

HOUSING & HOSTELS - SAFL

1997

JUNE - DEC

NEWS

Angry residents reject councillor's resettlement plan

'We don't want to move'

ASHLEY SMITH
STAFF REPORTER

Residents of Mfuleni on the Cape Flats are furious about a plan by African National Congress councillor Oliver Nqubelani to move about 7 000 residents from an informal settlement to a bushy area without toilets, water or other amenities.

Hundreds of people from the settlement and other members of the local community gathered next to the public library in Mfuleni last night to confront Mr Nqubelani about his proposal to break down hundreds of shacks near the centre of the township. A vicious war of words erupt-

(124)
ARGUS 8/1/97
ed as residents refused to accept the "autocratic rule" of their elected councillor who, they claimed, was not concerned about the welfare of the community.

Tension rose as they surrounded Mr Nqubelani and said they would not move from homes they had lived in since 1990.

"We are not moving. Why must we suffer when they promised us a subsidy from President Mandela?" said Eida Maggelba.

She said the area in which she lived had one toilet for every 200 people and had become a "breeding ground for many diseases".

"Before the local election last year, we called in Premier Her-nus Kriel to help our fight to get

decent civic amenities, but Councillor Nqubelani and his henchmen chased him away," she added.

Patrick Make, deputy chairman of the Mfuleni United Residents Association, said the area set aside by Mr Nqubelani was next to a graveyard and he was forcing people to "go to the bush".

"We are waiting for houses, so why must we move to another informal settlement?" Mr Make asked.

Mr Nqubelani told the volatile crowd he would call an urgent meeting with the "squatter committee" to resolve the crisis.

It was decided the meeting would take place at 7pm today, and the crowd dispersed.

Squatters' hopes for

Civic's call for talks prolongs

JERMAINE CRAIG
STAFF REPORTER

Sylvia Botha, 33, moved into a tin shack in the Vygieskraal squatter camp in Athlone 18 years ago and has reared four children there during that turbulent time.

She is still living in a shack in the camp and is expecting her fifth child

She was overjoyed last year when a development that would mean proper housing, roads, electricity and water for the camp was all but cut and dried, causing an excited buzz in the camp

However Sylvia's hopes, and those of more than 300 Vygieskraal residents, were dashed by objections from neighbours she has had for all those years

A dispute in the Athlone Reconstruction and Development Programme Forum has stalled a project that would bring long-awaited housing for 179 Athlone squatter families, some of whom have been living in zinc shacks for nearly 20 years

The Cape Town City Council, as well as the Provincial Housing Board, has given the go-ahead for the project, but the squatter communities of Vygieskraal and Jane Avenue will have to wait for their houses until the dispute is settled

The project, a joint initiative between the Athlone RDP forum, the council and the squatter communities, entails building housing near the Vygieskraal canal for close to 600 people living in the two squatter communities of Vygieskraal and Jane Avenue in Rylands

It also involves the levelling of the land, the construction of roads, stormwater drains and sewers, as well as the provision of water, street lights and electricity

However, one of the Athlone RDP Forum's affiliates, the Belgravia Estate Civic Association, has objected to the project, claiming it was not consulted about the development bordering the middle-class Belgravia suburb

The squatters say most of the Belgravia residents support the development and that the objections come from a small section of the community "who think they are better than us"

Athlone sources claim the executive of the Belgravia civic do not want a low-cost housing development bordering their properties, and are trying to rid the area of the squatters, something the chairman of the Belgravia civic, Ivan Williams, denies

The leader of the Vygieskraal squatter community, Mauridah Koopman, said the development would be a positive thing for Belgravia. The squatters were sick and tired of living in squalid conditions in tin shanties without electricity and water

"We spoke to the Belgravia residents, person to person, and people are glad the squatters are getting proper housing. They call themselves an elite area, but why do they still want squatters in their area? We are ignoring them now, they have been holding up the project for months," said Mrs Koopman

She said most residents in the camp were employed and would be able to pay their rent and rates

The area's councillor and deputy chairman of the executive committee, Saleem Mowzer, is facilitating the matter to try to reach an amicable solution



Hopes and dreams: three of the most influential members of the Vygieskraal squatter camp, Carol Loff,

Mr Mowzer said he had held meetings with the Belgravia civic in an attempt to break the impasse, without success

"The Belgravia civic raised three points. They said they didn't want any development, they objected to the size of the dwellings and they felt they had not been consulted about the project," Mr Mowzer said

The executive of the Belgravia civic had also objected to alleged anti-social behaviour of the squatters, claiming they were involved in drug-peddling, shebeens and the vandalising of local schools

Mr Mowzer said the council had rezoned the land for the proposed project from open space to housing, which the Belgravia civic had not approved

The council had already approved the rezoning, but agreed to speak to the premier about freezing it on condition the Belgravia civic agreed to support the project

The rezoning was put on hold, but at a subsequent meeting the Belgravia Civic again rejected the development

Mr Mowzer said he would continue to try to get the civic to support the development, saying that "we have a responsibility as citizens to improve the conditions of people who don't have housing, electricity or sanitation. If they are going to object, the community is not going to disappear, they will continue to live there as they have been. We want the civic to be part of the development"

Mr Mowzer will submit a report to council soon, which will decide whether the project will continue

Mr Williams says, "Belgravia is not anti-Vygieskraal project. We are very much for the project, provided it is sustainable." He claimed the Athlone RDP forum had left the Belgravia civic out of the project from the outset

r housing dashed

Vygieskraal's 18-year wait

(124) ARG 11/1/97



DOUG PITHEY

Koopman and Sylvia Botha share the hopes and dreams of all its residents 'They have been holding up the project for months'

newsletter drawn up by the Belgravia
says it will support the project on con-
that
only people now living at Vygieskraal
accommodated and no one from Jane
or any other area.

The project be well planned, in keep-
Belgravia Estate
each structure has at least two bed-
a living area and a bathroom and

new families be accommodated in
buildings that might be erected on
plot.
units be habitable throughout the

idents pay for all services ren-
well as rates
oad be built between existing Bel-
properties and the new scheme
project have all facets of uplift-
pace before its commencement

■ The project has a greening
programme and that the canal be covered
with a slab

■ The project must be sustainable
The chairman of the Greater Athlone
RDP Forum, Nazeem Mahatey, said the
forum had contacted all the participants in
the project, including the Belgravia civic,
on numerous occasions to inform them of
the development

He said the forum still regarded Bel-
gravia civic as part of its "family" and
vowed to resolve the issue

"The forum is aware and sensitive to
the concerns of Belgravia Estate and we
are looking for mechanisms to sort it out
We regard this as a family feud and we are
going to sort it out," said Mr Mahatey

He felt the Belgravia objections
stemmed from the fact that owing to
apartheid the area did not have any recre-
ational facilities, such as playgrounds and

community halls Mr Mahatey said the
forum was sensitive to these needs, but
said providing these things would take
time

He said housing was an urgent priority
in Athlone and appealed to the Belgravia
civic to support the Vygieskraal project

Meanwhile, the squatters are unsure
about their future and are waiting for the
project to begin

"The quicker this project begins, the
quicker things can change," said Mrs
Koopman

"We want to start a proper health
awareness programme and teach people
how to be independent

"We want to begin brick-making pro-
jects and teach people skills, but we can't
do that because we don't know whether the
project will go ahead

"All we want is to get the ball rolling,"
said Mrs Koopman

BU COZERS SNUFFLE SAME OF SQUATTER DEFIANCE

Mbekweni forced removals follow long legal battle with Paarl council

(124) ARU 15/197

LINDSAY BARNES
STAFF REPORTER

More than half the shacks at the squatter settlement at Mbekweni in Paarl had been demolished by early today despite a scorched-earth protest by residents who burned down their homes rather than see them bulldozed. Police spokeswoman Vivienne Phillips said today that only 140 shacks were still standing.

Yesterday billowing black smoke from burning shanties backed the squatters' protest against forced removal, after a protracted legal battle between residents and Paarl authorities who want to build low-cost housing on the land.

As the private demolition contractor's front-end loader sent timbers and corrugated-iron sheets crashing, an irate resident cleared his shack of possessions and set it alight.

His protest caught on and soon the part of Mbekweni known as Lahl'umlenze was dotted with bonfires, residents gathering to watch as each new set of flames licked the air.

But some of the fires were not planned. Cape Argus photographer Andrew Ingram saw a father and son hastily removing a bicycle from a burning shack, while other residents scurried to remove their possessions from homes set alight by burning neighbouring huts. Many of the timber dwellings were less than a metre apart.

Police spokesman Vicus Holtzhausen said two people were arrested for possession of a petrol bomb. Despite tension between residents, 440 policemen on the scene and demolition workers, no incidents of violence were reported. Sections of the settlement were cordoned off with razor wire to keep residents away from the demolition team and police kept watch in case of confrontation.

Residents heckled the workers and police, while sending their children away from the front line.

A few residents still inside the enclosure made last-ditch attempts to save their belongings and handed food, furniture and even live chickens through the razor wire. The destruction of the huts would take at least three or four days, Captain Holtzhausen said. He stressed the police had been called in to protect the contractors from the angry residents.

Paarl mayor Mike Magajo said the land had been earmarked for low-cost housing early in 1995 and in September that year municipal officials had told residents.

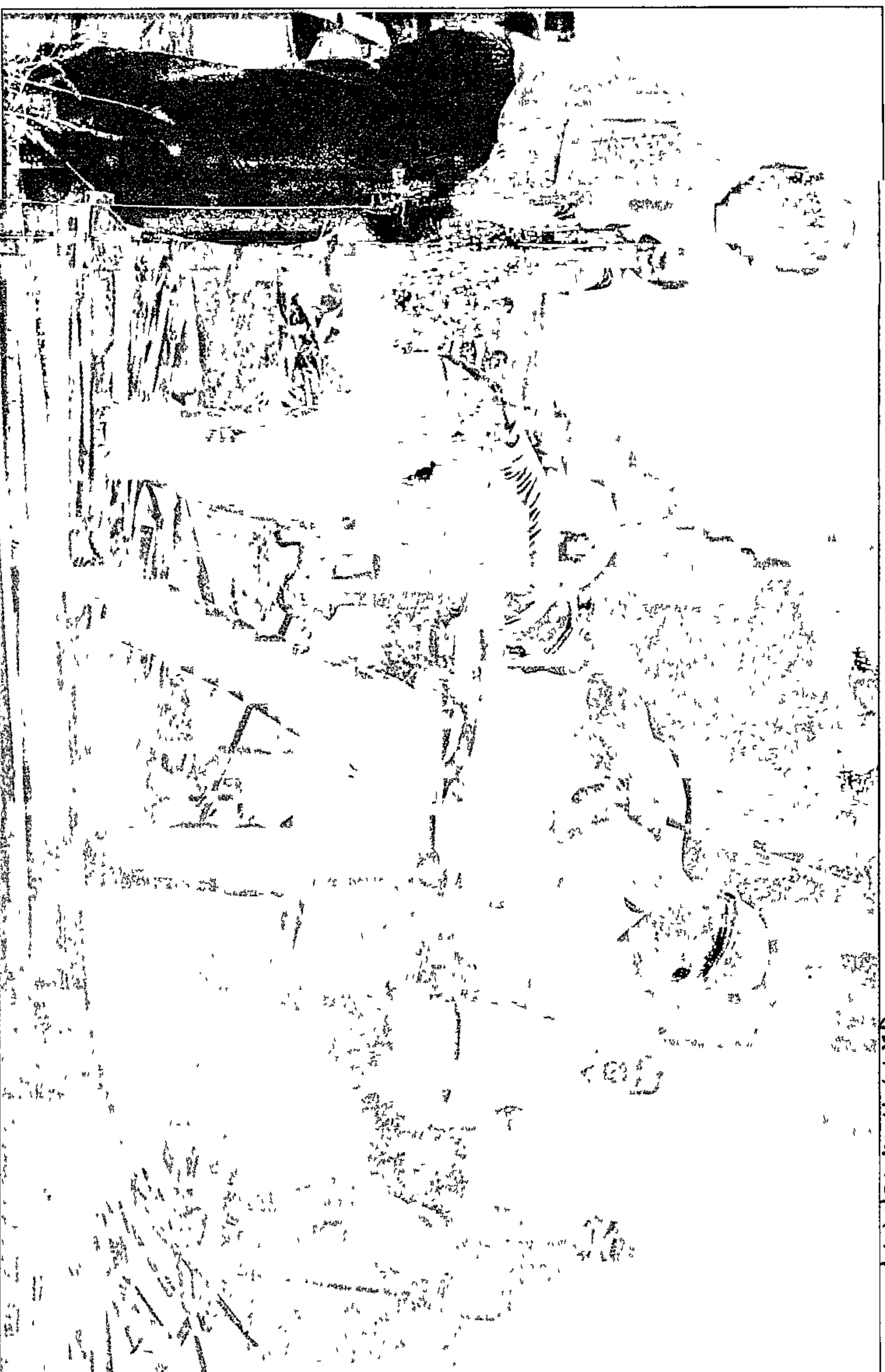
The residents promised to move by February last year and undertook to ensure the informal settlement did not grow. But they stayed and in April residents



Precious possession: a woman saves a chair from the demolishers



Final plea: a woman is unable to prevent her belongings being removed



Scorched earth: demolishers break up building material while a shack burns in the background

of the greater Mbekweni area met and agreed that the shack dwellers should be evicted to make way for housing.

In September, the authorities were granted an eviction order which was challenged unsuccessfully in court by the squatters' attorneys.

The squatters were given a month to pack their bags and this was extended to give them grace to find land to move to. A final order decreed that they leave by last Saturday.

A hall had been set aside at Mbekweni stadium to house them until other arrangements had been made, Mr Magajo said. But residents appeared to be unaware of this and many said they would seek shelter overnight in a nearby forest.

Mr Magajo said he lived in a shack in Phola Park informal settlement and sympathised with the Lahl'umlenze squatters but said the council had to take a stand so

the reconstruction and development project could begin.

Local police legal adviser Deon van Papendorp said he understood that each day the project was delayed cost the developers thousands of rands. He said the eviction had occurred without violence, but police had intervened when some members of the contractor's team allegedly set demolished material alight.

Keith Sheldon, the squatters' attorney, said the residents had successfully requested the eviction order be stayed until government ministers could be contacted to intervene in the issue, but Parliament was in recess.

Most squatters had refused to move as no alternative site had been identified. Municipal officials said no other land was available near Mbekweni, but there was space near the former coloured and white areas, Mr Sheldon added.



Arrest: police remove a man allegedly found in possession of a petrol bomb

Squatters moved to make way for houses

ERIC NTABAZALILA

PAARL mayor Mr Mike Mgajo is in an unenviable position — he has had to have squatters removed from land that is earmarked for low-cost houses

He has been at the centre of a two-year row which resulted in the forced removal of about 400 squatters from an informal settlement at Mbekweni on Tuesday.

Mgajo said yesterday he and councillor Mr Mawethu Wambi had to flee after hundreds of angry squatters marched on their homes.

"These people threatened our lives. Now we cannot even organise for the Red Cross to help those who don't have food because of these threats," Mgajo said

He said that before the squatters built their shacks, they were told the area was earmarked for low-cost houses. Every month they (the squatters) were called to mass meetings at which the council appealed to them to return to where they came from so the area could be developed

But the number of shacks increased and angry residents from other areas surrounding the Phola Park settlement wanted to evict the

CT 16/1/97
squatters themselves as they were desperate for the promised government low-cost houses

"We had to seek a court interdict because we felt that if we carried out the evictions on our own, it would have led to confrontations," Mgajo said

Wambi said "Some of the squatters will also be able to move into the low-cost houses"

The squatters slept on the roadside on Tuesday night and said they had nowhere to go.

Mrs Nomzi Ramashala, an executive member of the Phola Park Residents' Committee, said yesterday the committee had tried many times to reach the mayor and the councillors, but to no avail.

By yesterday afternoon, Mgajo and Wambi met the squatters to persuade them to sleep in the hall the council has organised in the Mbekweni stadium. It was agreed that a committee would be formed to look at the housing crisis in the area, Mgajo said

Police spokesman Captain Wicus Holtzhausen, who was at the scene, said yesterday the heavy police contingent was necessary "We are here to protect both sides, the squatters and the demolishers"



WE WILL NOT BE MOVED: Mrs Tina Jacobs and her 20-month-old daughter Ashlen are among 200 people in Delft who face eviction today

PICTURE: GARTH STEAD

Defiant Delft squatters to 'stand and fight' evictors

NASREEN SERIA

MRS Amanda Cloete of Delft will be evicted from her home today. She believes the house belongs to her, but the Tygerberg municipality and people on the housing waiting list disagree.

She said yesterday she would "stand and fight" when the evictors came.

Cloete is the unofficial spokeswoman for more than 200 illegal occupants in Delft who have been served with interdicts to vacate the 88 occupied houses by noon today or face eviction.

"I am scared about what may happen

when they come to evict us," she said, "but I have nowhere else to go."

She and her neighbours have not packed any of their belongings or made any preparations to move. "If they take our stuff out of our houses, we'll just put it back again. I'm prepared to go to jail rather than give up my home."

She has been living illegally in the house in Eindhoven for a week, and other houses in the neighbourhood have been occupied for up to a month.

"I stayed with my mother in Epping before this, but I couldn't stay there any longer because there were too many peo-

ple. I heard from a friend that these houses in Delft were empty. I have three children and I needed to find a stable place for them," she said.

Cloete is angry that she is now being forced to leave her home to make way for others. In the Western Cape provincial housing plan the houses in Delft will be allocated on an equal basis to coloured and black people. But the present squatters are angry because houses are being allocated to black people who were not on the waiting list.

"I know that black people have been disadvantaged in the past and that changes

have to be made to reverse this," said Cloete. "But where does that leave us?"

"I applied for a house in 1987 and then again in 1991. The authorities have been pushing us around all this time."

"Some reports have said that this is a racial issue and that there is tension between the coloured and black people living here, but that is not true. We are just desperate for houses."

Mr Justice J Hope said in the Cape Supreme Court yesterday that he sympathised with the illegal occupants, but "the law is the law", and occupants would be forced to vacate the houses by noon today.

(124) CT 24/1/97



Tense standoff: police, rifles at the ready, scuffle with people preventing the eviction of illegal occupants of Delft houses yesterday



Defiant Ursula Fisher defiantly puts back the furniture into a house she had been evicted from after staying there illegally

Delft eviction bid ends in violent chaos

Removal delayed until Monday as illegal occupants clash with police

JERMAINE CRAIG

STAFF REPORTER

Defiant illegal occupants of 88 Delft houses have been given a reprieve until Monday, after an attempt to evict them failed when violent clashes erupted between the occupants and police.

The air crackled with tension yesterday as sheriffs of the court, assisted by police, tried to evict more than 200 illegal occupants of houses in the Eindhoven area. The illegal occupants had been served with interdicts in the Supreme Court on Wednesday and given until noon to move or be forcibly evicted.

The illegal occupants had vowed earlier to "stand and fight" when the evictors

came - and fight they did.

There was a pressure-cooker atmosphere throughout the morning in Eindhoven, as the noon deadline crept closer.

People had been burning tyres in the streets in a show of defiance.

The noon deadline came and went with no sign of the sheriffs, but at 12.15pm the trucks moved in and the sheriffs came, accompanied by a large contingent of police and army personnel.

The tenants erupted in anger, hurling abuse at police and sheriffs, and vowing to stay in the houses. There was pandemonium as police and the occupants came to blows.

Police formed a cordon around the houses and sheriffs removed furniture. On at least two occasions, police drew

their weapons and appeared close to opening fire as people tried to storm through the cordon.

As soon as one family had been evicted, people broke open the doors, moved the furniture back in and reinstated the families.

After only five evictions, the situation became too

volatile and police and the sheriffs retreated and met to discuss a new strategy. It was decided to make a renewed



Prized house: Juwayah Adams, left, an illegal occupant, and Maragret Tsengwiwe, the legal owner, both have keys to the same house.

attempt to evict the illegal tenants on Monday and to try to get the legal owners to occupy the homes.

Captain Jan Solomons, station commander from the Bellville South police, said more police would be deployed on Monday to help the sheriffs evict the illegal occupants. He said about 70 policemen were used yesterday, but police had not expected so many people to fight the evictions.

Nico Rheeder, marketing co-ordinator for the Integrated Serviced Land Project (ISLP), a housing development project overseeing the building and issuing of the Delft houses, said a concerted attempt would be made to contact legal owners and get them to take possession of their homes.

Chronic housing shortages continue to afflict the Delft community, as people who have been on housing waiting lists for many years take over empty houses. Illegal occupants have accused consultants for the ISLP of taking money from people in exchange for houses. Some people say they were given keys to the unoccupied houses and moved in illegally after paying up to R2 500 to the consultants.

The crowd identified two consultants they had "ripped them off". When Saturday Argus approached the men, they refused to comment and would not give their names but confirmed they were ISLP consultants.

Saturday Argus also encountered an illegal occupant who had been staying in a house for two weeks, and the legal owner, who came to the house for the first time yesterday. Both had a set of keys.

Illegal occupant Juwayah Adams had moved in, saying she had been given a set of keys by one of the consultants. The legal owner, Maragret Tsengwiwe, said "This is my house and I will die for it".

Executive committee members of the Community Outreach Forum (Core), Rashied Stagge and Ernie Peters also appeared on the scene to speak to crowds

(124) ARG 25/1/97

Arrears: Marais under fire

By NORMAN WEST, Political Reporter

(124)
LOCAL Government Minister Peter Marais is under fire for not identifying councillors who are more than three months in arrears with their municipal accounts

The Speaker of the provincial parliament ruled almost two months ago that he should supply details

Yesterday the Democratic Party's Western Cape leader, Henne Bester, vowed to break the "conspiracy of silence" by Marais who has failed to name councillors involved

Bester warned that he would call for an investigation leading to possible disciplinary action if Marais did not comply with the December 3 directive of Speaker Willem Doman soon

Legally, a councillor who is in arrears with rates for three months may be summarily dismissed

Last year several defaulting councillors from Western Cape towns — most of them were from the ANC and included the mayor of Great Brak —

lost their seats after being in arrears. Later, some prominent NP figures in local government were also found to have fallen foul of the rule

Marais negotiated a three-month moratorium on dismissals with the ANC, which was subsequently gazetted

The moratorium expired at the end of December and no one knows whether defaulters have paid their rates debt or are legally liable for dismissal

On December 3 Bester raised the issue in the Provincial Legislature before the moratorium was imposed

He wanted to know how much money was owed, which political parties the defaulters belonged to and what steps were being taken

When Marais showed reluctance to reveal the information the Speaker ordered him to provide the information to Bester by December 17

Approached for comment, Marais said his officials were busy collating the information and added that the Christmas holidays had hampered

the collection of the data

Bester said yesterday he had obtained information that certain statistics would be made available, but by Friday he had been unable to get the names or party affiliations of defaulting councillors from any source within the Legislature or provincial administration

"The fact that no names have been forthcoming from Marais' department two months after I made a formal request is a glaring dereliction of duty on the part of Marais, and could even suggest that he was withholding the names for party political reasons," said Bester

"I now intend to seek advice with a view to the next steps to be taken against Marais for not complying with a directive from the Speaker to supply me with the information

"I am considering whether to ask for a debate in the Legislature on the issue or for the appointment of an ad hoc committee to discuss the matter and to make recommendations on possible disciplinary action against Marais"

ST (CM) 26/1/97

Revealed: we're not the fairest Cape

Many residents lack basic services, council survey finds

(124) AAT 27/1/97

ANDREA WESS
METRO CORRESPONDENT

For all the fairest Cape's glossy image, the harsh reality is that one in five people live in informal housing, some in areas which are entirely without piped water, sanitation services and refuse removals.

This is the finding of a survey carried out on behalf of the Cape Metropolitan Council to establish the state of housing, water and sanitation in the greater metropolitan area of Cape Town.

It is being hailed as one of the first accurate and representative assessments of access to basic facilities in the Cape metropolitan area.

The study, which was done in 1995 and focussed on the area served by the former Regional Services Council, is being circulated to metropolitan councillors to highlight the extent of the problem.

Stewart Fisher, chief executive officer of the CMC and former medical officer of health, said the study was done not only to establish the facts, but also to devise a methodology for similar studies which would be necessary in the future.

The study was based on a sampling of eight residential types: formal housing, flats or hostels, farms, smallholdings, mixed housing (formal housing with backyard dwellings), unserviced shacks, site-and-service ones and others with communal facilities.



TRACKING A CITY IN TRANSITION

The researchers decided to take larger samples in informal areas where little information was available. They used a questionnaire covering access to drinking water, sanitation, quality of housing, stormwater drainage and demographic details.

A definition of reasonable access to services was defined as having a water service within 50m of a building, some form of water-borne sanitation, access to refuse removal services and functioning stormwater drains.

The study recommends that those people who are worst off in terms of services should be targeted for intervention to improve their health status and quality of life.

The study found that seven percent of people in the areas surveyed lived in shacks which did not have access to basic services which were crucial to public health.

About 60 percent of residents lived in formal housing.



ANDREW INGRAM

Not so fair: an informal settlement beside the N2. A study shows many people lack access to basic facilities

- More than 8 300 dwellings did not have water within 50m
- About 10,5 percent of dwellings did not have waterborne sanitation. This figure rose to 20 percent in townships clustered around Khayelitsha and in the Paarl area.
- Nearly 30 000 dwellings were without access to refuse removal services.
- A quarter of the dwellings did not have functioning stormwater drainage systems.
- The area around Khayelitsha and Stellenbosch had the largest number of people living on unserviced sites and consequently the highest percentage of people without access to basic services.
- Semi-rural areas had specific environmental problems because of conditions on farms.

CAPE ARGUS, TUESDAY, JANUARY 28, 1997

Councillors hit streets in bid to collect rates

South owed R22-m

(124)

ARG 28/1/97

PETER GOOSEN
METRO DESK

A novel way of persuading defaulters to pay their municipal accounts - getting councillors to encourage those in their area to pay their arrears - is being considered by the South Peninsula Council today.

The idea of involving councillors in collecting arrears has been devised by the council's executive committee

Ward councillors would be issued with confidential lists of defaulters in their areas "in order that they may, if necessary, explain the situation and encourage defaulters to pay their arrears"

The young local authority is faced with arrears of various kinds of more than R31-million, and the figure is rising

Arrear rates bills alone - owed by defaulters in areas as far removed from each other as Constantia and Grassy Park -

amount to more than R22-million.

The question of arrear rates was raised in the council recently by Phillip Bam, whose ward includes Grassy Park, where council service arrears have topped R13-million

Mr Bam appealed to the council to attend to the collection of rates in a way that would not bring further undue hardship to ratepayers.

Mr Bam added that monthly payments demanded to pay off arrears were beyond the means of most people

A report on the guidelines issued to CMC staff who collected payments said no council employee had the right to refuse any payment tendered in reduction of an outstanding account.

However, the employee could not enter or accept an agreement of debt where monthly amount offered did not cover the average monthly charge for current services

Short reprieve for Delft squatters

~~307~~ ~~124~~
STAFF WRITER

ET 28/1/97

THE illegal occupants of 88 houses in Delft have been given a few days' grace and will not be evicted yet — but this reprieve will soon end.

The police, representatives of the Department of Housing and the sheriff of the Supreme Court met in Bellville yesterday to discuss what measures should be taken against the illegal occupants, who had been told to evacuate their houses by last Friday.

The police were prevented from evicting them after violent clashes broke out. People being evicted returned their furniture and belongings to the houses after officials had removed them.

Sergeant Jan Solomons said yesterday that no date had yet been decided upon for the evictions, but another meeting had been scheduled for today to finalise the matter.

"The court has made a ruling that the people have to be evicted and we are just following that order," said Solomons.

A housing department official in Delft said there were legal owners of all 88 houses, but not all the owners had collected their house keys yet.

"We expect the legal owners to move into their houses once the illegal occupants have been evicted. It is up to the sheriff and the police to decide when this will be."

Fighting as new Delft eviction bid fails

Teargas fired as families clash with police, sheriffs

FRU 29/11/97 (144) (207)

JENNIFER CAW
Staff Reporter

Teargas and batons were used as pandemonium erupted in Delft today, when the illegal occupants of 88 houses clashed violently with police and sheriffs for the second time in less than a week.

Supreme Court eviction orders served last week on the families living illegally in houses in Eindhoven required them to move out by noon last Friday, but attempts to evict them turned violent.

A large contingent of police and sheriffs returned to the area about 8am today to carry out the evictions, but they again faced fierce resistance. They had been expected to return on Monday, and then again yesterday, but never arrived. They arrived this morning unexpectedly.

By 11am the belongings of about 20 families were on the streets outside the houses but other residents then forced many of the people back inside and returned their furniture.

There were violent clashes when police used teargas and batons to stop people intent on preventing the evictions.

Residents hurled abuse at police, tempers flared and the situation threatened to get out of control.

In one confrontation women and children were sprayed with teargas and hit with batons as a crowd formed a cordon around a house in an attempt to stop an eviction.

Police pointed guns at the protesters in the ensuing fracas, illegal occupant Shereen Adams and her daughters War-ranita, 4, and Megan, 2, were sprayed in the face with teargas.

Another illegal occupant, Claire Solomons, was arrested during the same incident when she tried to stop police and sheriffs evicting her family.

In a house where Berenice Booysen is living illegally, residents came to blows with police and sheriffs as Mrs Booysen's



Fury: A resident, left, tackles a sheriff of the court

13-year-old disabled son Neil lay on a mattress on the floor.

Mrs Booysen and her three children have been living in the house for nearly a month and she is adamant they will not move. "I am not moving. They can do what they like, I am staying in this house."

Grant Twigg, co-ordinator of the Delft Civic Association, exchanged blows with a sheriff of the court.

"When the police evict people, they must arrest them," he said. "At least then they will have a roof over their heads."

"The residents have been talking among themselves and something is going to happen. The people say they are fed up and are not going to accept what is happening. They say they are going to get more aggressive."

Police and sheriffs moved out of the area about 11.30am.

Sheriff of the Supreme Court Johan Stassen said it was unlikely the evictions would be completed today and they would have to return tomorrow.

The illegal occupants say the Delft conflict has its roots in promises they were given before the local government elections last year. They claim National Party councillors promised them houses in return for votes.



Angry occupants: illegal occupants shout abuse at policemen monitoring the evictions. In the background other residents put furniture back in their homes

Some of the illegal occupants claimed they were not there illegally at all but had been moved in by the NP councillors for the area.

Mr Twigg said the local NP councillor for the area, Gerhardus Ventura, had been asked by Premier Hennis Kriel not to get

involved in the controversy because of "internal fighting between NP members".

"We have requested a meeting with Housing Minister Cecil Herendien but he has not responded," Mr Twigg said.

Mr Ventura was not at Eindhoven today.

The illegal occupants have also claimed that they paid money to Integrated Services Land Project consultants for the houses.

They had earlier vowed to "stand and fight" and have been fiercely resisting all attempts to evict them.

New bill will pave way for housing development fund

Robyn Chalmers

THE Gauteng housing and land affairs department is to introduce new housing legislation this year, paving the way for a development fund for which R2bn in private sector funds is already under negotiation

Launching a two-pronged attack to deal with Gauteng's estimated 600 000-unit housing backlog, provincial housing and land affairs minister Dan Mofokeng said yesterday that more than 154 000 low-income units would be delivered over two years

An additional 81 000 stands would be brought on stream over two years and 215 000 properties transferred to their occupants under the discount benefit scheme. The total budget for these schemes amounted to R2,5bn and an estimated 116 000 jobs would be created each year

Mofokeng said the department would enter partnerships with the private sector and local authorities to speed up housing delivery on a mass scale. Major contracts had been signed for mass housing projects in Pretoria, Springs and Midrand as well as Johannesburg's southern, western and northern metropolitan substructures

"The department also seeks to set up a Gauteng housing development fund, which is looking to use provincial and private sector finance to provide

end-user finance to local authorities for their housing projects

"The deadline for the establishment of this fund is the end of March this year (and) although no investment figures are available, we are in negotiations with a trust company which is willing to commit R2bn," he said

The housing bill to be introduced by the department — by June, it was hoped — would be the overall legislation for housing in the province. It would entrench the powers of the Gauteng provincial housing board and allow for the establishment of the housing fund

Mofokeng said the bill would also empower provinces to transfer assets to local authorities so they could be better managed at local level

He called on national government to help the province cope with the influx of people. Recent indications were that up to 20 000 people arrived in Gauteng every month from other provinces and other parts of the world

"To date, 52 000 stands have been serviced and 24 000 houses built in Gauteng, but any inroads made into the housing backlog are rendered meaningless by the influx of people into our province," he said

The department saw this as the year in which it looked to escalate housing delivery for the homeless and release land for the landless

BO 29/1/97 (124)



DOUG PITHEY

Heated confrontation: a policeman sprays teargas at illegal occupants fighting eviction from houses in Delft. Claire Solomons, right, was arrested

More evictions of illegal Delft home occupants loom

(124) ~~(123)~~
 NORMAN JOSEPH AND JERMAINE CRAIG
 STAFF REPORTERS

ARG 30/1/97

Evictions of families illegally occupying homes in the Eindhoven area of Delft are due to continue today.

Yesterday more than 50 people occupied the Delft Civic Centre in protest over the evictions of illegal occupants. The protesters vowed to remain in the centre until provincial Housing Minister Cecil Herandiën promised to stop court officials evicting families.

They are demanding that "illegals" in houses be left alone and that Mr Herandiën instruct local housing officials to allocate homes to people from the waiting list

Chaos erupted in Eindhoven yesterday when residents, who prevented court officials from removing belongings from houses, clashed with police and the officials

Scuffles broke out after police used teargas and batons to drive back a human



Standoff: police point their guns at illegal house occupants in Delft where violence broke out yesterday

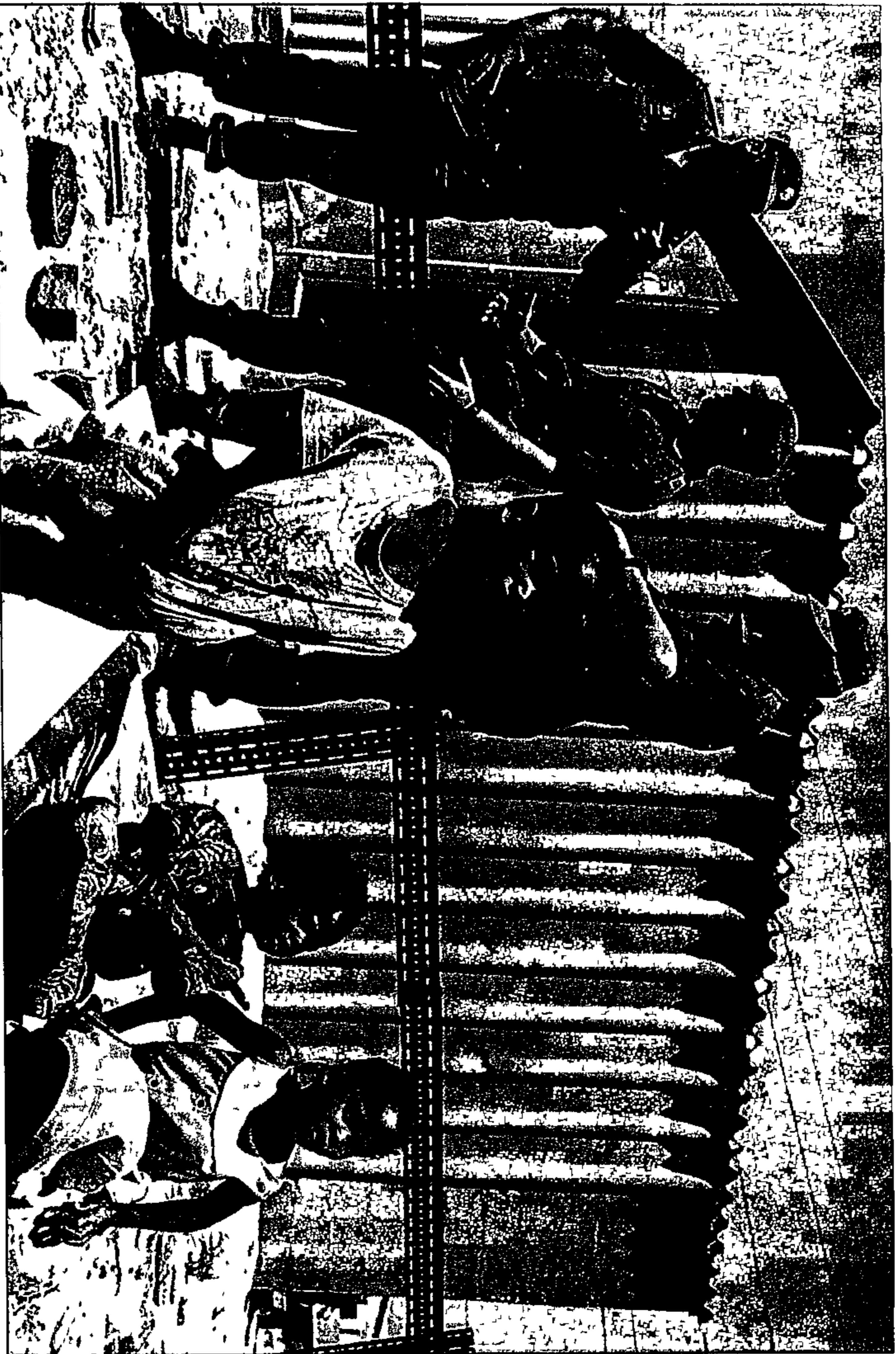
chain formed around one house. Armed police, some with dogs, guarded the local housing department building in Eindhoven

Mr Herandiën said his department understood that families were desperate for homes but that he could not condone illegal occupations which jeopardised fur-

ther housing developments in the area

The Delft houses formed part of the Integrated Serviced Land Project, which aimed to tackle the housing needs of about 40 000 people living in informal settlements.

So far about 300 families had moved into homes in Southern Delft as part of the ISLP project.



HOMELESS: Clinton, Marsha and Martha Christophels wait in the sun, watching and listening as their parents shout at the police who are evicting them. In the background are policemen in discussion. **PICTURE ALAN TAYLOR**

Illegal occupants of Delft homes evicted 'peacefully'

ERIC NTABAZALUA

THE LAST families who illegally occupied houses in Eindhoven, Delft, were peacefully evicted yesterday after a week of resistance.

Most of the families were moved to the Delft Civic Centre where they tried to make makeshift shelters inside the hall.

Mrs Budrunusa Ferreira, a mother of five, said she was not confident of her children's future as she was before the new government.

"I have been on the waiting list for five years and what they did today is very bad. The people we elected left us in deep water with nowhere to go. We are not sure of our children's future," said Ferreira.

She was preparing a bed for her asthmatic six-month-old daughter Ayeshia under a wooden frame tied to a cement pole inside the hall inscribed on the frame is a notice in Arabic "Allah the most beneficent".

She said her husband did not go to work as she could not cope with her five children alone.

Ms Bernice Booyen, a mother of three boys, said she was not evicted on Wednesday because of her disabled boy Neil, 12. She said the council had asked her to organise a place for her family to stay.

"This morning they came and gave me a letter saying they had given me a chance to organise myself a place to stay. I threw that

letter in the rubbish bin because I have nowhere else to go.

"The other place for us would be the bush," Booyen said.

Mr George van Niekerk, chairman of the Delft Community Organisation, appealed to the Red Cross and other community organisations to help the people who were evicted with food and clothes.

(14) ~~CT~~ 3/1/97



BRENTON GEACH

Where to now? children of evicted families are fed at the Delft Civic Centre

Ousted Delft families claim housing 'racism'

NORMAN JOSEPH AND JERMAINE CRAIG
STAFF REPORTERS

Allegations of corruption and racism have been levelled at housing department officials by illegal occupants of houses in Delft criticising their eviction.

Several people claimed they had given local housing officials R2 500 to secure homes in Southern Delft, a new housing project.

The Cape Argus has sent a list of names and erf numbers to the provincial Housing Department office.

The last of the 88 families living illegally in Delft were evicted without incident yesterday.

Earlier, illegal occupants were involved in fierce clashes between and police and sheriffs of the court, who were forced to withdraw twice, last Friday and on Wednesday, because of opposition from residents

Yesterday the illegal occupants, most of whom live in backyards, said they had been on the waiting list for houses for more than five years

Eunice Swarts claimed she had given R2 500 to an official who gave her a key to a house on erf 8824

At two meetings this week people

repeatedly claimed that African people were being given preference to buy houses in Southern Delft.

Provincial housing department officials denied the corruption and racism allegations and outlined details of a housing project

"The Integrated Serviced Land Project is a special integrated presidential project on urban renewal of the reconstruction and development programme," an official said.

"It aims to address the housing needs of about 40 000 people living in informal settlements and overcrowded backyards in Crossroads, Guguletu, Langa, Nyanga, KTC and Philippi."

James Slabbert, housing director and project manager, said families did not hand over money to secure sites or houses. Sites had been allocated according to strict principles

Families who did not qualify for the full government housing subsidy paid the balance of the price of their homes to the provincial housing board through the board's agents, the marketing consultants.

No other money changed hands and beneficiaries had been advised constantly that there was no charge for being nominated a beneficiary

AKG 31/1/97

(124)
(237)



Squatters move out of city hall

PETER DENNEHY

CT 5/2/97

EIGHTY-EIGHT households of people whom had been evicted last week from homes they had illegally occupied in Southern Delft left the suburb's civic hall at noon yesterday in accordance with an undertaking they had given

They had been there less than a week since they had been evicted by court order from houses they had occupied for a month

Yet it was an emotional leaving. They knew that the sheriff's assistants would throw them out of the hall, too, if they did not leave of their own accord. And 25 of the families, most of whom include children, had nowhere to go. They prepared to sleep outside the hall.

Mrs Tina Swarts threw two loads of her personal possessions into the road before lying down there herself. Her voice shaking with emotion, she said she was "gatvol" (fed up), and that she had had to give her children away.

Ms Amanda Cloete, who has three children, said the new Southern Delft houses were being allocated in a ratio of 75 to 25 between black township residents and coloured waiting list applicants, instead of the 50-50 arrangement it was supposed to be.

It was not possible for the "illegals" to return to the backyard shacks where they had lived before as other people had taken them over in the meanwhile.

Mrs Clare Solomons, who has been charged with trespassing, said she had been given a key to the place she occupied from the marketing manager of her section of Southern Delft, whom she named

She had not paid him anything, but had merely pleaded with him, and shown him her council card which proved she had been on the housing waiting list for 14 years.

NO REFUGE: Being homeless is no adventure for 10-year-old Glona Jayas, one of the many children affected by the evictions from the community hall in Delft yesterday

PICTURE: THEMINKOSI DWAYISA

Desperate Delft families quit civic centre for field

JERMAINE CRAIG
STAFF REPORTER

ARG 5/2/97
"Where must we go to now with our children?"

These words, from a desperate mother who had taken refuge with her family in the Delft Civic Centre, captured the mood of those forced to leave the centre and move to a field yesterday.

There was an air of despondency in Delft as about 25 homeless families, many with infants only a couple of weeks old, realised the harsh reality of their situation.

The families were evicted from houses in Eindhoven they were occupying illegally.

They were met by the chairman of the Tygerberg Council housing committee, Claude Ipser, who said the council could not allow a "state of anarchy" to develop and that they would have to move.

"The council is sympathetic towards the people - they are in a dire predicament,

(124) (207)
but we have no moral nor legal obligation to do anything for people who invaded homes or civic centres illegally. We are in local government - this is not local government, it is anarchy and it must end," said Mr Ipser.

Various community leaders had asked Mr Ipser to give the families a seven-day extension or house them temporarily at a nearby shooting range. But after consulting the executive committee of the Tygerberg council, Mr Ipser returned to say this was not possible and they would have to move. The families then decided to erect shacks in the adjacent field.

There was growing disillusionment with the National Party, accused of moving people into homes in Eindhoven illegally after the local government elections.

Meanwhile, the Swart Commission, which is investigating allegations that officials and councillors received bribes in exchange for keys to dwellings, met for the first time in Eindhoven yesterday.

Squatters protest against pending eviction

PETER DENNEHY

FIFTY-SIX families living in the disused buildings of the Princess Vlei Primary School in Retreat have been asked to leave of their own volition on Friday this week.

The letter asking them to leave came from the State Attorney's office. The 80 adults, who have 120 children, fear they will be evicted and held a protest gathering in Wale Street yesterday.

This comes at a time when all levels of the state appear to be cracking down on illegal occupancy. Earlier this week, a similar number of families were evicted from the Delft community hall. Earlier those same families had been evicted from newly-built houses in Southern Delft that they had illegally occupied.

At yesterday's protest meeting, spokesman Mr Edward Copperfield of the Concerned Residents of Steenberg and Retreat commented that even the previous government had had to abide by court rulings that forbade the forcible removal of people when there was no alternative place for them to go.

Committee member Mr Bernard Jackson said the school had been occupied for two years. It all started when an estate agent named Mr Jethro obtained a lease for the disused school from the provincial authorities.

He was supposed to use it for business purposes. Instead, he put eight families in there and charged them R200 a month each, Jackson said. After five months, the authorities threatened that Jethro would lose his lease. He tried unsuccessfully to evict his tenants.

Now they pay nothing, and the numbers have grown. Many of them are employed, and they would be prepared to pay for accommodation if they could have similar facilities and more secure tenure.

Committee member Mr Malcolm Brophy said there



HAPPY TO STAY: Nicole Thompson, 6, who lives in what used to be a classroom in Retreat, attends another primary school in the neighbourhood. The residents in this school hope to be able to stay. **PICTURE: GARTH STEAD**

had been times when things had not gone well at the former school, but at the moment "we have a strong committee and the people are standing together."

Money is raised for cleaning materials, and even to pay a caretaker. "The main thing is that there is order among the people. No fighting," he said.

There are several signs that a cohesive community has developed there. A well-attended report-back meet-

ing was being held in a courtyard when the Cape Times visited yesterday.

There is no electricity, but there are a few taps, most of them set up from water points by the occupiers.

Mr Roy Petersen, provincial spokesman for public works, said after Friday further action would be considered. "That will only be after appropriate investigation and a report-back to the provincial cabinet."

11

Region's housing target 'inspires' project leader

ARL 8/2/97

(124)

PROPERTY EDITOR

Where others would quail in the face of the huge problems facing the Western Cape in providing housing for 40 000 families, Mbuyiselo Nombembe draws inspiration from the task.

After two years at the helm of Holistics Settlements, a private company co-ordinating the government's R1,2-billion integrated serviced land project, he believes that nothing is impossible

One of the problems facing the project is that of illegal occupations

Desperate people take desperate measures and now that the housing programme is finally getting off the ground, people are scrambling to get accommodation

In the most recent incident, 88 families illegally moved into homes in Southern Delft, where 2 000 sites were serviced in in the first phase of the project last year

So far, about 300 families who were on the waiting lists have moved into their

homes, but the development has been stalled by the illegal occupants

As a professional facilitator and mediator who once wanted to work for Foreign Affairs, Mr Nombembe does not believe in removing people forcibly

This is a mild approach from a man whose life has been threatened in the course of his work

"Information is power. If you inform people, they will understand

"People must know why they are being moved and how it will benefit them and their community," he says

Among the greatest threats to the goal of providing better living conditions, are the renegade warlords, he says "By building houses, we are destroying their power base and also their economic base. There are areas where people pay protection fees and pay money for even the most menial jobs," he says

Another problem bedevilling housing provision, according to Mr Nombembe, is what he terms "sharks behind the scenes

trying to make money out of the desperate"

"We have heard of instances where people pay huge amounts of money to get onto a waiting list (for a house)"

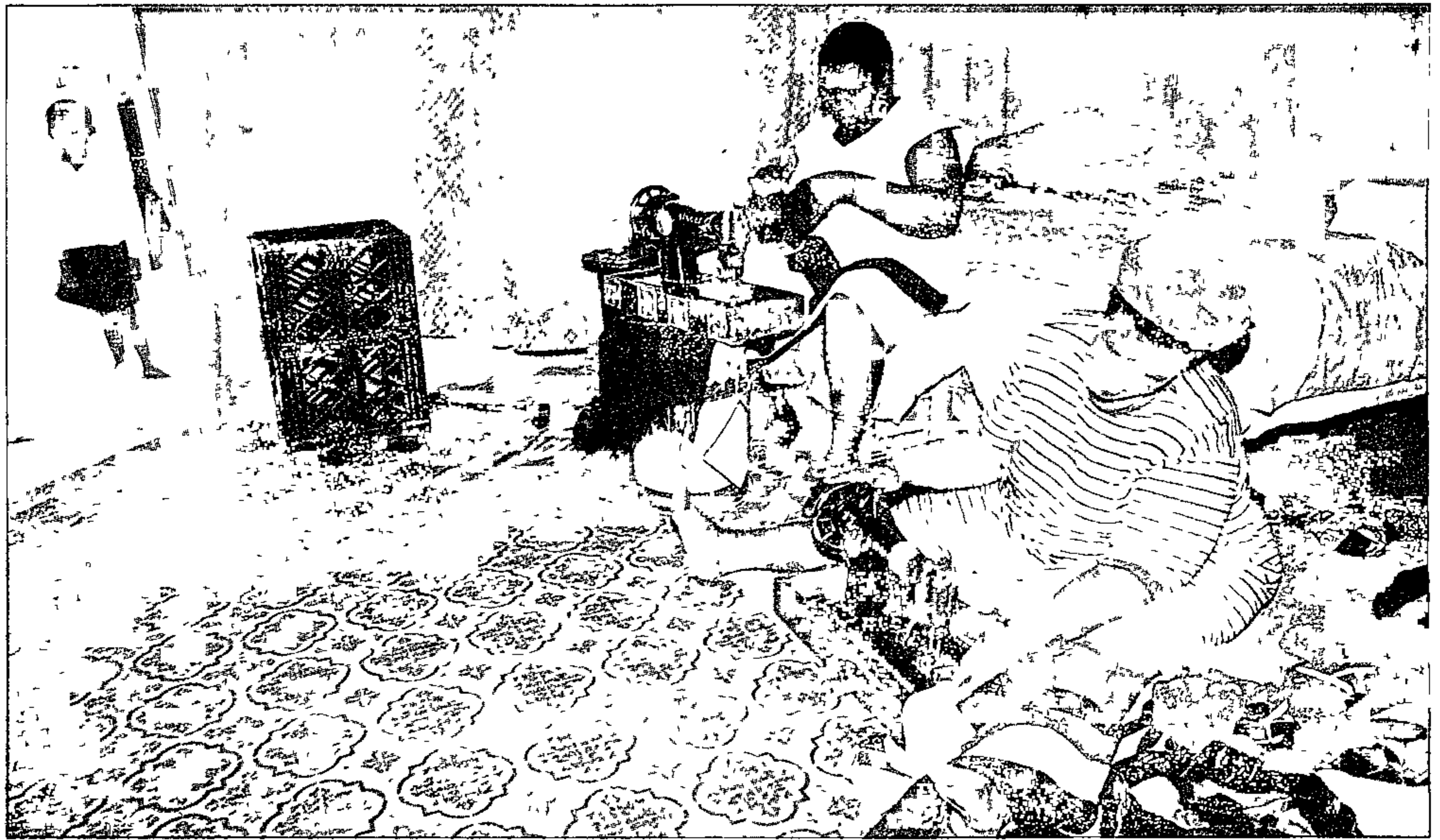
He warns that the land belongs to the government and nobody has the right to sell sites or houses. There is no charge for either and they are allocated according to strict principles

One of the most inspiring things to him, is the manner in which communities are standing together to ensure that the project works against illegal invasion and theft.

Mr Nombembe, born in the Transkei, studied in Zimbabwe and France before settling in Cape Town in 1993

At an early stage in his career, he left his job as a French teacher to become a professional facilitator and mediator.

A period spent developing educational facilities for street children was followed by a stint with the National Peace Secretariat resolving youth and gang-related conflicts on the Cape Flats



ROY WIGLEY

Homes at last: over 600 starter homes (top right) have been completed in the Integrated Serviced Land Project, while new homeowners Selina Mbinda and Beatrice Bukyi (above) get to work in their new house

Cont.

Executives create new

City abuzz as senior Hunt Lascaris

Cape Town is talking about the sudden resignation from Hunt Lascaris TBWA (Cape) of MD Dave Bester and creative director Stephen Burke.

For Bester, this is the realisation of a dream shared with a couple of prospective partners in the past. Now, the time is right - he and Burke work well in tandem, as the past three years have proved, with a crop of awards and billings doubled to close on R50-m. All that was needed was a client, so when a prospect expressed interest Bester Burke was in business.

The new agency, which has no outside

EDITED BY
LYNNE
KLOOT



AD MONITOR

Mark Fisher at DDB, and newcomers to agency ownership like Bull Calvert Pace

at the Cascades at Sun City, a fashion show put together by Mary Reynolds and perhaps even David Bowie as guest performer.

A big venue is needed for thousands of guests, which Carradine's and its parking lots at the Waterfront will provide - something like a street party in a very wide street. Date is March 7, when it's party time from 6pm until close to dawn, theme is Favourite Phobias. My costume will be suit and black Homburg.

■ Talking of black suits and Homburgs I hear that O&M's ad for Trailbusters boot

TO DATE

The integrated serviced land project progress to date:

SERVICED SITES:

- Weltevreden Valley: 2 200 completed, 15 353 planned
- Southern Delft: 2 000 completed, 3 747 planned; 2 700 about to start
- Crossroads: 604 under construction, 1 505 planned
- Philippi East: 2 372 planned
- KTC 2B1: 383 completed
- KTC 2B2: 304 planned
- Miller's Camp: 104 completed
- Tambo Square 1: 104 houses built
- Victoria Mxenge: 145 under construction

HOUSES BUILT

- 90 in Weltevreden Valley
- 350 in Southern Delft
- 80 being built - completed by end of month, becoming available on a daily basis.

HOUSING MARKETING PROGRAMME

More than 4 000 beneficiary families identified, registered for sites, and put through education and information programme preparing them to select housing options and for home ownership.

FAMILIES MOVED IN

- 90 families in Weltevreden Valley
- 150 "people's housing" families have moved on site in the first phase of 240 sites in Weltevreden Valley and some have started building their own homes.
- 300 families in Southern Delft with a further 50 families moving in within days.

SCHOOL BUILDING PROGRAMME

Two new schools built. One at Brown's Farm (Ntshonalanga Secondary) and the other in Langa (Kulam Secondary).

EXTENSIONS TO NINE SCHOOLS COMPLETED:

- Guguletu: Sokhanyo and Nobantu Primary Schools
- Nyanga: Mkanyiseli, Hlengisa, Linge, Liwa, John Pama, Walter Teko and Sonwabo Primary Schools
- Langa: Zimasi Primary School

COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRES

Extensions to Guguletu Community Health Centre completed.

POLICE STATIONS

Construction began on a police station for Delft and upgrading of Nyanga police station has started.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Building on Weltevreden Valley library starts July.

New communities take shape on Cape Flats

600 starter homes, 5 000 sites ready

CHARLENE GLAYTON
PROPERTY EDITOR

The mammoth R1,2-billion Integrated Serviced Land Project on the Cape Flats is fast taking shape.

Six years after its inception, the project is now producing results, and more than 500 Cape families have moved into their own homes for the first time.

So far 624 starter houses have been completed, almost 5 000 sites have been serviced and a further 745 are being prepared.

The ISLP takes a wider approach to housing and focuses on building communities, putting into place the associated infrastructure. To this end, two new schools have been built and extensions to nine more schools have been completed.

The Gugulethu community health centre has been upgraded and a new police station is being built in Delft, and the Nyanga police station is being upgraded.

The ultimate goal of the ISLP is to provide housing for 40 000 Western Cape families at present living in the informal settlements and overcrowded backyards of Crossroads, Gugulethu, Langa, KTC and the surrounding areas.

CHANGING CITY



TRACKING A CITY IN TRANSITION

A budget of R1,2-billion, to be spent over five years, is available for this purpose. A large portion of this budget – R708-million – is allocated to providing for housing needs, while the balance covers capacity building among members of the community as well as creating health, education, community and recreation facilities.

Half of the funding for the project comes from the central government and half from the provincial administration of the Western Cape.

The development of the project has been influenced by a history of fragmented

which gave black people only limited access to jobs, the apartheid policy excluded blacks from settling permanently in the Western Cape.

As a result, no formal urban development took place beyond government-provided housing in the townships of Nyanga, Langa and Gugulethu and the limited employer-subsidised hostels for migrant workers.

People who managed to enter the region illegally had little option but to squat, mainly in the Crossroads area.

As control laws were increasingly ignored or found to be ineffective, squatting increased and spread to surrounding areas, leading to a mushrooming of informal settlements.

Competition for space between residents, as well as the demolition of shack settlements by the state, led to increasing tension and insecurity which often erupted into violence.

It became imperative to come up with a development strategy that would involve all communities. In 1991, in response to this need, the provincial administration of the Western Cape invited all the many relevant stakeholders in the metropole to



Getting started: MD of Holistic Settlements Mbuluyeselo Nombembe (right), examines the site with labourer Lucas Pnon. Holistic Settlements is the co-ordinator of the Government's Integrated Serviced Land Project.

embark on a process of determining a strategy for the development of the area.

A policy committee was formed with representatives from the South African National Civics Organisation, the Western Cape Squatters Association, the African National Congress, the Umzamo Development Project, the Western Cape Civic Association, and the authorities at provincial and local level.

Although the Pan Africanist Congress expressed support for the project from the start, its representatives only attended meetings after the general election in April 1994.

The policy phase lasted from April 1991 to August 1993, during which time a technical committee calculated the demand for housing and services.

The committee also researched the availability and suitability of land, formulated principles to govern town planning and engineering designs, and negotiated principles for land acquisition and site allocation.

In September 1993, agreement was reached on the project objectives and the following year a business plan was developed for the ISLP.

The plan caters for the households living in the backyards and hostels of Langa, Gugulethu and Nyanga and in the informal settlements in the area, including Barcelona/Europe, Green Park, KTC, Mahobe Drive, Millers Camp, Mpinga Square, New Rest, Pella Park, Waterfront, Samora Machel, Sweethorne and Vietnam.

The national government's capital subsidy

More than 500 families have moved into their own homes for the first time

scheme provides for the costs of servicing and purchasing sites and also makes a small contribution towards top structures.

Families with incomes below R3 500 a month qualify for a housing subsidy, which is paid on a sliding scale, ranging from a maximum of R17 250 for those earning less than R800 to R5 750 for those in the R2 501 to R3 500 income bracket.

A consolidation subsidy is available for

people who are already living on serviced sites in Driftsands, Brown's Farm, Heinz Park, Millers Camp, Lower Crossroads, Tambo Square and KTC.

A "people's housing process", which encourages people to take responsibility for their housing needs, has been embarked upon to assist residents to effectively manage and obtain the best value for whatever resources are available.

To this end, the Government makes use of community-based housing support programmes to provide technical advice and assistance in addition to the existing subsidies.

Apart from taking care of the housing needs of desperate Western Cape families, the ISLP also provides for community facilities.

These facilities will include 35 community halls, 35 sports fields, four libraries, 427 primary school classrooms, 276 secondary school classrooms, a 200-bed community hospital, four community health clinics and an ambulance service. The project should be completed by March 2000.

Rates revolt brewing in coloured suburbs

CT 17/2/97.

(124)

THE FLAT RATES charged for municipal services in black townships are creating resentment **PETER DENNEHY** and **CYNTHIA VONGAI** report

TROUBLE is brewing in Cape Town's coloured suburbs. Residents are seething because they have to pay in full for municipal services, while much lower, "flat-rate" amounts are charged in black suburbs.

The flat rates have not led to riots in Cape Town, but some observers have been worried that the violent protests that have taken place in Gauteng this month may spread to the city.

A growing revolt among residents over what they believe is an unfair rates system could lead to a crisis for the government.

The first sign of impending trouble in Cape Town came on Tuesday in Mandalay, which adjoins Khayelitsha, when 200 residents who attended a rates meeting agreed that each household would pay only R100 a month for municipal services.

Mandalay falls under the jurisdiction of the city of Cape Town, but the Cape Metropolitan Council still administers the delivery of municipal services.

Those at the meeting demanded that the flat rates be extended to their suburb. Mr Theo Twalo, of the Concerned Residents of Mandalay (Correma), said discussions had been held with council officials, but these had been fruitless.

The officials had quoted the municipal ordinance, No 20 of 1974, he said. The ordinance had nothing to do with the people of Mandalay because "we belong to the new South Africa", Twalo said.

He wanted the old ordinance to be scrapped immediately. He said municipal officials "still belong to the past" and were not addressing the needs of the people of Mandalay.

At another rates meeting yesterday, residents decided they would march to the Cape Town municipal offices on February 21. It is expected the march will involve about 3 000 residents who want to "pressure the council" into addressing their complaints.

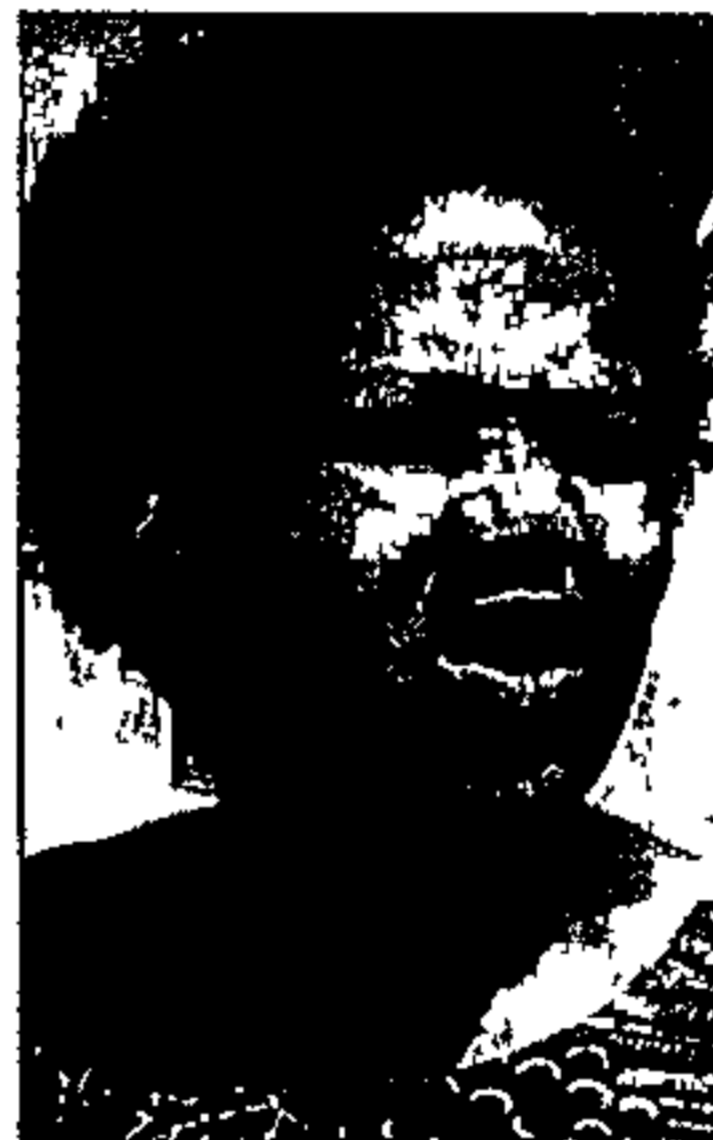
The Rev Wilhelm Scheepers, councillor for the ward, said in an interview that Mandalay residents paid property rates and charges for electricity and water varied from household to household. He believed the average amount was more than R200 a month.

