums and was delaying local government reforms.

'Good' consumers fall foul

Municipal Reporter

AT least one "good" electricity consumer has fallen foul of the city council's new ruling of being given a polite warning if a payment is missed. 124

Mrs Terry Honeyman of Churchill Road in Plumstead said yesterday council employees came to cut off her electricity, despite a new policy that those who have not had their service cut in 15 months will get a letter or telephonic warning them of this

"I thought the men were coming to warn me," she said When one of them said he had come to cut her electricity off, she had asked him whether he read the Cape Times CT 21/9/94

Council spokesman Mr Ted Doman said yesterday that it was not possible to phone everyone whom the computer said ought to be disconnected, as there were 900 of these a day

A disconnection order executed yesterday morning was likely to have been processed last week. A pilot "polite warning" project had already been in operation then, but it had not been possible to reach everyone on the lists, Mr Doman said

Efforts were being made to improve the "polite warning" service, he said

Council won't scrap arrears

Southeaster (Suppl. to South)

BY SABATA NGCAI

THE Cape Town City Council will not scrap electricity arrears and will continue to disconnect residents who haven't paid.

This was announced this week by the new head of the council's executive committee, Mr Arthur Weinberg. The tough-talking Mr Weinburg called electricity disconnections "a hot potato".

"If Telkom cuts off your telephone when you fail to pay the bill, why should we be an exception?" he asked

The council said that in terms of an agreement between the former state president and the new one, arrears in black townships would be written off But the council complained that it was not being compensated by the government for scrapping the arrears

A spokesperson for the South African National Civics Organisation (Sanco), Mr Newton Adams, described the council's statement as "provocative" He said Sanco was opposed to the council's unilateral decisions in matters affecting the community

"We must ensure that these issues are addressed in a consultative way," Mr Adams said (124)

The council said it knew the disconnections were causing inconvenience, but it was obliged to continue "in the interests of the community" The council is owed up to R60 million in arrears

They said efforts to recover the arrears could not be relaxed There were about 56 000 people whose electricity would be disconnected.

On a more conciliatory note, the council apologised to consumers whose electricity had been cut off after they had paid.

The present council will be in the office for about one more month before being replaced by the Transitional Metropolitan Council 23/9-27/9/94

Cape Times
Homefinder and Funfinder Inside

Cape Town 2004

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Anger in Western Cape over arrears

By CHRIS BATEMAN

LOCAL resentment at having to pay selective housing rental arrears boiled to the surface yesterday after the short-lived "scrapping" of arrears in PWV coloured townships

This was in spite of the quick and sharp repudiation by Housing Minister Mr Joe Slovo of the clumsy, illegal "scrapping" by PWV Minister for Local Government and Housing Mr Dan Mofokeng

Western Province Housing Minister Mr Gerald Morkel said his telephone line "sizzled" with civic outrage at the news, prompting him to call housing director-general Mr Billy Cobbett for an explanation

"He said Mofokeng had no authority to do it and that if they wrote off all the nation's housing debts it would cost R7-to-R8 billion — the entire national housing budget is only R2,6bn," Mr Morkel said

Mr Slovo said Mr Mofokeng's proposal had "no basis in law", adding "The assets involved are at present not at the disposal of the provinces but are controlled by the National Housing Board on behalf of central government." Any departure from this would require a central cabinet decision

Mr Slovo warned that a write-off in one province would immediately create pressure on other provinces to follow suit.

Local coloured residents interviewed in a snap survey yesterday cited the scrapping of local black housing rental arrears as their biggest grievance.

Cape Town City Council rental arrears (for coloured and Indian suburbs) stand at R8,7m and outstanding home ownership payments total R7,2m (as at end of January '94)

The local snap survey, in Bonteheuwel, revealed residents willing to pay — provided current arrears were written off

"If they make rents affordable people will pay — but plenty of grassroots education is needed," said Mrs Dorothy Lodewyk.

The National Party yesterday welcomed Mr Mofokeng's plan to write off arrears in PWV townships, but said it was not a permanent solution NP spokesman Mr Daryl Swanepoel said the NP was disappointed, however, that the provincial legislature had given serious attention to the matter only after residents resorted to extreme measures

(124) CT 23/9/94

● Coloureds 'still racist' — Page 4

Not only the destitute need roofs and shelter

ARG 24/9/14 (124)

■ Destitute people who receive shelter are sometimes better off than those with tiny incomes or pensions which are too small to pay for a roof over their heads But, at last, these people also have somewhere to go to in Cape Town

DALE KNEEN
Weekend Argus Reporter

WHEN business executive Graeme Laithwaite cruised home in his Mercedes-Benz and saw homeless people lying on the street, it bothered him

But, he didn't simply think that the government, the City Council or some welfare organisation should do something about the problem.

He called up the Haven Nightshelter Organisation and asked what *he* could do

Today Graeme, corporate operations manager for Pick'n Pay, has another "job"

He's the chairman of a group of people who pooled their expertise to raise funds to open a home in the city for destitute people

And they've managed to do it.

The group is called the Henderson Haven Committee and it will be opening the Henderson Haven Home in Chapel Street, Woodstock, next month.

This home, however, is different from the many nightshelters that the Haven Nightshelter Organisation has helped to open over the years

It will be for people who are "functionally destitute" which means those who have a small income but not enough to pay for accommodation.

Said Ruth O'Regan, a social worker for The Haven "It's heartbreaking to have to turn people away from nightshelters to give preference to those who have no income at all."

The Henderson Haven Home will provide overnight or monthly accommodation for people who are working, but who earn only a little or who receive small pensions.

The building in which the home will be situated is the old Moira Henderson House, which is owned by the Anglican Church and was once used as a home for "friendless girls" as unmarried, homeless mothers were once called.

Now men are more likely to fill the home's 60 rooms, which include a reception area, a recreation room, a kitchen, a dining room and a chapel which will be used as a "quiet room"

"We're hoping we will be able to provide a dignified place where people can stay Each room will be comfortable, inhabitants will pay about R5 a night and meals will be available," said Mr Laithwaite.

The Henderson Haven Committee was looking at the "corporate market" to help fund the running costs of the home and had received already substantial donations from the Strawbridge Trust and Rotoract in Wynberg

Getting the slightly rundown building into shape was the responsibility of handyman Riaan Fourie, who was, until recently, homeless himself

The Henderson Haven Home is looking for a couple who would be able to be caretakers of the building Those interested may telephone 419 1255.

Pictures. ROY WIGLEY, Weekend Argus.

□ **NEW HOME:** Graeme Laithwaite, chairman of the Henderson Haven Committee, with handyman Riaan Fourie outside Moira Henderson House, above, which is to become a haven for the homeless.

□ **CHAPEL STREET:** Graeme Laithwaite looks at what needs to be renovated in an old chapel, left, Chapel Street's Moira Henderson House

SDU members freed

JOHANNESBURG — Four members of ANC-aligned self-defence units have been freed after their arrest for the alleged possession of eight illegal firearms.

The four suspects were freed after a crowd demonstrated for their release outside Tembisa police station on the East Rand.

Police claimed community forum members had said "in a threatening way" that the safety of policemen in Tembisa could not be guaranteed unless the four were freed.

Police said the men's release had been agreed at a meeting with SDU members and community forum members attended by PWV regional MP Robert McBride. — Sapa.

Electricity surcharge could go

S/Times [C/Metro]

By NAZEEM HOWA

CONSUMERS who get their electricity from the Cape Town City Council are paying a 10 percent surcharge to subsidise the municipality's rates fund.

This was confirmed this week by city council spokesman Ted Doman who said the subsidy would total R70-million this financial year

However, Dr Ian McCrae, chairman of the National Electrification Forum, said the cabinet had agreed to a Nelf proposal to standardise all rates This would be introduced within months

"We see nothing wrong with the surcharge as all residents benefit from the levy through the provision of libraries, street cleaning and other council services throughout the municipality," Mr Doman said

(124)

Defending the council's loading of electricity charges, Mr Doman said Cape Town's tariff at 20,59 cents a unit was still lower than most other municipalities

25/9/94

R3-m to be spent on housing schemes

(124)

ARG 26/9/94

☐ Communities to get upgrading asked for

Staff Reporter

MORE than R3 million will be spent on upgrading council housing schemes in Mitchell's Plain, Athlone, Retreat and Kensington.

The Cape Town City Council utilities and works committee chairman Ian Iversen said R1,33 million would be spent on fences and precast concrete walls asked for by community organisations

Drains, footpaths and roads would also be improved

Mr Iversen, who is an executive committee member, said the money allocated for walls would not meet the full costs immediately, but work would continue in future financial years

"Apart from visual improvement, the walling — which includes concrete boundary walls on starter-home properties — would reduce the problem of sand accumulation on roads, and reduce street-sweeping requirements in the areas concerned," Mr Iversen said.

Roadworks would include extensions, kerbing and resurfacing, and footpaths.

Funds had been set aside in the annual council budget to address improvement projects in council housing areas

A report to the committee from the city planner said R500 000 had already been approved by the council for fencing and walls, and a further R830 000 was proposed.

In addition to R900 000 already identified for road, footway and drainage work approved by the council, further work costing R770 000 would be undertaken during the present financial year.

This included roadworks at Rio Grande Walk, Manenberg, drainage at Red River Road, Manenberg, additional roadworks in Ipsting Road, Ashley Crescent and Grindal Crescent, Lavender Hill, road verge surfacing in Kalksteenfontein and footpaths in Beacon Valley

Sexwale catches flack

South

By Shannon Neill

23/9 - 27/9/94

PWV Premier, Tokyo Sexwale, has come under fire for his verbal tongue-lashing of coloured protesters who demanded equal treatment as their counterparts in African townships in the payment of service arrears.

He was roundly condemned for the "racist remarks" by the Cape Areas Housing Action Committee (Cahac), the Workers International to Build, the Fourth International and the South Western Joint Civics Association

Sexwale was reacting to protests about service arrears not being scrapped in the largely coloured community of Reiger Park on the East Rand (124)

Cahac spokesperson, Mr Joey Marks, said Sexwale's comment that people demanding parity over the scrapping of service arrears had "long tails and talons" was "downright racist" and "violated coloureds rights to dignity and respect"

For the government to put a moratorium on arrears in coloured areas and to scrap them in African areas was "racist", said Marks

"Our community suffered the same problems as other communities

"People in our community have problems paying rental and service fees because of the high unemployment in the country"

He said Cahac had exhausted all avenues of peaceful negotiation and legal channels and was left with no option except peaceful protest

Sanco representative, Mr Newton Adams, said he did not view the government's actions as racist but rather as "a matter of priorities"

"Arrears have to be looked at across the board but there are areas which were more disadvantaged, more oppressed in the past

"Khayelitsha must be adressed as a priority but areas like Ravensmead and Elsies River mustn't be excluded," said Adams

'Payers will want money back'

☐ Warning on scrapping of service arrears

ARG 28/9/94 (124)

ANDREA WEISS
Municipal Reporter

PEOPLE who have been paying for services are likely to demand their money back if the government pursues a policy of scrapping arrears

This was the message from Lingelethu's acting town clerk Wouter Loots at the monthly meeting of the Western Cape Regional Services Council

Mr Loots said an appeal from the community services branch of the Western Cape Provincial Administration, calling for a moratorium on any prosecutions, would encourage people to stop paying for services

This would cause service delivery to be hampered even more.

"The question of write-offs could become even more problematic. Already there are indications in my community that people who have been paying are going to ask for their money back if arrears are written off," he said.

In a letter to the RSC on August 19, the provincial government appealed to local authorities to place a moratorium on all prosecutions for arrears and charges "up to and including the January 1994 account and afterwards".

The bill up to January should be footed by central government, while arrears after that date should be dealt with by transitional councils, the letter said

In cases where people had been sentenced, arrangements should be made to have judgments set aside and the people released

The letter called for co-operation in dealing with a sensitive matter so that "a mutually acceptable solution is found for the existing unsatisfactory situation"

The RSC decided the matter of arrears needed to be addressed on an urgent basis and not left to transitional councils It also decided to ask for an urgent meeting with local government minister Peter Marais.

● Also yesterday, chairman of the Committee of Provincial Affairs Thozamile Botha warned that the Reconstruction and Development Programme would collapse if non-payment spread to all areas

He was speaking at a conference on electrification.

Mr Botha warned that white communities would not tolerate a huge increase in rates to subsidise revenue lost if electricity was no longer earning income for local authorities

He said it was critical to maintain political and social stability during the transitional period

Residents want rent, rate arrears scrapped

(124) ARG 28/9/94

JOSEPH ARANES
Staff Reporter

RESIDENTS of Tafelsig, Mitchell's Plain, are to launch a campaign to have their rent and rates arrears scrapped.

It will be spearheaded by a committee representing 20 community organisations, it was decided at a lively meeting last night organised by the newly constituted Tafelsig Co-ordinating Committee and attended by about 400 residents.

Joint co-ordinator of the committee James Kleinhans said Tafelsig was one of the most neglected areas of Mitchell's Plain and had a very high crime rate

"People are unemployed, children go to school hungry, houses are leaking and falling apart, yet the city council demands we pay high rents and rates knowing the majority of people cannot afford it," Pastor Kleinhans said

"These and other issues have brought us together In the past we all worked in our own small organisations duplicating the work done by other organisations

"With this committee we hope to become a unified body and speak with one voice, and hopefully those in power will finally take notice of the suffering of the people," Pastor Kleinhans said

Colleague Mandisa Dlanjwa said nine organisations joined forces at the beginning of the month

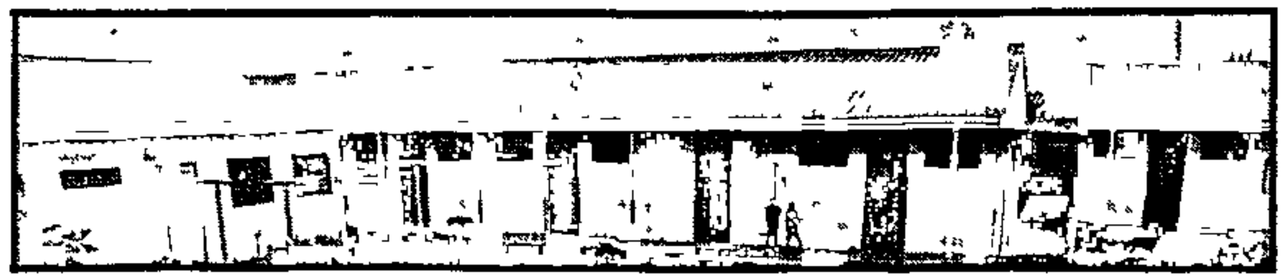
"Last week we held another meeting, 20 organisations turned up and this committee was formed. We will launch officially on October 22," she said.

"The council can't expect us to pay our accounts if we are unemployed Where must we get the money from", said a resident

☐ Squatters face eviction over electricity bills

Tension as coloured families move into hostel for Africans

ARG 28/9/94 (124)



THIS IS HOME: The Hillsight hostel complex in Grabouw

Pictures: LEON MULLER, The Argus

JUST ARRIVED: Illegal tenant Marianna Strauss, below, a mother of one, on the bed in her room at the hostel complex The hostels were earmarked for African squatters whose shacks were destroyed in a fire

VUYO BAVUMA
Political Staff

TENSION is simmering in Grabouw after 45 coloured families moved into a hostel complex allocated to African squatters whose houses were destroyed in an inferno

The squatters are now staying at the Myezo High School complex, but are facing eviction because of increasing electricity bills

The squatters became destitute after their shacks were destroyed by a fire in the Waterworks settlement last month

They were temporarily housed at the school while the authorities upgraded the disused Hillsight hostel

But last Thursday the coloured families moved in and have refused to budge

They said they were desperate for accommodation and had suffered under the previous apartheid government.

They said the African squatters could return to the homelands where they owned large tracts of land

At the weekend the squatters asked police to increase patrols in the area because they feared attacks after several people were arrested for vandalising their hostels

Meanwhile, a meeting yesterday attended by representatives from organisations, including the Peace Committee and the Grabouw Advice Office, resolved to ask the government to upgrade another section of the Hillsight hostel

Squatter Thanto Abeila, whose shack was destroyed in the fire, said he was desperate to move into his rightful place

It was ironic, he said, that most of the coloured peeople came from nearby location Pineview where their houses were a "far cry from the squatters' shacks"

"The invaders are being opportunistic and are now causing difficulties for us Last week we had a meeting with their representatives, but they refused to accept our case

"But we won't give up the struggle to move back into our places"

Mother of two Daphne Jansen, 60, one of the illegal tenants, said she had been on the waiting list for a very long time

Under the previous government, she and her family had experienced "a lot of hardship" while they stayed in a garage, but they now felt free, she said.

Another tenant, Marianna Strauss, said she was tired of staying in a one-roomed backyard house that used to become waterlogged on rainy days

She said she knew she had moved into the area at her own risk, but was desperate for the accommodation.

September 30 to October 4 1994

Squatters save for their own houses

Southeaster (suppl to South)

BY SABATA NGCAI

EXCITED squatter residents from Khayelitsha last week unveiled a model of a two-bedroom house they plan to build from their savings.

The residents formed the Victoria Mxenge Housing Development Association two years ago and have been saving since then for their own houses

Other communities were invited to view the model so that they could follow the example in their areas

The exhibition was a dream come true for the squatters who have been saving a required minimum of five cents a day — and accumulated more than R19 000

The 286 residents, who are mostly women, have been saving since 1992 Most of them are unemployed

The association's co-ordinator, Mrs Pat Matolengwe, said the wooden model had been made life-size so that residents could complain if they were not satisfied with the size of the house

The model was furnished so that people could see "a real" house

Mrs Matolengwe said that a two-bedroomed house would cost about R18 000 and a three-bedroomed one R20 000 30/9 - 4/10/94

"This is just an estimate," Mrs Matolengwe said (124)

She said the houses are inexpensive because they would be built by the people themselves

The association's members are trained and qualified bricklayers They have already made more than 2 000 cement blocks and roof tiles

Each four-roomed house will need about 1 800 blocks The association members started making cement blocks a few weeks ago, at a minimum of 200 a day

They work in shifts — 20 people a day make 25 blocks each

Mrs Matolengwe said they hoped to use the government subsidy, their savings and loans to buy the houses

The association has secured a five-hectare piece of land in Philippi where they will build houses for 203 families The other families have chosen not to move from Khayelitsha

They are also negotiating with the Cape Provincial Administration to have sewerage pipes and other services installed on the land before they start building

WORKING TOGETHER: 20 workers make 25 concrete blocks each day to produce the 1 800 blocks needed per house

Warning over rent arrears

THE scrapping of rental arrears and service charges had to be addressed with the greatest circumspection, ANC head of local government in the Western Cape Mr David Dlali said yesterday

He said the scrapping of arrears would be considered sympathetically, but it was short-sighted to debate the issue while new local government structures were still being debated — Sapa

Mofokeng fights irregularities

JOHANNESBURG. — PWV Local Government and Housing Minister Mr Dan Mofokeng promised yesterday to fight financial irregularities in local governments.

This included white areas where mayors and other officials were getting 100% salary increases, he told the PWV standing committee on local government and housing.

"We must sit down and tell those guys 'no way'," he said — Sapa

(124)

City Council owed over R200m arrears

CT 30/9/94

Municipal Reporter

MORE than R200 million is owed to the Cape Town City Council for electricity, water, rates, rentals and other services.

The council heard yesterday that the R200m included the arrears owed by black local authorities (BLAs) for council services.

The BLA arrears, which make up most of the R65,8m in the "sundry debtors" account, will be paid by the government. Electricity arrears are almost R60m.

Delft residents kick up storm over houses

ARG 7/10/94 (124)

Kriel, Morkel attacked for praising scheme

JOSEPH ARANES
Staff Reporter

THREE months after gale-force winds ripped the roofs off 22 houses and damaged other houses in Eindhoven, Delft, residents are still kicking up a storm about a lack of action from housing authorities

Residents have lashed out at Western Cape Premier Hernus Kriel and Housing Minister Gerald Morkel for touring the area and praising post-storm repair work and the Delft development as a whole

Weeks ago residents refused to let repair teams fix their "matchbox" houses, saying it was not possible to nail back a roof if the walls were rotten

Most of the houses consist of a living room, toilet and tiny kitchen Each house has only one tap which is in the toilet and which is also the source of water for cooking and other uses

Eindhoven mother of five Lydia Jansen said Mr Kriel and Mr Morkel had visited the area unannounced to inspect the repair work but had never reported back to the people on the findings of a government task team that had investigated all aspects of the sprawling, low-cost housing scheme.

"After inspecting the damage caused by the storm, President Nelson Mandela and Mr Slovo said the scheme was a disaster, the houses were built like pigsties and were cement tombs

"They appointed a task group to find out why the storm had damaged the house and after we gave our views on the subject, were promised they would report back to us

"Instead repair crews are in the area patching up the damaged houses This is not a solution because when the next storm comes our homes will be ruined again"

Mrs Jansen said her family had no privacy as all of them slept in the living room

"If they can just build a bedroom for us, put a sink in the kitchen and a bath or shower in the toilet, I am sure people will only be too happy to pay their accounts"

Lavona Felix, deputy chairwoman of the area's housing crisis committee, said despite numerous meetings with different authorities, nothing had been done about housing problems in the area

"We marched on parliament, gave inputs to the task group and met with all the relevant ministers but to no avail

"We are still forced to live under these inhumane conditions and although all the politicians condemned the housing scheme none lifted a finger to set it straight"

Mrs Jansen said everybody wanted them to shut up and be content with their houses but they would make a noise about it until they were given a decent house which they could call home

Grabouw residents show their anger

(124) ARG 7/10/94

ROGER FRIEDMAN
Staff Reporter

GRABOUW residents spent the night at the town's municipal offices and have vowed to continue protesting until two top officials resign or the transitional town council is in place

The first meeting of the already-elected transitional council made up of 10 councillors from statutory bodies and 10 from non-statutory bodies has been pencilled in for next Wednesday Transitional councils were meant to assume power on October 1

Neither town clerk of 30 years Valdor Dudley nor housing official Hendrick Greeff were at the municipal offices yesterday to respond to calls for their immediate resignation

Deputy town clerk Ian van Rensburg said all other officials had been told to go home when the protesters arrived

Outside the offices, however, newly-elected councillors attempted to keep a crowd of about 300 protesters calm

They had their hands full as a "ghetto-blaster" placed on the municipal steps pumped out disco and demonstrators performed the town-and-country version of the toyi-toyi

Mr Dennis Marinus — a councillor, president of the Grabouw Community Organisation and chairman of the Cape Areas Housing Action Committee — said the demand for the officials' resignation was non-negotiable

Mr Dudley had been town clerk since the advent of the Group Areas Act and Mr Greeff was responsible for housing in the area — a major cause of crisis in the community

Mr Marinus said that since 1965, when 314 sub-economic houses were built, there had been no further developments

Grabouw needed about 5 000 such houses urgently as people had poured into the town from neighbouring farms since the scrapping of influx control

Other demands of the community were that the municipality

- Scrap rent arrears as councils in historically-black areas had been instructed to do by central government,
- Scrap the R21 water surcharge added to monthly water accounts, and
- Transfer ownership of sub-economic houses to their present tenants

Mr Van Rensburg estimated the housing shortage to be around 3 000 units compared to Mr Marinus's 5 000

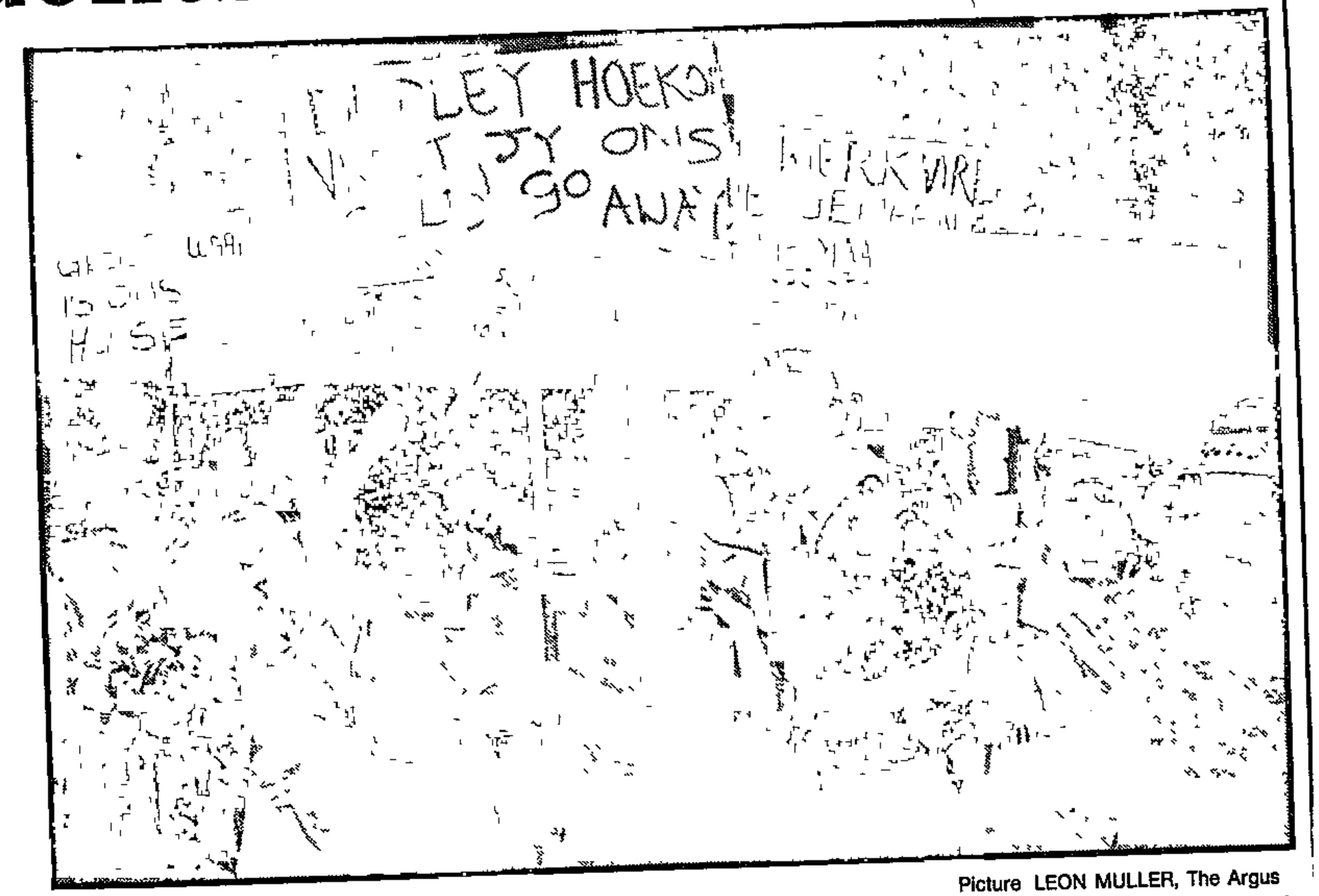
On the water surcharge, he said this was an issue for the new council On the transfer of houses, the municipality was keen to transfer ownership but was awaiting go-ahead from the province to transfer without charging water and sewerage connection fees

He added that the province had made 1 250 plots available to Grabouw's poor, 441 of which were waiting allocation

An "informal" meeting of the new council was hastily arranged for last night Ten of the 20 new councillors met a delegation from the Grabouw Community Organisation

It was decided to send a fax to Peter Marais, regional minister of local government and development, demanding his urgent attendance at a meeting in Grabouw

He did not want to comment on calls for the heads of Mr Dudley and Mr Greeff



Picture LEON MULLER, The Argus

GET OUT: Grabouw residents demand the resignation of the town clerk Valdor Dudley and town official in charge of housing Hennie Greeff.

R1,67-bn boost for families in squalor

(124) ARG 8/10/94

TOM HOOD

MORE than 36 000 families living in squalor near Cape Town will soon benefit from a R1,67 billion housing and development scheme, says provincial Housing Minister Gerald Morkel.

The huge serviced land project was aimed at alleviating the plight of shack, yard and hostel dwellers, he said

Not only would houses be built but schools, libraries, clinics and day hospitals would also be provided

Areas targeted for this development were Crossroads, Philippi East, Miller's Camp, Delft, Weltevreden Valley, Langa and KCT

About 181 000 families in the Western Cape were in dire need of affordable housing, he said "This figure increases almost daily as new arrivals come to the Cape in search of a better life"

Mr Morkel, who spoke at an exhibition to mark the opening of the Cape Technikon's housing unit, said he supported national Housing Minister Joe Slovo's proposal of incremental housing provision

Housing ministers of other provinces were reported to have disagreed with the proposal

This idea had been applied in South Africa and elsewhere for centuries, said Mr Morkel A family extended its accommodation in accordance with affordability and resources

"In view of the extremely limited resources for housing and tremendous demand, it is wise to spread the funds as widely as possible to ensure a sustainable housing delivery process can be maintained

"I support the incremental housing delivery approach provided it is underpinned by a structured technical financial support system"

An incremental housing strategy envisaged by his department reflected a commitment to the reconstruction and development programme in that it was people-centred and community-driven

It must be accompanied by a resource centre or housing bureau where people were helped over time to extend and complete their houses

R84 m bill shock for ratepayers

S/Times [C/Metro]

CAPE TOWN ratepayers are facing a shock debt of R84-million as a result of the non-payment of monthly service fees by the Peninsula's three black local authorities.

And the city's ratepayers could be hit with increased charges for rates, electricity, water and other services to recoup the losses, which are increasing at an estimated rate of R4 775 000 a month, according to a confidential city council document in Cape Metro's possession

The money "must be found by all legal means and that can only mean increased service charges," a well-placed local government source said

By the end of April the arrears of Ikapa municipality, Lingelethu West City Council and Mfuleni Town Council for bulk water, electricity, sewerage, fire protection, community services and health services stood at R40 824 00

By the end of this year the loss to the city in unpaid services would amount to a staggering R84-million.

The council does not budget for a deficit and the R84-million would have to be recovered by increased taxes, an informed source said yesterday Already Milnerton, which buys its bulk water from Cape Town, has been warned to brace itself for a 30 percent increase in water charges next year.

Ikapa's monthly services bill is R3 415 000, while those of Lingelethu and Mfuleni are R1,3 million and R600 000 for monthly bulk water supplies alone.

Disaster

Meanwhile, it has been learnt that the Cape Town City Council and 24 smaller Western Cape local authorities have invested a total of R47-million in the failed Prima Bank. As a result Cape Town stands to lose R2 million.

Prima, which was placed under curatorship in May, has been declared unable to repay R190-million of the R218-million owed to creditors and deposi-

9/10/94

By NORMAN WEST
Political Reporter

tors If funds invested by the 24 local authorities are irretrievably lost — and all signs indicate this will happen — they will be forced to find a way to recoup these losses

The Prima Bank investment could spell disaster for a small town like Piketberg, which "has put most of its eggs in the Prima Bank basket"

(124)

Piketberg and many of the other smaller towns which invested with Prima depend on interest for their financial survival The bank has been unable to pay interest on deposits since July 1

Mr Pieter Marais, regional Minister of Local Government, yesterday confirmed that three weeks ago the Cape Town City Council had asked him to use his influence with the Reserve Bank to help save the investments

Mr Marais agreed to do so, but the Reserve Bank has refused to intervene The Reserve Bank made

To page 3

Progress slow on rent debt

By NAZEEM HOWA (124)

DEBT collectors appointed by the city council have failed to make a significant impact on its R11,6-million outstanding rental arrears.

Latest figures reveal that rental arrears presently total almost half of the council's annual income from tenants.