In Khayelitsha, residents of formal houses have to pay a flat rate of R56 a month. In some cases, the amount is R40.

Many former Khayelitsha resi-



WANTS RESULTS: Mr Morgan Naidoo would pay more than R100 if he could see the fruits



'NO IMPROVEMENTS': Ms Letty Sacharais says she won't pay as Mandalay still lacks facilities

dents have bought houses in Mandalay. Scheepers says that, at a guess, between 60% and 70% of Mandalay's residents are black.

Many residents said the rates they were paying were too high and it was for this reason that they supported the proposal that they pay a flat rate of R100 a month for municipal services.

Mr Norman Phillips said he had lived in Mandalay for 11 years. "We got electricity in this area only three years ago. We still don't have many facilities like other places, so why are we paying rates?" Phillips said.

"When I moved into this house I did not receive the necessary forms for rates, so I did not pay rates for three years. Now the council expects me to pay the lump sum I owe, about R3 500, and I don't have that kind of money. It was due to their maladministration that I did not get the forms in time."

Residents Ms Letty Sacharais, Ms Misiwe Diephu and Mr Morgan Naidoo accused the council of not doing enough to develop the area.

"I have written several letters to the rates department asking about the lack of facilities in the area and they have all been ignored," Naidoo said.

"I know the flat rate of R100 will not be enough for the council to maintain the area. I am willing to pay more, but we must see where the money is going."

"There is no post office or library, nor any parks for children to play in. They play on the streets."

Sacharais owes R6 000 in rates and favours the flat-rate system. "I won't pay rates because, since I moved in, there have been no improvements, no shops or post office, and they want so much money for doing nothing. If I need to go to the post office I have to catch a taxi to Mitchells Plain."

Diephu believed all rates arrears should be scrapped and a flat rate levied while residents negotiated for a better rates system.

The local branch of the SA National Civics Organisation (Sanco) fully supports the Mandalay residents' decision. However, the president of Sanco's Gauteng branch, Mr Ali Maziya, said last week that flat rates were not the way forward for local government.

"Flat rates are not what we would encourage our communities to strive for," he said.

"Flat rates are not a solution (for) economic growth in our country. We are encouraging communities to begin to realise that we cannot continue paying a flat rate."

"The government should identify problem areas and address these, so that at the end of the day we are all paying according to what we consumed."

● In Khayelitsha, there is resentment among residents that their flat rates are much higher than those in iKapa townships.

Mr Lennox Boyce, chairman of a civic association of residents of the H section core houses, said Khayelitsha should be charged a lower flat rate as it was further from the centre of the city. "More people will pay if the flat rates are lower."

● Khayelitsha's deputy treasurer, Mr Eddie Pienaar, said this week that about R30 000 was collected in services fees each month in Khayelitsha — yet the figure should be R2,5 million.

In the iKapa townships (Langa, Nyanga, Guguletu), whose flat rates are lower than Khayelitsha's, payments are picking up. In November, more than R400 000 of the billed total of R600 000 was collected. However, the iKapa areas have amassed arrears of R24m since 1994.

travel documents and work permits of the arrested people.

grumbled customers soon returned them (

Delft housing claims probed

JERMAINE CRAIG
STAFF REPORTER

ARG 18/2/97

The Swart commission - investigating allegations of bribery, corruption, racism and people being awarded houses in exchange for votes in Delft - has begun hearings

The marketing co-ordinator of the Integrated Serviced Land Project, Nico Rheeder, yesterday outlined the role played by consultants Infinitu Real Estate, who have been accused by some of those evicted of taking bribes in return for moving people into houses

Mr Rheeder said the company had been appointed to handle the marketing of the project and conducted workshops with residents about home ownership

He said 2 000 houses were to be built in

(124)
Delft South, 500 of which had been completed. The rightful owners were put on to a list, qualifying them for housing subsidies

Most of the homes in Delft cost about R16 675 and the subsidies were for R15 000. The balance was paid to the marketing consultants, who passed this on to the builders

Mr Rheeder said he had been called by National Party councillor Gerhardus Ventura, who told him people were saying the consultants were taking bribes and moving people in

During the eviction of illegal occupants, Mr Rheeder said, he had heard allegations from people that the consultants were taking bribes. Such allegations were very common and he himself had heard "hundreds", but none had been followed up

The hearing resumes today

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Councillors named in Delft probe

JERMAINE CRAIG
STAFF REPORTER

(124)

AR 20/2/99

The Swart Commission investigating alleged irregularities involving housing in Delft has been told National Party councillors moved people into houses illegally as it was "the only chance they had" of getting accommodation.

The commission is investigating allegations of bribery and corruption after 88 families living illegally in houses in Delft were evicted.

Spokeswoman for those evicted, Amanda Cloete, testified to the commission yesterday that she had been moved into a house by NP councillors who said they had the authority to do so. She and her family had been staying with her brother in Voorbrug but had to move because the house was overcrowded.

"I met NP councillors Jenny Lekay and Stan Simmons. I approached Mr Simmons and told him about my situation. He said all the people who are here (in the Delft houses) we put into the houses, I give you the right to move into a house. I was also told to move in by Mrs Lekay as she said it was my last chance to get into a house," Mrs Cloete said.

She said people did not feel they were illegal occupants as councillors had given them permission to move in. "The councillors told us they had the authority to put us into the houses. I would not have moved into the house if I had not got approval."

Hendrika Solomons, a mother of four, said she had also been moved into a house by Mr Simmons.

"I spoke to Mr Simmons who said I must go and see if there was a house standing empty. He said I must move in and he would sort it out with the rent office and housing board. I also spoke to Monica Sauls (also an NP councillor) and Jenny Lekay who said I must stay in the house. I would not have moved in if they had not given me permission."

Marketing consultants for the Integrated Serviced Land Project were also accused of moving people into houses.

Western Cape Housing director and Integrated Serviced Land Project manager James Slabbert said councillors had no jurisdiction to move people into houses and his department had never given permission to any councillor to do so.

The hearing continues today

Task team to probe 'housing gravy train'

JEAN LE MAY
STAFF REPORTER

(123)

ARG 22/2/97

Housing Minister Sankie Mthembu-Mahanyele and officials in her department have been at great pains to disguise the real reason for the existence of the newly-appointed task team on mortgage-lending criteria.

The task team has been asked to decide whether public servants should be thrown off the cheaper-mortgage gravy train.

Casper van Rensburg, general manager of the Public Servants' Association, told Saturday Argus he was surprised that the association had not been approached by the task team.

"Housing benefits were part of the negotiated package and nothing can be changed unless it is re-negotiated," he said.

The Minister announced earlier this month that the task team "will endeavour to resolve controversy" on lending criteria. But her statement fails to deal with the issue at hand. If anything, the Minister moved the goalposts by saying that she hoped the task team would identify new approaches "so that the housing needs of the poorest of our people can be addressed".

The situation facing the task team has little to do with the poorest people. It arose because many public servants landed in financial trouble because they bought more expensive houses than they could afford.

Another bank spokesman said some public servants, through inexperience, had bought "ridiculously expensive houses which they hadn't a hope of maintaining".

This happens because the guidelines for home loans allow a public servant to get a bigger home loan than a private borrower with the same income - an arrangement sanctioned in April last year by the Department of Housing, the Association of Mortgage Lenders and the National Association of Home Builders and Developers.

It was agreed that householders with an income of R3 500 or less should be allowed to borrow an amount on which repayments would be not more than 25 percent of their income.

This was raised to 30 percent for households earning more than R3 500.

In the past, before the tax on fringe benefits was imposed, both State and private sector employees who received monthly housing subsidies got them in addition to their monthly salaries.

This was deemed acceptable because the subsidy was a tax-free benefit.

But ever since tax was imposed on fringe benefits, people in the private sector were getting gross-income packages and the loan repayments were calculated on that income.

However, public servants' housing allowances are added on to the 25 to 30 percent of basic salary, enabling them to get bigger home loans than those in the private sector.

For example, a private sector worker who earns R4 250 can get a home loan of R75 000 with repayments of R1 275 a month. However, a public servant with the same salary may borrow as much as R105 000, with repayments of R1 800 a month.

The alarm was raised by Norman Axten, chief executive of the Council of SA Banks, (Cosab) who said that "giving State employees access to homes they cannot afford is totally irresponsible and contradictory to the Government's call for prudent lending".

This encouraged home buyers to over-commit themselves and many had lost their new homes and all they had invested in them, he said.

The bank associations had sent their own proposals to the various state departments involved in housing, said Mr. Axten, but "in the final analysis banks will assess the affordability of each borrower to criteria they deem prudent".

This remark was seen by the State departments involved as a threat by the banks to ignore the guidelines and apply their own criteria for loans.

Debt arrears mount to R224m

ST (cm) 23/2/97

(124)

By TOM HOOD

RATEPAYERS in Cape Town are paying over R1-million a month to meet losses resulting from reduced cash flows as debt arrears of all kinds mount to R224-million.

The city has also been landed with R104-million of debt from former black local authorities which were heavily in the red, pushing total debt arrears to nearly R330-million, according to the latest figures from the city treasurer's department

Almost R75-million was owed in rates at the beginning of the year, plus R49-million of unpaid electricity bills and R25-million for water

Fuelling the losses were soaring home ownership and rental arrears, which topped R49-million by January 16. The city plans to open cash offices in housing areas in the hope of stemming the home ownership and rental arrears

More than half the 19 000 families who have bought council houses are behind in their monthly payments and the sums owing amount to 106 percent of annual repayments

The city's housing committee reported this week that it was giving priority to the reduction of housing arrears

Almost 10 000 families had arrears of R23,4-million by January 16, up from R22,7-million on December 17. Another R22-million is owing in rents

Worst suburbs for arrears were Hanover Park extension (87 percent of owners), Lentegour (86), Tafelsig (84) and Bridgetown (63). Suburbs with best records were the Malay Quarter (9 percent), Maitland and Bellmore Park (13), Vanguard and Primrose Park (both 16), and Strandfontein (22)

But 31 percent of owners are paid up in full, a slight improvement on the previous month

"Our hands are tied because defaulters cannot be evicted," said a council official. "The new council will have to grasp this nettle sooner or later. But many people earn less than R200 a month and need to be subsidised."

The council could collect unpaid rates because it had power to hold sales in execution, while prepaid meters are cutting down electricity arrears

MORATORIUMS IN MANDALAY UNLIKELY

Rates protest reveals inequity

THE EFFECTS of the historical racial divisions of greater Cape Town are once again showing up in the high rates paid by homeowners in Mandalay. **PETER DENNEHY** reports.

CAPE Times investigation into property rates suggests that Mandalay residents who marched in protest against their high rates on Friday do have an axe to grind

Most of the residents in Mandalay — an area that used to be coloured, but now is mixed with a black majority — are not tenants, but owners, and the price of houses is in the region of R100 000 each

Rates payable on a property are calculated as a proportion of the value of that property in relation to a nominated base year

In Mandalay, a suburb of about 2 000 houses, the base year is 1974 (despite the development of the area only having taken place in

1980). Rates are calculated at 4,648 cents to the rand

As the average house in Mandalay has a municipal valuation of R7 800, rates are R362,54 a year (about R30 a month)

Significantly, however, sewage treatment and refuse removal charges are not included in rates of the rest of Cape Town municipal. The Mandalay sewage charge is R33 per month per household plus VAT, and the refuse charge is R15,40 per month plus VAT

So each household in Mandalay pays over R80 for municipal services. Once electricity and water are included, this comes to about R200 a month

This compares unfavourably with houses of a roughly similar market value, regardless of where they are

A house in Francis Street, Lower District Six, was sold recently for R105 000. While on one hand it is close to the central city, it is old, and small and part of a row of houses as opposed to being free-standing — so its 1979 municipal valuation is only R4 560

As the base year in this area is 1979 and rates are calculated at 9,05052 cents per rand, the annual property rates including refuse removal and sewage charges are R470. At R39 per month this is just under half the R80 municipal services charges in Mandalay

In Lenteguur, the suburb closest to Mandalay, there is a similar pattern. A house recently sold for R75 000 has a rates liability of R58 a month

Mr Frank van der Velde — a for-

mer mayor of Cape Town who is now with the ANC and who was warmly praised by marchers on Friday — said the explanation for the disparity lay in the authorities historically having treated certain suburbs as separate and largely self-financing

At one stage Cape Town's old Regional Services Council, which is now the Cape Metropolitan Council (CMC), used to supervise the administration of 38 separate local authorities in greater Cape Town

In each case, their rates were worked out according to the cost of providing services there, after subsidies from higher levels of government were taken into account

The result is that the number of cents per rand of municipal valuation varies widely in CMC-administered areas, from 9,7c in Grassy Park to 2,1c in Uitsig, even though many suburbs, including these two, have the same base date

Like most tax systems, property taxes have an element of cross-subsidising sliding scale from wealthy to poor

But Mandalay, which is still administered as a separate "local area", has its property rates set without recourse to cross-subsidisation. Since the boundary reshuffle last year, however, it has been included within Cape Town municipality

Once its administration is integrated into Cape Town's and the entire municipality's new rates are implemented in mid-1998, Mandalay's overall rates burden is likely to drop

But the moratoriums that the marchers want on things like "final demands", and furniture repossessions and the cutting off of water supplies, are unlikely to be put in place

Such actions, as the saying would have it, go with the territory.

ET 24/2197 (124)

'Siege on owners'

(124) CT 24/2/97

PETER DENNEHY

KHAYELITSHA residents are feeling the heat as they come under mounting pressure to pay their bonds and service charges

At a Khayelitsha Civic Association meeting, attended by about 100 people at the Emithini Primary School in H Section yesterday, chairman Mr Zolile Feni expressed his and his members' disappointment in the new government

There had been a stalemate in negotiations between bond-holders in Khayelitsha and the financial institutions, he said. Many people had found they were unable to afford their bond payments, so they had negotiated about their homes' "structural defects" and the price of the land on which their houses stood

The financial institutions had gone to the government, which lent them a sympathetic ear and established a new organisation, Servcon, which, Feni said, "It concentrates on subduing people so they resume their payments"

The government wanted to end the boycotts of bond payments. Feni said he was disappointed the government had not listened to the people's leaders and had spoken only to financial institutions

He described the mortgage system as a "sugar-coated, bitter pill". Many people had not been fully informed about what was entailed. Couples had been granted houses because their joint incomes were more than R500 a month, for example, and they were told the payments would be only R200 a month. Now they faced losing their homes

Feni said he could see no justice in pricing a home in Khayelitsha, a "dormitory" suburb, at more than R80 000

The council was selling land to private developers at low prices, Feni said. In the case of his home, which stood on 319m², the developer had paid R1,25/m². His house was priced at R25 000. Some "nasty mathematics" must have been applied to arrive at such a price, Feni said

'Shoddy' Delft homes slated as city urged to halt project

ANDREA WEISS ARG 28/2/97
METRO CORRESPONDENT (124)

City councillors want the Integrated Serviced Land Project to stop building houses because of the shoddy product being delivered.

African National Congress councillor Daphne King won a motion before the Cape Town municipality calling for an urgent investigation into the immediate suspension of the construction of further dwelling units in Weltevreden Valley and southern Delft, in consultation with the Tygerberg municipality, because of vehement public resistance to the final product

Ms King said people could not be expected to raise children in houses which measure about 30 square metres in total and which a technical report had described as being seriously flawed for Western Cape conditions

She said the problem was that only about R6 500 remained from the R17 500 government subsidy after the cost of servicing the land was deducted

She believed the city should be investigating ways of allowing more of the subsidy to be spent on the building

Mrs King's view was backed up by Mildred Leseia, who said she had not been an activist in order to procure houses such as those being delivered through the Integrated Serviced Land Project.

"These houses are an insult to the Mother City of Cape Town, they're an insult to the president because it's a presidential lead project, and they're an insult to me," she said

"I don't think I fought my whole life for people to live in houses like that."

The National Party's Elizabeth Bantom described the houses as "pathetic"

After a lengthy debate, the council agreed that the city manager, in consultation with the executive committee, look into suspending building and "whatever action necessary" be taken.

Property wars rage in former black townships

By SIPHO VANGA

(124)

HUNDREDS of property disputes are raging in Cape Town's former black urban areas

One of them involves an unemployed Guguletu mother, battling to regain her home which is occupied by tenants who allegedly kicked her out and now refuse her entry to the premises

Nozipho Dubase, of NY 59 No 3, has been forced to live with a neighbour, Elizabeth Magujima, even though the house had been granted to her by Ikapa Town Council on August 20.

Disputes between owners and tenants over housing transfers have been common in the townships

Dubase's problems began after her mother died in 1991, leaving her title to the house. But, because of ill-health, Dubase initially let a family stay in her house while she stayed with a relative. Then a man and his wife asked to stay in her house.

"When I told him I did not want tenants he pleaded with me, saying he was still looking for another place and the arrangement would be a temporary one," said Dubase, adding that she agreed after persuasion by her sister.

Dubase said the couple had lived in her house since the beginning of 1993 without paying rent.

When she decided to return to her house the couple refused to leave — and she complained to the South African National Civics Organisation.

Fanele Duze, deputy chairman

ST (CM) 2/3/97

of Sanco, Section 2 Area, confirmed that Sanco was investigating the matter.

"We have gone as far as seeking assistance from the Community Policing Forum. At present we are following legal channels to persuade the tenants to leave the house. The tenants have ignored a 19-day notice of eviction issued by Legal Aid lawyers from Mitchells Plain. They failed to heed a second letter with a countdown of seven days. We are busy dealing with lawyers to help sort the matter out. These tenants have overstayed and they must move out."

Often ownership disputes stemmed from the old local authorities, said Duze, explaining "The old local authorities were not sympathetic to problems experienced by residents. Those who failed to pay rent were thrown out and tenants were registered as owners."

"Corrupt council officials also contributed to the problem by transferring houses illegally without consulting the registered person."

Sydney Ncate, chairman of the housing committee, Central Sub-structure, confirmed that they had inherited many property disputes from the previous administration.

"But we have managed to resolve many of them. Among the townships, Guguletu especially, we have managed to solve a lot of the disputes and the number of complaints has decreased."

Presently there are 126 outstanding disputes in Langa, 217 in Guguletu and 309 in Nyanga.

R1,2-bn cash boost for Cape housing project

40 000 homes to be built
(124)
ARLT 15/3/97

JULIAN JACOBS
STAFF REPORTER

About R1,2-billion is to be spent on implementing the Western Cape's Integrated Services Land Project, which aims to supply about 40 000 families with houses and services.

This figure was revealed by director of project execution James Slabbert in a recent progress report

Provincial RDP presidential lead project co-ordinator Alan Siebritz said the programme was the largest of its kind in South Africa

He said services and houses would be supplied in Crossroads, Langa, Guguletu, Nyanga, KTC, Weltevreden Valley and Southern Delft

More than R100-million has already been spent on the project. Over 4 000 sites in Southern Delft and Weltevreden Valley have been developed and completed, while a further 5 300 dwellings are under construction. About 5 000 sites will be developed in Philippi East and construction has started on 585 houses in Crossroads

Electrification of KTC and Miller's Camp and the construction of a sports field in the area has also begun

Basic services have been supplied to Victoria Mxenge, a site where women are applying newly-learned bricklaying skills to

build their own homes. Two new schools have been completed at Brown's Farm and Langa, and a new community health centre in Southern Delft is nearing completion

Work on the new community police station in Southern Delft is also making rapid progress. The R1,8-million project has passed the halfway mark and the station is expected to be completed by April

The development of local economies is seen as a priority and special emphasis has been placed on teaching people new skills while implementing various projects. Entrepreneurship and business management training is offered, while the establishment of small businesses has been encouraged

More than 400 families in the Weltevreden Valley and about 300 in Southern Delft have decided to build their own homes, and housing support teams have been established to help them

These provide families with technical training and advice. The provincial housing board has set aside funds for the construction of two support centres in Weltevreden Valley and one in Southern Delft

About 50 percent of the project funding is supplied by the Government through the reconstruction and development programme. The rest has been raised from the provincial government, the Cape Metropolitan Council and local authorities



BRENTON GEACH

Building the future: Nozimasile Sakhwe, left, and Nocwaka Shenxane mix cement for their new homes

Oh no, you don't!

Residents stop councillor from jumping housing queue

YVETTE VAN BREDA

A WARD councillor in Manenberg who tried to jump the queue for a house, has been forced to withdraw her application after community objections

Anne du Plessis, National Party councillor and a divorced mother of two, applied to the city council's housing committee for a council home after being on the waiting list for two years. But there were objections that her action was unfair to others who had been waiting up to 15 years.

Du Plessis claimed her living conditions were unsuitable for her job.

She shares a tiny two-bedroomed flat in a run-down Manenberg block with four other adults and five children.

The housing committee decided to recommend to the Executive Committee that Du Plessis be allocated a house. But Exco feared this would set a precedent. Early last month, the chairman of the



UNDER FIRE: Councillor Anne Du Plessis outside the two-bedroomed Manenberg flat she shares with four adults and five children. Picture: AMBROSE PETERS

housing committee, Councillor Sydney Ncate, said he had received several calls from civic organisations in Manenberg objecting to the committee's decision to

provide Du Plessis with housing. Some people had been on the waiting list for over 15 years, Ncate said, and a satisfactory solution was needed. There

people voted for me in the elections". Du Plessis said she received a monthly allowance of about R2 000, "which one cannot live on".

There were also allegations from representatives of the Western Cape Civic Organisation that Du Plessis did not serve the community adequately.

A fellow councillor and representative of the SA National Civic Organisation, Faldela de Vries, said it was not fair for a councillor to get a house at the expense of others who had been waiting for many years — especially as Du Plessis had moved from Gauteng only eight years ago.

This week Du Plessis said she had withdrawn the application.

"I could have had thousands of signatures to support my application, but I thought it was unfair to the people. I told myself it's not right."

She added that it was only certain members of the civic organisations in the area who opposed her having a house, "not the entire Manenberg community". Thousands of

(124) ST (16/3/97)



Homes sweet homes: these one-roomed houses will soon be given to the hundreds of residents of Zwelihle in Hermanus

LEON MULLER



Home improvement: the houses are made of corrugated iron sheets and reinforced with foam rubber and wire mesh which is cemented and painted

Roofs over their heads for Hermanus homeless

(124)
ANDREA BOTHA
STAFF REPORTER

ARLT 18/3/97

The 900 people living in poor conditions in the Zwelihle township near Hermanus will soon get their own houses, with running water, proper sewerage and electricity.

The houses, due to be finished in April, are being built by the Greater Municipality of Hermanus and the project is managed by consulting engineers Gibb Africa

Although some of the older residents of Zwelihle have complained that the one-roomed houses are too small, they are generally happy with their new homes

Elliot Ponona, a spokesman for the community, said "The people who are going to live there are happy with the houses."

Each house is 13 square meters and consists of one room with a small adjoining bathroom containing a toilet, shower and wash basin. There is a tap with running water outside.

The houses are prefabricated and made of corrugated iron sheets with foam rubber reinforcement. Wire mesh is fitted over the sheets which are then plastered and painted. The houses have garden areas of 220 to 250 square meters.

According to Gibb Africa project manager Andre van der Merwe, the building subsidy for the houses had to be cut because of the expense of installing sewerage and other services to the properties.

This meant there was only R8 300 left to build each house.

Horizon Homes won the tender for building the homes and drew up the plan within the budget.

The plans were submitted to Gibb Africa, shown to residents of Zwelihle and approved by the community.

Horizon Homes director Golan Idris said the houses were small because of the limited budget within which they had to work.

HERMANUS REDUCES CONSUMPTION BY 30%

Water-saving blueprint could save billions of rand

HERMANUS HAS PIONEERED in outstanding water conservation campaign. **ENVIRONMENTAL MELANIE GOSLING** reports.

A MAJOR water-saving campaign in Hermanus described by Water Affairs Minister Mr Kader Asmal as the most important urban water management initiative ever undertaken in South Africa — has reduced the town's water consumption by a massive 30%.

Announcing the preliminary results of the project in the city last night, Asmal said if similar practices were applied by other local authorities, it would save the country billions of rands a year.

"I cannot begin to tell you how significant this is for our country. Can you imagine the implications if Gauteng reduced its water consumption by 25% or more? My challenge to local authorities is to learn from what is unfolding at Hermanus."

If Cape Town adopted the model, the city would save 80 million kilolitres of water a year — enough to fill 46 million domestic swimming pools. At Cape Town's

current tariffs, this would mean an average saving of R160 million a year.

Asmal said visiting United States experts had described the Hermanus programme as one of the most comprehensive water conservation packages to be undertaken in the world.

The programme, which was launched in October last year, consists of a 12-point plan, of which about half have been implemented.

The project began after the Hermanus town council approached the Department of Water Affairs for help in alleviating the town's water crisis.

Hermanus would soon have exceeded its annual 2,8 million m³ quota fixed by the SA Water Board, and was refused permission to increase its water supply by raising the De Bos Dam wall.

Hermanus had either to put a moratorium on any further development, or cut back drastically on water consumption.

Chairman of the department's National Water Conservation Campaign, Mr Guy Preston, said the department had decided to put money into the Hermanus campaign, which could then be used as a model for other municipalities.

"The principles of the Hermanus project could be adopted in all major centres in South Africa."

"It is a blueprint for coastal towns and we think it should be implemented in greater Cape Town. If Cape Town adopted this, it would stave off the need to build dams for a long time," Preston said.

The principles which were adopted by Hermanus are:

- Increasing the run-off of water into the De Bos Dam by clearing alien vegetation in the catchment area, which is over 70% infested with thirsty wattles, pines, rooikrans and gums.

- The introduction of escalating block-rate tariffs, ranging from 30c a kl for the first five kl to R10 for every kl over 100 kl, whereby the more water consumers use, the more they pay.

- The introduction of an "assurance of supply" tariff, whereby consumers pay a monthly fee

similar to the rental fee for having a telephone service. This means holiday home-owners pay their share for the infrastructure and water needed to meet peak holiday demand. The fee would be R40 a month, R10 for sub-economic households and R2 for the indigent.

- The introduction of informative billing, where users show their month-by-month water consumption for the previous year, and how they compare with the town average.

- Introducing school audits whereby schools measure specific water usage, determine areas of wastage and implement water-saving devices.

- Implementing a communication programme to keep consumers informed of what the programme entails and why it is necessary.

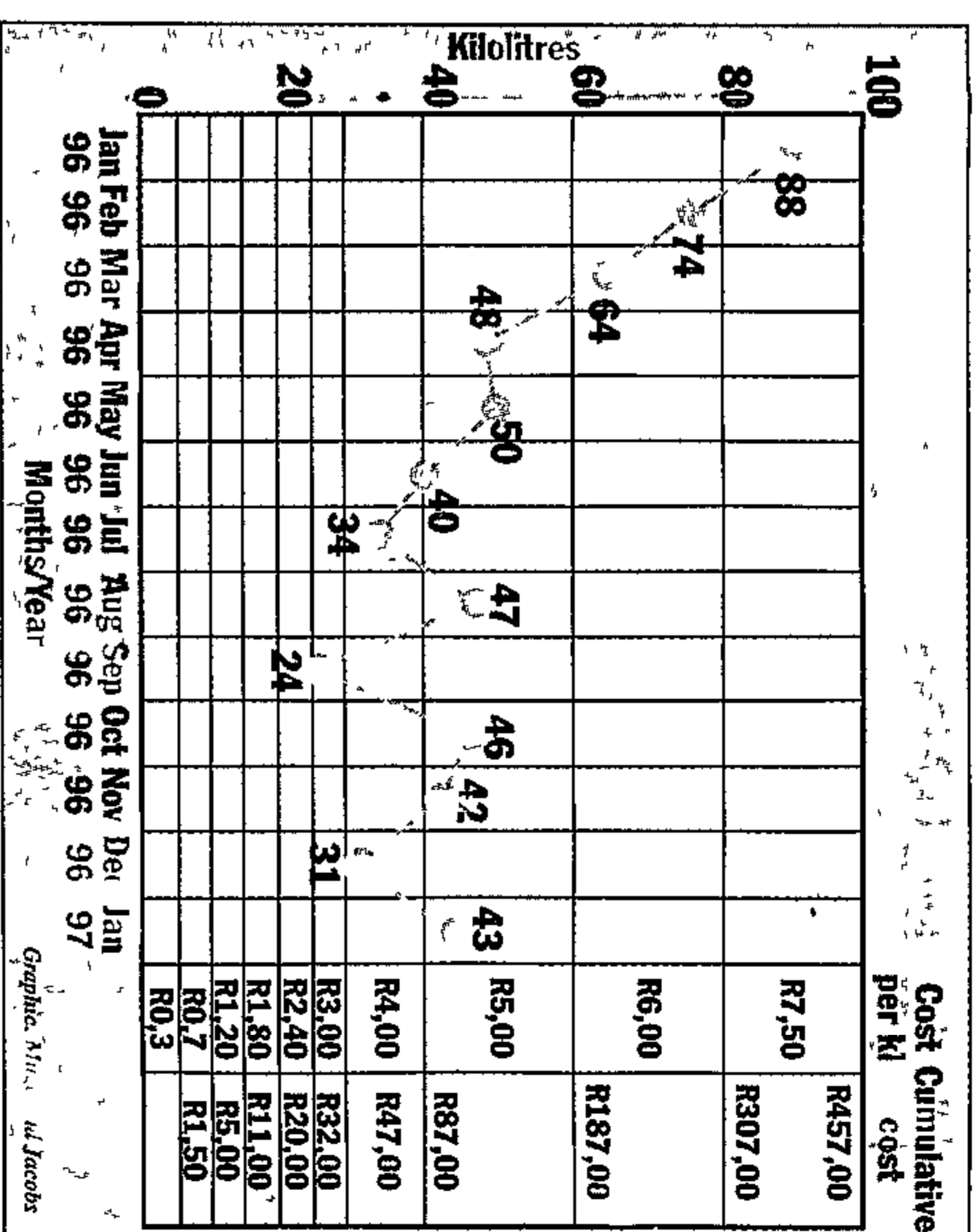
Other points that will be implemented in the future are:

- A "retrofit" programme to install water-saving devices in homes, such as dual-flush lavatories, as well as fixing leaks.

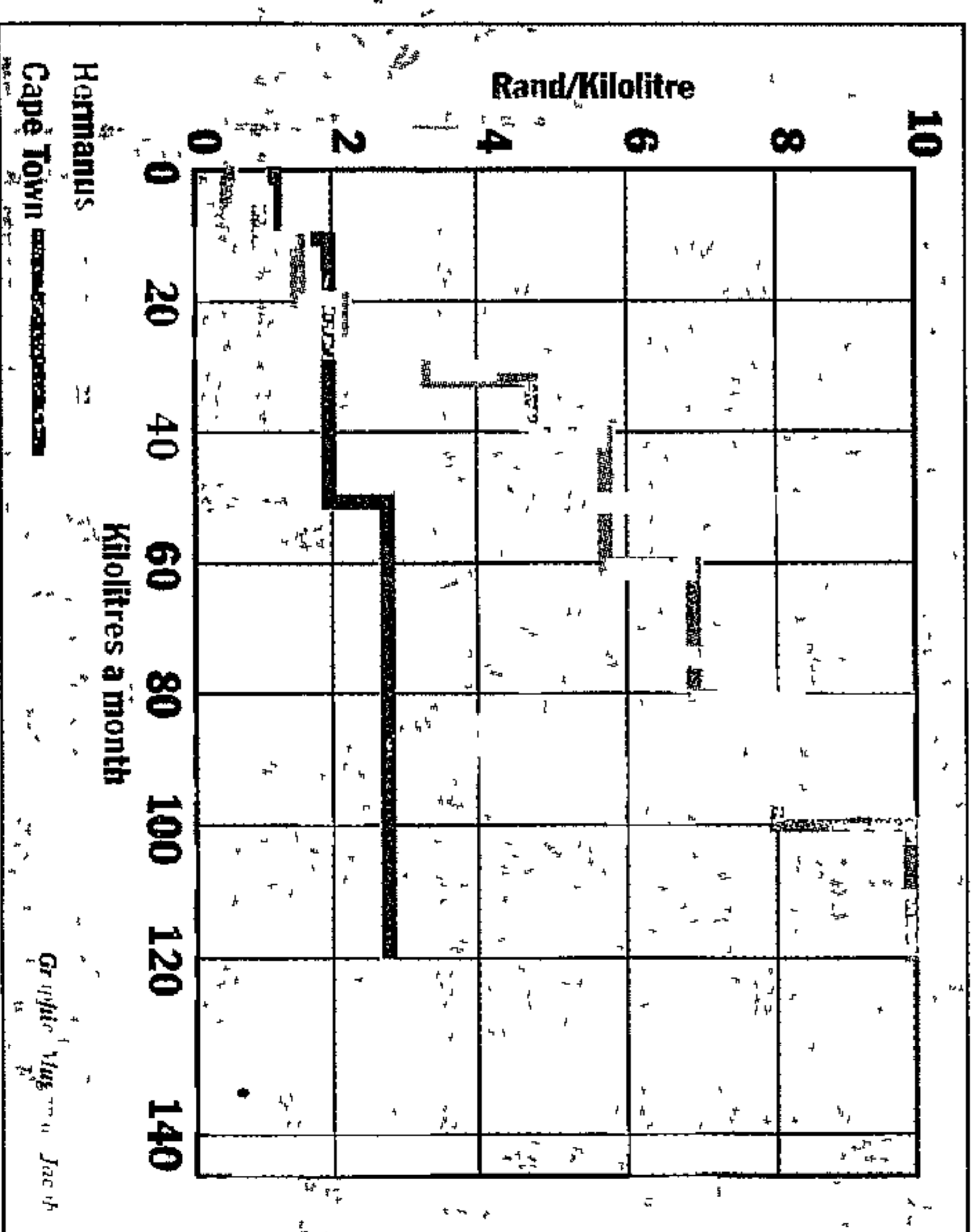
- "Water-wise" gardening and food production methods.
- Pre-payment water meters.

(124)

CT 19/3/97



DIP: The water bill of a Hermanus consumer shows the dramatic drop in the household's water consumption after the October introduction of a major conservation programme. The drop in the middle of the year is a normal winter decrease, but the January decline — almost half the amount consumed the previous January — is a direct result of the programme.



ALL RELATIVE: The block-rate water tariff structure in Hermanus means the more you use the more you pay, starting from 30c a kilolitre for the first five kl to R10 for every kl over 100. Cape Town domestic consumers pay 85c for the first 10 kl, R1,67 for the next 40kl and R2,51 per kl over 50. A middle-class family consumes about 40 kl a month.

Protest plan to invade Rondebosch Common

Council in crisis talks over land

ARLT 20/3/97
(124)

ANDREA WESS
METRO CORRESPONDENT

Rondebosch Common has been targeted for protest occupation by 315 people who feel they have been thwarted in their efforts to find land on which to build houses.

The members of the Masincedane and Kwezlomso housing scheme affiliated to the South African Homeless People's Federation are threatening to occupy the common tomorrow, Human Rights Day, and stay there until land is found for them.

A crisis meeting between municipal officials and the federation has been called for later today in an effort to avert confrontation between the group and Rondebosch residents.

Spokeswoman Kate Ncisana said members of the group had knocked on every possible door to find land, each time to be told the land in question had been identified for another purpose.

They had hoped to build houses on land close to Prince George Drive, but this had been earmarked for a highway to service the Capricorn Technopark project. Then they suggested land close to Summer Greens, but this was being used for the Century City theme park development.

Their third option was land close to Jan Smuts Drive in Lansdowne, but they were told it was for flats.

Ms Ncisana said people wanted land closer to transport and work opportunities. Members had complied with government requirements to be eligible for the state housing subsidy, by organising themselves into a housing savings scheme

arranged an urgent meeting with the Homeless People's Federation later today. City manager Andrew Boraine and community development executive director Ahmed Vawda would also attend.

Mr Mowzer said they would discuss the municipality's efforts to develop a housing policy and strategy. The Rondebosch Common occupation would be on the agenda.

Although the council understood the frustration of the members of the housing scheme, it could clearly not allow the occupation of land, he said.

Ms Ncisana, who was born in Cape Town in 1945, has a long history of struggling to find a permanent home in the city. During the years of influx control, she was deported to the Transkei several times, the first time after her father was imprisoned in the mid 1960s.

She was active in efforts to secure tenure at the Nyanga Bush settlement and took part in a hunger strike at St George's Cathedral in the early 1980s.

Eventually, she was given a plot in Site C, Khayelitsha, which she says has become overcrowded, with four families sharing 250 sq m of land and 13 people using one tap and one toilet.

It is understood that at the meeting today efforts will be made to persuade the federation to stage a symbolic protest at an alternative venue, possibly outside the Civic Centre, to avoid conflict between the group and Rondebosch residents.

The new executive director team of the Cape Town municipality has identified as a priority the need for a housing strategy for the municipality, which includes looking at available land.



Battlefield option: a housing lobby group say they will stay on Rondebosch Common until they get land

Ms Ncisana said they were saving their own money and had acquired building skills which would enable them to build their own homes and even service the land cheaply. They had a letter promising them the housing subsidies would be paid as soon as they had land on which to build.

She said the group intended staying on

the common until it was given land.

"I don't know a door I haven't knocked on. I think everybody who hasn't got a place will have to stand up," she said.

Saleem Mowzer, the Cape Town municipality's deputy executive committee chairman, said the municipality had heard yesterday of the proposed occupation and

Rondebosch Common invasion headed off

ART 21/3 | 97

(124)

ANDREA WEISS
METRO REPORTER

A protest occupation of Rondebosch Common was averted last night after a two-hour emergency meeting between the SA Homeless People's Federation and Cape Town municipality representatives.

The meeting was called in response to a threat by members of the Masincedane and Kwezilomso housing scheme, who are frustrated at their inability to secure land on which to build their own houses

Saleem Mowzer, the Cape Town municipality's deputy executive chairman, said after the meeting that the occupation of the common had been called off

He said the council delegation, which included representatives of all three major political parties, and executive directors Ahmed Vawda and Dave Daniels, had outlined the work the strategic management team was doing on formulating a housing policy

Because the members of the housing scheme were from Site C, in Khayelitsha, it was agreed that the Tygerberg Municipality, the Cape Metropolitan Council and provincial government needed to be

involved in addressing the issue

A further follow-up meeting has been scheduled for April 4

Mr Mowzer said he wanted to commend the federation for "the responsible manner in which they handled the whole situation" He said both parties were pleased with the outcome of the meeting

A spokesperson for the housing scheme earlier expressed her frustration with the group's difficulty in finding land even though they had complied with government requirements to be eligible for the state housing subsidy

Kate Ncisana said the members of the housing scheme had saved their own money and acquired building skills but each time they identified a piece of land they were told it had been earmarked for another purpose.

The group of 315 people had planned to begin their occupation of Rondebosch Common today and to remain there until land had been found for them They are demanding land closer to transport and work opportunities

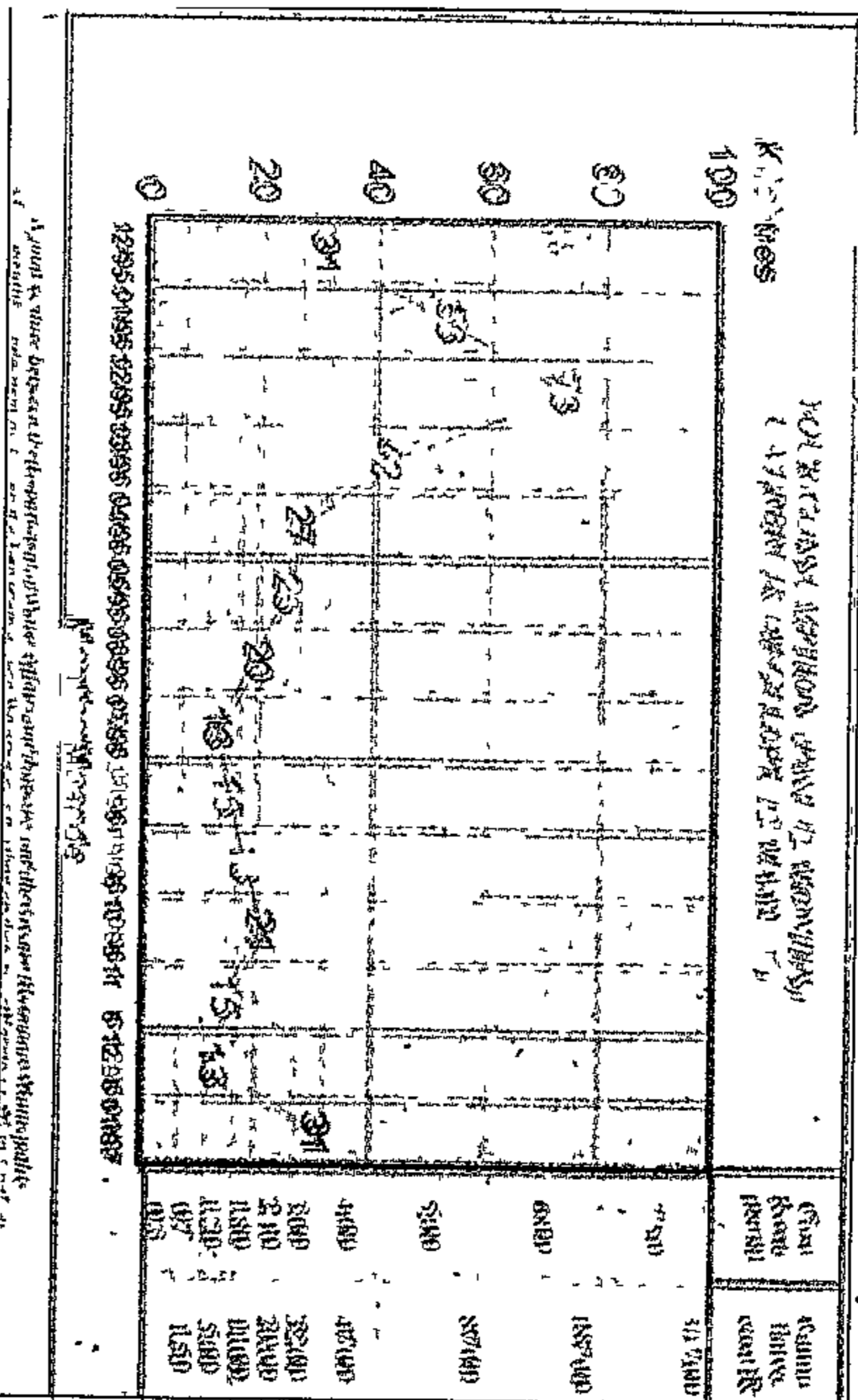
The protest was intended to coincide with Human Rights Day today.

Capetonians stand to lose access to forests, page 3

City warned: cut water waste, or else

Threat of tariff increase as Cape Town faces supply crisis

(PA) Aft 22/3/97



Water use: the graph, which forms part of the new Hermannus water account, makes it easy to assess water usage

TWEET GAINSBOROUGH-WARNING STAFF REPORTER

Minister of Water Affairs and Forestry Kader Asmal has called on Capetonians to support the National Water Conservation Campaign as concern grows that the city may run out of water by 2002.

And John Saunders, assistant city engineer for water, has warned that Cape Town residents will have to learn to conserve water or face major tariff increases.

He said the emphasis had already swung toward water demand management as opposed to looking for new sources. Even with two augmentation schemes in the pipeline the situation required urgent attention, he said.

In spite of its heavy winter rainfall, Cape Town ran out of water in terms of local supplies last century and has for the past century piped in water from beyond the Hottentot Holland mountains at considerable cost.

A water conservation education programme supported by the Department of Water Affairs is in place.

This includes water inspectors visiting schools and giving lectures on water conservation. In addition videos with hints on how to reduce water consumption are being sent to schools.

A permanent exhibition of water saving devices is mounted at the Two Oceans Aquarium and a water tariff structure favouring those with low water consumption is in place.

But it is not only the Mother City that is facing a water crisis.

The municipality of Hermannus is involved in a major water conservation campaign. Tough tariff increases have reduced water consumption by about 30 percent, according to preliminary results. Consumers have also been issued with a

graphic representation of their water usage, which shows immediately how effective water saving measures have been.

Commenting on the success of this programme, Professor Asmal said: "The Greater Hermannus Water Conservation Programme may be the most important initiative yet undertaken in urban water management in South Africa."

"We need to take its successes to other areas - indeed this is already beginning in Grahamstown, Port Alfred, Bushmansrivier Mouth, Kenon-on-sea and Kenhardt."

Andre Roux, project manager for the Hermannus project, said the majority of domestic water went into the garden and there were many ways of reducing this aspect of consumption. Among the tips for lowering water

usage in the garden are

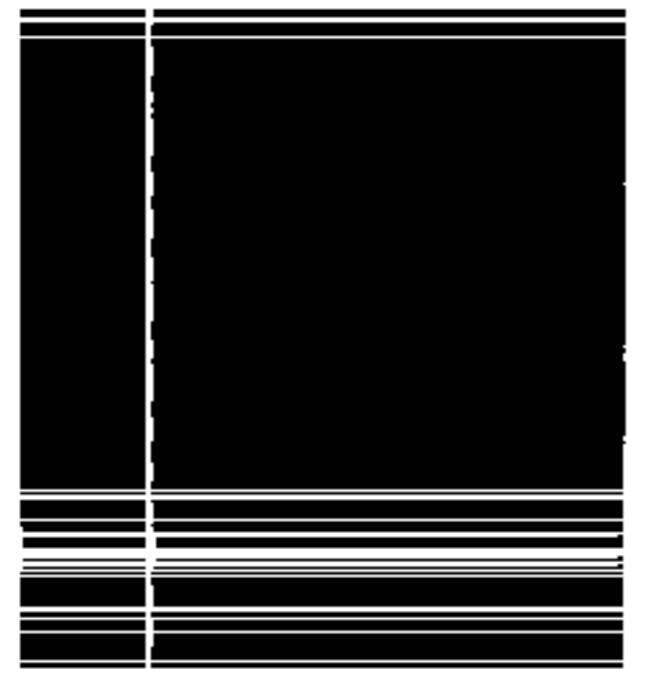
- Planting indigenous plants which require far less water than exotics
- Watering your garden in the evening or early morning to avoid evaporation, and recycling grey water from baths, showers and sinks.

As part of Water Week, Hermannus launched a "Waterwise demonstration garden."

A major aspect of the national water campaign is the "2020 Vision for Water" education project, which will reach 650 000 children at 1 500 schools throughout the country.

Water audits will be conducted at schools and homes throughout South Africa. Through encouraging children to measure water usage, determine areas of waste and implement water savings, the project is a practical way of changing attitudes and behaviour towards water use.

Each child is given a water audit kit so their schools can carry out a full water audit.



Deal for bond-defaulters a step to ending boycott

Taxpayers' money gives buyers a second chance

ARC 22/3/97

(124)

JEAN LE MAY
STAFF REPORTER

Buyers of low-cost houses who have defaulted on their mortgage payments and are threatened with eviction are being given a second or even a third chance - with taxpayers' money.

The Mortgage Indemnity Fund (MIF), funded by the Department of Housing, has renegotiated bonds on behalf of defaulters with Khayaletu Home Loans, a subsidiary of the department's housing arm, the SA Housing Trust (SAHT)

This could be a first step towards ending the bond boycott which landed Khayaletu Home Loans with a debt of more than R100-

million in accumulated interest on arrears

The MIF last week said that "a landmark achievement" towards resolving bond disputes had been reached with an agreement between Khayaletu Home Loans and a residents' association in Chlawelo, Gauteng

Another 15 more agreements were on the table and would be signed soon, said MIF spokesman Tlaks Banda. Residents' associations in Khayelitsha and Crossroads were among those with whom agreements had been negotiated, he added, but loans would be rescheduled individually so as to make it easier for buyers to meet payments

William Maponya, corporate public affairs manager of Khayaletu Home Loans, said there had been many complaints about

the quality of housing. "The SAHT insisted that we should employ contractors from within the community and unfortunately much of the work was simply not up to standard. The poor quality of the houses, coupled with the political situation, encouraged the linking of a bond boycott with the rent boycott," he said

Khayaletu Home Loans is a development company set up with R400-million by the SA Housing Trust in 1988

Conventional banks and building societies declined to finance development in high risk "red-lined" areas. The MIF, which has been described as "a sort of super insurance company", was set up in 1985 to encourage lending in 469 "red-lined" areas, including

Khayelitsha, Crossroads, Gugulethu, Nyanga and Mandalay. The fund indemnifies financial institutions against losses

The MIF has facilitated more than R6-billion in home loans in "red-lined" areas, managing director Nkululeko Sowazi has said

However, there is little in the current negotiations for the Khayelitsha Civic Association, since many of its members have mortgages with the conventional financial institutions. Spokesman Zoile Feni said that they had been to the Government for help and an organisation, Servcon, had been established to help - "but instead of helping it concentrated on subduing people into resuming payments". Servcon could not be reached for comment yesterday.

R1,5bn

arrears

shock (124)

Municipal debt grows ST(CM) 23/3/97

TONY ROBINSON

THE debt burden faced by the six municipalities in greater Cape Town and the Metropolitan Council has grown to the point where it has become a R1,5-billion bombshell and a threat to orderly local government.

The shocking situation is revealed in a report to the Metropolitan Restructuring Forum by a special treasurer's task team.

According to the report, a total of R1,18-billion was owed to the councils on June 30 last year. In the eight months since then arrears have continued to grow.

Together with interest on the arrears this means that by the end of the present municipal year on June 30, debts will exceed R1,5-billion.

The debts are for rates, water, electricity, sewage, refuse and housing. Worst off, according to the report, is Cape Town, where debts totalled R660-million, more than the total income from a year's property rates.

The Metropolitan Council was owed R356-million, Tygerberg R110-million, Blaauwberg R16-million, the Eastern Substructure R17,6-million, the South Peninsula R3,6-million and Helderberg R16-million.

The report says the causes of the present crisis include "the exertion of political pressure through non-payment of accounts", the moratoriums declared by ministers in the Tricameral Parliament and "political interference" with administrative credit control procedures.

In addition, the Masakhane campaign had not produced the required results in the area and government had not honoured its undertaking to pay local authorities for the bulk services supplied to the old black local authorities (BLAs).

Despite this, the councils had to continue paying VAT in advance to the Receiver of Revenue for the bulk services.

The report says there was an agreement that the government would pay for the bulk services to BLAs but it fell through when the BLAs did not cooperate.

In terms of a 1994 agreement local authorities were asked to submit claims for arrears on bulk services. Cape Town claimed R33,39-million and the Metro claimed R15,47-million. In November 1994 the government paid out about a third of these claims (R12-million and R5,4-million) but "no mention was made of the balance".

The report says no further payments were made and the bulk services arrears owed to Cape Town have escalated to R139-million in June last year.

The report also reveals fears of a rates boycott. It states "Municipalities should be extremely careful not to alienate current ratepayers and consumers still honouring their financial commitments by inappropriate credit control measures and/or irresponsible write-offs".

An additional concern is that local rates protesters may take note of the recent judgment in the High Court against the Pretoria City Council when it was found that Pretoria unfairly discriminated against the largely white ratepayers when others were not paying rates and that this was unconstitutional.

The treasurer's task team recommended that:

- All arrears for rates, electricity, house rentals and instalments should not be written off but recovered.

- Credit control measures should be introduced to recover arrears.

Measures suggested included disconnection of electricity and water, prepayment meters with a surcharge, and the issuing of summonses.

SITES FOR 10 000 PEOPLE NEEDED

Council puts brake on land project

CJ 24/3/97
(124)

THE CAPE Metropolitan Council says an integrated development framework has to be drawn up to help identify land for housing the poor. **PETER DENNEHY** reports.

THE Integrated Serviced Land Project (iSLP) developing around Crossroads, should not be expanded, says Cape Metropolitan Council (CMC) chief executive officer Dr Stewart Fisher

He was responding to a request from provincial housing minister Mr Cecil Herandien, who asked the CMC to identify more land on which the iSLP could house another 10 000 families now living in the Greater Crossroads area.

Planners have accused the iSLP of adding to "urban sprawl"

Urban planner Mr Ken Sturgeon said yesterday that the iSLP was limited by the lack of flexibility in the national housing policy

Fisher said an integrated development framework had to be drawn up to help identify land for housing the poor. Higher densities in some neighbourhoods would upgrade them

Herandien, who chairs the iSLP's steering committee, told the CMC about R100m would be spent in this financial year on houses and infrastructure in Southern Delft and the Weltevreden Valley

Over the past six years the CMC and its forerunner, the Regional Services Council, spent R120m on providing necessary infrastructure

Fisher is not opposed to identifying more land for housing the poor, but says this cannot be done as an extension of the iSLP

Herandien said the chief aim of the iSLP was to upgrade existing informal settlements. Some people would have to be given sites elsewhere, to make space for upgrading

He said if extra land was identified, the relevant local authority could develop it under iSLP management

He said the steering committee

knew that the communities within the iSLP project area were not the only ones that needed housing and that their needs had to be seen in the context of overall need

● The iSLP has received a lot of flak about the quality of houses built in its project. The quality depends on the size of the subsidy the government provides. The maximum is R17 250, which must also pay for the servicing of the site

● A January 1997 Council for Scientific and Industrial Research study says "there is a considerable surplus of potentially-available land in relation to the demand"

The study also says "the Tygerberg substructure will in all probability have to accommodate the largest share of the demand for low-income housing"

● The Eastern municipality recently had its application for R13m towards infrastructure for 5 000 low-income houses refused

The CMC said the Eastern municipality should be asked to comment on the financial viability of the project.

COUNCIL'S CLAIMS HAVE FALLEN AWAY

'Write off old service debts'

CT 26/3/97 (174)

CITY COUNCIL exco member Leon Markovitz says the council should summons people who have not paid for services before it is too late to sue them **PETER DENNEHY** reports.

ARRR'AR municipal services debts that are more than three years old should be written off, National Party caucus leader in the Cape Town City Council Mr Leon Markovitz urged yesterday.

Debts of this kind fell away legally after three years — unless the council had issued summonses in that time, he said.

Markovitz said that while property rates debts lasted for 30 years, services debts did not. To recover property rates debts the council had a duty eventually to sell the property.

He said he had already written about the matter to the council's exco, on which he serves.

"The exco has to say that we can't write off any more. We have to sue these people. Whether you proceed or not (after that) is neither here nor

there, because once you decide to sue the money is claimable," he said. Once the legal claims had fallen away, the council had a moral duty to write the amounts off.

"We must come up with a policy of bringing money into this council, so that we do not go insolvent," he said.

He was responding to a remark by ANC councillor Mr Saleem Mowzer that many ratepayers in "advantaged" areas were also behind with payments to the council. Mowzer also mentioned that businesses owed the council millions of rands.

Councillor Ms Faldela de Vries remarked "We must not only look at arrears in the disadvantaged areas."

She took NP councillor Mr Howard Parker to task for his comment that communities that did not

support Masakhane ("let us build for each other", a move to encourage payment and delivery of municipal services) should not expect to be provided with new fire stations, libraries and public swimming pools indefinitely.

"Are we saying we are going to stop services to the affluent areas as well?" she asked. "There is always the perception that the poor do not pay."

Markovitz said legal action had been taken against business defaulters. He also said the non-payment of municipal service debts by people in affluent areas tended to be fairly short-term.

"In other areas, the debts are five or six years old," he said. Council officials have said their computers are not yet able to provide an age-analysis of the debts. Yesterday's debate took place after the Western Cape Provincial Administration offered R140 000 to each of the six Cape Town municipalities and the metropolitan council for the

large-scale municipal services

Masakhane campaign, on condition they each provide "matching finance" to effectively double the total amount.

Cape Town accepted this yesterday, with an amendment from Ms Belinda Walker of the Democratic Party, who wanted the council's amount audited and a report on how effective it had been.

● Last week, a report from a metro-wide team of treasurers reported that debts owed in the middle of last year to Cape Town municipality amounted to R659m.

Of this, most is expected to be recovered in the medium term. But overdue debts came to over R400m at the end of last year. Of this, more than R100m is owed in property rates, which is not a problem in the long term, because no property can change ownership without these being paid.

The government has agreed to pay close to R50m of the former black local authorities' R139m debts for

Inquiry into Worcester council debt

'write-offs'

~~27~~ (124)

STAFF WRITER

CT 7/4/97

A COMMISSION of inquiry has been appointed to investigate Worcester municipality's decision to write off accumulated deficits taken over from the former town council of Zweletemba, the MEC for Local Government, Mr Peter Marais, has announced.

The two-man commission is expected to submit its report within a month.

Its members are Dr Colin Prest SC, who is to chair proceedings, and Mr Friedel Conradie, former town clerk of Goodwood.

The commission is also to investigate various unauthorised expenditures, including:

- Compensation packages for retiring council members;
- Allowances paid to former council members; and
- Transport benefits for current council members.

The Worcester municipality has 17 councillors, most of whom are members of the African National Congress.

In the November 1995 local elections, the ANC captured 12 seats and the National Party, five.

The inquiry is also expected to address the apparently "inordinately high" amount spent in assisting the Touws River municipality.

Not all of this expenditure could be verified, Marais said.

Transnet pays workers' R2-m rates arrears

ANDREA WEISS
METRO CORRESPONDENT

~~123~~
(124)

Local Government Minister Peter Marais has brokered a groundbreaking agreement with Transnet which will pay more than R2,1-million in rates arrears owed by its employees.

Mr Marais announced the deal yesterday, calling it a "major breakthrough to reverse the culture of non-payment"

In terms of the agreement Transnet will pay the money and recoup it from employees in an agreed manner and time period.

The money is owed to the municipalities of Cape Town, Tygerberg and Oostenberg.

ARC 11/4/97
Mr Marais said the step was "an example of compassion and empathy" which would contribute to the development of healthy labour relations.

"It will also contribute to the recovery of the financial position of local authorities, which is a cause for great concern."

Mr Marais has called on other government and non-government institutions to follow Transnet's example because it could contribute "massively" to the survival of hundreds of municipalities

He said all employers and unions should investigate these possibilities and work together to make the Masakhane campaign a success

Transnet helps tackle rates impasse

Linda Ensor

CAPE TOWN — A solution to the non-payment of rates was reached yesterday when Transnet agreed to take over R2,1m in outstanding rates owed by its employees to three Western Cape municipalities

The agreement was heralded as a novel way of ending the impasse over the nonpayment of rates which has crippled many local authorities.

Western Cape local government MEC Peter Marais said that if similar agreements were reached in other parts of the country between employers, employees and municipalities, significant inroads could be made in reducing the R6bn owed to local authorities. He regarded the agreement as a breakthrough in attempts to reverse the culture of nonpayment of rates and services in the Western Cape.

About 1 000 employees were involved in the agreement in terms of which Transnet agreed to pay R2,1m to the municipalities of Cape Town, Tygerberg and Oostenberg.

The money would be deducted over a period of time from the workers' salaries in a manner agreed on with the individual workers on the basis of their personal financial circumstances.

Marais said the workers, faced with the imminent loss of their homes through sales in execution following nonpayment, had asked Transnet for help and Transnet had consulted with him about a possible solution.

Cape Chamber of Commerce and Industry human resources manager Charl Adams welcomed the development saying "Anything that can break

the impasse without prejudicing any parties must be favourably considered as an alternative. This however, is presupposing that the outstanding debt is not written off, nor becomes an additional debt to the corporation, but is paid off by employees according to arranged agreements.

"We encourage creative solutions to the nonpayment of rates and it seems that Transnet has hit on a formula that is acceptable to all stakeholders to unlock the impasse."

A similar initiative was launched in Port Elizabeth recently when the regional chamber of commerce signed an in-principle agreement with labour federation Cosatu which would allow the payment of R86m in municipal service arrears by deducting from the salaries of the city's 350 000 workers.

Both parties had to canvass support among their members for the plan which won the approval of 90% of the business community.

Marais called on other government and nongovernment employers to follow Transnet's example by discussing with trade unions and their workers an agreement to take over their rates and service arrears.

He believed this could make a massive contribution to the economic survival of hundreds of municipalities which faced accumulated arrears of about R340m in the metropole.

"Employers cannot stand aloof from the problems of their workers. They must take up the cudgels on their behalf," Marais urged, saying that they stood to gain from good governance at

Continued on Page 2

Transnet

Continued from Page 1

local level. If municipalities were burdened with nonpayment this would affect the economy at the end of the day.

Marais also considered it preferable for employers to undertake the often intricate negotiations on arrears with municipalities, rather than leaving this to often uneducated workers.

Employers had the necessary expertise and capacity to reach deals with

municipalities but were doing nothing to protect workers threatened with the loss of electricity and water services and even their houses. Another possibility to be investigated was for service charges to be deducted monthly on a stop order basis from worker's salaries.

Spokesman for Provincial Affairs and Constitutional Development Minister Valli Moosa, Mpho Mosmane, said the ministry could not comment on the agreement without scrutinising it first. However, it welcomed any initiative which helped reverse the culture of nonpayment.