The figures show that lawyers appointed by the council to collect arrears have brought in R390 000 since the beginning of the year For the month of August, council debt collectors have recovered only R1 460 in outstanding rents.

However, the council has handed over to debt collectors 585 of the 23 261 tenants who are in arrears

Council spokesman Ted Doman said this week that only those tenants who could afford to pay but refused to do so were being handed over.

"We opted not to go for the eviction process as this can cost up to R800 a tenant. We've found the 25 percent commission claimed by the debt collectors to be a more viable option," Mr Doman said.

The drain on council revenues caused by the outstanding rents was presently being covered by a subsidy from the rates account, he said

Rows flush building of Villiersdorp toilets

South

FIGHTING between Villiersdorp squatters and the municipality has halted the building of urgently needed toilets and the R1 million raised by civics to build houses has been frozen because of similar squabbles

Residents have started protesting

Local ANC chairperson Mr Thomas Jansen and town clerk Mr Johan Serfontein agree flush toilets are needed 7110 - 11/10/94

Jansen said the ANC had helped to raise the money and wanted at least 200 toilets Serfontein denied this and said there was only enough money to lay the sewerage and build 20 toilets

The ANC refused to accept this and the contractor left without building any toilets (124)

Another row regards the allocation of land The civics have raised R1 million to build houses but cannot start until they get land

There are 52 plots in one area and 144 in another in the town which were serviced with a loan from the former House of Representatives

Jansen said "The council wants us to pay R14 000 for the land We refuse because it's not worth that and they didn't service it"

But Serfontein denied this, saying "The loan must be paid back to the provincial government now that the House doesn't exist."

R284 m arrears: rates hike looms

S/Times [C/Metro]

THE Cape Town City Council has an arrears debt burden of R284-million — and ratepayers of all Peninsula local authorities which buy services from the city could face huge rates hikes to recover the money.

By NORMAN WEST
Political Reporter

(124)

"Should the matter not improve dramatically in the immediate future we will be forced to raise the costs of electricity, water and other services by as much as 30 percent," the head of Cape Town's executive committee, Arthur Wienburg, warned this week

The R284-million debt includes R84-million owed to the council for services supplied to three Black Local Authorities (BLAs) — Ikapa, Lingulethu West and Mfuleni Town Council — which was first revealed by Cape Metro last week.

It also includes R24 386 000 in outstanding rates owed to the council by central goverment for 1 400 government properties in the city, which was due for payment on September 30 this year

"The position is extremely serious," he said

"It would be unreasonable for other local authorities to expect Cape Town to bear the full burden of the amount owing by the BLAs while they (the other local authorities) do not meet their share of financial responsibilities," Mr Wienburg said

The council had also not yet received R24-million which the Department of Provincial Affairs and Constitutional Development agreed to pay towards a debt of R33,4-million owed by the BLAs up to January 20 this year

"Our information is that central government had approved the payment of the R24-million towards the debt of the BLAs, but this amount remains outstanding," Mr Wienburg said 16/10/94

"What is worrying, though, is that we have had no assurances from central or provincial government that money owed to us by the BLAs after January 20 will be paid at all," he said

Outstanding arrears in terms of days total 82 in former coloured sub-economic areas, 480 days in Langa and Guguletu and 36 days in the rest of the city

Yet in Langa and Guguletu, only 3,77 percent of the defaulters were disconnected

In previously coloured sub-economic areas 10,96 of defaulters were disconnected while in the rest of the city — where the arrears are lowest — 17,60 percent of defaulters were disconnected

The total percentage of arrears for electricity in the Langa and Guguletu for July and August amounted to 1 648 percent, while in coloured sub-economic schemes the figure was 192 percent, compared to 41 percent in the rest of the city

Asked if this indicated that traditionally white areas were being seen as "soft targets", Mr Wienburg said "Regrettably that would be a correct assumption

"I am aware of it and have raised the matter with the appropriate officials with a view to giving the matter urgent attention," he said

Morkel acts on housing

CT 17/10/94 (124)

Bill calls for wider powers

MAGGIE ROWLEY
Property Editor

WESTERN CAPE Housing Minister Mr Gerald Morkel is proposing legislation to give himself executive powers over housing in the province

The proposed Housing Bill is aimed at overcoming delays in the devolution of power from the government to provincial legislatures which has prevented provincial housing ministers "from carrying out the housing function"

It provides for powers assigned to the National Minister of Housing in terms of the Housing Arrangements Act 1993 to be assigned to the Western Cape Minister of Housing and for the dissolution of the existing Regional Housing Board

The draft bill, which has been approved in principle by the Western Cape legislature and is to be advertised shortly, stresses it is "an enabling mechanism" to facilitate policy-making

"While policy is being made it will also enable the province to perform the housing function and administer housing in the province, thereby ending the present anomalous position whereby executive functions still lie with the National Minister of Housing"

It further argues that in terms of Schedule 6 of the Constitution, housing is a provincial function but that existing housing legislation assigns all powers and duties to the National Housing Minister and this would need to be amended before any powers could be assigned to the provincial minister

The alternative course now proposed by Mr Morkel is to adopt legislation in the Western Cape in order to obtain the necessary powers

The main features of the proposed Housing Bill include the establishment of a Housing Board to replace the Regional Housing Board which was established in terms of the Housing Arrangement Act and falls under the National Housing Board and National Housing Minister

This new Housing Board would also take over the assets, liabilities and rights and obligations of the National Housing Board in the Western Cape

It will consist of up to 12 members experienced in housing matters who will be appointed by the minister Of these, seven will be appointed from nomination lists provided by special interest groups including women's rights, local government, the financial sector, the construction industry, property development, community-based organisations with specific interest in housing and welfare agencies

Provision is also made for the establishment of the province's own Housing Fund which will control all funds emanating from assets and appropriations from provincial and national legislatures

The draft Housing Bill is to be sent to a standing committee and is expected to come before the provincial legislature on November 14

Driftsands waits for peace while political fortunes rise and fall

☐ 'We want the Provincial Administration to do what they said they would do'

DRIFTSANDS is one of the smallest communities on the Cape Flats, a settlement whose neat, structured appearance gives it an air of enviable calm. But in the past year Driftsands residents have found themselves at the very nexus of the tough, sometimes bitter, political competition in the Western Cape between the National Party and the African National Congress. Political Correspondent MICHAEL MORRIS reports.

(124) ARG 18/10/94

ZODAA Tika is an old hand at dealing with life on the Cape Flats

She settled in Crossroads in the 1980s and, for a decade, has contended with the comings and goings of umpteen leaders, and the rising and falling fortunes of their factions

Now she has had enough of all that She wants to live in a community that is peaceful and has facilities for a better life

As a member of the Driftsands Residents' Committee, Ms Tika s sentiments closely match those of the community s other 500-odd inhabitants

But their perception is that even in the new South Africa, it is the comings and goings of political leaders that are decisive

In fact, it may not be as simple — or as hopeless — as that It is probably true of development everywhere that it is slow and complex Fund applications have to be made, budgets approved, priorities established

Nevertheless the community feels that politics, rather than need, is the chief determinant in how soon they can expect things to change for the better

A few months ago Driftsands was in the news because some residents were burning down each other's houses

At the heart of it was bitter competition between a National Party faction led by provincial legislator Johnson Ngxobongwana and ANC and Pan Africanist Congress rivals

PLAYTIME: Driftsands children gather outside the temporary crèche, damaged during the recent conflict between rival political groupings

When the conflict came to a head in August, Mr Ngxobongwana and his 40 or 50 followers left Driftsands and eventually resettled nearby

Since then, there has been peace in the community, but residents claim development has come to a standstill

Their perception is that the Provincial Administration — and its Nationalist political leadership — has turned its back on Driftsands precisely because the NP element moved out, dropping what the residents believed was a strategy to turn the settlement into a "model" NP township, for image-building purposes

Provincial development officer Molliat Mfeketo said he had been told by his superiors to "work through" Mr Ngxobongwana and no-one else

He said his objections to this — and warnings that Mr Ngxobongwana's presence in the community was the source of friction — fell on deaf ears

He said he was eventually told not to work in Driftsands

The Provincial Administration rejects suggestions of political bias in its approach to Driftsands, and says Mr Mfeketo was instructed to "concentrate his energies on other communities — Wallacedene and Bloekombos — long before tension developed at Driftsands"

Ms Tika said "Mr Nxgobongwana tried to force people to join the National Party and he used to say that if they didn't, everything (development) will stop

"Now we want the Provincial Administration to come back and do what they said they would do"

She said they had been told the school and crèche would be upgraded, a community hall would be built and a community garden laid out

"Now, nothing is happening"

The Provincial Administration denies that development plans have been altered for political reasons

A Housing Ministry spokesman said in response

- The upgrading of the school needed to be done by the Education Department in close co-operation with the Serviced Land Project
- An application had been made to fund the relocation of the crèche
- An application for funds to build a community hall had been lodged with the Regional Housing Board, and that funds "have been made available" for the training of people in the community to help build it, but that training could begin only once the project finance was approved
- That Food Gardens Unlimited had conducted a series of training programmes in the community to prepare for the launch of a community garden Development of the garden, however, had been retarded by political tension in Driftsands

But the spokesman acknowledged that "tensions in the community have a destabilising effect on all development projects" and that there are "many examples where tension has either halted or retarded development"

Conflicting claims about events in Driftsands are unlikely to be settled openly — not least because of the political sensitivities involved

But now that peace has returned to Driftsands, the community is anxious for a practical indication that development will resume, and that the departure of the NP contingent will have no bearing on that

Pictures: LEON MULLER, The Argus

STRIFE DAMAGE: Driftsands Residents' Committee member Zodaa Tika points to black plastic used to fill a window of the Driftsands crèche.

Council toughens stand on services

ARG 18/10/94 (124)

☐ Letters of demand to go to non-payers

JOSEPH ARANES
Staff Reporter

THE city council is toughening its stand on non-payment of service charges in informal settlements and is laying blanket charges with police to prevent squatters from building unpermitted shacks on council land.

At a meeting yesterday the council's housing committee decided to send letters to families in Tafelsig's Area L — the "Lost City" — demanding they pay their service charges

The meeting also heard that a blanket charge had been laid with the police in an attempt to prevent Langa squatters from setting up structures on council land

The residents of Area L, who were housed there after they were evicted from houses they illegally occupied in Tafelsig earlier this year, agreed to pay the R15 a month for service charges. The shacks were built using materials supplied by the council

But to date no payment has been received from the residents and they owe the council more than R23 000.

Councillor Isobel Edelstein said this was unacceptable given the fact that the residents themselves had agreed to pay.

Councillor Joye Gibbs added. "We can't negotiate with the community — we must deal with the individuals as this is a financial issue which must be paid individually"

Chairman of the committee Neil Ross said all the Area L residents had been given letters outlining the agreement and demanding payment

"We will send them another letter demanding payment and these do go to individuals. The problem is that some want to pay but there are members of a more militant group who want to pay nothing"

Lesley Langenhoven, a member of the Athlone, Rylands, Scotsche Kloof and Woodstock management committee, raised the question of shacks being erected on the Langa side of Vanguard Drive and said every day more shacks were being put up

"Already there are problems with cattle running across the road and causing serious accidents

"People in Bonteheuwel were also concerned that crime in their area might increase with the influx of squatters on their doorstep"

Housing committee member Hugh Paton said all the shacks were being erected on land which belonged to the Ikapa town council and not on the city council side of the boundary

"But we are monitoring the situation very closely and have laid a blanket charge with the police should shacks be erected on our side"

Mrs Gibbs said a similar situation was developing in Constantia along the Steenberg Road and suggested that the council inform the Western Cape Regional Services Council about the problem as the land belonged to the RSC.

The committee decided to send letters to the RSC and to Ikapa telling them the situation was unacceptable.

Grabouw protesters 'furious'

(124)

CT 19/10/94

Staff Reporter

PROTESTERS yesterday left the Grabouw municipal offices briefly after a two-week sit-in there — but re-occupied the building in a furious reaction on hearing that the town clerk, whose resignation they demanded, had returned to work.

Services to the Overberg town were resumed briefly yesterday morning after the protesters and the town's transitional council agreed to call a truce on the local housing crisis and protesters who have been occupying the building for two weeks, moved out.

But the peace was short-lived, said a spokesman for the Grabouw Community Organisation (Graco) "When we heard that the town clerk had returned to his office, we re-occupied the building."

The Graco protesters are demanding that new houses be built, that their rental arrears be scrapped, that the new transitional council be re-elected and that the mayor, the health inspector and the town clerk, Mr Valdor Dudley, all resign at once.

The protesters feel Mr Dudley did nothing to alleviate the housing shortage in Grabouw's Pinedene township in more than 30 years on the old town council.

The office of local Housing Minister Mr Gerald Morkel confirmed he would visit Grabouw next Tuesday to attempt to sort out the grievances.

Housing shock for Cape families

We can't deliver on promises made at election time, says minister

(124) ARG 19/10/94

CLIVE SAWYER
Political Correspondent

INADEQUATE government subsidies and high construction costs threaten to dash hopes of housing for thousands in the Western Cape.

Provincial housing minister Gerald Morkel has warned that "site and service" schemes, or at best starter housing, is the most people can expect unless subsidies are increased to meet the high costs of construction in the Western Cape.

Mr Morkel was one of nine provincial housing ministers who gave evidence today to the national parliamentary select committee on housing

He said expectations about the supply of housing were rising, fuelled by election promises, but funds were limited

Expressing frustration at the continuing delay in devolving power over housing from central to provincial government, Mr Morkel said to be called regional minister for housing was a misnomer

He said bills were being prepared for submission to the Western Cape legislature next month on housing, including draft legislation on housing in rural areas

Outlining the huge demand for housing in the Western Cape, he said 35 000 "units" would have to be built every year merely to cope with population growth

Urbanisation was at a rate of 5 000 people a month

Mr Morkel said his government strongly supported an "incremental" approach to housing, which meant providing the basics and encouraging people to add to this

"South Africa must be told the truth, the (election) promise of four-bedroom homes for all is not achievable now or even in the distant future"

In a clear reference to African National Congress electioneering, Mr Morkel said "People made promises on platforms and we cannot deliver"

The R119 million allocation for housing in the province meant there was a R65 million shortfall on projects approved in the past financial year

The Western Cape had 50 000 serviced plots ready for development but private developers were not interested because of "red-lining" by financiers

Mr Morkel asked the committee to go out of its way to ensure enough money for housing was given to all nine provinces

The state should fund resource centres to teach people skills to "incrementally" improve their housing

He said he did not believe that with the money available the province would be able to move away from site and service

Mr Morkel also lashed out at the politicisation of the huge storm on June 29 which flooded large parts of the Cape Flats and damaged low-cost housing at Delft

He said the presidential task team which investigated the Delft issue had cost R320 000 for two weeks' work "And what did we really achieve?"

He called for densification of housing development, citing District Six as an example where people could be enabled to live close to the central city.

Delft: End evictions call by residents

124

ARG 20/10/94

NORMAN JOSEPH
Staff Reporter

ANGRY Delft residents are calling on the provincial administration of the Western Cape to end evictions of people who rented houses from legal owners.

More than 500 residents marched to the administration's information centre in Delft yesterday to protest against the owners telling "illegal" occupants to vacate their homes.

Residents were also demanding that local administration officials James Slabbert and Nico Rheede fulfil their promise that "illegal" occupants who had lived in their houses for more than four months, would be able to buy their homes from the administration. The legal owners' contracts would then be cancelled.

Wayne Koen, chairman of the South African National Civic Organisation (Sanco) in Delft, said all legal owners had houses elsewhere.

He said officials at the information centre — Mr Slabbert and Mr Rheede — recently sold houses to people who were not on the waiting lists.

Alarmed at the rising tension between "legals" and "illegals" in the past four weeks, legal owners have been hurrying to take possession of their homes, leaving more than 15 families homeless.

Meanwhile, several people were injured during scuffles yesterday with security guards outside the information centre.

Chaos broke out when residents demanded to see Mr Slabbert and Mr Rheede.

ANC media officer Yolanda Nel was treated for leg and hip injuries.

Coupons suggested for arrears

ANDREA WEISS
Municipal Reporter

(124)

ARG 20/10/94

A COUPON system for people who are too poor to pay for services might help to solve the arrears problem.

This is one of the proposals contained in a paper on urban water tariff policy at a conference of municipal engineers in Cape Town

Author Rolfe Eberhard of the Palmer Development Group said in his paper that water should not be provided free but a "life-line" or social tariff should be considered to accommodate the poor.

This tariff would be based on minimal payment for a set amount of water based on what was needed to maintain a healthy environment (about 30ℓ a person a day).

For the indigent, who passed a means test, a token system could be introduced.

The token would be used to "pay" the water agency, which in turn could redeem them from the relevant government department, possibly welfare.

Where people were dependent on standpipe supplies, water might have to be supplied free or water vending might be considered, because of the problems of charging users.

For those who used more water than the "life-line" amount, a rising rate tariff was proposed, so that the more used, the higher the rate paid.

Increases in tariffs should be implemented in small amounts over time and significant attention should be paid to consumer education, he said

Housing budget shockingly low

Sowetan 21/10 - 25/10/94

By Shannon Neill

"HORRENDOUSLY low" is how a spokesperson for regional ministry of housing, described the budget for the Western Cape This highlights the problem facing the department of housing and the City Council

Should available funds be used to build low-cost houses, possibly on the Delft model, or should funds be used to repair existing state-owned structures which are in many cases below standard?

The council-owned Sac-Pac Home project in Lavender Hill, is one of many areas which are in desperate need of repair

Known as "Sakkiesdorp" by residents, the houses are so damp that carpets, clothing, bedding and walls are rotting Most residents suffer from TB or have chronic chest and lung complaints

Residents complain that the council visits the houses, examines the problems and then disappears

Ms Evelyn van Rheede has lived in "Sakkiesdorp" for four years She pays R95 a month for rent and spent R150 to paint her mouldy home this year

Her youngest child had to be treated in hospital recently for a lung infection caused by the damp

"They're quick to put you out when you don't pay rent but they don't fix the place," she said

Council director of project management, Mr Hans Smit, admitted the council had almost no money to repair the properties it rented out.

The government provides money for building new houses and not for upgrading or repairing existing ones The council also has a minimal amount of money for repairs This is equivalent to about one percent of the historical building costs

"The Sac-Pac homes were part of a self-help project so the building costs were nothing — theoretically there is no money to repair them," said Smit

Two years ago the council estimated it would cost R60-million to repair the flats

The entire housing budget for the region for building and repairing existing structures is only R163-million although this might increase slightly later in the year

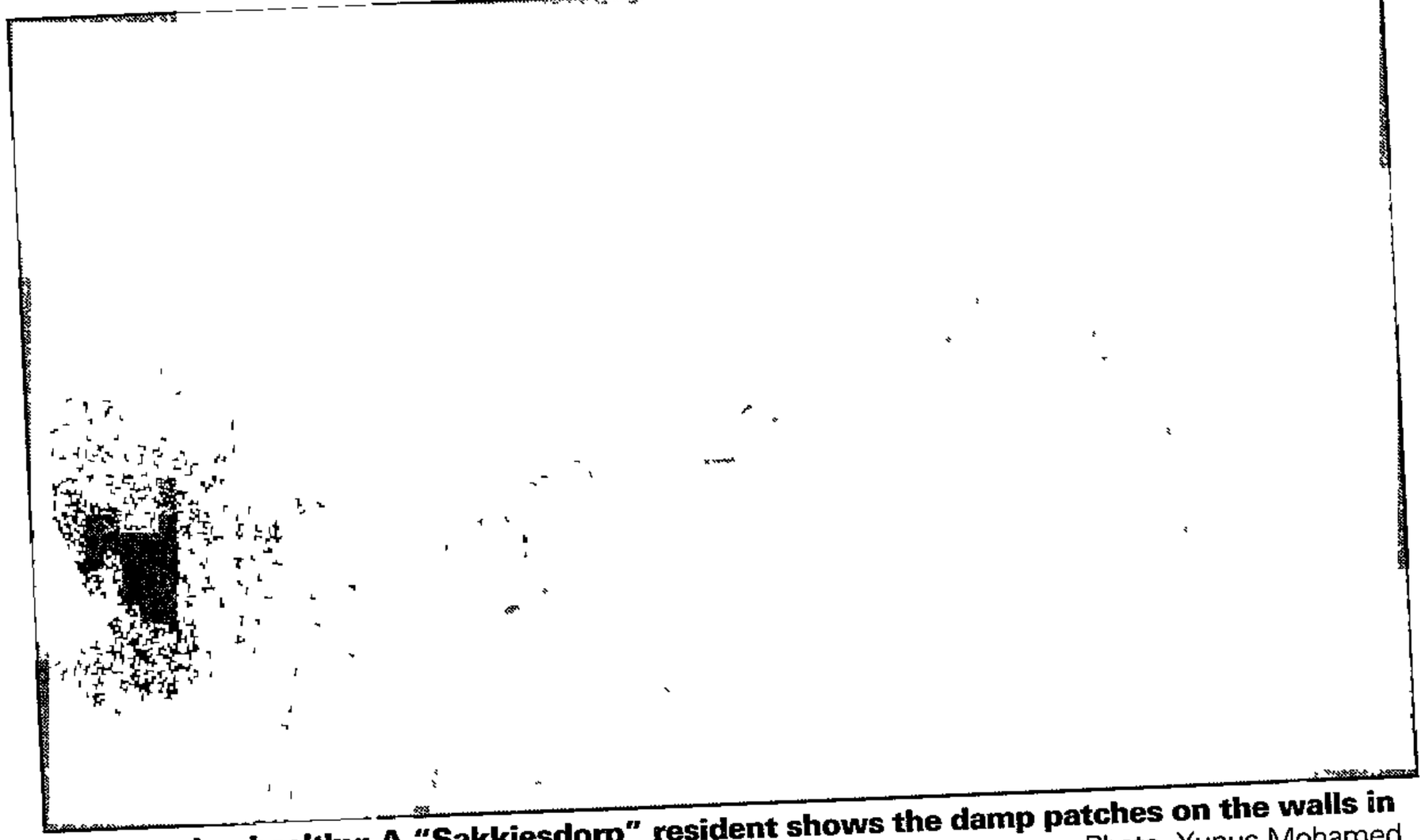
"We would like our entire housing stock to be of a feasible habitable standard in terms of health, safety and the surrounding environment The Sac-Pac homes and thousands of others need money spent on them and we just don't have the funds

(124)

"It's going to have to be addressed and the most feasible way would be through the RDP, which aims to redress the imbalances of the past and the lack of maintenance on the Cape Flats is an obvious imbalance," he said

Mr Sam Dodgen, spokesperson for housing minister, Mr Gerald Morkel, said the problem in housing was due to the lack of a national strategy "We can't allocate funds until there is a national strategy in place"

National Minister for Housing, Joe Slovo, may finalise a national housing strategy when he meets the regional ministers next week



Damp and unhealthy: A "Sakkiesdorp" resident shows the damp patches on the walls in her bedroom

Photo Yunus Mohamed

Delft evictions put off for now

EVICTIONS in Delft will be temporarily suspended, according to an agreement yesterday between the CPA, the ANC and the SA National Civics Organisation

Families sub-letting from legal tenants were evicted recently because their rents were not forwarded to the Regional Services Council

It was also agreed to set up a forum to look into the problem of illegal tenants and high rents — Sapa

CT 21/10/94

(124)

ARG 21/10/94

Meeting told Delft evictions are halted

(124)

NORMAN JOSEPH, Staff Reporter

EVICTIONS of "illegal" occupants in Delft have ended, with plans afoot to form a community forum representative of all political parties in the area.

At an emotionally charged two-hour meeting yesterday, James Slabbert, provincial administration housing director for Delft, announced no "illegal" occupant would be evicted either by staff of his office or by the "legal" tenants.

This week many Delft residents were forced to leave homes which they had been leasing from legal tenants who had failed to pass on the rents to the housing authorities.

Residents alleged more than 15 families had been evicted from their homes by legal tenants and Delft housing officials.

Recently letters were sent out — by the local office — to several "illegal" occupants, telling them to vacate their homes as "legal" occupants would be moving back into their houses

Yesterday's meeting was attended by at least 300 people — including members of the Delft African National Congress, South African Community Party, South African National Civics' Organisation and provincial administration officials.

As Mr Slabbert addressed residents and tried to answer questions, people shouted at him to stop evictions and letters to "illegal" occupants

After some heated exchanges with Rose Sonto, ANC housing representative in the Western Cape legislature, Mr Slabbert said to loud applause: "We are stopping evictions and transactions between 'legal' and 'illegal' occupants now.

"The community can start a new forum with new policies which I will support. I will forward it to the National Housing Board."

The meeting agreed that the forum would be formed "very soon".

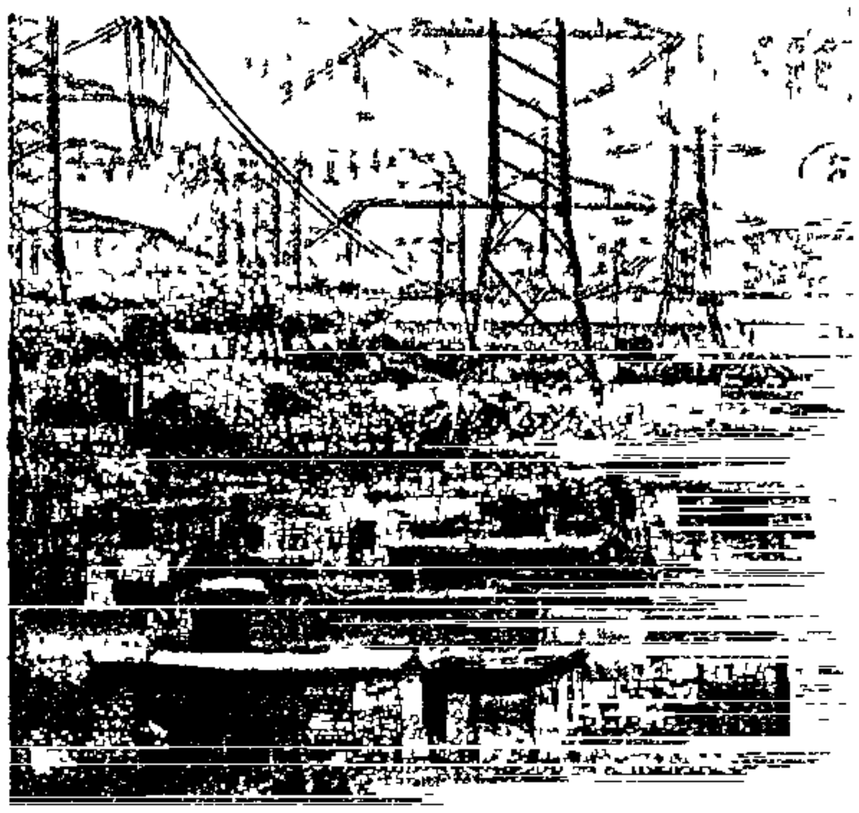
Mr Slabbert asked police to help illegal occupants who might face intimidation.

Delft station commander Jan Solomons agreed to instruct his staff on the issue.

Mr Slabbert said requests to sublet homes would be turned down.

BUSINESS AS USUAL: In spite of tensions over the presence of squatters on the fringes of Langa, life carries on at one of the two kiosks in the Jakkalsvlei Canal squatter camp.

WE WANT ACTION: Mandla Sizani, left, and Jongilanga Tshetsha want President Mandela and Housing Minister Joe Slovo to visit them and address their needs



UNPLUGGED: The Jakkalsvlei Canal squatters can hear

Housing rov

MXOLISI MGXASHE
Staff Reporter

THREATS of violence are marking a growing row between Langa residents and squatters who have set up home on the fringes of the township along the Jakkalsvlei Canal

Langa residents say squatters are adding to health and social problems in the area, while the squatters say they have nowhere else to go and that the government should pay attention to their plight.

The squatters, who have no access to toilets, have been accused by Langa residents of soiling the adjacent Isilimela Comprehensive School grounds

The shack dwellers do not have water except for the dirty water in the canal, and they have to travel almost a kilometre for clean water for cooking and washing

Isilimela Comprehensive School principal Rose Maphayi said she was worried about a possible breakdown of discipline among pupils

"We do not have proper fencing and gates here Who knows? The students may visit the shacks and get mixed up with all kinds of things "And if some of the squatters decide to resort to selling drugs for their livelihood, that may become a big problem for the school," she said

At one stage pupils had had to be stopped from burning down shacks, Mrs Maphayi said

□ Threats c

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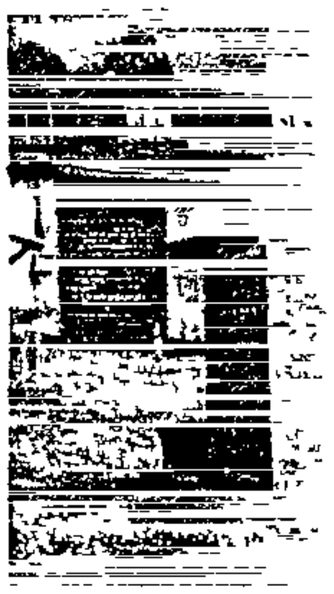

BULLDOZING TACTIC
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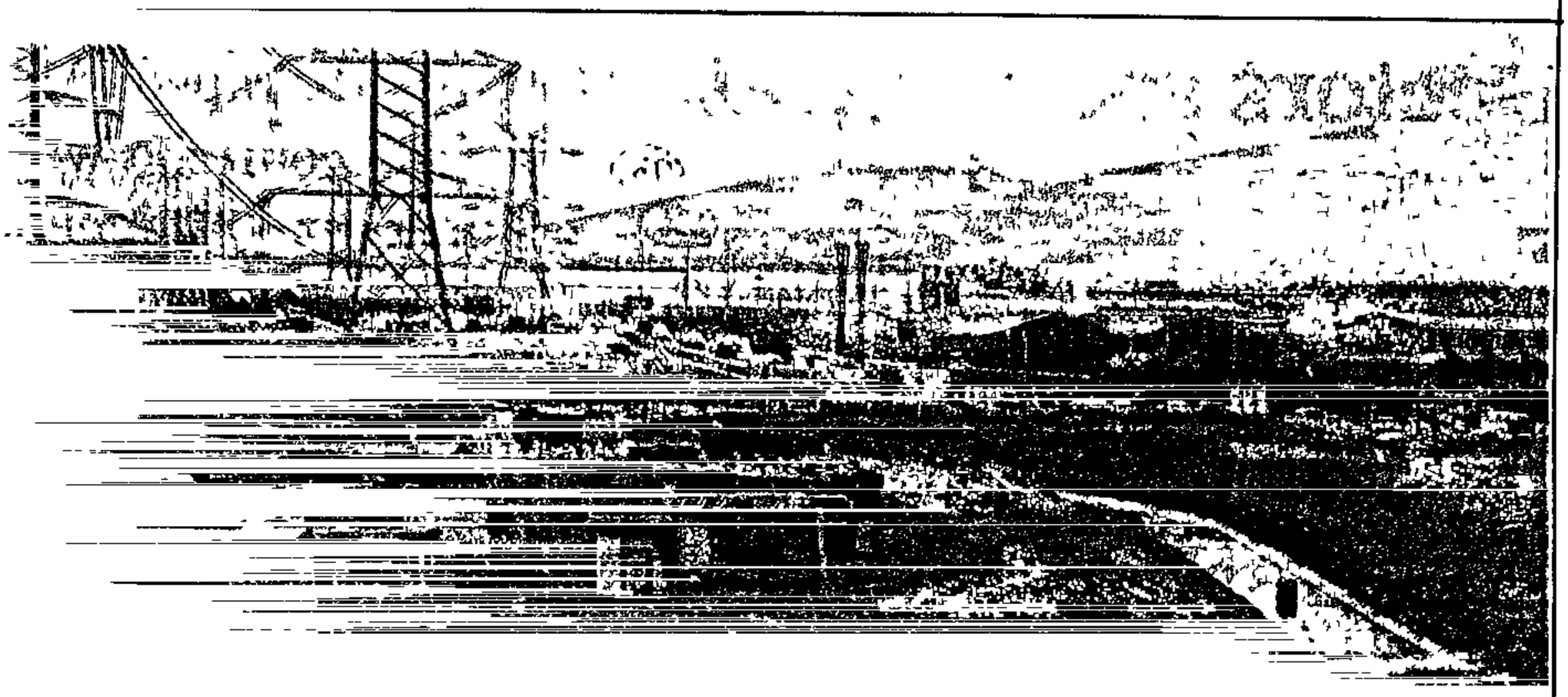

Pictures LEON MULLER, The Argus.

LUGGED: The Jakkalsvlei Canal squatters can hear electricity buzzing in the pylons over their camps but have no such comforts in their dwellings.

Housing row brews in Langa

(124) ARG 25/10/94

☐ Threats of violence over squatters

ISI MGXASHE
Reporter

ATS of violence are marking a growing row between residents and squatters have set up home on the of the township along the viei Canal.

nga residents say squatters are to health and social problems the area, while the squatters say have nowhere else to go and the government should pay to their plight

ne squatters, who have no access toilets, have been accused by residents of soiling the adja- Isilimela Comprehensive School

ne shack dwellers do not have except for the dirty water in canal, and they have to travel al- a kilometre for clean water for and washing.

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one stage pupils had had to be from burning down shacks, Maphayi said

Langa residents say if the squatters are allowed to settle permanently in the area, the township will become as "dirty and polluted" as most townships where shacks havebecome a normal feature

"Where did they come from?" asked a fuming Langa resident who did not want to be identified for fear of reprisals

"They must go back to wherever they came from We've been fighting this problem for a long time," she said, adding that the government must "sort out this mess now, otherwise there will be serious trouble"

A doctor said the squatter camp was a health hazard that highlighted the need for proper planning and the elimination of "unstructured housing development schemes"

"People can't live under these conditions indefinitely and wait for commissions to be appointed, study the situation and take years to come out with solutions," he said

Phyllis Fuku agreed, saying proper housing should be built, such as at Khayelitsha

This week squatters said they would rather confront Langa residents than leave the area

"President Mandela and Minister Joe Slovo must come here to sort out this problem, otherwise blood will spill," said Jongilanga Tshetsha and Mandla Sizani, who have been living in the area for four months

They had previously lived in shacks in the Zones area of Langa but moved out after several fires had destroyed their dwellings

They now share one room with six people

Some single-roomed shacks accommodate as many as eight to 10 people

Xolani Mbambo, who runs a small tavern frequented by most of the unemployed squatters, also believes violence will erupt if Langa residents insist on having them leave the camp

He called on the government to provide shack dwellers with clean water, toilets and other facilities

"We elected this government hoping that our lives would change, but nothing is changing and we are suffering Mandela must act now before it's too late," he said

BULLDOZING TACTICS: Construction continues along the Jakkalsvlei Canal while squatters insist on staying

THE CAPE

Delft residents threaten arson if housing demands are not met

JOSEPH ARANES
Municipal Staff

MORE than 30 members of the Delft Development Forum have taken over the Voorbrug community centre — threatening to set the building alight if the authorities do not move fast to sort out problems in houses caused by winter storm damage

The forum sent faxes yesterday to the offices of Western Cape Premier Hernus Kriel, Housing Minister Gerald Morkel and Police Minister Patrick McKenzie outlining their demands They have also demanded that Mr Morkel come to see them.

They are demanding an immediate answer from the government on the findings of the special task team which investigated winter storm damage to their houses

They also want a day hospital built in the area and seek the dissolution of the Delft management committee, whose members, they allege, are corrupt

Forum spokesman Harold Apollis said a meeting was held in the civic centre on Tuesday night and about 1 000 residents decided it was time to take action

"The residents decided on the occupation of the community centre and also gave us a mandate to use arson and to intimidate state workers, who want to work from the building, as means of settling the crisis.

"At 2pm yesterday, 150 of us occupied the centre and although we sent families with children home, the rest of us will remain in the building until we get a positive response from the ministers"

"But we will not allow any of those workers into the building until this matter is resolved," he said

(124) ARG 28/10/94

Delft residents end 2-day occupation

(124)

JOE ARANES
Weekend Argus Reporter

ARG 29/10/94

THE Delft residents who have been occupying the area's community centre for two days have left the building after receiving a faxed message from provincial Health Minister Ebrahim Rasool stating that he will meet them next week.

More than 30 residents, all members of the Delft Development Forum, occupied the centre to highlight the housing crisis in the area and threatened to torch the building if those in authority did not respond favourably to their demands.

The community wants the provincial Minister of Housing, Gerald Morkel, to tell them the findings of the task team appointed by President Mandela to investigate the damage caused to their houses by the winter storm.

They are also demanding that Mr Rasool convert the De Hague creche into a day hospital to help fight the increasing number of tuberculosis cases in the area.

Forum spokesman Harold Apollis said residents decided at a mass meeting to leave the building and to re-occupy it on Monday if the Mr Morkel failed to address their demands.

"Yesterday we sent a fax to Mr Rasool and although he was not in office, we were told he would meet a delegation of the forum next week."

Homeless but not helpless: The proof's in the roof

WM 30/9-6/10/94 (124)

Instead of depending on the government for a roof over their heads, a group of homeless women from Khayelitsha has started an innovative savings scheme. Justin Pearce reports

FOR the women of the Victoria Mxenge Savings Scheme, development starts with coins in a jam jar under the bed On Saturday, the group of 200 homeless women from Khayelitsha celebrated the first stage of their plan to build a neighbourhood from scratch they had levelled the land on a site donated by the Catholic Church at Philippi and built a life-size wood and canvas prototype house on it.

They were still a long way from having homes to move into, but the presence of a site and R19 000 in the bank were tributes to the tenacity of women who weren't prepared to wait around to be rescued by the reconstruction and development programme

The idea of this sort of scheme reached South Africa after an international conference of homeless people held in 1991, said savings scheme coordinator Patricia Matolengwe. "We realised we could not take for granted that the new government would be able to build houses for the poor " People at the conference looked at the example of India where "they have been free for 40 years but they still suffer homelessness" There savings schemes were developed as a way of giving the poorest people access to finance for their own homes.

In South Africa, as in India, banks refuse to grant housing loans to the lowest-income earners Banks claim that small loans are not worth the administrative costs, and distrust poor people's ability to manage money A savings scheme answers both these objections· it enables a loan to be made in the name of a community with a combined income sufficient to make the loan worthwhile, and it proves to the bank that the scheme's members can manage money effectively

To Matolengwe, the group is effective because it consists of women "We, as women, are responsible for the house We are the ones who experience the leaks and the burning of shacks We are responsible for the children's welfare "

For women who were tired of waiting for houses or site-and-service schemes, the Victoria Mxenge savings scheme provided a way to make a contribution towards improving their own circumstances, scraping together R19 000 in two years. In terms of planning, it is the most advanced of 165 similar schemes countrywide affilitated to the South African Homeless People's Federation (SAHPF)

Many of the women were unemployed, contributing to the project physically, if not financially The women themselves cleared the bush and levelled the land on the site. Four women volunteered to learn how to cast blocks and tiles from concrete, with the help of low-tech equipment supplied by a foreign donor.

Though a lot of money must still be raised, the fact that the project has got as far as it has is proof that the women are capable of managing their own financial and housing needs. Matolengwe hopes that this will count in their favour when they apply for loans

The housing subsidy system is skewed in favour of projects built by contractors, says Joel Bolnick of People's Dialogue, an NGO which acts for community-driven development schemes He cites the legal red tape which makes subsidies inaccessible to people who want to do their own building

Yet the figures prove that a contractor-built house is not cost-effective a budget researched by Victoria Mxenge members shows that, using their own building and design skills, they can build a two-bedroomed house for R10 000 — about half the price quoted by contractors for the same job

Another benefit of a scheme initiated and developed by a community is that it is driven by exact needs "We're not just saving money — we're determining when and where and what kind of houses will be built," Matolengwe says Top-down development fiascos such as the unused "toilet towns" are out of the question when people are making their own decisions about what they want.

Celebrations on completion of the first house PHOTOGRAPH NIC BOTHMA

People's Dialogue is overseeing the establishment of a rotating loan fund, based on the collected savings of SAHPF affiliates and state and donor funding Affiliates will be able to apply to borrow from it — each application being considered on the basis of the community's needs and its track record at managing money

There is a concern that the sight of homeless people seizing the initiative will absolve the state of responsibility for housing While promising co-operation with SAHPF, Western Cape housing minister Gerald Morkel — a National Party member — praised the women of Victoria Mxenge for "getting on with it" while "those people in the PWV are expecting handouts"

Matolengwe thinks the relationship between the provider and the needy should be allowed to change "If the government can support us, we are prepared to be the doers "

Reply to Franschhoek marchers

26 (124)

FRANSCHHOEK municipality is drawing up an eight-page response to a protest march last month in which community members presented reasons why they were unwilling to pay for services at present tariffs

Town clerk Mr Meyer Siebrits said yesterday there had been about 300 people in the march They claimed to represent the people of Franschhoek, but he doubted whether he had seen any white people among them, he said

The march had taken place on October 22 The following Thursday, a special council meeting had been held, at which the council had addressed itself to all the points on a memorandum handed in

CT 2/11/94

"We have agreed to quite a few points, including moving the clinic," he said

The protesters had wanted a transitional local council to be established, but this could not be done before the Premier had established the new boundaries of Franschhoek, which would be outside the Cape Town metropole

Members of the transitional council had already been selected, Mr Siebrits said

He confirmed that the marchers were still refusing to pay present service charges, saying that the tariffs were too high

"If you want the services you ask for, you must pay for them," he commented

Forum formed in Delft after stormy meeting

ARG 4/11/94 (124)

NORMAN JOSEPH
Staff Reporter

A STORMY meeting on housing problems in Eindhoven, Delft, attended by political figures and at least 200 people, almost ended in chaos before a community forum was formed

At one point an upset provincial Housing Minister Gerald Morkel, whose presence at the meeting was demanded by residents who had occupied the Voorbrug Community Centre, threatened to walk out

He was jeered and heckled several times. At one stage the meeting turned into total chaos, with racist remarks hurled at Mr Morkel after he said Eindhoven houses, damaged in winter storms, could not be extended but would be repaired

Chris Nissen, African National Congress leader in the Western Cape, repeatedly called for calm. Without Mr Nissen's presence the meeting almost certainly would not have continued

Mr Morkel announced that he was offering residents of Eindhoven — and the rest of Delft — a subsidy of R12 500 for each house, damaged or not

But Eindhoven residents would be offered a site in a new project to the west of the area where they could build a new house with the subsidy

"But this will be at your own risk as you have to take out some money from your own pocket"

Shouting to make himself heard, Mr Morkel said the national ministry would not channel reconstruction and development programme (RDP) funds for housing in Delft until a forum was in place which represented all the people in the area.

In reply to questions from residents, Mr Morkel said he might be forced to get a court interdict to stop people from interfering with builders repairing houses in Eindhoven

Representatives of 16 community and political organisations in Delft then set up the forum at the meeting in the town's information centre

Among those present were regional ANC housing official Rose Sonto, Delft housing director James Slabbert and his senior colleagues of the provincial administration

Last week more than 30 members of the Delft Development Forum staged a sit-in at the Voorbrug community centre, threatening to set the building alight if the authorities did not sort out Eindhoven's housing problems

More than 30 houses were damaged in the winter storms, leaving at least 400 people homeless

The organisations, which include the Delft ANC, Sanco, Communist Party, National Party, Delft Sports Board and the Delft Residents and Civics Association, have agreed to go back to their members with a constitution previously drawn up by House of Representatives official Koos Burger in his attempt to form a forum

Organisations not represented at the meeting would be allowed to join at the next meeting.

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Work together for good of all – Morkel

Pictures, LEON MÜLLER, Weekend Argus

☐ **HOME BREW:** Provincial Housing Minister Gerald Morkel takes a sip of the local brew at a shebeen while he visits Black City in Crossroads.

■ The Western Cape government says it is meeting its promises to the underpriviliged. But residents have been told to work together to ensure no one is left out.

(124) ARGUS 1/11/94

JOSEPH ARANES
Weekend Argus Reporter

COMMUNITIES must work together so government departments can deliver much-needed facilities and services to areas as a whole, provincial Housing Minister Gerald Morkel said on his tour of Black City in Crossroads.

The minister was visiting the area to check on projects which Western Cape Premier Hernus Kriel had promised to the community about two months ago

On that visit Mr Kriel told the residents he would provide them with more taps, toilets and construct a road leading to the squatter camp's creche.

Mr Morkel said yesterday he was proud to announce that the government of the Western Cape had kept its promises to the people because most of the work on the projects were completed

But a few metres away in another large shack area, no work had begun When the minister questioned this he was told the people there belonged to a different organisation and had to negotiate for themselves

"The government can't work like this . the communities must get together and start working together for the good of all its people.

"We cannot have a situation where a little section gets services and another part of the community gets none. We must end this strife in our areas that is dividing the community and must all hold hands or we will make no headway"

Mr Morkel told the community he would see if taps and toilets could be provided for the other section as well

During his walk in the dusty, windswept settlement the minister stopped and spoke to a number of residents and also went into a shebeen where he had a sip of locally brewed beer

☐ **SHOWN AROUND:** Black City residents committee members show Housing Minister Gerald Morkel the work being done in their area

End of 'one person, one plot' for Cape Town, say planners

(124)

□ 'Densification' the buzz word of the future

ARG 7/11/94

ANDREA WEISS
Municipal Reporter

CAPE Town will have to break out of its "one person, one plot" attitude towards living space if the city is to stop encroaching on valuable agricultural land on its fringes.

This is the view of councillors and planners who support the notion of "densification", a buzz word in planning circles which more often than not puts the wind up property owners.

Densification is the need to build more dwellings on less land available within the city — and there are different views on how this should be done while retaining enough recreational space

Two recent proposed developments — one in Lakeside, the other in Rondebosch East — were the subject of heated opposition from residents

While the former remains unresolved and the council's town planning committee is to make an on-site inspection, the latter appears to be heading for a resolution

The difference, according to Ron Kraybill of the Centre for Conflict Resolution, was the method employed in introducing the development to the community

In Rondebosch East, Mr Kraybill facilitated several community meetings to negotiate the development of former railway land by the non-profit company Newhco — and was initially faced with heated opposition

The method employed by developers in the past could be called the "fast/slow" approach, in that they usually presented complete plans to the city council for approval before the community was invited to comment through advertisements in the newspaper, he said

This meant that if there was resistance, the community could slow down the approval process, a situation in which everybody ended up the loser

By consulting widely within the community at the outset, developers could turn the process around and reach the kind of consensus they needed before submitting plans which would then be speedily approved

This would mean that developers would have to show a willingness to accommodate community concerns

In Rondebosch East, such a process was followed, and although plans have not yet been put before the town planning committee, there is only one objection at this stage

At several meetings within the community there was initially huge resistance to the project because many people believed it would lead to a drop in standards and create a slum on their doorstep

An important player in the process was also a representative of the city planning department who was able to explain to the community why there was a need for densification

A second important issue in the densification debate is what kind of development should be encouraged

Those developments which involve portioning out small plots with single dwellings on them are deemed by many planners to be extremely unfriendly, often presenting a hostile facade of garages and walls to the street

The preferred design is of a two or three-storey, low-rise development with adequate public space for children to play in

With more and more land being eyed for development following the political settlement in South Africa, densification is going to become even more of a buzz word in future

The challenge of how to pursue the ideal without making the city's built environment unliveable is one that will have to be shared between communities, planners and developers

ARG US 12-13/11/94

New deal for black farmers

MICHAEL MORRIS
Political Correspondent

THE first 26-plot scheme in the Western Cape's far-reaching initiative to get black farmers on to the land has been approved by the provincial cabinet

The R4,3 million small farms project on Sandkraal farm near Tembalethu township at George, approval of which follows extensive negotiations with the community, was announced yesterday by provincial Agriculture Minister Lampie Fick

Sandkraal was originally expropriated by the provincial housing authorities for residential development

However, prompted by the keenness of aspirant farmers in Tembalethu who had begun agricultural training under the parastatal Boskop training centre, Mr Fick's department saw Sandkraal as an ideal site for a small farmer settlement

The 355 hectare farm will be subdivided into plots ranging in size from three to nine hectares, some suitable for grazing and others for vegetable farming

A proper survey and the installation of irrigation, fencing, farm roads, electricity and a domestic water supply will probably begin in the new year

Negotiations are still expected between the agriculture and housing departments on the purchase price of the land, which is estimated to be about R2-million

Farmer training will begin in February

Applicants for the 26 plots will be judged according to their aptitude and level of training The successful applicants may buy (or lease, with the option to buy) their farms with loans from an agricultural credit board to be set up in terms of legislation due before the provincial parliament soon

Finance would be made available on the basis of the productive value of the land

"There are no handouts involved here These farms will run as economically viable units," Mr Fick said

Farming of the plots is expected to begin within about 18 months

Mr Fick said he envisaged a "contractor culture" developing in the community, "so that you will have a man with a tractor setting up a business to do the ploughing and someone else setting up a transport company to take the vegetables to the market"

Ultimately the community would be in a position to set up its own dairy

Souty

No say in arrears deduction

By Edwina Booysen

WORKERS at a state institution are up in arms because the government is deducting rent arrears from their salaries — leaving some with barely R200 a month take-home pay

The employees at Kraaifontein's De Novo Rehabilitation Centre are furious that their employer, the Cape Provincial Administration (CPA), has started deducting rent arrears without consulting them

"The community is upset about the way the CPA is going about the deductions," said Mr Samuel Arries, chairperson of the De Novo Residents Civic Association

The rehabilitation centre works with drug addicts and alcoholics Its staff live in government housing

"None of us can understand why we are always in arrears," he said "Rent is deducted from our salaries each month, so how can we be in arrears?"

The community is angry that the CPA only notified them after the deductions had been made Arries said they wanted to know why, after they pay rent arrears each year, they are still held liable the next year

"The reason given to us by the CPA was that people pay rent according to their income, and when they receive increases or promotions the rent is often not adjusted accordingly," Arries said

"But many of us don't get promotions or increases every year, and when we do, the rent is increased So how can we continually be in arrears?"

Mr David van Wyk, a general assistant and driver at the centre, earns about R200 a month after deductions He now makes extra money to buy food and clothing by selling vegetables grown in his garden

(124)

"My wife doesn't work and my gross salary is about R900," Van Wyk said "Some months it is a miracle that we get by"

One of the residents, who's family has worked at De Novo for the past 50 years, recently retired She was forced to pay R1 000 in rent arrears immediately

"I was told I either had to pay or vacate my house," Mrs Clarissa Lucks said "Where would I go to?"

Mr Christopher Abrahams, vice chairperson of the De Novo Action Committee, said the CPA officials had agreed that there was a problem with the way deductions were calculated They said they would have it checked out.

"But nothing has happened," he said "At one meeting, the CPA agreed to place a moratorium on the deductions, but it seems that that was also an empty promise"

Health conditions and the state of the 86 houses was another concern of the De Novo community

"The houses, which are between 50 and 60 years old, are in desperate need of repair," Abrahams said

"Six out of 10 families have chest problems There is no proper drainage system, and the houses are cold and damp all year round"

"People are already earning next to nothing We think it is criminal the way the CPA is treating us"

A spokesperson for CPA Welfare said they did not have the finances to repair the houses and that the De Novo community had been informed of the rent arrears

"None of the people are compelled to live on the premises in terms of their contracts They would probably all qualify for housing subsidies to move elsewhere"

PAY OR LEAVE: Retired De Novo worker, Clarissa Lucks, was forced to pay R1 000 in rent arrears immediately or find herself out on the street

ARG – 24/11/94

First moves on housing backlog

(124)

MICHAEL MORRIS
Political Correspondent

WESTERN Cape legislators have taken the first steps towards claiming powers from the central government to tackle the housing backlog and improve the lives of shack dwellers.

This is the essence of the Western Cape Provincial Housing Bill, presented to the first meeting of the provincial legislature's housing committee yesterday — the first Western Cape parliamentary committee meeting to be open to the public and Press

The bill, which is intended chiefly to create a provincial housing board which will advise the Western Cape housing minister and administer housing stock, finances, loans and subsidies, is a prerequisite to the province getting its hands on the power to run its own housing operation

But tortuous debate lies ahead on refining the nitty-gritty of the law and the powerful housing board it will create

Yesterday's three-hour exchange — an "informal discussion" on the bill — went to the heart of all the critical elements of South Africa's socio-economic and political transition

Chief among them are control of resources, decision making, representation, gender equality, accountability, delivery of change to the deprived and disadvantaged, maintaining order and ensuring financial viability

Hennie Bester, the committee chairman and Democratic Party provincial leader, and committee members from the other parties highlighted key deficiencies in the draft legislation, particularly its failure sufficiently to define the powers and functions of the housing board

African National Congress members expressed qualms about the composition of the board, particularly whether "end-users" — the community — would be sufficiently represented

Nationalists expressed reservations over the prospect of the board being given too much power

Whatever disagreements emerged, mainly between the chief partners in government in the Western Cape — the National Party and the ANC — over some of the technical aspects of the housing law, there appears to be consensus in the housing committee on the need to get the bill in place

The debate on the bill — the informal discussion continues on Friday with formal clause-by-clause negotiations expected next week — is expected to reflect all the main concerns about what people hope political change will bring and how it is to be delivered

Cape Town owed R250m

EDWARD WEST

CAPE TOWN — Cape Town City Council arrears on rates and services, half the annual R500m income from rates, could not be written off, said city council executive chairman Arthur Wienberg B/Day

He said arrears had fallen from R270m to R250m over the past few months

Wienberg said he planned a meeting with Provincial and Constitutional Development Minister Roelf Meyer to discuss the arrears and payment of property rates owed by the state "It is unacceptable that government talks about overcoming the ethos of non-payment when it is a non-payer itself" (124)

As at October 20, outstanding rates due by the state amounted to R13,8m 28/11/90

Council documents showed the service amounts owed by black local authorities amounted to R62,7m at October 20

ARG US 12-13/11/94

New deal for black farmers

(124)

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Ultimately the community would be in a position to set up its own dairy.

Khayelitsha folk get switched on

S/Times 11/9/94

By SAHM VENTER

PUTTING her faith in the future, Eunice Batala bought a refrigerator three years ago, believing her ramshackle hut would get electricity some day.

Finally, two months ago she watched as men ran a cable into her home. Now she has plans — small, perhaps, to wealthier South Africans, but big to her.

"I can make pudding for my grandchildren," she said this week with a smile. [C/Metro]

Electricity is slowing spreading through Khayelitsha, near Cape Town, home to 500 000 people, changing the lives of residents long denied basic amenities many take for granted

Such development is the cornerstone of President Nelson Mandela's ambitious programme to improve economic and social conditions for millions of impoverished blacks.

Ms Batala, 66, cast the first vote of her life in the April election for Mandela because she wanted change. The project that brought her electricity began before the vote. Set up by the French government, British East Midlands Electricity and Eskom, it has provided power to about 8 000 of the estimated 60 000 "informal" dwellings — in fact, little more than dilapidated shacks — in Khayelitsha. Another 20 000 are scheduled to get power this year

In Ms Batala's three-room shack, her family watch TV on a set that once cost R2,50 a day to run off a rechargeable battery. Now she buys power worth R5 that can be registered on the white plastic meter.

She has picked out a R500 stove and plans to buy a heater and a vacuum cleaner. — Sapa-AP

THE MAGIC OF ELECTRICITY .. Thobeka and Johan Batala with baby Sipho watch TV, powered by electricity for the first time, in the family shack Picture. ADIL BRADLOW

(124)

Switch-on will light up their lives

(124)

Staff Reporter CT 20/5/94

A THREE-YEAR project to bring electricity to 50 000 Khayelitsha shack dwellers kicks off next week when the first 200 families switch on the lights in their homes for the first time.

The R75 million project is a joint venture by Eskom, (British) East Midlands Electricity and Electricité de France

The joint company, Phambili Nombane (Forward with Electricity), is part of a countrywide drive to electrify 1,5 million homes in the next five years. Some 3,8m houses in South Africa lack electricity

Phambili Nombane aims to electrify the remaining 50 000 dwellings in Khayelitsha by 1996.

The first 200 customers in Makhasa, Village 5, already have pre-payment meters installed.

Local contractors, using township skills, have also begun erecting poles and stringing overhead cables in Khayelitsha's Town One and Three.

Makhasa spaza shop owner Ms Kindness Mlumbi says she will now buy a fridge and stock cooldrinks and perishables "My turnover will increase and my life will be much, much easier," she said.

The sale of electricity on a pre-payment basis will be franchised through existing spaza shops

SWITCHING ON . . . Ms Kindness Mlumbi, a Khayelitsha spaza shop owner, is eagerly awaiting the electrification of her shack which will be among the first 200 to be "switched on" next week

Picture CLIVE SMITH

Light and power for the people

SHARKEY ISAACS (124)
Weekend Argus Reporter ARG 28/5/94

IN a big electricity switch-on, power has been installed in 227 houses in sprawling shanty towns in Khayelitsha

Township resident Cynthia Sogexe yesterday celebrated her introduction to electricity with a few friends

Mac Mdingi, sales manager of joint operating company Phambili Nombane, handed her a voucher and a large cake, saying that 50 hours of free electricity would be given to all consumers

General manager of the company Alain Roucole said that one contractor was electrifying 4 000 homes in Town 3 — part of Village 5 — and other contractors were working elsewhere in Khayelitsha

"Our aim is to connect about 20 000 homes by the end of the year," he said

Electricity delights squatters

BY SABATA NGCAI

Shack fires caused by falling candles and leaking gas tanks will be a thing of the past when residents of Macassar squatter camp in Khayelitsha switch on to electricity for the first time.

The electricity will be switched on once meter boxes have been installed in the whole area, which is expected to happen within the next few weeks

The electricity project is a joint venture of Eskom and two foreign companies

Overjoyed Macassar residents said they were planning to buy equipment and appliances to make life easier and more enjoyable

NEW LIFE: Mrs Nosakhele Sivungu has been using candles all her life and now she is preparing to switch to electricity.

Southeaster Suppl to South

Some have already bought portable televisions and hi-fi sets, but run them from car batteries

Mrs Nonzukiso Bhokisi said the meter box installed in her shack this week will save her lots of money She said the battery is costing her a lot of money She spends R5 to charge it every three days

"It is a great relief to have electricity," she said (124)

Mrs Nosakhele Sivungu said she will be using electricity for the first time in her life

"I want to buy myself a heater because it's winter time," she said

"I'll now stop using the fire stove, it's giving me problems When it gets wet, I can't eat until it gets dry" 10/6 - 14/6/94

Mrs Sivungu said after the squatters got electricity, people who lived in brick houses could no longer look down on them.

"The installation of electricity will close the gap between us," she said

Switching on to safety

By Phillip Kakaza

PEOPLE living in squatter areas around Nyanga have looked forward to the electrification of their homes But many are now concerned that electrification is posing an added fire hazard.

Phambili Nombane, a joint operating company consisting of Eskom, Electricté de France and East Midlands Electricity, has already electrified 50 000 shacks in Khayelitsha. 10/6 — 14/6/94

At a community meeting held in Mpinga Square recently, shack dwellers expressed concerns about the safety of using electricity.

A South African Civic Organisation (Sanco) member, Mr Joseph Zuma, said residents should have their shacks fireproofed before electricity was installed, to prevent shacks from catching fire (124)

He said some of the shacks had leaky roofs which could cause problems if rain water came into contact with electric wires.

"We should also be taught ways of using electricity safely, " he said

The squatters in Nyanga have not been given a date when electrification will start and Ikapa Town Council could not give any further information

Some residents said they had seen enough fires and were scared to become victims themselves

Shad Malinga installed electricity in his shack so he could watch television, but said he was not sure how to use it safely. "It will take a lot of teaching for me to be able to use electricity more safely."

Eskom spokesperson Mr Charles Cooper said the company had launched an electricity safety campaign to create awareness of the uses of electricity inside and outside the house

(124)

R500m expected from sales

CT 6/12/94

THE sale of more than 28 000 houses to Mitchells Plain residents is expected to raise about R500 million for Western Cape housing projects.

The sale of the houses is a joint venture between the Cape Town City Council and Mercantile Bank to provide loans to families who can afford to buy their homes.

The project is the first of its kind in South Africa.

Western Cape Housing Minister Mr Gerald Morkel yesterday opened the first office of the bank in Mitchells Plain.

Mercantile Savings and Loans will provide finance to tenants who take advantage of the government's extended sales scheme. The bank plans similar ventures elsewhere in the country. — Sapa

● MS&L paves way for home loans — Page 12

Most Khayelitsha homes electrified by end of year

S/Times [C Metro]

MOST of the 50 000 dwellings in Khayelitsha will have electricity by the end of the year, says the general manager in charge of the R100-million project

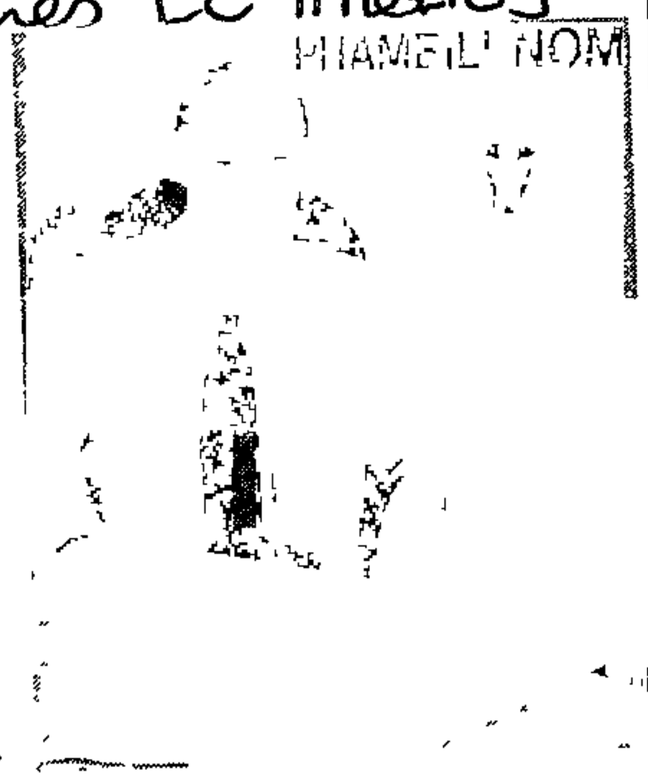
Mr Alain Roucole, general manager of Phambili Nombane, a consortium comprising Eskom, Electricite de France and East Midlands Electricity of the UK said "Khayelitsha will be totally electrified by the end of the year except for a few buffer zones with temporary shacks or squatter camps"

Mr Roucole, who has been seconded from Electricite de France to help with the technical side of the project, said a key criterion for the scheme was that every plot that received electricity had to be hooked into water and sewage services

Electrification was a vital part of the RDP programme, said Mr Roucole

"Getting electricity into the homes of Khayelitsha is making a dramatic impact on thousands of lives," he said

"We have used local labour as much as possible and the whole project has been planned with the help of input from the local community Flexibility has been the watchword for the whole project so far as the managers are concerned We have always been looking for quicker, cheaper and more efficient ways of acheiving our goals and we have learnt a lot in the process"



ALAIN ROUCOLE

11/12/94

Mr Roucole, who will service the scheme once it is up and running, plans to stay here for a further two years offering technical advice, before returning to France

(124)

HOUSING & HOSTELS — CAPE

1995

JANUARY — MAY.