Housing plans (124)

rejected

ARC 14/4/97

PETER GOOSEN

METRO DESK

It's back to the drawing board for Section 21 company Communicare whose plan for a group housing development of 106 houses in Ottery has been turned down by the South Peninsula Council's urban planning committee.

The vacant site, state land on De Wet, Carol and Melville Roads, falls between Grassy Park and Ottery.

Outlining the proposal, a Communicare spokesman said the land was low-lying and a water-retention dam surrounded by public open space would be one of the main features of the development.

There were four house types and the most expensive would cost R120 000.

In a public participation exercise Communicare found that people were against the idea of three-storey walk-ups.

Single-storey homes were most in demand, according to the respondents.

The development would have five-metre brick-paved roadways that would function as open space and play areas for children.

Cape firms administer workers' service accounts

Linda Ensor

CAPE TOWN — Port Elizabeth and Uitenhage employers are administering the monthly payments of the service accounts of their employees to the local municipalities.

An estimated 5 000 to 6 000 workers in Uitenhage had been incorporated into the system, Uitenhage deputy city treasurer Philip Nel said.

Small enterprises were involved, as well as large companies such as Volkswagen and Goodyear.

Nel said municipal officials had taken the initiative by arranging meetings with employers and employees and persuading the latter to sign forms consenting to stop orders. Deductions were being made for current debts as well as for arrears, which in Uitenhage amounted to about R30m.

Port Elizabeth Regional Chamber of Commerce and Industry CE Kevin Wakefield estimated deductions had

been made to the salaries of about 2 300 workers in Port Elizabeth.

He said the chamber had played a facilitating role by getting employers and unions to agree to the scheme last September, despite the enormous administration costs for employers.

The union movement had encouraged its members to participate, but Wakefield said it was now up to the municipality to get consent forms signed by sending task teams into the workplace. Employers did not have the capacity to do this.

While business had proposed outsourcing this function to the private sector, the municipality was afraid of the complications which could arise if mistakes were made. Wakefield said another solution would be for provincial governments to legislate for a statutory minimum deduction from payrolls for municipal payments, with individuals being responsible for topping up the amounts owed.

Police row likely to dominate debate

Wyndham Hartley

CAPE TOWN — Today's parliamentary debate of President Nelson Mandela's budget vote and Friday's debate of the money given to safety and security are set to become the battleground over the reasons for the row between Safety and Security Minister Sydney Mufamadi and SAPS national commissioner George Fivaz.

Opposition parties gave notice yesterday that they would use the two budget votes to question the African National Congress (ANC) about the recent clash between Mufamadi and Fivaz, particularly as both men failed to appear before Parliament's safety and security committee yesterday to explain the situation.

BD 15/14/92



Deputy Intelligence Minister and former ANC Intelligence Chief Joe Mhlanhla enters the Johannesburg High Court yesterday to give evidence at the judicial inquest into the 1994 Shell House shootings. Picture GARTH LUMLEY

'Good roads vital for strong economy'

Jacob Dlamini

CAPE TOWN — SA loses an estimated R17bn to road accidents every year, the Southern African Bitumen and Tar Association (Sabita) told Parliament's transport committee yesterday.

In its presentation to the committee's road safety hearings, Sabita said the cost was due to the loss of productive output, property damage, pain and suffering, and administrative and legal costs.

Sabita said bad roads accounted for at least 3% of all accidents and warned that road authorities could lose R500m in potential claims from victims of accidents.

Sabita technical director Rob Vos said the association had commissioned the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research to conduct research on the full effects of roads on all accidents.

Vos said road freight would have to grow by at least 12% a year if SA was to realise the 6% gross domestic product (GDP) growth targeted by the government. He said every 1% of investment in road infrastructure could generate 2% to 3% GDP growth.

However, it cost the economy two to three rands on every rand not spent on maintenance costs. The SA civil engineering industry had lost 30 000 jobs between 1986

Vos said SA fared poorly when compared with countries such as Botswana in terms of the availability of paved roads per one million people. SA's roads, which should be regarded as one of the country's greatest assets, were inadequate to serve the disadvantaged communities.

Sabita public relations consultant Mamosedu Maleka said local government officials "were vulnerable to exploitation by greedy road developers".

Maleka said Sabita had conducted workshops designed to show local government the benefits of well-maintained roads.

BD 15/14/92

Business may help collect rates arrears

PETER GOOSEN
METRO DESK

The Cape Town Chamber of Commerce and Industry is prepared to look positively at a partnership with local authorities to collect arrear rates, rents and service charges from members' employees.

Chamber executive director A W Lighton told the South Peninsula Municipality this week there had been a positive reaction to Transnet's agreement with local authorities to get arrears from its staff and the chamber was prepared to form a partnership with local authorities to look at a system, provided it did not clash with the interests of members.

Asked what the council could do about getting new - and perhaps much higher - property rates accepted by ratepayers, the chamber's local government committee chairman, Bob Wood, said the council had to communicate effectively with its ratepayers

ARG 17/4/97 (124)

and should not levy new rates until it had undertaken a number of "trial runs" to see which areas would be affected and by how much.

"If you arrive at a result which is obviously going to affect one area more than another, you need to try to make adjustments, meet these people, explain the situation and try to split the increase over, perhaps, three years. Only then do you levy the new rate," he said.

Mr Wood said one of the biggest problems facing local authorities in the Cape was old property valuations. Regular valuations were essential.

The chamber had decided, reluctantly, to accept site valuation only, in spite of the system's shortcomings, because it would be much quicker to implement. Of critical importance was to change the Valuation Ordinance immediately to give effect to the new system and to take care of such aspects as the continued preservation of underdeveloped properties of historical and aesthetic significance.

Hermannus locals protest at huge water price rise

Bulk users face 200 percent increase

TWENTY GAINSBOROUGH-WARING
STAFF REPORTER

Excessive development in Hermannus has been blamed for the increasing cost of water in the area. Bulk consumers are bearing the brunt of the higher costs as the municipality levies higher tariffs to bring water use under control.

The town's development framework, which took water consumption into account, originally made allowance for 11 500 erven. Already 8 500 plots have been developed, putting great strain on available water resources. With the growing popularity of the town more than 800 erven have been approved for development over the past 18 months. This included eight group developments of more than 20 units each.

Bulk consumers of water, known as "wet" industries, are furious that they are bearing the brunt of increased tariffs, while further developments are being

given the go ahead in spite of the limited water resources.

Bulk users are facing increases of up to R800 a month on their water bills. Many believe if higher water costs force them to cut back on their services, tourism in the area will suffer.

Rudolph van Niekerk of Hermannus Dry Cleaners said "We've been very hard hit and it's difficult for a business like this to save water as the machines operate with minimum quantities of water."

He said he was paying R5.15 per kilolitre this year compared to R1.94 per kilolitre last year.

"This represents an increase of 212 per cent," he said.

Andre Olivier of Care Dry Cleaners, whose power was cut after he failed to pay his water account in full, quoted similar figures. A spokesman for a large holiday

RRG 19/4/97

(124)

'The escalating cost of water has left bulk users facing increases of up to R800'

resort in the area said monthly costs had risen by over R800 but the water was needed to maintain the large lawns at the resort.

Bea Whittaker, a spokesman for the municipality, said major developments approved before July 1996 would go ahead, but new developments would have to find on-site ground water at their own cost before approval would be given.

Recently, a 70-erven development in the town was halted until the developer had sunk a borehole and found groundwater.

The development of a golf course between Hawston and Vermont is also on hold until developers find on-site groundwater capable of supplying most of its needs.

The Greater Hermannus Municipality embarked on a water conservation campaign when the town's annual water con-

sumption for 1995 reached levels planners expected would only to be reached by 2005.

An awareness campaign was then launched in a bid to reduce consumption by 30 percent. Part of the campaign included a special tariff rate for bulk users, worked out to suit their particular needs. However some businesspeople said they had not been aware of the system.

Residents also want to know why the greater use of groundwater supplies had not been made a priority, particularly as a consultant's report in 1993 had clearly stated that the Hermannus area was rich in groundwater.

A spokesman for the town planning department said a hydrological study was currently being undertaken and consultants appointed by the municipality have indicated the most sustainable groundwater sites are in the Fernkloof Nature Reserve.

The municipality has entered into negotiations with the Fernkloof Advisory Committee to discuss drilling in the reserve

'Time to get tough on R636m debt'

ST(BM)20/4/97(124)

TOM HOOD

CAPE TOWN has little chance of recovering all of the R636-million in unpaid rates, rents and arrears owed by ratepayers, council tenants and house buyers unless stringent measures are taken, according to city treasurer Eddie Landsberg

The debt, up 25 percent in a year from R507-million, was pinpointed by auditor-general Henri Kluever in his report on the city's

finances for the year ending June 30 last year

A response by the city treasurer, submitted to the executive committee on Tuesday, said "Until the politicians are prepared to take stronger measures, linked to a poverty assistance policy, the alarming increase in these debts will continue, with a further deterioration in the position"

Meanwhile, a report to the Cape Metropolitan Council's finance committee warned that large outstanding amounts had

become the single biggest threat to the finances of local government in the Peninsula

Debtors owed R1 180-million to the six municipalities and the CMC as at June 30 last year

Political interference with the administrative credit control procedures was one of the reasons, said the report

Landsberg said in his report that the increase in rate and general debts to R247-million from R174-million in a year was largely due to the increase in the previous black local authority debt

for sewerage, refuse removal, community health and fire services

A housing debt of R55,6-million, up from R35,7-million, represented current and arrear instalments due from buyers of council houses and rents from council tenants

"The increase in water debtors, from R98-million to R146-million, cannot be effectively controlled until the political decision of absolute non-disconnection of water services is abandoned," Landsberg said



CLEAN-UP: Hendrina Arends and companions oversee the burning of rubbish at Sun City, Sir Lowry's Pass. They are involved in a scheme similar to one envisaged for city townships. Arends, previously unemployed, says her income is "a big help".

PICTURE: ALAN TAYLOR

Union slams contract work plan for jobless

A TOWNSHIP battle is raising a stink as 18 000 households wait for their first-ever door-to-door refuse removal service to get going.

Firmly behind the job creation scheme is the Ikapa Town Council and the ANC, backed by local government MEC Mr Peter Marais — and solidly against it is the influential South African Municipal Workers' Union (Samwu)

Samwu objects to the low "wage" offer of R750 per person in the scheme and refuses to support the plan to recruit jobless people to the Clean and Green campaign on year-long contracts.

It wants the work to go to Samwu members — permanent council employees.

Mr Robert Adams, secretary of the Cape Town branch of Samwu, said R750 was less than half what a municipal worker should earn.

Ikapa townships' current refuse removal service uses skips. The huge metal containers are left on street corners until filled by residents, and are then removed.

The planned job creation project will cost R1 million and be free to residents, although they will be expected to continue to pay existing municipal "flat" rates.

Marais accused Samwu of having a political agenda unrelated to the best interests of workers or the unemployed.

"Samwu speaks for the few who have jobs and not for the many jobless," he said.

Marais said the union was pushing the ANC to pass a law making municipal workers' overtime 1½ times the usual rate, and suspected that this was behind their opposition. — Staff Writers

CT 21/4/97 (124)

Residents, municipality vie for control of Mamre land

Controversial decision rests with Hanekom

ARLT 24/4/97

(277) ~~AA4~~ (124)

JOSEPH ARANES
STAFF REPORTER

Battle lines have been drawn for the control of 8 000ha of land surrounding the small Swartland settlement of Mamre.

The land, being held in trust by Land Affairs Minister Derek Hanekom, is at the centre of a dispute between the Blaauwberg Municipality, under whose jurisdiction the town falls, and residents who feel they should control its future development.

In the late 1830s, the British colonial powers gave the land, at the time three farms, to freed slaves and placed it under the trusteeship of the Moravian Church which had established a mission station there.

The church managed the land for the people for many decades before handing it back to the community which had established a statutory body, the Board of Management, to run the town's affairs and its assets.

But a few years ago, the community found board members had sold some of the land without their consent. They disbanded the board, established a new trust and laid charges against former board members. The case is pending.

With the introduction of new local government legislation, the land was placed under the trusteeship of Mr Hanekom and the rural town put under the jurisdiction of the Blaauwberg municipality.

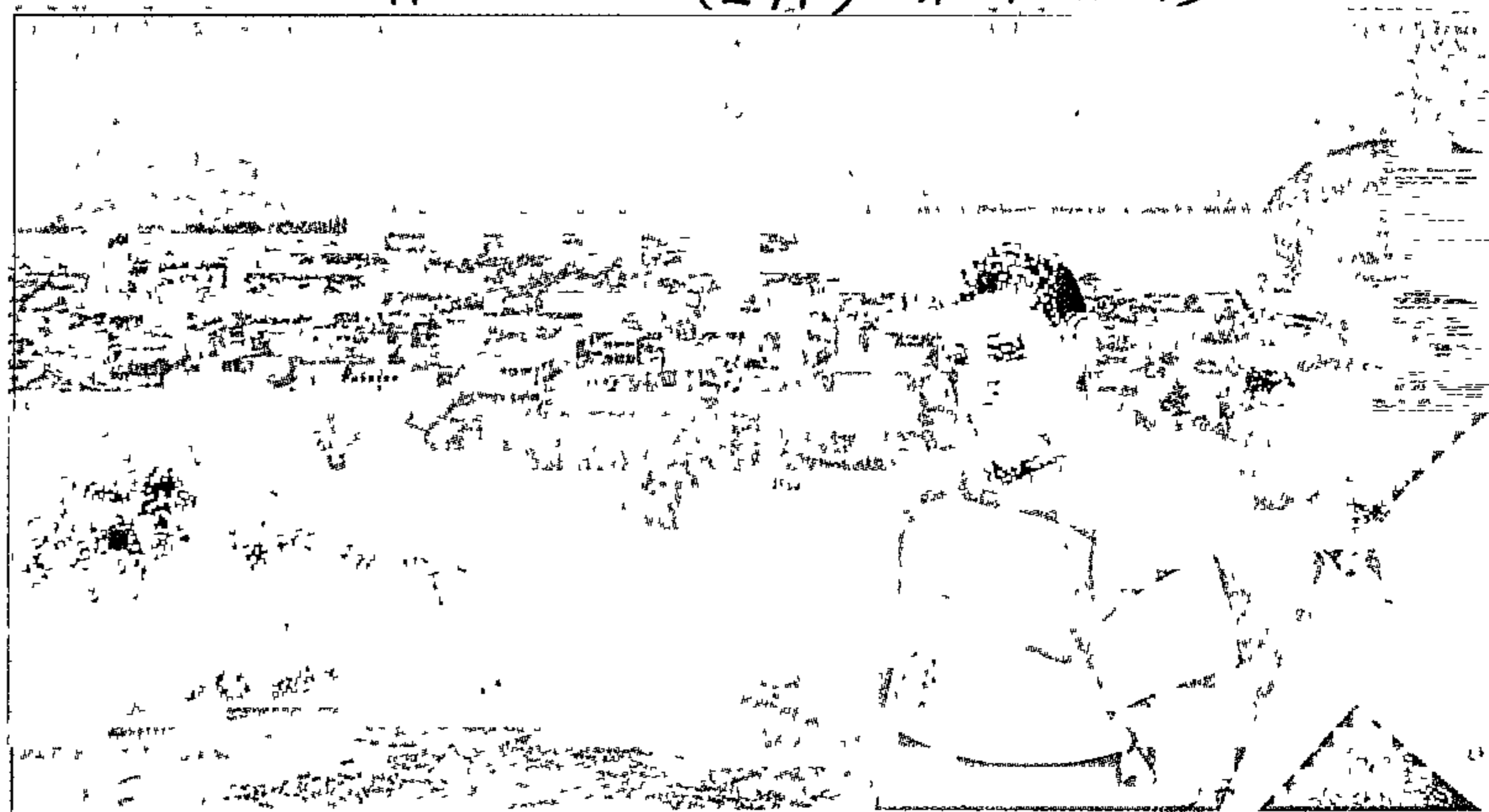
Land Affairs planner Igor Boonzaaier said the minister would like to transfer the land back to the community but would have to take into consideration the role of the municipality.

"We recently held a series of meetings with the community, the municipality and other roleplayers to find out what the sentiments of the people are. There seem to be conflicting opinions, legally and within the community, on who should take ownership of the land and the other assets," he said.

The minister would make his decision only once he was certain it would be in the best interests of the whole community.

Chairman of the Mamre Community Trust Dave Pick said it seemed as if the National Party was intent on using the issue as a political plaything to the detriment of the community.

"Led by their local councillor and the NP-con-



BRENTON

Under siege community leaders Geoff Carelse and Dave Pick discuss the future of the Swartland town of Mamre.

trolled Blaauwberg municipality, the NP want to get their dirty hands on the land so they can control our destiny. They tend to forget community issues override party political interests."

Mr Pick said the community had come a long way in its fight to control the land.

"First it was the church, then the corrupt board and now we are faced with a municipality that is threatening to stop development in the town unless the land is transferred to them."

He said the community would, in terms of new legislation, form a communal property association making it possible for the minister to transfer the land to the people.

The community trust was mandated by the community to look after their interests and the starting point was that the land belonged to the people.

"We will not allow the municipality to dictate to us and let our children be disinherited," Mr Pick said.

Blaauwberg Municipality chief executive officer Peter Gerber said in terms of a local government

proclamation made by Minister Peter Marais, Mamre fell under the jurisdiction of the municipality.

"However, the land and the management of it shall not detract from the provisions set out in the proclamation. The land and the community assets must be used to benefit the community," he said.

The municipality was a democratically elected structure there to serve the interests of all the residents and he felt it was not in the best interests of the Mamre community to operate as an independent structure. "The municipality is best placed and has all the technical know-how and resources for the future development of the area. This must be done in conjunction with the community."

Mr Gerber said while it was a known fact that the municipality was controlled by the NP and the community trust was largely ANC-aligned, he did not want to get into a political fight. "As a municipality we will hold talks with the Land Affairs Ministry about the issue as we do not want to divide the community but want what is best for all."

Council facing tough decision over

Who will occupy new Athlone homes

JERMAINE CRAIG
Staff Reporter

ARC 28/4/97

A housing project in Athlone to provide much-needed homes for 136 families has become embroiled in controversy over who will live in the new houses.

Although the project is set to get the go-ahead, a tough political decision on allocation faces the Cape Town Municipality.

The council initially proposed the houses should be built for homeless families in the entire Athlone area, but the issue aroused a storm of emotion from Kewtown residents who want the houses allocated to families from their own community.

The houses are to be built on an old dump site in Kewtown in Ward C36 which also comprises Bridgetown, Silvertown, Sybrand Park, Parktown and Hazendal-Bokmakierne.

There is a major shortage of housing in this ward and most houses accommodate more than one family.

Rob Johnston, chief engineer, construction, for the Cape Town Municipality, said no decision on the project had yet been made.

He added that the councillor for the area, Johnny Peters, would make a recom-



OBED ZILWA

Housing blues: Abubakar Miller and Harold Stewart at the site of the proposed housing project

mentadation to the council's housing committee at its next meeting on May 7.

Mr Johnston felt the majority of people seemed to be "in agreement" that the project should go ahead, but the council faced a crunch decision about who to accommodate there.

Mr Peters hinted in an interview that he would recommend to the housing committee that the project should go ahead, but that people presently living in his ward

should get first preference

"I am all for building houses in Kewtown, but I believe it should be for people living in overcrowded areas in Ward C36," Mr Peters said.

This was the opinion of the community and he was merely carrying out his mandate from the people.

"The feeling of the community is that we are all for it. The houses should be built but people in our area should get preference," said Mr Peters.

The chairman of the Athlone Ward C36 RDP forum, Sydney Flowers, said the forum supported the project, but felt the council needed to consult the community before making its decision.

The forum did not oppose the idea of people from other areas coming to stay in the Kewtown houses, but felt the majority of people - if possible as many as 90 percent - should come from Ward C36.

Chairman of the Kewtown Residents Association Bruce Malagas said "The people of Kewtown were never consulted about this homeless issue. The project was initiated by the Kewtown Residents Association and our position is quite clear."

"These houses must go to the people of Kewtown, it is an issue we are not prepared to negotiate."

RDP trickle turns into torrent

Westlake site to get Marconi Beam treatment

ELINE SAWYER AND PETER GOOSEN
STAFF REPORTERS

The Government has forecast major breakthroughs this year in the Reconstruction and Development Programme, including 200 000 new houses and school feeding for five million pupils a day.

And in a big RDP boost unveiled today, a neglected 100ha site in Westlake on the southern boundary of Pollsmoor prison has been handed to the South Peninsula Municipality for development, including upgrading informal settlements.

The land is occupied by informal settlements, two hospitals, the Westlake Technical College and the Ark City of Refuge

Graham Lawrence, chairman of the council's executive committee, said it was the largest joint venture the council had worked on.

Central Government, the Western Cape government and the council have agreed the site will be developed along the same lines as Marconi Beam near Milnerton. The informal settlement at Marconi Beam is being upgraded as part of the RDP.

In a glossy "mid-term report to the nation" published today, the Government said the economy was in a long-term upswing and that a partnership had been forged between business, government and trade unions.

It said that while there had been achievements in implementing Govern-

ment plans, the emphasis since May 1994 had been mainly on planning, which would now be followed by delivery.

Outlining plans for this year, the report forecast that

- The school feeding programme, now serving three million pupils, would be extended to reach five million

- The nutrition and social development programme, which reached 1,3 million people last year, would benefit 1,5 million

- 200 000 houses would be built, mainly for people who qualified for subsidies

- About 25 cases were expected to be finalised by the Land Claims Court, benefiting about 50 000 people

- The community water supply and sanitation programme would serve a fur-

ther 1,7 million people this year and two million in 1998

- About 600 clinics would be built or upgraded and 100 more mobile clinics provided

- Cataract operations would be increased by 25 percent, restoring sight to 52 000 people

- Human resource development would include curriculum and teacher development, the establishment of a national task team on life skills and HIV/AIDS training, and the setting up of transformation forums at all higher education institutions

- Measures to promote growth and rising productivity

- The introduction of a Competitive-ness Fund and a Sectoral Partnership

ARLT 29/4/97

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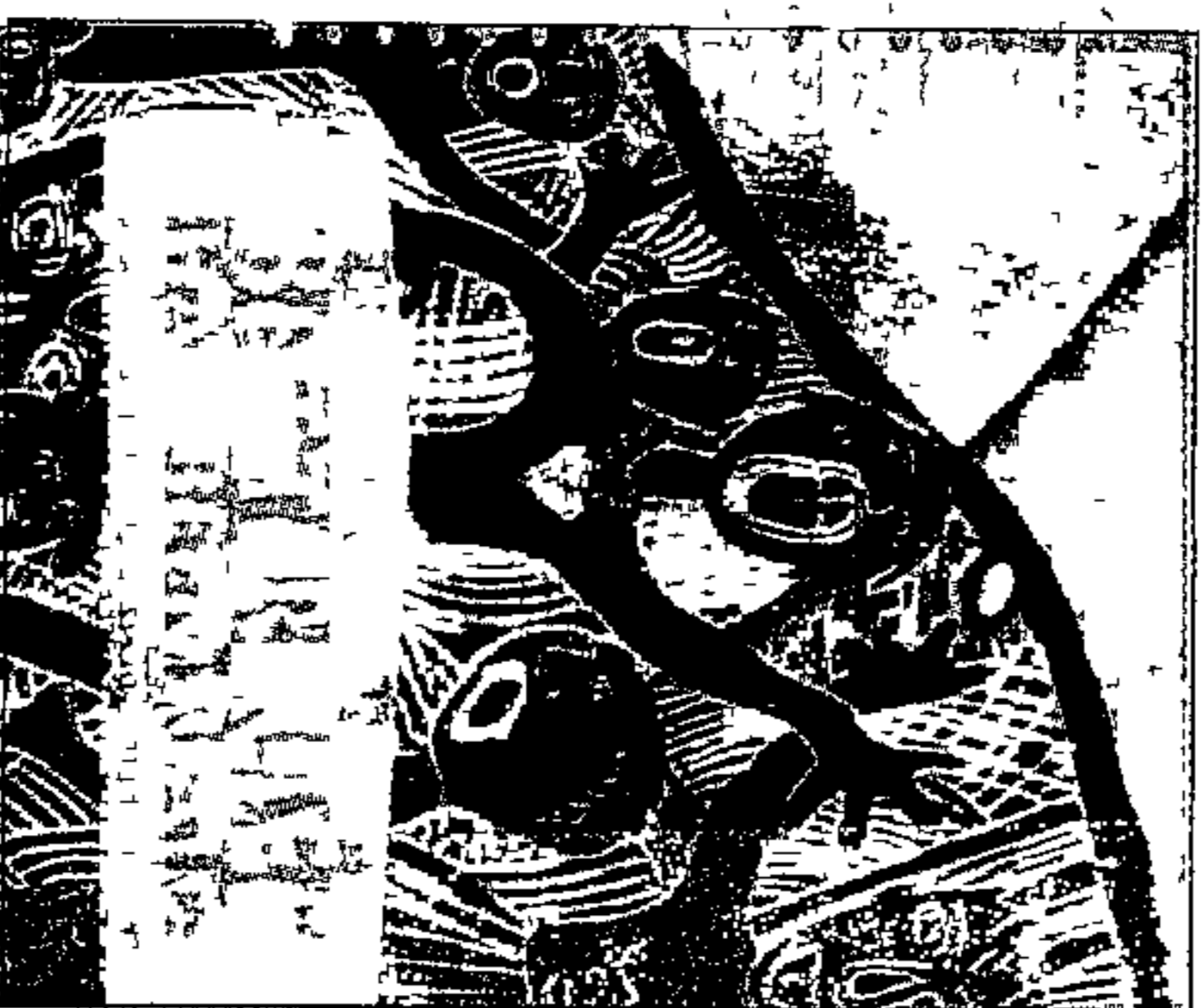
Facility as grant-matching programmes to enable firms to hire consultants to boost competitiveness

- Stronger political management of the crime prevention strategy, the spending of R1,2-billion on improving the system and better resources for courts and police.

"Today, particularly with democratic local government, communities throughout the country are beehives of activity," the report said.

"Away from national media coverage, streets are being tarred, refuse collection is being improved, schools are being renovated, clinics are being built and upgraded and housing projects are being started."

Defence Force marches into new SA, page 4



Good times ahead: how the mid-term 'report to the nation' is presented



OBED ZILWA

Ready for upgrading resident William Swarts wants decent housing at the Westlake informal settlement, which has been earmarked for a major overhaul by the Reconstruction and Development programme

South Peninsula set for housing boom

PETER GOOSEN
METRO DESK

One of the Peninsula's most neglected areas - 100 hectares next to Pollsmoor prison at Westlake - is to be transformed into a model mini-town.

The project, the first major Reconstruction and Development Programme venture by the new South Peninsula Municipality, will provide proper housing for thousands of residents in informal settlements and is likely to incorporate industry to create

employment opportunities and make the scheme financially self-sufficient.

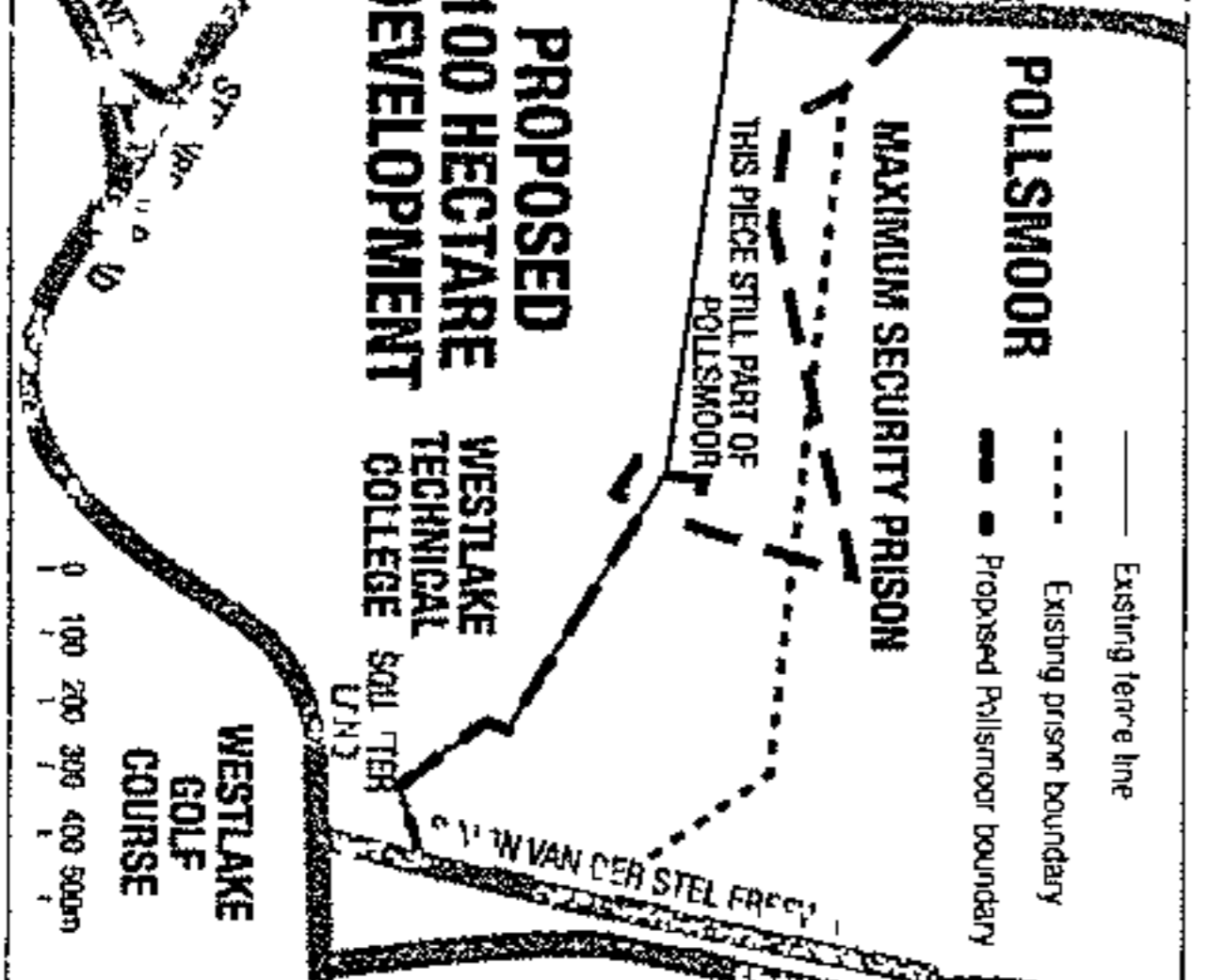
The central and Western Cape governments have handed the site - south of the prison and bounded by Steenberg Road - to the municipality for a major overhaul.

The area contains some of the south's biggest headaches: burgeoning informal settlements with an appalling refuse problem and an infrastructure of roads and other services which have reached the end

(124)

ARU 30/4/97 page 3

TRACKING A CITY IN TRANSITION



Council plan to revamp neglected South Peninsula area

From page 1

of the line. It is a stone's throw from some of Tokai's most expensive housing and two golf courses, Westlake and Steenberg.

On the site are several informal settlements, two hospitals, the Westlake Technical College and the Ark City of Refuge, a shelter for destitute people.

The upgrading and development of Westlake would give the South Peninsula Municipality the chance to "earn its

stripes", planning committee chairman Neville Riley said. The Government, the province and the council had agreed to develop the area along similar lines to Marconi Beam near Milnerton.

Mr Riley said it would be possible to provide proper housing for many residents. To this end the province was conducting a census.

He said there was also likely to be an industrial component to the project.

"It is our intention that this project will

be financially self-sufficient," he said.

The Ark, long a bone of contention with its neighbours, could be moved to a more suitable site or confined to its original boundaries.

"We are well aware of the marvellous work done by this church," Mr Riley said.

The council had already advertised for a suitable developer-facilitator to put together an acceptable development package. He promised a comprehensive public participation process.

"In fact anybody concerned about the development or is interested in it must feel free to contact the South Peninsula Municipality," he said.

On the contentious issue of refuse removal, Mr Riley said the council had employed 24 Westlake people to collect rubbish. In some places front-end loaders were being used.

He also gave the assurance that the environment and aesthetics of the area would be taken into consideration.

ARK 30/4/97

(124)

Westlake 'desperately needs houses'

ARL 30/4/97 (124)
STAFF REPORTER

People in informal settlements in Westlake favour the proposed upgrading and development of the area, but are not sure where they will go while the project is in progress.

The neglected 100ha site south of Pollsmoor Prison handed to the South Peninsula Municipality for upgrading and development is at present occupied by several informal settlements, two hospitals, the Westlake Technical College and the Ark City of Refuge.

Residents' spokesman William Swarts said that the upgrading of the site would be of great benefit to the community.

"The community is in desperate need of houses," he said.

"Most of the residents are unemployed, with little or no income.

"All we want is a free, peaceful life," Mr Swarts said, adding that it had running water, but no electricity.

"The place is a filth because rubbish is not collected regularly and children are exposed to all kinds of diseases," he said.

Mr Swarts said he had been living in the settlement for 22 years, and was a caddy at the Westlake golf course earning about R70 a week.

He said domestic violence was also a big problem, especially between the black and the coloured communities.

Yoliswa Mohau said the proposed upgrading and development project was very good news.

"The community is in desperate need of decent houses.

"We have no income and therefore it is a constant battle to survive, especially during the winter months.

"The prospect of houses being built is very uplifting," she said.

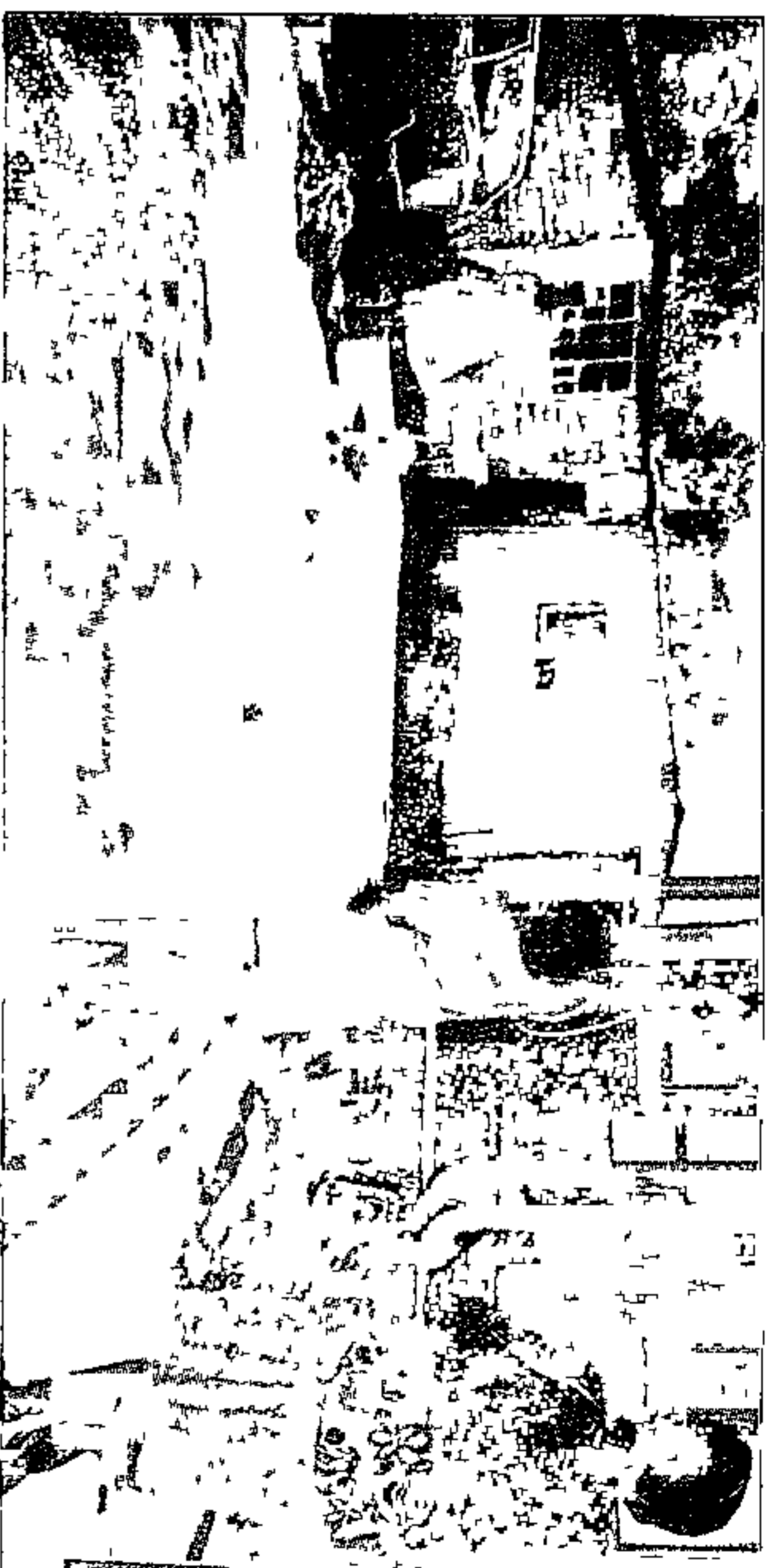


Highway life Westlake borders Steenberg Road

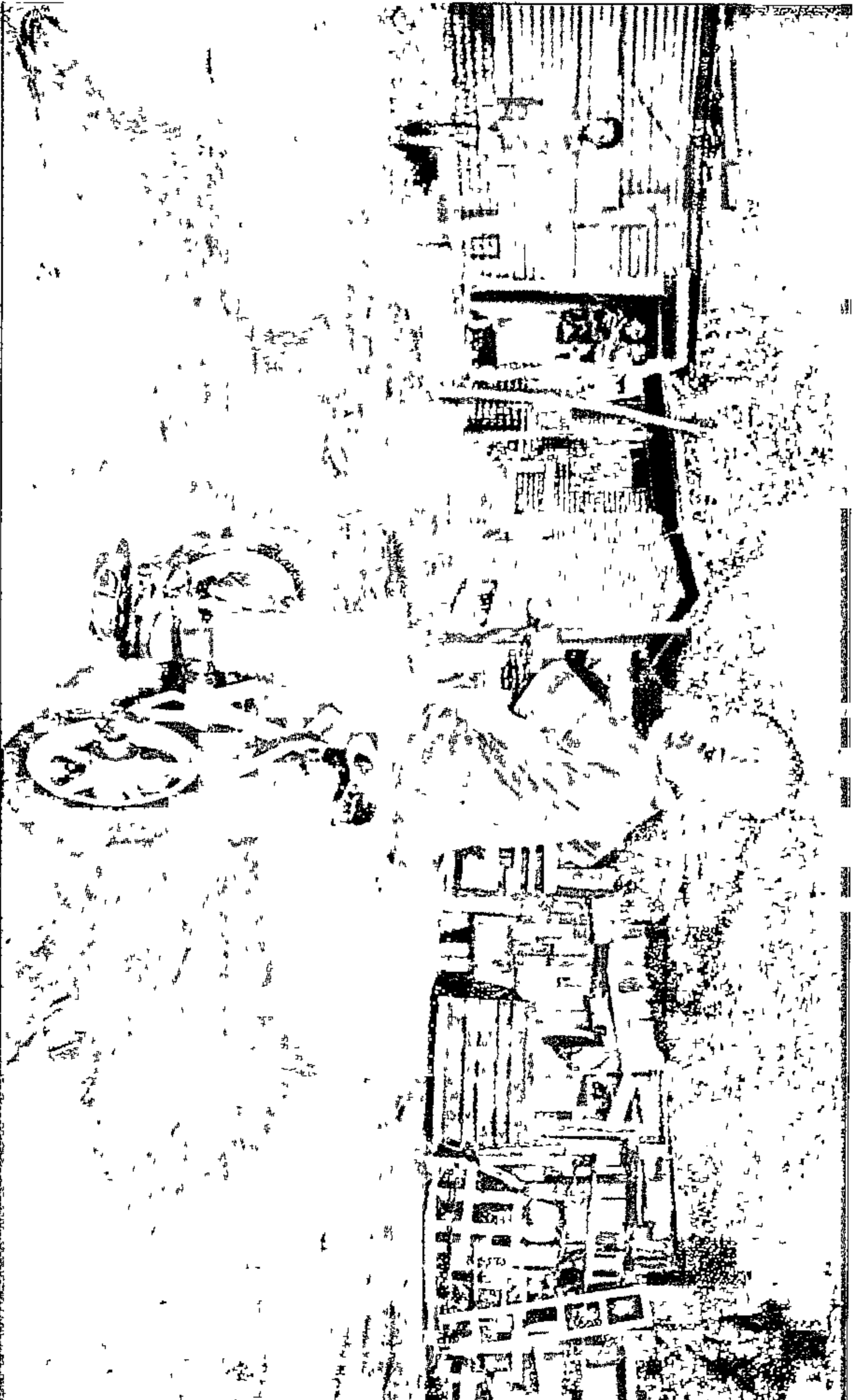
TECHNICAL CITY



TRACKING A CITY IN TRANSITION



Making a call Yoliswa Mohau, right, on the telephone at Westlake informal settlement



OSBED ZILWA

Playground: Ndiyabonga Ohatsi, 4, rides his bike in the Westlake informal settlement which is to be upgraded and developed

Dr
16

Rumpus over collection of arrear rates

PETER GOUSEN
METRO DESK

(124)
AAG 30/4/97

The South Peninsula Council is to investigate, as a matter of urgency, the Cape Metropolitan Council's methods of collecting arrear rates in Grassy Park after summary judgments against people paying off arrears.

The metropolitan body acts as the South Peninsula's agent in the collection of rates. Councillor Phillip Bam raised the rates issue as a matter of urgency at yesterday's council meeting and obtained unanimous support.

He said the southern council should insist the Cape Metropolitan Council's credit control procedures did not create undue hardship.

Ratepayers were getting summonses with a five-day deadline or summary judgment would be sought. "But some people are getting them in the post days after the deadline has passed," he said.

Asmal urges city water rates rise

'5c hike would mean victory in war on alien plants'

JOHN YELD

ENVIRONMENT REPORTER

An increase in Cape Town's water tariffs of just five cents a cubic metre would raise R50-million - enough to clear invasive alien vegetation from the whole of the Table Mountain National Park now being created.

This step should be considered seriously by Cape Town's water users, says Water Affairs and Forestry Minister Kader Asmal

Professor Asmal also announced that the clearing of water-hungry alien plants from the city's main catchment areas in the Boland mountains would in future be financed from water tariffs, and that a water board for the metropolitan area would be established as soon as possible

His remarks came in a speech read on his behalf by Claus Triebel, his department's deputy director-general, at a function on Table Mountain yesterday to mark the centenary of the opening of the Woodhead reservoir

The reservoir, one of the two oldest conservation and storage reservoirs still in use as a municipal water supply, is one of five on the Back Table area

Professor Asmal said the next major storage reservoir in the region would be the Skuifraam Dam on the Berg River near Franschoek, and that a final decision on its construction would be made once funding arrangements had been finalised

"But before new schemes like Skuifraam Dam can be built to increase our water supplies, it is more important to deal seriously with other obvious options of managing the water supply. These options are the better management of our catchments and the management of our demand for water"

He praised the old Cape Town City Council for its decision to provide R20-million to start clearing water-hungry invasive alien vegetation from mountain catchment areas supplying the metropolitan



Dam proud mayor Theresa Solomon at the Woodhead reservoir with Michael Stewart and Pam Wormser, relatives of the men who built it 100 years ago

Wemmershoek and Steenbras

"The financing of this work will in future be secured through water tariffs, as this is considered to be part of the operation and maintenance of these schemes

"It is of particular significance that an increase of a mere five cents per cubic metre of water on supply tariffs for the

generate enough funds to clear the whole Table Mountain National Park of invasive alien plants. This is certainly a challenge that Cape Town water users should seriously consider"

This should not be viewed merely as a tariff increase, Professor Asmal argued. "It should be seen as an investment

ture on major works, clean up the Cape as never before, allow the indigenous flora to take its rightful place, and provide sorely needed jobs"

Cape Town mayor Theresa Solomon said the city was "very close" to the point where it would have to consider advances in technology for water extraction from the

APG 1/5/97 (124)

'RESOURCE MUST BE MANAGED'

City could run out of water by 2020

TO DISCOURAGE WASTE and show that water has value, the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry intends gradually to increase its price. **CYNTHIA VONGAI** reports.

CAPE TOWN will run out of water if its citizens don't start conserving it now, Water Affairs and Forestry deputy director-general Mr Claus Triebel said yesterday

Triebel was addressing a mountain-top reception celebrating the building of Woodhead Dam on Table Mountain 100 years ago to alleviate a water shortage in the city

He said that if present consumption continued the city could run out of water by the year 2020

Capetonians needed to realise that the city's 3,5 million water users could not continue to waste its water

"We will not have enough water to take us into the next century unless we begin to manage this very valuable resource," he said

"We are looking into alternative water sources such as the desalination of sea water or recycling of sewage effluent, but both would be extremely expensive"

The only practical alternative would be to implement water conservation programmes immediately, but this would need the full co-operation of ratepayers

The city used daily a minimum of about 800 million litres and a maximum of 1,35 billion litres, and the demand was rising because of the influx of people from other areas, he said

"Water is probably the cheapest commodity on the market, costing less than 0,5 cents a litre, and because of this people tend to waste"

To discourage waste the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry intended gradually increasing the price of water

"People must realise that water has a value, although it is not always reflected in the price," Triebel said "Attitudes have to change, and they will, once people realise water is a valuable resource"

The price increase would also help to pay for the Table Mountain

National Park to eradicate alien plants

The department had set aside R20 million to eradicate exotic plants such as gum and pine trees

"The intrusion of invasive plants has a negative impact on the much-needed run-off from catchments to fill the dam. The city is making available R20m for the water programmes. In the past this cost was borne by the exchequer and with the change of policy the people that benefit from this resource, the ratepayers, must pay for its conservation."

Triebel said that despite the Cape having a high rainfall, most of the rain that fell in urban areas could not be trapped and stored.

The Mayor of Cape Town, Ms Theresa Solomon, said the engineers who had built Woodhead Dam had been "men of extreme courage and ingenuity"

Ten of the engineers' grandchildren attended the reception in honour of their grandfathers yesterday

Ms Gwen Watermeyer, a descendant of one of the engineers, said she was proud to be part of the history of the dam

CT 1/5/97

(124)

(124)

Water users can save R780-m, says expert

ARC 3/5/97
TWEET GAINSBOROUGH-WARING
STAFF REPORTER

Water-users in Cape Town can save an estimated R780 million through similar conservation measures to those that have been implemented with great success in the Hermanus area, a top water scientist has said.

Guy Preston, head of Water Affairs Minister Kader Asmal's national water conservation campaign, says that Cape Town users can cut their consumption by 30 percent without suffering any big disturbances to their everyday living standards.

"This represents a saving of about R780-million, and this money could then be diverted to areas where it can be used to address other pressing needs, such as the supply of water to communities that have no running water.

"Money can also be used to clear alien vegetation in catchment areas. The clearing of vegetation has a two-fold benefit of job creation and increasing water in catchment areas.

Dr Preston, an environmental scientist and special adviser to Professor Asmal, says it is possible for Cape Town to implement significant water-saving measures immediately.

These would include retrofit attachments within the home such as dual-flush toilet mechanisms, water-wise gardening methods and a tariff

structure favouring those with a low water consumption.

He said all new developments and houses would have to incorporate water-saving devices, should proposed legislation be accepted.

The municipality of Hermanus has been used as a pilot project for the implementation of a water conservation campaign. The project proved highly successful, reducing water consumption by 32 percent.

Only about half of the proposals have been implemented, and once the programme is in full swing consumption is expected to drop further.

Measures followed in the campaign include a new tariff structure favouring those with low water consumption, but with built-in checks to ensure fair billing to accommodate those in commerce, for example hotels, which have a high water usage.

"The aim of the water conservation campaign has at all times been, to be fair to all users while encouraging a lower water consumption.

"Some businessmen in the 'wet industry' sector have been unhappy about the new tariffs, but these businesses were usually unaware they could approach the municipality to come to a special arrangement enabling them to continue operations without job losses," Dr Preston said.

"Either we pay now or we pay later. The looming water crisis in the Western Cape is not going to go away."

Water on tap, electricity for 600 Crossroads families

ANDREA WEISS AND JERMAINE CRAIG
CITY DESK

More than 600 families are to benefit from the first development to have taken place in the once war-torn Crossroads, ravaged by conflict in the mid-1980s.

The development of 604 sites in Phase 4 is part of the integrated Serviced Land Project (ISLP), the largest housing project in the country and currently Cape Town's only major housing initiative.

The Crossroads sites are due to be ready by September this year, and beneficiary families are to be given an education and information programme before they take occupation.

The local elections last year have been cited as a reason for "peace breaking out" in Crossroads as former warlord Jeffrey Nongwe was roundly beaten by African National Congress councillors at the polls.

But the integrated Serviced Land Project has come under fire from councillors in the Cape Town municipality who voted

to have the project suspended recently on the grounds that the houses being delivered were not up to scratch.

The Cape Town municipality is not, however, in charge of the project.

It is a presidential lead project with a budget allocation of R1,2-billion and it will provide 34 000 serviced sites to families, the bulk of whom earn less than R800 a month.

One of the problems which has beset the ISLP is that there is little money left over from the state subsidy to build a "top structure" – or actual house – with the bulk of the subsidy being spent on servicing the land.

Municipal engineers maintain that high service standards are necessary to save on long-term maintenance costs.

Another problem is that low income-earners cannot raise loans to supplement the subsidy. Thus the houses that are built are extremely small and in the "matchbox" mould.

Also, a strategy to upgrade informal settlements once their occupants have moved to new sites is being hampered by

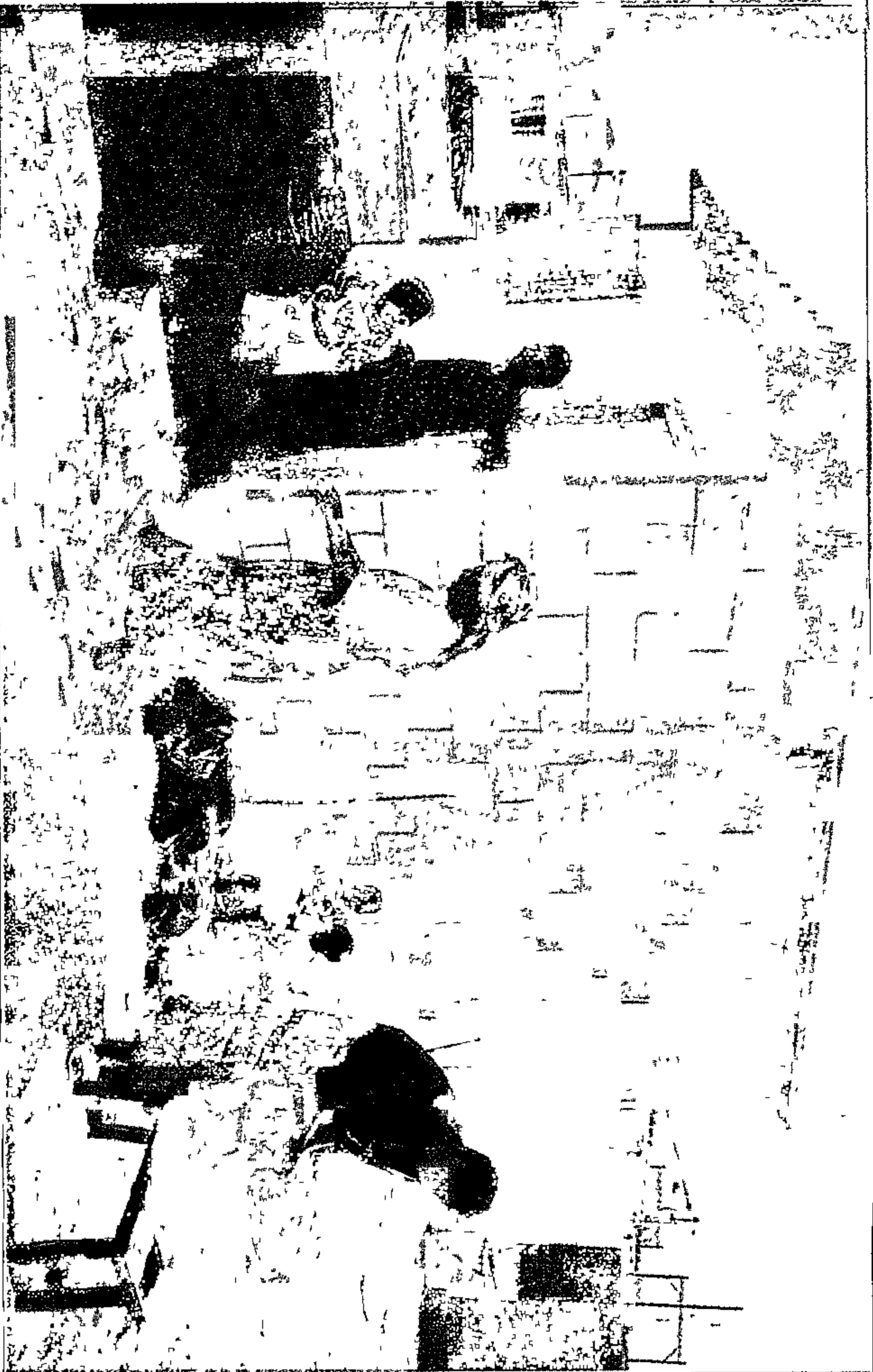
the fact that other people move in as soon as the former occupants move on.

Some informal settlements are also located on land which cannot be upgraded because of its poor quality, such as the 1 000 families who live in the settlements known as Barcelona and Europe on the old municipal rubbish dump alongside the N2 near the airport.

While politicians have been arguing over the ISLP, many residents have already moved into their new homes or on to the sites allocated to them for self-build schemes, indicating that those desperate for housing are willing to take what they can get.

Mbuyi Nombembe, a facilitator with the ISLP, feels that the way in which the houses are viewed depends on where people are coming from.

For those who have been living in unserviced squatter settlements such as Barcelona, Europe or the ironically named Waterfont, it is definitely a step up to live in a house which has water on tap, a flush toilet and electricity.



New development washday in Weltevreden Valley – one of the ISLP's major developments – but councillors are disappointed over the quality of housing

HANNES THIART

'Housing, housing, housing' - our No 1 problem

R50-m owed in rentals, long waiting lists and limited state subsidies

ARC 6/5/97 (134)

ANDREA WEISS
CITY EDITOR

An acute shortage of low-income housing has been identified as Cape Town's most pressing problem.

Major difficulties facing the city include R50-million owed in rental and rates on council-owned property, racially segregated waiting lists, massive overcrowding in hostels - which are housing thousands of families - and the limited amount of money available through the state housing subsidy scheme.

City manager Andrew Boraine told the Cape Town Press Club recently that "housing, housing, housing" was the most serious problem with which Cape Town had to deal.

The Cape Town municipality is in the process of formulating a strategic development framework to address the housing crisis. Also in the pipeline is a new housing department which will begin to look at both the existing rental stock belonging to the council as well as new housing projects.

TECHANGING CITY



PACKING A GEM IN TRANSITION

Fourteen key issues affecting housing delivery have been identified in a document which is to be tabled at a series of workshops.

According to Ahmed Vawda, Cape Town municipality's new executive director of community development, the workshops will be an important step towards formulating a housing framework - something which both Durban and Johannesburg have already tackled.

In his view, the priorities are to identify

the roles of responsibility of the various roleplayers - the province, the metropolitan council and municipalities - and to get agreement on common systems.

These agreements should cover issues such as the allocation criteria for new housing and the methodologies used in new housing projects.

Other matters that have to be dealt with are transitional arrangements arising out of the inherited situation, and ensuring delivery of existing projects is not held up.

Among the 14 key issues to be laid on the table at the workshops are:

- The Cape Town municipality waiting lists, previously limited to coloured families, have about 44 000 names on them. There are two lists - the first, dating from 1968 to 1987, has 16 596 names on it, and the second, from 1988 to the present day, has 29 097 names. As there is an average 12-year wait for a vacancy in rental schemes, the second list is not in use. There are also waiting lists for Ikapa and Crossroads, but the status of the lists and numbers is not known.

■ There is an urgent need for public

land to be made available for housing in the low-income market but a comprehensive data base of all vacant city land is still being prepared. There is no agreed policy for the release of land and there are competing uses, such as between housing, recreational and commercial uses. The cost of serviced land also takes up almost 70 percent of the available housing subsidy.

■ Housing finance and affordability. One of the problems to have emerged out of the housing subsidy scheme is the inability of low-income earners to raise small loans to top up the available subsidy. This means there is little money left for the dwelling itself - most goes on the provision of services - because an estimated 75 percent of people in Cape Town earn less than R2 500 a month.

■ Subletting is widespread in council rental estates but the tenure of the tenants is insecure and they are open to exploitation. Overcrowding is also widespread. While there is a demand for rental accommodation, a national policy is not ready yet. There is also illegal renting of state

land in squatter areas although this is being ironed out through the Integrated Serviced Land Project, which is providing 34 000 serviced sites on a freehold title to beneficiaries.

■ Housing delivery in the Cape Town municipality is mainly confined to the integrated Serviced Land Project (SLP) which is constrained by the limited amount of money left over for the actual houses.

■ There are an estimated 25 000 backyard shacks in the Cape Town municipality, and possibly 55 000 to 100 000 in the metropolitan area. These shacks do not meet building regulations and have not been approved by the local authority. They also lead to services and facilities overload. Planning needs to recognise that given the housing shortage, subletting and backyard shacks are inevitable.

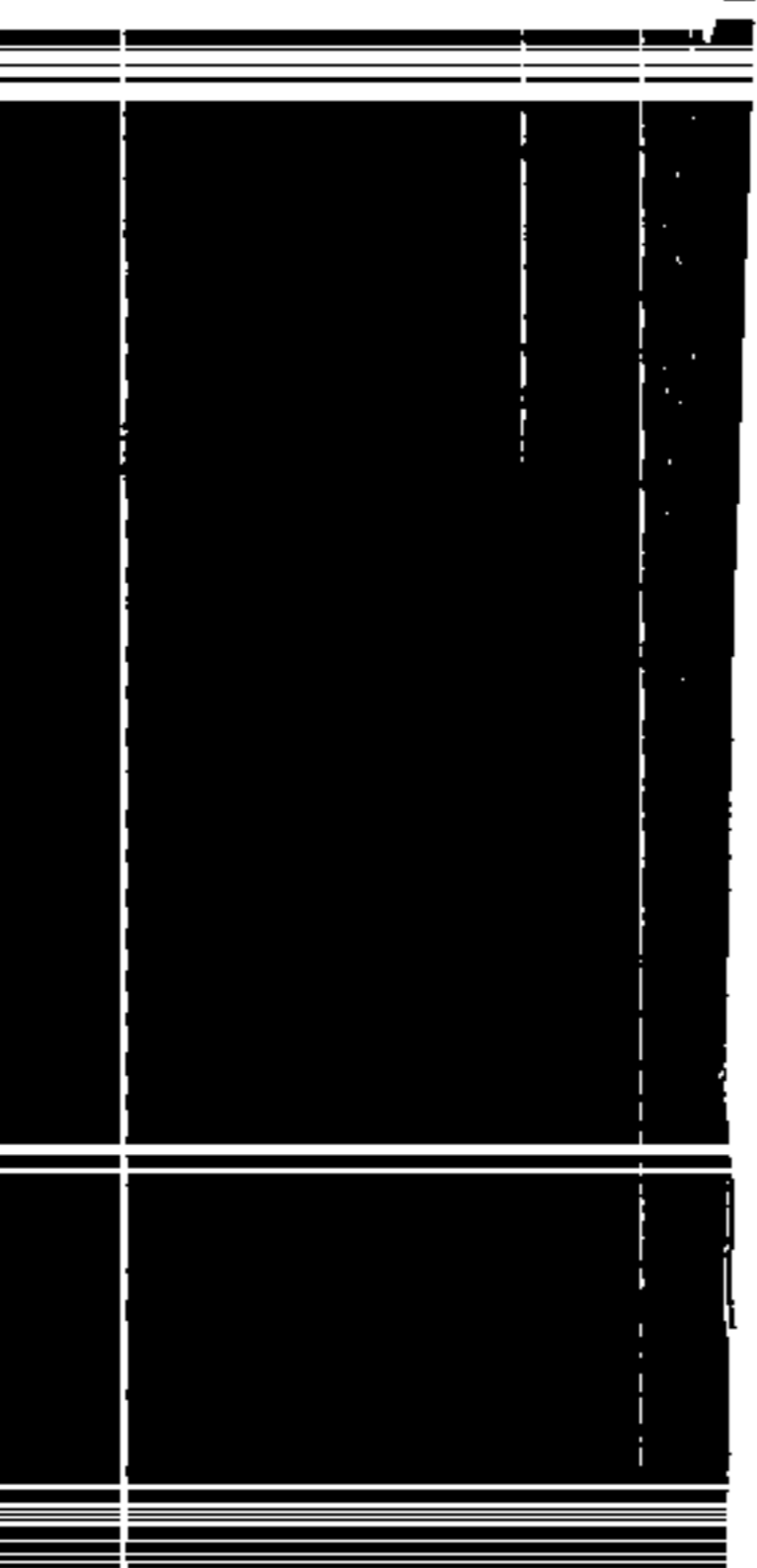
■ In the Ikapa area, hostels provide on average one bed per family with consequent massive overcrowding, overloading of infrastructure, a breakdown in administration and no rental payments coming in. Upgrading will displace some families who

will have to be accommodated elsewhere. An estimated 96 000 people share 22 000 bed spaces in public hostels, while a further 15 000 are accommodated in 3 360 beds in 54 private hostels.

■ While higher density affordable housing has been identified as desirable in planning terms, high construction costs do not make it affordable for the poor. The existing housing subsidy scheme means that higher density housing is affordable only for those earning above R3 500 a month.

■ The council administrators and managers about 63 724 rental units which are plagued with arrears. Some people living in these houses are enjoying highly-subsidised rentals because they may be earning well above the income levels which would normally qualify them, but there are no up-to-date income assessments.