Pay up, or lose out

ARG 12/1/95 (124)

☐ Township residents billions of rands in arrears

VUYO BAVUMA
and ROGER FRIEDMAN
Staff Reporters

PEOPLE who evade payment for public utility services are thwarting effective administration in Western Cape townships, and condemning millions in Langa, Guguletu, Nyanga and New Crossroads to falling living standards

This tough warning came today from Wallace Mgoqi, outgoing Ikapa Town Council commissioner, who said township residents were billions of rands in arrears

Responding to Mr Mgoqi's warning, African National Congress Western Cape leader and regional Economic Affairs Minister Chris Nissen said the culture of non-payment was one of the biggest obstacles to regional growth

"If there are no proper services because of no proper payments we will continue to have a Third World situation within a First World environment," Mr Nissen said

Mr Mgoqi, a civil rights lawyer, was seconded by the provincial administration five months ago to run the Ikapa administration after the collapse of the council

In a damning report, Mr Mgoqi said a strategic management plan, which strongly recommended measures to improve life in the townships, had been accepted by several organisations last year

But it could not be implemented because of the boycott of service charges

At the end of October, residents owed more than R2 billion

Mr Mgoqi said the longer this practice continued the "drier the council's coffers would become"

Another problem was the absence of key personnel at the Ikapa Town Council, which hindered the smooth functioning of the administration

Only three white officials made up the senior management of Ikapa Their style was centralised because of understaffing

This caused problems because it was seen as the perpetuation of "white baasskap"

Mr Mgoqi also said that there was a poor work ethic among ordinary council workers As a matter of routine, staff reported late for work and "go home as they please"

Other problems included complaints from members of the Women's Forum of the South African Municipal Workers' Union that they were discriminated against

Mr Nissen said "Apartheid is finished and we must assist the government in the reconstruction of our country and the reconstruction of our lives

"Now is the time our people need to pay We have to uphold democracy and assist in changing the lives of our people

"We need to transform the culture of non-payment into a culture of responsibility"

President Nelson Mandela, the late Joe Slovo and other leaders in the government and the ANC had appealed to residents to pay for services debts

"Maybe we need to do much more," Mr Nissen said

● The newly established Transitional Metropolitan Council is set to take over the council within a few days

CT 16/1/95.

Major housing plans for Cape

Property Editor (124)

CONSTRUCTION will start soon on at least four major affordable housing projects in the Western Cape, providing more than 6 000 units and totalling well over R200 million.

Mr Khalil Mullagie, administrator of the Urban Development Commission of the Western Cape Economic Development Forum, said that apart from the four projects about to be started, many others were well into the planning stages.

● Developers plan for mass housing — Page 10

Developers plan for mass housing

CT 10/1/95 (124)

By MAGGIE ROWLEY
Property Editor

CAPE property developers are gearing up to meet the RDP mass housing programme with at least four major projects due to start this year to provide nearly 6 000 units in the greater Cape Town area

These include two large housing projects to provide more than 3 500 units at a cost of more than R150m which are to be overseen by Condev Cape, the largest residential developer in the Western Cape.

Condev Cape MD John Wilkinson confirmed at the weekend that the projects, both on state-owned land in the greater Cape Town area, were expected to get off the ground by mid-year.

State subsidy

The projects will be undertaken in terms of the RDP and will employ the services of emerging contractors with Condev acting as project managers

The majority of the units, which will be sold for between R40 000 and R100 000 will qualify for the state capital subsidy scheme or at least part of it, Wilkinson said.

The larger of the two projects, he said, would be financed by a consortium of Life Offices

This would comprise 1 000 units in the first phase and a further 1 500 units in the second phase.

The second project, financing of which [illegible] still also being negotiated, would provide a further 1 000 units and would also be built on state land.

Wilkinson declined to name the sites except to say that they were in the greater Cape Town area and "had been approved in principle".

The projects represent a major departure for Condev which has to date concentrated primarily on middle and upper income housing, a sector of the market it will also continue to serve, says Wilkinson.

These new projects, he said should take between three to five years to complete.

Richard Arderne of Newhco said they had two major projects in the Steenberg area which together would provide about 2 500 units of between R50 000 and R100 000.

One of these sites comprising a 8ha site owned by the City Council near Steenberg Station had been earmarked for about 500 houses Details of size and cost of houses and community needs in the area are being thrashed out by the local development forum and once approved at forum level, rezoning applications will be submitted to the council, says architect planner Craig Baynham of Baynham Theron

Arderne said the council were taking a pro-active stance in the development on their land and were providing valuable input.

He and Baynham said the central focus was not only the provision of affordable housing but great effort would also be made to [illegible] a positive urban environment was created including the provision of community facilities

"We hope to submit these applications shortly so that work can get under way in the first half of the year"

The second site, on the Cape Town side of Steenberg Station and belonging to the state, would allow for about 2 000 units to be built

A whole series of studies are to be undertaken on this site by the City Council and the community to also ascertain the needs of the community before work starts.

Arderne said they expected most of the financial institutions to be involved in the financing of the project but they were also talking to the Community Bank

Newhco is also involved with other housing projects in Rondebosch East where around 106 units are being built, a 30 unit project in Dublin Street, Woodstock, and a 50 unit project in Franschhoek.

Other projects

"We have also umpteen other projects on the cards scattered throughout the greater Western Cape region but these are still in the early planning stages."

Dave de Freitas of Stocks and Stocks said they too had certain projects in the pipeline for the Western Cape but there had been certain delays at provincial level.

"As such we are not likely to proceed with anything for the next few months but we are going to be doing a lot in this sector," he said.

Rent boycott ends in favour of flat rate

CT 17/1/95 (124)

JOHANNESBURG — South-Western Joint Civic Association chairman Mr Basil Douglas yesterday announced that the organisation had decided to suspend its rent and services boycott and would pay an interim flat rate of R45 per month

The boycott in mainly coloured areas near here started in September last year after Sowejoca's demand for a R45 flat rate was rejected.

Mr Douglas said residents at a meeting on Sunday voted overwhelmingly in favour of payment

He said the civic association wanted to restore a culture of payment for services under certain conditions, one of them being that negotiations with local government had to be resumed as soon as possible

Payments will start at the end of January

Within three months the council should deliver the promised transfer of houses and flats rented by one occupant for more than 10 years, all debts should be written off and negotiations on affordable rates should be speeded up, he said — Sapa

BUSINESS PERSONALITY

Bringing electricity to informal settlements

55 (124)

Argus 21/1/95

ALIDE DASNOIS
Deputy Business Editor

FRENCHMAN Alain Roucole has come from Cannes to Khayelitsha to manage electricity company Phambili Nombane.

Phambili Nombane (Forward with Electricity) was started in January 1994 as a joint operating company with three partners: Eskom, Electricité de France (EDF) and East Midlands Electricity of the United Kingdom, each of which put in R1 million.

Eskom is funding the network (about R100 million over three years).

Phambili Nombane's objective is to bring electricity to the estimated 35 000 families in Khayelitsha living in informal housing.

By December last year 22 000 households had already been electrified, all with pre-paid electricity meters, and Mr Roucole is confident that the remaining families will be connected this year.

Next in line could be the thousands of squatters living in the so-called "buffer zones", on plots which have not officially been allocated to them.

But first, political decisions will have to be taken about whether these families are to be housed permanently in Khayelitsha or not.

"If they are to stay, we are ready to provide electricity once water and sewerage have been provided."

With its headquarters in Bellville South, Phambili Nombane employs about 50 people, most of whom are from Khayelitsha.

The company is in charge of the maintenance as well as the installation of the system.

"As an agency of Eskom, we are responsible for all contact with the clients.

"We install the boards, we maintain and repair the system and we make sure there are local outlets where clients can pay for their electricity," explains Mr Roucole.

"Also we teach clients how electricity works and how to use it economically and safely."

Mr Roucole says two things struck him when he first arrived in Cape Town a year ago.

"The first was how similar the countryside is to the south coast of France where I come from. Cape Town is like the Cote d'Azur 20 years ago, before there was cement everywhere.

"Let's hope Cape Town doesn't go the same way."

The second surprise, he says was "how polite people are here".

"In France, people don't listen, they want to have their say.

"Here I've found people are extraordinarily disciplined, in community meetings for instance They say what they think, but first they listen."

Mr Roucole has an MBA from the Ecole des Hautes Etudes Commerciales in Paris and has been with EDF since 1971.

He knew something of Africa before coming to Cape Town, having worked for EDF in the Ivory Coast and in Djibouti.

He describes Phambili Nombane as a "successful hybrid" of three cultures — French, British and South African.

"This is the biggest challenge and also the biggest satisfaction, working with people from other backgrounds.

"On the whole it works well. We come up with richer ideas and when there's a problem we can draw on three sets of experience to help us find a solution."

The business environment in Cape Town, he says, is much more sophisticated than in other African countries, but there are "pockets of inefficiency" which are disconcerting.

"Here one tends to expect things to work, but it's important to remember there are occasional zones of turbulence and not to relax too much."

Last year Phambili made a profit.

Mr Roucole won't give a figure, but, he says, the money was reinvested and the company's available funds "were considerably increased".

Once the installation of electricity in Khayelitsha is completed, other joint ventures of this sort are on the cards, both elsewhere in South Africa and in other African countries.

Council shock over proposal to write off service arrears

(124)

ARG 25/1/96

ANDREA WEISS, Municipal Reporter

THE Cape Town city council has reacted with shock to a suggestion by central government that local authorities should bear the cost of writing off arrears incurred by individual consumers before January 31 last year.

The row erupted after Thozamile Botha, deputy-director in the department of constitutional development, made a distinction between "internal arrears" and "external arrears" at a meeting in Kempton Park in December.

Mr Botha said the distinction was between arrears owed by black local authorities to the state (external arrears) and those owed by individual consumers to local authorities (internal arrears)

In effect, this means that local authorities would be responsible for individual service arrears, while the state would only foot the bill for arrears owed to it by black local authorities

"This interpretation came as a shock as it is contrary to our understanding of all the statements made by government representatives," the city council's executive committee was told in a report from treasurer Eddie Landsberg

Mr Landsberg said his view was shared by the politicians and officials from the Western Cape and Johannesburg City Council who had attended the meeting on December 5

The meeting was convened to deal with the aftermath of the payment boycott

"The grave impact of this interpretation, if it is indeed correct, on the equity and the payment pattern of the coloured, Asian, and white community was drawn to the attention of the meeting

"Those who paid their accounts would have to pay for the 'write-off' of the arrears of others, and may be encouraged to react against the local authority concerned," Mr Landsberg warned

"Should these consumers stop paying because of this racialistic and unfair decree, the financial viability of local government could be compromised"

Mr Landsberg said the meeting decided that "he who decrees must sign the cheque"

Township dwellers' huge debt

CT 25/1/95 (124)

Municipal Reporter

THOSE electricity consumers in Langa and Guguletu who are in arrears with their payments have an average debt of R2 200 each.

This was disclosed in papers before the Cape Town City Council's executive committee yesterday

Consumers who are in arrears anywhere else in Cape Town Municipality's supply area owe an average of R380 each.

Much of the reason for this disparity is the history of electricity supply in the townships In the past the council was slow to disconnect services there

But those days have gone, and the electricity department has set a target of 200 disconnections per week in Langa and Guguletu After a short while, those who are disconnected are offered the option of immediate reconnection — but with pre-payment meters.

The council is replacing 40 meters a day in Langa and Guguletu, and it hopes that all consumers there will have converted to pre-payment meters by the end of the year

Arrears row

CT 25/11/95 (124)

City tells govt to 'pay up or shut up'

By PETER DENNEHY

THE government should "pay up or shut up" in the dispute about municipal services arrears, the City Council said yesterday.

City treasurer Mr Eddie Landsberg was reacting in a hard-hitting report to a government suggestion that arrears be written off for all race groups — but not at government expense

It was decided last year that black local authorities' debts to the government before January 31, 1994 be written off at the cost of the government

But last month councillors were told at a meeting in Kempton Park that the government had decided on November 25 last year that transitional councils would be advised to write off service payment arrears for all communities, not just township communities — and not at the expense of the government

Backlash

Mr Landsberg objected to this, and accused the government of being "naive"

He said that in effect, individual local authorities would end up with the burden Within them, the good payers would have to pay for the debt write-offs of bad payers

Mr Landsberg warned of local government instability if uncertainty over the writing-off of municipal arrears was not ended soon

A backlash against local authorities was highly likely in these circumstances and some "good payers" might stop paying altogether

Mr Landsberg said he agreed with the saying "He who decrees a write-off must sign the cheque" Cape Town did not want the central government to tell it what to do about debts of more than R100 million owed to it — unless it did so with its cheque book open and its pen ready

Furthermore, officials wanted the council to retain debt owed to it on the books and contended that consumers should receive a service commensurate with the charges levied, so the consumers should pay

The council was gradually collecting money owed to it in various ways, and wanted to continue doing so For example, agreements were often reached with individuals that a surcharge on their pre-paid electricity would be levied, to progressively eat away an earlier electricity debt On pre-payment meters, users could not run up debts, but they could be paid off

Mr Landsberg said the government believed a summit should be called for all candidates for the municipal elections and they would be cautioned against politicising the arrears situation in their campaigns

Yesterday the Cape Town City Council's executive committee resolved that its chairman, Mr Arthur Wienburg, should raise this matter with Premier Mr Hernus Kriel as soon as possible, and seek his support in discussions with the central government

● The council does not yet have detailed breakdowns of how old the debt owed to it is At present, well over R100m is owed to it in arrears of various kinds — R62m for electricity, R13m for rent arrears, R12m for home-ownership scheme arrears, and the rest mainly for water and rates

● Township dwellers' huge debt — Page 2

SOWETAN Thursday January 26 1995

al action hits chicken breeding plant

Government told: Pay up or shut up

(124)

Sowetan 26/1/95

■ **NEW ADAGE** He who decrees a (debts) write-off must sign cheque:

THE Government should "pay up or shut up" in the dispute about writing-off local services arrears, Cape Town City Council treasurer Mr Eddie Landsberg said.

He was reacting to a report on Tuesday of a Government suggestion that arrears should be written off for all race groups — but not at the Government's expense Landsberg said he agreed with the saying. "He who decrees a write-off must sign the cheque."

Last year the Government decided to write off debts incurred by black local authorities before January 31 1994 at Government cost At a meeting at Kempton Park last month, councillors were told that Government had decided on November 25 1994 to advise transitional councils to write off arrears for all communities But this should not be done at the Government's expense Landsberg objected to this and accused the Government of being "naive".

Individual local authorities would effectively end up with the burden and the good payers would have to pay for the debt write-offs of bad payers

Landsberg warned that if uncertainty over the write-offs did not end soon, there could be instability A backlash against local authorities was highly likely and some "good payers" might stop paying altogether, he said.

Cape Town did not want Government to rule what it had to do about debts of more than R100 million — unless it did so with its cheque book open and its pen ready — *Sapa*

'No blame' in rates debacle

By PETER DENNEHY (124)

NOBODY was to blame for the R14m debacle arising from the overturning of rates increases — and that's official CT 31/1/95

Releasing the report yesterday, local government minister Mr Peter Marais said he agreed with the majority finding of the Commission of Inquiry that nobody was to blame.

Everyone acted in good faith, the majority report said. Large increases in property rates in some areas which accompanied the new valuation — and caused a huge public outcry — had been due to the drastic rise of property prices in parts of the Peninsula The council had made adjustments to the rates levy to alleviate the impact of the new valuation of property

Nobody should be held accountable for the estimated R14m incurred when the court overturned the 1990 valuation roll, the majority report found

However a minority report was submitted by Mr Bernard Squire, a chartered surveyor, disputing the findings of fellow commissioners Mr P J Putter and Mr R B Moolman

Mr Squire's report states that steps should have been taken to check the legality of the valuation methods agreed upon

A report to the council's executive committee by the City Treasurer and the City Planner failed to mention that not all properties would be visited, that some information dating back to 1966 would be used, and that procedures for commercial and residential properties would differ

The Legal Adviser did not report on these illegalities, and the matter was not followed up by either Exco or the City Planner, who was finally responsible for the valuation roll.

☐ **HOUSES FOR ALL:** This is the piece of land on which R1,5 billion of housing and industrial development will take place In the foreground is the Marconi Beam Squatter camp where 750 "social houses" and 1 750 low- to middle-class houses will be built

ARG 4/2/95

(124)

R1,5bn housing for Marconi Beam

■ From page 1

democracy but it could also serve as a blueprint for the rest of the country"

As part of the project at least 750 so-called "social houses" will be built for the Marconi Beam squatter community The land for the houses will be given to squatters by the developers and two-bedroom core houses will be built

Because the land comes free, the cost of houses should be covered by the R15 000 housing subsidy available from the government Facilities will include schools, creches, churches, sport fields and community buildings A further 1 750 low to middle-income houses will be built

The total project will be completed in five to six years but within the next few months services will be installed and businesses constructed will total about R200 million which is to include a 10 000² shopping centre which will be a mix of First and Third World facilities

Leslie Viljoen of the Rabie Cavcor Consortium which is facilitating the project, said all the role players — including Old Mutual, Anglo American Property Service, Metropolitan Life, Southern Life, Condev Cape, Nasionale Pers, Absa and Murray and Roberts Construction — were keen to get the project under way as soon as possible

Other role players in the planning of the project included the government, the community, the Development Action Group, Milnerton municipality and Ratepayers' Association, Telkom and squatter community representatives

Mr Viljoen said the project was expected to create hundreds, if not thousands, of new jobs

The innovative development strategy will provide a mix of residential retail and industrial uses geared to provide access for residents to economic opportunities and upliftment of the area

A special Marconi Beam Community Trust, representing squatters, has obtained five hectares of land to be reserved for small informal businesses to be run by the people from Marconi Beam

Alistair Rendell, spokesman for the Development Action Group, said key aspects of the social project, where housing and work opportunities were in close proximity, were that it would be self-managed by the community and owned by the Community Trust. It would provide economic empowerment with more than 400 construction jobs

Felicity Hector, spokeswoman for Ikagene (United) Marconi Beam, welcomed the project and said the area would be renamed Joe Slovo Park

☐ **SOCIAL HOUSE:** This is an example of the type of house planned for the Marconi Beam squatter camp under the R1,5 billion housing and industrial development which has been approved for the area

Kader tipped for watchdog body

(202) ARG 4/2/95

JEAN LE MAY
Weekend Argus Reporter

A CODE of conduct for all members of parliament has not yet been drawn up, but names for a proposed monitoring committee has been put forward

The question of a code of conduct has arisen following investigations into the financial affairs of at least three prominent office-bearers — Allan Boesak, whose Foundation for Peace and Justice is being investigated, Peter Mokaba MP, whose activities related to the National Tourism Forum are being probed, and provincial minister Lerumo Kalako, who is alleged to have misused state funds

National Congress, said the party had submitted names for the proposed monitoring committee, including that of Water and Forestry Affairs Minister Asmal Kader

The proposal that a strict code of conduct for all office-bearers and MPs should be introduced was made in August last year

A draft code of conduct drawn up by the ANC and reportedly circulated among its MPs was leaked to the Press the following month

It proposed instant dismissal for a range of offences, from corruption to the use of an official position to obtain sexual favours

It said MPs should make themselves available for party and offi-

Blast-off for RDP

R1,5bn housing project provides blueprint for SA

ARG 4/2/95 (124)

■ The Western Cape has taken the lead in creating housing for the masses in a huge R1,5-billion housing and industrial development project which could serve as the blueprint for other projects in the country.

WILLEM STEENKAMP
Weekend Argus Reporter

IN a major drive to beat the housing backlog in the Western Cape, the go-ahead has been given for a huge R1,5 billion housing and industrial development project in Milnerton

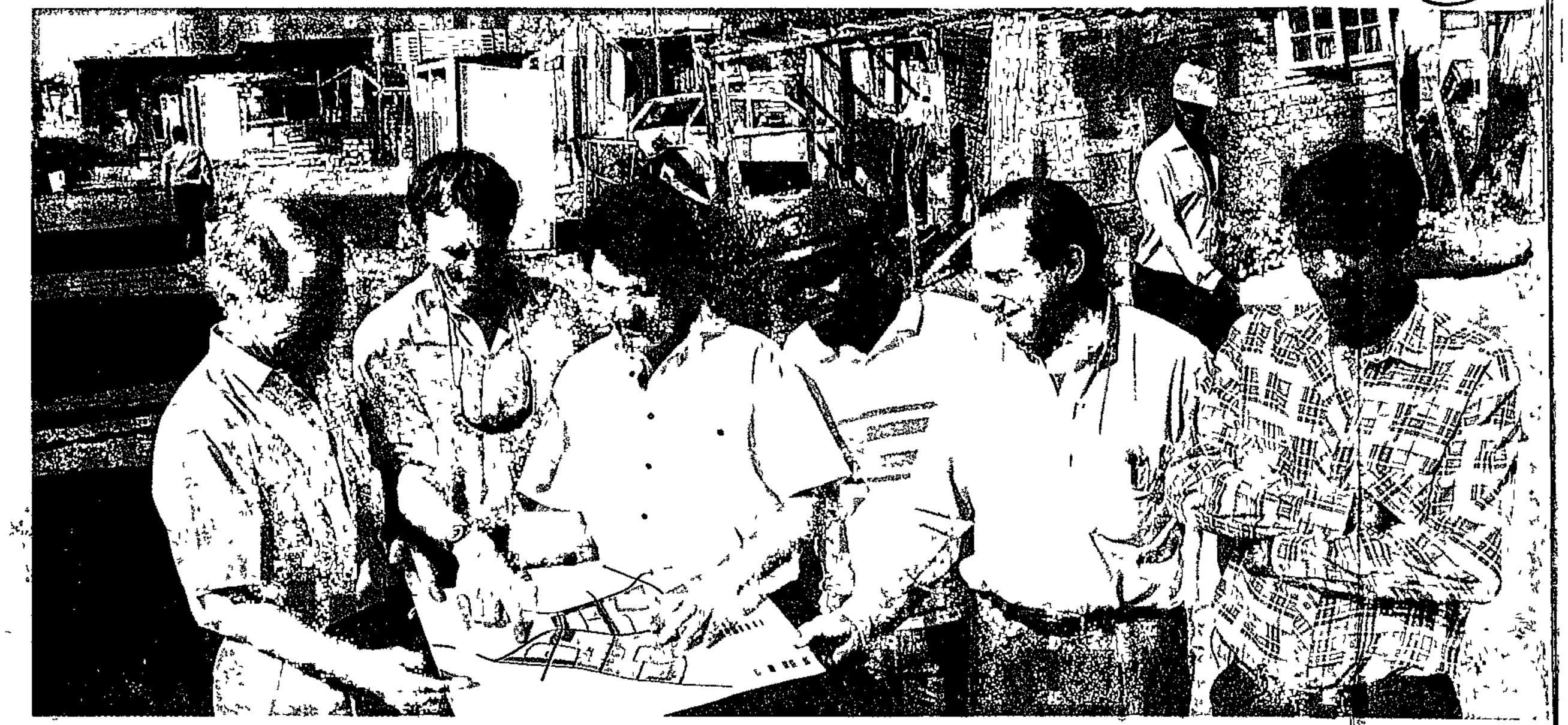
The development, funded by the private sector, is one of the biggest to be undertaken in the Western Cape The installation of services on 240 hectares of land, which includes the Marconi Beam squatter camp, is set to start in early April

An indication of the size of the project can be seen in a comparison with the cost of the 2004 Olympic Games which is estimated at R3,5 billion, compared to the R1,5-billion Milnerton project

Described as a blueprint for RDP housing projects for the rest of the country, Milnerton town clerk Peter Gerber said the speed, ingenuity and professionalism with which the private sector had become involved in the project had stunned even the most cynical

"The size, planning and scope of the project is simply unbelievable. In short, the approval of this project can be described as not only a victory for

■ To page 3



Pictures HANNES THIART, Weekend Argus

□ **DREAM TEAM:** The major role players in the megabucks housing and industrial development project near Milnerton study a map of the 240-hectare development area at Marconi Beam They are, from the left, John Wilkinson, managing director of Murray and Roberts, Alistair Rendell of the Development Action Group, Leslie Viljoen of the Rabie Cavcor consortium, Welcome Mbange, interim chairman of the Marconi Beam Community Trust, John Rabie of Rabie Cavcor, and Phillip Rasmeni of the Milnerton ANC branch.

R1,5 billion boost for housing

(124)

Star 4/2/95

WILLEM STEENKAMP

IN A major breakthrough to meet the housing backlog, the go-ahead has just been given for a vast R1,5 billion housing and industrial development project in Milnerton in the Western Cape.

The development is funded by the private sector. The installation of service facilites on a 240 ha piece of land is set to start on April 1

Comparing the projected cost of the 2004 Olympic Games — R3,5 billion — to the R1,5 billion Milnerton project gives some indication of its size

Described as a blueprint for reconstruction and development programme housing projects for the rest of the country, Milnerton town clerk Peter Gerber said the speed, ingenuity and professionalism with which the private sector had become involved in the project had astonished even the most cynical.

"The size, planning and scope of the project is simply unbelievable," he said.

"In short, the approval of this project can be described as not only a victory for democracy, but it could also serve as a blueprint for the rest of the country."

Free of charge

As part of the project at least 1 000 "social houses" would be built for the Marconi Beam squatter community The land for the houses would be given to squatters by the developers Two-bedroomed core houses would be built.

Because the land would be free of charge, the cost of the houses should be covered by the R15 000 housing subsidies available from the Government

A further 1 500 low- to middle-income earners' houses would also be built.

Schools, creches, churches, sports fields, community buildings and other social facilities would be incorporated into the development.

The project would be completed in five to six years. The cost of the services to be installed within the next few months and businesses to be constructed would total about R200 million, including a 10 000 sq m shopping centre which would offer a mix of First and Third World shopping facilities

Leslie Viljoen of the Rabie Cavcor Consortium, which was facilitating the project, said all the role players were strong financial groups and were keen to get the project under way as soon as possible

◆ Housing boost

They include Old Mutual, Anglo American Property Services, Metropolitan Life, Southern Life, Condev Cape, Nasionale Pers, ABSA and Murray & Roberts Construction.

Other role players in the planning of the project included the Government, the Development Action Group, Milnerton Municipality and Ratepayers' Association, Telkom and squatter community representatives

Viljoen said that after years of conflict, struggle and negotiation with more than 60 interest groups, consensus was reached.

The project was expected to create hundreds — if not thousands — of jobs.

The innovative development strategy would provide a mix of residential, retail and industrial land uses geared to provide access for residents to economic opportunities and to uplift the area.

The Marconi Beam Community Trust, which represented the squatters, had obtained five hectares of land which would be reserved for small, informal businesses run by the people from the area.

Development Action Group spokesman Alistair Rendell said the concept of land sharing, which recognised the need to market housing and cultivate opportunities in close proximity, was well known abroad, particularly in the Far East.

A key aspect of the (social) project was that it would be managed by the community and owned by the Community Trust, he said

It would provide economic empowerment in that more than 400 construction jobs, and home and service industries would be established, and industrial and commercial jobs would be created.

Private sector to help in Marconi Beam plan

CT 6/2/95 (124)

By PETER DENNEHY

SOME of South Africa's largest companies have given the RDP a vote of confidence by buying 70ha of industrial land at Marconi Beam in Milnerton – the site of a project to provide shack-dwellers with brick homes

Mr Leslie Viljoen, managing director of Cavcor, said those involved included Old Mutual, Anglo American Property Service, Metropolitan Life, ABSA, Southern Life and Condev Cape

All were about to take transfer of pieces of the industrial land

The entire Marconi Beam site comprises 240ha

"The transfer was subject to rezonings, which were approved by the Premier on Tuesday," Mr Viljoen said

"The companies are planning to develop their land quickly They are all aware of the entire project, and they are helping to implement it"

Eventually it is hoped that 750 expandable starter-houses will be erected for those who now live in shacks at Marconi Beam There will also be 1 750 low- to middle-income houses

Mr Viljoen said starter houses had a market value of R35 000 each, including the land and the services

The land for the development will be donated to a trust by the private sector

The trust fund will start with 5ha of land that has been zoned for commercial use. This will be developed as soon as possible, and the trust may assist some whose incomes are so low that they cannot afford even the most basic formally-built house

The maximum once-off capital subsidy from the government for a house has recently been increased to R16 000 in the Western Cape

"In this project, the full subsidy can be used in the construction of the house

"This deal addresses all the requirements of the RDP," Mr Viljoen said

Mr Pieter Feenstra, general manager of Telkom Properties, said the project was unique in that most of the former squatter community would be housed in formal housing on the same site

Ms Felicity Hector of Marconi Beam said the social housing component of the development would be called Joe Slovo Park.

MOVING UP IN THE WORLD ... An example of the type of house which will be built to replace shacks at Marconi Beam Developers hope to build 750 starter homes and 1 750 low- to middle-income houses. Picture ANNE LAING

R1,5n boost for squatter camp

BD 6/2/95

EDWARD WEST

CAPE TOWN — The Marconi Beam squatter camp in Milnerton, Cape Town, would get a R1,5bn housing and infrastructure shot in the arm, it was announced last week. (124)

The project, involving big business, government and the community, is driven by a planning forum which includes the Development Action Group, Milnerton Municipality and Ratepayers' Association, Telkom — which owns the land — private developers and squatters. (207)

The project would provide formal homes, factories, offices and shops, including a R50m shopping centre.

The six-year project would be facilitated by a Rabie Cavcor consortium. The residential phase involved building about 1 000 social houses and 1 500 low- to middle-income houses.

Key players in the industrial development of the project were Old Mutual, Anglo American Property Service, Metropolitan Life, Absa, Southern Life and Condev Cape.

Bulk services would be constructed by Murray & Roberts Construction.

More than 60 interest groups were involved in planning, negotitation and discussion for the development of 240ha on the Marconi Beam site.

Development Action Group spokesman Alistair Rendell said 25ha had been set aside as part of a general upliftment programme.

Facilities would include a school, crèches and small businesses.

Gauteng homes backlog is 600 000 — minister

BD 7/2/95 (127)

JOHANNES NGCOBO

GAUTENG housing minister Dan Mofokeng said last week his office would review the three-year 53 000 housing project for the province earmarked by the Gauteng Housing Board.

He said it needed to be reviewed because the backlog in the province was about 600 000 houses.

The figure of 53 000 was originally mooted by the Transvaal Housing Board and taken over by the new Gauteng Housing Board. The January edition of the provincial government publication RDP Vision said the new board had committed itself to the previous housing board's target.

Mofokeng originally backed Premier Tokyo Sexwale's promise to build 150 000 houses over a year.

Mofokeng said one reason his ministry was to review the situation was because some houses the board had approved were of low quality.

His government would meet the challenge posed by the backlog and would ensure that at least 600 000 houses were constructed for the province's people over a five-year period.

The housing board's plan involved: East Rand, 25 441 houses; central Witwatersrand 9 959; Vaal Triangle 7 941; Pretoria 5 769; Midrand 2 700; West Rand 1 579; and Bronkhorstspruit 26 houses.

RDP Vision said many of the housing projects had already begun.

Gauteng Housing Board spokesman Heili Knoesen said subsidies for the scheme had varied according to the income of pontential owners.

She said that among the applicants approved were people earning between R800 and R1 500, who would receive a subsidy of R12 500; from R1 500 to R2 500 the subsidy would be R9 500; and from R2 500 to R3 500, R5 000.

Knoesen said a start had been made on projects near Katlehong, Thokoza and Vosloorus, and Rooikop on the East Rand.

TownCon developers' consultant spokesman Mike Ngubane said they had started to develop Langaville and Tsakane townships, near Brakpan, and townships at Nigel.

A Stocks & Stocks spokesman said his company would begin new developments in Gauteng within three months.

□ Sapa reports from Bloemfontein that the allocation of 30 000 housing subsidies for the Free State, with additional allocations for 1996/97 and 1997/98, was approved by the outgoing Regional Housing Board at its last meeting on February 3, provincial housing minister Vax Mayekiso said yesterday.

Mayekiso said that according to unconfirmed information, R200m would be allocated to the Free State from the National Housing Fund.

A basic allocation of 100 subsidies a town had been decided on to ensure each town received an acceptable and economically viable allocation. Subsidies already allocated by the Regional Housing Board and the Premier's Housing Project of 2 200 houses had been taken into account in the total of 36 300 allocations in 79 towns. Total backlog in the Free State was 285 085 houses.

The allocation meant every Free State community had been allocated houses for the next three years and that no community would be left behind in housing deliveries.

There was a proviso that the allocation to each town would be re-evaluated after six months to determine progress. If problems were experienced, subsidies would be re-allocated to ensure funds were used effectively.

CLAREMONT

ARG 7/2/95 (124)

Increase in house density city-wide, says council

PETER GOOSEN
Staff Reporter

NO PART of Cape Town is immune from an increase in density, says the city council's planner's department.

It was commenting on an application by the owner of an old house, Monmouth Lodge, in Eden Road, Claremont, who has the blessing of the city council's town planning committee to demolish the building and divide the land into three plots.

Land surveyor and town planner K C Baard applied on behalf of the owner, K D Durr, to subdivide the land into three 475 square metre plots.

The committee also dealt with eight objections to the proposal, including one from the Ward 14 and 15 Ratepayers' Association, which maintained that the plan would cause overcrowding; it would be out of character with the low density area; the existing homes would lose their privacy and property values would be devalued.

The committee rejected the objections.

"No part of the city is immune to an increase on density. The proposal presents conventional single dwelling sites of a size and configuration in keeping with contemporary needs."

The owner is restricted to one house on each plot.

Housing project stands available by next year

(127)

BD 8/2/95

SELLO MOTLHABAKWE

THE first fully serviced stands for phase one of the Esselen Park community housing programme should be available by July next year, said a spokesman for the landowner, Propnet.

Work has started on infrastructure for the proposed housing project between Kempton Park and Tembisa. Local labour has been used extensively.

A portion of the land is still home to the Transnet Esselen Park Centre for Excellence, and staff housing.

Propnet, Transnet's property arm, decided in 1992 to make underutilised land available for housing for destitute communities in the area. It had, in collaboration with interested parties, created a committee of stakeholders. A working committee was formed to steer the home building.

The land would be developed in phases in keeping with the demand for it. Phase one involved the construction of about 40ha of low-cost housing for Transnet employees and residents of neighbouring communities on a roughly 50-50 basis.

Propnet project co-ordinator Hansie Marais said the company's aim and that of the working committee was to create a sustainable community while establishing support systems that would assist people in becoming self-reliant

The finance entry level was being kept as low as possible

The development was making use of a range of progressive building options The "starter house" approach, and others, would enable the prospective homeowner to build a house according to his means He could make basic alterations to the design as and when it became convenient for him.

Quality controls would be implemented with the assistance of the Homeowners' Association. This would help residents ensure that their dwellings complied with basic quality and safety standards.

The community housing project makes extensive use of Transnet resources, including the land, funding for infrastructural costs, the in-house skills of Protekon — a Transnet construction, technical and professional service division.

Management backup for the labour-intensive construction is provided by the Esselen Park training college

Low-cost houses for Du Noon

By MAGGIE ROWLEY
Property Editor

(124)

CT 9/2/95

A LOW-COST housing project of 2 000 units costing an average of R15 000 each is to be developed on the large Du Noon site in Milnerton

The project, the second "social housing" development announced by the local authority for Milnerton this week, will be built at Du Noon, which was expropriated by the municipality from farmers about a year ago.

Milnerton town clerk Mr Peter Gerber said negotiations between ratepayers' organisations and residents in formal and informal settlements in the area were nearing finalisation

About 1 000 starter homes will be built in the first phase, which is expected to go to tender in April "if all goes well".

A show village will completed by the end of the year The bulk of the houses should be ready for occupation by the end of 1996, he said.

Mr Gerber said negotiations were underway with the provincial authorities to obtain the land as cheaply as possible

"Although the Du Noon site is about 109 hectares, only 88ha can be used for housing as there are electricity pylons on part of the site as well as a quarry"

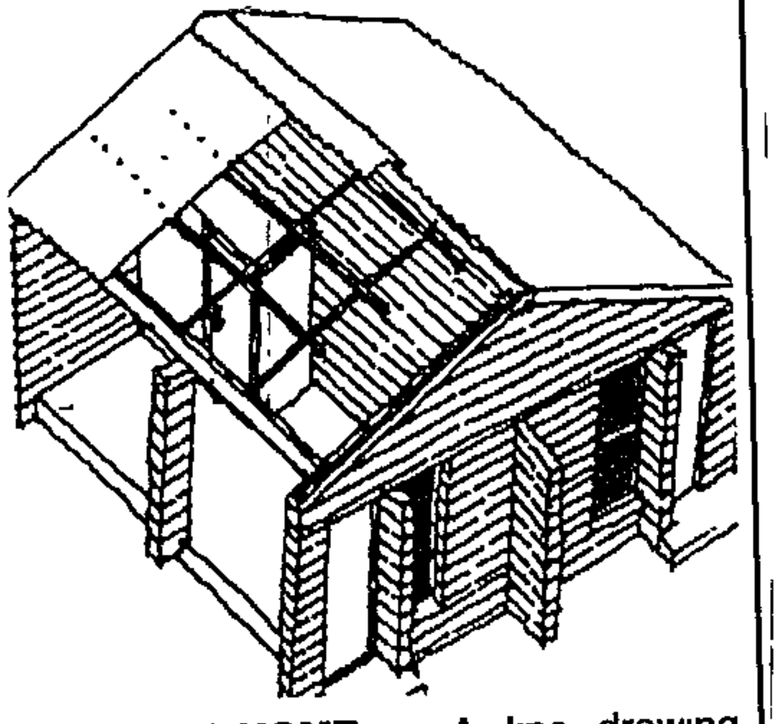
He said they intended to build starter homes of about 25m² which could be upgraded at a later stage by residents. These homes would qualify for the R15 000 government capital subsidy scheme

While the private sector would undertake the construction, the municipality would oversee the entire project, he said

Earlier this week, a project to provide both social housing for the former squatter community as well as low and medium income housing was announced for the Marconi Beam area in Milnerton.

Mr Gerber said both projects would be built in the spirit of the RDP and as such would be as highly labour intensive as possible to create jobs in the area.

"Not all the housing that is required for people living in informal settlements can be accommodated at the Marconi Beam site, and the Du Noon development will enable us to house the overflow," he said



STARTER HOME ... A line drawing showing the outline of an add-on starter home in the social housing projects to be built on the Marconi Beam and Du Noon sites in Milnerton.

French see the light in township community

(124)

ARG 10/2/95

□ *Power on in 22 000 homes*

ADELE BALETA
Staff Reporter

A DELEGATION of the French Senate Energy Working Group has visited homes in Makaza, Khayelitsha, to inspect the results of the Phambili Nombane electrification project which has linked up 22 300 homes in eight months.

The pilot project, which is a joint venture between Eskom, Electricité de France and East Midlands Electricity of the Britain, plans to connect a further 8 000 homes before the middle of the year

Phambili Nombane (Forward with Electrification) general manager Alain Roucole believes the partnership of two European utility companies with an African one has been successful and could lead to further joint involvement in the electrification of southern Africa, and possibly other countries in Africa.

He said he hoped the project would "serve as an example for other less developed countries'

"Electrification is the most powerful means of improving quality of life and raising the standard of living, and is therefore central to the reconstruction and development programme.

"It is directly linked to economic growth in that it supports small business development and it appears that the growing number of small businesses in Khayelitsha since the inception of this project is testimony to the newly empowered community"

The eight-member Senate Energy Working Group delegation is representative of the key political bodies within the Energy Working Group which consists of 60 members.

Their aim is to assemble information regarding energy problems in France and around the world for the benefit of the senate

Delegation leader and president of the Energy Working Group, Bernard Barbier, said projects like Phambili Nombane gave the group insight into evolutionary trends in the energy sector

"The project has proved to be highly successful and we have learned a great deal," he said

Senator of the Cote d'Or region, Henri Revol, said the project was a logical way to provide the people of Khayelitsha with electricity and it will be used as an example in other countries'

LIGHT UP: French Senate Energy Working Group delegate Henri Revol tests the electricity in Lindi Madonci's home in Makaza, Khayelitsha.

Pictures
NIC BOTHMA

PEOPLE POWER: Nosithembele Mhlobo with her 10-month-old baby Batabile, switches on her electricity in her newly electrified home

Marconi scheme 'set to boost Cape coffers'

(124)

BD 15/2/95

THE R1,5bn housing and industrial development announced recently in the Western Cape's Milnerton area should boost Cape coffers by millions this year, property analysts say.

The six-year project, starting later this month, will provide houses, factories and shops in the Marconi Beam area in Milnerton. It adjoins Montague Gardens, recognised as one of the best-sited industrial areas in the Western Cape.

The scheme will be co-ordinated by a Cape-based consortium of Rabie & Cavcor.

Spokesman Leslie Viljoen said the business potential of the area was enormous. The creation of new roads, linking up with existing highways, would open up the area.

Viljoen said the development followed trends abroad in providing a mix of residential, retail and industrial uses, providing access to economic opportunities for residents.

The scheme was expected to create about 400 jobs in the initial phase and many more as the various facets got under way.

The project, involving big business, government and the squatters at Marconi, was driven by a grassroots planning forum.

It involved key players in the economy, including Old Mutual, Anglo American Property Service, Metropolitan Life, Absa, Southern Life and Murray & Roberts.

About one third of the land would be developed for industrial and commercial purposes while a quarter would be for housing. Provision had been made for facilities such as a junior school, creches and churches, as well as sports and playing fields.

Out of the total of 2 500 houses, 750 would be subsidised, while 1 750 would be built by a private developer and sold for between R70 000 and R120 000 each.

Alastair Rendall, a spokesman for the Development Action Group, which was co-ordinating the 25ha social upliftment portion of the development, said all the subsidised housing would be developed by a community trust.

SA housing at 'bargain prices'

CT 16/2/95 #8 (124)

By MAGGIE ROWLEY
Property Editor

THE national property market is at the bottom of its cycle providing South Africans with a rare opportunity to buy cheaply, says Erwin Rode, director of Rode & Associates.

Opening the new regional headquarters of NBS Deveo in Plattekloof yesterday, Rode said the property cycle tended to move in 18-year cycles and the opportunities presenting themselves now, in both the residential and non-residential sector, only occurred twice in the average person's working life

Nationally, real house prices are 15% below their peak in 1983 while Johannesburg office rentals are as much as 39% below their peak in 1982

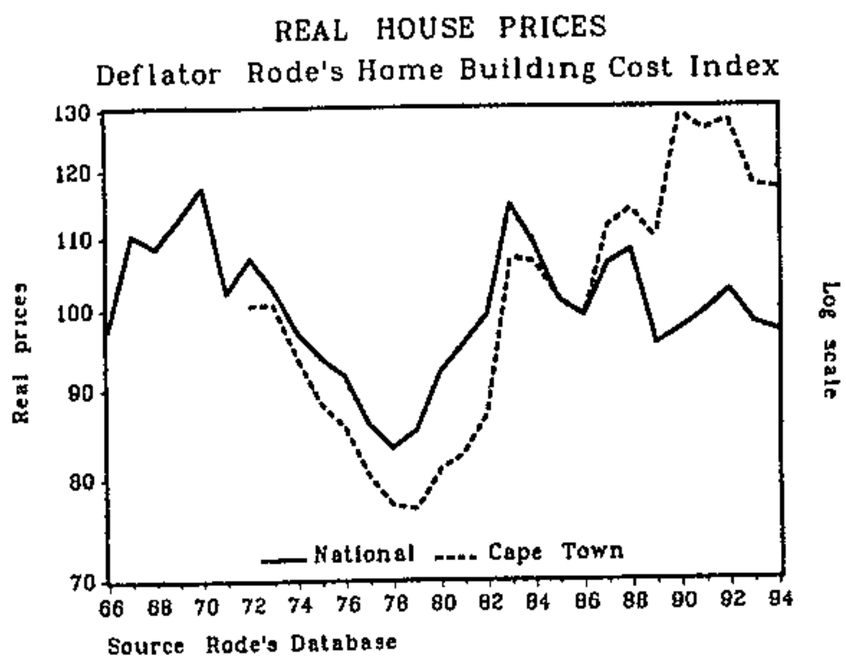
"The difference can be ascribed to the greater sensitivity of house prices to interest rate hikes

"Hence, Dr Chris Stal's policy of high real interest rates since early 1989 suppressed the supply of new homes, thereby keeping the demand for and supply of houses close to equilibrium, which limited the slide in house prices"

Commercial and industrial properties, on the other hand, he said, were dominated by the institutions which were not interest-rate sensitive

"Office buildings are especially speculative, thereby creating long periods of horrendous oversupply, which, in turn, produce unique buying opportunities like the present"

Rode pointed out, however, that Cape Town house prices did not offer the same upside potential as elsewhere in the country.



OUTSTRIPPED ... The graph shows that Cape Town house prices have outperformed the national index since 1980 and, as such, do not offer the same upside potential as house prices elsewhere.

"Cape house prices have outperformed the national index since 1980 and real house prices in the city are only 10% below their peak in 1990

"Thus, if one assumes that the gap between Cape Town and national house prices remains constant in future, the upside potential for Cape Town is less

"However, 10% is still no figure to be sniffed at It means that in a zero inflation environment, house prices could advance by 10% over the next five or so years

"Assuming building costs will grow at 15% per annum compounded for the next five years, it means that Cape Town houses could be 110% (less about 7,5% for ageing) more expensive than today."

Rode said real office rentals in Cape Town are much lower than real industrial rents, which suggests that office rentals offer more upside potential However, he pointed out that Cape Town industrial rents have started a process of catching up with Johannesburg and Durban

"Assuming that this process will continue, we can look forward to a period of vigorous real growth in Cape Town's industrial rentals as well"

R14m housing project planned

(124)
CT 17/2/95

Residential units near Crawford station

MAGGIE ROWLEY
Property Editor

A R14 MILLION housing development project is to be launched on vacant state land in Rondebosch East adjacent to Crawford station

The 106-unit housing project will be undertaken by Intersite the property management arm of the Rail Commuter Corporation

This is Intersite's first entirely residential project and will be known as Rondebosch Close

Is it being developed jointly with the New Housing Company a national section 21 housing developer and will bring one two and three-bedroom sectional title units to the market priced from R99 000

Mr Kevin Roman regional portfolio manager of Intersite Western Cape said Intersite planned to develop residential corridors along railway lines to encase stations and weave them into the urban fabric of the surrounding areas"

This would also provide added security for commuters

Two other projects — one in Langa and the second in Retreat — which involve both residential and industrial development would also contribute towards this ultimate goal he said

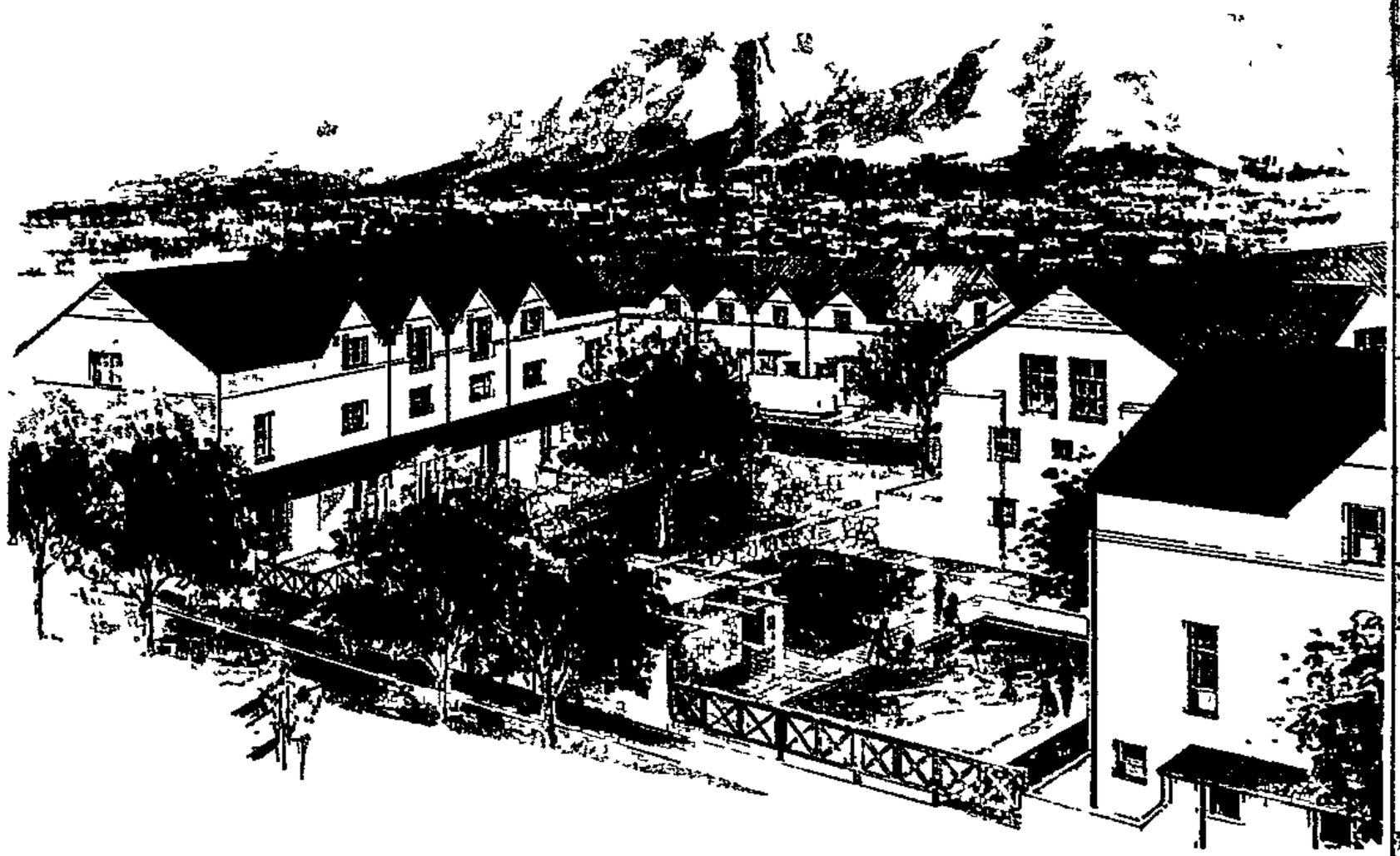
Builders have already moved onto the 1 8ha Rondebosch Close site in Second Avenue and will complete development in four phases The first phase is scheduled for completion in July and the other three by December

Only 17% of the site will be covered and the development will include professional estate management, optional covered parking, private gardens, fitted kitchens a communal swimming pool a gazebo and braai as well as extensive landscaping.

During the planning phase the developers embarked on a comprehensive public involvement programme to gauge public opinion and obtain the support of local residents

New Housing Company significantly modified the plans and development layout to accommodate suggestions made by the local community

This included reducing the number of units by 26 and the maximum height of each unit from three storeys plus an attic to two storeys plus an attic, with perimeter buildings all being restricted to one story



NEW DEVELOPMENT .. AN artist's impression of the 106-unit housing project on vacant state land in Rondebosch East, adjacent to Crawford station, which is to be developed by Intersite, the property management arm of the Rail Commuter Corporation

Housing: 'Private sector has role'

(124)

MICHAEL MORRIS
Political Correspondent

UNLESS private sector developers launch their own housing projects, they will have to share blame with the government if there is a lack of progress in this field, the Institute of Directors has been told

Norman Michaels, personal assistant to provincial Economic Affairs Minister Chris Nissen and a key figure on the Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises (SMME) committee, said the private sector could not simply sit back and wait for the government to launch schemes

He was speaking at an Institute of Directors' lunch on behalf of Mr Nissen, who was unable to attend the function Mr Michaels read Mr Nissen's speech at the lunch

Answering a question from a building contractor who noted that "we are already into the second month of the new year and there is very little activity" on the housing front, Mr Michaels replied that while it was up to the Housing Ministry to talk about the house-building programme, the private sector had to play a more active role in grasping opportunities to launch its own initiatives.

"I would like to see the private sector using opportunities, because if it's going to wait for the government to make things happen, and not force opportunities which the government cannot ignore, it will have to carry as much of the blame for a lack of progress in the housing sector

"If you want to go for it, go for it If not, you will be left sitting on the sidelines"

● Mr Nissen said in his speech that it was necessary to overcome the "misconception" that the reconstruction and development programme was simply about meeting needs

The RDP had four essential pillars — building the economy, meeting needs, developing human resources, and democratising the state and society — and they were interdependent

"We cannot meet needs without growth, or achieve growth without building human resources The independence of all four pillars of the RDP must be acknowledged," he said

ARG 20/2/95

Building plans held up pending committee meetings

ARG 25/2/95

(124)

Municipal Reporter

ABOUT 120 building plans have been delayed this month because standing committees have not met

The backlog has been exacerbated by a provision of the Local Government Transition Act which says that all town planning decisions have to be taken by a committee of the new council Previously, decisions about minor plans were delegated to officials

The new Cape Town City Council has not yet appointed its committees because of a political bunfight for positions.

An official at the city council said the plans were mainly for house alterations and would probably be held up for a month.

The delay will affect builders who like to work during the summer before the start of the wet Cape winter.

In the meantime, a few large developments are on line because approval was given before the council changeover.

CAMPAIGN LAUNCHED ... President Nelson Mandela at Marconi Beam settlement near Milnerton at the weekend where he launched a campaign to encourage people to pay for services. Picture CLIVE SMITH

'We have to pay for what we use'

CT 27/2/95 (124)

PRESIDENT Nelson Mandela chose an informal housing development near Cape Town on Saturday to lay the first symbolic brick of a campaign to end the rent and services boycott and stimulate public involvement in the government's housing programme.

"We all have a responsibility to pay for what we use," Mr Mandela said at the launching ceremony at Marconi Beam settlement near Milnerton. "The Masakhane campaign is an important part of the reconstruction and development programme. Everybody must support it."

Marconi Beam mayor Mr Rod Hulley said the campaign would only succeed with the support of all South Africans.

Earlier, Mr Mandela was mobbed by excited residents as he went on a short walk on the fringe of the shack settlement.

"We do not want you to stay in houses like this, we want you to have decent houses," he told the crowd.

Urban planner Mr Alistair Rendall said the campaign — Zulu for "let us build each other" — had come at an opportune time for the 5 000-strong Marconi Beam population.

Bulk services including sewerage, roads, water pipes and electric cabling were being installed for about 1 200 households on community trust land that qualified for R15 000 housing subsidies.

He said residents had been boycotting services after failing to secure land security from the local municipality.

"We've basically been trying to implement the RDP," development plan co-ordinator Mr Lesley Viljoen said.

The ministries responsible for the campaign were represented by RDP minister Mr Jay Naidoo, housing minister Ms Sankie Nkondo and deputy provincial affairs minister Mr Mohammed Valli Moosa.

Also present were Western Cape Premier Mr Hernus Kriel, his colleague from Northern Cape, Mr Manne Dipico, and Mr Mathews Phosa from the Eastern Transvaal. — Sapa

W Cape gets housing boost

(124)

Staff Reporter

LOW-COST housing in the Western Cape has got off to a spectacular beginning with the start-up or completion of multi-million rand projects in the poorer areas of the Western Cape CT 1/3/95

This came after the announcement in July last year by Western Cape housing minister Mr Gerald Morkel, that the Land Service Project, aimed at providing 36 000 homes for the "poorest of the poor" would be launched with a R1,8m trust

The project involves the erection oflow-cost housing units and self-help assistance on prepared sites for squatters

In a statement yesterday Mr Morkel announced that 26 residents' development committees have been established and 7 000 new serviced sites have been provided in Brown's Farm, KTC and Philippi East.

Bulk earthwork contracts in Weltevreden Valleyu and southern Delft are underway at a cost of R15 million, while the bulk earthworks contract for Philippi East has been completed at a cost of R10 m New housing will be provided during the coming year in Southern Delft, Weltevreden Valley, Philippi East and certain areas due for upgrading

R35m land project in south-west Cape

(124)

By BARRY STREEK
Political Staff

A R35,1-MILLION land reform programme in the south-western Cape was launched yesterday by the Minister of Land Affairs, Mr Derek Hanekom, and the Minister without Portfolio, Mr Jay Naidoo

The programme was part of a R315m pilot redistribution project involving dispossessed and landless communities in the nine provinces, Mr Hanekom said

The three-year pilot programme, launched by Mr Hanekom and RDP minister Mr Naidoo in Cape Town, was the beginning of a broader process of redistributing land to those in the direst need, or who had been denied access by former racist policies

State land, including at least 16 state forests and more than 2 500ha of agricultural land, would now come under the control of the communities in the area CT 1/3/95

Mr Hanekom said at a press conference "The beneficiary groups will identify their own needs, develop their own plans and make decisions on the allocation of funds within the department's policy framework"

Similar R35,1m grants have been made for eight other pilot land reform projects in the other eight provinces

The Western Cape project will be in the district consisting of the southern heights and coastal plain from Swellendam and Witsand to the west of Nature's Valley and the eastern boundary of the province

The magisterial districts include Knysna, George, Mossel Bay, Riversdale and Heidelberg and the eastern part of Swellendam.

In addition to the magisterial districts, the area has 50 identifiable towns and settlements

The ministry said R10,2m of the grant was a "land acquisition assistance grant" A further R18,8m was a "homestead basic needs grant" for beneficiaries of the land grant, with a maximum of R12 500 per household to cover such items as water supply, sanitation, internal roads and homestead land

Cape kickstarts RDP with R1,5bn housing and development project for Marconi Beam squatters

(124) CT(BR) 8/3/95

By Audrey D'angelo
Cape Business Editor

The Marconi Beam squatter settlement at Milnerton, where about 1 200 families live next to the thriving Montague Gardens industrial estate, is the focus of a R1,5 billion housing and industrial development project to kickstart the RDP programme in Cape Town.

The project aims to provide houses for the squatters as well as training and jobs

If successful, it could serve as a blueprint for similar projects in the rest of the country

Plans for the redevelopment were discussed at a seminar at Milnerton race course on Monday

Members of the Marconi Beam Business Association, met executives from the industrial estate and the Minister of Trade and Industries, Trevor Manuel

Squatter businesses

The businesses run by squatters range from the installation of kitchen cabinets to spaza shops and shebeens

The seminar was organised by the business association and the non-profit Development Action Group (DAG), which was formed eight years ago to help create a better living environment for the urban poor

DAG researcher Patrick Brennan told the seminar that most of the squatters were unskilled and illiterate and therefore had difficulty finding jobs in Montague Gardens

Only 33 percent of the squatters were employed in the formal sector, most at the nearby Milnerton turf club, he said

Few could afford formal market housing, he added

But the development programme plans to include 750 subsidised houses and 250 more expensive ones

In addition, Condev (Cape) will manage the construction of a further 1 000 houses

The squatter camp will be cleared for industrial development with some of the new housing built next toit

Other houses will be built at Du Noon, a few kilometres away

"It is envisaged that skills training, job creation and the encouragement of opportunities for small business should form part of the overall development strategy," said Brennan

"The most obvious place to look for job creation opportunities is Montague Gardens"

Discussing the industrial estate, Brennan said it was one of the few diversified and mixed industrial areas in greater Cape Town

Job creation

Stressing that the elimination of unemployment among Marconi Beam residents was a priority, Brennan said that without job creation the development project would fail

He added that there was an urgent need for both short-term and long-term training to empower the squatters

Where did R1m for housing and services go? ask town's residents

ARG 13/3/95 (124)

NORMAN JOSEPH
Staff Reporter

RESIDENTS of Montagu are at loggerheads with the town's interim council over the alleged misuse of more than R1 million intended for housing and services

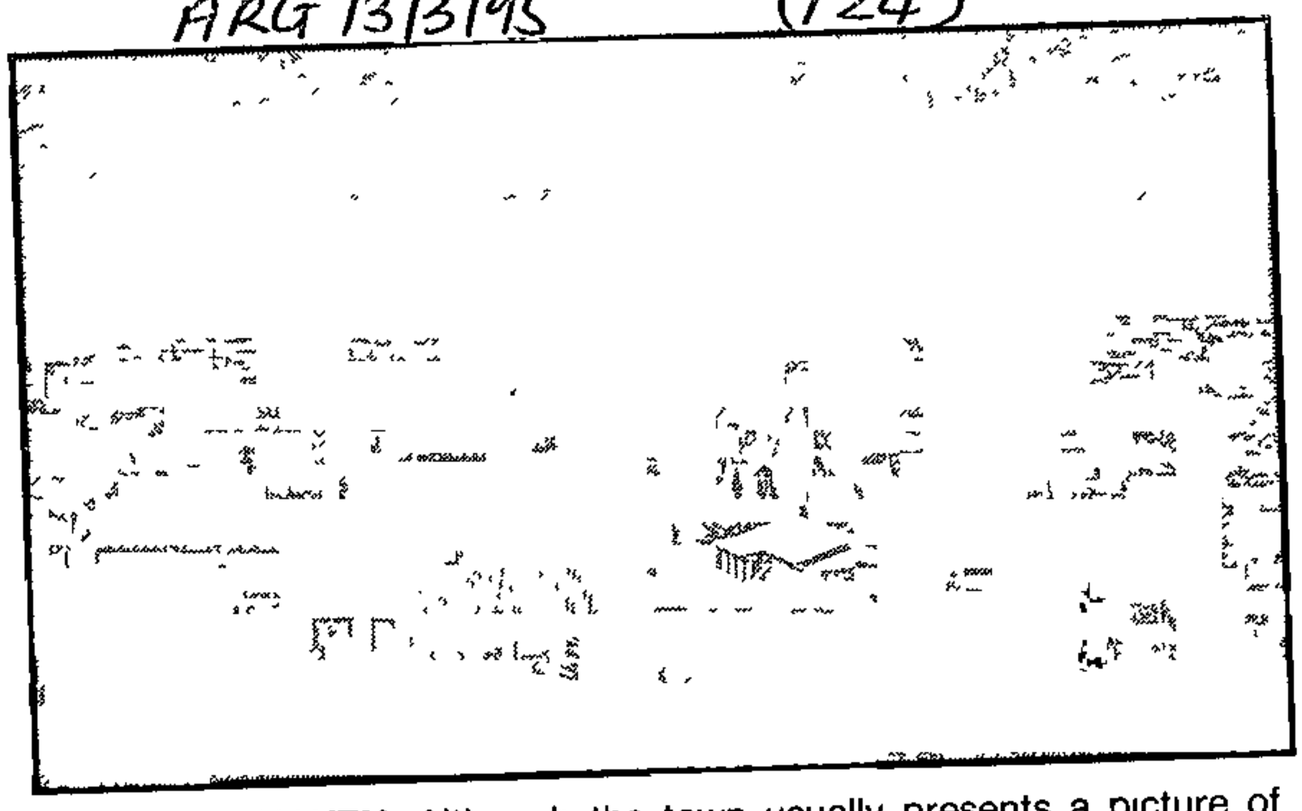
They allege the council had not used the funds properly and want to know what had happened to the money, granted by the province's housing branch

But the town clerk has dismissed the claims and says the money has been spent openly and for the purposes intended

Residents' spokesman Leonard Winegaard said council officials had not turned up for a meeting with the community on February 15 to explain their case — but town clerk Jan van der Westhuizen said he had not been notified about the meeting

Mr Winegaard alleged

- A R500 000 subsidy granted for informal housing was never used to build the houses in 1994,
- R800 000 for a water scheme which was supposed to mean residents would pay less for their water, but accounts showed it was now more expensive,
- R25 000 for a swimming pool which was never completed — sources within the council alleged there was no documentary proof of the project,
- R24 000 was given in November last year for a food scheme to help the underprivileged in the area Residents alleged only R6 was left over for the whole of March, and residents had not had any food help
- R23 000 was given to all schools in the area to share Yet only white schools were given money to improve school facilities, and
- A municipal worker, Abraham Geldenhuys, was boarded by a doctor after 23 years' service with the municipality but was paid only R500



MONTAGU HAVEN: Although the town usually presents a picture of peaceful bliss, there is tension beneath the surface

But town clerk Jan van der Westhuizen said "The R500 000 for informal housing was not a subsidy It was a loan at 11,25 percent interest repayable over 30 years for a self-help project I have a copy of the departmental approval of the project

"My council applied to the department of housing for a low-interest loan amounting to R800 000 I have documentary proof that R266 760 was approved and as the department will confirm, that is the only funding we received for the purpose"

Mr Van der Westhuizen said funds were made available under the government's job-creation scheme

He said "When the scheme was discontinued no funds were available to complete the municipal swimming pool

"A survey done by the principal of the Ashbury Primary school revealed that none of the parents was in favour of the completion of the pool and my council resolved to transfer the plot and buildings to the school, which was next door"

Responding to allegations about the feeding scheme fund, he said "R18 400 of the R24 000 has been spent to date Soup and sandwiches are distributed through our two clinics to the aged, TB patients and children"

Mr Van der Westhuizen said R23 769 was provided for aid to local schools during 1993/4 Assistance of R14 575,25 was rendered to the coloured schools

"I received no request either in writing or orally for the council to attend a meeting with the community"

According to council records, they had not employed a worker named Abraham Geldenhuys in recent years, he said

Mr Winegaard said more community meetings were scheduled for the next few weeks to work out a plan of action

MONDAY
MARCH 13 1995 ★

Mfuleni first to get RDP housing

(124)

CT 13/3/95

THE first Reconstruction and Development Programme for low-cost housing in the Peninsula will be launched in Mfuleni township bordering Blue Downs on the opposite side of the N2 from Khayelitsha today with the building of the first five show houses

Mfuleni mayor Mr Oliver Nkqubelani said more than 500 stands — already provided with basic services — have been made available to the squatter community close by

Mr Nkqubelani said it was hoped the show houses would be completed within the next two months. — Sapa

WOMEN SHOW OFF THEIR FIRST 'SHOW HOUSE'

Owner-builders appeal for finance

(124)

CT 15/3/95

HOUSING MINISTER Ms Sankie Nkondo visited the pride of Cape Town's self-help schemes yesterday, the Victoria Mxenge settlement, and listened to a host of development problems there. **PETER DENNEHY** reports.