■ Homeless people living on the streets of the city need to be catered for, whether through shelters, skills training or rehabilitation programmes. Street people impact on business confidence in the city and often find themselves in conflict with permanent residents or businesses.



25 000 houses built or on the way in W Cape

Minister details new building plans

WILLIAM-MERVIN GUMEDE
POLITICAL STAFF

Since South Africa's first democratic elections three years ago, 24 720 houses have been built or are under construction in the Western Cape, the National Housing Minister, Sankie Mthembu-Mahanyele, has announced.

Introducing the debate on her housing budget in the National Assembly, she said that of the one million houses the African National Congress promised to build when it came to power, 192 815 had been built or were under construction nationally.

However, 525 000 low-cost housing subsidies – better known as RDP houses – were approved by the provincial housing boards between March 1994 and mid-April this year. This meant construction would start soon.

She announced tougher measures to curb "cowboy" builders and protect consumers, increase



New plans: Sankie Mthembu-Mahanyele

the delivery of rural housing and to give increased housing powers to local authorities.

She said the National Home Builders Registration Council (NHBRC), the building industry's self-regulatory body, would be given legal status.

Already, 14 builders had been de-registered by the NHBRC due to non-compliance with its

regulations, she said.

"It is my intention to ensure that every builder accessing credit or building houses using government subsidy will have to be registered with the NHBRC."

For the first time home owners would be able to telephone a toll-free housing advice service (0800-111-663).

Another bill would be introduced in Parliament to give local authorities powers to administer national housing programmes and give local municipalities powers to plan, budget, manage and maintain housing.

The Bill proposed that municipalities would be obliged to deal with each of these issues while giving attention to the basic needs of the communities.

Guidelines for accreditation of municipalities had been agreed on with the provincial housing MECs and would take effect immediately. Initially only the big metropolitan municipalities were expected to apply.

ARG 7/5/97

(124)

Sinking into a quagmire of debt

(124) ST (CM) 11/5/97

Tenants and buyers of council houses owe city more than R50m

TOM HOOD

TENANTS and buyers of council houses in Cape Town are getting deeper and deeper into debt, with fewer than half paying their monthly bills.

The council billed 18 477 home owners in April for a total of R2-million, an average instalment of R104. But the council expected only 46 percent to pay, bringing in less than R1-million.

"This is happening every month and the percentage of home owners not paying is increasing monthly," according to a report by the housing committee.

In a bid to recover arrears, the committee plans to employ a debt-collecting company, which wants a three percent service fee on cash collected plus 15 percent of the cash flow brought in above an agreed monthly average.

The report revealed that council home buyers owed over R27-million to the city at April 17 while council tenants were more than R23-million in arrears — both record amounts.

Over 54 percent of home owners owed more than two months' instalments, while the total they owed was 24 percent more than a year's billings.

Almost 65 percent of tenants were at least two months late with their rent and arrears had climbed to 16 percent — more than a year's income from rents.

A new survey showed large amounts were owed by families with low incomes.

Of 7 607 families that filled in questionnaires, 1 853 claimed to have no income. Of these 1 338 were in arrears and owed an average of R1 558. Another 2 736 families put their income at under R800 and 1 696 of these were in arrears, owing an average of R793.

Just over 1 000 earned between R801 and R1 500, and 741 owed an average of R1 686. The highest amounts owed, averaging R1 711, were by people earning from R1 501 to R2 500.

More than half of the 421 families earning R2 501 to R3 500 were in arrears, owing an average of R1 252.

Sinking into a quagmire of debt

(124) STCom 11/5/99
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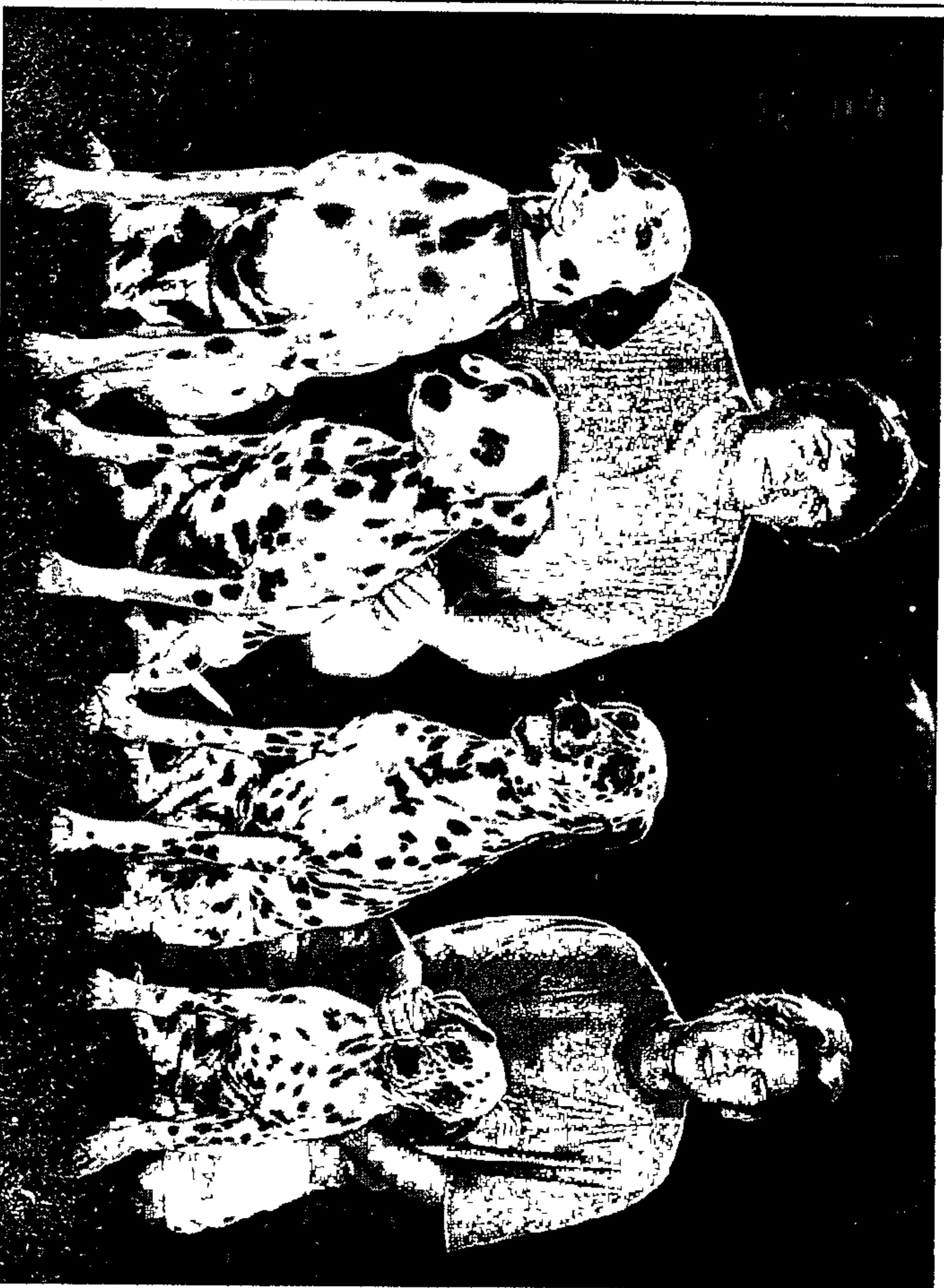
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SPOT ON: June de Wet, the Peninsula's one-woman Dalmatian rescue unit and her son and only help, Robert, 13, at their Newlands home with their four Dalmatians. They rescue dogs that prove too much for their owners. Picture: AMBROSE PETERS

Model self-help houses are all going to crack

Rubble used as landfill to blame

ANDREA WEISS
City Editor

Houses in one of Cape Town's most publicised self-help housing schemes, often shown proudly to visiting VIPs, will inevitably crack because they are built on rubble which is unsuitable for the purpose.

This is according to a report to the municipality's engineering services committee on the high-profile Victoria Mxenge scheme

The self-help project in Philippi is often on the itinerary of official tours as an example of community involvement in housing delivery and was visited recently by Hillary Clinton, wife of US President Bill Clinton

The committee has decided to write to provincial and national housing ministers to express their concern about the situation, which could lead to serious structural faults in future

The houses are being built by members of the Victoria Mxenge Housing and Development Association, which falls under the

umbrella of the South African Homeless People's Federation, formed in 1992 to enable people to pool resources to house themselves

The project is on three hectares of church land which is very low-lying and flood-prone in winter

Because of this, the association arranged to fill the land by allowing a demolition contractor to dump rubble on the site

But the report says this was a cardinal error, which would cost too much to fix if the project was to continue

"This unfortunate action has now compromised the development of the township as settlement can be expected to occur over an extended period

"Had the reclamation been properly controlled, and with very little additional costs, the land could have been properly filled to allow the future construction of services and houses without any concern regarding their structural integrity," the report says

According to the report, consulting engineers advised in 1995 that the fill material was unsuitable for conventional con-

(124)

ARF 15/5/97

struction of roads, services and houses and that the complete removal and replacement of the fill would be required

Because this would have been a very expensive route to take, the association asked for design drawings and tender documents to be drawn up with the view to limiting the problem

To avoid the cracking of the houses, special reinforced concrete raft foundations were designed, but this design also proved to be too costly and the association had decided to "accept the inevitable cracking of houses", the report said

Now civil engineering drawings with a rezoning application have been submitted to the Cape Town municipality for approval, but the council is being advised by its own officials not to adopt responsibility for maintaining services and roadways which have been built on the uncompacted fill.

"The unconditional acceptance of the township will create a precedent for other developers who could, in an endeavour to reduce infrastructural costs, follow similar procedures," the report says

RESISTANCE TO NEW PLAN

CMC sees red over distributing electricity

CT 19/5/97 (124)

THE CAPE Metropolitan Council has gone against the spirit of centralising South Africa's electricity distribution. Metro Writer **PETER DENNEHY** reports.

THE Cape Metropolitan Council (CMC) has decided not to take on the task of distributing electricity

In this respect, Cape Town differs from both Gauteng and Durban

The Metropolitan Restructuring Forum, the CMC body which took all decisions on the functions of the CMC, decided that until the electricity distribution industry in South Africa was restructured, the six new Cape Town municipalities would distribute their own electricity

Mr Kevin Morgan, general manager of legal services for the National Electricity Regulator (NER), was disappointed

"We believe that the various municipalities are acting within their legal rights in wishing to supply electricity directly

"However, we continue with our efforts to persuade the players that one metropolitan supplier is preferable," he wrote

The CMC approach goes

against the spirit of restructuring, which will be a process of reducing the number of licenced distributors from the present 400 to five Regional Electricity Distributors (REDs)

REDs can be run along business lines, with Eskom and the municipalities sharing seats on the boards

Meanwhile, the estimated one-third of the 800 local authorities which are not financially viable will be given the power to tax the electricity used in their areas

In the Western Cape, there has been resistance to the RED plan

Mr Pierre Uys, exco chairman of the CMC, says the decision that local authorities should retain their electricity undertakings for the moment is a sensible arrangement

It prevents staff from being shifted twice — once to the metro, and once more to the RED

Morgan said the first round of licences to supply electricity had been issued at a time when the

Cape Town metropolitan authority was not yet in place

This resulted in the old municipalities, like Bellville, being licenced

Observers are watching the issue of filling posts in the electricity service

Some positions were advertised in the Helderberg and Tygerberg municipalities in November last year, but were hurriedly withdrawn when it was pointed out to the NER that they were placed prematurely

Yet the actual staff members who provide the electricity service will be the same

The crucial issue is whether they report to the modern day equivalent of a town clerk, or directly to the management of a RED

This will provide an indication of whether the service will be run on business lines or not

Mr Frank van der Velde, who is on the NER board, dismissed rumours that there are elements resisting change

"If they say they have decided to stay with the way it is at the moment, that will soon be changed," he said

First protest against new rates system

CT 19/5/97 (124)

METRO WRITER

THE first objection to the proposed new rates system — a system based on land-only valuations rather than land-and-buildings valuations — has been received by the Western Cape's chief directorate of local government.

Ratepayer Mr Des White of Mouille Point has submitted that the introduction of the new system exceeds the power of the Western Cape legislature to propose an amendment to national legislation.

In a second point, White quotes a new section of legislation, which states "a common rating system, as determined by the metropolitan council", must be in place as a prerequisite for the levying of a property rate.

He says the Northern Substructure and the Helderberg Council, which are both part of the metropole, "have decided not to rate properties on a land-only basis".

His third point is that the City of Cape Town has placed a misleading advertisement about the new rates system.

White claims the advertisement is misleading where it says "property rating in Johannesburg and Pretoria, has been based on this type of land-only valuation for many years".

DIY housing project on shaky ground at council

Uncertain future for Philippi project

ARG 24/5/97

(124)

ANDREA WEISS
CITY EDITOR

The city must get its act together and find suitable land for the homeless to build houses on.

This is the message from members of the Victoria Mxenge self-help housing project in Philippi, which has hit a serious snag with the Cape Town municipality over on-site services. The high-profile project has been held up as a model of self-help housing and was recently visited by American First Lady Hillary Clinton, who praised the women for setting an example.

But while self-help housing is touted as a solution to South Africa's problems, those involved say their successes are "despite", not because of, the Government.

The municipality's engineering services committee is reluctant to approve services in the Victoria Mxenge development because it has been built on poor quality landfill, which could lead to the houses cracking and roads subsiding. This could damage underground services, which the municipality would have to fix.

But the women involved say they are willing to accept the shortcomings because otherwise it would have been financially unviable. They also argue that unless the municipi-



Digging: workers at the Victoria Mxenge self-help housing scheme in Philippi

ality finds suitable land and cheaper ways of servicing land, other self-help projects are doomed.

About 20 houses have already been completed by the women, who have been doing the building work themselves.

The Victoria Mxenge project is being developed by members of the South African Homeless People's Federation, which has about 50 similar projects in the Western Cape and a

total of 215 housing savings schemes in the region.

There are 9 000 housing savings schemes countrywide, making the SA Homeless People's Federation the biggest self-help group in the country.

Patricia Matolengwe, a treasurer for the Victoria Mxenge project, took the council to task for having "new people" at every meeting. She said members felt they were having to "start afresh" and explain

issues from the beginning at each meeting.

Ted Baumann of the People's Dialogue, which is giving technical and financial support to the SA Homeless People's Federation, said Victoria Mxenge had gotten off the ground "despite the Government, not because of Government assistance".

He said that had the council found land for homeless people, the women would not have

been forced to build on marginal land.

The land for the project was donated by a church in Philippi. Because it was "swampy", the women approached a private contractor to fill it in but they claim he reneged on the agreement by bringing in unsuitable material, including huge chunks of concrete and tree trunks.

Mr Baumann said the solution put forward by engineering consultants was for steel-reinforced foundations to be put in, but these were too expensive and would have effectively ended the project. Instead, the Victoria Mxenge women decided to use a ring slab, described as a "poor person's solution". They learned it from women in Mumbai, who are members of the National Slum Dwellers Federation in India.

The women now face an impasse. The engineering services committee does not want to approve services for the development, although officials have not yet made a final recommendation.

Mr Baumann said that "ultimately what it points to is that there has been no movement towards identifying suitable land in this city. People are waiting for indications of where they can expect to do self-help building development."

Pictures
Alan Davo



UN gives recognition to housing scheme activist

WHEN Ms Patricia Matolengwe decided it was time that "the poorest of the poor" did something to dig themselves out of the poverty pit, she was talking about shovels and cents

Now her achievements as an architect and leader in a series of housing and savings schemes that have mushroomed into the national South African Homeless People's Federation — which she co-chairs — are being recognised by the United Nations Development Programme

The UNDP has chosen Matolengwe as one of four grassroots activists worldwide who have taken significant strides to eradicate poverty in their communities. The award will be presented next month in New York City

Matolengwe — an intense, dynamic woman — has yet to move out of her own Khayelitsha shack.

In her youth she dreamed of



BUILDER: Patricia Matolengwe helps the homeless.

training as a nurse, but failed Std 10 when she fell pregnant. She survived by selling meat and devoted the rest of her time to the local ANC Women's League, which she represented at an international conference on poverty in Johannesburg in 1991. It was

here that she, as one of a small group of activists, gave birth to their branchchild

"There were people from all over the world at this conference. They told us how they set up their own housing and savings schemes. We decided that we should do that here.

"The problem is that people don't want to organise themselves. They depend on the government. Yes, the government is there, but we have to stand up and do something for ourselves. We should not think that the government is 'someone else' — we should think, 'We are the government'," she said

WORKING MUM: When Kutula Meje helps build homes in Victoria Mxenge for herself and other shack-dwellers, her two-year-old son Awile is never far behind.



Cont.



WOMEN AT WORK: Lucretia Hermanus and Hilda Masiza shovel their way to a new home in Victoria Mxenge, Phillippi, where almost 300 women from squatter camps are working together to build their own houses

cont.

ONLY FOUR DAYS TO A NEW HOUSE

Sisters are building homes for themselves

(124)
CT 15/9/97

A GROUP of 286 women from Khayelitsha and Philippi have built 41 homes in less than two years. Today they can finish a house in four days, reports **ELISSA GOOTMAN**.

WOMEN are building in Philippi. Dressed in faded aprons and even saddled with blanketed babies, they are mixing, stacking and wheelbarrowing their way to a new home.

Nearly all of the Victoria Mxenge housing project's 286 members are women from Khayelitsha and Philippi squatter camps. They have built 41 homes in less than two years, and 57 more are under construction.

They applied to the R10 million Utshani Fund for loans and they will be the home owners.

Ms Patricia Matolengwe, a member of the Victoria Mxenge project and co-chair of the South African Homeless People's Federation, said "At first we were undermined by the men in our community. They said, 'I can't be accommodated in a house built by a woman.' They asked, 'How can you leave the children (to build)?"

"Now they keep quiet," Matolengwe said, grinning.

When Ms Beauty Gqirana lived

in a shack, she always knew when it was raining outside because the water would seep inside. She savours the memory of that first rainy morning in her Victoria Mxenge house, when she woke up so dry and warm that she left home without her raincoat.

"I got dressed, went outside, and then I had to go back in and change my clothes. I didn't even know it was raining."

"We were waiting for the government before, but then we thought, 'Let's try it ourselves. Let's put our minds and hearts in this.' When we were tired, we told ourselves, 'We must try. We must go on. No, people, don't get tired,'" Gqirana said.

The women heeded their own instructions. Matolengwe pointed to a concrete slab and said that in less than a week it would be the foundation of a house.

"At first, when we were just training, it took us two weeks to build each house. Now we're down to four days," she said.

The houses are built on three hectares of land donated by the Catholic Church. Each is 54 to 72 square metres, and costs R10 000 to R15 000 to build.

"We don't pay for labour because we are all helping each other. And we never went to university to get these skills. We learnt them from the other poorest of the poor," Matolengwe said.

Architect Mr Shawn Cuff, technical co-ordinator of the housing project, said: "From a structural point of view, these buildings are dead solid. And these women did it all themselves. They made dream (home) models, and I helped them find subtle ways of adapting their designs to make them more cost- and space-efficient. But they decided when they needed consultants and which consultants they needed."

The building process seems to be as important as the products for women like Ms Agnes Ngqeme, a 65-year-old mother of five.

"Before this project, my life wasn't going right. Now I feel so proud. In the shack, I felt so weak. Now I can push a wheelbarrow. I can carry a block on my head. And I will have a house," Ngqeme said.

Municipalities should pay for extra costs, says Western Cape minister

(124)

ARG 24/5/97

ANDREA WEISS

CITY EDITOR

Municipalities have been urged to pick up more of the tab for low-cost housing so the bulk of the money available from the state housing subsidy can be spent on houses and not underground services.

This appeal comes from Provincial Housing Minister Cecil Herandien, who has suggested that municipalities insisting on high engineering service levels within low-cost housing developments should pay for the additional costs themselves.

This would leave more money for building the actual house.

The Provincial Housing Board has drawn up a report setting down standards and norms within the housing subsidy scheme, specifying maximum levels of service which can be paid for out of the subsidy

At a press conference yesterday, Mr Herandien said that in many instances "unrealistically high levels of services are demanded from developers by local authorities"

This was why it was proposed that certain maximum levels of service be funded out of the subsidy and the rest be paid for by the municipality enforcing a higher level of service

Other suggestions from the housing board are that engineers, town planners and developers should be encouraged to come up with more "innovative township layouts and engineering designs"

Mr Herandien also encouraged local authorities to fund the installation of rateable services such as water and electricity and to recover the costs of the installation through tariffs

He said local authorities were responsible for bulk and link ser-

vices for housing projects and the government could not be expected to fund this

State funding in the form of the Consolidated Municipal Infrastructure programme was available for this and could be applied for by local authorities

In turn, he urged people receiving houses to accept their responsibility by paying for services

Statistics supplied by the provincial administration in the Western Cape show that housing subsidies to the value of R892,6-million have been approved in the province, with about R215-million already paid out.

The figures show that 6 845 units have been completed and a further 3 131 are under construction

The province has received applications for subsidies from a total of 190 projects, of which 136 have been approved to date

Water shock for the well-heeled

TOM HOOD

CAPE Town residents with big gardens or pools are in for an expensive shock — they could pay up to three times as much for their water as smaller consumers after July.

However, owners of city flats will pay about 14 percent less for water.

These changes are part of a new three-tier domestic tariff, which will mean an average 12,5 percent increase for consumers in the municipal area. However, as a disincentive to large domestic users whose wa-

ter consumption exceeds 150 kilolitres a quarter, the new charge includes a penalty, which will increase the cost to 326c a kilolitre. This could apply to people with garden sprinklers and pools to keep full.

A standard tariff structure would be applied to the entire area, replacing different tariff rates for different communities, says a report by the city's engineering services committee.

Families in squatter camps, which share communal water facilities, will be levied a new charge of R5 a month towards consumption and maintenance. Families will also pay a flat

rate of R9.40 a month where water is supplied to an individual property without a meter.

The report says it received complaints from people in apartment blocks where water was measured through a single bulk meter. The present tariff classes the blocks at the same level as hotels, boarding houses, camping sites and commercial premises.

However, the only way flat owners could pay the same as other domestic consumers would be to get individual metering, a costly and difficult modification. As a concession, the tariff level would be cut to 155c a kilolitre for private

blocks and council-owned flats. For private blocks this means a 13,9 percent reduction after July 1.

The hotel rate will jump to 203c a litre, from 180c, which will also apply to schools, hospitals, churches, halls and government departments.

Most domestic consumers face a 10,76 percent hike in water bills, paying a "concessionary price" of 94c a kilolitre for the first 30 kilolitres consumed quarterly. For the next 120 kilolitres a quarter, the charge jumps to 196c and 326c when water consumption exceeds 150 kilolitres a quarter.

Industrial and commercial
ST (CM) 25/15/97

premises will be charged a rate of 203c, up from 180c. The committee's report said a big effort must be made to install meters in the coming year. Thousands of consumers, largely in the former iKapa and Crossroads administration areas, were supplied water but had no meters.

An under-recovery of about R20-million would be charged to the tariff stabilisation fund, which would be totally depleted this year, said the report.

The council expected an income of R194-million from water this year to yield a R14,4-million profit, which would go towards the rates (124)

Mzimela calls for probe into prison rampage

Woman





HANNES THART

Property owner: Chris April, left, waves to Gabiba Bux and her husband Essop after handing them the title deed to their home

First homes for Flats families as land project delivers goods

SHARKEY ISAACS
STAFF REPORTER

Nine families have moved into the first of 2 000 new serviced sites and starter homes in Southern Delft – and become landowners for the first time.

The houses are being provided by the Integrated Services Land Project

New developments in Southern Delft, Weltevreden Valley North and Philippi East will benefit 43 000 Cape Flats families. The project was devised for low-income families who qualify for the government housing subsidy.

Chief provincial housing director John Africa said the transfer of the nine homes was the result of three years of planning, design, negotiating, selling and construction – “the time it took to provide a new residence on a piece of barren land”



In Delft, R55-million has been spent during the past three years on schools, clinics, community facilities and other amenities.

Assuring the new owners they would have title to the land, he said: “Everyone in the world needs a place where they can make a home of their own”

Among the first recipients were Gabiba Bux and her husband, Essop, who were allocated plot 8818.

Mrs Bux said “We’ve been married for 17 years and have

never been able to afford a place of our own”

Mr Bux, a hawker, said. “We’re very thankful to finally have a home of our own and I’m confident we’ll be able to afford its upkeep and pay for the municipal services

“We are more than grateful”

The other eight recipients said they were equally grateful.

They are Mustafa and Mrs Brown, who have lived with their four children in Mitchell’s Plain, John Alwyn, a single parent with two children, Batini Pukwana, a single parent with two children; Tomaza Thafeni, a single parent with three children, Ellen Stober, a pensioner and single parent with four children, Tuna Elias Mtiya, a single parent with four children, Esther Beverley Beyers and her husband and children, and Zoleka Gladys Salman, a single parent with four children



RATES RUMPUS Fighting nearly erupted at this meeting of Grassy Park residents last night to protest at looming rate increases, when NP councilors walked out. — PICTURE: KAREN RETIEF

Grassy Park residents resolve to fight rates increases

ERIC NTABAZALUA

IN A STORMY meeting that almost saw residents and National Party councilors come to blows, Grassy Park residents last night resolved to fight impending "discriminatory" rates increases and called for a flat rates system to be introduced.

Residents also passed a resolution, to be sponsored by councilors Mr Phillip Bam and Mr Peter Gabriel, that a moratorium be placed on all rates increases until

rates equity with other areas was achieved.

The residents further resolved to support and accompany a delegation to the South Peninsula municipality on the rates issue.

They decided that a seminar should be held to educate the Grassy Park community on how a flat rates system would work.

Opening the meeting, Bam said the rates issue had been troubling the people of Grassy Park for a long time and it was not the first time it

was being discussed.

"We are here tonight to once again say no to a rate increase. We are here to say not again."

"We are here to say we are not going to be bullied once again into accepting rate increases just because some people have the majority vote in our council, and therefore they can vote for rates increases in Grassy Park. This is an issue that doesn't seem to go away because some people don't want it to go away."

"It doesn't matter what political party you come from tonight, we are all here as ratepayers of Grassy Park and that we all suffered inequalities and the same disadvantages and therefore we have to unite as a community," the councilor said.

However, Bam made it clear to the meeting that it was important to pay for services but the residents wanted to know why the people of Grassy Park have to pay more.

The meeting, attended by more

than 300 residents, including councilors from the NP and the African National Congress, shifted from a rates meeting into a political platform where members of the two parties yelled at each other.

NP councilors left the meeting claiming they were refused an opportunity to explain why the rates increases were necessary.

Pandemonium nearly broke loose when some residents came out of the meeting to ask the councilors why they had left.

(14) 27/5/97



HOME OF OUR OWN: Mustafa Brown (back) and his family — Fatima, 8, Feroza, 14, Farouk, 12, wife Gawa and Mutalief, 6 — was one of 10 home-owners in Delft to receive their title deeds yesterday. Although the house is small, Brown says he is thankful to have a roof over his family's head. **PICTURE GARTH STEAD**

it leaks when it rains and it is too small for my family."

Beyers' wife, Ester, added "We waited this three or four months and no one has come to fix the roof. They just ignore us."

"I am happy that I have a house of my own at last."

Mrs Beyers pointed out the dampness on her ceiling.

"Water pours in from a gap in the

window," she said.

"Sometimes the floor is flooded. The water comes in under the door because the floor in the house is lower than the ground outside."

Stober, however, was overjoyed — after living for many years in a old-age home — to have a property she could call her own.

She played down the problems she had had with the toilet, a small room in the corner.

It had not worked properly when she moved in last November and had since ceased to function.

"I just have a problem with the toilet, but I used to live in a home," Stober said. "Now I at least have my

own house and I can look after my two grandchildren — and one day I will have something to give to them."

President Nelson Mandela visited Delft last year and, appalled by the conditions, declared it a disaster area. He instructed a presidential task team to investigate the condition of the houses.

The task team reported that most of the houses were badly constructed and engineering services were poor. These factors had had a negative effect on the residents' quality of life.

Some residents claimed the provincial housing department had ignored the task team's report.

"I saw seven houses built in one day," Beyers said.

"I don't want to live in this house for ever."

"I will have to extend it in a couple of months because it is not big enough for my family — then I will sell it and buy a proper house."

Mr Mustafa Brown, who lives further down the road, has used planks to build a room for his children on to the corrugated-iron shell that is his home.

He has also added a covered entrance at the front door.

"At least my family have a roof over their heads," Brown said.

"I am happy about that."

HOUSES 'STILL SHODDY'

The Delft shells they call 'home'

CT 27/5/97

(124)

OWNERS of new homes in Delft say the presidential task team's report on shoddy construction has been ignored. **CYNTHIA VONGAI** reports.

A CORRUGATED-IRON shell with wooden doors and a tin roof — that is what pensioner Ms Ellen Stober has waited 10 years for to call home.

She was one of 10 people who received title deeds to their "new" houses from the National Housing Board at a ceremony in Southern Delft yesterday.

Delft has been beset by housing problems and it has been alleged that houses have been poorly built. A number of houses have collapsed and last winter high winds ripped the roofs off several others.

The chief director of the Department of Planning, Local Government and Housing, Mr John Africa, said in an interview that the government had bought and developed large parcels of land for people who would otherwise not be able to afford their own property.

"The government has provided housing subsidies to enable families with even the lowest income to buy their own property."

In his speech at the ceremony, Africa said, "I have come a long way with the project and it is good for me

to see that houses are still being built in this emerging town and I believe the 1 000th house will be occupied within the next few days.

"As you know, Southern Delft forms part of the Integrated Serviced Land Project which in 1994 was declared by the president as a presidential pilot project to promote the upgrading of the Cape Metropole."

This project would provide housing for 43 000 families.

Africa said the ISLP project would cost R1,2 billion and would include schools, clinics and community facilities. An additional R592 million had been made available from Reconstruction and Development Programme funds.

In the past three years, R55m had been spent in providing 2 000 plots in Southern Delft.

"A further 4 000 plots are being serviced and the erection of houses will start by September," Africa said.

"A community health centre as well as four schools are being built. It is expected that more than R70m will be spent on the town in the next year."

After the new home-owners had received their title deeds, the Cape Times accompanied several of them to their homes.

"I will not live here for more than five years," said Mr Patrick Beyers, married with four children.

"My house was not built properly

'Homes for homeless' plan sparks rent threat

Residents angry

JERMAINE CRAIG
CITY REPORTER

ARG 28/5/97

(124)

Kewtown residents have threatened a rent boycott if the Cape Town municipality goes ahead with a controversial project to build 136 houses in the area, only half of which will be for existing residents.

They demand that all the houses go to local families but the council wants half for homeless families. It was originally intended that all would be for homeless people.

A compromise decision to allocate half the houses to locals and half to homeless people in the Athlone area came out of an acrimonious meeting of the council's housing committee recently. But at a subsequent meeting the decision was rejected by Kewtown residents.

The council's original recommendation was that the houses be built for the homeless people of Athlone

City council housing committee deputy chairman Daphne King said the council's decision was a "compromise" from which it would not budge

The matter will now be referred to the council's executive committee and to the full council, but Ms King predicted the decision would not be changed.

An income survey would have to be done among homeless people in Athlone to see who would be able to pay for services, she said.

Bruce Malagas, chairman of the Kewtown Residents' Association, said the council was "in for a big fight".

He said the project had been initiated by the residents' association and all the houses should be allocated to Kewtown residents.

"We are upset that other people are being pushed into our area to get rid of other people's problems. We are not prepared to negotiate with them, the 136 houses must belong to the people of Kewtown."

He said some people living in flats in Kewtown had been there for more than 40 years and were not yet homeowners.

These people could move into the new houses and others living in backyards in Kewtown could be moved into the flats.

Mr Malagas said the association had asked for an urgent meeting with the council's housing committee chairman Sydney Ncate to sort out the matter.

Sydney Flowers, chairman of the Athlone Ward C86 RDP Forum, said the council had not consulted the community before making its decision.

"My strong objection is not what they have offered but how they have done it. They have once again proved themselves to be the old regime council whereby they decide for the communities. If we have to, we will fight, demonstrate and do everything in our power to fight what is going on."

Johnny Peters, ward councillor in the area where the houses will be built, said he was "frustrated" by the council's decision. His recommendation to the housing committee that people living in his ward should get preference was shot down at the meeting

"I feel the mandate I received from my people was not taken into consideration. I feel our people are getting a raw deal. The community will have to give me a mandate about what to do next," he said.



OBED ZILWA

Investing in people: French consultant Sébastien Moriset, centre, watches labourers build a wall with compressed earth

ARG 28/5/97

Down-to-earth scheme builds jobs

STAFF REPORTER

A Mitchell's Plain building project funded by the French government and using labour-intensive methods has provided jobs for 30 people from disadvantaged Cape Town communities.

France agreed to fund the new R1,2-million Alliance Française headquarters in Portlands on condition the builders manufacture their own bricks using local soil and local labour, said Sébastien Moriset, consultant for CRATERre-EAG.

The use of the method in the Western Cape stems from a co-

operation agreement between French experts in the development of the technology, CRATERre-EAG (International Centre for Earth Construction School of Architecture of Grenoble), the French Foreign Affairs Department and the community projects office of Peninsula Technikon's construction-related departments.

The multi-purpose centre will be used for language and cultural training for Mitchell's Plain residents.

The technique of making compressed-earth bricks was developed about 30 years ago and is used throughout the world, and

extensively in Africa.

The labour-intensive technology suited communities with high unemployment, Mr Moriset said.

More than 60 000 bricks had been made by 12 labourers in Bellville last year and the remaining 10 000 by six people on site, said Herman Gribble from the CPO.

The bricks cost about 70c each to make, including labour, which accounts for 60 percent of the cost. This was cheaper than ordinary bricks, he said.

The centre is a demonstration project, but the CPO is initiating similar projects using earth technology in Riverland, Bellville and Saron.

(124)

THIS FRAUGHT JOURNEY

Boraine's 100-day trek maps legacy

CHANGING CITY



TRACKING A CITY IN TRANSITION

ANDREA WEISS
City Editor

A grim picture of a divided city fraught with problems has been sketched by Cape Town's city manager, Andrew Boraine, after his first 100 days in office.

He says its people are divided by location, economic access, race, language, party politics, culture and religion and he wants its history, with its "diverse and conflicting nature", to be documented afresh

to bridge communities and unify the city. He identifies "housing, housing, housing, housing and housing" as the people's top five priorities.

Mr Boraine said divisions had become obvious during visits to 41 of the 44 wards in the new Cape Town municipality by his team of executive directors.

The remaining three wards will also be visited by the team, who met a wide range of people during the 100 days and held nine public meetings. Mr Boraine said it was clear that

Capetonians were divided by their location, economic access, race, language, party politics, culture and religion - as had been illustrated by a racial row in the Cape Metropolitan Council this week.

He believed the history of all suburbs in the municipality should be written, because "it is important to understand where we have come from." This would be a way of drawing together previously segregated communities.

Among the other issues identified by his team were

Of apartheidtheid

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■ The need to adopt an urgent policy on land restitution - Mr Boraine said more than 250 000 residents could lay claim to restitution as they had been dispossessed

■ Housing delivery, which was a matter of major concern the city did not have a housing policy, budget or administrative capacity to deal with what citizens in some areas identified as their top concern

■ The need to define the relationship between the Cape Town municipality with the other five municipalities and the Cape Metropolitan Council

■ Several policy vacuums, which, made it difficult for officials to make decisions on a day-to-day basis about issues such as urbanisation and urban development, economic development, densification, strategic use of land and integrated development planning

■ Antagonistic relationships between ward councillors and community organisations in certain wards. This had a negative impact on the ability of officials to do their jobs, Mr Boraine said

CITY

Housing arrears shock figures

TOM HOOD

(124)

ST(CM) 1/6/97
MORE than half of Mitchells Plain's 16 000 families who bought council houses have fallen behind in their monthly payments, with only 7 000 having paid in full for their homes

Shock figures, which will be presented to Cape Town's housing committee on Wednesday reveal that by May 19 unpaid instalments amounted to R26-million, up R654 000 on April

Worst area for arrears was Tafelsig where 2 000 of 3 300 home owners were in arrears, followed by Lentegeur with 1 830 of 2 780 families

Of the city's 18 000 house buyers, only 28 percent had paid in full and 10 000 families owed at least three months instalments

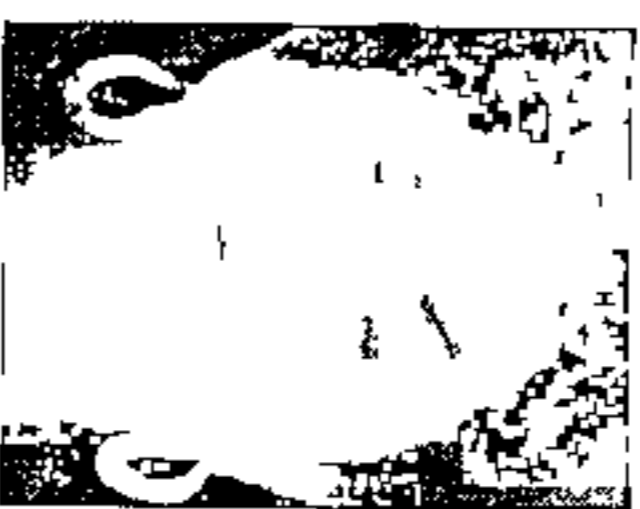
The committee will discuss mounting a publicity campaign to encourage payment of arrears "in the spirit of Masakhane" Incentive schemes were suggested to promote the campaign

● Ten thousand of the city's 16 000 council house tenants are in arrears with their rent and more than 65 percent owe more than three months' rent

Total rental arrears rose R600 000 to almost R24-million at May 8 Worst area was Manenberg where 3 500 of 4 900 families were in arrears.

CLEANING CITY IS A LOSING BATTLE

R160m a year hits the dirt



CLEANSING SERVICES will not win the war on filth while street people and traders remain problems. Environment writer **MELANIE GOSLING** reports

THE Cape Town municipality spends about R160 million a year in trying to keep the city clean — and it is not winning the battle.

The director of cleansing services, Mr Kendall Kaveney, says three factors prevent Cape Town's having a clean environment: the south-easter, vagrants and uncontrolled trading on the streets.

The council is developing "south-easter-proof" bins, he says. These are to be introduced gradually as the old bins are vandalised or need replacing.

However, Kaveney believes the city will not win the battle against filth unless politicians solve the problems of homeless people, street children and informal traders.

"The problem is bigger than the abansing department. We can't keep on throwing resources at it because it is growing faster than we can handle it."

"We have whole communities living on freeways, under bridges, on the streets. They do their washing on the streets, they throw their rubbish on the streets, they defecate and urinate on the streets — and the number of people living like this is increasing daily. We have to do washaways every day."

"We estimate that 80% of the worst litter spots in the City Bowl (are created by) informal traders and vagrants who raid dustbins, black bags and waste skips for cardboard and bottles that can be recycled. They remove these items, but they scatter the rest of the litter all over the place, so it has to be cleaned up twice."

"The cleansing department can't cope with the hundreds of street kids and vagrants. This is a social responsibility, not a cleansing responsibility, and the politicians must grapple with it."

On July 1, Cape Town municipality is to take on the responsibility of cleaning the former Ikapa townships of Guguletu, Nyanga, Brown's Farm and part of Crossroads.

The cleansing department says that, ultimately, all areas under its authority will have the same level of service.

"Whether you live in Rondebosch or in Nyanga, you will all have your streets cleaned and rubbish removed the same number of times," Kaveney says.

"My job is to move to one standard of cleansing throughout Cape Town's municipal area."

CT 3/6/97 (124)

Will those who pay their service charges and those who don't be given the same service?

"Payment of rates is not my issue. It's something that will have to be grappled with sooner or later by the politicians. We can clean the city only if we have the money to do so — and the only way to get the money is through rates."

"I will tell the politicians how much it will cost us and they will have to find the money."

However, Kaveney says, it's not all bad news. Changes in the structure of the local authorities could provide a window of opportunity.

"We are looking at all sorts of ideas to deal with the new situation in cleansing. What is fairly certain is that in the new era, communities will have to become more involved."

"They are going to decide on certain issues — for instance, if they want to pay extra to have a higher level of service."

For example, if the people of Claremont decide they want their rubbish to be removed or streets swept more frequently than the stipulated number of times, they will have to pay extra.

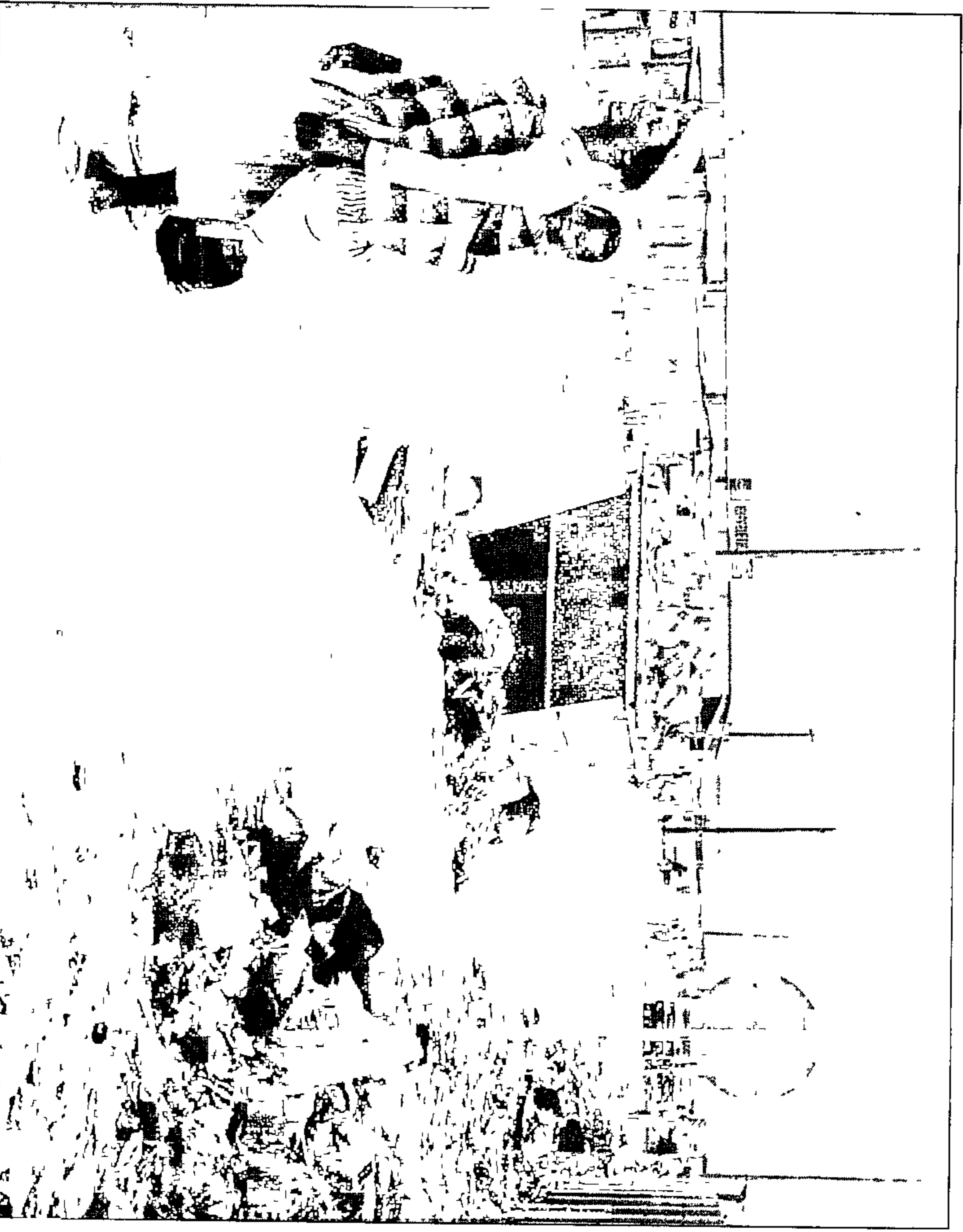
Kaveney says Sea Point and the CBD have entered into similar arrangements with his department and these are working well.

The Cape Town Carcs Campaign is a joint venture between the cleansing department, the Cape Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Property Owners' Association.

"They have employed 30 homeless people to sweep the streets using our equipment. They pay half their wages and we pay half."

"It's been going since November and is doing very well."

"This is the sort of co-operative venture we are going to need in the future if we are going to cope with keeping Cape Town clean."



DOWN ON THE DUMPS: Cleaning the piles of litter accumulating in the streets of several former Ikapa townships is to become the responsibility of the Cape Town municipality's cleansing services department next month. Although the department intends eventually to offer uniform services, it says the community will have to become involved if its efforts to keep the city clean are to succeed.

Pay up or face music, warns ANC Council gets strict with Khayelitsha defaulters

MOSES MACKAY
SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Khayelitsha residents must pay for services if they want the area to be improved. And defaulters will have to face the music.

This is the view of a leading African National Congress councillor in the area, Vuyani Ngcuka, who is the deputy chairman of the Tygerberg council.

Mr Ngcuka, former mayor of Khayelitsha, said the new Tygerberg council was "making efforts" to get the area normalised even though accounts were not yet being delivered to parts of the township. Problems included the inaccessibility of paypoints in the area.

Delays were due to the restructuring and amalgamation of the administration in Tygerberg.

"Now that is behind us, the capacity to deliver is there." But Mr Ngcuka warned the

council would have no option but to take strict measures against defaulters.

"Those responsible will be dealt with and the legal process will follow as it is applicable in the rest of the Tygerberg."

He said affordable rates would have to be set to take into account unemployment and low income levels in the area.

"People should pay according to the standard of service they receive."

Speaking on the huge backlog of decent housing in the Khayelitsha area, Mr Ngcuka said "It is the function of the provincial and national governments but as the local government, we facilitate that by making land available at affordable rates and provide the infrastructural development. We have made available 1 600 plots and presently we are completing 420 plots for housing development." He said the council faced diffi-



Warning: councillor Vuyani Ngcuka

culties because it was costly to service land in Khayelitsha, which has a high water table.

"These factors make the cost of plots very expensive. After you have developed your plot, for instance, you are left with R5 000 (out of the available subsidy of

R15 000 to R17 000) to develop the house."

Mr Ngcuka said the way to overcome this problem was to find affordable loans which were not generally available on the financial markets.

The council is involved in an investigation to come up with a scheme that is affordable to the majority in Khayelitsha who earn between R800 and R1 500 a month.

The council has negotiated with the Mortgage Indemnity Fund in conjunction with the National Housing Department to make certain sections of Khayelitsha eligible for loans.

This process has freed up 1 500 plots and 200 houses have been developed in Lirha Park, Khayelitsha, which was previously redlined because of bond boycotts.

The council has also drawn up a development proposal for the Green Point squatter camp. Mr Ngcuka said the council was

ARU 6/6/97 (1a4)

engaged in a housing strategy plan whereby "we are gearing ourselves for mass housing development".

Work to improve the conditions in which squatters live includes the servicing of land in the Green Point area and improved drainage of the Kuls River in the vicinity of Site B near the K and S sections.

Sonwabo Mtengwana, an RDP forum member and chairman of the ANC Trevor Vlakazi Branch in Site B, says there are no quick solutions to the problems of squatters in the area. Nevertheless, groups of people were taking the initiative and building their own homes. Mr Mtengwana said the onus was still on the Government to intervene and build houses.

He called on all community organisations to work together in the area. "Different organisations have a role to play in our area and we should assess the conditions and interact with the council and RDP forums," he said.

Councils gear for battle over big rates rise

CMC faces court action

PETER GOOSEN AND ANDREA WEISS
CITY DESK

Legal action has been threatened over the way in which the Cape Metropolitan Council has allocated money to municipalities to help them keep rates increases down to acceptable levels.

Cape Town municipality, the largest council, has been awarded the least amount of money by the National Party-dominated CMC

Cape Town, which is controlled by the African National Congress, was to have received only R11-million out of a R195-million allocation to the six municipalities, while the next largest, Tygerberg, was to be given R79-million

Cape Town's allocation caused a flurry of meetings yesterday between members of the executive committees of Cape Town and the CMC which today offered to up that amount to R26,7-million with the possibility of a further R11-million if a dispute over tariffs is resolved.

The South Peninsula has also signalled its displeasure because R50-million

promised by the province has been deducted from the allocation that the metropolitan council has made, even though there is no assurance that the provincial money will materialise.

The allocations originally awarded by the metropolitan council would have seen both Cape Town and South Peninsula having to up their rates by 19 percent, rather than the 12,5 percent they had budgeted for.

The CMC, which was meeting today, is tasked with topping up the budgets of the new municipalities from its own funds. Saleem Mowzer, deputy chair of the Cape Town's executive committee, said in the debate today that in spite of the compromise proposal being made, he believed the amount being offered was "unfair, unequal and inequitable".

Pierre Uys, executive committee chairman of the CMC, said today that the CMC had depleted its surpluses and would have to effect savings on its own budget to find the additional R49-million it had now offered.

The total amount promised to local councils now stands at R209-million

CLIVE SAWYER

'Real problem' (124) dogs housing subsidy in W Cape

APG 12/6/97

MPs from the housing committee who toured settlements in Cape Town say there is a "real problem" with the size of the housing subsidy in the Western Cape.

"The difficult topography requires a superior level of roads, drainage, sanitation and housing," they said in a report tabled in Parliament.

A delegation from the committee visited Marconi Beam, Bloekombos in Kraaifontein, Delft, the Integrated Serviced Land Project and Victoria Mxenge near the N2.

It said ways of funding the cost of services should be explored so that most of the subsidy could be spent on building houses.

Starter houses now being built were likely to deteriorate in a few years and were not a long-term alternative to shacks, because of their flimsy construction and small size.

The committee had requested full information on the location, extent and cost of inherited housing schemes and how it was planned to integrate these into current housing strategies.

The visit did not go beyond the Cape metropolitan area, but the committee said it wanted to visit smaller towns "where, we were told, most housing developments were taking place".

Council vows not to punish ratepayers

CLAUDIA CAVANAGH

CT 12/6/97

IN a significant bid to keep down rates increases, the Cape Metropolitan Council (CMC) yesterday transferred R210-million to local councils

Even with this subsidy however, residents could face rates hikes of around 19%

If the municipalities are to keep increases down to 12,5%, as Cape Town proposes in its budget today, savings to meet substantial shortfalls will have to be effected

Had the CMC stuck to its previously mooted allocation of R160m, Oostenberg might have faced a rates increase of nearly 65%, Blaauwberg and Helderberg 50%, Cape Town 17%, South Peninsula 26,5% and Tygerberg 32,5%

"Having allocated R160m, the CMC had depleted its surplus. The only way we could come up with the extra money needed, was to cut R49m out of our own budget," explained CMC exco chairman, Councillor Pierre Uys

"This means that certain CMC services and projects will be affected"

Representing the largest council in the CMC, Cape Town's councillors expressed dissatisfaction with its allocation of R26,75m

Tygerberg, the second biggest municipality will receive R79,4m

A three-hour debate ensued over R11m originally given to Cape Town on top of the R26m, but which was withheld pending the resolution of a dispute over tariffs.

Finally, the National Party dominated CMC voted against Cape Town being allo-

cated the extra R11m until it proved it was owed the money

Mr Philip van Ryneveld, Cape Town's executive director of corporate finance, said he would easily comply

Councillor Saleem Mowzer, deputy chairman of Cape Town's executive committee, said the present system and the way the funds were allocated, was not fair and equitable

"We believe Cape Town is taking a drop in what it should be getting in terms of the other municipal local authorities," Mowzer said.

Van Ryneveld said that even with the R11m — which would increase Cape Town's allocation to R38m — "we'd be getting slightly less than last year while all the other municipalities are getting more"

He said: "This issue of sharing revenue between the CMC and the local councils is very fraught and should be done on a fair basis. A clear, transparent and equitable process is required"

And Cape Town has vowed not to punish its ratepayers despite this effective reduction and a cut in transfers from the province, said van Ryneveld

Referring to Cape Town's budget due today, he said: "We've contained our rates, recommending an increase of only 12,5%

"This means that in real terms we'll have to tighten our belts all round

"In areas of service delivery we'll have to produce more for less

"But Cape Town is entering an exciting period I'm impressed with the calibre of people we have around and am sure we'll make it through"

(124)

Cape Town rates hike of 12,5% on the cards today

(124) ARG 12/6/97
CITY EDITOR

The Cape Town municipality is expected to approve a 12,5 percent increase in rates at its annual budget meeting today.

The increase is in line with an agreement between the six municipalities in metropolitan Cape Town that all rates will be increased by the same percentage to ensure equity throughout the metropolitan area.

Uncertainty was introduced into the process this week when the Cape Metropolitan Council reduced the amount Cape Town was expecting to get to help it balance its operating budget from R39-million to R11-million.

This would have seen rates go up by 19 percent

But this did not materialise as a new proposal was put on the table effectively giving Cape Town R26,7-million, with the possibility of a further R11-million.

Tariffs for rates, services up in historic budget for city

CT 13/6/97 (124)

WILLEM STEENKAMP

THE City of Cape Town unanimously passed a R3,12-billion budget last night with all-round increases in rates and services for its historic first year as a reconstituted, non-racial municipality.

Elements of the budget which will affect ratepayers include:

- A property-rates hike of 12,5%
 - An average electricity tariff increase of 7%
 - Sewerage and refuse tariff increases of 12,5%
 - A water tariff hike of 12,5%
- Among a host of projects to be undertaken, the following were highlighted:
- A fire station for Guguletu
 - The upgrading of the Athlone stadium and other sports facilities
 - A new swimming pool in Lentegeur
 - An indoor sports hall in Portlands
 - A new library in Kewtown
 - A new clinic in Weltevreden

Valley North, Mitchells Plain

- Upgrading of other clinics throughout the city
- Investment along the Lansdowne-Wetton corridor

Mr Philip van Ryneveld, executive director financial services for the councils, said at a briefing yesterday that the budget represented a 6,7% increase in rates and general services expenditure, well below the expected 10% inflation rate.

"We are going to have to produce more for less and control expenditure very tightly throughout the year," he said.

In her budget speech to the council last night, executive committee chairperson Ms Nomandia Mfeketo said the council was "committed to fiscal discipline".

The council planned to improve the collection of revenue. This will include tightening up credit control policies, introducing a combined bill, debit order facilities and using the retail sector more extensively to collect revenue.

She said the key to reforming the income system was a new valuation roll and rating system. The new City of Cape Town included three different, outdated valuation rolls, and some parts — mostly the old iKapa areas — had no roll.

The new valuation process would be launched soon, she said, and the council was "determined" to implement it by July 1, 1999.

"In the former Black Local Authority areas these charges will represent substantial increases. We recognise that these charges will not gain easy acceptance by residents, but it is an inevitable part of improving living conditions in the area and integrating the city."

"It must be pointed out that the city will be spending substantially more in poorer areas than is levied and collected from these areas. The source of this cross-subsidisation is largely the commercial areas and not, as is often assumed, only the developed residential areas."

Let's first put our house in order

WHAT impact would hosting the 2004 Olympic Games have on Cape Town's primary need — housing? **EULALIE STOTT** grapples with the issue.

I AM sure that many of us who believe that our city should not try to host the 2004 Olympics would be delighted to find that our concerns are baseless. For this reason, I believe that answers are needed to some of the questions below.

In the early 1980s Cape Town city's debt from non-payment of rents and services by the lower-income families in its housing estates was about two percent. Since the general election in 1994, about 50% are not paying and in some areas of self-help schemes (such as Tafelsig) about 86% are not paying.

Cape Town municipality is not alone in this, other local authorities are also owed millions of rand. Last year, the national figure given was R6 billion. In the Cape Town metropolitan area it is R1,18bn.

I believe Khayelitsha is costing about R7,4 million per month on services such as clinics, water, sewerage, refuse removal and staff administration, but its income from residents is about R300 000 per month.

In greater Cape Town, the R1,18bn owed is for electricity, water, rates and services. How much of that sum is owed to the Cape Town City Council (who signed the Olympic Bid Book) and for what? Who will pay these amounts? What possibility is there of low-income families paying these arrears and when will it happen?

About R460m is owed.

It is not the council's fault that it has found itself in this situation. At least one local authority is unable to meet next month's bills without an overdraft.

President Nelson Mandela justifiably enjoys international and local acclaim and prestige but, in spite of his repeated requests, the non-payment situation has only worsened in Cape Town since 1993.

The Development Bank of South Africa's financial estimates were submitted to the cabinet for examination. Why have they not been made available to the public? This seems strange. Will the cabinet undertake to fund Cape Town if our city has no funds available to improve the

cleansing services and to rectify the present under-funding of maintenance?

Until recently, the Cape Metropolitan Council's income has funded new capital projects (such as a civic hall for Langa) and systematically attended to the storm-water drainage needs of the area, the provision of bulk services on a metropolitan level, the rehabilitation of streets, extensions to cemeteries, water reticulation projects, playing fields, and high-mast lighting. However, since the new structures may not be viable, R209m of the Cape Metropolitan Council's levy income this year is to be used for the relief of rates in those areas.

Is this sustainable?

It is not surprising, nor a reason for criticism, that the future financial viability of local authorities in the metropolitan areas is uncertain. It is an understandable consequence of the need to re-incorporate the black areas into the city and to restructure former municipalities.

But since the final distribution of debts and credits will not be done until about next year and since there is no certainty that the various local authorities will agree to accept any debts incurred before this year, what will happen to the millions owed to Cape Town? And what will happen if the money is not forthcoming?

**I find it totally unacceptable-
able that anyone who is
conscious of the need for
Cape Town's workers to
be housed near the city,
should propose that the
area between Kensing-
ton and Goodwood be
used for anything but
housing.**

For 40 years, I have been well aware that the number one need in Cape Town is houses, houses and houses, and for that reason, I joined the council in 1961 to try to help reduce the housing shortage for all races. I now find it totally unacceptable that anyone who is conscious of the need for Cape Town's workers to be housed near the city, should propose that the area between Kensing-

ton and Goodwood be used for anything but housing, namely, three- or four-storey blocks of flats, which will be of benefit to our citizens for 365 days every year.

The Olympic stadium and the rowing canal on the other hand will be an unne-

 (124) CT 18/6/97

sary luxury after the three-week Olympic period is over. One has only to look at the TV sports programmes to see that, in many instances, the seats at numerous sports stadiums are generally far from fully occupied.

The building programme for the Olympics will possibly exhaust scarce building materials (bricks and cement, for example). This is bound to increase building costs to the disadvantage of homeless workers. Experience in the mid-1970s showed that when there was a shortage of materials, costs increased. (More recently, after the Barcelona Games it was found that house prices more than doubled in the Catalonia region.)

Building a "media" village at Culemborg and a stadium, rowing canal and athletes village at Wingfield to be sold for about R90 000 a unit will hardly "facilitate the socio-economic development of disadvantaged communities through the housing process".

Present policy decrees that a husband and wife whose joint monthly income is R2 000 qualify for only a R9 500 state housing subsidy. All the "old" waiting-list people are supposedly to be housed by "densification along existing corridors". It is impossible to build flats for R9 500. And it will be impossible for low-income workers to borrow money at 19,5% interest rates. Self-help can hardly be used to build flats.

Those in need of a home may therefore suffer, not benefit, from Cape Town's hosting of the Olympics.

The IOC decides on the distribution of the income from the Games. The host city has to bring into being an "organising committee for the Olympic Games". This organ-

isation is given the income decided upon by the IOC. Apparently, it took 40% of the income from the previous Games but intends taking 50% in future. Is this correct? What is the reason? What percentage will it take in 2004?

Incidentally, the Olympics will benefit the state as it will receive 14% VAT on every building constructed and from every souvenir, Coca-Cola or meal sold.

In August 1996, Mr AD Frazier of the Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games (ACOG) said "There's not going to be a big win for anyone. I'll tell you that right now. If there's anything at all, it's going to be very low numbers."

The chairman of the Metropolitan Atlanta Olympic Games Authority said "The ACOG tends to be more optimistic than we are. We want to see all the numbers before we feel comfortable."

The Cape Times quoted the IOC from Lausanne some time ago as stating that the Atlanta Games had run at a loss. The ACOG had no government safety net. Will the Cape Town Committee have a government safety net? If not, who will cover any losses?

Is it not possible that the city will be in dire financial straits long before 2004, hard-pressed to meet its basic commitments as a local authority? Can the IOC take a chance in 1997 on a city, with such financial problems, hosting the Olympics? Imagine the shame and odium if, ultimately, we are not able to host the Olympics competently. Dare we take such a risk?

Eulalie Stott is an alderman of the city of Cape Town.

MANY BUSINESSES SUMMONSED

CMC gets tough with 7 000 levy-dodgers

at 23/6/97

(124)

A LOCAL GOVERNMENT clampdown to raise R45m from erring businesses has been welcomed, provided the informal sector is also targeted, reports **CLAUDIA CAVANAGH**

HUNDREDS of businesses throughout the Peninsula will be summonsed and have property attached within the next few days as the Cape Metropolitan Council (CMC) bares its teeth in a new hard line policy against service levy evaders.

Seven thousand unregistered levy-payers are expected to be identified and about R45-million recovered for CMC coffers in a sweeping action throughout the metropole.

As the net tightens and summonses flood smaller magisterial districts where inspectors are particularly active at the moment, some businessmen and women have vowed to take a stand against the "unfair" system which demands 0,2% of turnover and 0,25% of the businesses' payroll.

Even those advocating payment express dissatisfaction with the levies which target only formal businesses. They have called for the system to be reviewed.

"We're not happy with the CMC levies which add to the cost of doing business in the region," said Cape Town Chamber of Commerce and Industry executive director Mr Alan Lighton.

The levies are added into the prices paid for goods and services and thereby hidden from the consumer who is the actual taxpayer, he said.

"We are aware, however, that a large number of businesses have not been paying the levies and this cannot be allowed to continue. As long as the levies are in place all must pay otherwise some will have an unfair advantage over others.

"The levy system itself is fraught with problems and we have urged that it be reviewed. But until this is done it is only fair that all must pay."

Resentment is mounting

against the levy system in the Helderberg municipal area. While not advocating an open boycott, businesses hint at possible action.

"Business is an easy target when it comes to the collection of levies and rates," said Helderberg Chamber of Business chairman Mr Woolf Vosse.

"If the authorities are going to become tough and insist that we render unto Caesar that which is his — which is after all the right principle — the law must be applied across the board.

"Individuals who are in rates and levy arrears must be summonsed with the same diligence that businesses are. If this is not done, the only way business can be heard is not to pay its levies."

Helderberg municipality had not yet taken a stand against previously disadvantaged communities in arrears and was hoping for a provincial subsidy to help it out, said Vosse.

"If this doesn't materialise, the only way to collect the arrears is from those who owe the money.

"If the load falls once again on those who always pay, then it is time to revolt openly and say that we, as businesses, won't pay either."

Fish Hoek Chamber of Business president Ms Janet Holwill urged businesses to pay the levies.

"They go straight to the CMC and back to the local councils," she said.

"If we don't pay, rates are sure to go up as a result."

The chamber considered it unfair that informal traders in the area were not obliged to pay the levy.

"Why should formal business have to pay while informal traders, who are significant role players in the business community, are excluded? Everybody should pay towards the common good of the whole community," Holwill said.

Mr Henne Smith, deputy director of financial services for the CMC, agreed: "The informal sector poses a problem. Although we're looking at ways and means of getting a fixed amount from these traders, no proper solution exists."

Green Point Market traders last year failed to raise levies among themselves.

"We registered a number of traders but they tend to disappear when we send out warnings and summonses," Smith said.

Funds collected via the levies are used for infrastructural projects throughout the

CMC and handed out to local councils. The R209m given last week to the six metropolitan local councils to offset rates increases was derived from these levies, said Chief Executive Officer Dr Stewart Fisher.

The CMC had no choice but to adopt a hard-nosed attitude to levy evaders, he said.

"By increasing our levy base and ensuring that levies due to the CMC are collected, future levy increases may be minimised."

Councillor Pierre Uys, chairman of CMC's exco, said all business people would be treated fairly and equally to give effect to the Constitution's equality clauses.

"Our policy is also in keeping with the spirit of Masakhane."

"The levy system is fraught with problems and we have urged it be reviewed. But until this is done it is only fair that all must pay."

Umgeni Water taps into growth

RAVIN MAHARAJ

(124)

Durban (ET) 27/6/97
Umgeni Water reported increased water sales yesterday by 6 percent, which translated into a 14 percent growth in turnover to R393 million for the year to February 28

Operating expenditure fell by 2,1 percent to R188 million (R192,1 million) and interest and finance charges were R157,7 million (R101,6 million), leaving a surplus of R9,6 million (R1,6 million).

Net capital expenditure was R496,1 million. This was used to finance the bulk water supply infrastructure, the largest of which was the R250 million Midmar waterworks, and some 52 projects in rural areas.

Brian Walford, the chief executive at Umgeni Water, said good rainfall and infrastructure improvements after the 1987 floods had helped Umgeni, the largest catchment-based water operation in southern Africa, to increase water sales to 315 182 megalitres from 296 106 megalitres.

But a negative spinoff of the increased customer base, which in the rural communities had increased from 4 000 to 12 000, was that Umgeni — for the first time — had to embark on a debt recovery programme in the “climate of non-payment”.

But apart from these problems, Avison Carlisle, the director of finance and administration at Umgeni Water, said dams had been maintained at a “good level”. This, he said, had significantly reduced the energy cost associated with pumping and the need to purchase water from external parties. It had also resulted in an 18 percent reduction in cost of sales.

City scoops Cobbett to tackle housing crisis

ANDREA WEISS
City Editor

Billy Cobbett, the former director-general of housing, is to head the Cape Town municipality's new housing department which has the mammoth task of sorting out the city's housing backlog.

Mr Cobbett left his job as head of the national housing department in May after a well publicised clash with housing minister Sankie Mtembi-Mahanyele.

His appointment is regarded as something of a coup for the Cape Town municipality, which has identified housing as a major issue owing to rapid urbanisation.

Among the problems Mr Cobbett will have to tackle in his new "nuts and bolts" portfolio are all the city's new housing projects, difficulties with the existing rental stock and homelessness in central business districts



Cape coup: Billy Cobbett

Mr Cobbett's appointment will be announced tomorrow at a council meeting to mark the introduction of administrations of the six new municipalities

His appointment comes as bitter winter weather is throwing a fresh spotlight on the housing crisis.

In a strongly worded sermon yesterday, Cape Town's Anglican archbishop, Njongonkulu Ndungane, said last week's storms "vividly illustrated" the urgency with which the Government had to address the question of housing.

"We cannot, as the Church, watch this type of thing happening without voicing our concern," he said

Mr Cobbett worked closely with former housing minister Joe Slovo to formulate a national housing policy.

Ndungane's homes call, page 4

Cobbett accepts Cape Town city post

BD 11/7/97

(124)

Linda Ensor

CAPE TOWN — Former housing director-general Billy Cobbett has been appointed by the Cape Town municipality to tackle one of the thorniest housing problems in any of the country's major metropolitan areas

He could take up his new job as head of the housing department within the next few days if his long-awaited departure package from national government gets finalised

This was expected to have been concluded by today, a reliable source said. Cobbett's payout was expected to amount to hundreds of thousands of rands to compensate him for the premature termination of his contract by

Housing Minister Sankie Mthembu-Mahanyele

The Cape Town metropolitan area has lagged far behind other centres in devising a strategy to tackle its housing crisis mainly because the local elections were held late and the new council took some time to be established

Cobbett's major task would be to speed up the provision of housing and in the process get to grips with the sprawling squatter camps of Crossroads and Khayelitsha and with the immense development difficulties of the Cape Flats

Sources believed the most critical component to his success would be whether the Cape Town city council underpinned his efforts with a strong

political will

He takes up his position as the consolidation and transformation of Cape Town's metropolitan substructures takes effect

It is believed that Cobbett was made a number of offers from the private housing sector after his departure from government following a fallout with Mthembu-Mahanyele over a rural housing project in Mpumalanga

The dispute revolved around the award of a R185m contract for the project to Motheo Construction, which did not have an established track record in housing construction. Cobbett claimed his contract was terminated prematurely at the behest of the minister and demanded appropriate recompense

New rates system for city residents from '99

CT/17/197 (24)

FOLLOWING CHANGES to municipal boundaries, the Cape Town City Council has decided to introduce a rates system based on the land value of properties only. **MELANIE GOSLING** reports.

RESIDENTS in the Cape Town City Council area will be charged according to a new system of rates from July 1999 which will bring equity into a rating system fraught with inequalities.

Rates are likely to increase dramatically in some areas — such as the Atlantic seaboard and the City Bowl — where property values have rocketed since they were last valued by the municipality in 1979. There may be decreases in poorer areas where property prices have not changed much.

With the changes to the municipal boundaries, the new Cape Town municipality has inherited areas from old local authorities with different rates systems, creating a situation where residents in some parts of the new municipality pay rates based on 1979 property valuations, some on 1974 valuations and some on 1981 valuations.

In some areas, such as the former black local authority areas of Nyanga and Langa, which now fall under the Cape Town municipality, there are no property valuations at all, and residents have been charged a flat monthly rate of R15 a property.

In Pinelands, residents have been paying rates based on 1981 valuations.

In some areas such as Philippi, formerly controlled by the Cape Metropolitan Council (CMC), there are no property valuations and residents have not been charged rates.

Other areas formerly controlled by the CMC, such as Oudekraal (including the White House) and an area of about six rural properties near Kirstenbosch, owners have not been charged rates although there are 1974 valuations.

The council resolved last week to introduce a system of rates based on the land value of properties only, called site value rating. This means all 214 000 properties in the municipality will have to be revalued, and in some places such as Nyanga, Gugulethu and Philippi, properties will be valued for the first time.

The council will scrap the old rates system, which taxed owners on the value of the land and the buildings.

The co-ordinator for the city's rating and valuation project, Ms Alexandra Dijkhuis, said the council's main reason for adopting the land-based

rates system was that it could be carried out relatively quickly. If the council had to revalue land and buildings, it would have to inspect and measure each building in the municipality, which would not be completed until the middle of 2002.

Establishing a market value of the land only, ignoring the buildings, could be completed by the middle of 1999, which means equity could be achieved sooner, she said.

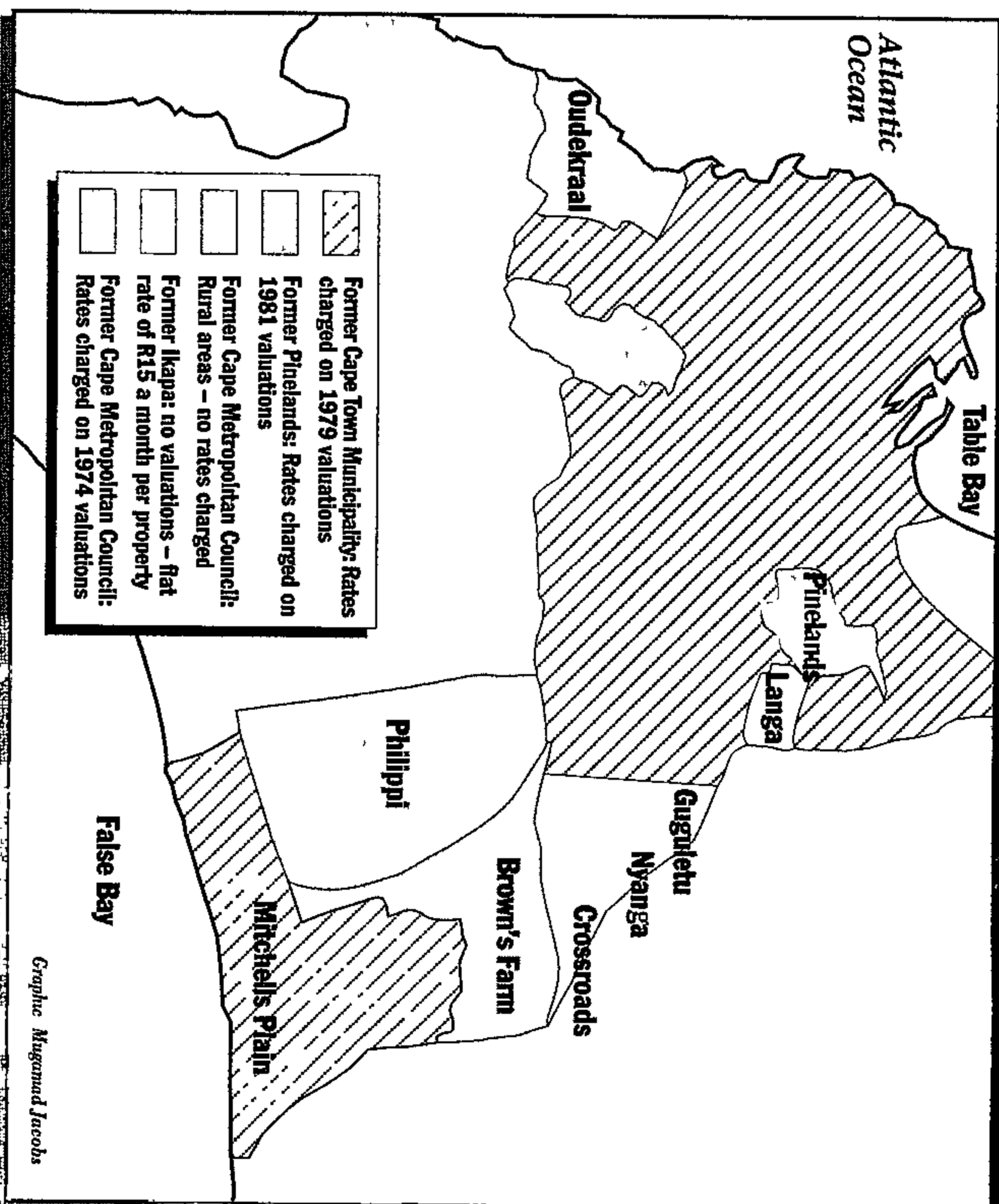
The council said site value rating, which has been used for decades in other South African cities, including Johannesburg, Bloemfontein and Pretoria, is also a more practical way of regularly updating valuations.

It was impossible to predict what the percentage increases in different suburbs would be.

Said Dijkhuis: "People say because property in, for example, Bantley Bay, has gone up by 200% since 1979, therefore rates there will go up by 200%. That is not the case, because how much rates one pays is not just an issue of property valuation alone, but includes several other issues."

These issues include rebates on rates. After valuation has been completed, the council will decide on who will get rebates, which they are allowed to do by law. These may be applied to all residential properties or to certain groups of people such as pensioners, or to certain community

Cape Town Municipality's unequal rates structure



Graphic: Mogenand Jacobs

Autonomy for 6 municipal bodies

DAN SIMON

TODAY marks a historic turning point in local governance in the Cape Metropole when six non-racial municipal structures become fully autonomous.

Once boasting 69 local government decision-making bodies and 19 administrations, the Cape Metropole now consists of six rationalised municipalities and the Cape Metropolitan Council (CMC).

The South Peninsula municipality, for example, has prioritised low cost housing and a general valuation of properties as its top order of business.

South Peninsula mayor, Mr J Jacobs, said that from today a large proportion of the allocated staff, as well as assets and liabilities, would be transferred to the South Peninsula from the old Cape Town City Council and Cape Metropolitan Council by provincial proclamation.

The municipality, he said, will have an administration consisting of approximately 4 200 staff. Up until now services were conducted on an "agency basis" in 90% of its jurisdiction.

"This transfer marks the end of intense negotiations between the various stakeholders over the last three years and ongoing consultation with the unions.

"The result was a fair allocation of resources to the South Peninsula municipality for delivery of services to its community on a sustainable basis," he said.

But chief executive officer Mr Jan Koekoer, an advocate, said it would take time before the new administration was up and running.

"There are huge problems still to be tackled and this cannot be sorted out overnight," he said.

Some of the problems facing the municipality would be finding suitable office space for the hundreds of new municipal employees.

"For the time being staff at CMC offices will remain where they are as it is impossible to create a civic centre overnight. But then we still don't know if we want one. We may want to be a decentralised."

Koekoer said it was envisaged that the municipality would need an annual budget of R600 million.

Mr Hans Smit, the director of housing services, said a housing department would be set up to address the housing situation in underprivileged areas.

It was hoped that the housing backlog, including the building of homes at the Westlake informal settlement, would be addressed in 24 months.

facilities such as religious centres, sports venues or historic buildings.

Achieving equity does not mean that everyone will pay the same amount of rates, but that everyone will be charged rates according to the same formula, she said.

The new rates system is also likely to affect owners of underdeveloped land, such as someone who owns a single dwelling which has flat rights

The rates system will be based on the rights on the property.

Municipal rates will also be levied on state and provincial land in the metropole for the first time, which means these owners may look more critically at how they use their land.

This could affect Portnet, which owns the harbour and Culemborg, the Defence Force, and provincially-

owned schools.

Once the valuations have been completed, every property owner will be notified by post of the new valuation figure, and will be informed about the appeal process.

Valuation courts to hear these appeals will be set up to run between August 1998 and December 1998. New rates bills will be sent out in July 1999.

NP hits at new city housing chief's salary

Exco defends deal

(124)

APR 2/7/97

ANDREA WEISS
City Editor

The National Party has taken issue with the salary to be paid to Billy Cobbett, former director-general of housing, who will head the City of Cape Town's new housing department.

The NP raised its concerns at a ceremonial meeting yesterday to mark the unbundling and amalgamation of new administrations for local authorities in the Cape metropolitan area.

It is understood Mr Cobbett, who is getting a five-year contract, has been offered a package of about R400 000 a year, R70 000 less than he would be earning as director-general.

NP councillor Debora Mfiki set the cat among the pigeons when she said her party wanted its concerns about the salary of the new director of housing noted, given the financial constraints of the new administration.

The NP's remarks were labelled "mischievous" by African National Congress councillor Saleem Mowzer, who served on a sub-committee to decide new senior appointments for the council.

Mr Mowzer, deputy executive committee chairman, said the NP had supported the appointment of Mr Cobbett and agreed to the package.

"We have appointed the best person for this position, who can assist us in the delivery of housing," he said.

Mr Cobbett recently left his position as director-general of housing after a clash with Housing Minister Sankie Mtembi-Mahanyele.

Nomandla Mfeketo, chairwoman of the council's executive committee, said it was undignified for a political organisation to be party to a decision then use a public platform to contradict what was agreed.

"We all know Billy is taking a drop in his present package and is coming on a contract basis. When you look at the salaries of present Cape Town staff you will find that even though they are full-time, their total packages are not very far from what he is getting."

The council needed someone with Mr Cobbett's expertise and had to compete with the private sector to secure him.

"The fact that he was so willing to take a drop in his package indicated his commitment to the housing issue and local government. That is the calibre of people we want. We want people who will deliver."

Mr Cobbett, who declined to comment on the NP's remarks, said he had taken a salary cut when he accepted the job. He had been offered better-paid positions in the private sector but these would have taken him away from the kind of work he wanted to do, which was to deliver housing to the poor and homeless.

"It's a tough, tough job and I am looking forward to the challenge."

Housing crisis a priority for city

— Boraine

(124)

CT 2/7/97

DAN SIMON

THE new City of Cape Town municipal administration is to prioritise housing and homelessness, promote economic development and review its affirmative action policy in the light of its unsuccessful implementation.

These were just some of the key issues raised yesterday by the city manager, Mr Andrew Boraine, when he unveiled his business plan for the city during a special council ceremony to mark the end of an era of separate development.

Boraine said his plan set out priority projects and programmes for the city for the next 12 months. The plan for 1997/98 was a "stepping stone" towards compiling a three-to-five year integrated development plan for the city as required by the Local Government Transition Act.

The city's priorities, he said, were to "build communities" which had been devastated by unemployment, crime, gangsterism and natural disasters such as flooding.

Problems in these communities were also compounded by a lack of basic services and proper administration. The priority focus over the next few years, therefore, would be housing and homelessness.

"There are huge needs but limited resources. We must prioritise, otherwise we will continue to respond on an ad hoc basis to areas of crisis. This can be wasteful of resources and effort," Boraine said.

"Building communities is

more than building houses. There will be a need for an integrated and multi-disciplinary programme which will take in a new spatial development plan for the city and the identification of new land and finance."

Boraine said the capital budget already reflected these priorities. The operational budget would be restructured by September to take these priorities into account.

Boraine said the council would devote considerable resources and skills towards assisting communities to uplift

themselves.

The council would also identify and help develop new emerging pockets of business, streamline procedures for land use and set up a one-stop shop for business and development applications.

It would also appoint a director for economic development who would head a specialised economic development team.

Gearing up to win the Olympic Bid would in itself have a major economic and social development impact, Boraine said.

Another priority for the new administration was to make it more representative of the population of Cape Town.

"We cannot serve all the people unless all the people are reflected in the composition of the staff at all levels in terms of race and gender. Much work needs to be done, and, starting today, we will immediately review our affirmative action policy and question why it has not been successful to date."



PACKING SOLUTIONS MOUTHWASH CEPACOL

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Alien plants plea by Asmal rejected

Dispute over water supply

(124)

ARL 3/7/97

ANDREA WEISS
City Editor

Water Affairs Minister Kader Asmal has been given the brush-off by the Cape Metropolitan Council, which refuses to fund the clearing of alien vegetation on Table Mountain from bulk water tariffs.

Professor Asmal was hoping to raise about R50-million over five years as part of his Working for Water programme

But the council's water and waste committee yesterday turned down a request for an additional levy of 5c a kilolitre in the bulk water tariff on the grounds that clearing alien vegetation on Table Mountain would not benefit the city's water supply.

Arthur Clayton, executive director of water and waste services, said dams on Table Mountain and in Simon's Town provided less than two percent of the Western Cape's water

Mr Clayton said it was doubtful

whether any significant or useful increase in supply would result from clearing alien vegetation near these dams.

The bulk tariff already provided for additional alien vegetation clearance tariffs on water drawn from the Berg River and Riviersonderend, from which the city derived most of its water.

Mr Clayton said that while the worthiness of eradicating alien vegetation in terms of general environmental responsibility was not questioned, whether the water tariff was a suitable vehicle to fund expenditure on the mountain had to be considered.

David Erleigh, who chairs the water and waste committee, said that the committee felt the money should not come out of the water tariff, and that the conservation benefits of clearing alien growth should be considered by "the appropriate standing committee" once the relationship with the National Parks Board had been clarified



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Land-only valuation: the pros and cons

AGG 3/7/97

(124)

IN 1999, MOST PROPERTY IN THE WESTERN CAPE WILL BE VALUED ON LAND ONLY - A MAJOR BREAKTHROUGH FOR THIS AREA, WHERE DEVELOPMENT HAS OFTEN BEEN HAMPERED BY THE ANTIQUATED LAND AND BUILDINGS RATING SYSTEM WHICH HAS PENALISED THE IMPROVEMENT OF PROPERTY PETER GOOSEN OF OUR CITY DESK EXPLAINS

Even though only Cape Town, South Peninsula and Blaauwberg of the six Metropolitan Council substructures have accepted a new "land-only" valuation system, it has been overwhelmingly supported. The same system has been in use in Gauteng and Kwazulu Natal for years.

Why is it so popular? Well, for one thing, it's a more equitable and quicker way of valuing property.

The old system of valuing land and buildings was notoriously time-consuming because a professional valuer had to visit every property - in Cape Town, for instance, there are 185 000 properties to be valued - in person to take measurements and examine the building.

A land-only valuation system means that only the size of the land is needed and much of this data is available on computer already.

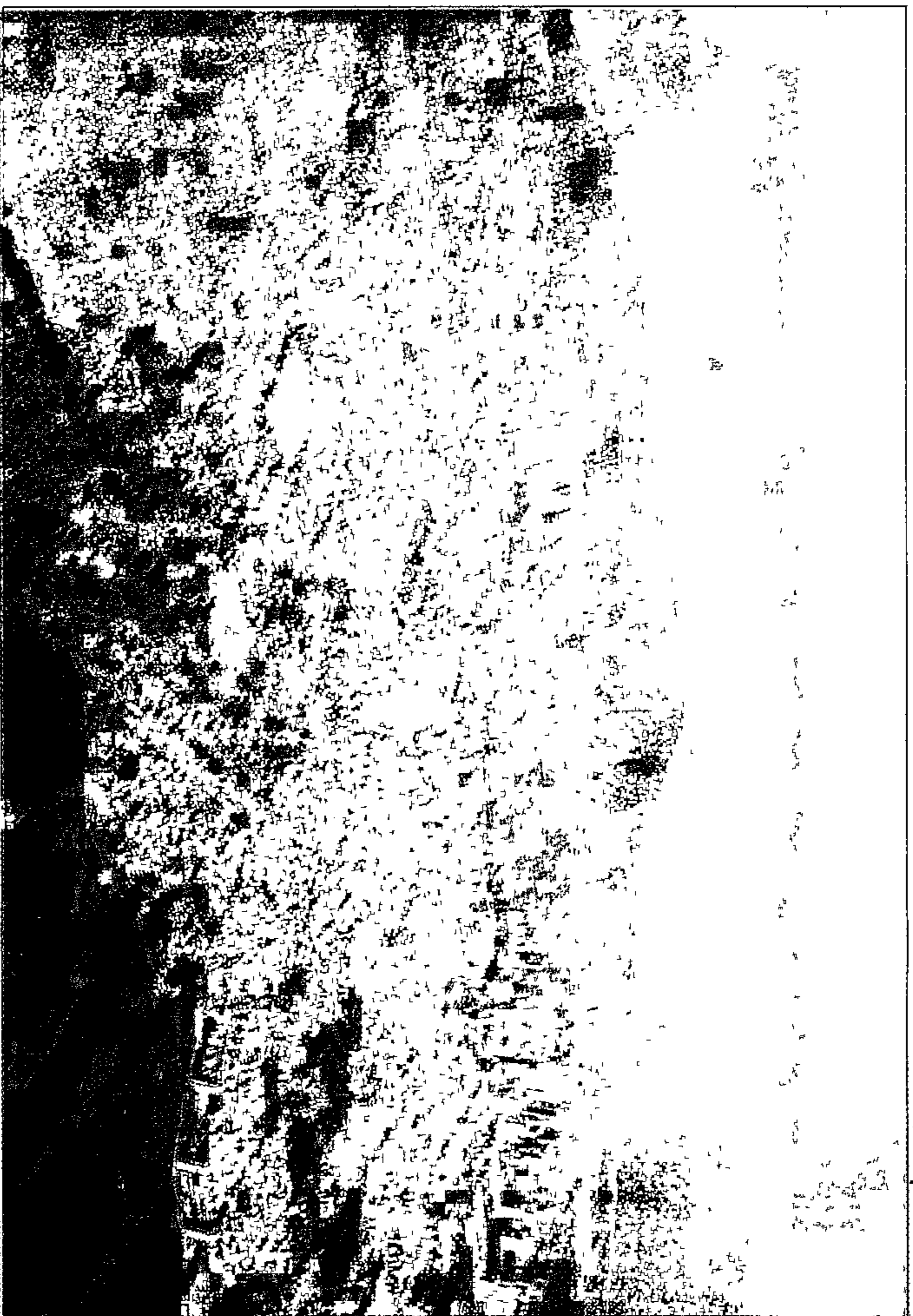
The old system also had the effect of penalising property owners who improved their property: their rates would automatically rise. This will not be the case with a land-only valuation system. The land will be valued at market value, based on its present and NOT its potential zoning.

Is it bad news for some? Probably, especially slum landlords whose rates have been based heavily on the fact that their buildings were almost derelict. Now, the state of the buildings will have no bearing on the rates.

When the South Peninsula Council formally accepted the new system, it considered dozens of letters of support - six from overseas organisations - as well as some from people or organisations opposed to the system.

The best way to "lay bare" the system probably is to look at these objections and the way the South's valuation experts dealt with them.

Objections to land being valued at mar-



Value for money? An aerial view of Cape Town city centre. Cape Town council is one of three substructures to accept a new land-only valuation system.

ANDREW INGBAM

ket value were based on the fact that in some areas, people had bought property many years ago, values had escalated and some people perceived a system based on market value of the land would make the rates so high that people would be forced to sell. This concern also was expressed by pensioners and cultural organisations.

In response, the council said it was bound by the Property Valuation Ordinance to assess market value.

The issues relating to hardship to pensioners and cultural organisations would be dealt with during the second part of the valuation exercise which would deal with concessions.

Objections to land-only valuations generally were centred on the fact that it was

unfair to tax two sites of the same value by the same amount if one had a small building on it and another a much larger one. There were various permutations of this concern.

The size and value of the building and the number of people occupying it was seen as an indicator of an ability to pay. The number of people occupying the larger building was perceived as placing a greater strain on municipal services and consequently should be charged more in rates.

A similar issue raised was that rates should be charged on the services rendered to that property. Thus, if a property had no development on it, a minimal charge should be levied as it did not use

municipal services.

But the council said there was not necessarily a relationship between building size and the number of occupants. Small houses might have many occupants, while larger houses might have only one occupant. The exception was in cases where blocks of flats were next to houses.

Municipal service charges were used to pay for services that can be charged for on an individual property's consumption basis.

Thus, if a large number of occupants consumed large amounts of water and electricity, they would have to pay for its use. So, concerns relating to these services were not relevant to the situation. Rates pay for the running of the municipality

rather than for specific services. A lot of people and organisations objected to site-only valuation on conservation grounds as it was seen to encourage densification, would place under threat the rural atmosphere of some areas and force the subdivision of large plots which contributed to aesthetics and health.

The council responded that site rating often was perceived as a mechanism to encourage development. This could be positive in that it discouraged urban sprawl and reduced the strain on services. However, it could only encourage development within the parameters of the zoning scheme.

Other objectors said site valuation would benefit affluent areas at the expense of the poor. They said rates would decrease for the developers of shopping malls and hotels and increase for ordinary residents.

The council's response was that the land would be valued in accordance with its zoning. It would be possible to differentiate between various categories of land users by applying a different cent in the land formula.

In a letter of support for the new system, Ted Gwartney, executive director of the Robert Schalkenbach Foundation in New York, said: "I support your initiative to rate land values only, because of its efficiency, equity and fairness. It is possible to rate land with a minimum level of market value deviation between sites, and a high level of accuracy."

"It seems unfair to me to tax people's incomes, purchases and improvements until a city has first collected that revenue it has created in land values."

Mr Gwartney has been involved in land valuation for 30 years and supervised the rating in 160 provinces and towns including British Columbia, Canada, Sacramento, California, Hartford, Connecticut, Southfield, Michigan and Novgorod in Russia.

Godfrey Dunkley of the International Union for Land-Value Taxation and Free Trade in London said there was proof in Britain and in South Africa that flat rating discouraged growth and investment in the city - effectively driving capital away.

"The relatively small amount of rates payable on land encourages land speculation and the withholding of land from use whilst awaiting unearned financial gain. Flat rating encourages 'slumlording'."

Offer to Cobbett defended

Linda Ensor

CAPE TOWN — The R400 000 a year salary package offered to former housing director-general Billy Cobbett to head up the Cape Town municipality's housing department was well in line with the salaries paid to municipal officials in similar positions, city manager Andrew Boraine said yesterday.

He noted that Cobbett had been employed on contract for five years, and that employees on contract normally earned more than those permanently employed.

Permanently employed directors in the municipality earned about R350 000 a year, he said.

Boraine said the executive had taken a sound business decision to attract the best person for the job of tackling the city's housing crisis.

Cobbett was that person, not least because he was known to financial institutions and could be instrumental in negotiating a favourable lending rate

when the city council borrowed money for housing.

In this way he could save the city a lot of money.

Boraine said that in any event, Cobbett's package was less than the R470 000 he was earning annually as director-general of housing.

Cobbett added that the National Party (NP) had agreed to his employment and the salary he would get, so they should not be questioned by NP councillors. NP Councillor Deborah Mfiki had expressed disquiet over the package at a council meeting earlier this week.

Details of Cobbett's final package from government after his premature departure as housing director-general was still shrouded in mystery yesterday. The public service and administration department said a statement on the matter was the responsibility of the housing department. That department bounced the issue back to public administration for comment.

BD 4/7 1977 (124).

Driver jailed for

Cobbett steps into a new storm

ST (CM) 13/7/97
YVETTE VAN BREDA

(124)

FORMER national housing director general, Billy Cobbett, who left the department under a cloud after a dispute with Housing Minister Sankie Mthembu-Mahanyele, has walked headlong into a new controversy

Cobbett stepped into the Cape Town City Council housing director's hot seat on July 1 only to run up against the powerful South African Municipal Workers Union (Samwu), who have appealed against his appointment

The controversy over Cobbett's appointment comes amid complaints that the council is still dominated by "white males" and lacks affirmative action and transparency

Yesterday Samwu general secretary

and Cosatu executive committee member, Roger Ronnie, criticised Cobbett's appointment

Samwu had generally found the way Cobbett had attempted to implement national housing policy to have been "problematic", he said

"Cobbett's housing formula was bent on providing small units which placed too great a burden on new home owners, and relied too heavily on private sector goodwill. The policy has not produced the expected results, and if he pushes ahead with this approach we are bound to have problems

"The council should have looked for somebody who has a deep understanding and knowledge of conditions and housing problems in the municipality."

The union is backing Dr John Williams, who, it maintains, was overlooked for the position

Samwu and Williams, who presently is Principle Planning Professional (Policy and Research) in the City Planner's Department, claimed that Cobbett's appointment had been unprocedural and unfair

Samwu spokesman Robert Adams said papers had been lodged for the appeal against Cobbett's appointment, but the matter still had to be heard.

The appointment could not be confirmed until the appeal was heard

However, this has not stopped Cobbett from moving into his plush new Civic Centre office

Said another union official. "His appointment has been cast in stone as he has moved into his executive office suite lock stock and barrel, even though an appeal is pending. This is not normal procedure"

Council spokesman Ted Doman confirmed that an appeal had been lodged and it was expected to be heard this week by a sub-committee

W Cape to get R473,5m housing subsidy

(124) ARG 19/7/97

Pretoria - Housing Minister Sankie Mthembu-Mahanyele and provincial housing MECs have reached agreement on the allocation of 280 000 housing subsidies with a cash value of R4,2-billion by provinces this financial year.

In terms of the agreement reached at a meeting on Thursday, provinces will be able to commit a further amount of subsidies by March next year, the housing ministry said in a statement yesterday.

This would be done according to an agreed formula which took into consideration issues of provincial populations, housing backlogs and, for the first time, provincial performance in houses built or under construction.

Allocations (in millions) were: Gauteng, R1331,7; KwaZulu-Natal, R494,6; Western Cape, and Eastern Cape, R473,5 each; North West, R405,9; Mpumalanga, R363,6; Free State, R291,7; Northern Province, R257,9, and Northern Cape, R135,3.

Mthembu-Mahanyele said she was pleased with the agreement reached. "This means we will have allocated more than 800 000 subsidies by the end of the 1997/98 financial year and all of them will be translated into houses built or under construction by no later than 1999."

"We are planning to release the balance of the one million subsidies within the first six months of the next financial year."

She said this was a clear indication that government's target of building or having under construction one million houses within five years was on track.

"We still have a lot of work to do and the next year will be critical...now is the time to keep the pressure up and to work on solving the problems which are inhibiting delivery" - Sapa

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Housing plan for Grabouw site forges ahead

ARG 21/7/97

(124)

The Western Cape Housing Department is forging ahead with plans to develop a controversial site near Grabouw which has been the scene of violent clashes between police and squatters for three years

The housing department has taken the next step in developing the site, Melrose

Place, by approving plot prices of R7 750 each. The department is also processing 273 subsidy applications from would-be residents amounting to more than R21 million.

Shack-dwellers in Snake Park, a transit camp near Melrose Place, have repeatedly

occupied the site in defiance of several court orders. Residents said poisonous snakes in Snake Park were a threat to adults and children. Department official Surita Botes said processing of the subsidy applications had started and assessments would be done soon. — Staff Reporter

Ship containers become dream homes

(12/11)

ARL 24/17/97

STAFF REPORTERS

Shipping containers converted into homes, complete with running water, electricity and carpets, have made dreams come true for three former Phillippi squatters.

The three, all staff of Safmarine, were given the keys to their new homes by the shipping company yesterday. The handover formed part of the company's social investment programme.

Describing conditions at her former residence, Zoleka Bottoman, an information systems clerk, said she had to dig her own toilet "and when I came home from work I had to go and fetch water".

The single mother of two said she was elated about her new home in Khayelitsha.

She said that when she complained to her manager about her living conditions, especially when it rained, her employers came up with the innovative idea of using containers to create a three-bedroomed house with a bathroom, kitchen and living room.

"I am very happy - I won't sleep tonight," said an overjoyed Ms Bottoman.

Designer Wayne Wagner emphasised the part community members played in building and painting the houses.

Safmarine spokesman Peter James said other corporations were invited to attend the ceremony so that they might invest in similar community initiatives.



HANNES THART

Happiness: homeowners Zoleka Bottoman, Bigboy Joseph and Cecilia Msalela with Safmarine MD Anthony Farr

At a cost of R50 000 per house, similar initiatives could provide the Government with a low-cost solution to the serious housing problem in the country, he said.

Safmarine managing director Anthony Farr said it was necessary for corporations to "show they have a heart" when it came to helping the community.

Khayelitsha housing survey starts

NORMAN JOSEPH
CITY REPORTER

(124)

ARG 29/17/95

A housing survey costing the Tygerberg municipality R400 000 is under way in Khayelitsha.

The aim of the exercise, which started this week, is to assess the socio-economic conditions and land availability and gather information needed to set up a housing plan for the sprawling township

Housing committee chairman Claude Ipser said the survey would enable the municipality to plan housing developments in several areas

Loans would be made from the National Housing Fund for houses in Town Three

Village One, Site B Buffer and Green Point and an area in Site C.

In Town Three Village One, 1 601 sites have been serviced and all earthworks and main services completed as part of phase one

The Khayelitsha Housing Initiative Forum, made up of community organisations and financial institutions, is to make representations to the committee about the status of bond payments and the forum's role in Khayelitsha

The forum plans to hold a workshop on Friday on the availability of land in Khayelitsha and the number of homeless in six areas of the township

Community organisations and financial institutions have been invited to attend

Council casts net to make everyone pay

R10-m a year target

ANDREA WEISS
CITY EDITOR

124
AUG 30/7/97

Residents of the former Ikapa and Crossroads areas face bills for new interim community charges being levied by the Cape Town municipality.

The charges are aimed at creating equity between parts of the city where people pay rates and areas yet to be valued, mainly in the former black local authority areas.

The charges are based on the rates paid in similar areas of the city, such as Manenberg and parts of Mitchell's Plain, and residents face monthly bills of up to R40.

The first bills go out this week and the council is gearing itself for a campaign to persuade residents that the new charges are fair and should be paid.

The council's move is also aimed at eliminating the possibility of ratepayers successfully persuading the courts that they cannot be made to pay rates if all citizens are not being treated equally.

In a special message to residents of these areas, executive committee head Nomaandia Mfeketo points out that more than R250-million is to be spent in the former black local

authority areas this financial year.

Among capital projects are a new R3-million fire station in Guguletu, libraries costing about R1,5-million in Nyanga and Guguletu and improvements to roads. Residents have also recently received free refuse bins.

If everybody pays the new charges, R10-million will be collected during the financial year.

People will be billed R10,72 a month for water if there is no metering system but water on tap. This is based on the minimum amount charged for water in terms of new stepped tariffs.

Where taps are shared by up to 150 households, the charge will be R5 a household a month.

The council has yet to collect charges from "informal" areas that have few street lights, no hard roads, but where refuse is collected and water provided. It says it will be doing this once a proper billing system is in place.

There will be no change to charges in hostels until that have been redeveloped.

Ms Mfeketo asks those who receive services from the council to pay, and threatens action against them if they do not.



COMMUNITY COSTS: Cape Town's financial director Philip van Ryneveld with one of the new interim community services accounts that will go out this week to areas of Cape Town recently merged under a single administration and some of which have never been part of a general valuation

PICTURE: ALAN TAYLOR

Former townships get billed for services

(124) CT 30/7/97

CLAUDIA CAVANAGH

TWENTY-FIVE thousand households in the former black areas of Crossroads and Ikapa — including Nyanga, Langa, Guguletu, Brown's Farm in Philippi, and KTC — will receive their first interim community charges account from the City of Cape Town this week.

The system is aimed at levelling fair charges at areas that have never been part of a general valuation.

People who do not pay will face action and even "house visits" from the council which is determined to develop effective credit-control mechanisms. Practical arrangements for paying arrears accumulated under the previous administration are to be made and are not to be written off.

Cape Town's financial director Philip van Ryneveld explains: "The new municipality of Cape Town

inherited five administrations with different approaches to tariffs, charges, taxes and credit controls. From this we're trying to move as quickly as possible to a single system which will ensure that everybody is treated equitably.

"On July 1 — when the administrations were merged — electricity and water charges became uniform throughout Cape Town."

Every household in the municipality will now pay R10,72 a month for the first 10 000 litres of water used. As more is consumed, the cost per litre increases.

"This means that if you're poor, for the cost of three cans of cold drink, you can get water for the month. Even if you live in a wealthy area, you'll only pay R10,72 for water if you consume less than 10 000 litres.

"The centrepiece of local government finance," said Van Ryneveld, "is its property rates."

A general site valuation of the whole city will take place and a property tax based on this will be developed.

"But in the meantime — in place of rates in townships and in other areas where there is no valuation role — we've introduced interim community charges.

"In setting them we looked at the general quality of the townships, the level of services provided and at what people in poorer areas — such as Manenberg — are paying, and came up with a comparable charge."

We were shown one of the new bills addressed to a Guguletu resident. It amounted to R40,72 including R20 for community services, R5,44 for sewerage and R4,56 for refuse. This particular resident owed R340 in arrears.

Formal site and service areas will be charged R20 per plot excluding water.

While informal areas and illegal squatters have escaped the net for now, they won't be let off the hook forever.

"We're going to have to think creatively about how you charge people who are occupying land illegally and what do you do when they don't pay. Unless you have some effective mechanism to take action against them when necessary, it's extremely difficult to manage," said Van Ryneveld.

The bills — representing substantial increases — are likely to come as a shock to some. One Langa resident, Mr David Noah, said he'd no objection to the charges *per se*, but felt the communities should have been warned of the impending increase.

The visible improvement of services in poorer areas must be evident if a Masakhane campaign is to succeed, said Cape Town's chief executive officer Andrew Boraine.

Speaking at a Masakhane workshop in Cape Town yesterday, Boraine referred to "national lessons" to be learnt regarding the Masakhane project.

The setting of equitable and fair tariff charges throughout the city is another prerequisite to the launching of a successful Masakhane campaign.

"It's no good if the perception exists in any community that someone else is being charged less than them or dealt with differently."

A creditable credit control mechanism should also be in place. "It's no good saying we'll take action against people who default if we are uncertain about what action we should be taking," said Boraine.

Manenberg residents threaten boycott after rent increase

JULIAN JACOBS

ARC 2/8/97 (124)

Irate residents of Manenberg have called for a reassessment of the 12,5 percent municipal rent increase and have threatened to stop paying rent until their demands for better, cheaper housing are met

They also propose paying rent to their own trust account instead of to the Cape Town municipality.

Various community-based organisations yesterday said they wanted the municipality to scrap the rent increase and wanted to be treated fairly with affordable flat rentals

"We want the authorities to stop charging interest on rental arrears and we want transfer of houses to us without strings attached"

Solly Staggie, representing the Manenberg branch of the Community Outreach Forum (Core), said the Manenberg organisations had asked to meet city council housing chief Billy Cobbett to discuss how best to

avoid rent boycotts and the scrapping of rental arrears

In a mass meeting last week residents complained about unemployment, cuts in their welfare grants and about the fact that pensioners paid high rentals and waited for up to a year before their homes were repaired by the council

"When it rains my house looks like a swimming pool. The rain seeps through the gutters and windows which are broken," a resident said

Western Cape Community Organisation (Wecco) spokeswoman Marlene Russo said the idea of setting up a trust account was to force the council to reassess its position on rent increases and rent arrears

"Areas such as Grootbrak, George, Pacaltsdorp and Outdshoorn are perfect examples of how effectively the trust account system work," said Ms Russo

She said that the trust account could be managed by a lawyer chosen by the community

guards' assault against the two guards, Mark guards did not find the wallet.

METRO NEWS

Rates write-offs 'illegal'

ST(OM) 3/8/97 (124)

TOM HOOD

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THE R1,5-billion in arrears stemming from rates boycotts cannot be written off legally, the Cape Metropolitan Council has been told by legal counsel

A local authority was not entitled to write off, "in a wholesale fashion", all debt older than three years, advocate Willie

Burger said in his report to the council this week.

Municipal authorities were obliged to take all steps within their means to recover all debts. They were entitled to write off only those debts that were irrecoverable, such as when a debtor had disappeared.

Also, a local authority could not discriminate unfairly between different areas or classes of inhabitants "An unreasonable

failure to enforce the payment of debts owed in particular areas or by particular classes may be unfair against those areas or classes where payment is strictly enforced."

The finding means the councils will have to try to recover the debts.

The report would be sent to the councils for comment, said Dr Stuart Fisher, chief executive officer of the Cape Metropolitan Council



Cape firm bids for foreign aid

Germany sets aside R40-m for low-cost housings

ARC 7/8/97 (124)

ALDE DASNOIS
Business Editor

Western Cape property company J & B Group is bidding with a German partner for a slice of the R40 million set aside by the German government for low-cost housing projects.

J & B Group director Brian Johnston said negotiations between his company, several builders in the Western Cape and low-cost housing group Africa House of Germany were well advanced.

Africa House, started by three German business people, plans to market houses built from prefabricated steel panels, sup-

plied by German steel giant Krupp, in South Africa in a joint venture with J & B Group.

"We are completing a feasibility study based on the import of the steel panels," said Mr Johnston.

"If the project takes off and demand justifies it, we would probably try to source the steel closer to home, from Saldanha Steel, for instance.

"A manufacturing plant would be set up

The building technique is suitable not only for houses, but also factories, community halls and creches

business delegation to Germany in June.

The joint venture plan is to sell the product through builders in the region who would hold franchises from a master franchise company set up by Africa House,

somewhere in the Western Cape," said Mr Johnstone, who is chairman of Fabcos in the Western Cape and who co-headed, with Cape Town Chamber of Commerce and Industry president Ali Gierdien, a Western Cape

J & B Group and other builders who are members of the Foundation of African Business and Consumer Services (Fabcos). The manufacturers would supply the master franchise company with the materials.

If the project finds favour in Bonn, German government aid would be used to bridge the gap between the government subsidy on low-cost housing and the cost of the houses, with new owners repaying the loan over time, Mr Johnston said.

The building technique was suitable not only for houses but also for other buildings, including factories, community halls and creches, he said.

GOOD RESPONSE TO NEW CHARGES

(124)

Service payments up 30% in townships

CT 13/8/97

CITY COUNCIL cash office staff have begun going door to door in former black local authority areas to explain the interim community charges, **CLAUDIA CAVANAGH** writes

MISS Noyabathum Makwe-quana is unemployed. She and her grandmother battle to survive on the little they make from selling the beer they brew in their Crossroads shack — but they are willing to pay the Cape Town City Council's new interim community charges.

The levy was introduced in former black local authority areas Crossroads and Ikapa last month. Makwequana's neighbour, father of four Mr William Manrich, says he has paid the levy.

"Everyone must pay if they want things to improve," he told two of the 25 council cash office officials who went door to door yesterday.

Armed with pamphlets and clipboards, the officials began the arduous task of visiting every household and explaining why residents must pay more. They are also updating council records.

The system is intended to levy fair charges in parts of the city that have not been included in rates

R337 million was owed in rates to the six councils in the metropolitan area.

The amount owed for water, electricity, sewerage, refuse and housing was a whopping R1,18 billion, said Mr Henne Smit, the Cape Metropolitan Council's deputy director of financial services.

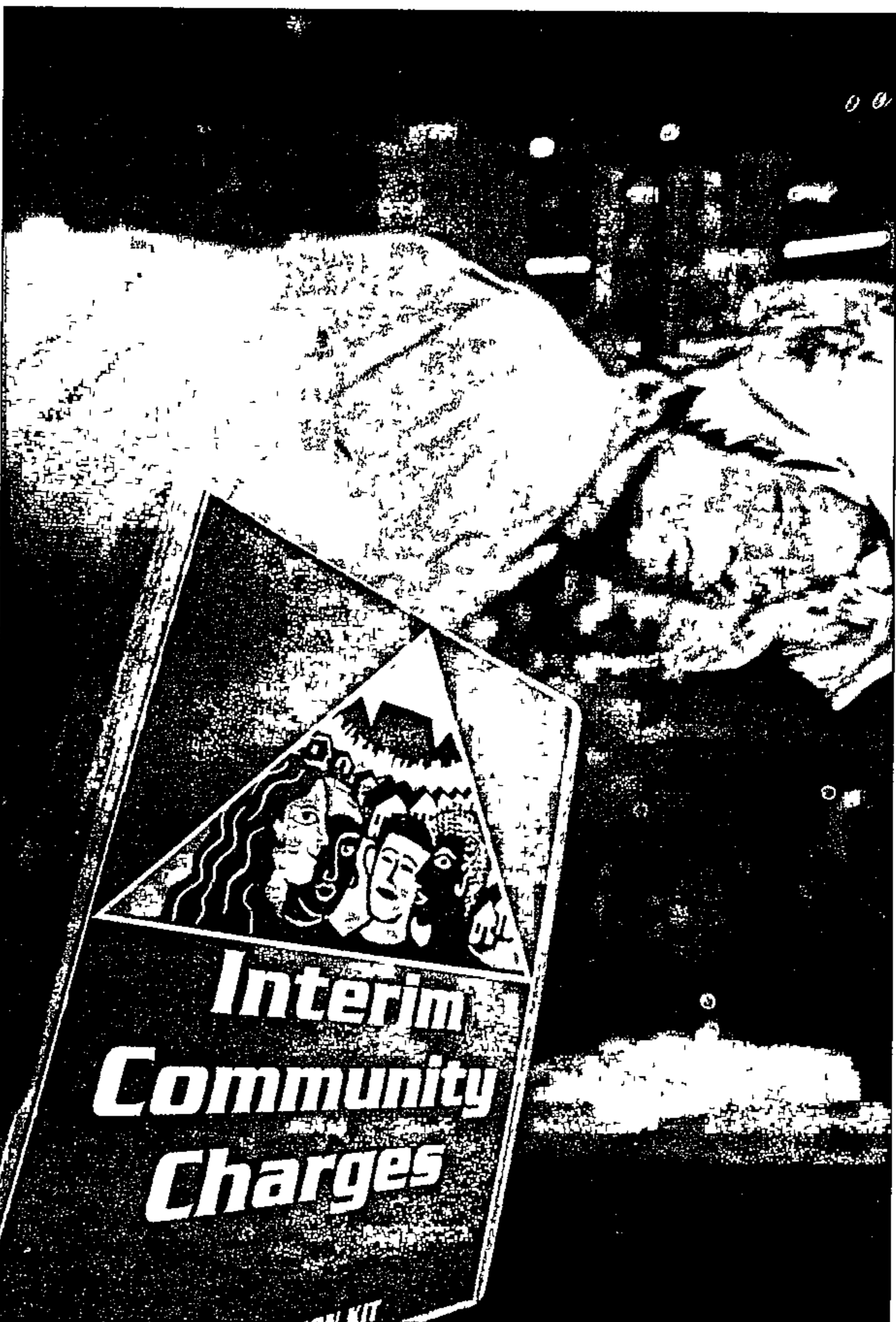
Although it's still early, Cape Town's new system of charges has had a good response.

"We've collected more from these areas over the past three days than in the past month," said council spokesman Mr Ted Doman.

In the first week of August, payments were 30% higher than in the first week of last month, the city's director for income and cash, Mr Derek Harms, said.

The due date for the new accounts has been extended to Sunday, August 17 — the council's Special Payment Day — when all council cash offices will be open.

"Additional mobile cash offices will also open in the area on the next two months' residents of these areas will also be able to pay their accounts at 'Pick 'n Pay'."



POOR BUT PAYING: Notlame Noyabathum Makwe-quana of Crossroads is feeling the pinch. Her granddaughter, with whom she lives, does not have a job. However, both women told Cape Town City Council officials going door to door yesterday that they were willing to pay the interim community charges.

PICTURE: GARTH STEAD

Council to blitz rent defaulters

Tough action to recover R600m

(124) ST(CM) 17/8/97
TOM HOOD

CAPE Town City Council is gearing itself for a major crackdown on rent and service defaulters who have piled up debts of over R600-million.

People who ignore reminders to pay are likely to be hauled before the courts and may have their goods confiscated by the Sheriff of the Court. The pay-up drive starts today.

Agitation from communities, for example, could also see the council reviewing its policy of no evictions for non-payment of rent, a major cause of arrears, according to housing committee deputy chairman Daphne King.

City financial director Philip van

Ryneveld said the council wanted to establish a fair basis for treating everyone equally across the city.

"We must get a structure of charges in place that will be as fair as possible. We need to be tough and we want to begin with a programme for fairness in rent and service charges," said Van Ryneveld.

The city is expected to join the other five Western Cape municipalities later this year in a big joint Masakhane campaign to tackle the non-payment problem.

City officials today begin a major drive to get thousands of families in former black local authority areas to pay rates for the first time.

They expect to rake in millions of rands monthly and to get at least 80 percent of families to pay up. The extra income will go to improving services and facilities.

The initiative comes in the wake of a countrywide crackdown aimed at ending the general culture of non-payment besetting municipalities.

Starting today, and at the request of local communities, city officials will open pay offices every Sunday and run a six-month mini-Masakhane campaign in Langa, Nyanga, Guguletu, Brown's Farm, Crossroads and Philippi.

Pamphlets and posters are being distributed to remind people they now form part of the democratic city of Cape Town and must contribute to the city coffers.

They are also promised the same kind of services as suburbs like Bishopscourt, Athlone and Sea Point, with R250-million for improvements having already been set aside for this year.

Families would receive monthly bills as well as reminders if they fell behind, then letters of final demand would follow, a council spokesman said this week.

If this failed, the council would issue summonses and get court orders for the Sheriff of Cape Town to seize goods from defaulters.

Families would be charged R20 to R30 a month in "interim community charges", depending on the level of basic services provided.

No charges will be payable in areas with no services. In the townships with only bare necessities, interim charges will start when a proper billing system is in place.

The council would get new income of R11-million a year if everyone in the black areas paid their rates.

'Red tape' foils housing delivery

(124)

BD 20/8/97

Patrick Wadula

WITH less than 20 months to go before the next general elections, expectations concerning the delivery of housing have not been met, says Condev Cape development manager John Hopkins

Addressing a recent conference on Housing for Africa '97, Hopkins said there were about 2,5-million families with no formal shelter and the influx into metropolitan areas was increasing

"The housing delivery process needs to be increased as failure is staring us in the face. There is too much bureaucratic red tape," Hopkins said

Development companies were leaving the market because of lack of government support. Communities also needed to ac-

cept the "affordable and incremental" housing approach, or the process was doomed

However, Hopkins said, there were exceptions to the gloomy picture — such as the R1,5bn Marconi Beam project in Milnerton being developed by a consortium

The former squatter area was being redeveloped with the building of 1 000 government-subsidised homes in Joe Slovo Park, while 1 036 homes priced between R50 000 and R150 000 were being developed at nearby Phoenix

Kutlwanong civic executive council chairman Thami Eland said the Kimberley township had managed to erect energy-saving homes of about 34m² within the government subsidy limit. The project would consist of 2 300 homes, of which 200 had already been completed

These houses were designed in consultation with the community and the US department of energy laboratories and the SA department of minerals and energy

"Through the design, residents save up to 90% on energy requirements for heating," Eland said. This cost made up about 50% of household winter costs, so the saving markedly affected residents' quality of life

Eland said that under normal circumstances 50% or more of the subsidy was used for repurchase of municipal property and provision of bulk services, while building materials constituted as much as 85% to 90% of the top structure cost

The Kutlwanong community had brought site costs down to R2 500, although the Kimberly municipality had initially planned to take R7 500 a stand

Tygerberg to evict 1 600 squatters

ARL 21/8/97
Shack-dwellers warned to make way for low-cost housing

NORMAN JOSEPH
Staff Reporter

Tygerberg municipality has obtained an eviction order against about 1 600 people living in shacks on land in Khayelitsha earmarked for low-cost housing and industrial development.

The municipality plans to give the squatters in Mew Way, Harare camp, notices to vacate sites. They have been warned that unless they demolish their shacks, they will be broken down under the court order.

Ernest Saas, municipal manager of community development and liaison, said hundreds of shacks had been marked with numbers and a number 14 demolition operation was in the pipeline.

Dozens of empty structures had already been demolished.

He said people from the Eastern Cape and parts of Phillipi had illegally invaded the land and constructed shanties. Tygerberg chief executive officer Dave

Wilken said Tygerberg communities were "100% behind us".

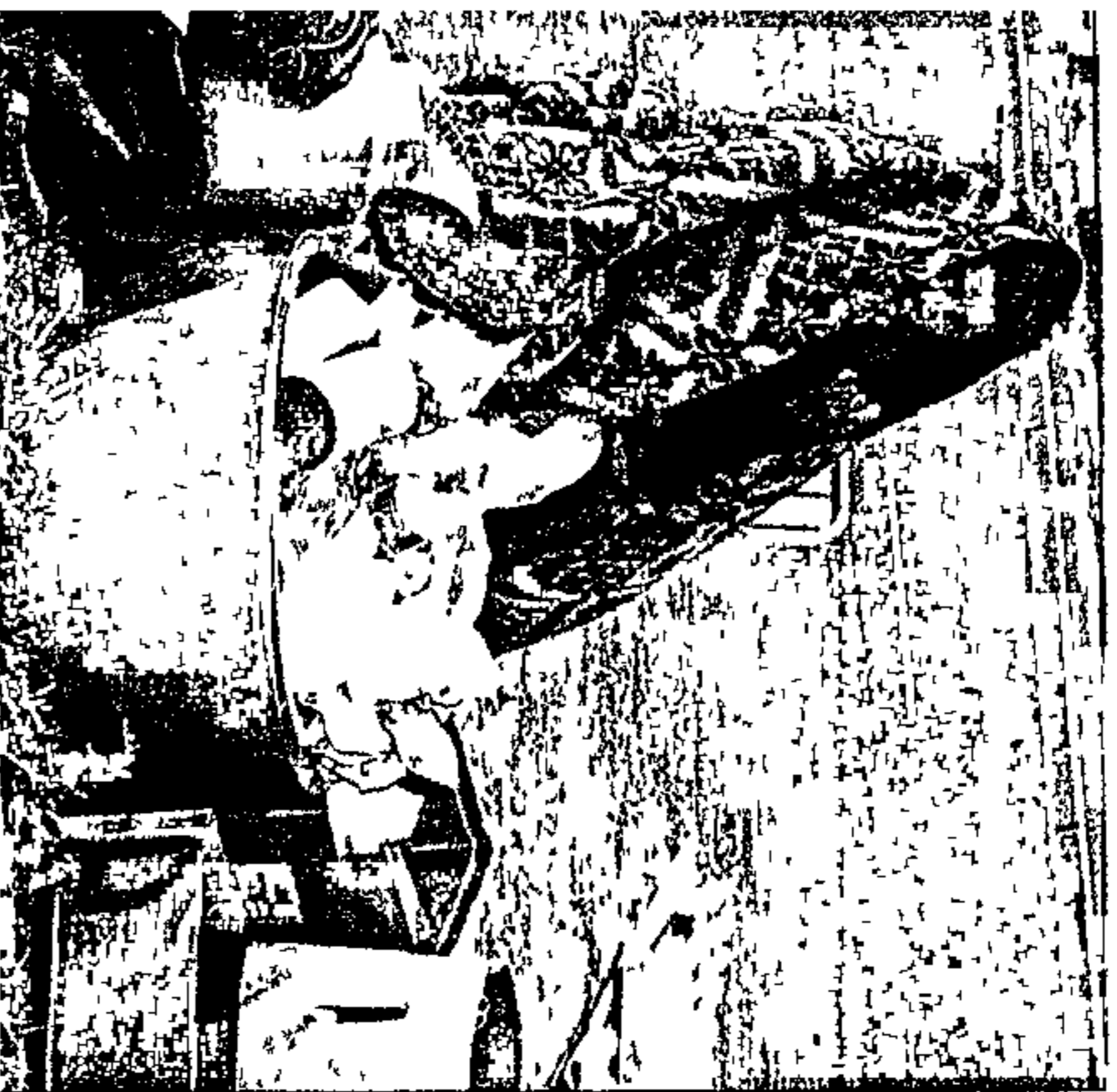
If the municipality did not act now, the area would remain a squatter camp forever.

Mr Wilken said the squatters were welcome to collect their furniture, removed when empty structures were demolished, from the municipal offices in Khayelitsha.

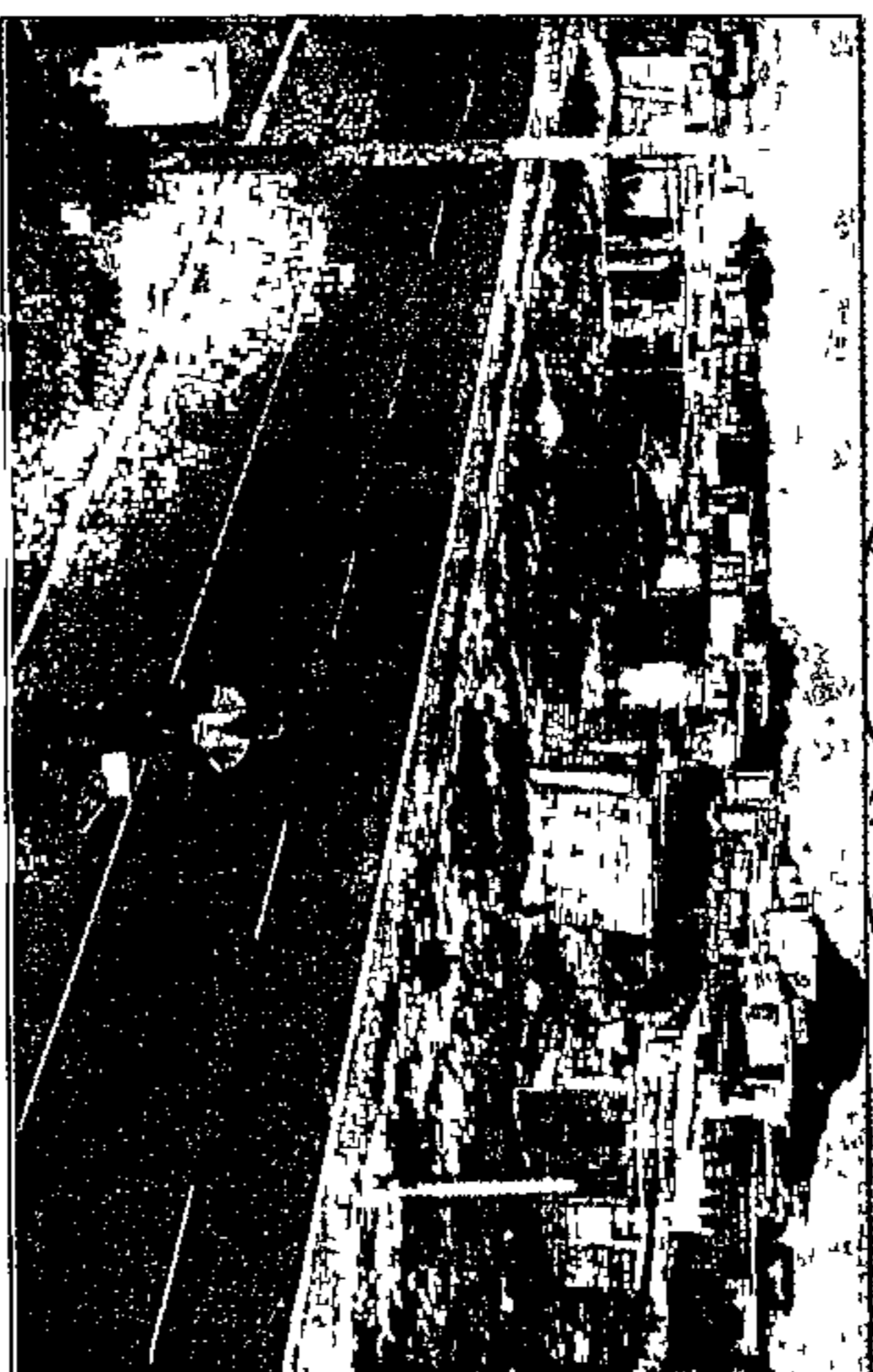
Khayelitsha Reconstruction and Development Programme forum leader Matoto Ngomana supported Mr Wilken's sentiments, saying the invaders were "sabotaging development" and making it difficult for the municipality to prepare properly.