THE 66 active members (out of 286) of a savings scheme at Victoria Mxenge, just off the intersection of Lansdowne and Duinefontein roads, have built a 6,5m square formal concrete-block "show house" for R9 500, not including the cost of the labour which was their own

A private developer's quote for the same structure was R20 900, they told Housing Minister Ms Sankie Nkondo The women of Victoria Mxenge have saved an amount of R22 657,57, they said

They had encountered a number of problems, the most pressing of which were difficulties in getting either housing subsidies or bridging finance via the regional housing board

The board is geared up to deal with projects where a developer plays the leading role, including putting up the money to start construction before the government subsidy money comes through

When they told the board "we are the developers", the board had told them it was the first time they had encountered this situation and would have to "see what the government thinks about it", said translator Mrs Iris Namo of a non-governmental organisation called People's Dialogue

Mr Patrick Magebula, a development worker from Inanda near Durban, said the SA Homeless Federation knew of 21 savings schemes countrywide, of which six, including Victoria Mxenge, were ready to start building "With our savings we can meet the government half-way," he said. "We have proved that we have the discipline to save and pay"

It was vital that development should take place before the subsidies came through The self-help projects were not getting the priority they deserved, he said "By helping those who help themselves, you encourage others to take the initiative"

Ms Rose Molokoane, convenor of the Homeless Federation's training programme, said the government had promised R10m for the Utshani fund, to help communities start developing, but the funds had not come through

CHECKING ON ACHIEVEMENTS: Housing Minister Ms Sankie Nkondo (left) examines the first house built by the women of Victoria Mxenge settlement With her is resident Mrs Rose Maso. *Picture: ANNE LAING*

Power to the people of Khayelitsha

CT 17/3/95

(124)

EUNICE RIDER
STAFF REPORTER

POWER to the people of Khayelitsha is becoming a reality, as more and more residents gain access to electricity

French Minister of Industry, Posts, Telecommunications and External Trade Mr José Rossi yesterday led a delegation of French officials and businessmen to Khayelitsha, where they saw some homes receiving electricity

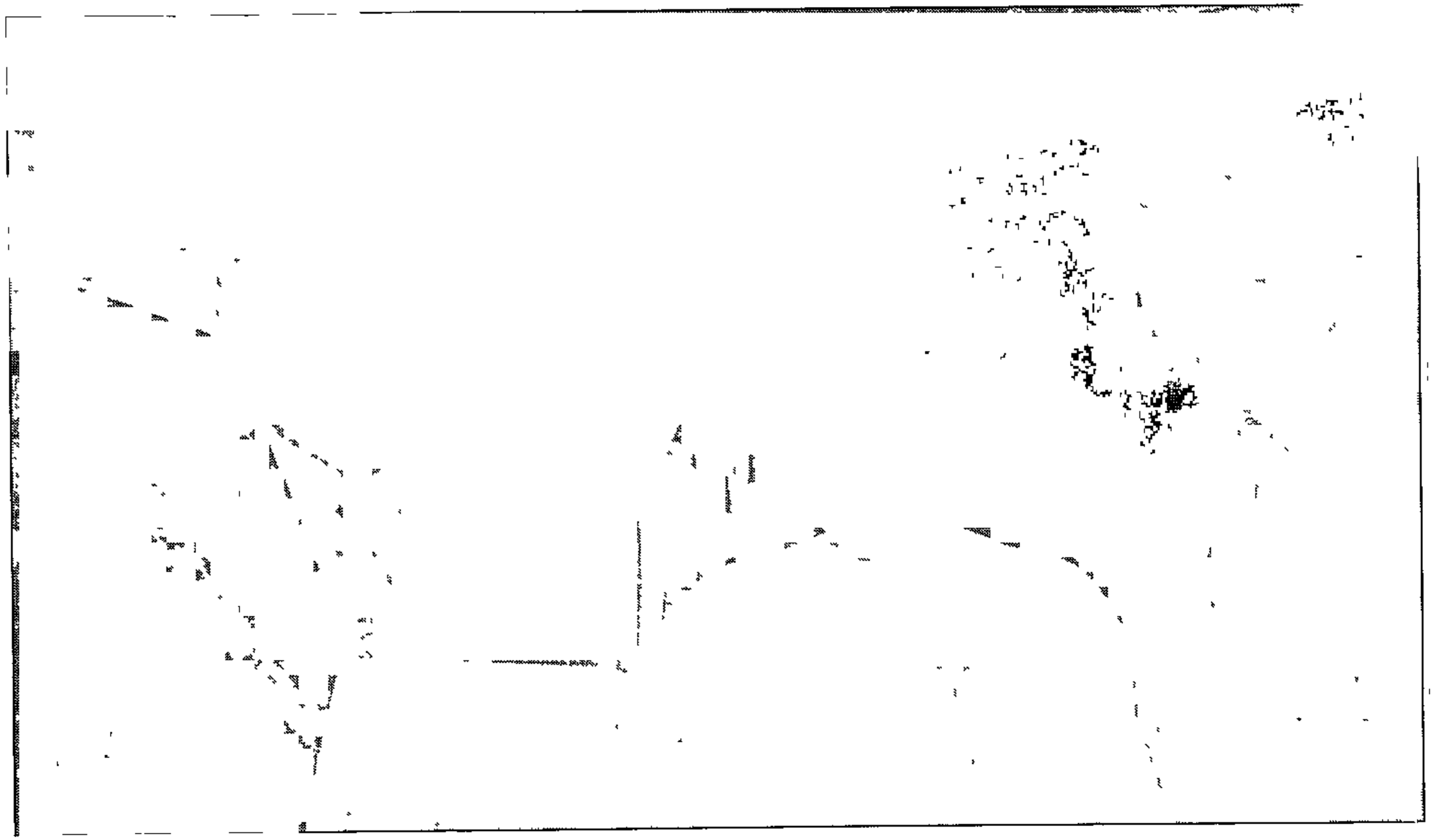
The Phambile Nombane township electrification project, responsible for the spread of power, is partly funded by France

The delegation, which is here on a four-day visit to the city, were welcomed by the township's new mayor, Mr Vuyani Ngcuka

About 23 500 homes have been electrified since work started on the pioneering electrification project in March last year They hope that 40 000 homes will have been electrified by the end of 1996

The project will receive R100m a year for three years from Electricité de France, Eskom and East Midlands Electricity from the UK

One resident, Mrs Nobuntu Sohaba, said she was not only enjoying the comforts available through electricity for the first time in her life, but the township was safer because the risk of fires had diminished



THRILLED Mrs Muriel Bambatha of Khayelitsha was delighted to have her spaza shop's electricity supply switched on after her pre-paid electricity meter was activated in the presence of (left to right) the new mayor of Khayelitsha Mr Vuyani Ngcuka, French government MP Mr Philippe Mathot, and the French Minister of Industry, Posts, Telecommunications and External Trade Mr José Rossi *PICTURE: ALAN TAYLOR*

PLANNING FOR CAPE TOWN'S FUTURE

(124)

Urban densities to rise

CT 20/3/95

STRATEGIES for combating urban sprawl include increased densities along "development corridors" and the creation of an "urban edge". By our **Municipal Reporter**

A PROPOSED guide plan for Cape Town aims to increase residential densities along "development corridors" by up to four times, says Mr Francois Theunissen, the Cape Metropolitan Council's director of planning

He hopes the new Metropolitan Spatial Development Framework will be approved by "all the formal players" this year

Mr Ken Sturgeon, a senior partner in MLH Architects and Planners, said two of the new development corridors would be the 13km stretch of Klipfontein Road from Mowbray to Crossroads and Wetton and Lansdowne Roads from Wynberg to Khayelitsha.

About 20 000 people currently live along the Lansdowne Road corridor Planners believed this could be increased to 80 000 by allowing development to go up to just a few storeys high

Recurring themes in the development framework are

- Urban sprawl must be contained by establishing an edge beyond which development may not spill over
- Densification of the city in general, except in green belts and "quality environmental spaces"
- Mixed land uses In the development corridors at least, shops and flats and even some small industries with a low nuisance element will exist alongside each other. People of varying income levels will live in the same precinct
- Planners will pay far more attention to the needs of people who use public transport

Mr Sturgeon pointed out that only 20% of South Africans owned motor cars Three-lane freeways could move 6 000 people an hour in cars, mostly travelling alone An efficiently-used lane dedicated to buses could move far more.

PRESENT SYSTEM IS UNACCEPTABLE TO MANY

Rates boycotts prompt search for alternatives

(124)

CT 22/3/95

WITH rates boycotts likely to continue, city administrators countrywide are investigating other sources of revenue.

PROPERTY rates could soon be a thing of the past, if a national inquiry into more effective and acceptable means of payment bears fruit

Rates boycotts and the unacceptability of rates taxes to large proportions of the population have caused the Durban city council to propose scrapping rates

Last night Cape Town city treasurer Mr Eddie Landsberg said the problem of rates and rents boycotts was a national dilemma

The Fiscal and Financial Commission was created last year to look into alternative revenue sources for the three tiers of government, he said

He felt the best short-term solution would be a local income tax "piggy-backed" on the national income tax

Durban city treasurer Mr Mike Turrell has said that his city will consider scrapping rates against the background of renewed rates boycott threats

"The system of taxation in the form of rates is becoming unacceptable to large portions of the community," he said in a report to councillors

Durban council sources say there are only two realistic alternatives One is to increase income tax in greater Durban, the other is to effectively up the VAT on local transactions

Either option is likely to be controversial, but Mr Turrell is convinced that to continue with the present system will become increasingly problematic and eventually impossible

"We're receiving petitions demanding rates rebates from so many different communities It's simply impossible to satisfy them all

"The concept of contributing to the cost of services which are provided for the benefit of the community at large, like roads, beaches, health and museums, appears to be completely foreign," he said

Minor exceptions aside, "no solution to the problem will be found in granting rebates to selected categories of the ratepayer community, as the burden will merely be shifted from one dissatisfied group of ratepayers to another equally dissatisfied group" — Staff Reporter, Own Correspondent

Squatters move into new homes

ARG 23/3/95

(124) ~~(307)~~

NORMAN JOSEPH
Staff Reporter

SQUATTER families who have lived for years in Uitsig will become proud home-owners for the first time this week in a R3 million project move into starter houses on a site in Uitsig Avenue and more are to follow, thanks to the Uitsig Community Trust and Utility Homes

Trust chairwoman Annie Jacobs said 187 homeless families would own homes soon

The project was made possible by funds supplied six years ago by the former House of Representatives for housing in the area

The funds were passed on to the Regional Services Council which made them available to the community

Mrs Jacobs, a community activist, formed a trust and negotiated with Utility Homes for help

She said "It is not a big house but a starter home, which is a life investment for families who can extend it."

One of the couples who have already moved into their new home, Dimitri and Sandra Alexander, were on the council's waiting list for 12 years

Trust vice-chairman Julius Thembani, who lived in a shack for many years and who has also moved into a new home, said "You can just imagine how I feel I can't work properly because of the excitement"

Mr Thembani said the houses cost R23 500 each and were secured with a R300 deposit

Housing project

CT 23/3/95

THE five-year, R592-million Serviced Land Projects to provide housing on the Cape Flats was making good progress, the Minister without Portfolio, Mr Jay Naidoo, said yesterday

He told Parliament's Joint Standing Committee on Finance this was one of only two RDP projects whose business plan had been given full approval

(124)

City faces massive rates hike this year

PETER DENNEHY

CT 24/3/95 (124)

RATES could increase by up to 21% this year, city treasurer Mr Eddie Landsberg warned at a City Council executive committee meeting yesterday

He said imminent change in local government could easily lead to a 10% rates increase on top of the 11% recommended by exco yesterday

Mr Landsberg was referring to the fact that the council's boundaries are going to change soon, probably in such a way that the iKapa area (Langa, Nyanga, Guguletu and Crossroads) is included in Cape Town municipality The southern suburbs south of Wynberg will fall under a new South Peninsula authority

Central government wants local authorities to be self-sufficient, so it is reducing its subsidies, he said

Exco recommended the 11% increase yesterday after it had been asked by treasury officials to state what increase it would find politically acceptable

The 11% is not the final figure, however, but a guideline to officials who will draw up the council's budget over the next two months.

● See Page 3

CITY TREASURER WARNS OF 21% HIKE

Exco proposes rates be increased by 11%

(124)

CT 24/3/95

THE COUNCIL has provided guidelines for a "politically acceptable" rates increase. **PETER DENNEHY** reports

PROPERTY rates should increase by 11% from July, the City Council executive committee recommended yesterday

The council had been asked by treasury officials to set a parameter for a "politically acceptable" rates increase

At the exco meeting, City Treasurer Mr Eddie Landsberg warned that imminent change in local government could lead to another 10% increase in rates, over and above the 11%, bringing the total increase to 21%

He said the council's boundaries would soon change, probably resulting in the iKapa area (Langa, Nyanga, Guguletu, Crossroads) being included in the Cape Town municipality, while the suburbs south of Wynberg would fall under a new South Peninsula authority

The increase in service costs, coupled with a reduction in government subsidies, would put pressure on the treasury, he said

City engineer Mr Arthur Clayton also warned that an 11% rates increase would mean a decrease in existing service levels, because of the increased price of services.

Also, the demand for services was rising, he said The volume of refuse, for example, was increasing at 15% a year

Mr Clayton also suggested that provision should be made in the budget for "mega events" such as the Queen's visit or the Rugby World Cup, which inevitably led to increased demands on his cleansing and other staff

Mr Hanief Tiseker of the ANC disclosed that in its caucus meeting the ANC had initially said the increase should not go into double figures. Yet there were "expectations" of the council, so budgeting was very difficult, he said

Ms Nomaindia Mfeketo, the exco chairperson, said she was no expert on budgets "I have been on the side of the people who ask why the rates increase is always above the salaries increase," she said

Mr Leon Markovitz of the NP said he was not in favour of a prefixed percentage for the rates increase He said the amount required to keep services at their current level should be used as a guideline for the increase

Mr Landsberg answered that it would take a 15% increase to keep services at the existing level

Mr Clive Keegan argued that a 12% increase would be a "defensible investment" in the city

■ DIEP RIVER ARG 24/3/95 (124)

'Housing density must rise'

PETER GOOSEN
Staff Reporter

INCREASED housing density in Cape Town was the answer to urban sprawl, said city planner David Daniels

He told the Diep River and Districts Ratepayers' Association this week that densification was vital if the inner city was to be brought to life

In spite of the fact that "densification" had become a swear word like the Olympic Games in the eyes of ratepayers, they should not get paranoid about it

Cape Town was an apartheid city that closed down at 6pm every day

Apartheid had forced people to the peripheries and this had led to the need for subsidised transport

"This trend must be turned around to enable the city to sustain more schools, clinics, libraries and other vital services," he said

The way to do this was to allow land to be subdivided into smaller plots along the natural transport corridors of the city like Main Road and Voortrekker Road

He foresaw plots as small was 250 or 150 square metres

Commenting on the problem of squatters and the shortage of housing, Mr Daniels said "It is my view that we must all carry the burden We must accept that we are responsible for the situation which is the result of apartheid

"The problem is not going to go away and we must accept that middle to low-income housing most be provided within the present confines of the city"

With proper planning these houses should find acceptance in any area

On the 2004 Olympic Games bid, Mr Daniels said it would have enormous benefits for the city and the Reconstruction and Development Programme

He assured ratepayers that not a cent would come out of their pockets to pay for the R60 million bid

Ratepayers would become part of the equation only once the bid had been successful

City council to lose R90-m income

ARG 24/3/95 (124)

JOSEPH ARANES
Municipal Staff

THE Cape Town City Council is expected to lose about R90 million in income when the new Cape Metropolitan Council boundaries are declared later this month — and property owners are facing a probable rates increase of about 11 percent

Assistant city treasurer Mike Richardson said the Cape Town sub-structure would cede land and assets to the neighbouring sub-structures, while incorporating part of the former Ikapa Town Council

"This will affect our rates base and income but could also limit our expenditure as we will no longer be providing services to these areas."

Council officials were preparing target budgets and had presented the executive committee with possible figures

Civics pirates in bid to 'steal' houses – claim

(124)

ESANN DE KOCK
Weekend Argus Reporter

MANY township residents may lose the roofs over their heads if alleged house pirating by the civics is tolerated. ARG 25/3/95

This weekend the SA National Civic Organisation (Sanco) may evict Marcia Mvula from her house in Brinton Street, Langa, which she has been renting from the Ikapa Town Council for the past seven years

Mrs Mvula, who says she has spent much money and effort to keep the house in good condition, got a letter from Sanco in which she was told to vacate her house by this weekend.

Sanco claimed it belonged to the Jayiaya family of Langa. But, says Mrs Mvula, she has been the legal occupant since November 1, 1988, when she signed a lease agreement with Ikapa.

"If they come and chuck me out, my two children and I will have nowhere to go."

Mrs Mvula says she knows members of the Jayiaya family, but neither they nor Sanco have been able to come up with proof to substantiate their claims. "I am a paid-up member of Sanco, but these people now want me to get out of the township."

Mrs Mvula says she is not the only resident facing harrassment from Sanco. "I have appointed a lawyer to investigate and the police have also been notified They say they will not act against me, because the eviction notice from Sanco is not legal."

She says Ikapa's hands are tied."They say Sanco does not want to listen to them."

Charlton Rayi, Ikapa administration officer in Langa, confirms Mrs Mvula is the lawful occupant of the house and has been since November 1, 1988.

"Before Mrs Mvula rented the house, it was leased to a certain Violet Tinge I have it all on file."

The lease of the house was legally transferred and registered to Mrs Mvuma

Mr Rayi believes Sanco's efforts to lay their hands on township houses are rooted in their belief that some people lost their land and houses in the apartheid years and now want it back. He says the organisation is practising overt favouritism and regularly supplies Ikapa with lists of names of people whom, they demand, should be allocated homes in the township.

"Since Sanco has been recognised as a lawful organisation in the township, it has been trying to undermine Ikapa. Their efforts to take Mrs Mvuma's house is unlawful and unreasonable. But, anyone who does not fall in with Sanco's ways and demands, now becomes *persona non grata*."

The organisation has been coming up with "stories about people who have lost their houses", but has been unable to supply proof, says Mr Rayi.

"The law should take its course. I have spoken to the police about the matter and they have confirmed they would not act to evict anyone on Sanco's demands. I have told Sanco and the police that I don't want to be a part of this injustice."

Sanco executive member Leslie James confirmed Mrs Mvula's case was being investigated by his organisation.

Olympics 'set to hit the ratepayers'

ARG 25/3/95 (124)

KAREN STANDER
Weekend Argus Reporter

RATEPAYERS in Cape Town will fork out billions of rands to fund building of infrastructure for the 2004 Olympic Games, an expert in local government warned

This shock message comes from former Cape Town administrator Donald Craythorne and directly contradicts assurances by National Olympic Committee of South Africa's (Nocsa)Sam Ramsamy, who said recently ratepayers would not pay "an extra cent" towards the Olympics

But, Dr Craythorne, now an advisor to the Western Cape provincial government, told Weekend Argus this week "Then he (Ramsamy) doesn't know how municipalities operate"

Estimates of the cost of hosting the 2004 Olympics have ranged from R5,6 billion to a massive R21 billion

Among the suggestions on how to collect from ratepayers are a piggy-back rates-levy on all rates and regional levies, a special property rate and a special levy on income tax for the province

This blow comes as city treasurer Eddie Landsberg warned at a city council executive committee (exco) meeting this week that Cape Town rates could increase by up to 21 percent this year

Cape Town's bid to host the Olympics has been racked by controversy, with public slanging between leading players, including Mr Ramsamy, Pick 'n Pay chairman Raymond Ackerman and various representatives of the Cape Town City Council and led to the resignation of Mr Ackerman as bid committee co-chairman

Yesterday, Mr Ackerman

■ To Page 3

'The poor will suffer'

(124)

■ From Page 1

confirmed he would return to the Olympic bid committee if conditions he had set for his return were met

A summit meeting to decide on the new Olympic bid structure and the board of directors is to be held on April 5 and councillors are to debate the contents of a contract between the city council and Nocsa on Monday.

ARG 25/3/95

Dr Craythorne told Weekend Argus the "bottom line" was Cape Town ratepayers would pay for the facilities needed — essentially an Olympic village to house 15 000 athletes and a sophisticated stadium to seat 100 000

"It is a matter of how you arrange it (for the payment) and what you do with the infrastructure afterwards"

He was commissioned by the Olympics Trust to do an analysis of the proposed contract with Nocsa and to come up with a plan on how to get the bid back on its feet

In his report, he said there would be a need for the regional legislature to enact a law to create a City of Cape Town Olympic board

Expenditure would be on public sports venues (the local authorities to pay full costs of facilities) and on the Olympic village (the cost of which could be off-set against sale price of units).

As a method of paying for these facilities, Dr Craythorne made four suggestions:

- The Olympic board to issue debentures or bonds,
- Fund-raising,
- Piggy-back rates-levy on all rates and RSC levies. Alternatively, the provincil legislation could provide for a special property rate, or
- The province to promote a special, perhaps one-time, levy on income tax (requiring national legislation)
- Democratic Party provincial legislator Richard van der Ross said yesterday he doubted the Olympics would benefit Cape Town's poor

"I'm beginning to get worried about the Olympics especially now that the price tag has gone up from R6 billion to about R21 billion

"We are asking Is this really necessary?"

Woman's Langa home ransacked 'by Sanco group'

(124)

ESANN de KOCK
Staff Reporter

ARGT 27/3/95

A LANGA woman's rented house was badly damaged when an angry irate members of the South African National Civic Organisation (Sanco) allegedly forced their way in in an attempt to evict the woman.

Marcia Mvula said her windows were smashed, her security gate was broken and her television was stolen at the weekend.

She said she received a letter from Sanco last Tuesday demanding that she hand over the keys to the house in Brinton Street, Langa, which she has rented from the Ikapa Town Council since 1988.

Mrs Mvula said the Sanco letter gave her and her two children until Saturday to leave the house.

Sanco spokesman Leslie James confirmed on Friday that Mrs Mvula's case was being investigated by his organisation's street committees.

He said "many wrongs" had been committed in the past and Sanco was addressing this problem in the townships.

He said occupants of houses which "belonged to other people" would be given sufficient notice to vacate.

He would investigate why Mrs Mvula had been given only four days.

Mrs Mvula said more than 100 Sanco members arrived at her house on Saturday and demanded that she leave.

"When I refused, they started smashing my windows with bricks, broke down my security gate and came into the house

"They carried my furniture out and, to warn them and to protect myself, I fired several shots into the roof.

"They also stoned the house and a stone hit me in the chest."

Mrs Mvula contacted the police, who arrived after 30 minutes.

"A Sergeant Jansen came into the house and took me away to lay a charge against Sanco.

"He ordered two policemen to stay at the house. When I got back home, they had left already and I discovered my TV had been stolen I don't know who took it, but I saw a Sanco person carry it out.

"My house is a mess. The windows are broken and some doors have been damaged. My pot plants have been smashed.

"My children and I are now living with a friend."

Charlton Rayi, Ikapa administration officer, confirmed Mrs Mvula was the lawful occupant of the house

Probe into attack on woman's house

☐ *Sanco accused of vandalism in eviction bid*

ESANN de KOCK
Staff Reporter

LANGA police have confirmed they are investigating a weekend incident in which a woman's rented house in the township was badly damaged by angry members of the South African National Civic Organisation allegedly trying to evict her.

Marcia Mvula said her windows were smashed, her security gate broken and her television stolen during the incident

She said she received a letter from Sanco last Tuesday demanding that she hand over the keys to the house in Brinton Street, Langa, which she had rented from the Ikapa Town Council since 1988

Mrs Mvula said the Sanco letter gave her and her two children until last Saturday to leave the house

A Langa policeman who visited Mrs Mvula's house on Saturday said two windows were smashed when he got there, and there were people in the street outside the house

He said the police later left with Mrs Mvula, who wanted to make a statement, and the Internal Stability Unit was called to monitor the situation

The previous day, Sanco spokesman Leslie James had confirmed that Mrs Mvula's case was being investigated by his organisation's street committees

He could not be contacted for further comment yesterday, but said last week that "many wrongs" had been committed in the past and that Sanco was addressing this problem in the townships

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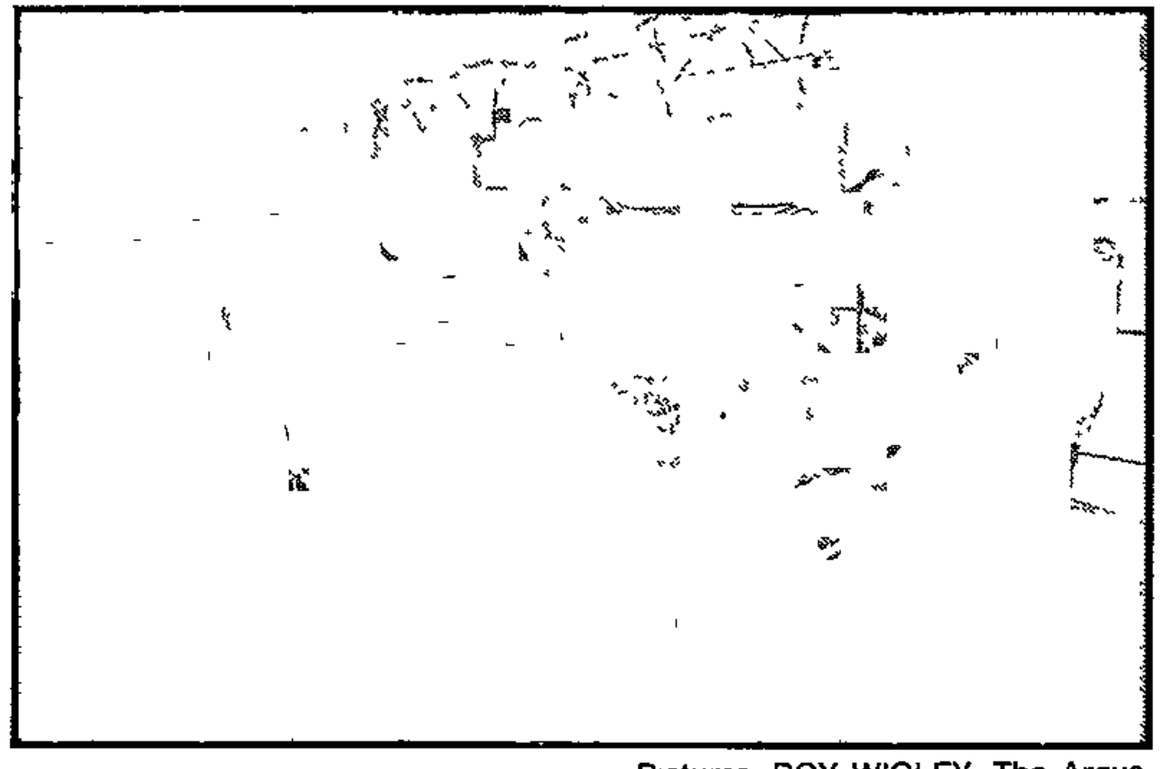
"My children and I are now living with a friend."

Charlton Rayi, Ikapa administration officer, confirmed Mrs Mvula was the lawful occupant of the house



Pictures ROY WIGLEY, The Argus

WRECKED: Marcia Mvula shows off the damage to her car, allegedly cause by her refusal to leave the house she has lived in for eight years.

ARG 28/3/95 (124)

FORCED OUT: Marcia Mvula outside her rented Langa house that was allegedly vandalised after she refused to move out Mrs Mvula shows off the letter from Sanco that demanded she vacate the house she has rented from Ikapa Town Council since 1988 In the background are the broken windows of her house

Crisis looms as Cape Town's water dries up

Municipal Staff ARG 29/3/95

CAPE TOWN's water supply is slowly but surely drying up and the city could end up with a water shortage in the future if new dams are not built, the regional director of the Department of Water Affairs has warned

James Butler said his department had kept a data bank on the storage levels of Western Cape dams and all the information showed the dams could not keep up with the demand for water.