Last Friday, about a thousand squatters marched to the municipal office in Parkmisa Park and demanded the land be allocated to them and temporary services be installed.

Douglas Nikolose and Martin Kubuli, who spearheaded the protest march, said all the "illegals" had lived for many years in backyards and parts of houses in Khayelitsha and deserved houses.



OBED ZIWA
Mchithali Macassar, where she rented a room, to build a shack in Harare



Doomed a few of the shanties in Mew Way which the municipality wants to demolish

V S

Pay up and hit the jackpot

NORMAN JOSEPH
CITY REPORTER

(124)

ARG 22/8/97
The Oostenberg municipality is to launch a "pay and win" competition as part of a national Masakhane campaign to persuade residents to pay services arrears of R89-million.

Members of a task group formed by the council recently are fine-tuning details for the competition

The national campaign, Masakhane Focus Week, runs from September 1 to 7.

Municipal spokesman Charlie Harmse said the community would be requested to start paying accounts and at the end of each month paying residents stood the chance of winning a prize

Cash, hi-fis, CD players, electrical appliances and vouchers would be among the incentives on offer

One of the slogans under consideration is. "You can be an Oostenberg winner".

Mr Harmse said several businesses had responded positively, showing willingness to give financial backing

for the competition.

Among other suggestions, posters would be set up in places such as shopping malls and leaflets placed in account envelopes

He said the municipality had inherited the arrears bill from other local authorities when "unbundling" of municipalities took place

The objectives of the municipality's Masakhane project would be to boost the council's image among the communities and to decrease the level of accounts debt owed by residents

Countless strands of electric wire criss-cross the Crossroads skyline like a giant spider web. They are strung from brick houses to nearby shanties.

This is how shack dwellers without their own power 'buy' electricity from their neighbours in conventional houses.

The highly unorthodox power system has been condemned as potentially lethal as it could cause fires and electrocution, as well as trip overloaded power supplies

But many of the residents living in shacks do not qualify for their own electricity supply because their shanties are not on legal sites. So they have become dependent on family members and neighbours who live in brick houses with a proper electricity supply, who string lengths of cable, sometimes over hundreds of metres, to connect them

Investigating the practice, Saturday Argus found four men hard at work joining electric wires in a street. They were placing the wires on planks to hang them over rooftops and winding them around trees to reach the homes of shack dwellers. The electric wires they were using stretched 400m. The wire cost them R1,75 a metre at a local hardware store

They had clearly been doing this kind of thing for a long time and locals did not bat an eyelid. It was a normal sight

Shack dwellers can be legally connected if they live in a recognised site-and-service scheme. Saturday Argus found it could cost more to buy the makeshift electric wires than to have a proper meter for pre-paid electricity installed at a cost of only R65

But the problem for many shack dwellers is that they do not qualify for conventional electricity

The owner of a brick house who has tapped her power supply for the benefit of neighbours said she had two shacks connected to her house in the nearby squatter camp. She said her neighbours had approached her asking her to help them out. "I agreed to help them and we have a standard arrangement that they purchase electricity on my pre-payment meter account," she said

At the neighbour's shack, the radio and television were both operating - thanks to the indirect power supply

The householder from the brick home said the wires hanging across her roof to the shacks were sometimes knocked down by trucks and sometimes the live wires lay in the street - exposed to passersby, including children. "We have received letters from Eskom warning us that it was dangerous and we were overloading the network, which often resulted in tripping," she said

She said that whenever it rained, her neighbours in the shacks used a lot of electricity, which often resulted in the pre-paid meter running out of electric units. "I pull out their plugs to save units, which results in my neighbours becoming angry with me," she said

Driving through the dusty streets of Crossroads the multi-coloured web of wires becomes increasingly visible. Children play under the wires hanging across the streets. The radio and television sets blaring with the help of the unauthorised wiring give the township a sense of being alive and jiving

Another woman who shares her electricity with three shacks said it was her neighbourly duty to perform this service. If you don't, she said, people think you are "posh".



OBED ZILWA

Connected: helped by a nearby householder, Crossroads shack dweller Cynthia Mawa and family can watch TV and cook

Residents warned on illegal wiring

Cape Town's fire brigade has warned that all illegal wiring is dangerous and could lead to fires and loss of life.

A fire brigade spokesman said it was amazing that no one had died or shacks been burnt down from the low-slung electrical wires connecting houses with shacks in the townships

He said that in the past month the brigade had received only two calls from Crossroads, which is criss-crossed with unauthorised wiring. There were nine calls from Langa, seven from Guguletu and four from Nyanga to deal with fires. But none of these had been caused by electrical faults

Eskom spokesman Monde Moletsane said

Eskom had warned that illegal extensions from brick homes to shack dwellers in Crossroads could not be condoned

He said Eskom could not supply squatters in Crossroads with electricity because they were living on illegal sites

"They must live on site-and-service erven, then only can they receive an electricity supply at a cost of R65," he said

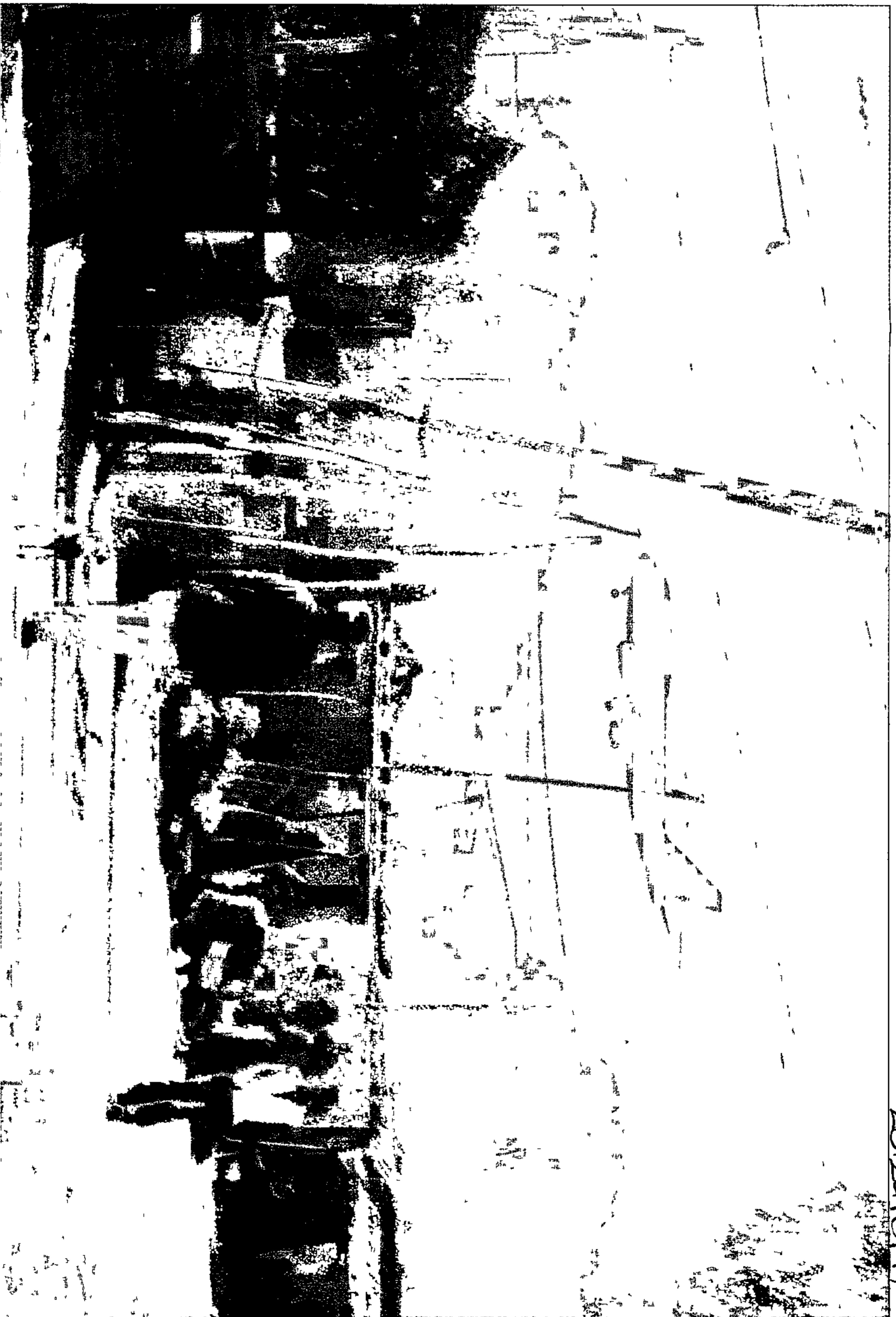
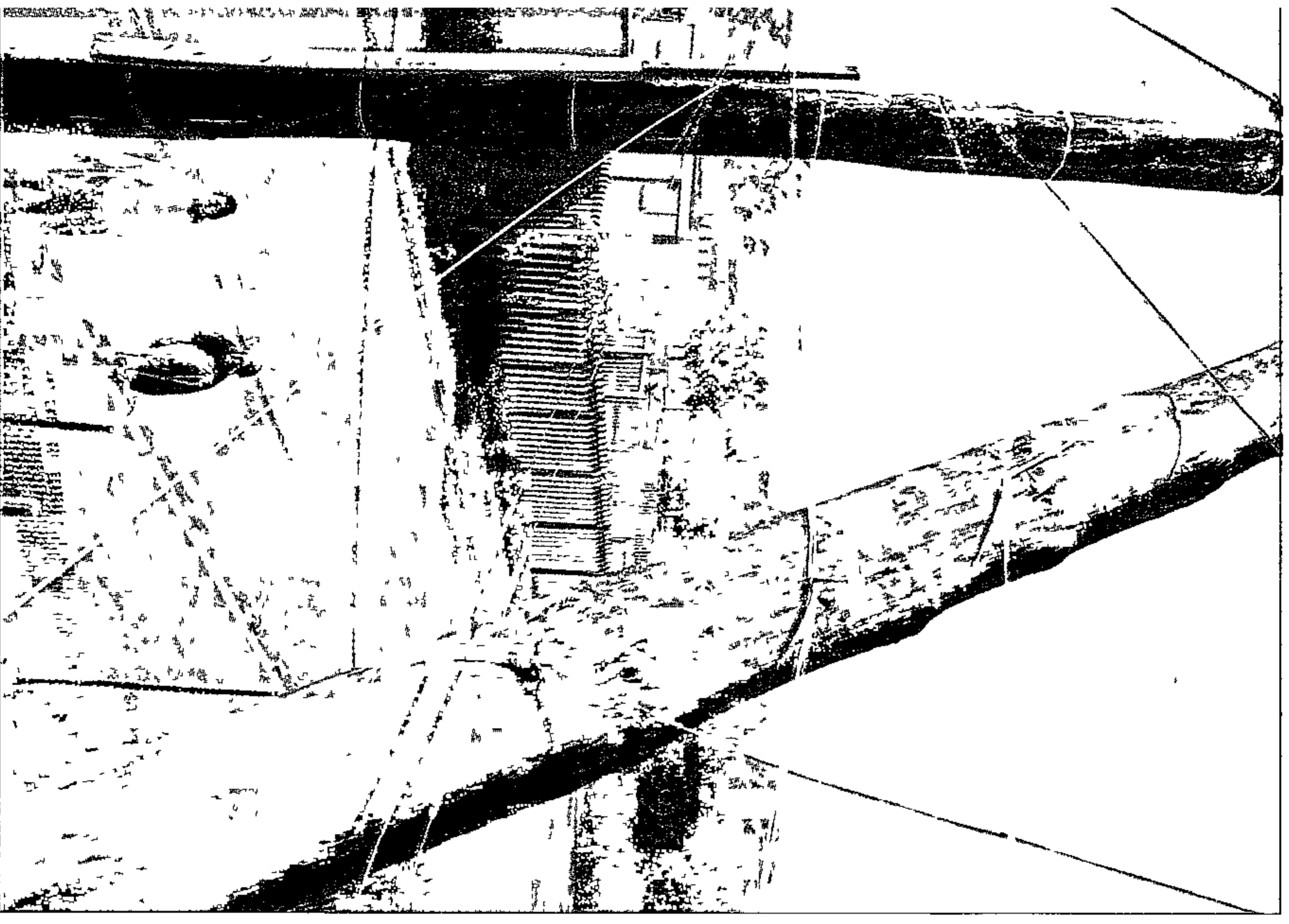
He said the practice of stringing up wires from brick houses to shacks had been raised with local community leaders

Warning letters had been delivered to residents using the illegal extensions

Cont

Power sharing Crossroads-style

23/24/8/97



der web: a network of do-it-yourself electric wires held up by a pole

azard SAA's famous Boeing 747 Ndizani flies over the jumble of informal wiring that criss-crosses the townships. The unauthorised wiring gives the township a sense of being alive and win

Ratepayers in angry protest

NORMAN JOSEPH
CITY REPORTER

ARG 27/8/97
Watched by police and soldiers, Oostenberg mayor Kobus Brynard adjourned a council meeting to face dozens of angry ratepayers protesting against the municipality's debt-collecting policy.

At the Kuils River municipal building last night, representatives of Stratford Green, Eerste River and Blue Downs ratepayer associations demanded that the council stop attaching people's goods

(124)
Ratepayer spokesman Paul Thompson said that court officials daily confiscated furniture and other belongings from the homes of people in arrears with rates and service charges

Mr Brynard and deputy mayor Gawa Samuels were confronted by angry ratepayers who demanded a meeting with the council and its attorneys

In a heated exchange, Mr Thompson told Mr Brynard residents demanded that the municipality negotiate with people behind with payments "because we are human beings".

Cape Flats can't pay, won't pay rent arrears

Destitute residents want pre-democracy debts to councils scrapped

(part) RLG 27/8/97

NORMAN JOSEPH
City Reporter

Deft single parent Patricia Michaels opened an informal crèche when she lost her job, to make a living and pay her debts, including her rent arrears, and to help other working mothers.

But while she is earning just R800 a month, Ms Michaels, who shares a two-roomed house in Eindhoven with her two children, says she will probably never be able to bring her arrears up to date.

Ms Michaels is just one of thousands of destitute people living below the breadline on the Cape Flats, who make up a large proportion of the debtors who owe a total R1,18-billion to the six municipalities and the Cape Metropolitan Council in the Western Cape.

From the R800 a month, Ms Michael must pay R200 rent, R260 for her 13-year-old daughter's school fees and R200 for traveling expenses, apart from groceries. "Shaking her head, she said, "I want to pay my arrears, but will never be able to do so because of my low income."

During the past month, protest marches have been held in Eerste River, Delft, Belhar and Bishop Lavis, where residents are demanding that local authorities scrap arrears accumulated before January 31, 1994.

They allege that "black" people's arrears have been scrapped completely.

A Metropolitan Restructuring Forum document revealed that President Mandela and then National Party leader F W de Klerk signed an agreement on January 20, 1994, that transitional councils should not inherit debts and liabilities accumulated by black local authorities.

Amounts due by individual debtors to certain black local authorities were subsequently written off and funded by central Government.

Amounts due by these local authorities for bulk services supplied by transitional councils and Eskom, and amounts owed by individual debtors in areas other than these local authorities, remain a problem and must be paid.

A snap survey by Cape Argus revealed that Cape Flats people wanted to pay their

arrears, but in many cases could not afford to

Sources in the CMC said rent and rates arrears could not simply be written off, as the money had to be paid over to local government.

The sources said politicians had sent out the wrong messages that all arrears would be scrapped.

The Metropolitan Restructuring Forum made several proposals recently to all municipalities on how to collect arrears, but these have not yet been finalised.

A CMC source said the MRF had sought legal opinion on how to persuade people to pay outstanding arrears.

Hilton Brookes, a City of Tygerberg official, said a Masakhane workshop was being planned that would cover everything from arrears to uplifting communities.

"Masakhane must be seen as a venture affecting community life generally and not only arrears.

"But the council must be paid for rendering services. The workshop will hopefully identify needs and several projects may be planned."



Destitute: Deft resident Patricia Michaels, front, with other families who say they want to pay their arrears but cannot afford to do so

DOLG PRINCE

City seeks to run troubled housing project

(124)
ANDREA WEISS

CITY EDITOR

ARL 29/8/97

The Cape Town municipality wants to take over the controversial Integrated Serviced Land Project, which councillors accuse of delivering a shoddy product.

The suggestion that the municipality investigate taking over the low-cost housing project drew heated debate in the council at its monthly meeting yesterday.

The council voted to authorise Billy Cobbett, director of housing, to create a multi-disciplinary team to prepare a report on the implications of taking over the project within municipal boundaries.

An amendment proposed by Belinda Walker of the Democratic Party, expressing concerns about the financial implications of the move, was withdrawn.

Ms Walker suggested that it might attract too many people if other municipalities were not able to deliver housing as effectively.

Her remarks drew an angry response from several African National Congress councillors and National Party councillor Elizabeth Bantom, who said her father provided better accommodation for his pigs than the project was delivering.

Ian Iversen of the DP said his party was not opposed to the provision of housing but was worried about fiscal responsibility and wanted more information.

Daphne King of the ANC said the amendment was in fact catered for in the original proposal, which was that a full report be made to the council, which included financial implications.

NEWS



DOUG PITHEY

Housing battle: hundreds of homeless people protest in front of the Kuils River Magistrate's Court

Houses empty, so squatters moved in

NORMAN JOSEPH
STAFF REPORTER

Ten illegal occupiers of houses in Mfuleni appeared in Kuils River Magistrate's Court on charges of housebreaking.

Recently 150 homeless people belonging to the Mfuleni United Residents Association moved

into 60 houses on a site in Inciniba Road, Mfuleni, claiming they had been empty for a year.

No charges were put to the 10 and they were not asked to plead when they appeared in court yesterday

Hundreds of association members attended the hearing and protested in front of the court building

(124) (501)
ARG 2/9/97
Magistrate Len Scheeper and prosecutor Rachel Vogt set bail of R100 for five of the accused.

The others were released on warning

The case was postponed to September 16 for further investigation

Mr Scheeper asked the accused not to return to the houses they had occupied

Council plan for shack clampdown

PETER GOOSEN

CITY DESK

ARG 9/9/97

The South Peninsula Municipality is to stop shacks spreading at Masiphumelele near Sunnydale, Fish Hoek, even if it has to break them down, because there are already more people there than sites available.

The council's housing services committee was told yesterday that the 350 families living temporarily on the school site and adjacent wetlands had risen to 560 and new structures would have to be demolished urgently.

The development of Masiphumelele by Communicare - 811 residential stands in phases two and three - is already the subject of a High Court action this month

The plan was to settle 621 of

the original households in phases two and three and the balance of 190 families would come from the 350 on the school site and wetlands

Chairman Bealah Smith said the council would have to take firm control of the situation there.

As it was, people living on the wetlands was environmentally unacceptable. There were more people than land available

Vice-chairman Gordon Merrington said more people were moving in all the time, including a criminal element.

Philip Bam said that unless the council came up with a proper policy on housing and had a strategy, it would be demolishing shacks continuously.

The committee decided to set up a separate committee on Masiphumelele before taking strong action.

124

Vrygrond's residents set to get their 'promised land' at last

Seven years of debate lead to R15-m housing deal

ARG 9/19/97 (1a4)

PETER GOUSEN
CITY DESK

The chairman of the South Peninsula Council urban planning committee described it as a move towards the promised land. And the residents of Vrygrond in Muizenberg, one of Cape Town's oldest informal settlements, will hopefully agree.

Last week members of the Vrygrond Trust sat around a table in Tokai with the consultants they had chosen to thrash out details of the R15-million development of services and housing in the settlement.

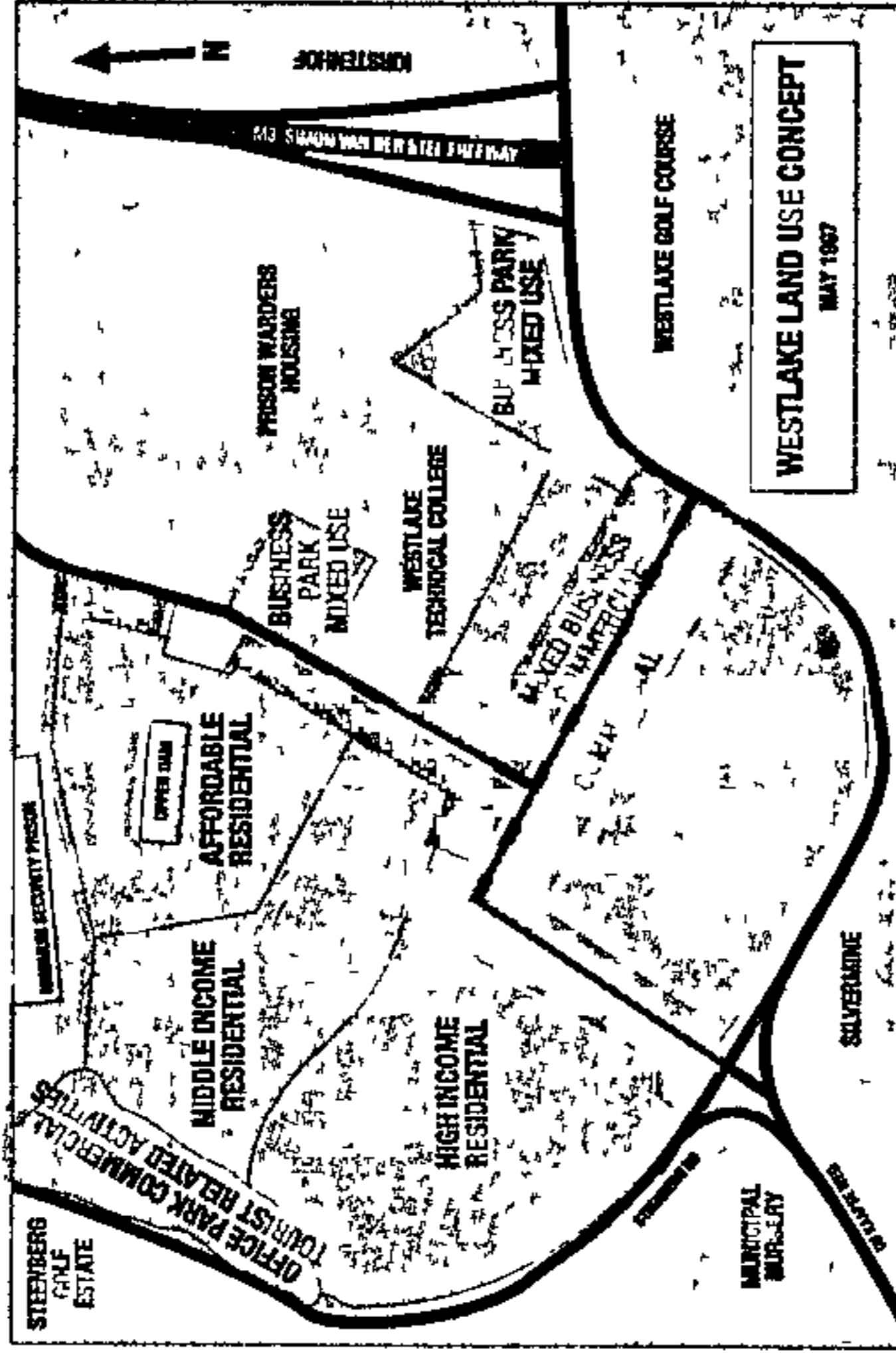
Behind the meeting were seven tough years of struggle to unite a deeply-divided community. Even after the trust was formed it had to survive hostile takeovers, dissension in its own ranks and a lot of other trauma to get where it is today.

Although the process was started by the old Cape Town municipality, the final breakthrough with the trust was made by the new South Peninsula municipality.

The South's executive director of housing, Hans Smit, said they were delighted the plan had come to fruition. Vrygrond would be laid out with streets and services for about 1 200 plots, including sewers, water and electricity.

The money would come from housing subsidies of R17 250 a family. Mr Smit said the Provincial Housing Board stipulated that, apart from services, there had to be a top structure of at least 20m², so housing would be supplied as part of the contract.

The municipality wanted the trust to oversee the housing aspect, and be responsible for appointing contrac-



tors, Mr Smit said.

The 56ha were given to the Vrygrond Community Development Trust by the South Peninsula Municipality when the Capricorn industrial and technology park - Vrygrond's neighbour - burst on the scene and announced plans to buy land from the council. The people of Vrygrond objected because they wanted the council to settle the question of their land first.

It was a major coup for Vrygrond. The council agreed to give the land to the people on condition they withdrew their objection to Capricorn.

But their problems were not yet over. The trust first threw out the council's development plan and then objected to their appointing consultants. They wanted their own professional consultants. So the council agreed.

Last week the trust, Fred Jacobs,



Six-pack: Vrygrond trust members Fred Jacobs and Trevor Siljeur, project manager Andre Lamprechts, trust member Yvonne Baard, and, sitting from left, trust chairman Jonathan Schrire and South Peninsula executive director of housing Hars Smit

achievements than he is.

He said the trust, which planned to replace Vrygrond's tin-and-board creche with a community centre, had

Trevor Siljeur, Yvonne Baard, Leon Peters, Lous Davids and Oom Thys Witbooi, sat down with the consultants and gave the project the go-ahead.

Although he is reticent about his role in the Vrygrond drama and gives the trust all the credit, some must at least go to the trust's chairman, Jonathan Schrire, the most unlikely Vrygrond Trust chairman imaginable.

Mr Schrire, although born in the Cape, has spent much of his life in London - he was an antique-book dealer - and returned not so long ago as a director of Capricorn.

When trouble began brewing with Vrygrond, he was delegated to contact the community and sort things out. So he did. Before he quite knew what was happening he found himself chairman of the trust. And nobody is more proud of the trust's

built an internal road giving access to areas of Vrygrond previously inaccessible, and had raised R300 000 to be used for community upliftment.

R2-m down, R84-m to go in Oostenberg

NORMAN JOSEPH
CITY REPORTER

In the past four months Oostenberg Municipality has collected more than R2-million in debts from its residents, shrinking the overall amount owing to R84-million.

In January this year, ratepayers owed the municipality almost R83-million.

This was disclosed by the municipality's new mayor, Nationalist Danny de la Cruz, who was recently elected unopposed to office by the full council

Party colleague Antonio de Lange, 68, was elected as the new deputy mayor, replacing another Nationalist, Gawa Samuels

Mr De la Cruz, 58, an NP member since 1990, has stepped into the hot-seat vacated by party colleague Kobus Brynard

He is a former member of the now-defunct Labour Party and ex-chairman of the former management committee in Kuils River, where he has lived for 16 years

He said he would try to cement relations among the 28 NP, 10 African National Congress, one Independent and one Freedom Front councillor in the council, which has recently been beset by disruptions and protests

"I plan to start a good association with the council, the communities, public sectors and our administration officials," said Mr De la Cruz

He said most residents had



HANNES THIAI

In the hot seat: Oostenberg's new mayor, Danny de la Cruz of the National Party

responded well to the municipality's plea that they start paying their rates and service charge arrears

Referring to the housing needs, Mr De la Cruz said affordable houses would be built and offered to people living in informal settlements, middle class areas and those wanting homes in affluent areas

Mr De la Cruz and his wife Catherine have a large family of four daughters, four sons and 11 grandchildren

ALL 10/9/97 (124)

Officials owe state R152 000 in rent

ARLT 11/9/97 (124)

Eviction threat to non-payers

CLIVE SAWYER
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

More than 300 government officials living in the parliamentary villages of Acacia Park, Pelican Park and Laboria owe more than R152 000 in unpaid rent.

Officials still in arrears on September 20 are to be evicted, says Jeff Radebe, Minister of Public Works

He was replying to questions in the National Assembly by Kobus Jordaan of the Democratic Party

Mr Radebe said that in most cases non-payment was caused by technical delays in processing payments "rather than by a conscious desire not to pay".

Of those listed, about 30 had

cleared their arrears since the list was compiled in July.

He said Siphoshezi, director-general of public works, had addressed a personal letter to his colleagues asking them to give immediate instructions to their officials who were still in arrears with their rentals

Twenty departments had indicated that their officials had signed stop orders against their salaries for the payment of rent.

Letters had been sent to heads of departments which had not made arrangements about the arrears, warning that if arrears were not paid by September 20, occupants would be evicted

"Any future applications for accommodation shall also only be considered upon complete settlement

of arrears rentals," Mr Radebe said

The list, which, with those who have made payments, runs to more than 340 names, includes officials from the office of Deputy President Thabo Mbeki, and almost every Government department - from National Intelligence, Agriculture, Arts and Culture, to Finance, Foreign Affairs, the South African National Defence Force, State Expenditure and Welfare.

Also listed are nine Inkatha Freedom Party officials, 21 of whom are from the office of the chief whip of the ANC, and three from the office of former National Party leader F W de Klerk's

Amounts owed in arrears ranged from a little more than R100 to more than R3 000, Mr Radebe said

NP huffs and puffs over ANC's order to halt housing development in Cape

NORMAN JOSEPH

Local National Party housing Minister Cecil Herandien wants to take national ANC housing minister Sankie Mtembi-Mahanyele to court for ordering him to halt housing delivery in the province.

Mrs Mtembi-Mahanyele - after telling Mr Herandien to halt housing delivery - then accused the Western Cape of lagging behind in approving new projects.

An angry Mr Herandien said that he would not stop the provincial housing board from allocating subsidies since homeless people needed to

be accommodated to achieve the national goal of one million houses by 1999

Developers, especially on the Cape Flats, would be hard-hit if the allocation process was stopped, he said

Mr Herandien said yesterday that his department has, over a period of two and a half years, set projects in motion to achieve the one million houses goal

The department has to date achieved just over 50% of the provincial target of 114 000 housing units

Mr Herandien said he was deeply concerned and angry that Ms Mtembi-Mahanyele had said that the Western Cape was "over-committed by

R600 million"

He said the province needed R1,8 billion to meet "our target" of 114 000 housing units

"A province such as Mpumalanga has already approved more subsidies than what was allocated to them. Why are they not reprimanded?"

He said the national minister was completely out of touch with her own department regarding housing delivery statistics in the country

Mr Herandien said "In terms of the statistics from her department the Western Cape is third after Gauteng and Kwazulu-Natal with the number of houses completed and under construction "

ARG 13/9/97

(124)

ANC, Nats in war of words over housing

Ministry slates Western Province

TOM HOOD

WESTERN Cape Housing MEC Cecil Herandien has become embroiled in a row with the national Housing Ministry over claims about apartheid-style housing delivery in the province

An accusation by Housing Minister Sankie Mtembi-Mahanyele that the region had over-committed itself by more than R700-million has angered Herandien

Mtembi-Mahanyele has also said far too many housing subsidies were being handed out in the region and it was therefore not entitled to new subsidies

The row is the latest round in the political wrangling between the ANC and the National Party over the controversial issue of housing delivery in the province

Herandien said he would defy the minister's instruction to stop issuing housing subsidies

"To stop now will deprive hundreds of thousands of people of getting houses I am not prepared to stop," he said

A week ago Mtembi-Mahanyele accused the Western Province of doing too much for housing, this week she complained the province was not doing enough, said Herandien. He threatened to take her to court if she continued to say the region was "doing badly"

But Mtembi-Mahanyele yesterday accused the provincial housing department of over-committing themselves by more than R700-million

If the Western Province had ditched its commitment to apartheid-era pro-

jects, said Mtembi-Mahanyele, it could have built five times more than the 35 988 houses either finished so far or in the pipeline. The province ranked only seventh in terms of the actual number of houses built under the new housing subsidy scheme, she said

The Western Cape had approved 84 183 subsidies and 159 projects. Of these, 117 were active and 68 projects already had houses built

All provinces had been ordered this month to stop further subsidy commitments until their use of funds had been checked by the national Housing Ministry

Added to this, the Western Cape housing department was still paying huge amounts on apartheid-era projects for coloured residents instead of complying with the new national subsidy scheme, said Mtembi-Mahanyele

"From March 1994 to July 1997, the Western Cape spent R787-million in total. Of this, R400-million has been spent on projects initiated under the House of Representatives housing policy.

"It is a fact that the Western Cape could have built five times as many houses if the R400-million had been spent in terms of the current housing subsidy scheme. We have been talking to the Western Cape to phase out their old dispensation projects

"But they are taking their time about this and using the money for these old dispensation projects. We won't tolerate this. We are not here to promote old apartheid policies and priorities," Mtembi-Mahanyele said

Said Herandien "To target the Western Cape as 'doing badly' is out of tune with the figures of her own department and smacks of political opportunism"

ST (cm) 14/9/97 (124)

'Apartheid policies must go'

ET 15/9/97

(124)

THE government would not tolerate attempts by the Western Cape authorities to promote apartheid policies and priorities, Housing Minister Ms Sankie Mthembu-Mahanyele said in a statement yesterday.

She was reacting to Western Cape Housing MEC Mr Cecil Herandien's threat to take her to court, for ordering him to halt housing delivery in the province.

From March 1994 to July this year the province had spent R787 million, of which R400 million had been spent

on projects initiated under the former tricameral parliament's coloured House of Representatives, Mthembu-Mahanyele said.

"It is a fact that the Western Cape province could have built five times as many houses if the R400 million had been spent in terms of the current housing subsidy scheme."

Her ministry had been talking to the Western Cape to get them to phase out their old dispensation projects, she said.

"These were inherited by every province. But they (the Western Cape) are taking their time about this and using the money for these old dispensation projects."

The province's housing department had been asked on numerous occasions over the past year to supply figures on cash flow and commitments to the national department. No response had been received.

The minister said two weeks ago her department had sent two officials to the Western Cape to meet deputy housing director, Mr John Austin, to get the statistics.

"The figures supplied to the national department by Austin showed the province had unauthorised, over-commitments totalling more than R700 million," Mthembu-Mahanyele said.

These, as well as unauthorised over-commitments by other provinces, was a matter of serious concern to her department.

A letter had been sent to provinces earlier this month informing them that they may not make further commitments until an accurate reconciliation of their cash flow and present level of commitments had been made against their national housing subsidy scheme allocations.

"This in no way means that provinces cannot continue with projects for which funding has already been approved."

On Friday, Herandien said he would not stop the provincial housing board from allocating subsidies, since homeless people needed to be accommodated to achieve the national goal of one million houses by 1999.

To date it had achieved just over 50% of the provincial target of 114 000 housing units.

Mthembu-Mahanyele said the Western Cape ranked third in terms of the actual number of houses under construction under the new housing subsidy scheme.

The province ranked seventh in the country in terms of actual houses built under the new subsidy scheme, and eighth in terms of subsidies committed, as opposed to the number paid out, Mthembu-Mahanyele said — Sapa

Ministers clash in Cape housing row

Court threat on subsidy order

ARG 16/9/97

CLIVE SAWYER AND NORMAN JOSEPH
STAFF REPORTERS

The row between national Housing Minister Sankie Mthembu-Mahanyele and her Western Cape counterpart, Cecil Herandien, is intensifying, with her describing him as ignorant of what is happening in his department.

The dispute was sparked by the Western Cape persisting with housing projects inherited from the tri-cameral system instead of reallocating the money in terms of the new subsidy system, which Ms Mthembu-Mahanyele says would have delivered five times as many houses.

After an investigation by national housing officials, which allegedly exposed the Western Cape Housing Ministry as over-committing itself by more than R700-million, Ms Mthembu-Mahanyele ordered a halt to projects for which funding had not been approved.

Before the investigation, the province had failed to supply figures on cash flows and commitments, she said.

KwaZulu-Natal Housing Minister Peter Miller has said his province would also ignore an order that all

housing projects and allocations of subsidies be stopped.

The Western Cape is third in terms of the actual number of houses under construction within the new housing subsidy scheme, seventh in the country in houses built under the new subsidy scheme and eighth in subsidies committed compared with those paid out.

Mr Herandien said last week he would not stop the provincial housing board from allocating subsidies and would consider taking Ms Mthembu-Mahanyele to court to reverse her order.

At a media conference yesterday, Ms Mthembu-Mahanyele said she felt sad that Mr Herandien was not aware of what was happening in his own department.

The figures quoted by her ministry had been supplied by officials in his department. "Probably his department does not inform him of developments," she said.

But Mr Herandien is adamant that developers, especially on the Cape Flats, would be hard hit if the allocation process was stopped.

Top provincial housing officials will hold an urgent meeting today to discuss Ms Mthembu-Mahanyele's claims that the province is "over-

committed" by about R700-million.

Mr Miller told the Cape Argus his department would hold urgent talks with Ms Mthembu-Mahanyele this week.

He said KwaZulu-Natal had built 52 000 houses and a further 13 000 were being built.

A total R100 000 had been allocated for subsidies and in August his department spent R60-million on housing projects.

He said Ms Mthembu-Mahanyele's information was "out of date" and "there must be a misunderstanding".

Ms Mthembu-Mahanyele said that as part of her ministry's commitment to fiscal discipline, a letter was sent to all provinces telling officials they could not make further commitments.

Statistics for the Western Cape gathered by her officials showed that from March 1994 to July 1997 the Western Cape spent R787-million. Of this, R400-million was spent on projects initiated under the former House of Representatives housing policy.

She claimed the Western Cape could have built five times as many houses if the R400-million had been spent in terms of the current housing subsidy scheme.

Councillors under siege over plan to privatise cleaning

NORMAN JOSEPH
CITY REPORTER

(124) (20)

AA 17/9/99
employ only 117 casual workers at R1 000 a month. They would have no benefits, like a medical aid or a pension fund, and could not be sure of permanent jobs.

About 50 municipal workers disrupted a Tygerberg executive council meeting in Parow, keeping councillors and officials under siege for more than three hours.

The workers, members of the South African Municipal Workers' Union, and shop stewards from various branches, demanded that a council decision to privatise the cleansing department in Khayelitsha be reviewed with the union's involvement.

A large contingent of municipal law enforcement officers tried to keep the protesters outside the municipal building in Voortrekker Road during the meeting yesterday.

But they forced their way into the council chamber, driving several councillors to their offices.

Andre Adams, chairman of the union's Tygerberg branch, told the remaining committee members that if a private company took over cleansing in Khayelitsha, most of the 230 workers would lose their jobs.

Mr Adams told committee vice-chairman Vuyane Ngcuku that the private company, Billy Hattingh Refuse Removal System, could

employ only 117 casual workers at R1 000 a month. They would have no benefits, like a medical aid or a pension fund, and could not be sure of permanent jobs.

Mr Ngcuku told the protesters their actions were unacceptable, and promised that their grievances would be addressed later.

But union members, chanting and singing, demanded that the committee make an instant ruling that the decision be reviewed at a meeting with the union.

Mr Ngcuku called off the meeting, saying there was no quorum. As councillors gathered in another room to discuss the union's demands, protesters ran amok in the council chamber, sitting in executive seats and chanting slogans.

Officials locked their offices and fled the building.

After about two hours, workers attempted to force their way past law enforcement officers into the room where councillors were talking.

Tempers flared and a brief scuffle broke out, but law enforcement inspectors Floors Coetzee and Arthur Booyens restored order.

Mr Adams said 1 000 municipal employees would march tomorrow from the Bellville Civic Centre to the Parow administration offices.

Western Cape plans houses-and-work project for 700 squatter families

Samantha Sharpe

CAPE TOWN — Western Cape housing MEC Cecil Herandien has unveiled a R1,1bn development plan for the Westlake area bordering Tokai, which will provide homes for 700 squatter families living near the M3 highway.

The project, which encompasses the area at the end of the Cape Town Blue Route and adjoining the Steenberg Golf Estate, will entail a joint venture between the public and private sectors aimed at boosting growth and development in the area.

As part of the redevelopment process, most of the people living in the area would be housed in formal housing with light industrial and commercial development providing the engine room for employment in

ED 17/9/97

(14)

(14)

the area, Herandien said. Once the final redevelopment plan has been agreed upon, an entire upgrade of the area would commence — a process expected to last between three and five years — with social and middle-income residential units being developed in a carefully planned precinct.

He said the Rabie/Cavcor Consortium, which spearheaded and project-managed the successful Marcom Beam development in Mthunton, had been appointed project managers.

The redevelopment and upgrading of Westlake and the provision of housing for the squatter community was aimed at achieving a political and economic solution to the

problem for the national department, the province and the South Peninsula municipality.

"We are adopting the spirit and the principle of empowering previously disadvantaged communities, as well as restructuring the urban fabric, to generate sustainable economic growth and continuing community development," said Herandien.

Ward councillor for the Westlake area Neville Riley said the plan was a "milestone"

that marked the first housing development of the new local authority.

"The area has about 700 families who live in unacceptable conditions. The redevelopment presents an opportunity for these people to be housed in formal housing at no cost to the local ratepayers."

The joint view of the housing ministry, the South Peninsula municipality and Rabie/Cavcor was that, to ensure the success of

projects such as Westlake, it was vital to build an effective and continuing social upliftment programme into the

business plan, Riley said.

"Employment, education, health and recreational facilities are all essential, for without them, there can be no healthy family life and no healthy communities."

"To create and sustain healthy communities, development has to be holistic and people-centred in its approach," he said.

Pride and tears as Langa turns 70

ST (CM) 28/9/97

(10/11)

BABALWA SHOTA

LANGA celebrated its 70th anniversary this week with pride — and tears

While most residents enjoyed the week-long activities to mark the event, 74-year-old Phylis Fuku tearfully recalled the forced removals which gave birth to the township

She was among the hundreds who were uprooted from areas closer to central Cape Town and forced to move to Langa.

The township that has produced sports and entertainment giants like boxer Nika Kumalo and singer Brenda Fassie was this week alive with music, dance and drama.

Among the dignitaries who attended were Cape Town Mayor Theresa Solomon and Anglican Archbishop Njongonkulu Ndungane.

A sober note was struck amid the celebration as Fuku recalled how in 1939 she and her family were forced out of Ndabeni by apartheid.

"It was a very sad time for us. We had to leave a place where there was no crime or racism and were forced into a township that had nothing but mud and water.

"Langa was far from everything and our parents struggled to get to work. There were no schools, no recreation halls and the living conditions were very bad."

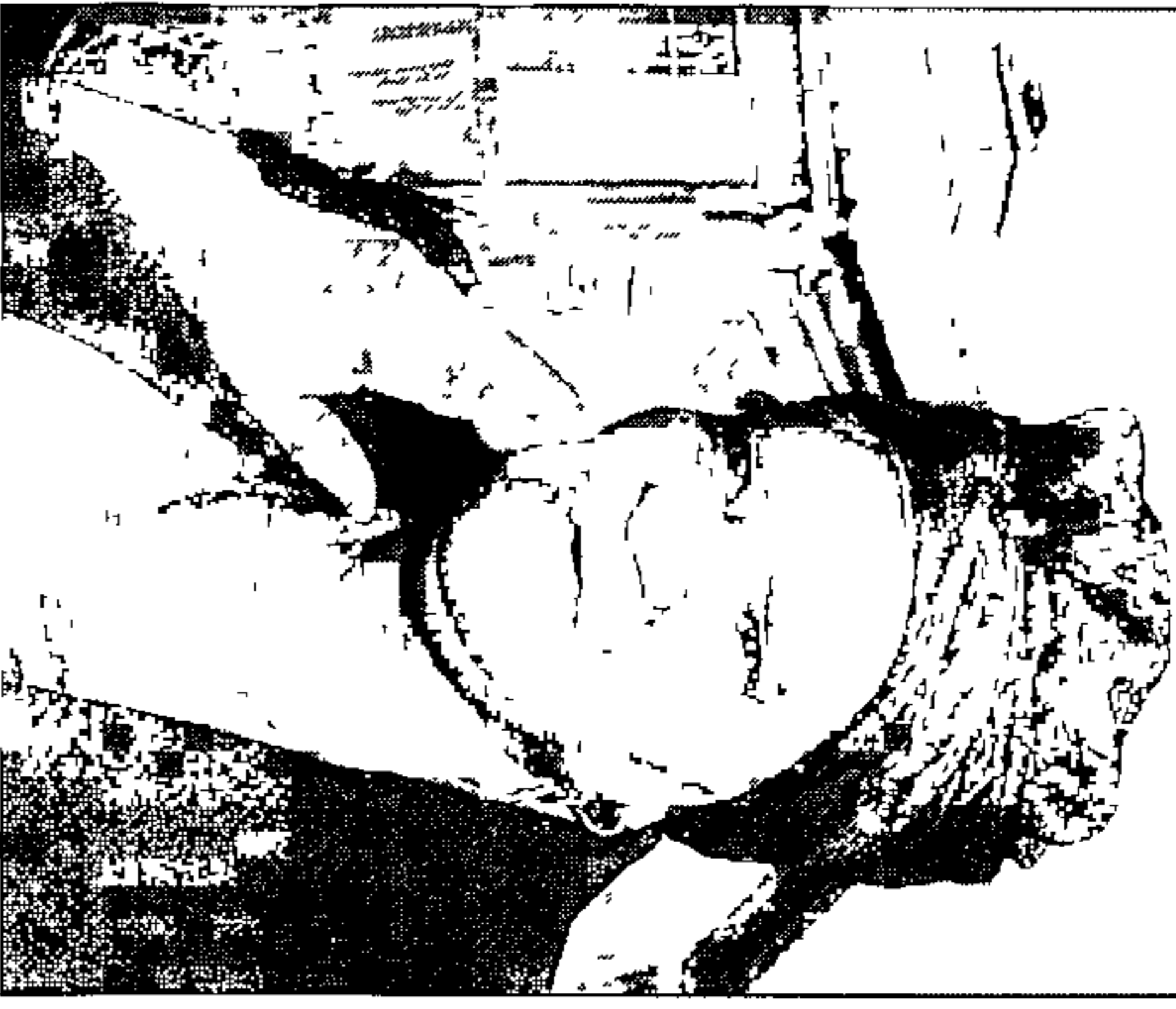
But the families put their despair behind them, battled together and made Langa not only liveable but a memorable place in which to live. Soon the cold and ugly township had been transformed.

The South African Civic Organisation and students' club were among the first social bodies to be established during the 1940s in Langa.

"We built a sports field where there used to be a muck and water. On Thursday and Sunday afternoons we would have ballroom dancing and other indoor activities. On sunny days families would have picnics while watching the men play cricket.

"So, in the end we finally settled down, but we never forgot the years of District Six and Ndabeni," said Fuku.

Made up of labour hostels, four-roomed houses, shacks and a middle-class suburb, Langa now boasts a population of about 100 000 — a far cry from the initial 850 people.



CALL BACK THE PAST: Phylis Fuku talks of the days when she lived in the close-knit community of Ndabeni
Picture: JACK LESTRADE

Fuku, who was on the committee organising the celebration, felt upbeat about the future: "This anniversary is going to bring the people of Langa even closer. We have unearthed a lot of hidden talent here and our main goal is to motivate the women and youth to make Langa a model township."

Plan to merge Eskom with councils Department wants to 'consolidate' electricity supplies

ARL 29/9/91

144

NORMAN JOSEPH
City Reporter

A huge merger between Eskom and the Western Cape's local authorities is on the cards.

The merger will go ahead if a national committee investigating the proposal, and the municipalities involved, give the plan the green light.

Woosey Barnard, deputy director for electricity supply in the national Mineral and Energy Affairs Department, said from Pretoria that similar mergers were in the pipeline throughout the country.

Dr Barnard said the department had

formed the Electrical Restructuring Inter-departmental Committee, known as Eric

He said the committee had a mandate from the Government to merge local authorities countrywide with Eskom, which supplies half the country's electricity

National research by the department showed there were problems throughout South Africa

There were 420 different local authorities licenced to distribute electricity, 2 000 different types of tariff structures, and most municipalities lacked a sound economic base.

Local authorities selling electricity

to their residents last year collectively made a "surplus profit of R2-billion

Dr Barnard said the new committee's ultimate aim was to see electricity supplies "consolidated"

In the Western Cape the committee would try to set up a Regional Electrical Distributor (Red).

The committee would probe the cost-effectiveness of this.

All roleplayers in all provinces would be consulted and taskteams formed to facilitate mergers.

Dr Barnard said that of South Africa's nine provinces, only the Western Cape - which was 83% electrified - and Gauteng had effective supplies

The Eastern Cape and Northern Province urgently needed electricity supplies but had poor infrastructures

The Northern Province, only 66% of which was electrified, was worst off.

The committee's success depended largely on municipalities' willingness to amalgamate with Eskom and to form a uniform tariff structure

Dr Barnard said the committee would also look at the issue of unequal numbers of engineers and electricians operating in different areas

He said some informal settlements had none while affluent areas often had as many as five engineers and 20 electricians on duty.

Residents demand transfer of accounts

NORMAN JOSEPH
City Reporter

Angry residents of Mandalay on the Cape Flats are to ask Public Enterprises Minister Stella Sigcau to transfer electricity supplies and accounts from Eskom to the Cape Town municipality.

Hundreds of residents, mostly members of the South African National Civic Organisation (Sanco), have complained that Eskom charges too much for electricity and people cannot afford to pay their accounts.

Sanco's Mandalay spokesman Barb Mkhontwana said his organisation was

spearheading the anti-Eskom campaign and was in the process of making arrangements to hold talks with the minister.

Residents said Eskom asked for a basic charge in addition to charging for electricity used and that the amount depended on whether people had an econo-meter or the normal switchboard panel

Mr Mkhontwana said Eskom was "ripping people off" and that the Cape Town municipality's tariffs were more affordable

Eskom's public relations officer Carin de Villiers said the company had a lawful licence to sell and to supply

electricity and that protesters demanding the transfer were in the minority

"We can't hand over large numbers of staff and assets to Cape Town municipality," she said

"The whole industry is set to change but it will take from six to 12 months and then will merge with the local authorities."

Ms De Villiers said large bills were outstanding and that "at this stage we are not going to hand over to Cape Town municipality"

Meanwhile, Mr Mkhontwana said Sanco would take legal action against Mitchell's Plain police for wrongfully arresting some of its members for

allegedly trespassing at Eskom's Mandalay branch on September 18

Sanco supporters and police clashed during a protest march against Eskom's allegedly high electricity accounts

Mr Mkhontwana said charges against some of Sanco's supporters had been withdrawn and that they had laid assault charges against the police This was confirmed by Mitchell's Plain police captain Desmond Laung.

Captain Laung said trespassing cases against many other Sanco supporters were scheduled for court trials on November 3 at the Mitchell's Plain magistrate's court.

Cape Town to get new rates in 1999

(124)

BD 29/9/97

David Greybe

CAPE TOWN — The city of Cape Town has embarked on a two-year campaign to introduce a new property rating system by July 1 1999, which it is confident will avoid the pitfalls which have dogged other cities

"We are not going to impose rates which are unaffordable," Cape Town executive director corporate finance Philip van Ryneveld said yesterday

"There will be swings in what people pay in rates arising both from the new rating system as well the fact that the current valuation system is 18 years old," he said "However we will ensure that the swings are not so great as to shock people because that would not help anybody"

The city of Cape Town was aware it had inherited a rates system which was "clearly inequitable" but, Van Ryneveld said, it was equally important "to keep everybody on board"

He was confident that Cape Town would not have a repeat of what happened in Sandton, for instance, where ratepayers revolted following huge rates increases

He said the city of Cape Town had decided to replace the current, but outdated and varying, rates system based on land and improvements with a new rates system based only on land value

However, in the area of commercial property the city wanted "to ensure a reasonably good correlation between the rental value of commercial property and the rates payable on such prop-

erty", Van Ryneveld said

It was possible that the new rates system for Cape Town's 250 000 properties would be implemented in a phased manner The valuation process was expected to be completed by next June, a year before implementation

"We have realised that rates changes can cause a lot of resistance, so our approach has been to do some careful modelling to evaluate the impact of the new system," Van Ryneveld said

The city was also looking at the possible introduction of "mechanisms to help elderly people who are unable to pay the full amount under the new rates system"

The city would also implement a rebating system "to create fairness".

The city of Cape Town consists of a substantial section of the former Cape Town municipality, the former Ikapa (which includes Nyanga, Guguletu and Langa), Crossroads and Pinelands As a result, different rates systems based on different valuation dates operated in the various local authorities

"If the city had decided to base the new rates system on land and improvements it would have taken us into the new millennium," Van Ryneveld said Most properties were last valued in 1979, other areas in 1974 and 1984

The Democratic Party-controlled Cape Town municipality undertook a new valuation in 1990, but due to a "political storm" over the proposed new rates the system was never implemented However, the valuations had proved helpful, Van Ryneveld said

Con men grab 'deposits' from homeless

ARL 29/9/97 (124)

CITY EDITOR

Township families are being swindled out of large sums of money with false promises of houses in the Integrated Serviced Land Project.

Project manager James Slabbert says no one needs to pay to be registered for a site. About 20 families have already been conned into handing over R500

deposits on the false promise of houses, only to find out they have been taken for a ride.

The presidential lead project will ultimately provide about 40 000 houses to people living in informal settlements and backyards in Crossroads, Guguletu, Langa, Nyanga, KTC, Brown's Farm and Philippi.

Mr Slabbert said no one had the right to sell houses or accept money for getting families listed on the

beneficiary registers.

Cases had been reported of people coming families out of money and taking their identity documents, saying that in return for deposits of R500 they would get houses.

When the families arrived on the appointed date to collect house keys, they discovered they had been tricked.

Only people living within the boundaries of the project for at least

two years qualify for sites, which are allocated by a consultative forum.

There are strict beneficiary identification and registration processes which involve reconstruction and development programme forums, councillors and communities.

Those wanting more information about the project should contact their RDP forums or project facilitation manager Mbuyi Nombembe at 344121.

Civil service rent crackdown ⁽²⁴⁾

CLIVE SAWYER
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

ARG 3/10/97

Government officials who owed thousands of rands in rent arrears at Cape Town's parliamentary villages paid up this week after public works officials changed the locks on 52 dwellings.

Four officials who have not paid are still locked out.

The drastic action was taken after earlier revelations that the state was owed thou-

sands of rands in rent arrears for accommodation at Acacia Park, Laboria Park and Pelican Park

Fifty-four lessees, mostly at Acacia Park, were three months or more in arrears and owed a total of R59 016. After the locks were changed, 48 people made arrangements to settle their arrears, two paying in full.

A Public Works official confirmed that R16 026 had been paid and the remaining R42 989 would be recovered in the next two months. No Members of Parliament were involved in the arrears crackdown.

W Cape builds 36 000 houses

CLIVE SAWYER
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

ARG 9/10/97

Almost 36 000 houses have been built or are being built in the Western Cape thanks to the Government's subsidy scheme introduced three years ago

Housing Minister Sanki Mthembu-Mahanyele told Parliament yesterday that 11 297 individual ownership subsidies had been approved by the Western Cape provincial housing board last year

A further 7 721 subsidies had been approved in the first seven months of this year

Responding to Democratic Party MP William Mnisi, she said 161 people who bought formerly state-owned houses in the Western Cape after 1994 were in arrears, owing a total of R363 715

She said about 9 000 units were owned by

(124)
the National Housing Board

Details of housing owned by municipalities was not readily available.

The Department of Public Works was investigating state property assets, including housing

Since 1994, 388 units had been sold, of which 293 had been purchased with state loans

There were 161 people in arrears, owing R363 715 This pushed the total owed on state loans to R3 104 185.

Ms Mthembu-Mahanyele said Ernst and Young had been appointed as consultants to help the Western Cape Housing Department to update and prepare assets for transfer to municipalities.

Debt collection was part of the firm's contract.

"Attention is currently being given to the collection of the debts," she said.

Move to help Blue Downs homeowners

NORMAN JOSEPH

CITY REPORTER

ARG 9/10/97

The cash-strapped area of Blue Downs, where about nine houses are repossessed each month, now has its own advice centre to help curb the spiralling number of foreclosures.

Provincial housing director and Mortgage Indemnity Fund spokesman Anton Fuchs said the centre, which opened this week, had the full backing of the Government

Operations will be headed by Oostenberg Municipality National Party councillor Gawa Samuels and attorneys and community workers from the Blue Downs Community-Based Organisation

The sprawling 10-year-old area is known for the many clashes between residents and court officials over the repossession of houses from families far in arrears with bond repayments.

Over the years residents and banks have also been at loggerheads over prices and instalments.

Ms Samuels said two houses were repossessed last week, leaving the occupants destitute

She said homeowners could approach the centre for advice and information about bond arrears, repossessions and "housing education", especially for potential buyers

Ms Samuels said low-cost housing projects by the municipality were in the pipeline in West Bank and Happy Valley in Blue Downs where more than 5 000 houses were planned For more information, call Ms Samuels on 909 5809

Hammer falls on homes of 56 rates defaulters

Civic chief slams council for 'complete overkill' in auctioning ⁽¹²⁴⁾ houses

ART 16/10/97

SHARKEY ISAACS
STAFF REPORTER

Fifty-six first-time house owners lost their homes to the auctioneer's gavel in the 1996-97 financial year, when the Cape Town municipality clamped down on 287 who had defaulted on rates and water bills.

Properties were attached, then auctioned in a drastic step to recoup arrears. Most of the 287 facing this threat settled their arrears in the final stages of the process and 31 made satisfactory arrangements, saving their houses.

Anwah Nagra, chairman of the District Six Civic Association, condemned the step as "complete overkill".

"No consideration was given to the possibility that some of the people might be losing their houses for trivial amounts. It happened not because they couldn't meet their bond repayments, but for debts."

He said it was shocking that most of the houses auctioned were bought back by the banks or building societies holding the bonds, or by the Cape Town municipality.

"The timing is also completely

wrong, because it has come when most people from formerly disadvantaged communities are still getting used to a culture of paying accounts.

"There is no sympathy, and legislation should be tabled to prevent such harsh steps," he said.

While most affected people were reluctant to talk about their plight, Yusuif Bean of New Woodlands in Mitchell's Plain, agreed to speak about his situation.

Mr Bean almost lost his house twice in four months after two notices of sales in execution. His problems began two years ago when he moved into his house and had to adjust to paying his bond, and accounts for electricity, water and rates, as well as meeting normal monthly expenses.

Battling to make ends meet, he failed to pay some rates, then some water accounts. He ran up arrears of about R2 500, which, with legal costs, soared to R4 074, 55.

The municipality sent him a final demand for rates.

He offered to pay R200 a month, and was referred to the municipality's lawyers. His offer was not accepted and the sheriff of the court delivered the first sale in execution notice in January.

He went to see the lawyers again and was told he had to pay R1 500 immediately, which he could not do. He offered them R250 a month and five payments, from March to July, were accepted.

In spite of his having paid R1 250 towards the debt by July, he was served the second sale in execution notice that month.

But, after a visit to his MP, Mary Turok, the second notice was set aside and he is continuing to pay off his debt.

Bonteheuvel resident C L Hoffman had a similar experience.

She said she bought her house in Elder Street from her terminally ill mother about a year ago.

At the time she was still studying and was unaware relatives living in the house were not paying the rates. She found out when she got a final demand for R1 300 last December.

The sheriff arrived in January and served her with a sale in execution notice, and she found legal costs had pushed her account to R2 334, 12.

The municipality's lawyers wanted a minimum of R1 000 up front, but she said she could not afford this and would prefer to pay off the arrears. Ms Hoffman continued paying,

believing her offer had been accepted but found to her horror it had not when the sheriff returned in July and pinned the second sale in execution notice on her door while she was asleep.

"I opened my front door and found potential buyers outside inspecting my house. Some even had the nerve to ask to look inside."

She again approached the lawyers, who refused to give her a hearing, then the municipality's chief accountant. He said he could do nothing as Bonteheuvel now fell under the Tygerberg municipality.

Ms Hoffman offered the Tygerberg municipality R1 000, but it was refused.

In desperation she borrowed the money owing from relatives and friends and paid the debt in full "to get everything over and done with."

The chairman of Cape Town City Council's housing committee, Sidney Neate, said affected house owners should not let the process reach the stage at which they could lose their houses before discussing their personal problems.

He said it was very difficult for him to stop sales in execution once they had been set in motion.



Reprieve: Yusuif Bean and his son, Inerzan, outside the house in New Woodlands, Mitchell's Plain, that they nearly lost.

BRENTON BEACH

Cape Flats women build new lives together

3(124) M+G 24-30/10/97

Gustav Thiel

The Victoria Mxenge Housing Savings Scheme is proof that all it takes to overcome dire poverty and a pressing need for shelter is courage and dedication.

When Patricia Matolengwe started the scheme in 1992 she had no idea of how far-reaching her initiative would be. Last Friday, International Day for the Eradication of Poverty, she received a major United Nations development programme award for her contribution to alleviating poverty on the Cape Flats.

More importantly, with her drive and foresight, she succeeded in lifting the spirits of 11 desperately poor sin-

gle mothers and convinced them that it was possible to own their own houses. "In a real way, we were the poorest of the poor — we were single mothers, without real homes and with uncertain futures," says Matolengwe.

The women, each with an average income of less than R800 a month and at least three dependents, decided they could start making a difference to their situation by saving at least 50c per day.

Their dream was to save enough ultimately to build their own houses. As news of their initiative spread, other women on the Cape Flats decided to join the scheme, which is now officially part of the South African Homeless People's Federa-

tion. Matolengwe started negotiating at the end of 1992 for a piece of land on the Flats that was being used as a waste dumping ground.

The Catholic Church, which owned the land, decided to donate it to Matolengwe. "Four of the women were put on a brickmaking scheme to prepare for the day when we would start building. By then we had saved R1 200 and put it in the bank."

Scheme members — today numbering 280 women and six men — had to decide whether they wanted to settle on the Cape Flats. Only 148 decided to stay, and were each given a plot on the three vacant hectares donated by the church.

Together with People's Dialogue,

a housing non-governmental organisation, the women planned their new settlement, complete with an early care centre and mobile clinic. Today three-quarters of the houses are nearing completion and almost half the scheme members have moved into their houses.

The houses, which would normally cost R35 000, were erected for less than R10 000, because the women did most of the work themselves.

But Matolengwe still lives in her three-roomed shack in a nearby squatter settlement. "In most cases people who are in the forefront always benefit first when the tree bears fruit. This is fine, because we know we will all get our share of the land."



Geraldine Shibambo, a shop-floor steward in Brits, is one of the first recipients of an RHLF-financed loan from start-up Tshepong Financial Services. Jack Tladi of Tshepong discusses her plans to completely renovate her home in five years, beginning with a new fence.

Strides made in financing housing for SA's low earners

(124)

After years in a shack, a scream of joy

Nov 28/11/97

By EDDIE JAVIYA

Geraldine Shibambo screams with joy as Jack Tladi from Tshepong Financial Services tells her that her application for finance has been successful. She slowly walks away from the cheering neighbours, with her face held in her hands. At last, the shop-steward at Autocable in Brits and the mother of three children will build her house with bricks.

She has been living in a shack for about three years and hers is one of more than 200 000 local households who are feeling the impact of delivery.

"It has finally happened," says Shibambo with tears in her eyes. "My prayers have been answered and I will build a proper house for my children."

"I am grateful for what has been done for me. I know it is through the Government's effort that people like myself will at last live in decent houses."

Shibambo is one of the first five recipients of a Rural Housing Loan Fund (RHLF) financed loan from Tshepong Financial Services - one of the intermediaries that give loans to low income earners. She hopes to complete her house in five years. She earned too little to get a loan from a bank.

The National Housing Finance Corporation (NHFC) enables low-income families to purchase or rent homes, or improve their existing homes, by channelling funds to the appropriate intermediaries who service them.

Tshepong Services is a retail institution which receives finance from the Rural Housing Loan Fund (RHLF), a specialised fund initially capitalised by the German development Kreditanstalt and managed under contract by the NHFC. The NHFC is a develop-

ment finance institution, owned and funded by the Government.

It promotes access to finance through intermediaries for people who qualify for government housing subsidies and have limited access to credit and facilitates the funding of two specific groups of intermediaries.

According to Pakie Mphahlele, an analyst, the RHLF provides funds to retail lenders and intermediaries who work with people in small towns, villages, agricultural areas and rural settlement of 40 000 people.

"It enables lower-income families to have access to loans to provide flexible solutions for building or improving their homes in rural areas," he says.

"It operates through carefully selected micro-lenders who are finding innovative ways to make home improvement finance affordable."

He says RHLF has given retailers R40-million which will benefit 12 000 rural households. "We provide finance to legal bodies such as non-bank retail lenders, housing associations, private and public companies (including Section 21 companies), co-operatives, banks and mutual banks."

"We also offer risk-sharing finance for pilot loan schemes to encourage the innovative provision of end-user finance in unknown markets," he adds.

Meanwhile the Ministry of Housing has released statistics on subsidised housing construction, which detail the number of houses to be built and subsidies approved between March 1994 and September this year.

Gauteng must build 243 000 houses for its citizens, KwaZulu Natal has a backlog of 195 000, Eastern Cape must provide housing for 152 000 and Western Cape has a target of 114 000 to meet.

Township's water runs dry in debts dispute

Row over R2-m subsidy councillor says was destined to cover arrears

AKT 30/10/19 (T124)

BLACKMAN NGORO
STAFF REPORTER

Residents of Zweelhe township at Hermannus, without water for two weeks after the supply was cut by the town council, are forced to beg for water from neighbours or walk long distances to the local school.

For Nonkonzo Ndlbongo, 19, getting water means having to swallow her pride and beg from her neighbours. Two or three times a day, she goes next door with her white bucket. Others not so lucky have to walk nearly a kilometre to the school.

The Hermannus Town Council, which cut off their supply, has in fact previously come in for praise from Water Affairs Minister Kader Asmal for its water conservation programme.

Earlier this year, in the town's publicity brochure, Professor Asmal described the programme as "the most comprehensive water conservation initiative for an urban area in the history of South Africa".

"The greater Hermannus water conservation programme is showing not only that this can be done but that it can be done in a largely painless way."

Town clerk Theunus van Rooyen said the Zweelhe residents' water had been cut off to force them to reduce arrears on their accounts.

"You cannot run a council without money. It's going very badly in other councils at the moment," Mr Van Rooyen said.

Councillor for the area Amos Ngqamni said residents' arrears for rates, water and electricity ranged

between R3 000 and R6 000 a person but he disagreed that cutting off the water supply was the answer.

"This is not the way to go about getting people to pay. Most of these people work as domestics and on temporary construction sites. They can hardly afford to look after their families."

Meanwhile, a row has erupted between National Party and African National Congress councillors in Hermannus over how the NP-controlled council spent a R2-million subsidy given to councils after 1994 to write off debts owed by disadvantaged communities.

Mr Ngqamni says he is convinced the amount was to cancel debts in communities such as his.

"They cannot give us an adequate explanation as to how the money was spent. Any talks we have had to this effect have broken down," he said.

"We suspect it was used for development in white areas in spite of it being earmarked for disadvantaged communities."

However, Mr Van Rooyen counters that the R2 million was not for individuals but was to service bulk debts to bodies such as Eskom.

"Everyone started with a clean slate in 1994. All debts were written off at that time and these are new arrears, since 1994. We paid debts incurred by our coloured people and also those incurred by the Zweelhe municipality."

When Cape Argus visited Ms Ndlbongo in the township it was mid-morning and she had not yet had a bath. "My whole life has changed. Even if I take the councillor with me to the council offices to negotiate for a

respite, I will still be unable to reduce my arrears as I'm unemployed. Things can't go on like this, the Government must help us cope or talk to this council."

The council, composed of nine NP and seven ANC councillors, was coping with situations in a way unchanged from the past, said Mr Ngqamni.

"They are verkramppe. They have recently built about 200 houses through the government subsidy scheme but what we want is land to build our own houses."

"They won't agree."

He said the last significant development was in 1990 when the Independent Development Trust serviced 463 stands on land it bought from the council.

Mr Van Rooyen said the council was not a welfare department. "If residents cannot afford to pay even the indigent rates or the sub-economic ones for the most disadvantaged people, probably R20 or so a month, then there is a big problem."

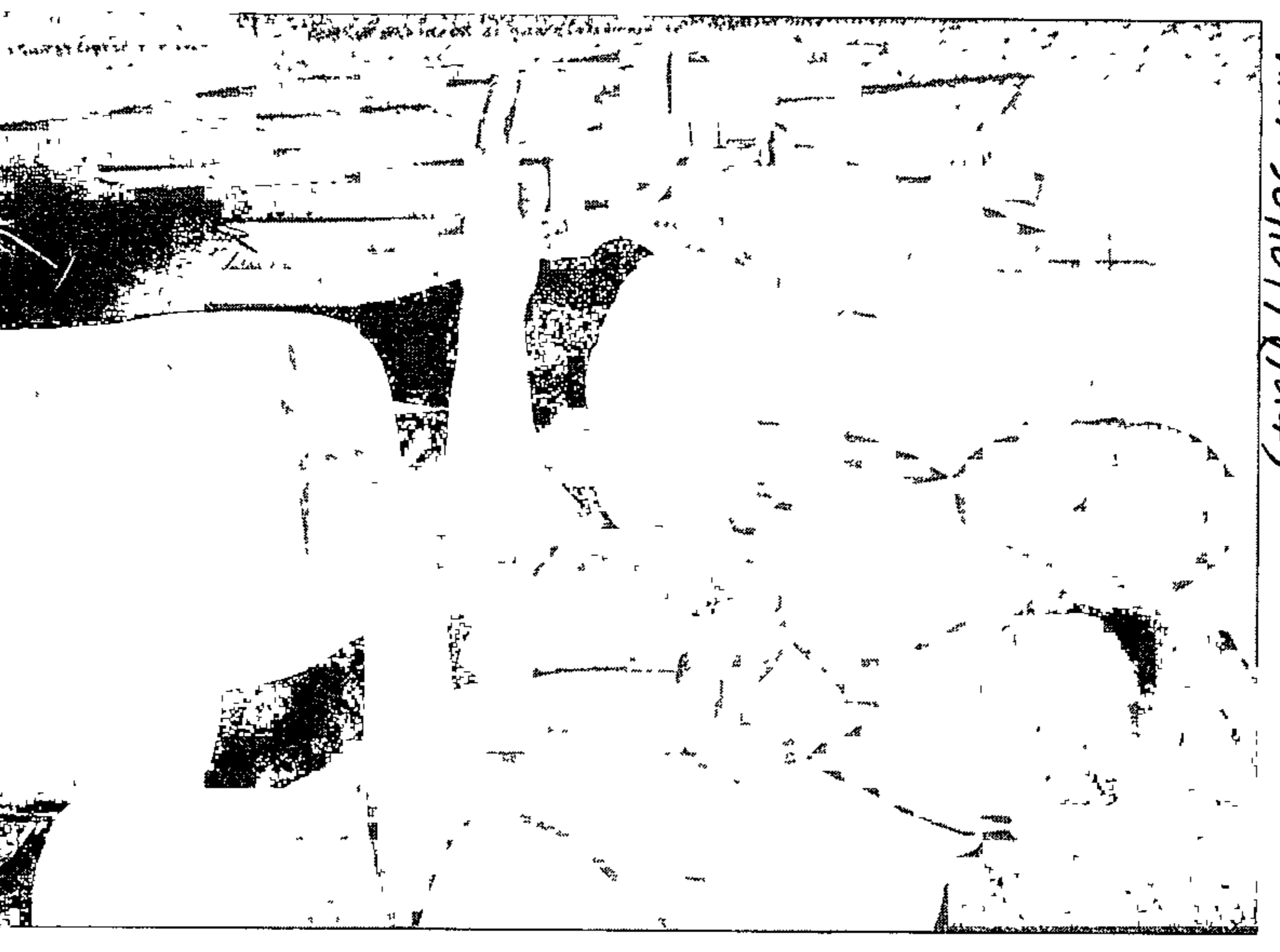
"The state has to get involved. People have asked us not to take them to lawyers but nobody can get anything for free. They have to go to the welfare department."

He said he knew tempers had flared and said he sympathised with the people affected by the water cuts, but that they had all been given notice.

The Cape Town Legal Resource Centre has been asked to step in and is seeking an urgent court interdict against the council, said the LRC's Vincent Saldanha. "This is a violation of the basic human rights of these low-income earners," he said.



Forced to beg: Paulina Kune, 27, gets her water from a neighbour



No water: councillor Amos Ngqamni and Nonkonzo Ndlbongo, 19, at one of the dry taps

Sheriff's men grab baby as evictions turn ugly

ARG 30/10/97

(124)

MOSES MACKAY

A six-month-old baby, wrapped in a duvet, was taken by sheriff's officials from her mother's home together with the furniture as evictions continued in Mandela Park, Khayelitsha.

Gloria Skomo pleaded with the officials to give back her child, but they ignored her. She struggled and wept as she walked alongside the court officials.

The baby was recovered, alive and unharmed, amid broken furniture by community police.

Residents trying to stop the evictions ran in all directions yesterday when police, with dogs, teargassed and chased them. One woman was badly bitten by a police dog.

Emotions ran high as more than 10 residents were evicted from their homes in Blocks 22 and 23 in Mandela Park.

Community leaders eventually defused the situation.

Ben Nkwali, a member of the South African National Civics Organisation, said Sanco had held talks with the lender to try to resolve the housing debt problem.

NBS Bank, he said, was not co-operative and was unwilling to talk to the residents in Mandela Park.

Resident Sebenzile Ngedu was among those evicted for failing to keep up bond repayments to NBS Bank.

He was unable to continue paying due to unemployment. "Where am I going to stay now?" asked Mr Ngedu, a father of four.

Vuyelwa Jacobs, who was not among those evicted, said in 1991 President Mandela had told people in the area they should not pay their bonds because they were matchbox houses, too small for families.



HANNES THURAT

Tidy team: Samwu members help co-worker Bathandwa Sipakisi, with wheelbarrow, collect refuse in Khayelitsha to highlight a campaign against privatisation of municipal services

Protest spells big clean-up for Khayelitsha

LENORE OLIVER
STAFF REPORTER

About 3 000 municipal workers streamed in to clean the streets of Khayelitsha in defiance of moves to privatise municipal services.

The SA Municipal Workers Union (Samwu), armed with spades, wheelbarrows, compactors and black bags, arrived in truckloads yesterday at Sites B and C to tidy the area and collect waste for five hours.

These areas were targeted because refuse collection was the poorest. Samwu has embarked on a nation-

al campaign to oppose privatisation of municipal services on the grounds that the quality of services delivered to communities will suffer.

The union also fears that many of its members could lose their jobs

Yesterday's action was intended to demonstrate Samwu's contribution to the Masakhane campaign, and to show the Tygerberg council that with the "political will and the re-organising of the workforce, local government workers are able to provide an effective and efficient service"

Mark Tinkler, chairman of the Cape Metropolitan Samwu branch,

said members wanted to show local authorities that it was not necessary to privatise - there were resources

"We are trying to say that we have the resources within the existing structure," he said

"The workers just have to be re-organised and redeployed in order to have efficient service within the City of Tygerberg," Mr Tinkler said

Samwu felt that privatisation would widen the gap between councils and communities, and has suggested alternatives to privatisation such as re-organising municipal structures and giving communities

greater control over the allocation of resources

The union had suggested a pilot project for delivery of services focused on re-organising the workplace by improving relationships between municipal management, municipal employees and councils

Tygerberg officials say the jobs of Samwu members have not been jeopardised, and that the substructure is simply extending its services to areas deprived for many years

Mr Tinkler said the union would investigate other forms of action if its demands were not met

ARG 30/10/97 (232) (124)



Thrown out: evicted residents at Elitha Park, Khayelitsha, stand with their possessions outside their home

MANDLA MNYAKAMA

Anger as another 23 families evicted

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Hostile and resentful residents watched as another 23 families were evicted from their homes in Elitha Park, Khayelitsha, for falling behind in their bond repayments.

The angry residents yesterday accused court officials and police of stealing money during the evictions

(124) and claimed they had a "negative attitude" to residents, especially the home loan defaulters

Court official Phillip Johannes said residents should report their complaints to police. Anyone found guilty of misconduct would be dealt with accordingly, he said.

Among those evicted yesterday were July Jarithi, 57, and wife Eunice, who live at 24 Ntlazane Street

and bought their house for R65 000 but defaulted on their instalments

Mr Jarithi said "Obviously I don't feel good about the evictions. We want to pay for our houses but we don't have money or jobs."

Macdonald Ngaba, a member of the Western Cape Civic Association, called for government intervention to address the crisis. "The people don't feel secure," he said.

ARG 31110/97

Rip-off landlords made to pay back millions

WILLEM STEENKAMP AND PAUL OLIVER

Unscrupulous Western Cape landlords who have been overcharging for rent-controlled dwellings for years now face paying back millions of rands to their tenants.

Landlords are already being made to cough up after the Metropolitan Rent Board advised angry tenants they could claim what they had been overcharged.

The board confirmed that a number of tenants had already taken their claims to courts – and won. A rent board spokesman said claims

for larger sums could go to the Cape High Court. In some instances landlords who own dozens of properties could face bankruptcy.

Typically, a landlord would let a rent-controlled house for a market-related sum – higher than the prescribed rent – then increase this without the board's permission.

For years hundreds, possibly thousands of tenants in houses and flats in the Peninsula have been ripped off.

Some landlords have been charging rent of up to five times the prescribed rate.

Tenants have said that landlords

are using gangster tactics to force them to vacate these dwellings so they can be used more profitably.

Some landlords are suspected of hiring vandals to virtually demolish a dwelling after informing tenants they must move out for renovations.

The site is then sold for development.

Money-hungry landlords are also kicking out tenants to let apartments or houses to immigrants and refugees prepared to pay more for rent-controlled properties.

In one instance shots were allegedly fired into the bedroom of an elderly woman living in a rent-

controlled dwelling to frighten her into moving out so that illegal immigrants could move in.

Board chairman Koos Theron said that with only one inspector, it was impossible for the board to cope with the number of complaints it received – some from as far afield as George, Mossel Bay and Worcester.

The Community Rental Tenant Forum has appealed to Housing Minister Sankie Mthembu Mahanyele to intervene, calling for the board to be restructured to make it more representative of the community.

AKG 1/11/97
More reports, pictures on pages 14 and 15

Slum-lords grow fat: by exploiting the poor's need for homes

Rent Control Act is being ignored

ART HIGG
PAUL OULIER

(144)

Cape Town's "slum-lords" are cashing in by charging high rentals to tenants living in squalor, many of them with nowhere else to live

Tenants, including impoverished pensioners, are too afraid to complain in case they are evicted from homes they have occupied for more than 70 years in some cases

A Saturday Argus investigation also revealed shocking stories of intimidation by unscrupulous landlords who forced pensioners from their homes in order to sell the properties at huge profits

In some cases tenants were being intimidated to such an extent that they were scared to talk or be identified for fear of retribution by their landlords

Claims have been made that some landlords hire criminals to burn the properties down in order to sell them for industrial use

Houses are often deliberately left to be vandalised after tenants have been evicted so that the land can be sold to developers who are willing to pay exorbitant prices

According to a spokesman for the Metropolitan Rent Board, the bedroom of an elderly woman tenant in Salt River was riddled with bullets during the night in an attempt to force her from her home

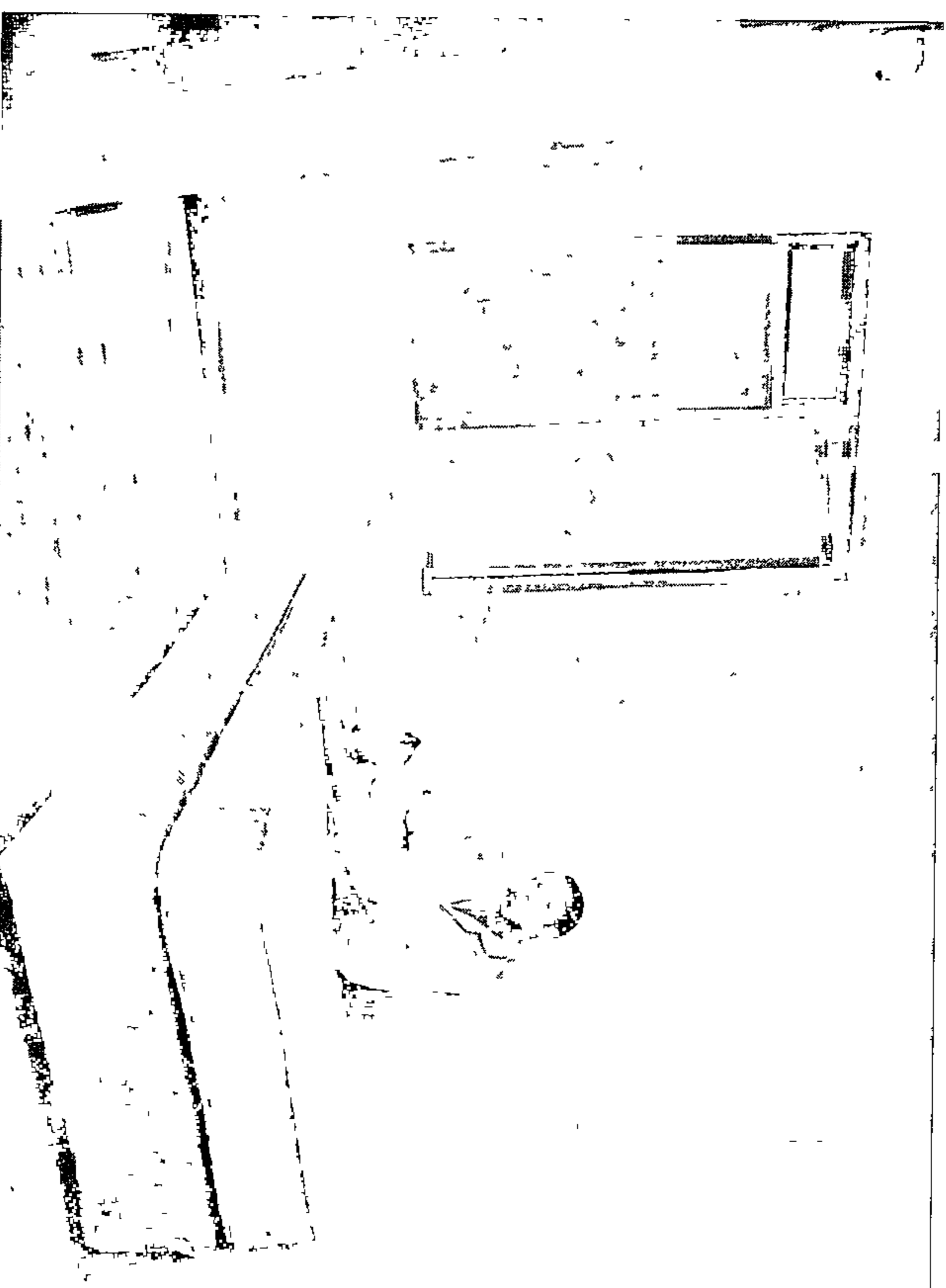
One landlord rented out dozens of houses which have been allowed to fall into a derelict state. Tenants were, however, forced to pay rentals determined by the landlords who disregarded the Rent Control Act

A Saturday Argus news team found that pensioners and families earning between R400 and R2 000 a



Don't let the roof come down: Fahema Colloppen stares at the roof that she fears may collapse at any minute

BRENTON BEACH



Flipped off: technician student leader Fanie Maene in a small room which is rented out to students for R650 a month

month were living in dismal conditions which often presented a safety and health hazard

In Salt River two families living in two separate houses belonging to one owner, had to share a single outside toilet in a yard

In some of the houses, electric wiring was in such a state of neglect

that it posed a serious fire hazard

Often tenants were forced to make expensive renovations at their own expense to make the properties livable - without being compensated by the landlords

A family of nine was found living in a disused cafe at 27b London Road, Salt River. They had been promised

for eight years by the landlord that the building would be renovated

Inside makeshift rooms were created by prefab partitioning

"We are paying R300 a month with no kitchen facilities and one outside toilet without any flushing facilities."

Continues on opposite page

Tenants are too afraid to complain in case they are evicted

(124) AR 4/11/97

From previous page

said tenant Edward Sheldon

"The landlord has continuously promised to renovate the property, but nothing has come of it yet."

Pensioner Keeleher Ramsay, 87, who has been living at 34 Greet Street, Salt River, for the past 40 years, recently had a narrow escape when the back door of her rented home fell on her head, injuring her seriously.

"I have been begging the owner for years to fix up the door but all he did was to make promises. After the door fell on my head I was badly injured and had to go to the doctor."

"Although he offered to pay the doctor's bill, the door has still not been fixed."

"Everything that looks new in this house was done by me at my own expense just to make it livable," Mrs Ramsay said.

In a house on the corner of Foundry and Portland streets in Salt River, disgruntled technician student leader Fanie Meane told Saturday Argus that students were paying up to R650 a month for a bedroom of 3m by 2m.

"Most of the rooms had been partitioned off to create more rooms. After some of the students next door complained about the dismal conditions, the owner simply chased them away and changed the locks on the doors."

Community Rental Tenant Forum (CRTF) vice-chairman Mo Joolay appealed to tenants living in houses built before 1949 to contact the Forum so an inspection of the property could be made.

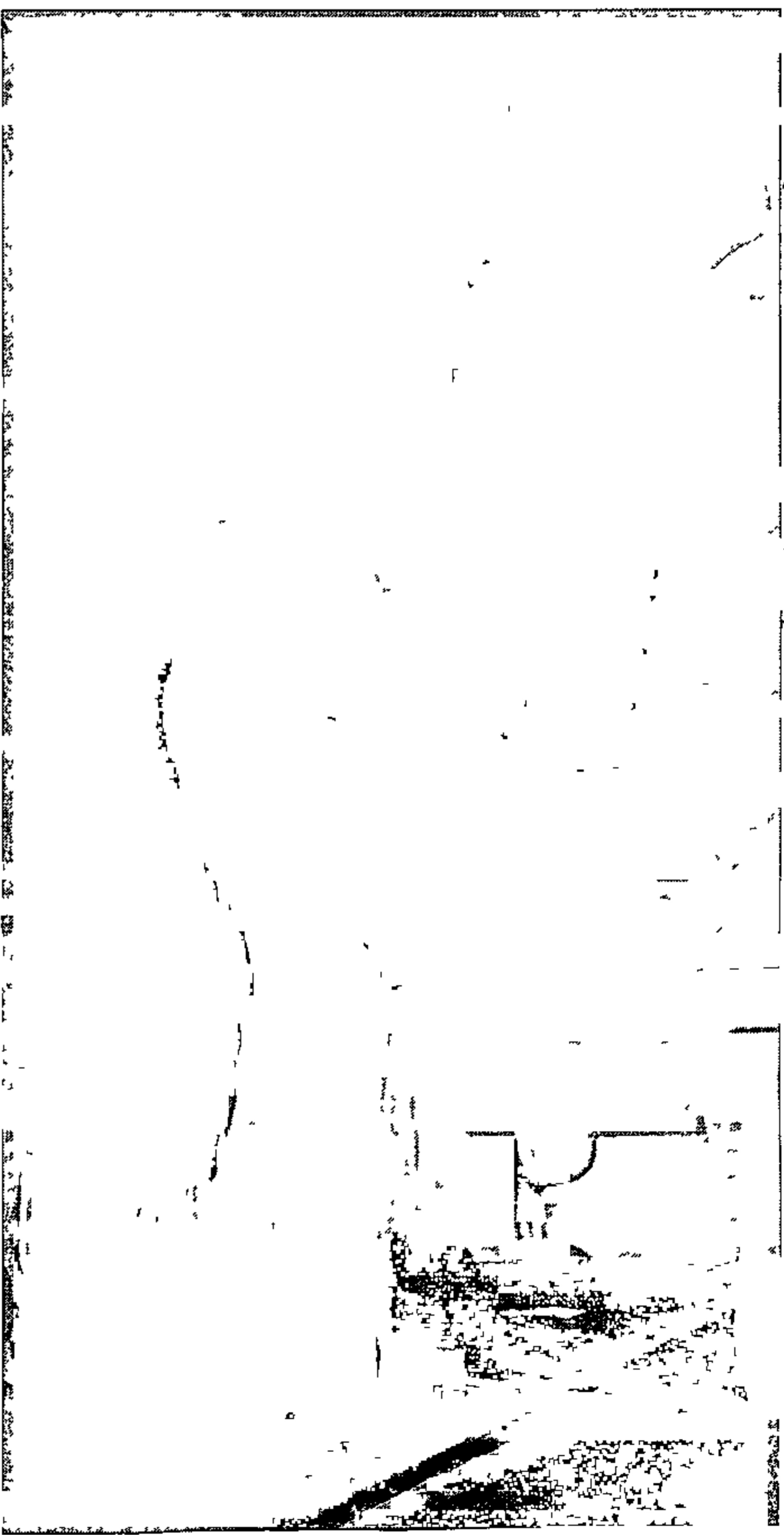
"All tenants who think they are paying too much, or who are being harassed by their landlords, can contact us at 47 7774 or 47 1658."

"Every Monday a meeting is held at Community House in Salt River Road, Salt River, and all tenants are welcome to attend."

"We have also prepared a petition for tenants living in decontrolled houses to sign so that these houses can be placed under the wings of the Metropolitan Rent Board," he said.



Converted: Community Rental Tenant Forum vice-chairman Mo Joolay at the entrance to a shop that has served as a home for more than eight years



Falling apart: tenants are obliged to renovate the homes they rent at their own expense



Derelict: Community Rental Tenant Forum treasurer Ismael Modack says he has spent a vast amount of money on making his home livable

Evictions on hold as Khayelitsha residents get chance

MOSES MACKAY
SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Evictions in Khayelitsha have been suspended to allow residents to make arrangements to resume the bond repayments on their homes.

This has been confirmed by Servicon Housing Solutions which acts as a facilitator between bond holder

NBS Bank and home owners

Servicon managing director Dennis Creighton said NBS Bank had a number of properties in Khayelitsha and it had been trying to get clients to accept a proposal either to buy the property back or to join a "right size" programme

The "right size" programme was for people who could not afford the houses they were in and who would

be allowed to pay a rental before being moved to houses they could afford

Mr Creighton said the bank's clients had not been honouring their bond repayments for years

"We are trying to resolve that and evictions have been suspended providing people come forward and start paying," Mr Creighton said.

The SA National Civic Organisa-

tion had responded positively to this arrangement, he said

Mr Creighton added that his organisation could prevent evictions if people came forward and accepted the programme.

"What is not acceptable is people occupying properties without paying.

"People should respond early rather than wait for the sheriff of the court. I think evictions will continue

if residents don't come forward or default on arrangements made with institutions," Mr Creighton said.

In a fax to the Cape Argus, Trevor Oliver, NBS Bank general manager mortgage lending and savings administration said too many interventions were perpetuating the problem of keeping people in houses when they should not be there. This affected the entire market

Since the repossession of these homes, repeated approaches by the bank had been ignored and occupants had continued to refuse to come to any financial agreement. The bank had no alternative but to invoke the due process of the law because the occupants were in breach of the law

"Evictions will always be a last resort when an occupant refuses to negotiate with the bank or pay NBS Bank follow the normal process that spans many months and in some cases years before reaching the point where evictions are carried out.

"The behaviour of these people makes a mockery of the vast majority of the owners who are either honouring their obligations in full, or if they are experiencing financial difficulties, are discussing their problems with the bank," Mr Oliver said.

to pay bond arrears
ARC 9/11/07

For richer, for poorer: the valley's search for harmony

Paupers, millionaires – and the wonders of nature

ARG 4/11/97 (124)

INSIDE STORY

In the second of three reports on Noordhoek valley, **MICHAEL MORRIS** finds significant consensus on stricter developmental controls



From Ou Kaapseweg, above Noordhoek the southern panorama of the valley exposes the elements of an environment that in many respects is a microcosm of the Peninsula

Between the glimmering Atlantic on the right, and the smudged olive topography of Blakkloofrant the ridge concealing Fish Hoek on the left is a landscape of different even jarring features

The estates and stabled small holdings defined by avenues of trees or ranch style fencing are quite distinct from the compact pastiche of comfy looking middle-class homes

Towards Kommetjie, the long roofs of light industrial plants are visible amid the gum trees and closer in is the idle expanse of the wetlands and the new lakeside development on its northern edge

In the middle more or less is the squat shopping complex, with its glittering fringe of parked cars

That appears to be it. A little to the right, though, is a dense darkish cluster of indistinctness neither industry nor housing nor shops. But it is not to be overlooked. Masi phumelele – whatever it looks like from the mountain – is probably the most critical component of the Noordhoek mix

With almost proprietorial pride, councillor Alan Phillips says the valley is home to everyone from "paupers to millionaires"

What makes it different from other parts of the Peninsula is that the paupers and the millionaires share a relatively small space whose specialness is measurable in both environmental and material terms

The risks here are the danger of harming the wetland habitat of protected flora and fauna as much as the danger of losing money on a land deal because the neighbouring low income settlement is still not much more than a community of shacks

But there is another risk, expressed by the people of Masi phumelele that new people will keep coming, crowding their space and taking their jobs – and that, because of these things their lives may not show the kind of improvement for which they had hoped

Without doubt there is friction in Noordhoek, but there is also a greater degree of unanimity on core issues than it might at first appear

The big picture is plain to environmentalists like Wally Petersen



New start: Residents who can afford something better than a wooden shack are being helped by developers Communicare to build brick homes

and Fulvio Grandin of the Kommetjie Environmental Awareness Group (KEAG), the custodians in a sense of the Wildevoelvlei wetland system that establishes the valley's rural temperament.

Everything that happens in the valley says Mr Petersen, 'affects the wetlands, since the entire valley is a catchment area. That means every community has a stake'

A baseline biological study under Dr William Harding of the Cape Metropolitan Council's department of scientific services is expected to reveal later this month the real state of the wetland system

What the environmentalists already know is that pollutants from industries from the soon to be expanded sewage plant, and from run off from Masi phumelele are the chief problems

It boils down to pressure from human settlement. And one of the biggest headaches is the risk that "Masi phumelele is going to explode and push deeper into the wetland"

This is "politically a very difficult thing to handle", Mr Petersen admits, but he insists that the only argument is "convincing people that space has limits and that the wetland system is a treasure we all share"

Instilling a 'greening ethic' is part of KEAG's mission in Masi phumelele, where it has helped set up various gardening and greening workshops and school projects. The soil and climatic conditions are hostile and the results are often discouraging – but it's a start

Ultimately, though, Mr Grandin believes the whole valley must work together on this

"Communities must become part of the whole. Whether it is race, economics or land tenure, we should try

to smooth out the differences. We are all living in the same area, and need to improve and nurture it and there is no point in moaning or just doing something about one's own space

At 27 literacy worker Skolweni Zelanga is all set to put down her roots in the place that rather tentatively has been home for six years

"When I came here in 1991 it was very difficult. There was a shortage of water, no shops, no schools, no clinic, no work – nothing. We spent the whole day in the settlement"

Today, she has a plot and once she has saved enough will build a house. But she does not believe the quality of life in the community will improve if newcomers keep coming

I agree they should limit the numbers, she says

Like Ms Zelanga, Ndileka Ortman is worried about newcomers.

There are still people coming in and I think it should be controlled. One of these days it will be down there," she says, pointing towards the wetlands and the sea

"There are a lot of people who have been living in Masi phumelele for many years, and then new people come in and they get the plots"

Rob Gordon, low income housing manager at Communicare which has developed the settlement says the importance of controlling numbers is directly related to the community's wherewithal to help itself

If more people come in, there will be fewer jobs and even those who have plots ultimately will not have the means to build houses or plant gardens or even pay their bills

"As soon as they move in, they have to pay rates. They are getting something better but if they are jobless, it is just another burden"

While Sandy Dowling who helps run the Valley Development Project at the Siyakhulisa Centre in Masi phumelele is unforgiving of the view that poor people do not belong in Noordhoek if they cannot afford to be there, she agrees that controlling numbers is practical and desirable

"This comes with the new South Africa. Black urbanisation was slowed through influx control and apartheid and we now are feeling the impact in a much shorter period"

We cannot live separately, as we did under apartheid, and we have to face the fact that we are going to have to live together, but it is just not practical to have more people coming in. The land has reached capacity

Residents really are keen to build a good community and it's nonsense to say they are happy about new people putting up shacks"

But "control" is not enough to make life better in the valley

"We have been trying to get people working together. The mountain chain effectively cuts us off from the rest of the Peninsula and we have realised there must be more interaction. Essentially, that calls for a change in the mindset of white residents"

Noordhoek ward council chairman John Cannan affirms the view of many when he warns that "the

chances of the original settlers getting a house are diminishing with each new arrival, and believes certain minimum steps must be taken if the settlement is to become a suburb in time

These include enforcing building lines and other standards and building perimeter walls or fences along the wetland border. "Unwelcome as this may be it is necessary to discourage further sprawl," he notes

Councillor Phillips says he speaks for most whites in asserting that "we do not object to these people" (Masi phumelele residents)

"They need shelter, jobs, clothes. But there are no jobs, it is environmentally sensitive and people are arriving by the day. We are concerned that control and development

must go hand in hand"

The unenviable task of securing that control falls to Hugh Paton, director of urbanisation and housing planning at South Peninsula Municipality. Deciding to "put a stop to the construction of new shacks" – the present strategy – is more difficult than it may appear

"The problem is that shack dwellers operate in an illegal arena, occupying land that is not theirs, and building without any plans. There might be money changing hands for the right to do things and the whole thing is, in a sense, illegal"

Changing that requires a joint initiative with local leaders but they are seldom willing to work with the authorities, either because of their own interests or because they are rejected by the community for trying to assert control

It is the dynamic of people who have grown up outside an organised urban structure and there is no organised way to achieve a paradigm shift

He is convinced though, that improving the living standard in Masi phumelele will depend on limiting growth and setting standards

In all these things, the only feasible approach is a "co-operative" one

We all have to find new ways together of working out sensitive problems. There is simply no alternative, he says

For all their differences most Noordhoek residents seem to speak with one voice about the single most important challenge: limiting growth to secure their own interests

If that is the consensus, it suggests the greatest risk would be a failure of community, a failure – however hard it might be – of sharing the responsibility to act communally

'We cannot live separately and we have to face the fact we are going to have to live together'

'Whether it is race, economics or land tenure, we should try to smooth out the differences'

MEDITATIONS

G-d reigns, G-d has reigned, G-d shall reign for all eternity
Torah, Psalms 10, 93 & Exodus 15

On no soul does God place a burden greater than it can bear
Qur'an 2:286

The world is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path
Holy Bible, Psalms 119:105

Always do what you know to be the best even if it is the most difficult thing to do
Aurobindo Ashram

Scrap rent, service arrears – Cobbett



Housing blues: Christeline Landsman gets water from a tap her family shares with the family of neighbour Roseline Orrus

JERMAINE CRAIG
STAFF REPORTER

(124)
ARL 5/11/97

Cape Town's new Housing Director, Billy Cobbett, has proposed that the city council approach the provincial government to scrap rent and service charge arrears up to March 1994.

Mr Cobbett disclosed that the council was owed about R40 million in rent arrears

He said this in a "very honest very brutal" presentation to the city council's housing committee today

He accused the council of addressing the housing crisis with decisions that were "immoral, inconsistent and very likely illegal"

He dismissed the council's waiting list of more than 30 000 people - growing by up to 500 people a month - as basically useless

It had "more to do with history

and forlorn hope than with housing"

His proposal that the arrears be scrapped was likely to be accepted by the housing committee today and will then be caucused by all the political parties before it goes before the full council

The proposal already has the support of the National Party with the NP's Leon Markovitz describing it as a "breath of fresh air"

The abysmal housing conditions of many Cape Town residents have "shocked" Mr Cobbett

He admitted this after a recent visit to Factreton, one of the areas under his control

Provision of housing has been identified as Cape Town's main priority. An important aspect will be how to speed up delivery time

The municipality pulled off a major coup when it employed Mr Cobbett to head its new housing department

CAPE ARGUS, WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 1997



Derelict: 80-year-old Sophia Saunders stays in this dilapidated room. She shares her home with 26 relatives.

BRENTON GEACH

Bid to save Flats homes project from collapsing

Cobbett wants city council to step in

5/11/97
(124)
ARCT 6/11/97

JERMAINE CRAIG
STAFF REPORTER

Cape Town municipality's new director of housing, Billy Cobbett, has proposed the council takes over the Integrated Serviced Land Project, which is "teetering on the edge of collapse".

The troubled ISLP is a presidential RDP project started in 1991 to provide housing and facilities to support education, health care, economic development and sport and recreation

for 40 000 households on the Cape Flats

Half of the project's budget of R1,2-billion will be financed from RDP funds

But it has been plagued by allegations of political interference by councillors, illegal occupation and poor-quality housing provided by contractors

At a meeting of the council's housing committee yesterday, Mr Cobbett said the project had its fair share of problems, but could also have a positive impact on alleviating the

housing crisis in Cape Town

"While the project comes with its own history, problems and conflicts, and may be viewed as a potential drain on the city's resources, it can also be viewed as a project sufficiently significant in scale to make a meaningful difference to the housing crisis in Cape Town in the next five years," Mr Cobbett said

He believed the council needed the "political will and determination" to make a success of the project

"In its current form, the project is teetering on the edge of collapse and more likely to fail than succeed"

But the problems could be overcome, he said

However, Mr Cobbett believed the ISLP could only be undertaken if the council eradicated problems facing the current administration

The council also needed to successfully launch its campaign to ensure good administration and policies for housing in future, Mr Cobbett said

ARLT 6/11/97

Policies 'trample on poor'

STAFF REPORTER

(124)

Cape Town municipality's new director of housing Billy Cobbett has slated the housing policies of the current administration and has vowed to usher in a new era to speed up housing delivery in the city.

In a "very honest, quite brutal" presentation yesterday, Mr Cobbett said the council's housing policy did not serve to uplift the poor but trampled on them even further

He called for a serious review of existing housing policies and practices and called on council to start a political campaign from early next year to launch "a whole new set of principles, policies and practices that will clean up housing in Cape Town"

He mentioned a number of inadequacies which needed to be addressed before the existing

housing crisis could be overcome

Points he made included

■ Cape Town's administrative practices were "fundamentally unfair" and created scope for corruption

■ The city did not provide administrative justice to its citizens, but made decisions that were "immoral, inconsistent and very likely illegal"

■ Maladministration in the council resulted in outside groups, such as street committees, civic organisations and even gangs resolving housing problems and allocating houses

■ The council was owed about R40 million in rental debt and needed to urgently look at ways of getting people to pay their accounts



'New era': Billy Cobbett

■ Council officials were partly to blame for this as they did not collect arrears and had not conducted or implemented income assessments for about 10 years

■ Mr Cobbett "strongly recommended" that the council's Interviews Sub-Committee, which is meant to deal with the illegal

occupation of council property or the use of council property for illegal activities, be disbanded with immediate effect

Individuals and organisations who were effectively taking bribes and extorting cash for access to council housing "virtually ensure that the poor get exploited," Mr Cobbett said

If adopted by the housing committee, Mr Cobbett's proposals will be put to the full council

Gangsters allocate council housing on Flats — Cobbett

DD 6/11/97 (124)

CAPE TOWN — The allocation of Cape Town city council housing is in such disarray that gangsters rule on the matter in parts of the Cape Flats — and 3 000 families who have been on the official waiting list for as long as 15 years have little or no chance of ever having their own homes.

This was revealed yesterday by Cape Town's new housing director, former national director-general of housing Billy Cobbett, who painted a gloomy picture for city councillors attending a housing committee meeting.

Cobbett said that the situation was so severe it would be difficult to overstate it. "This city does not provide administrative justice to its citizens, but rather dispenses a series of decisions that are ad hoc, immoral, inconsistent and very likely illegal," he said.

Consequently, the public had lost faith in the council, and had turned to gangsters, civic organisations and street committees, who now performed the council's functions in their area.

Cobbett said that many people who had lived in council flats for years had

no right to be there. Subtenants illegally inherited houses when the legal tenant died, while others took houses by force, threatening anyone who tried to evict them with violence.

He said hundreds of registered tenants, often thousands of rands in arrears, did not pay their rent. Often, they sublet council properties for more than they were supposed to be paying in the first place.

"We have a whole category of consumers in Cape Town who make a tax-free profit out of housing that is being subsidised for the poor. This is corruption and fraud on a great scale, and is common in parts of Cape Town."

Cobbett said council property was used to house and subsidise illegal activities such as shebeens, drug-dealing, assault, prostitution, gun-running and gangsterism.

About R40m was owed to the council in rental debt, he said, with 77% of tenants in the old Cape Town council's houses in arrears. This level rose to over 90% in former black local areas, he said — Sapa.

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THOUSANDS HAVE NO CHANCE

If you want a council house, ask gangsters

(124)
CT6/11/97

THE HOUSING CRISIS in Cape Town is so severe that it would be difficult to overstate, Billy Cobbett told the council yesterday. Metro Editor **CLAUDIA CAVANAGH** reports.

THE allocation of Cape Town City Council housing is in such disarray that gangsters rule on the matter in parts of the Cape Flats — and 31 000 families who have been on the official waiting list for as long as 15 years have little or no chance of ever having their own home

These and other shocking facts were revealed yesterday by Cape Town's director of housing, Mr Billy Cobbett

The highly-rated Cobbett, the former national director-general of housing who was imported earlier this year as Mr Fix-It for Cape Town's housing crisis, painted a gloomy picture to city councillors attending a housing committee meeting. His hard-hitting plans for a major turnaround of the situation were applauded by all

The chairperson of the council's executive committee, Ms Nomaindia Mfeketo, said his proposed new housing policy came as "a breath of fresh air"

"This is long overdue and is what we've been trying to achieve for ages. It'll go a long way towards delivering housing to the poor," she said

According to Cobbett, the situation was so severe "it would be difficult to overstate"

He said: "This city does not provide administrative justice to its citizens but rather dispenses a series of decisions that are ad hoc, immoral, inconsistent and very likely illegal"

In return, the public has lost faith in the council and turned to gangsters, civic organisations and street committees who now perform council functions.

He revealed that:

● Many people who have lived

in council flats for years have no right to be there. Sub-tenants illegally "inherit" houses when the legal tenant dies while others take houses by force, threatening anyone who tries to evict them with violence

● Hundreds of registered tenants, often thousands of rands in arrears, do not pay their rent, but sub-let council properties for more than they are supposed to be paying in the first place

"In other words," said Cobbett, "we have a whole category of consumers in Cape Town who make a tax-free profit out of housing that is being subsidised for the poor. This is corruption and fraud on a great scale and common in parts of Cape Town"

● Council property is used to house and subsidise illegal activities such as drug-dealing, shebeen-ing, assault, prostitution, gun-running and gangsterism

● R40 million is owed to the council in rental debt. In old Cape Town Council houses 70% of tenants (coloureds) are in arrears, with levels rising to over 90% in the old black local areas. Despite this, no credit control policy exists

Also, council housing arrears shot up after the council stopped evicting defaulters in 1994, he said, producing a graph that dramatically illustrated the trend

Most importantly, Cobbett stressed, the new policy should guarantee that action will be taken against defaulters and that no one — "however violent or well connected" — is above the law

● Different procedures are used to allocate houses in different areas. People living in old Cape Town Council areas, for instance, must pay any arrears they owe before they can get a house. In old Ikapa, though, a house will be transferred to someone who owes thousands in arrears

● The council waiting list — presently standing at 31 500 people and growing by between 100 and 500 new applicants each month — is a source of great resentment

"The reality is that the waiting list is nothing more than a false hope for those on it," said Cobbett.

"This council must have the courage to be honest, to tell them we are dealing with no more than a couple of dozen houses a year. If they are not near the top of the waiting list, their chances of getting a house procedurally

are very thin indeed"

● In some parts of the city, vacant houses are allocated by neighbours, gangsters and street committees. On occasion, councillors interfere in officials' decisions regarding who is next on the list

● Houses are commonly allocated to a member of family who has never even lived there

"Even more worrying is a practice sometimes condoned by officials and councillors, whereby tenants swap council houses. It's not their property, it's ours. By swapping they effectively beat everyone in the queue," said Cobbett

● Disparities in the way rent is charged means that neighbours living in identical accommodation sometimes pay rent which differs by 300% to 400%

● People are paying 1987 rents with 1997 salaries

'31 000 families on the (housing) waiting list for 15 years have little or no chance.'
— Billy Cobbett

Peninsula faces housing crunch

MICHAEL MORRIS
SPECIAL WRITER

The Peninsula is running out of land for new housing and does not have enough money to meet demand, leaving little choice but to opt for denser developments such as blocks of flats, and rental accommodation for the poor

Hemmed in by valuable agricultural or environmentally sensitive land, living space in the Peninsula is fast reaching saturation point. The only option is a big shift in housing policy from houses to flats, from single-plot housing estates to denser developments.

This emerges from a wide-ranging interview with Western Cape Housing Minister Cecil Herandien.

It coincides with the publication in the Cape Argus today of the first of a three-part

ARG 3/11/97
series on Noordhoek's Masiphumelele settlement, focusing on the challenges associated with urbanisation and upliftment.

Once hounded as squatters, the first African landowners of Noordhoek are expected to take transfer of their plots this month. However, discontent among white ratepayers over the way the settlement has been planned and implemented is matched by concern throughout the valley about the risk of an unchecked growth of shack-dwellers in an area of limited resources.

Mr Herandien revealed that although there was no accurate information on the present rate of urbanisation and migration – mainly to and from the Eastern Cape – “we will never be in a position to say we can contain the numbers coming in”.

The housing backlog in the Peninsula was about 200 000 units, “but the more

(124)
houses we build, the more newcomers arrive”.

“The demand for housing, the shortage of land and the high cost of servicing single-plot developments simply means we will have to opt for densification.”

“We can no longer think in terms of making plots available for everybody. We will have to look at the option of going up, and we will have to look at rental stock again, because not all people are in a position to become homeowners,” he said.

The upgrading of former men's hostels in Ikapa, which would house 12 000 families on the waiting list in Nyanga, Langa, Guguletu and New Crossroads, was an indication of this shift.

A clearer picture of urbanisation and

To page 2

Peninsula flatland looms

From page 1

ARG 3/11/97 (124)
migration patterns in the Western Cape is expected to emerge from a report next March by a project team appointed by Mr Herandien.

The team will produce a policy document as a guideline for provincial officials, local authorities and landowners. A consolidated housing waiting list is also being drawn up. But there are immense problems.

“Money is a big headache. Our quota of the Government's “one million houses in five years” programme is 114 000 units. We have received 104 200 subsidy applications and have over 60 000 completed or under construction, so we are close to our target.”

“But 80% of the work is in the country districts, while 80% of the need is in the metropolitan area, and we don't have enough money to meet

the 104 200 applications.”

“The need for the whole country is R4,6-billion. Provinces are still negotiating, but the initial government offer was R2,2-billion.”

“In the Western Cape, the amount allocated since 1994 is R942-million, and we have spent R835-million. For this year we have R107-million left, and we estimate that we will not have enough to meet the demands of our contractual obligations.”

“But we cannot stop approving projects, because it takes 18 to 30 months to get the process going.”

Attempts to create formal suburbs were being frustrated by a steady population growth, land shortage, limited funding, poverty and joblessness.

He urged local authorities, where possible, to make their own land available more cheaply for housing.

Noordhoek wrestles with past, page 10

CMC spends R2-million on flats upgrade

CITY REPORTER

(124)

ARG 10/11/92

The Cape Metropolitan Council has spent R2-million over several months to upgrade residential flats occupied by 3 000 people in a poverty-stricken Atlantis community.

The CMC also forked out R406 000 to build the Dura creche in Bunting Crescent which was officially opened last week. A construction company has donated R100 000 worth of building material for further extensions.

At the opening CMC councillor Nimrod Bavuma said the council was working with all local authorities to uplift needy communities.

CMC executive committee chairman Pierre Uys said "We have to give children a better chance in life so they can grow up to be responsible adults who contribute to the social and economic development of the Cape metro area."

Dura flats residents were provided with water taps and the courtyards extensively renovated. Broken roofs, windows and gutters have been repaired.

COBBETT VOWS TO HIT BACK

Halt in evictions 'sent rent arrears rocketing'

(124) CT 10/11/97
HOUSING DIRECTOR Billy Cobbett says the way council houses are allocated urgently needs reform, starting with forcing tenants to pay rent. Metro Editor **CLAUDIA CAVANAGH** reports.

RENTAL ARREARS on council housing have rocketed by over 500% since 1994 when the Cape Town Municipality stopped evicting non-payers

Speaking on the city's housing crisis last week, director of housing Mr Billy Cobbett showed councillors how arrears, which stood at just under R5m in 1993 when evictions were in full swing, are now over R26m

These figures are for old Cape Town municipal areas only. If ex-black local authority areas are included, the figure exceeds R40m

Which is why Cobbett — the former director-general of housing — has vowed to keep active and prosecute arrears accrued since the last eviction in 1994

The move follows hard-hitting reports last week of gangsters controlling the allocation of Cape Town's council houses and an admission by Cobbett — dubbed housing's Mr Fix-It — that 31 000 families who have been on the official waiting list for 15

years have little or no chance of ever having their own home

Without a whole new set of principles, policies and practices, the lot of Cape Town's homeless thousands — living in unacceptable and often inhumane conditions — will never improve, he said

"This city does not provide administrative justice to its citizens, but rather dispenses a series of decisions that are ad hoc, immoral, inconsistent and very likely illegal"

The first step towards rectifying the situation, he told councillors, was the adoption of a new policy document

"This will be the beginning of a long and difficult path to systematically overcome years of neglect in respect of housing," he said

The policy recommends the eviction of people who do not pay their rent, unauthorised occupants of council housing and any tenants involved in illegal activities like operating shebeens, drug dealing, gun running and operating brothels.

"The most important component of the policy is the certainty of sanction, the guarantee that action will automatically and systematically be taken in the event of default, and that no one — however violent or well connected — is above the policy and the law," Cobbett said

Arrears anomalies should also be addressed

"A cause of much resentment and friction — often seized upon by political opportunists — relates to the popular confusion around the write-off of arrears. For the record, there is no such thing as a write-off. The debt is merely moved elsewhere. Someone always pays," said Cobbett



MR FIXIT: Director of housing Billy Cobbett

R59-m conservation boost

New Peninsula national park to benefit

LENORE OLNER
STAFF REPORTER

Conservation in the Western Cape has been given a huge boost with a R59 million grant from the Global Environmental Facility. The facility is an international organisation that provides money for conservation of global interest. Part of the grant, made to the South African branch of the World

Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) and the National Parks Board, will be used towards the start-up costs of the soon-to-be-proclaimed Cape Peninsula national park.

Another portion will be invested and the interest used to fund conservation in the Cape floral kingdom. The grant will also fund a survey of the most pressing conservation issues in the Cape floral kingdom. According to WWF chief executive

Ian Macdonald, it was decided to apply for the grant because of the worsening plight of Table Mountain and the Peninsula.

"Apart from the fact that this area is an international conservation hotspot, I believe R7 million raised by the WWF locally played a key role in convincing the Global Environmental Facility of our determination to preserve this unique natural treasure," Mr Macdonald said.

Brian Huntley, chief director of the National Botanical Institute, said the grant provided the focus to get the national park established.

Provincial Minister of Environment and Finance Kobus Meiring said the grant was a victory for co-operation and negotiation.

"Three years ago we were like donkeys pulling away from each other. Today we are walking and talking together," Mr Meiring said.

Police keep watch over Khayelitsha garbage cleaners

NORMAN JOSEPH
CITY REPORTER

Police kept watch as members of the African National Congress Youth League linked up with a private company and municipal workers to clear

tons of refuse from Khayelitsha. Refuse removal has been suspended because of a dispute with the South African Municipal Workers' Union over a proposal to privatise cleansing services in the City of Tygerberg. In the past three weeks union

members have clashed with employees of cleaning company Billy Hattingh & Associates and Tygerberg officials in a bid to halt privatisation. Western Cape ANC Youth League head Lunga Newana said his organisation supported the clean-up

because the huge piles of rubbish in the streets were a health hazard. "We are not taking sides but merely helping the community," he said. Andre Adams, Samwu regional organiser, said the council was "acting against the labour relations law".

27/10

ARC 13/11/97

ARC 13/11/97

12/12



Homeless: a group of homeless people in Cape Town shelter from the elements. A master plan is soon to be devised which will cope with the city's homeless population.

Action on homeless

Master plan devised at workshop

(124) (124)

ARG 16/11/97

JILYAN PITMAN

Senior Cape Town municipal councillors, police and community workers have met to draw up a master plan to resolve the problem of the city's homeless people.

The action plan includes finding land or buildings to house the homeless, establishing advice centres for vagrants, setting up job creation projects and skills training and making the community aware of the problem.

There will also be special programmes for street children.

The programme was devised at an "action workshop" organised on Robben Island earlier this month by the Cape Metropolitan Council.

The new initiative will, however, depend on whether it can get financial support from municipalities and business.

The organisations involved agreed to submit progress reports by March. Delegates also resolved to ask the

media, especially newspapers, to mobilise public sympathy and support for homeless people in Cape Town.

The meeting was chaired by Sea Point city councillor Chris Joubert and included delegates from all municipalities in the Cape Town metropolitan area and from various non-government organisations involved with the homeless.

But there were no representatives from the business sector or the Chamber of Commerce at the meeting, although delegates said business support would be canvassed.

Mr Joubert said "Ways still have to be explored to get the facilities up and running and to keep them going. There is a lot of support from the Chamber of Commerce for this project."

Metropolitan council mayor William Bantom said media support was critical.

"It is so easy for journalists and editors to report negatively on the failings of the street community

"Television, radio, and more especially print, in the form of regional and local newspapers, can mobilise a great deal of public sympathy and support for the work we do," Mr Bantom said.

Sarah Crawford-Brown, hostel coordinator at the Salesian Institute, said the meeting had been a major step forward.

"We no longer threw verbal hand-grenades at each other and we were able to communicate for the first time," she said.

Ms Crawford-Brown said the process of trying to help the city's homeless had been going on for about 10 years but the Robben Island meeting had clarified what had to be done next.

She said the Cape Metropolitan Council should move away from party politics and should instead look at the real issues.

"Politics gets in the way of a real solution," she said.

She said non-government organisations helping the homeless had been

frustrated for many years.

Debbie Diamond of Co-ordinated Action for Street People has taken a business plan on solutions for homeless people to the Chamber of Commerce and to the police.

"The process was healthy and I'm excited about it," Ms Diamond said after the meeting.

Annette Cockburn of the Western Cape Streetchildren's Forum agreed the workshop was a positive development. "We have all talked enough in seminars and now we have something to work on," she said.

Director of Child Welfare Alan Jackson said that he was pleased with the outcome of the meeting but was disappointed there were no business people present.

"A number of issues will be implemented next year and by the turn of the century the overall programme should be up and running.

"The business sector will be lobbied for their support," he said.

'New era' in housing plans

boosts hopes of squatters

Municipality focuses on Athlone families

JERMAINE CRAIG
STAFF REPORTER

The "breath of fresh air" blowing through Cape Town municipality's housing department is set to blow good fortune in the direction of the 101 Athlone squatter families who have long begged for a chance at a better life.

The municipality has proposed building 180 low-cost houses on a site next to the Vygieskraal Stadium, where the families currently live - a project which will take in another 79 families living in Jane Avenue, Rylands

The project will include levelling of the land, construction of roads, stormwater drains and sewers and the provision of water, street lights and electricity for the new area

In recent months the hopes of the informal residents, some of whom have lived in shacks on the land for 20 years, have soared in expectation of finally getting proper housing - and then sunk to the depths of despair as protests from neighbouring residents stalled the project

The municipality's new housing director, Billy Cobbett, who recently announced his intention of starting a political campaign of sound administration to usher in a new era of housing delivery, has been asked to step in to resolve the impasse

He has visited the site, held discussions with the relevant stakeholders and is likely

to make a recommendation on the fate of the project within the next week

The main objectors, the Belgravia Estate Civic Association, objected that the municipality did not consult them about the project which borders their homes

Association chairperson Balakrishnan Reddy said the land was initially zoned for amenities and they were unhappy it had been rezoned for housing

He said the people of Belgravia, one of the oldest areas in Cape Town, had been promised recreational facilities by the municipality for many years and the disputed land was the only available open space

The land was also not suitable for housing, as a study conducted by the University of Cape Town's Zoology Department concluded it was vulnerable to flooding

"What the council is doing to us is a sin. We have proved to them that the area is unsuitable. Despite that, they still want to go ahead with the project," Mr Reddy said

Residents were also concerned that the crime rate would rise if the informal residents moved in, and showed dismay at the "anti-social" behaviour of some of the informal residents, who defecated and urinated against a wall, were rowdy and polluted the area, they said

Mr Reddy said the association was not against housing the residents and proposed the project be built a few hundred metres away, on land between the Vygieskraal Stadium and Klipfontein Road

"We are not against housing these people. We are for the Reconstruction and Development Programme and for better housing,"

Mr Reddy said

"We want these people to be uplifted but is this the only area in our town?"

Saleem Mowzer, deputy chairman of the executive committee and the area's ward councillor, said the municipality wanted the project to go ahead but was sensitive to the concerns of the association

"Billy Cobbett has been asked to investigate the whole matter to see if we can come up with a solution which will satisfy all the stakeholders

"We are awaiting the outcome of his investigation and hope we will come up with a resolution to this matter which will ensure everyone wins and there are no losers"

He said the municipality had approved the project and set aside funds for it in the current year's budget

The bulk of the funds will come from the national government's housing subsidy scheme

Mr Mowzer said a thorough investigation had been conducted on the land and it was deemed suitable for housing

While the wranglings around the project continue, the informal residents are patiently waiting for the day they can move into real houses

"All we want is a roof over our heads and that of our children," said one disgruntled Vygieskraal resident

ARG 17/11/97

(124)

2

The people a council 'forgot'

(124)

NORMAN JOSEPH

CITY REPORTER

ARG 17/11/97

Netreg residents, a Bonteheuwel community battling with houses that are falling apart, roads full of potholes and several dump sites causing a stench, say the City of Tygerberg municipality has forgotten them.

But Tygerberg housing committee chairman Claude Ipser, who has met the residents three times, says the municipality is trying to address their grievances

Municipal officials are frantically gathering information and records from several administrations regarding upgrading of underdeveloped areas in the Tygerberg "People need to understand that most municipal departments had been operating for less than four months," he said.

Mary Japhta, National Party ward councillor for Bonteheuwel, said she did not turn a blind eye to any community's problems and attended to all grievances

Hawston residents win trickle after water cut off

(124) CT 17/11/97

RONALD MORRIS
JUSTICE WRITER

HAWSTON residents whose water was cut off by the municipality because of payment arrears won a reprieve when they asked the High Court to intervene and their supply was resumed at a trickle.

The court was told that Hermanus had become popular with holiday home owners, tourists and small industry. Water costs had increased alarmingly over the past few years and residents believed they were being "priced out of Hermanus".

"Those who are born and bred in Hermanus can no longer afford to live here," Mrs Dorothy Josephs said.

Josephs, supported by Mrs Ansie Isaacs, Mrs Clara Kennedy, Mrs Louisa Damon and the Hawston Civic Association, brought an application against the Greater Hermanus Municipality.

They wanted the municipality's decision to cut off the water supply of individual applicants and civic association members to be declared unlawful, alternatively unconstitutional.

They also sought to have the supply restored immediately or to be restricted to a trickle, enough to provide them with their basic needs.

By agreement between the parties Mr Justice G A Kuhn ordered that the water of about 60 residents be restored at a trickle, pending a hearing in March next year.

In papers Josephs, a mother of five who is separated from her husband, told the court she was unemployed and the sole breadwinner was her 15-year-old son, who worked as a labourer on a building site, earning R120 a week.

Her only other income was R35 a day as a temporary domestic

worker, three days a week.

At the end of September she received a letter from the municipality saying that unless she paid an outstanding R199,95 her supply would be cut.

She was unable to pay the money and on October 9 the water supply was stopped. Since then she had had to rely on friends and family for water and conditions in her home had deteriorated markedly.

Her young children had become sick and she had to attend a day hospital almost daily, with the result that she was unable to do domestic work, Josephs said.