"We have been keeping records and drawing graphs of storage levels and rainfall figures for most of the province's major dams for the past 10 years and the graphs show a downward trend

"Water Affairs Minister Kader Asmal announced plans about two months ago for the development of a dam on the Palmiet River This would help alleviate the demand for water caused by the rapid influx of people to the urban centre"

Declining water levels at Cape Town's major supply dams this week were

- Steenbras Lower — 34 percent, last year's level was 35,8 percent,
- Theewaterskloof — 64 percent compared to the two-year average of 67 percent,
- Voëlvlei — 47,4 percent while for the past 10 years the average for March was 73 percent, and
- Wemmershoek — 51,3 percent full compared to the 10-year average of 59 percent.

The only exception has been Steenbras Upper — 93 percent compared to 65 percent

TICK

RDP gets kick-start in Gauteng

By Joshua Raboroko

(127)

THE Gauteng legislature and two organisations have signed a low-cost housing accord to kick-start the Reconstruction and Development Programme in the province

At a Press conference in Johannesburg yesterday, the South African National Civic Association and the National Building Contractors and Allied Trade Forums agreed to work together with the government to help reduce the housing backlog

The Gauteng legislature announced that it would provide R1,3 billion for low-cost housing

Deputy chairman of the Provincial Housing Board Mr Moses Molefi said part of the money would be used to develop 77 000 sites given to emerging black contractors Sowetan

Sanco president Mr Ali Mazayi said the accord was an important step towards providing housing for the masses

Nabcat chairman Mr Victor Selani welcomed the accord and said Sanco would be a powerful ally in redressing the imbalances of the past and providing housing 30/3/95

The forums would hold a workshop with the Congress of South African Trade Union to reach a similar accord so that workers were also involved, he said

The accord is aimed at fusing a close relationship between the two organisations and to ensure that emerging black contractors were extensively involved in the provision of housing

Molefi said the government would provide 10 000 serviced sites for low income earners

He said the sites had been allocated with immediate effect and would benefit hundreds of homeless families

The families will also gain when the government introduces its R15 000 subsidy to the disadvantaged communities

Information regarding subsidies can be obtained from civic associations, local authorities and the Gauteng MEC for housing

Dist 6 with good vibes

ARGT 1/4/95 (124)

■ The new District Six will be a lively mix of family shops, corner cafés and housing, says the trust's new chief executive, Basil Davidson.

JEAN LE MAY
Weekend Argus Reporter

BASIL Davidson, new chief executive officer of the District Six Community Land Trust, has great ideas for a vibrant community rising again on the fallow land which once housed Cape Town's liveliest neighbourhood.

"The last thing I want the new District Six to be is just another housing scheme," he told Weekend Argus

"I see it as a cultural melting-pot which could be the catalyst to bring life back to the city centre," he said

Mr Davidson is a burly, bearded character who looks like Father Christmas, but he's a professional town planner with a mixed bag of experience. It ranges through consulting for the World Bank, the Development Action Group, the Western Cape Economic Development Forum and the regional housing board of the Western Cape

Like most busy people, he always seems to have time to do more He starts work today as chief executive officer of the trust, having been chosen unanimously by the board of trustees as the pick of the bunch of 38 applicants

In the new District Six, housing will be an important component but essentially it will be a mixed development made up of family shops, corner cafes, restaurants and cinemas as well as private dwellings, he said.

"Perhaps there will be small hotels and an intimate theatre, not necessarily on the land we own Our target is the small and intermediate entrepreneur.

"I don't want to see a huge, sterile shopping centre there, with one of the supermarket chains as key tenant and the usual mix of national clothing stores and a couple of jewellers"

There will also, hopefully, be a museum and a small memorial park to commemorate the destruction, under apartheid, of the old District Six and the forced removal of its people

The area controlled by the trust is about 40ha — "most of the unused land between De Waal Drive and the Eastern Boulevard, which is in fact only a small portion of District Six", said Mr Davidson

One of the key elements was the emphasis laid on public transport.

"We want to keep cars out of District Six as far as possible, partly because of the waste of land involved in finding parking for them and partly because we want the area to be public-transport oriented and not car-oriented.

"The city council has been talking about a 'dedicated' route reserved for public transport between the city and the Waterfront, with a possible extension to District Six That would be truly wonderful," he said.

Mr Davidson admitted, however, that some parking would have to be provided, if only to make the hotels, cinemas and restaurants accessible to people who live outside District Six.

Housing will be mainly high-density, possibly three or four-storeyed walk-up buildings — "No lifts, to keep costs down" — but the trust was keen on encouraging "a spread of income groups" with both rental and freehold properties available at subsidised and market-related prices, he said

"While we don't see it primarily as a housing scheme, there is nothing to preclude a housing scheme developed by a local authority.

"But we definitely don't want to see another Manenberg or Hanover Park in District Six,' he said firmly

"District Six is a presidential RDP project," he pointed out.

Picture: LEON MULLER, Weekend Argus.

□ **NEW MOOD:** Town planner Basil Davidson is raring to go with plans for a new, vibrant District Six — "not just another housing scheme".

'No conflict of interest' in Ilco Homes negotiations

CT 3/4/95 (124)

CHRIS BATEMAN
POLITICAL STAFF

THERE was "nothing suspicious" about current negotiations by the Cape Town Community Land Trust to buy an Ilco Homes-owned piece of District Six for R5 million after the state-owned Community Development Board sold it to Ilco Homes for R800 000 nearly 10 years ago.

This was said by Western Cape Housing Minister Mr Gerald Morkel at the weekend in reply to a suggested "conflict of interest" by Mr Vernon Joshua, Ilco Homes' development manager and chairman of the Cape Town Community Land Trust

Mr Morkel, who said Ilco Homes want R7,7 million, added that Mr Joshua had nothing to do with the price-setting

'Rich man' profits from state subsidy

(124) ARG 8/4/95

KAREN STANDER
Weekend Argus Reporter

A MAITLAND property owner who bought a council house — while thousands of others have waited years without accommodation — has been accused of abusing the welfare system and making a profit from sub-economic housing

But city council officials say they are powerless to take action against Mahomed Alli Abdul Ahmed, because the Pelican Park property has been transferred and he is now the legal owner of the house

More than 43 000 people are on the city council's waiting list for houses Officials said the waiting period was well over 10 years for even the smallest accommodation

Director of housing Charlotte Sims confirmed that Mr Ahmed had been given a state-subsidised loan of R26 370 to buy the property in Heron Road in 1990 He paid a deposit of R300

At the time he already owned erf 22 502 in Maitland with his wife Nadema, which they had bought for R90 000 in July 1989. A copy of the deed of transfer on this property is in the possession of Weekend Argus

Mrs Simms said a deeds office search was done in all cases of council houses being bought and would have been done in this case. It was against council policy to sell to those who could buy on the open market

She said the short period of time between the two transactions was probably why the search failed to show he already owned property.

Mr Ahmed could not be contacted for comment as he was said to be in Durban and had not left a forwarding telephone number.

The case came to light after Mr Ahmed's tenant in the house, Moegamat Bassier, approached Weekend Argus for assistance. He said his complaint to the city council "fell on deaf ears".

"I have been on the waiting list for eight years but people like Mr Ahmed get houses. He is a rich man

"He had to sign a document stating that he did not own other property when he bought this house. It was an illegal transaction

"This is supposed to be a sub-economic unit and he gets it Then he lets it to someone like me for R650 a month and makes a profit This way the waiting list can't get smaller It's an abuse of the system

Mr Bassier said he would be taking up the matter with provincial Housing Minister Peter Marais.

The benefit had been substantial as the interest was considerably below the interest rate charged by banks and building societies.

Mr Bassier said Clauses 8 and 18 of the council's deed of sale stated clearly the property could be repossessed at any time in a case such as this and he could not understand the council's position.

R45-m for Cape black debts

ST (CM) 9/4/95 (124)

By NORMAN WEST
Political Reporter

THE Government has been accused of "blatant racism" for allocating an additional R45-million to write off service debts in black areas in the Western Cape — but not in coloured, Indian and white areas

This is over and above the R25-million granted last year for the same purpose, making a total grant of over R70-million from central government to wipe out service debts in black areas in the region

The additional payment was raised during the budget debate in the Western Cape provincial legislature on Friday by Cecil Herandien, a NP Member of the Provincial Legislature

He described the payments to Black Local Authorities (BLAs) as "blatant racism against anyone who is coloured, Indian or white"

The payment of R45,836-million was made by the Department of Provincial Affairs and Constitutional Development on March 13

"The ANC, which dominates the government of national unity, owes the coloured, Indian and white voters an explanation why the arrears of only black residents are being written off," said Mr Herandien

Western Cape Premier Hernus Kriel wrote to the Department of Provincial Affairs and Constitutional Development in September last year, pointing out that coloured and Indian communities — and in some cases white communities — had accumalated arrears in payments for the same reasons as blacks He did not receive a response

The Director-General of the Community Services Branch of the Cape Provincial Administration, Mr J J le Roux, warned the department in December last year that "if all communities were to be treated in the same manner then central government should also accept reponsibility for the debts of communities other than black"

Mr Herandien quoted from a statement made by Roelf Meyer's Ministry of Provincial Affairs on November 25 last year which said that in terms of service arrears resulting from non-payment in the various communities "it is confirmed that all communities should be treated in the same way"

The statement followed a meeting between the Provincial Affairs Ministry and Provincial Housing ministers.

At this meeting it was agreed that for the period up to January 31, 1994

- Transitional councils be advised to write off service payment arrears for coloured, Indian and white local authorities,
- Central and provincial governments would assist transitional councils to settle Black Local Authorities' debts

Significantly, the agreement stated that after February 1, 1994, transitional councils would be responsible for dealing with arrears accumulated since February 1

"It is, therefore, clear that the period for the writing off of arrears lapsed on January 31, 1994 In the light of this, residents should now start making the neccesary arrangements with their transitional councils to pay off arrears accrued after January 31, 1994," the statement said

Mr Herandien said that since Mr Meyer's statement the Director-General of Constitutional Development, Richard Kruger, had been emphatic that the government had never undertaken to make good the arrears of coloureds, Indians and whites

THE CAPE

Cape's unemployed get chance to make a pile

Municipal Reporter

MOUNTAINS of rubbish are to be moved from roadsides in a bid to boost the morale of people living in some of the Western Cape's more deprived areas.

Part of the finance for the R8-million project will come from the province's reconstruction and development funds.

Operation Clean Up is a scheme which has been devised by the Ministry of Roads, Transport and Public Works under Minister Leonard Ramatlakane and aims to provide work for the poor in line with the RDP.

The Cape Metropolitan Council has been asked to give the first phase of the plan, namely to clean up urban roads, its approval.

This it will do subject to the Provincial Administration of the Western Cape paying out R409 000 towards the first phase of the project. The CMC would match this amount on a rand-for-rand basis.

In a letter sent to Western Cape premier Hernus Kriel, Mr Ramatlakane said Operation Clean-up was aimed at bringing "a spirit of upliftment" to the province.

"It is endeavoured that through this project a contribution to the development of a clean and acceptable environment would be made," the letter said, adding that this in turn would contribute towards the province's tourist industry.

The campaign will include the removal of debris, alien vegetation, tree planting and greening in particular areas of the Western Cape.

Local authorities are being asked to match contributions from provincial government on a rand-for-rand basis to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Reconstruction and Development Fund.

Where local authorities don't have money, they are asked to consider giving equipment and human resources.

The campaign is also to be accompanied by a concerted educational campaign.

Stage one will consist of removing debris from major transport arteries, in and outside the road verges, within the metropolitan area starting on May 2.

The second phase consists of the removal of debris and alien vegetation, slope stabilisation, greening and landscaping.

Other plans are to provide more recycling depots and environmental education for residents in specified areas.

The total cost of the second phase is an estimated R7 060 421.

(124) ARG 11/4/95

Western Cape leads home building drive

(124)

ADRIAN HADLAND and ROBYN CHALMERS

CAPE TOWN — Western Cape had been quickest off the mark to build houses, erecting 1 750 since October, Housing Minister Sankie Nkondo said yesterday.

In reply to a question from NP MP Jac Rabie about the number of houses built by the Housing Department, Nkondo said 788 had been put up with Housing Department finance in Gauteng, 725 in Northern Cape, 362 in the Free State, 109 in Eastern Cape and none in Northern Transvaal or Northwest. Figures were not available for Eastern Transvaal or KwaZulu/Natal.

Western Cape was the only province which had not established a provincial housing board, Nkondo said.

Housing analysts said increased activity in the housing sector was a positive sign, particularly as the national housing programme had yet to be launched. The pro-

BD 12/4/95 □ To Page 2

Housing

(124) BD 12/4/95

□ From Page 1

gramme, which had been delayed for about six months, included the establishment of an interim builders' warranty mechanism to protect consumers and a mortgage indemnity scheme to shield banks.

Nkondo said Western Cape had set the pace last year, building 4 383 houses, while Gauteng put up 1 648, Eastern Cape 1 364, Northern Cape 1 068 and Free State 498. No figures were available for KwaZulu/Natal, Eastern Cape or Northwest.

However, 827 houses had been damaged by vandals, the forces of nature or through poor construction.

About 350 new houses in Gauteng had been vandalised by squatters, costing the state R400 000. Guards had been hired to prevent further vandalism, Nkondo said. Weather damage had necessitated repairs to six houses, costing R30 000.

Legal action had been taken against Delft Construction after 450 Western Cape houses were damaged by weather. The company had been liquidated before repairs began. "Due to the fact that the company did not have sufficient assets to meet the claim for damages, no funds were released by the liquidator to pay for repairs."

Retention moneys of R68 000 had been withheld while an insurance company had paid out R186 188. The state had lost about R656 000 as a result.

In the Free State, wind damage to 21 houses had required the developer to undertake repairs to the value of R138 550.

□ LINDA ENSOR reports from London that the French and SA governments will sign an accord in Paris today on co-operation in the field of housing.

● See Page 3

Scrap service arrears – mayors

ARGT 12/4/95 (124)

□ *Group to lobby for debt in coloured areas to be written off*

JOSEPH ARANES
Municipal Staff

A GROUP of ANC-aligned mayors from towns across the Western Cape will lobby central government in an attempt to get the scrapping of services arrears extended to coloured areas

The 17 mayors and 12 deputy mayors met with Western Cape chairman Chris Nissen to discuss problems in their areas and ways of encouraging their supporters to register for the November community elections

After the summit Mr Nissen said they had clarified a number of issues, including the rumour that coloured people were being excluded from the government's reconstruction and development programme

"We agreed to work together to ensure a smooth delivery of RDP services at grassroots level and in all communities, and the mayors have committed themselves to re-prioritise how their different budgets are being spent

"To many of the town councils it is still business as usual and many people feel left out of the process

"Coloureds in particular feel they are being overlooked when it comes to the RDP and affirmative action appointments"

Mr Nissen said the mayors had committed themselves to bringing everyone on board and would petition the government to extend the scrapping of arrears to include coloured areas

The mayors ironed out most of their difficulties and discussed the issues and problems they faced on the non-statutory bodies of councils

MAYORS MEET: ANC Western Cape chairman and Provincial Economics Minister Chris Nissen joins hands with Kraaifontein mayor Doris Neewat and the mayor of Lwandle, Silvia Mazizi as he discusses the upcoming community elections. Picture JACK LESTRADE

Atlantis mayor Noel Williams said the efficiency of staff members working for the various local authorities was also discussed and although they all agreed with the Kempton Park "sunset clause", that no staff should be fired, they felt productivity and efficiency should be encouraged

"The old apartheid system never addressed staff problems — it was always a case of top-down decision making — and the workers were not seen as an important part of their delivery system

"We are going to change this approach and although workers do not have to fear for their jobs, they must realise they must serve the interests of their communities"

Kraaifontein mayor Doris Neewat said there was a need for change "We need to be more creative and move away from doing things (in a certain way) just because they were done that way in the past

"We must encourage and discuss with our councils and officials the importance of consulting with communities before implementing decisions"

The mayors agreed to meet on a regular basis to monitor their progress and to discuss ways of managing changes in the communities

No housing board, more houses

CT 12/4/95 (124)

POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

THE Western Cape is the only province in which a regional housing board has not yet been established, Housing Minister Ms Sankie Mthembi-Nkondo acknowledged yesterday

However, 1 750 houses had been constructed in the Western Cape since October last year — more than in any other province

In response to a question tabled by Mr Jac Rabie (NP), she said a date for the establishment of a housing board had not yet been set.

However, a board for the entire previous Cape Province continued to function

In reply to another question from Senator James Selfe (DP), the minister said 4 383 housing units were built with government funding in the Western Cape in 1994

Weather had already destroyed or damaged 450 of these units at a cost of R911 000

Western Cape housing 'an impossible task'

CT 13/4/95 (124)

ANTHONY JOHNSON
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

REMOVING the Western Cape's housing shortfall for 191 000 families in the next five years appeared to be "an impossible task," provincial housing minister Mr Gerald Morkel warned yesterday

Speaking during his budget vote in the Western Cape legislature, he said the province needed about R660 million a year for the next five years to provide housing capital subsidies and related funds to address the backlog

"At present only about R300 million is made available for housing and only 50% of the housing needs can therefore be addressed annually " Subsidies would ensure just over 6 000 "new housing options" being developed in the province during the current financial year

The minister also cautioned against unrealistic expectations fuelled by election rhetoric that those without homes could expect three-bedroom dwellings

Mr Morkel said that as provincial minister responsible for housing he had "no meaningful authority or powers whatsoever", because the transfer of assets and devolution of powers to provinces were still under consideration

"This leads to the situation where large amounts are spent in our province without any intervention or consideration by yourselves as the legislature for the province," he said

Costs higher

Mr Morkel also noted that his department had shrunk by 44% as a result of a rationalisation process

He pointed out that development costs of providing serviced sites in the Western Cape were much higher than other provinces in South Africa because of the nature of the soil

"It is for this reason that much less houses can be provided unless beneficiaries can have access to additional funds to obtain a larger housing option," he said

Nissen no to reverse racism

ST(CM) 16/4/95 (124)

By NORMAN WEST
Political Reporter

THE controversial allocation of R45-million to write off black service debts in the Western Cape will be raised when the Minister of Economic Affairs, the Rev Chris Nissen, meets President Nelson Mandela on April 25

The payment for writing off service debts in black local authority areas, but not in coloured, Indian and white areas, was in addition to an earlier R25-million allocated for the same purpose

"That R45-million may be a late payment on what was previously agreed to in terms of the arrears of specifically black service debts," Mr Nissen said

"However, the perception remains that coloureds and other races were being discriminated against

Abuse

"Although we are trying to recreate a culture of payment for services — and I appeal to people to pay for services rendered — I am nevertheless raising the perception of discrimination in the payment to write off the arrears in black areas only with Mr Mandela"

Mr Nissen also appealed to business not to abuse the affirmative action policy of the government as it could lead to racial tension between coloureds and blacks in the Western Cape

"The perception is so strong that groups in the coloured community are beginning to form 'resistance' movements because they feel they are being left out of the fruits of the new South Africa, particularly in the Western Cape"

He said the policy of some companies to favour blacks for positions in order to appear to be "politically correct" while turning away coloureds and others was "tokenism and an abuse of the policy of affirmative action"

He said affirmative action was aimed at advancing people with the right qualifications from disadvantaged communities in order to rectify the economic imbalance created by previous policies "and not to practice reverse apartheid"

Mr Nissen, who is also the leader of the ANC in the Western Cape, said advertisments inviting "Xhosa-speaking" applicants caused coloured people in the Western Cape to feel "left out" and deliberately "sidelined"

"I have an understanding for that perception I cannot tell business how to word their advertisments for employment but I am apealing to them not to discriminate on a race basis because this causes real tension and is divisive

"Tension leads to violence and violence to instability I want to send this early warning signal to businesses which refuse to employ applicants because they are not African that such companies are flaming racial tension in the Western Cape"

Mr Nissen said he had a complaint from a young man who, after a telephone interview for a job, was told he "did not sound like a black"

"This is utter rubbish, it must be condemned and it must stop

"We cannot build the Western Cape with racial prejudice We must admit that blacks have perhaps been discriminated against more than other communities during the reign of the previous regime, but we must have a balanced approach and focus on where the need is the greatest without favouring people simply on the basis of skin colour"

Mr Nissen said the RDP was wrongly perceived as being for black economic and social upliftment only

"The RDP is for the benefit of all people, black, white, coloured and Indian We are committed to equal treatment of all persons and not to discriminate between the Ruyterwachts, the Bonteheuwels and the Langas," he said

Pay up or you're a non-starter!

ARG 18/4/95 (124)

☐ *Rates, water and power debts put would-be election candidates out of the running*

BACKGROUND TO THE NEWS

ANDREA WEISS, Municipal Reporter

KINGPIN: William Bantom

KINGPIN Nomaindo Mfeketo

KINGPIN: Arthur Wienburg

PEOPLE who have not paid their rates lights and water for more than three months will not be able to run in the local elections on November 1

This is one of the regulations prospective candidates will have to take into account as the run-up to the elections moves out of the registration phase into the political contest which will determine who runs the city for the next five years

It also signals one of the most important issues which will be hotly debated in the contest for control of grassroots government.

For the first time party politics will be firmly in the arena of local government and residents are likely to be barraged with party propaganda on issues such as arrears, potential rates increases and social spending

New parties have already started to emerge, the first being the Progressive Independents who have announced that their candidate Pieter Venter, will contest the Atlantic seaboard

Other groups with a metropolitan focus possibly even a Green party, may also announce themselves in order to contest the proportional representation component of the new local councils

Voters in the metropolitan area will get three votes — for a ward councillor a party to represent them on their local council and for a party on the metropolitan council Sixty percent of seats will be for wards and 40 percent for proportional representation on a party ticket.

These groups need not be registered political parties, but could be any organisation with an interest in local government. An organisation such as the Good Hope Alliance representing southern suburbs ratepayers falls into this ambit.

But these smaller "parties" may have a tough time fighting it out with the big boys — notably the National Party, the African National Congress and the Democratic Party — because of the costs attached to electioneering and the lengths they will have to go to to gain a high-enough profile to catch votes.

The established political parties are also keen to make their mark in local government because a strong hand in government on the ground will have impact on their national campaign during the next general election.

Calculate the cost of sending out one letter to 20 000 potential voters in a ward (R12 000), and the financial resources needed to stand begin to take on more meaning Then there are the costs of holding meetings and the personal time that will have to be spent walking the streets to meet just a fraction of the potential voters

A clause in the Local Government Transition Act which stipulates that half the wards will have to be in former black local authority areas means that wards in the former white and coloured areas are likely to be as big as 20 000 potential voters, or more

This clause was negotiated at Kempton Park to reassure white residents in towns where they would have been outvoted by their black neighbours In the Cape metropole it has the opposite effect, giving African residents a bigger bite of the cake than they would otherwise have in terms of demographics

When nomination time comes round 100 days before election day, a proclamation will be issued inviting ward candidates and parties to register

Other disqualifications for candidates are that they should not be members of the national assembly, senators, members of provincial leglislatures or serving 12-month prison sentences without the option of a fine

People who are employees of any transitional authority may also not run for elections, although the provincial premier will be able to give special exemptions

Candidates will also have to live in the areas in which they are standing, unlike the existing transitional arrangement which allows them to be drawn from across the geographical area of the Cape metropole

They may also only be nominated for one transitional authority and may only contest one ward or appear on one party list.

The 100-day proclamation (on July 24) will call for both ward candidates and party candidates and at the same time specify the election date, the hours of voting, the date for submissions of nominations and the date of nomination day

When parties or individuals make their nominations they will also have to supply symbols for use on the ballot papers. Those standing on a party ticket will have to raise a deposit equivalent of one percent of registered voters in a transitional authority (in a hypothetical municipality of half a million voters this amounts to R5 000)

Similarly, in wards the candidates will have to put up the equivalent of two percent of registered voters (in a possible 20 000-ward this equals R400)

The lists will have to submitted within 20 days of the proclamation after which the returning officer will check nominations to ensure that candidats qualify

A further period will follow during which parties will be given the opportunity to rectify any defects Another task of the returning officer will be to publish a list of voting stations in each ward 60 days before voting day

The formal announcement of the names of parties and candidates takes place 40 days before election day on nomination day

This is the end of the nomination period and marks the start of the election campaign when it is anticipated that the proverbial gloves will come off and parties will slug it out until their future status in local government is revealed in the poll.

W Cape gets R205-m for housing

(124)

ARG 18/4/95

Political Correspondent

THE Western Cape is to get R205,2 million from the national housing budget

Allocations for the provinces were agreed at a meeting between national Minister of Housing Sankie Mthembi-Nkondo and her provincial counterparts

The share for the Western Cape, at 11 percent, was the fourth largest

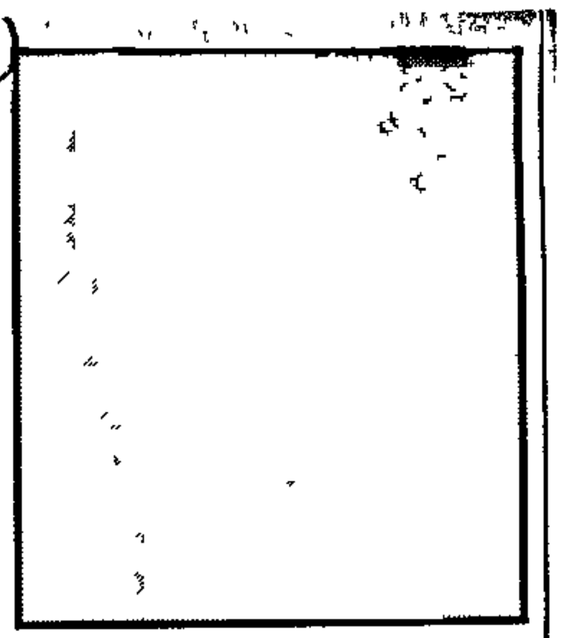
Gauteng was given 24 percent, Kwazulu-Natal 19 percent and the Eastern Cape 15 percent

This year's national housing budget was R2,92 billion, of which R2,792 billion was set aside for capital spending

Of this, R700 million was earmarked for infrastructure measures directly related to housing

Of the remaining R2,22 billion available, nearly R292 million was set aside for use at national level

Projects to be financed from this amount included the National Housing Finance Corporation (R220 million), Housing Support Centres (R50 million), the National Housing Education Programme (R10 million) and the National Housing and Services Information System (R5 million)



Sankie Mthembi-Nkondo

'Free ride' coming to end for rent boycotters

(124)

ARGT 19/4/95

MICHAEL MORRIS
Political Correspondent

WESTERN Cape residents, who are still not paying rent and service fees have been warned bluntly that their "free ride" is coming to an end.

"If you stay, you must pay," Local Government Minister Peter Marais said at the start of a lively local government budget debate yesterday

"Those who are here and those on their way to the Western Cape will have to realise that the Cape cannot guarantee free rides anymore

"We will all have to pay our way You cannot simply throw the poor at the rich and hope for a miracle cure."

He said new local government structures "should be carefully guided towards economic self-reliance and not be allowed to become permanent members in the soup kitchen queue"

Mr Marais added that he had "absolutely no faith" in the central government's ability to provide adequate funds for the Western Cape

Financial viability was the key to an effective local government system — and to a sensible demarcation of boundaries — and strong, viable municipalities depended on everyone paying their way

The haves and the have-nots would have to compromise in achieving a balance between maintaining standards in some better-off areas and improving low standards in disadvantaged areas.

"It is disturbing that the whole debate on the demarcation of boundaries in the metropole has become a simplistic 'where are we putting Khayelitsha' question"

Mr Marais was criticised for his handling of the sensitive local government portfolio

Among the critics was lone Freedom Front legislator Eleanor Lombard who said that while Mr Marais was undoubtedly an able and experienced politician, she doubted his suitability for a portfolio which required diplomacy more than anything else.

Mr Marais struck back, saying the delays in finalising the composition of the provincial committee and in deciding the demarcation of local boundaries in the Cape were the result of his own commitment to consult widely and give everybody a chance to have a say.

IKAPA, CROSSROADS HAVE RUN UP HUGE DEBTS

Cape services arrears top R50m

CT 25/4/95 (124)

TOWNSHIPS to be incorporated into Cape Town already owe the city millions for rates and services. **PETER DENNEHY** reports

BLACK townships almost certain to be incorporated into Cape Town within weeks when municipal boundaries change are running up debts of R4,2million a month — with iKapa and Crossroads piling up a debt of R56,5m since January 1994, according to deputy city treasurer Mr Ron Grace

The government agreed in January last year it would only foot the bill for writing off black local authority debts owed to other local authorities up to January 1994

The debts run up by iKapa and Crossroads are for services such as bulk water provision, sewage treatment and fire brigade and health services provided by Cape Town

Khayelitsha's debts could not be established yesterday

Mr Grace said the R67,5m total debt (R56m plus R11m on debts before January 1994) owed to Cape Town by iKapa and Crossroads did not include electricity arrears, as the city provided power directly to individual consumers and their R22m arrears were already Cape Town's problem

Mr Grace said the outlook for gradual recovery of electricity debts was good as an extra amount could be charged, by agreement, on pre-payment meters

● Meanwhile, resentment is running high in parts of Greater Cape Town over the fact that coloured rates and municipal service charge arrears were not written off along with the corresponding arrears in black townships

Signatures

Two dozen Labour Party supporters marched from the Grand Parade to the Wale Street offices of the Provincial Administration yesterday to protest to local government minister Mr Peter Marais and to deliver a petition with 700 signatures, said to have been collected in half a day

Mr Clive Williams, LP secretary for the Western Cape, said some unemployed home-owners had run up rates arrears of over R2 000

REMONSTRATING : Ms Mary Petersen of Elsie's River makes representations to Mr Valentino Muthien, (left), a representative of Local Government Minister Mr Peter Marais The small march, organised by the Labour Party, protested against the lack of municipal service arrears write-offs for coloured people, especially since there was a limited write-off of such debts for black people *PICTURE: ALAN TAYLOR*

Give us water — community

(124) CT 25/4/95

RESIDENTS of the 800-strong Klipfontein Mission Station community, near Philippi, are to meet a representative of the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry today to discuss the provision of water to the community

Mr Henry Gouws, a community worker with the Klipfontein Upliftment Society, yesterday said the community had never been provided with amenities, including water, electricity and refuse removal, despite attempts to obtain these benefits

He said that a resident, Mrs Lizzie Titus, 36, and her daughters Annemarie, 6, and Lucretia, 3, died in a fire about 2am on Sunday, and it was felt they could have been rescued if there had been ready access to water

The residents were entitled to be provided with water, as this had been identified as a "fundamental right", he said — Staff Reporter

Morkel's warning

(124)

CT 26/4/95

MAGGIE ROWLEY

IF the devolution of power from central to provincial level was not resolved soon, the Western Cape provincial housing department would appeal to the Constitutional Court, regional housing minister Mr Gerald Morkel warned yesterday

Addressing a breakfast seminar on the RDP hosted by the Master Builders' Association of the Western Cape, Mr Morkel said in terms of present legislation, the provincial minister of housing still had no meaningful authority or powers

"The minister can only appoint a provincial housing board and an assets committee, but these institutions are only extensions of the central bodies operating under delegated authority," he said.

A housing law had been passed last year by the provincial legislature, but Mr Morkel said he'd proposed that if the Housing Arrangement Act was amended to allow the devolution of power to the provinces, the Western Cape would not proceed with the implementation of its own housing law.

He said there were an estimated 191 000 families in desperate need of accommodation in the Western Cape. He said the province needed at least R600 million a year to realise its housing goals He said the R205 million allocated to the province by central government for housing this year fell far short of this and "will not go very far"

TUESDAY
★ MAY 2, 1995

Write-offs for coloured areas?

(124) CT 2/5/95

MUNICIPAL REPORTER

PRESIDENT Nelson Mandela's office refused to comment yesterday on a statement by Western Cape ANC leader Mr Chris Nissen after an ANC fund-raising event on Friday evening that arrears write-offs for black townships would be extended to coloured areas.

Mr Mandela himself could not be reached for comment.

"Our office has not been informed of any decision, so we have no opinion on this matter," presidential spokesman Mr Parks Mankahlana said

Mr Mankahlana said both Mr Mandela and Mr Nissen had been at the event, and they had spoken to each other

Mr Mandela will address a press gathering tomorrow morning, he said, so he could be asked then.

Mr Nissen's statement has been met with widespread disbelief by politicians of other parties, who have said it appears to be a "vote-catcher"

In terms of an agreement reached at the Kempton Park negotiations on local government, arrears that black local authorities owed in January 1994 to other municipalities are to be paid for by the government.

Black local authorities would in turn not persist with trying to get the money out of residents in their areas

The government is still in the process of paying off the arrear amounts

Municipal treasury staff have said that even Cape Town, one of the largest local authorities in the country with among the best computer capacity, cannot give a comprehensive breakdown of how old the arrears owed to it are.

An extension of the write-off would therefore seem impractical, they said, adding that the government had other financial priorities

Lavish water consumers to pay 21 percent more

Arg. 8/5/95 (124)

Municipal Reporter

LAVISH consumers of water are set to pay 21 percent more for what they use while the poor are in line for a five percent price cut

Those falling in between will pay eight percent more

This proposal has been approved by the Cape Town City Council's engineering services committee

The full council will be asked at the end of the month to approve an increase in the water tariff but it applies only to those who use more than a certain amount

In a new move, the council is considering dropping the price of water if consumption stays below an amount deemed to be essential for the average household

The average increase in the price will be about six percent, but different amounts will apply to various brackets of use

The proposal is in step with Water Affairs Minister Kader Asmal's plan to charge more for luxury use of water to subsidise the provision of water to indigent communities

Deputy city treasurer Peter Lever said the idea was to respond to Mr Asmal's call for basic water supplies to be affordable

It was estimated an average household needed 30 kilolitres of water a quarter (which is how water is billed), leading to the move to drop the price in this bracket by about five percent

Households which used between 31 Kilolitres and 150 Kilolitres a quarter would pay eight percent more which was just slightly above the cost of supplying water, Mr Lever said

R23m allocated to new Ceres housing project

(124) CT(BR) 10/5/95

By Maggie Rowley

Property Editor

The Western Cape Housing Board has allocated more than R18,5 million in subsidies to provide township housing and services in Ceres, in what is believed to be the first rural development project of its kind

The Ceres municipality has set aside a further R4,5 million to pay for sewerage, electricity and water services for the 1 100 erven in the project

The municipality intends recovering this sum by means of service fees

Johan Meyer, a spokesman for BKS, consulting engineer and project manager for the development, said yesterday design work was already well advanced, and tenders would be called for in June

Building work would begin in August or earlier

Meyer said BKS would soon call for proposals for housing, ranging from core or starter houses to larger homes for those able to secure additional financing from employers or financial institutions

A distinctive feature of the project, he said, was that the community was the client The community was being represented by a steering committee, formed after consultation with all political parties and community organisations in Ceres

The steering body and BKS would choose four or five contractors' proposals, and these contractors would be asked to build show houses so that people could choose which ones they preferred, he said

BKS would act as project manager, financial administrator and technical consultant

"The funds will cover all costs associated with the project, including land acquisition, professional design, the installation of all services, among them tarred roads, and the building of houses," he said

The maximum subsidy that would be granted would be about R17 500, which, after the cost of the land and servicing, would leave about R10 000 for a top structure

Several local companies, including Ceres Fruit Juices, were considering housing their employees in the project

John Schuurman, the mayor of Ceres, said the project would meet the total housing needs of Ceres, Bella Vita and N'duli

HEATHER PARKER
in Cape Town

Prepayment could be answer to power woes

(124)

BD 10/5/95

THE dassies on the upper reaches of Table Mountain may well have been swearing To add insult to the injury of floodlights that stay on until midnight, a light aircraft broke the evening peace last month, buzzing the mountain and trailing a banner announcing the centenary of power to the Mother City

The occasion was the 100th anniversary of the first electric bulb at the foot of Africa.

Former opposition leader Sir De Villiers Graaff unveiled a plaque to that effect, a nod to his late father DP de Villiers Graaff, who helped convert council Luddites to the glories of electric power Reminders of the miracle lit up the length of Adderley Street and mementoes were printed.

But generations after that first electrical surge, most of the inhabitants of SA are still in the darkness the dassies crave.

By African standards, the tip of the continent is well lit About 34% of South Africans have access to power, which is two to three times the estimates for the rest of Africa

For the two thirds that are without power, however, it cannot come fast enough. Power means more than the simple convenience of a light bulb The ability to cook food properly and to boil water have profound health implications No power means no after-dark study, which inhibits educational inspirations Small business and the development of the informal sector are limited if power tools cannot be used

No electricity means a less laundered look in the office or crippling commercial laundry bills, no electrified labour saving devices, so greater domestic pressure

The reconstruction and development programme proposes to bring electrification levels up to 72% within five years, with 2,5-million domestic installations Eskom itself is confident it will meet its target to electrify 300 000 homes this year But the national backlog in electricity payments — totalling about R1bn, according to an Eskom spokesman — is crippling the electrification drive.

One industry spokesman said the payment problem was to some extent a conceptual one. "We need to establish that power is not a right, but a product that must be bought, like sugar or petrol," he said.

The Cape Town City Council is among distributors who think they have cracked this problem with the use of domestic prepayment electricity distributors. These are activated by smart cards or tokens, rather like the old coin-operated gas meters

"Look at paraffin," Energy for Development Research Centre energy policy researcher Steven Thorne said. "It has been an incredible success as a source of energy, in rural areas where there is no wood, or in urban areas where there is no electricity Why? Because people can buy only as much as they can afford."

Prepayment allows the same kind of control.

Cape Town consumers across the board were crazy about them, city electrical engineer Fred Berwyn-Taylor said He said a 1992 survey of users "from Constantia to Khayelitsha" elicited a unanimously enthusiastic response, with users citing the ability to budget as the system's chief selling point. A number of city councillors had joined in the rush to apply for the new technology

City accountant Maurice Salmons is perhaps happiest of all about the prepayment system Consumers who are in arrears are able to overpay by about 14% when they buy their power in advance, thus clearing backlog relatively painlessly In this way, R300 000 is knocked off the council's R61m backlog each month.

Bibliography

iKapa's rates dilemma

RATES in the predominately black residential areas served by the iKapa Town Council would have to be increased by 2 000% if they were to be made economic, the Swart Commission has found

"The fact that blacks were not allowed to own property meant that to date this municipality has not been able to establish a system of property rates" CT 11/5/95 (124)

The commission added that if economic rates were levied "they would pro rata be much higher than those charged by neighbouring white authorities since there would be no cross-subsidisation by other residential consumers" — Political Staff

Over 23 000 homes electrified

MUNICIPAL REPORTER

OVER 23 000 homes in Khayelitsha have been connected to the electricity supply grid in just over a year, and electrifiers intend to raise the total to 40 000 by the end of next year

This was said yesterday at an international electricity conference at the Waterfront by Mr Alain Roucole, general manager of Phambili Nombane (Forward with Electricity) — the partnership providing electricity to Khayelitsha

French company Electricite de France and Eskom are partners in the electrification

Mr Roucole estimated Khayelitsha's population to be half-a-million, living in about 50 000 dwellings, of which 10 000 were formal and 40 000 were shacks No shacks had electricity at the beginning of last year

Mr Dickson Khulani, of the SA National Civics Organisation, said no electricity was provided when Khayelitsha was established in 1983 A few of the formal houses had been electrified in 1986, and three years later the civic associations started to campaign for more electrification.

"At that time we did not think informal houses would ever be electrified," he said

The electrification of Khayelitsha had been planned "in line with Reconstruction and Development Programme principles, though we did not know about the RDP then "

MEETING THE BENEFICIARIES: Mr Jean-Michel Fauve, president of the international division of Electricite de France, meets some of the children whose lives are being improved PICTURE: PETER STANFORD.

CT 11/5/95 (65) (124)

Delegates get an electric welcome

(124)

ARG 11/5/95

☐ *Visit to Khayelitsha project*

DELEGATES to the Electricite de France (EDF) conference took a breather from the proceedings to visit the Phambili Nombane electrification project in Khayelitsha for a first-hand look at its success

The delegates, managing directors of electricity utilities companies from mostly French-speaking Africa, as well as Indian Ocean countries, were led by EDF chief executive officer Francois Ailleret

The impressed delegates were taken to the shack of Fikiswa Plata, who operates a vending point for Phambili Nombane in Macassar squatter camp

Mrs Plata praised the work done by Phambili Nombane, saying that many residents could not do without the service the project provided

On their arrival in Khayelitsha, the delegates were welcomed by the township's mayor Vuyani Ngcuka

Mr Ngcuka said the challenge facing everyone in the country was not only the provision of services, such as electricity, but also jobs He praised Phambili Nombane and its partners, EDF and East Midlands Electricity of England

Phambili Nombane has electrified more than 23 500 homes since 1994 The project aims to electrify more than 500 000 homes in Khayelitsha in the next three years

Picture JACK LESTRADE

BONJOUR: EDF international division president Jean-Michel Fauve is welcomed by Macassar squatter camp children Mr Fauve accompanied delegates from the EDF conference who visited Khayelitsha to inspect the work of Phambili Nombane in the township.

Low-cost housing 'rarely discussed'

ARG 15/5/95 (124)

Municipal Staff

THE absence of an integrated housing policy for the Cape metropolitan area, combined with a lack of information about a provincial housing plan, means the provision of low-cost housing is rarely discussed at local government level — in spite of being a hot issue in most communities

Development Action Group (Dag) director Jacqui Boulle said the usual excuse by the province that "it is still waiting for central government to devolve its power", and the local authorities saying "they are only responsible for the co-ordination of services" hence no housing strategy, needed to be challenged

She said it was time the different authorities accepted responsibility and started laying the foundations of a policy which could be implemented by elected councillors after the elections.

"But in the meantime, set guidelines and housing frameworks need to be put in place and work should be done which will bring in those left out of the housing process because of past policies.

"Funding for low-income housing will come from the central government through the province, but the Cape Metropolitan Council and its substructures need to be creative and explore ways of delivering the housing units.

"We cannot continue with the situation in which housing is not being discussed simply because the agendas are set by people for who housing is not a priority.

"They can start by putting their strategies together and informing people of their plans. We need holistic thinking and planning and the process should include the local authorities and communities.

"Usable land needs to be identified, guidelines for future developments must be addressed and they should look at ways of internally generating funds for the provision of low-cost housing"

Electricity thieves get high voltage fines and sentences

(124)

☐ *Engineer: It's a cinch to track down offenders*

ARG 22/5/95

JOSEPH ARANES
Municipal Staff

STEALING electricity by bypassing pre-paid meter boxes not only exposes people to the risk of a high voltage electrical shock, but also to the shock of being locked up in jail

But in spite of this, a number of people are being prosecuted for the practice The problem is quite common in both the Cape Town City Council's area of jurisdiction and Eskom's

Recently, a Delft resident was found guilty of stealing electricity and sentenced to a year in prison without the option of paying a fine And he was lucky, as quite a few other offenders were sent to jail and forced to pay a heavy fine

Not only is it an offence to steal electricity, but it is also a crime to break open the sealed energy dispensers or bypass the system by altering the electrical circuit

Neil Ballantyne, assistant city electrical engineer, said the council was aware that a number of people were bypassing their meter boxes in most of their areas, but that it was not a significant problem

"We have caught quite a few people and prosecuted them, as it is very easy to detect who the offenders are

"But our biggest concern is that it is very dangerous to break open the boxes, because the conducters and wiring are live and have a high voltage"

He said that once pre-paid meters were installed, officials did random checks at houses and monitored the sale of electricity, easily picking up if people were no longer buying

Eskom's sales and consumer manager Jannie Ehlers said that since they first identified the problem, they had prosecuted a number of offenders

"The occurence varies from area to area, but Khayelitsha is one of the trouble spots at the moment"

Mr Ehlers said a number of residents who were aware that their neighbours were stealing electricity had tipped off Eskom about the offenders

"I think this is linked to the fact that the residents are aware that all this costs Eskom money, and they would rather see it being spent on more houses being electrified which is one of the reconstruction and development programme's goals

"Eskom's principle is that other customers should not pay for the costs incurred by people tampering with their meters"

Traffic chaos in Grabouw blockade

ARG 22/5/95 (124)

Staff Reporter

TRAFFIC in and out of Grabouw was severely disrupted today by disgruntled members of the Grabouw Community Organisation who blocked off the Pinetown area from the access road to the N2.

Spokeswoman Charlene Marinus said the organisation wanted rates arrears scrapped and was not prepared to wait until Wednesday when the town's transitional local council was due to meet.

She said a memorandum outlining the community's demands had been given to the Grabouw municipality last Thursday.

The community initially expected an answer tomorrow but over the weekend it became apparent council members had not heard of the memorandum.

Racial battle follows Grabouw rates march

Staff Reporter (124) ARG 23/5/95

IT is calm, but tense, in the Boland town of Grabouw after fighting and stoning between members of the town's predominantly coloured community organisation and people from the black community

A Grabouw police spokesman said yesterday's fighting started when protesting Pan Africanist Congress members of the Grabouw Community Organisation (Graco) marched to the Gerald Wright Hall for a meeting to discuss the scrapping of rates arrears

A member of the organisation is said to have damaged the house of a person in Waterworks squatter camp, and fighting broke out

Earlier in the day, about 500 members of the Graco barricaded the road that leads from Pinetown to the N2, seriously disrupting traffic to the town's industrial area

They were demanding an answer from the Grabouw municipality on the scrapping of rates arrears and improving conditions in the Snake Park squatter camp after handing a memorandum about this to the municipality last week

Police intervened to stop the fighting

A meeting was called to resolve matters, but by yesterday afternoon the roads were still blocked, said police

No fighting took place overnight

Grabouw mayor Stanley Shuma said today the fighting had been instigated by the PAC-oriented Graco members who "wanted to make a racial issue" out of the housing problems

Mr Shuma said Graco was concerned about conditions in the Snake Park squatter settlement to which the Melrose Place squatters were moved

"The Waterworks squatters are a mixed community of mostly black squatters"

He said it seemed as if the PAC Graco members felt that "only coloureds were entitled to houses" in Grabouw

"It doesn't work like that"

Mr Shuma said Graco agreed yesterday to attend a council meeting tomorrow at which the contents of their memorandum would be discussed

Two 'white' shacks destroyed by squatters

ARG 23/5/95 (124)

We've made our point, says leader

Staff Reporter

THE two "white" squatter shacks in Ruyterwacht have been demolished and burnt by the squatters after a successful meeting between residents of the suburb and Goodwood municipality

The shacks were put up by residents 10 days ago in protest against poor services from Goodwood municipality and unaffordable rents and rates

A group in Ruyterwacht called the Civilian-operated Protection Services (Cops) led the protest and leader Leon Delafontein stayed in one of the shacks

The white "squatters" were later supported by coloured squatters and some residents from Elsies River

The two squatter groups joined forces and demanded title to land for the Epping Forest residents who are without homes and unemployed, free building material with which to build homes, water and toilet facilities, refuse removal facilities and free blankets

Mr Delafontein said he had decided to quit squatting on council property yesterday when the Goodwood municipality agreed to address service provision in the area and promised that a wall would be built to separate the Ruyterwacht municipal area from the regional services council area

"The council people are already here looking at repairing the streetlights and cleaning up the area We see no need to continue our action"

He said his organisation was also satisfied that seven homeless people who had stayed in the shacks had found accommodation in Ruyterwacht

Goodwood town clerk Dave Wilken said it was agreed at yesterday's meeting that.

- The municipality would no longer negotiate with individuals, but with the Ruyterwacht Ratepayers Association.
- Eleven huts in the Epping Bush squatter camp which fell under the Elsies River transitional area had to be demolished and negotiations to improve the plight of this community would have to be taken up with the Elsies River transitional council
- The two squatter huts in Ruyterwacht be removed and that the municipality would pay attention to grievances about streetlights and services.

Picture: ANDREW INGRAM, The Argus

ALL OVER: Leon Delafontein adds more rubble to the fire after the squatter huts in Ruyterwacht were demolished and torched by the "squatters" themselves He said they saw no need to continue their action as "the council people are already here looking at repairing the streetlights and cleaning up the area".

Coloured debt write-off

CT 25/5/95

(124)

CHRIS BATEMAN

ALL coloured debt in the Western Cape up until January 31 last year would be written off on the same basis as black debt — and the Western Cape cabinet had given him full permission to do so, Local Government Minister Mr Peter Marais said yesterday

Speaking in the wake of several public pronouncements to this effect by local Economics Minister and Western Cape ANC chairperson, Mr Chris Nissen, Mr Marais said he was instructing transitional local councils to assess what effect this would have on their finances and to enter into negotiation with him on how they could make up for this loss

Asked how he intended making up for the loss, Mr Marais said he would negotiate with central government for the necessary funds

"I have the correspondence from (Constitutional Affairs Minister) Mr Roelf Meyer, saying I must treat coloureds and blacks the same," he said.

THE lift-off date — June 5 — for the implementation of the government RDP housing programme, is only days away In these special pages, the Argus reviews plans for the housing initiative with special emphasis on what is happening in the Western Cape

Housing the nation: From vision to reality

ARG 25/5/95 (124)

WESTERN Cape Housing Minister Gerald Morkel gives his view of developments in the field of housing in the region

WE have a vision for South Africa — a vision of growth, economic stability, peace and prosperity But a vision without substance will stay a vision

Here, in the Western Cape, where so many of our people still live in squalor, we have embarked on several projects to give substance to our vision

We are confident that we will be able to achieve our goal of building 200 000 housing units over the next five years, provided we receive adequate funds from national housing

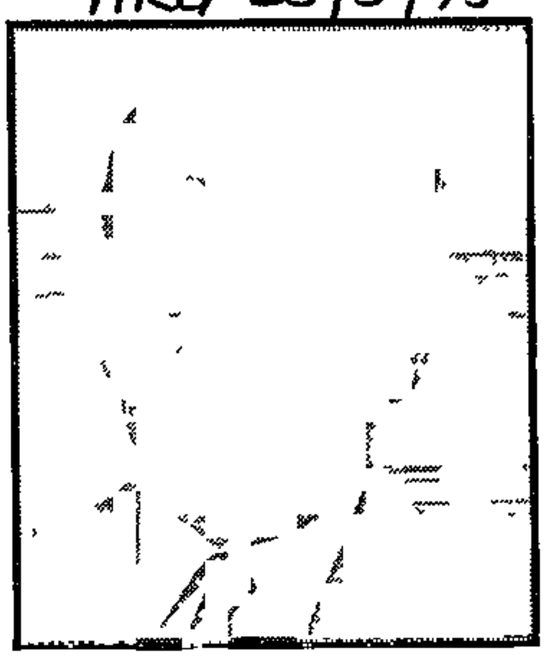
There has been a reconstitution of basic principles More than ever, development has to be people-orientated and communities have to be directly involved And integrated approaches to planning and implementation are imperative

Housing cannot be divorced from the people who will eventually live there We are striving towards sustainable community living

Due to the fact that communities and community-based organisations must play a key role in planning and implementing development, a very heavy responsibility is placed on them to refrain from actions which can retard such development

Time is money and we owe it to the people not to waste this scarce resource Lead times of months and years cannot be afforded

On 27 October 1994 a Housing Accord was signed in Botshabelo in the Free State by all the roleplayers in the housing delivery process — builders and banks, government at local, provincial and national level, building materials suppliers and the international community



Gerald Morkel

But most importantly, the communities, the unions, the Homeless People's Federation, the Housing Forum and the housing boards

The accord contains the firm commitment by all role players and has become the blueprint of our common goal housing the nation

I share the commitment contained in the Housing Accord to eventually provide, where it cannot be afforded immediately, a permanent residential structure with secure tenure ensuring privacy and which provides for adequate protection against the elements

Since the introduction of the project-linked subsidy scheme in March last year, 19 projects have been approved by the Housing Board

The projects range from Guguletu in the Cape Metropole to Plettenberg Bay in the south and Vredenburg in the west

The projects will provide more than 5 000 housing opportunities throughout the Western Cape

The Serviced Land Project (SLP) started by the Cape Provincial Administration in April 1991 has since became a presidential RDP project

It will provide 37 000 housing opportunities in the Cape Metropole during the next five years

Expectations were created last year that people would receive three-bedroomed houses from the word go, but this is certainly not possible with the capital housing subsidy scheme

At the Botshabelo housing summit in October 1994, the fundamental principle of incremental or progressive housing was accepted by all

The principle is not new

In fact, it has been practised for years by home-owners who have set about gradually upgrading and/or expanding their residences from corrugated iron shacks to brick and mortar houses or adding on to existing houses

The government cannot provide all the money to assist people with housing It is essential that the financial institutions become involved in the housing market

In return, home-owners must take responsibility for the repayment of loans to ensure the flow of housing credit and increased housing delivery in our province

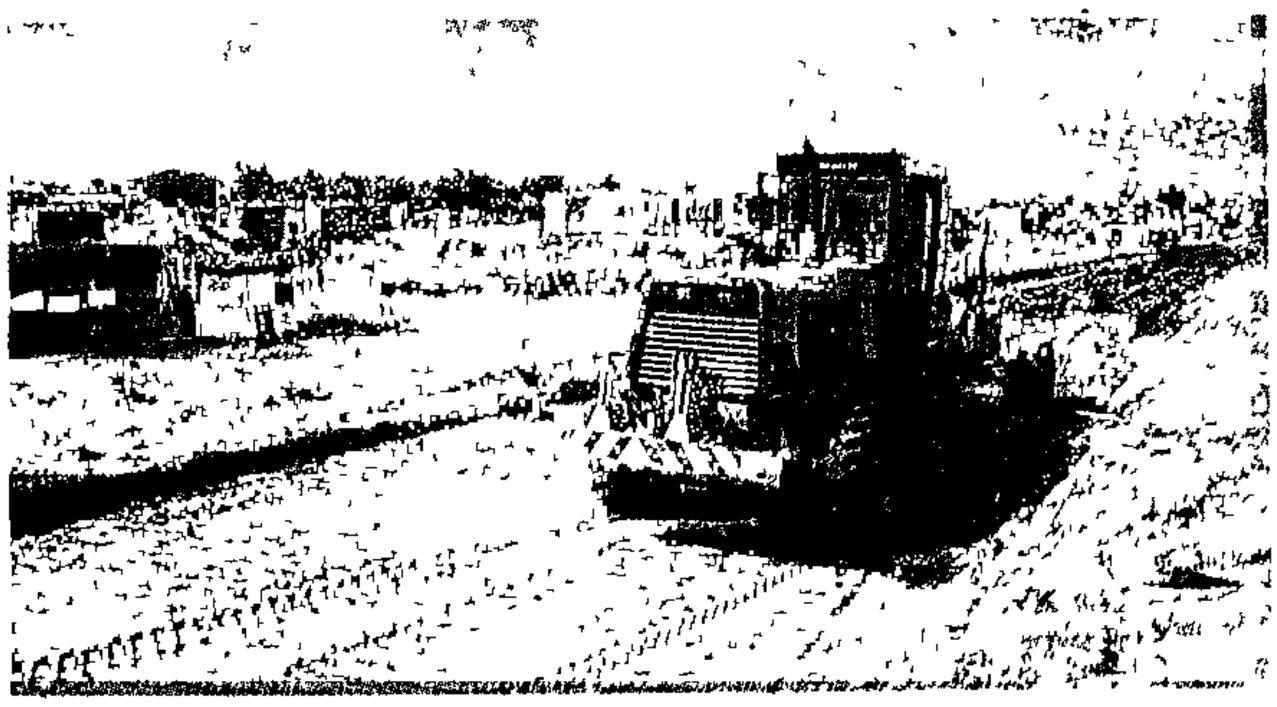
The Western Cape government is committed to a development process driven from within communities

Through its policies and strategies it will encourage and support initiatives emerging from communities or broader local social groups aimed at equipping people to drive their own economic empowerment, the development of their physical environment and the fulfillment of their needs

To assist our people, we are investigating setting up housing and building support centres with regard to building technology, home-ownership, end-user finance, the subsidy schemes and other aspects

I am confident that if every roleplayer in the housing delivery process does its share and takes responsibility for its part, our vision will become reality

This housing survey was compiled by CHARLENE CLAYTON, The Argus's Property Correspondent.



BUILDING: Earthworks in progress at the Samora Machel squatter camp at the intersection of the R300 and Vanguard Drive The 800 families in the camp will be accommodated in a development called Weltevreden Valley — one of the projects of the Serviced Land Project

'Write-off not certain'

(124)

CT 26/5/95

MUNICIPAL REPORTER

ACCOUNTS in Cape Town are not "colour-coded", so if there were to be a write-off of coloured arrears, it would have to be done according to geographic areas.

This was said by senior council officials yesterday, in response to an announcement by Local Government Minister Mr Peter Marais that the Western Cape cabinet was in favour of writing off municipal services arrears for coloureds.

He would enter negotiations with the government for the necessary funds, Mr Marais said.

City officials said it did not amount to an instruction to write off the arrears. Mr Marais could only issue such an instruction if the provincial or central government picked up the tab.

The Port Elizabeth council, which recently wrote off R60m worth of coloured and black arrears, had been taken to court by two whites and it appeared the case would end up in the Constitutional Court, Mr Ian Iversen said.

Games villag

Meeting restores Grabouw calm

Staff Reporter

CALM has returned to the Overberg town of Grabouw after the major players, stuck in a deadlock over housing, reached agreement on several issues at a marathon eight-hour meeting (124)

Topping the agenda was the violence which turned into a minor racial war earlier this week when black and coloured squatters fought running street battles ARG 26/5/95

The parties all agreed to end hostilities and to suspend all protest action in the town, and committed themselves to resolve the issues through negotiation

Town clerk Valdor Dudley said the meeting was the 48th since the beginning of the year between the transitional local council and the Grabouw Community Organisation (Graco) in a bid to resolve the crisis in the town

"But it was also the most successful as we reached agreements on things that were tearing the town apart"

A few weeks ago Graco supporters, about 1 000 predominantly coloured squatters, were bulldozed from Melrose Place, a site earmarked for low-cost housing for all homeless Grabouw people, and moved to a transit camp called Snake Park 300m away

The forced move sparked racial tension between Graco members and the residents of four black squatter camps, some of whom were attacked and stoned by angry Graco members on Monday

Graco leader Dennis Marinus demanded "immediate electricity" at the temporary site and the assurance that all residents would be allocated plots in Melrose Place, but the local council said the demands were impossible to meet

Last night Mr Marinus, who was suspended from the council because of his poor attendence record at council meetings, was allowed to serve as a councillor again on condition that Local Government Minister Peter Marais approved his re-appointment

Mr Dudley said Mr Marinus also agreed to serve on the housing forum, the body responsible for the allocation of sites at Melrose Place, on condition that an independent auditor be brought into the process to monitor the allocation process

"Another thorny issue that the meeting resolved was the scrapping of service arrears.

"The parties agreed that the council did not have the resources to write off debts and only if the central government stepped in and paid the accounts would residents' debts be written off

Problem over coloured debt write-offs (124)

MUNICIPAL REPORTER

CT 30/5/15

BD 30/5/95

Money for services

WESTERN Cape's housing department had set aside more than R500 000 for rudimentary infrastructure services at three towns, housing minister Gerald Morkel said yesterday.

Clanwilliam would receive R180 000, Botrivier R166 000 and Villiersdorp R200 000.

(124)

Council house, flat rentals rise

CT 31/5/95 (124)

MUNICIPAL REPORTER

RENTALS of all council houses and flats, except for a few old-age homes, are to be increased by 10% from July 1, the Cape Town City Council decided yesterday

There was lively debate over Mr Arthur Wienburg's claim that the increase was inadequate, as it would still leave a shortfall of R11,2 million in the housing service account

The shortfall would have to be made up by contributions from ratepayers, he said

Rentals of council houses averaged R78 a month, Mr Wienburg said However, the average cost to the council of each of the houses was R130 a month.

"I know it is an election year, but unless you act responsibly, the problem will become worse We are not talking about making profits, but recovering the actual cost "

Mr Hanif Tiseker (ANC) said millions of rands in surplus funds, collected from all areas through electricity bills were handed over to the rates account Also, if one looked at the outdated municipal valuations that were still being used, it became clear "the rich people of Camps Bay and Sea Point are being subsidised by this city".

Mr Wilfred Rhodes (Sanco) said the poor had always subsidised the ratepayers because of "wage discrimination" They worked, but did not get paid what they should for their work and thus were unable to buy houses.

Mr Neil Ross (DP) said the increase was modest and affordable for most, and it addressed the principle that people must pay for what they got

Affluent also in arrears

(124)

ARG 31/5/95

Municipal Reporter

RESIDENTS of some of the "leafiest" suburbs in Cape Town are relatively deep in arrears with their electricity payments

This emerged at the Cape Town City Council's monthly meeting yesterday

Ian Iversen of the Democratic Party said officials had learned how to apply pressure on reluctant payers

Figures showed that in Constantia, 19,2 percent of users were in arrears, in Rondebosch 22,1 percent, Rosebank 29,4 percent, Bakoven and Camps Bay 26,8 percent and Sea Point 36,3 percent

Rise in water, power and rent

ARG 31/5/95 (124)

ANDREA WEISS
Municipal Reporter

ELECTRICITY and water bills are to go up on August 1 by averages of nine percent and six percent

Rents on all council houses and flats, except for a few old-age homes, will rise by 10 percent from July

This was decided by the Cape Town City Council yesterday

But those who use limited amounts of water will pay less than before, and those who have difficulty paying rent can approach the council for assistance

The charge for the first 30 kilolitres of water used domestically every quarter will drop from 84c kℓ to 80c to help the poor

Those using up to 120 kℓ a quarter will pay R1,48 kℓ instead of the present R1,37, and those using more than 150 kℓ will pay R2,09 kℓ instead of the present R1,73

Industrial users of water will pay R1,56 kℓ instead of the present R1,47, regardless of how much water they use

Domestic users of electricity will pay 20,05c kW/h instead of the present 18,06c

Wealthy areas also in arrears

(124) CT 31/5/95

MUNICIPAL REPORTER

THE myth that virtually all the outstanding debts for municipal services were from poor areas was exploded yesterday by councillor Mr Ian Iversen, co-chair of the engineering services committee.

Mr Iversen said 21,2% of the 1 700 electricity accounts in Bishopscourt were in arrears.

In Kensington 31,5% of customers were in arrears, while in Sea Point the figure was 36,6%

In Constantia 19,2% of accounts were in arrears, in Rondebosch 22,1% and in Rosebank 29,4%, he said

Mr Iversen added that he did not believe the council should "go for" the people with the longest-outstanding debts, but rather for those who could afford to pay

"Some people are playing games with the council," he said