She told the court that water costs has increased alarmingly over the past four to five years and it seemed clear to her Hermanus had become a popular area for holiday home owners, tourists and small industrial development.

"It is a popular view among us that we are being priced out of Hermanus. Those who are born and bred in Hermanus can no longer afford to live here."

She and her co-applicants were not opposed to paying for water, but if they could not afford to do so, believed it was unfair, unreasonable and unconstitutional for the municipality to cut off water.

Josephs said the Constitution provided that everyone had the right to access to "sufficient food and water". For that reason the proposed National Water Regulations provided for restricted water supply if a consumer defaulted with payment.

An appeal procedure was also provided for which (presumably) distinguished between wilful

defaulters and those who for genuine reasons such as unemployment, old age or disability, were unable to pay.

Water was essential for human survival and the constitutional right to dignity and the right to have her dignity respected were meaningless and not worth the paper they were written on if people could not have access to a basic human requirement — water.

The lack of water resulted in the neglect and abuse of her children, Josephs said.

"It degrades me and the children that we have to go to our friends and relatives to beg for water."

The municipality's action was also unlawful because residents who had had their water supply cut had not been given a hearing or allowed to make representations.

The water supply of some people had been cut off and others' not.

Josephs said the prejudice which residents had suffered and would continue to suffer, unless urgent relief was granted, was simply that their living conditions had deteriorated rapidly since the water supply had been disconnected.

While the municipality would be able to calculate the money it lost, the harm suffered by residents, especially minor children, was likely to be irreparable and might even result in one or more of the older residents dying, Josephs said.

Mr Norman Arendse, instructed by Mr Vincent Saldanha of the Legal Resources Centre, appeared for the residents. Mr Mario Wilker, instructed by Guthrie and Theron, appeared for the municipality.

'Those who are born and bred in Hermanus can no longer afford to live here.'
— Applicant

System not fair, estate agents argue

BLACKMAN NGORO
STAFF REPORTER

The Ministry of Housing's Rent Board has long been a thorn in the side of owners of older properties - who say it acts only in the interests of tenants.

For example, if an owner decides to renovate or subdivide to increase the value of his property, he could be hamstrung by the Rent Control Act, in terms of which he could be stopped from charging any more rent than that originally determined for the entire property.

"I feel very strongly about it," said property manager Saville Penkin of J & S Penkin Properties

"These gentlemen from the Rent Board have never been in the proper-

ty business and are not qualified to value property

"They have a formula which allows for percentage increases on their value of the land and buildings, irrespective of whether the owner has improved the property substantially"

He said they operated only for the benefit of tenants

"Some people earn R5 000 a month, yet the Rent Board can and does set or recommend ridiculous rentals even in such cases"

He said rent control should apply only to those who required protection "Rent control is no longer the right way to go"

The allegedly arbitrary nature of rulings on rentals is causing friction in communities and owners have

been forced to resort to demolishing run-down buildings without getting the Rent Board's permission

The Democratic Party's executive director, James Selfe, also in the National Assembly, explained how the Rent Control Act had come into being

"Rent control was first introduced after World War 1 because of acute housing shortages facing a lot of people who had just returned from the war and had found there was no accommodation

"Landlords charged a lot before the Rent Board was set up and then tenants could be charged only rentals determined by the board

"The idea was that if a landlord wanted to increase rentals, the Rent Board inspected the property and ten-

ants were given an opportunity to object

"Landlords needed only to have the flats or houses furnished and they would be de-controlled, so the Government passed the Rent Control Act - putting whole areas under the jurisdiction of the board"

He said there were two arguments at that time - that the state was unable to provide low-cost housing and that this was a way to save the state money

"This constituted an additional cost to landlords who had to involuntarily provide low-cost housing. It was a powerful disincentive to procure buildings because of the low rentals"

There was a degree of abuse of the system. People who did not qualify

exploited the system to live cheaply

"Rent control was a war measure I don't think it's the responsibility of individual landlords to house those who can't afford to pay rent

"If the Government wants to house these people, they must subsidise the landlords"

John van der Spuy of Steers Property Organisation also condemned the Rent Board. "They wear two hats - on one hand they want to provide cheap housing for people who can't afford to pay rent, which is noble, but they are shifting the Government's responsibility to provide social welfare

"There are houses in Woodstock going for a couple of hundred rands but until they lift the rent control, those houses will fall down"

AMG 20/11/97

(124)

Masakhane finally makes a difference

Now over half settle accounts

ARG 20/11/97 (124)

JERMAINE CRAIG
STAFF REPORTER

The Masakhane campaign in the Cape Town municipality is beginning to bear fruit, with the number of people paying for services in townships rising from 18% in July to 53% last month.

The council's new administration is intent on encouraging people to pay for services and has introduced innovative methods to help bring this about.

To make payment easier, a campaign called Easy Pay was introduced in July, whereby people could pay their municipal accounts at Pick 'n Pay stores.

In June the number of people paying for services in the former black local authority areas was 18%.

After Easy Pay was introduced in July this increased to 24%. In August the figure rose to 25%, in September

to 35% and last month shot to 53%.

The council's executive director of finance, Philip van Rhyneveld, said Easy Pay was one of the council's most important collecting mechanisms and had raised about R500 000 a month from people in townships for which the council was responsible.

"I think it (Easy Pay) is an important element. As more people get to know it, it will prove more and more useful. People in the former black local authorities are now beginning to pay for their services and we have to ensure that we keep that momentum going," Mr Van Rhyneveld said.

The council would be looking at broadening the campaign to incorporate smaller retailers and also at collecting payments through debit orders and even via the Internet.

At a ceremony yesterday, four incentive prizes were awarded to people using Easy Pay to settle their service charges.

In the Cape Town municipality R29-million was collected last month from more than 85 000 people using Easy Pay.

City manager Andrew Boraine said the increase in the number of people paying for services was an indication of "fantastic support for the new council".

"It shows a very positive commitment from many very poor residents to contributing to the city. It also shows a positive response to the way in which services have been improved in those areas."

He said that in the past three years the amount of waste collected in black townships had increased from 1 000 tons to 8 000 tons a month. The council was committed to improving service delivery throughout the city, especially in formerly disadvantaged areas, and the fact that more people were paying for services augured well for the new administration.

Poor townships starting to pay service charges

CT 20/11/97
(124)

CLAUDIA CAVANAGH
METRO EDITOR

SERVICE charge payments in Cape Town's poorest areas are up by more than 40%. In real terms, the rise will boost the city's coffers by R6 million a year.

This follows the billing of 25 000 households in the former black local areas of Crossroads and Ikapa — including Nyanga, Langa, Brown's Farm in Philippi and KTC — with their first interim community charges accounts in July.

The new system aims at levelling fair charges at areas never part of a general valuation.

Since July council cash office

staff have maintained a door-to-door campaign explaining the charges to residents. Facilities to pay the accounts at Pick 'n Pay were also introduced.

"This is the start of an upward trend that can only bode well for the city," said Cape Town's executive director for finance, Mr Philip van Ryneveld.

"Over the years, we've sat with payments of around 10%. To see them climbing in a steady way is wonderful.

"Without income, local governments cannot function — any improvement on this front is therefore critical to the existence of local government."

R1,2-BILLION PROJECT ON VERGE OF COLLAPSE

City bid to save SA's Biggest housing plan

(124)
ET 24/11/97

CAN CAPE TOWN save the country's biggest housing project, which is teetering on the edge of collapse? Metro Editor **CLAUDIA CAVANAGH** reports.

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After this month's housing committee meeting, councillors agreed to begin negotiations to take over the entire project they had vociferously criticised earlier this year for its delivery of 30-square-metre houses in Weltevreden Valley and Southern Delft which were "shoddy" and "seriously flawed".

"If we don't take control of this project," Cobbett said, "we'll be allowing the development of a substantial new ghetto bigger than the ones we've already got."

The ISLP — which involves 50 housing projects and 26 communities — was to have all sites serviced and occupied by March 2000, but a host of problems has slowed down and in some cases stopped delivery.

The project is charged with bringing houses to Cape Town's

And while the province has denied the ISLP is in crisis, a consultant involved in co-ordinating the project revealed that it (the ISLP) is "about to lose its manager".

Mr Colin Appleton, chief executive officer of Holistic Settlements, management consultants for the project, said "The province is losing capacity and the person responsible for the ISLP is likely to move out — his post has been abolished".

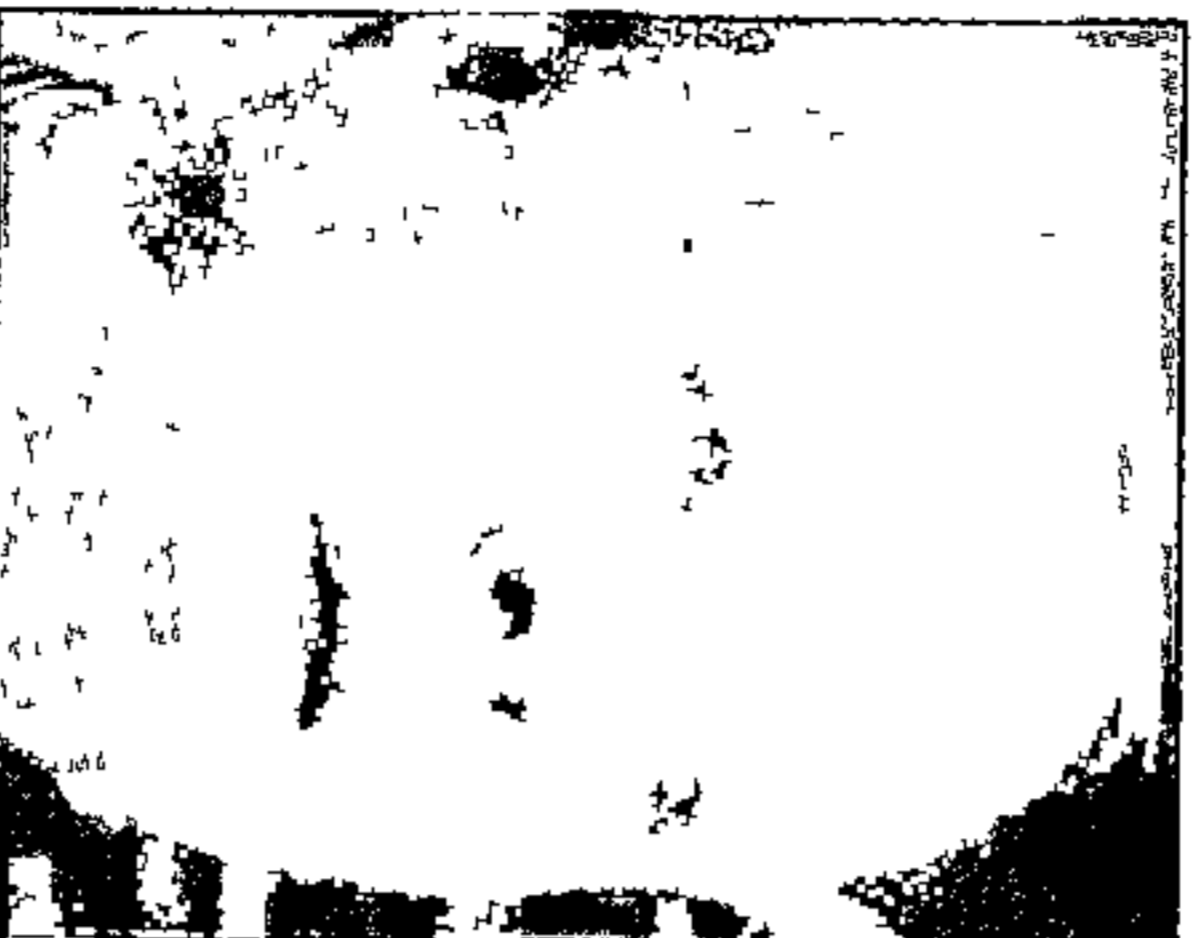
"It's certainly preferable for a housing project to be implemented by a local authority than the province. At the moment, councillors are politically accountable for its implementation, but are not really responsible for it," he said.

Provincial head of housing, Mr C O du Preez, admitted that the project had problems but denied it was in crisis.

At present, the province was the only large-scale developer of houses for the poor, while the Cape Town Municipality had not built a single house for the past year, he said.

"If it had been supported by all the role players — including the Cape Town Municipality — from day one, it would have been much easier to execute the project effectively," he said, warning that to keep up momentum, the city would have to provide a further 25 000 serviced sites over the next three years.

With very little discussion, the housing committee agreed that negotiations for the take-over of planning and engineering aspects of the projects should begin immediately. A phased take-over of the whole project should be concluded by the end of March, said Cobbett.



MR HOUSING: Billy Cobbett

most impoverished areas, including Crossroads, KTC, Brown's Farm, Millers Camp, Tambo Square, Barcelona, Vietnam, Samora Machel and Feseka, as well as thousands of families living in backyards and hostels in Langa, Nyanga and Gugulethu.

"That is where we feel the focus of this council should be," said Cobbett. "We don't want to ignore Sea Point, but we do feel we should be moving our resources out to where they're needed — from Facetion and Langa all the way down to Mitchell's Plan."

"There are ongoing allegations of protection rackets, money changing hands, disputes between councillors and RDP forums, different site prices and different standards," said Cobbett.

"The result is that the community is confused and disillusioned."



HOME SWEET HOME? This house in Tambo Square, an impoverished area in Nyanga which falls under the Integrated Serviced Land Project, illustrates some of the problems the project has encountered since its inception six years ago.

PICTURE: RICHARD STRITTMAYER

Dozens in Delft facing eviction

Dispute over unpaid bills

NORMAN JOSEPH
CITY REPORTER

ARG 26/11/97
Dozens of residents of Delft who rent houses from individual owners are facing eviction because rates and electricity bills have not been paid.

They are the so-called "illegals", tenants who say they pay monthly instalments to cover rates and electricity to the legal owners who do not pass the money on to the municipality. The occupants ignore the accounts, thinking that the owners are paying them.

Housing department officials describe such occupants as "illegals" because their names do not match those on the accounts, which are in the names of the owners.

Now dozens of families are facing court action by owners who want their houses back.

At a tense meeting in Eindhoven recently "illegals" vowed not to move out.

They claimed they had made regular monthly payments which the legal owners had not paid to the municipality and that the owners had not told the housing department they were letting their houses.

Some tenants said they were no longer paying owners because they had disappeared, while several other

(124)
owners had said the tenants could take over the houses.

Tenant and housing department officials had reneged on promises to allow them to buy the houses.

Tenant Hendrik van der Ross of Atbara Street, Eindhoven, said a legal owner had taken court action against him.

Michael Hendricks of Ebro Street, Eindhoven, said he had been summonsed to the Small Claims Court by the owner of the house he leased.

Ten families in Rosendal are homeless after owners moved back into their houses and demanded that the tenants leave last week.

Ward councillor Gerhardus Ventura blamed the provincial Housing Department for the problems, saying nothing had been done to sort out the mess.

The Swart commission of inquiry into illegal occupations in Delft recommended that the provincial Housing Department set up a temporary, emergency residential site for homeless people.

Surita Botes, spokesman for Housing Minister Cecil Herandien, said all the commission's recommendations were being investigated.

She appealed to Delft residents to supply information about irregularities and related problems directly to the department.

NEWS



NO LONGER HOMELESS: Pumla Bambelo (left) and Nomonde Mngxuma are now enjoying the fruits of their labour. They belong to the South African Homeless People's Federation, which has recently built 51 new houses at the Victoria Mxenge housing project in Philippi.

PICTURE GARTH STEAD

Women building for a better life

CYNTHIA VONGAI

(124)

"I USFD to live like a dog," says Ms Rose Maso. Now, for the first time in her life she is living in a brick house.

She built it herself, a spacious three bed-roomed home at Philippi's Victoria Mxenge housing project.

Maso's dwelling is one of 51, all constructed by women organised into the SA Homeless People's Federation.

Yesterday the 286 members of the project were praised for their hard work by national Housing Minister Ms Sankie Mtembi-Mahanyele at a ceremony to celebrate the completion of the first phase.

"Those who opt to have developers build them one-roomed homes should learn from Victoria Mxenge," she said. "These women are an example and an inspiration."

The women said they could not sit back and wait on the government to provide housing.

Their houses are built on three hectares of land the Catholic Church donated. Each is 54 to 72 square metres, and cost R10 000 to R15 000 to build.

Before the project started in 1991, many of the women had had enough of the squalid conditions in the large squatter communities of Philippi and Guguletu.

"I used to live like a dog," Maso said.

"When it rained I got wet, when the wind blew hard my shack was destroyed."

"In October 1996 I joined the Victoria Mxenge project and the South African Homeless People's Federation and began to help others build their homes."

"In turn they helped build mine. Neither the rain nor wind now bothers me. I live like a human being."

In 1994 the women secured loans and started a saving scheme, which enabled them to buy materials and start building houses.

Looking at the large, mostly three-bedroomed houses, one understands the sense of pride these women have for their achievements.

"No to developers no. We do it all ourselves with our sweat and hard work," the women proudly sing.

They did, however, get help from the national government — a R10 million grant.

The completed houses are already occupied while an additional 48 are at foundation level.

Homeless People's Federation national president Mr Patrick Magebhula said more people had to realise they needed to meet the government half way if they wanted homes before the new millennium.

"People are now realising that they are responsible for their own destiny," said Magebhula.

"There is always this perception that poor people have no responsibility. But members of the Homeless People's Federation have shown that this is not so."

"You just have to look at this housing project."

40 party workers served eviction notices

CHRIS BATEMAN

POLITICAL WRITER

AT least 40 party political workers were ordered out of the government's three parliamentary villages yesterday as the Department of Public Works began a battle to re-establish control of the "unruly" complexes.

The eviction orders are the first in a series of official moves prompted by a Cape Times exposé at the end of October highlighting security problems, burglaries and thefts at the villages, the moving in of illegal residents and frequent drunken weekend revelry.

Most of the party workers enjoying housing at taxpayers' expense are from the ANC (33), the

remaining seven are Inkatha Freedom Party members.

They were given until the end of December to pack their bags. They are being evicted because they are neither MPs nor parliamentary session workers — the two official criteria qualifying people for housing.

Mr Yusuf Simons, a spokesperson for Deputy Minister of Public Works Mrs Elleen Shandu, said the whips of all parties had been given a quota of houses for allocation on the understanding that these were only for MPs and National Council of Provinces delegates.

The allocation had been left to parties because of a departmental staffing shortage.

Public Works director Mr Sipho

Shezi had called an urgent meeting with party whips so the department could regain control of housing allocation before the year-end.

Simons said his department had taken legal opinion before issuing the eviction orders. "Their salaries were paid by political parties, not the government or Parliament and they were not session officials," he said.

Shandu told the Cape Times in October that she had stumbled across the illegal occupancies when trying to house some of her staff — and promised action then.

In Pelican Park, Zeekoewele, 26 workers were served with notices, in Acacia Park, Goodwood, 12 and two in Laboria Park, Belhar. The Cape Times' inquiry in

October had revealed that several residents, who pay a nominal monthly rent of between R120 and R140 including electricity and water, were profiting also by charging illegal co-dwellers rent.

Simons said no hard evidence had been found of this. "But control is very difficult, we simply don't have the staff and putting names to faces in 706 houses is very, very difficult."

In earlier incidents ● Shots were fired at the 545-unit village of Acacia Park in September after two men "gated" an all-night party at the Mopani Flats.

Two shots were fired by an off-duty policeman allegedly in an attempt to break up an argument

Police on guard at the gate to the village came running, but came under fire themselves and were unable to establish who had fired the shots.

Police have opened an attempted murder docket.

● Residents complained of vandalism, littering, noisy cars, lack of access control and rampant petty crime.

● Last December a caretaker of one village was denoted and transferred after allowing people to move into vacated official homes where they badly damaged private property.

Simons said during this festive season, only officials still working would be allowed to stay in the villages.

CT 26/11/97

Tug of war on privatisation

The City of Tygerberg municipality is still locked in arbitration with the South African Municipal Workers' Union over the privatisation of cleansing services in Khayelitsha

Municipal officials are studying video recordings of several clashes

between union members and the police recently when dozens of council vehicles were damaged and councillors were assaulted in Langulethu West.

Sixteen municipal workers may lose their jobs if they are identified among the culprits. - Staff Reporter

PRLT 28/11/97

SA to sign antipersonnel landmines treaty

Josey Ballenger

SA WOULD be the third party to sign a United Nations (UN) treaty next week on banning antipersonnel landmines, and believed southern Africa would clear all its landmines within 10 years, the foreign affairs department said yesterday.

The treaty will oblige parties to ban the use, development, production, transfer and storing of landmines within four years of the treaty coming into force, and requires the clearing of all landmine areas within 10 years.

"We believe 40 ratifications will occur within two years. So six years from December all stockpiled antipersonnel landmines will be destroyed," said the department's deputy director of the nonproliferation and disarmament directorate, Bennie Lombard. Forty countries need to ratify the treaty in order for it to be operational.

Lombard said the 10-year clearance clause would be "most applicable" to southern Africa, and that SA would assist the region in accomplishing this. "We believe it is possible and feasible to demine the en-

tire region in 10 years," he said.

Lombard said the Southern African Development Community would "look at establishing" a capability next year to rehabilitate landmine areas and compensate landmine victims.

The SA National Defence Force had destroyed some 240 000 stockpiled landmines in the past six months, saving only 18 000 to be used in development and training in mine detection, clearance and destruction techniques.

Of those, only 5 000 were "live", while the balance were "dummies",

Lombard told a seminar in Johannesburg organised by the Group for Environmental Monitoring and the SA Campaign to Ban Landmines.

Article 3 of the proposed UN treaty, which is expected to be signed by 120 countries next week in Ottawa, Canada, allows the retention of a limited (though unspecified) number of landmines for such training purposes.

Foreign Minister Alfred Nzo is expected to sign the treaty after only Canada and Norway.

However, the US and three major producers and users of landmines —

China, India and the Russian Federation — have said they will not sign the treaty.

Lombard said these nations should "not be stigmatised", however, as they were parties to an earlier UN treaty to ban certain conventional weapons.

"Those countries have supported the eventual elimination of landmines. They just differ on the timeframe," he said.

Signatories will have to provide reports, including information on landmine inventories and the measures taken to destroy the weapons

Western Cape scheme to provide soft loans to metal workers

Linda Ensor

CAPE TOWN — An innovative house funding scheme, devised by the Western Cape Community-based Housing Trust to provide more than 1 000 soft loans to metal workers in the province, will be formally launched today.

Trust director Naseegh Jaffer said yesterday that metal workers, who were members of the Cape Metal Employees' Co-operative and met

the criteria laid down, would be granted a loan of up to R10 000 for three years at a 10% interest rate — far lower than that charged by financial institutions.

"The plan confirms the increasing role of 'non-traditional' financial groups as major agents in providing housing capital to low income communities," Jaffer said.

The money could either be used for building a new house or as a top up to the state housing subsidy

The R1m capital for the scheme was granted by US agencies through USAid.

To qualify for a loan, a worker would have to be free of other outstanding loans, have been employed for more than six months, agree to repay the loan by means of a monthly deduction from his pay over three years and to provide 50% of the amount as security from his own savings and provident fund capital.

Jaffer said the co-operative

would grant the loans, which would be guaranteed by the National Urban Reconstruction and Housing Agency — a reconstruction and development presidential lead project.

The agency's financial consultant Sabi Mthwecu said it was policy to encourage community based organisations. "We are therefore delighted to help facilitate a programme involving a community-focused lender and savings organisation dedicated to meeting the needs

of workers"

The deal between the Western Cape Community-based Housing Trust, established in 1995 by a group of architects, town planners and academics, and the co-operative would be signed today, Jaffer said.

The co-operative was formed nine years ago as a social savings club. It joined the Savings and Credit Co-operative League of SA in 1991 and claimed to be its strongest affiliate.

BP 28/11/97 (124)

Row over squatters in Athlone hots up

Cobbet moves on housing plan

(124)
AAT 3/12/97

JERMAINE CRAIG
STAFF REPORTER

Cape Town's new director of housing Billy Cobbett is to recommend to his housing committee tomorrow that a controversial project to build houses for 180 Athlone squatter families goes ahead.

But the proposal has been met with fierce resistance from residents whose homes border the project

They have told Mr Cobbett his recommendation "stinks"

The council originally intended to build low-cost houses for 101 families living next to Vygieskraal Stadium and 79 families living in Jane Avenue, Rylands, on the site where the Vygieskraal families are squatting

The project was passed and money was available from this year's council budget and the central Government's housing subsidy scheme

But the plan was halted amid vociferous objections from the Belgravia Estate Civic Association, which said it was not consulted about the project.

Mr Cobbett was instructed to re-examine the matter and make a rec-

ommendation on how the council could resolve the impasse

After visiting the area, Mr Cobbett made his recommendation to all role-players this week.

He has decided that the project should go ahead to uplift the living conditions of the squatters, some of whom have been without homes for more than 20 years

But Mr Cobbett believed that instead of uniting the two squatter communities, the project should be separated and houses be built for the Vygieskraal families on the council land they were presently occupying

He also believed the council should negotiate with the owner of the land in Jane Avenue and build homes for the families living there

At a lively meeting attended by about 60 members of the civic association, Mr Cobbett said the council had previously misled Belgravia residents and he believed it would not be right to move the families from Jane Avenue and to Vygieskraal

He said that by separating the communities densities would be much lower and the chances of improving living conditions better

He believed that the proposal to build houses for the Vygieskraal com-

munity could be successful if it had the support of Belgravia residents.

However his proposal was flatly rejected by the residents, who opposed any housing project on the land.

"Your proposal stinks We want you to say to council "no housing here". Council should see to the ratepayers first, instead of seeing to people living on land illegally," a resident said.

Chairman of the Belgravia Civic Balakrishnan Reddy said the land was originally intended for amenities for Belgravia, but he believed this would not be possible if the project went ahead.

A woman said residents were concerned about the crime rate because of the squatters' presence Rapes and robberies were commonplace She said residents would go on a rent boycott if the project went ahead

The owner of the Jane Avenue land, prominent Athlone businessman Kanthi Patel, wants the council to move the squatters as he has already sold most of the land

After tomorrow's housing committee meeting, the matter will be referred to the full council for a decision

Macassar crackdown on R14-m debt bill

'Chaos' claim

NORMAN JOSEPH
CITY REPORTER

ARG 4/12/97 (124)
About a thousand Macassar residents are facing legal action by the Helderberg municipality for failing to pay arrears on municipal service bills totalling R14-million.

But the Macassar and District Residents' Association has questioned the debts, saying the financial information system of the municipality is in chaos

Association spokesman Samuel Kleyn said summonses had been issued to hundreds of people in the past few weeks after the municipality handed over defaulters to a firm of attorneys

Mr Kleyn said his organisation would query how accounts were compiled and seek a meeting with the municipality early next year

"Some people may not even be in arrears, while others may not owe the amounts on the accounts"

He said municipal staff must be adequately trained to use the new computer system

The municipality was tight-lipped when asked whether it had taken legal action. Chief executive officer Harry Carstens said, "Yes and no. Arrangements have been made with people to pay off the accounts."

Macassar councillor Heinrich Magerman said the council had decided to give residents until December 13 to make arrangements to pay off arrears which amounted to R14-million

Khayelitsha faces service arrears blitz

Council seeks R86-m

MOSES MACKAY
SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

The Tygerberg Council is threatening to get tough with Khayelitsha residents who owe more than R86-million in service charges arrears.

Thousands are failing to co-operate with the council, says exasperated African National Congress councillor Vuyani Ngcuka, whose pleas for payment have fallen on deaf ears

Residents owed R86 310 855 in rates, electricity and water arrears on November 28

Mr Ngcuka said strict measures against defaulters would be taken, including legal steps for recovery and electricity and water disconnections

People would be reconnected only after outstanding amounts, reconnection fees and deposits had been paid

Those who did not pay after being disconnected would be summonsed

Mr Ngcuka said people should pay for services because "local government is our government, so we have the responsibility to make it work"

"We made the commitment that the quality of life should improve. Therefore it is the people of Khayelitsha who must make a contribution to achieve that objective"

"The council has determined the service charges of Khayelitsha at a level that would suit everybody and be affordable"

Fundile Matoto, ANC councillor in ward D10 in Site B, said some residents and community leaders marched from the Chumisa Primary School to pay accounts on October 4

More than R11 000 was collected from 260 residents, in line with the Masakhane campaign

ARC 8/12/97

(124)

200 Cardboard City people get homes in Mitchell's Plain

Housing director brokers deal

JERMAINE CRAIG
STAFF REPORTER

About 200 people living in "Cardboard City", the shanty town under the Western Boulevard flyover, are moving.

After three months of negotiation with the Cape Town Municipality, they have agreed to move voluntarily to Mitchell's Plain.

City director of housing Billy Cobbett announced the breakthrough at a council executive committee meeting yesterday.

The settlement, also known as "Bridge Hotel", is less than a kilometre from the entrance to the Waterfront and the area is regarded as the most dangerous place in Cape Town for tourists who are mugged there regularly.

The homeless community has

mushroomed from 60 people to more than 200 in the past year.

The area has been a constant headache for city managers and was labelled a "criminal nest" by Cape Town Central police commissioner Raymond Dowd because of the number of attacks on tourists in the vicinity.

The squatters lived in about 50 wood, cardboard and corrugated iron shacks and shared two toilets with no running water.

Most of them have been homeless for years and sought refuge under the bridge when they were chased from the city by business people. The squatters feel they are blamed for crimes committed by people who are not part of their community.

In terms of a High Court interdict they could not be moved until alternative accommodation was found for

them.

Mr Cobbett said the squatters would be moved sometime this week to an area close to Lentegeur Psychiatric Hospital.

He said 341 sites had been identified for housing in Mitchell's Plain, with about 80 sites for the "Bridge Hotel" squatters and the rest for people in Mitchell's Plain in urgent need of housing.

It was likely the squatters would move into temporary dwellings but it was hoped low-cost housing could be built for them in future.

The news that they are to move is expected to be welcomed by hotels and businesses in the area. Waterfront spokeswoman Maureen Thompson said she hoped the squatters' situation would now improve. Any move to reduce the crime rate was a "great relief" to the Waterfront, she added.

(124) ARG 9/12/97

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(124) ARC 9/12/97

Cape living among best

ARG 9/12/97
London - In spite of their crime statistics, Cape Town and Johannesburg are the best African cities in which to live, reports the Corporate Resources Group - which advises corporate managers setting allowances for expatriate staff.

They are followed by Tunis and Harare, while Luanda, Conakry and Brazzaville are at the bottom - with Brazzaville listed as the least livable city in the world.

Vancouver and Toronto in Canada, and Auckland in New Zealand, had the highest quality of life in major world cities, the group reported yesterday.

Cities to avoid at almost any price were Brazzaville in the Congo, Baghdad in Iraq and the Bosnian capital Sarajevo.

The group reported on 192 cities worldwide, based on 42 factors,

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including political stability, economic outlook, culture, health and education resources, as well as public transport.

Canadian cities generally came top of the list of North American cities, and Mexican cities near the bottom of South American

Vancouver was voted No 1 in North America and the world, and Toronto No 3.

Atlanta had the highest quality of city life in the United States, followed by San Francisco and Honolulu

In Latin America, Buenos Aires, Montevideo and Panama City topped the list, while San Pedro Sula in Honduras, Port-Au-Prince in Haiti, and Havana in Cuba were at the bottom.

Baghdad, bottom of its regional list, was the second worst city in the world in which to live - Sapa-AP

Plan to bring piped water to thousands in W Cape

Projects to aid rural and urban poor

(124)

ARG 12/14/98 12/198

Fifteen percent of the Western Cape's population of about three million are without piped water and still depend on other sources - like rivers and springs.

Most of these people live in rural or informal settlement areas such as Khayelitsha, Crossroads and Langa

But the national Chief Director of Water and Forestry Affairs, Thuso Rameama, said the total amount allocated for water distribution in the Western Cape was R13,5-million and that several projects were underway in the province

He was speaking during an interview with the Cape Argus on the state of water provision in the Western Cape

He said that between 7% and 15% of people in rural and informal settlement areas had no sanitation, including bathrooms and flushing toilets, but that a lot of money was being spent in these areas to rectify the situation

"Some of the money is being used for area planning because we are looking at specific areas and their needs to determine the best resources to supply the water," said Mr Rameama "We look at whether ground or surface water is the best"

REPORT



LENORE OLIVER

The Department of Water and Forestry Affairs has adopted a 10-year strategy for the entire country - at the end of which it hopes to have tackled all the backlogs in water provision

"We should be in a position where at least 80% of the total population should be served," he said.

"We will never have the problem solved 100% because of other factors such as population growth - but our aim is to have solved the problem considerably at the end of the 10 years"

There is a R2,5-million emergency water supply programme for the greater Cape Town area, which is aimed at ensuring that

the short-term demands of the city are met

There is also a programme in Khayelitsha which is geared to providing basic water supply and sanitation

The sanitation projects in the Western Cape amount to R5-million

"In the past there was never any interest in servicing informal settlements because they were not regarded as neighbourhoods by the previous regime

"People are living in unhealthy and dangerous conditions and tend to use any water source they can find," said Mr Rameama

"However, a big problem we are experiencing is illegal connections where people break a pipe and connect for their own use

"This undermines the hydraulic design of the system and at the end of the day no payment is received for the water used - and the system becomes unsustainable," he added

"We are appealing to the public to respect the law

"Our department is doing the best it can to attend to all areas in need of proper water distribution and sanitation

"The programme will take time but we'll get round to everyone," said Mr Rameama.

Cobbett hits out at city housing chaos

Parties adopt 'brutal' report

(124)

ARG 12/11/98/12/97

JERMAINE CRAIG
STAFF REPORTER

City director of housing Billy Cobbett has called on the city council to "clean up housing" in a frank report which says housing officials are corrupt and council policies unfair.

He says street committees, civic organisations and even gangs are interfering with housing allocation and municipal property is being used for drug dealing, shebeening, prostitution and gangsterism

All political parties serving on the council yesterday unanimously adopted Mr Cobbett's "very honest, quite brutal" report in which he attacked the housing policies of the current administration and vowed to usher in a new era in housing and speed up delivery

Mr Cobbett said the council's housing policy did not serve to uplift the poor but trampled on them even further

He called for a serious review of

housing policies and practices and urged the council to launch a political campaign early next year for "a whole new set of principles, policies and practices that will clean up housing in Cape Town"

Mr Cobbett said the national housing subsidy was insufficient to produce an acceptable standard of housing and more money needed to be raised from other quarters. People should be encouraged to enter into council savings schemes to finance their homes and that the private sector should play a role in solving the housing problem

Cape Town's administrative practices were "fundamentally unfair" and created the scope for corruption. Because of corruption in the municipality, outside groups, such as street committees, civic organisations and even gangs resolved housing problems and allocated houses

The municipality was owed about R40-million in rent arrears and needed to look urgently at ways of getting people to pay their accounts

The issue of the scrapping of arrears had caused much "resentment and friction" among residents and the council had applied different rules in a way that was unfair. He proposed that the council ask the provincial government to change legislation so that rent and service charge arrears before March 1994 could be scrapped.

Many council-owned properties were being forcibly occupied, sub-let illegally or used for illegal activities such as drug dealing, shebeening, prostitution and gangsterism. The council needed to take administrative and legal action against people who sub-let or forcibly occupied municipal property and if necessary evict illegal occupants.

The council also adopted Mr Cobbett's proposal to take over the integrated Serviced Land Project. Representatives will meet the Cape Metropolitan and Tygerberg councils later today to discuss a possible takeover of the project, which aims to build 40 000 homes on the Cape Flats.

Seeking alternatives to 'matchboxes'

New look at plans for old Langa hostel accommodation

ART 13/14/97 (24)

ANDREA WEISS

Visit the old hostels built during apartheid for men in Langa and you will find grubby brick buildings with tiny, prison-like windows set amid a welter of shacks that have sprung up around them to accommodate the overflow of families who have a claim to a hostel bed.

An aerial view proves that these buildings don't only look dismal from the ground. They were dismal from their inception when they were built like prison blocks with few entrances and wide roads on either side.

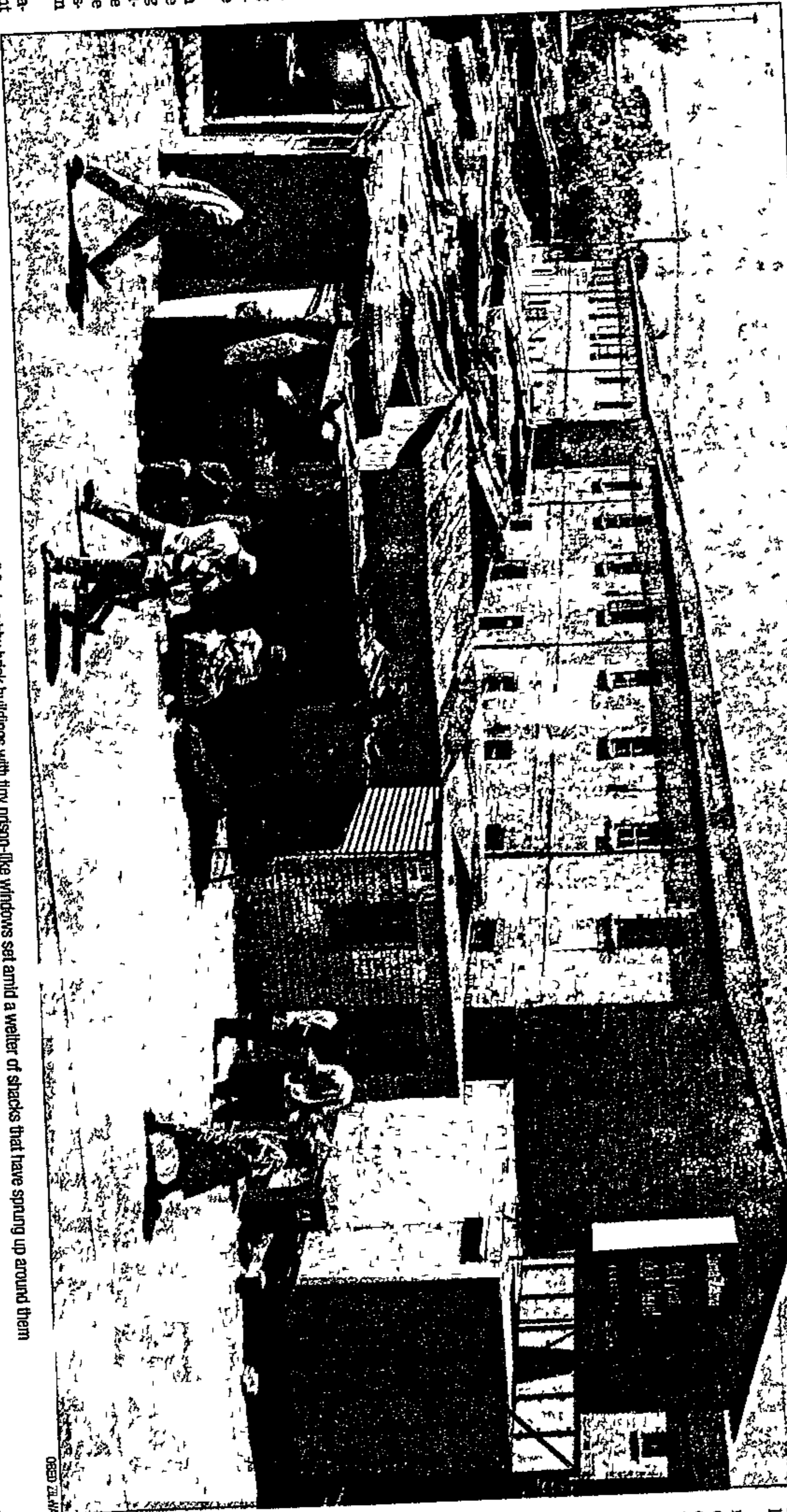
It appears as if the overriding planning principle was to ensure easy access for forces of law and order and the least hospitable environment possible, just in case anyone might be thinking of staying on in the city.

And then, you'll turn a corner, and come across an astonishing sight: a cluster of brightly coloured double-storey buildings with steps and landings, and bright blue doors leading directly on to a courtyard where children can play under the watchful eye of family members.

These are the Langa show flats, an impressive project to convert Cape Town's apartheid legacy of low slung hostel buildings into a livable environment. By going up more than one storey and by breaking away from the one-family-one-plot approach to housing, these flats are an innovation in low-income housing delivery.

Ironically, it is the apartheid legacy which has necessitated a different approach to low-income housing which is far removed from the more prevalent site-and-service approach so popular in other housing projects. Because of the existing buildings and the lack of space, the only way to accommodate all the people living in and around the hostels is by the higher density route, providing flats rather than free-standing houses.

The Langa flats stand in sharp relief to the integrated Serviced Land Project (SLP) which is gradually delivering a sea of matchbox houses, each standing isolated from the other



Old-style: visit the old hostels built during apartheid for men in Langa and you will find grubby brick buildings with tiny prison-like windows set amid a welter of shacks that have sprung up around them

on a separate plot.

This year, the SLP drew harsh criticism from local politicians for delivering less than desirable products. But the problem is not only one of small houses. It is the fact that these units are laid out as if there is unlimited access to transport.

Schools, shops and other necessities of life might be provided for, but the spread of houses makes them few and far between, and urban spaces

which could be used creatively for parks and other recreational areas end up as sandy, urban wastelands.

In the view of many urban planners, this is a policy heading for disaster, not only because it wastes land, but because it does not create conditions conducive to a vibrant, integrated urban environment so necessary for improved quality of life.

In an article in Architecture SA, David Dewar of the University of

Cape Town's school of architecture and planning, described the areas of Delft, Blue Downs and Khayelisha as "bleak, wind blasted landscapes with almost no vegetation, little boxes"

"We are creating instantaneous slums of new houses," he said. "The breakthrough will come when it is recognised that as society is able to do less and less to meet the particular needs of individual house-

holds, it is necessary to do more collectively.

"The focus of public attention needs to shift away from the individual household to collective spaces and public institutions," he said.

This is why the Langa show flats are a visible expression of an alternative way of addressing the housing crisis.

Not only do the old hostels necessitate a more creative use of the avail-

able land which has to be reclaimed from the roads and wasted spaces around the hostels, but they also are an opportunity to create the more logical spatial relationships between shops and schools and homes that make for a better quality of life.

In short, they have the potential to lift a housing project into another dimension not simply offering a place to sleep, but a place to live. Indications are that those

involved in housing policy are also beginning to wake up to the need for higher density development in the low-income housing market.

Recently, Western Cape housing minister Cecil Herdian said the demand for housing and the shortage of land, as well as the high cost of servicing single-plot developments, meant that government would have to start opting for densification.

He was quoted as saying: "We can no longer think in terms of making plots available for everybody. We will have to look at the option of going up, and we'll have to look at rental stock again, because not all people are in a position to become homeowners."

The architects involved in the flats project believe that the way to deal with the issue is to start looking at housing delivery in a more integrated way, moving away from a cost per-unit approach to one which looks at spending the available money on a total product.

In doing so, a range of possibilities is opened, where costing can be spread across the project with some older, upgraded units effectively subsidising new buildings, because each unit qualifies for the same subsidy.

Not all units would have to be the same size. Some could be bedsteads while others could have three or four or more bedrooms.

This approach also allows developers to look at the urban environment outside the front door, building into projects the possibility of creating good-quality urban space.

Cape Town's housing director Billy Cobbett is also of the view that an increase in density is an imperative because of the limited availability of land in Cape Town.

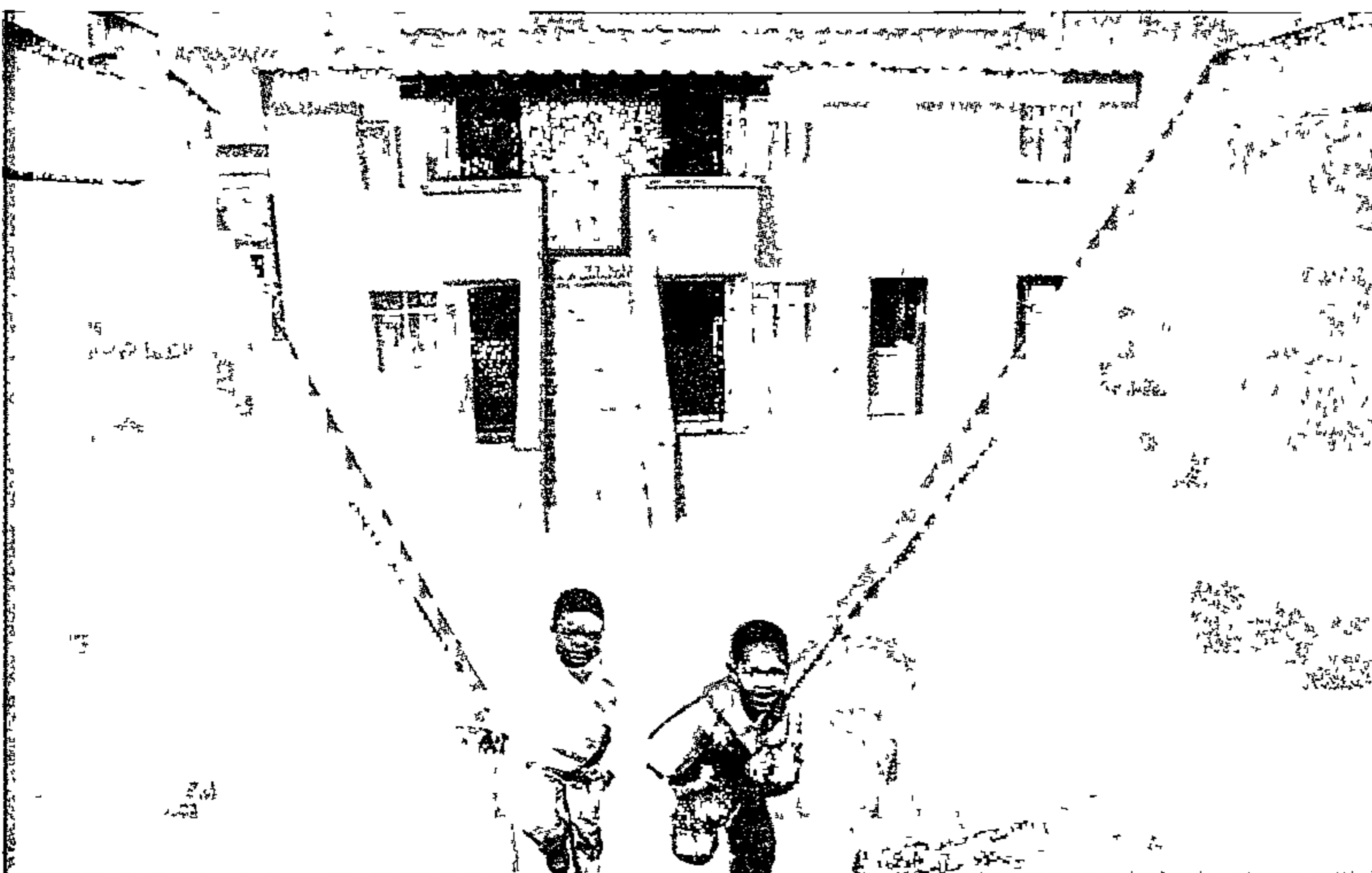
"If we continue on a one-person-one-plot basis we are in danger of destroying our city," Mr Cobbett said. "That higher density would be an area to which his housing department would be paying close attention in 1998." "We need a fundamental review of how we deal with the issue of space and how we make housing work," Mr Cobbett said.



Apartheid planning: an aerial view of men's hostels in Langa. The old, overcrowded, crumbling hostels of Langa surrounded by shacks have now made way for a new design in township living.

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ARG 13/11/98



The new: children play on the stairs of their new, lighter and brighter homes in Langa.



Bright design: architect Dieter Bossow at the Langa show flats.



SHANTY HUT MEANS THE WORLD TO ME: A Westlake settlement resident peers out of her makeshift home. The South Peninsula municipality is devising outreach programmes to improve squatters' lot

PICTURE: GARTH STEAD

Influx control 'key to homes (124) (507) provision CT 15/12/97

WILLEM STEENKAMP
SECURITY WRITER

INFLUX control is alive and well in the South Peninsula municipality — but its aim is not so much to discriminate as to provide established squatters with housing

Mr Hans Smit, executive director of housing services for the South Peninsula, said the municipality was striving to become the best municipal provider of housing by early in the next century — but this could happen only if the number of homeless people coming into the area was controlled

The municipality had 10 "major" squatter settlements with about 8 400 structures, he said

Leaders of the settlements, such as the Westlake camp and Imizamo Yethu in Hout Bay, had been drawn into the planning in an attempt to prevent expansion.

The municipality was also establishing partnerships with the community and devising outreach programmes to improve the squatters' lot

"If you don't work with the community, then you have a big problem," Smit said

"Co-operation is pretty good"

Municipal patrols or "rangers" kept a lookout for new shacks. They dismantled these and sent the occupants to another site or to the place at which they had spent the previous night

The rangers had an "extensive" network of informants who kept them up to date about the activities of squatters and homeless people, Smit said

"We're establishing control throughout our area"

An example of the kind of assistance the municipality would welcome, Smit said, was a letter setting out how the rangers worked and where they could be contacted that was sent by a Lakeside resident to other residents. The letter was written by Lakeside resident Mrs Kim Parker and reproduced in estate agents ERA Steer's newsletter

Parker wrote that according to "the squatter law of our country", if squatters built a shack on public or private land and were not removed within 24 hours they had a right to the land until a court order was granted to remove them or they were given "an acceptable alternative" site

Smit, however, disputed this. He said there were different interpretations of how and when action could be taken against squatters and homeless people

"The law protects homeless people and squatters, as it protects you and me"

Parker could not be reached for comment yesterday.

HOUSING & HOSTELS - W. CAPE.

1998

A place in the sun

New dawn for former outcasts

ANDREA WESS
Pourol, Reporter

It was one of those typically undecided Cape days with the sun doing battle with cloud and rain.

The Stellenbosch Regional Services Council had yet again broken down the makeshift shelters of an informal settlement clinging to the edge of Sir Lowry's Pass Village, but the group's spirits were high in spite of the setback. Sitting together, trying to catch the sun as it broke through the cloud, they were discussing what they should call the place where they were struggling to gain tenure.

Someone said they were just a bunch of "sonsisters" (sun hakers). Then another suggested they adopt the name "Sun City", and everyone laughed because of the irony.

This is how Joyce Flandorp, 41, remembers the christening of Sun City 10 years ago.

Yesterday, Sun City entered a new era with the official opening of an R11-million development of 683 starter homes in the settlement.

Once, the settlement was on the international map as an example of attempted forced removals when struggle activists, like Allan Boesak and Chris Nissen, took up its cause.

Dr Boesak wrote to the prime ministers of Ireland and Denmark about the plight of Sun City while President F W de Klerk was on a visit to those countries in 1991.

The new development in Sun City not only heralds an end to bucket full leaks, leaky roofs and damp floors, but has meant work for local people.

Mrs Flandorp's husband Peter is employed as a builder on the project. He, like many other beneficiaries, intends using his skills to expand the 24m² starter dwelling they have been awarded.

Mrs Flandorp, who runs a bakery from an old station building on the edge of the town, has high praise for ward councillor John Brits for supporting their efforts.

She hopes a real house, with plumbing and proper walls and a roof, will help ease her asthma. She also plans to bring her bakery closer

to home because the place she operates from is constantly being broken into. She says they will build on "bit by bit", and happily pay the water, electricity and rates, as will be expected of them.

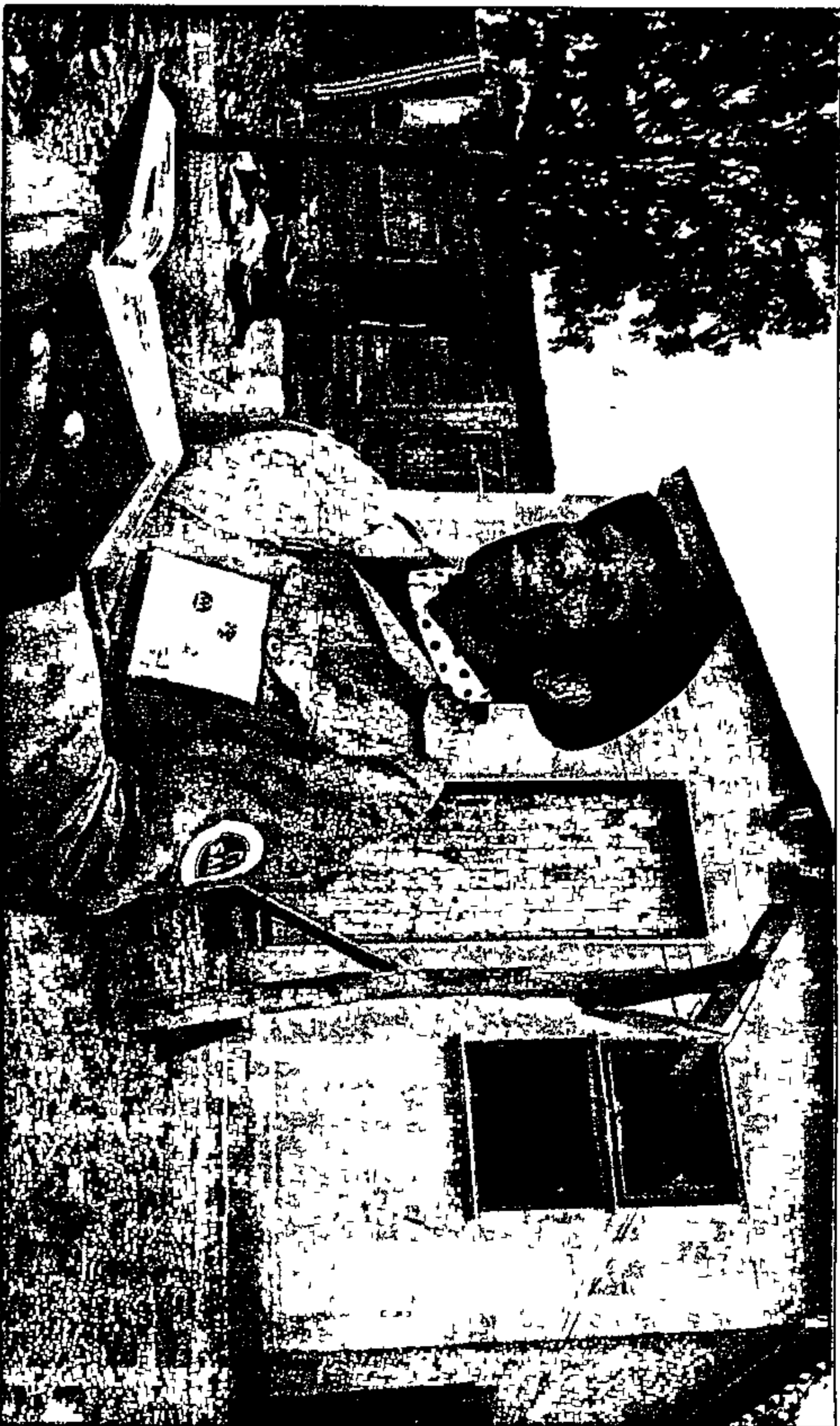
AKG 9/11/98(14)

Freddy Williams, 62, has lived in a shack for the 17 years and remembers having his shack broken down six times during the late 1980s when residents were struggling to gain a foothold in Sun City. Now Mr Williams has a new starter house next to his shack and points out where he aims to build a kitchen and put the bathroom.

"I feel satisfied because our living conditions have always been so tough. It rains, it's wet, the roof blows off," he says.

Then, after posing for a picture seated on a kitchen chair and with his well-worn Bible in hand, he points out where he plans to make a garden, complete with lawn and flowers.

From Mr Williams's satisfied demeanour it would appear that Sun City's residents have finally found their place in the sun.



Old and new: Freddy Williams, 62, sits outside his old shack and his new house, where he hopes to move soon - away from the leaks and damp



New beginnings: Joyce Flandorp stands near the foundations of her new house



A place in the sun

New dawn for former outcasts

ANDREA WEISS
POLITICAL REPORTER

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This is how Joyce Flandorp, 41, remembers the christening of Sun City 10 years ago.

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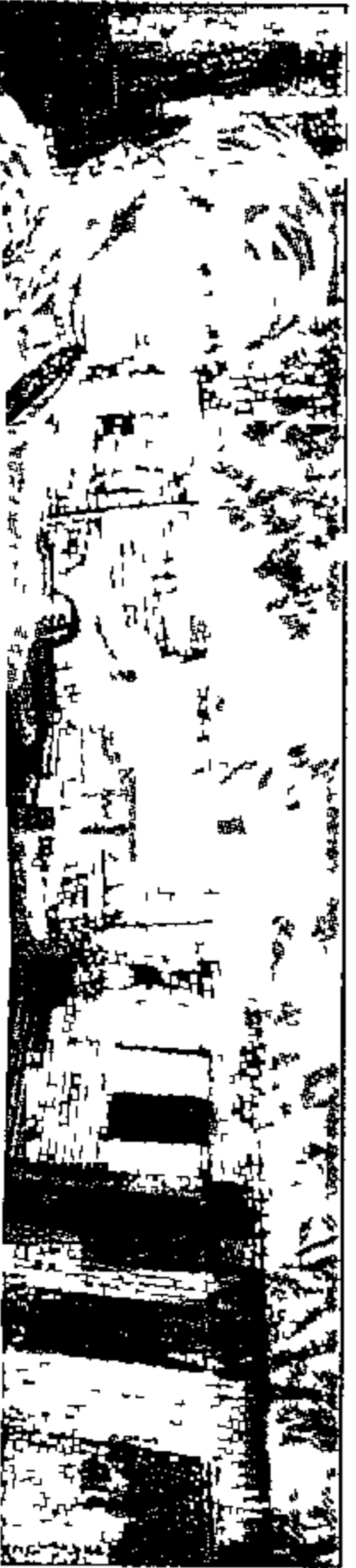
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'Squatters' rippers' am 'housing rip-offs'

(124)

Bloekombos community leaders accused of fee fiddles, bribery, corruption

MOSES MTHEHELEU MACKAY

ART 7/11/98

When the new Government said it would provide homes to South Africa's poorest citizens, it did not expect its promise to become a source of suspicion and anger.

Squatters at Bloekombos, in the Oostenberg municipal area, say community leaders are profiting illegally from the new government subsidised homes.

Residents told Saturday Argus some community leaders were accepting bribes of up to R600 from home seekers who wanted to "qualify" for the new houses.

But the community leaders and the authorities insist everything is above board and that the leaders are merely acting as collection agents for the Government because the municipal offices are too far away.

The leaders, members of the African National Congress, say the allegations are being made by their political enemies to discredit them before next year's elections.

The residents also allege that newcomers are being assigned houses ahead of long-time residents.

One woman said she had lived in a shack in the area since 1990 but she had been overlooked when it came to allocating houses. She said people were expected to make a one-off payment of R50 for water and R75 for electricity to the community leaders, in addition to an initial down-payment of several hundred rand.

"Some residents paid members of the Bloekombos Forum R200, R400 or R600 to get houses. I don't know



SWEET HOME: long-time residents are passengers on political gravy train



RAW DEAL: if you do not have money to pay the forum members you can forget about getting a house

why we have to pay money to them. The municipality should take the responsibility. We don't know where these monies are going to," she said.

"If you do not have money to pay the forum members or if they don't like you, you can forget about getting a house," she said.

She said she was consulting a lawyer. The woman said community meetings on housing were convened by the same people "we have a problem with". She said some residents had occupied houses by force because they realised they would not be helped if they waited for the "community leaders".

Another resident said the allocation of houses had been characterised by corruption and bribery.



HOME BASE: Bloekombos in the Oostenberg area Pictures: OBED ZILWA

Council designs home loan package for poor

ARLT 27/11/98 (124)

PETER GOOSEN
STAFF REPORTER

A fail-safe system for granting micro-loans of up to R5 000 to would-be home owners in poor areas has been worked out by officials of the South Peninsula Municipality.

Accepted in principle by the council this week, the scheme has already attracted the interest of the National Housing Commission and could become a national model

It is based on the formation of a Section 21 company administered by the municipality's top management - no additional salaries are involved.

The company would kick off with R2-million to be transferred from the council to the new company's loan fund.

The scheme has been worked out because, with the maximum

Government subsidy of R17 250, building conditions and other factors in the Western Cape mean that the biggest possible house is 20m² on a 140m² plot

To build anything bigger, the owner has to obtain a home loan from a financial institution

The report considered by the council yesterday said "Financial institutions either charge higher-than-normal interest rates as hedges against risk and high administration costs, or deny the applicant access to additional finance"

The plan is to provide micro-loans, on a commercial and sustainable basis, to new beneficiaries of the national housing subsidy scheme, subject to strict rules.

"Right up front it must be clear that this is a loan and not a grant," said the report.

"It will have to be managed and controlled in terms of rigorous

guidelines if this proposed loan fund is to be extended and expanded to benefit future applicants"

The Section 21 company would levy a monthly administration charge of R30 and the bond would be registered in the name of the South Peninsula Municipality

Institutions acting on behalf of the state - such as the National Urban Reconstruction and Housing Agency - would, for a nominal fee, use external and state funding to act as guarantor for the council

To qualify, applicants would have a history of no arrears with a local authority and be fully paid up at the date the loan was granted.

The maximum amount of the loan, R5 000, would be based on the monthly repayment not exceeding 15% of gross monthly household income. As a first buffer against risk, the applicant would have to pay a refundable deposit equal to 10% of the loan over three months

Face-to-face with vagrancy 'problem'

JILYAN PITMAN

Cape Town southern suburbs councillor Owen Kinahan took two senior municipal officials on a tour of his constituency this week - to see the vagrants

The homeless people are plaguing his constituents, says the Democratic Party councillor

Mr Kinahan, who represents Observatory, Mowbray, Rosebank and Rondebosch, wants the council to take action

Saturday Argus went on the tour with Mr Kinahan and the two council officials - Ahmed Vawda, executive director of Community Development at the Cape Town municipality, and John Reeves, an inspector in environmental health at Rondebosch municipal health depot

The next day, Mr Vawda said he was taken by surprise at Saturday Argus's presence and had not been able to respond to questions quickly

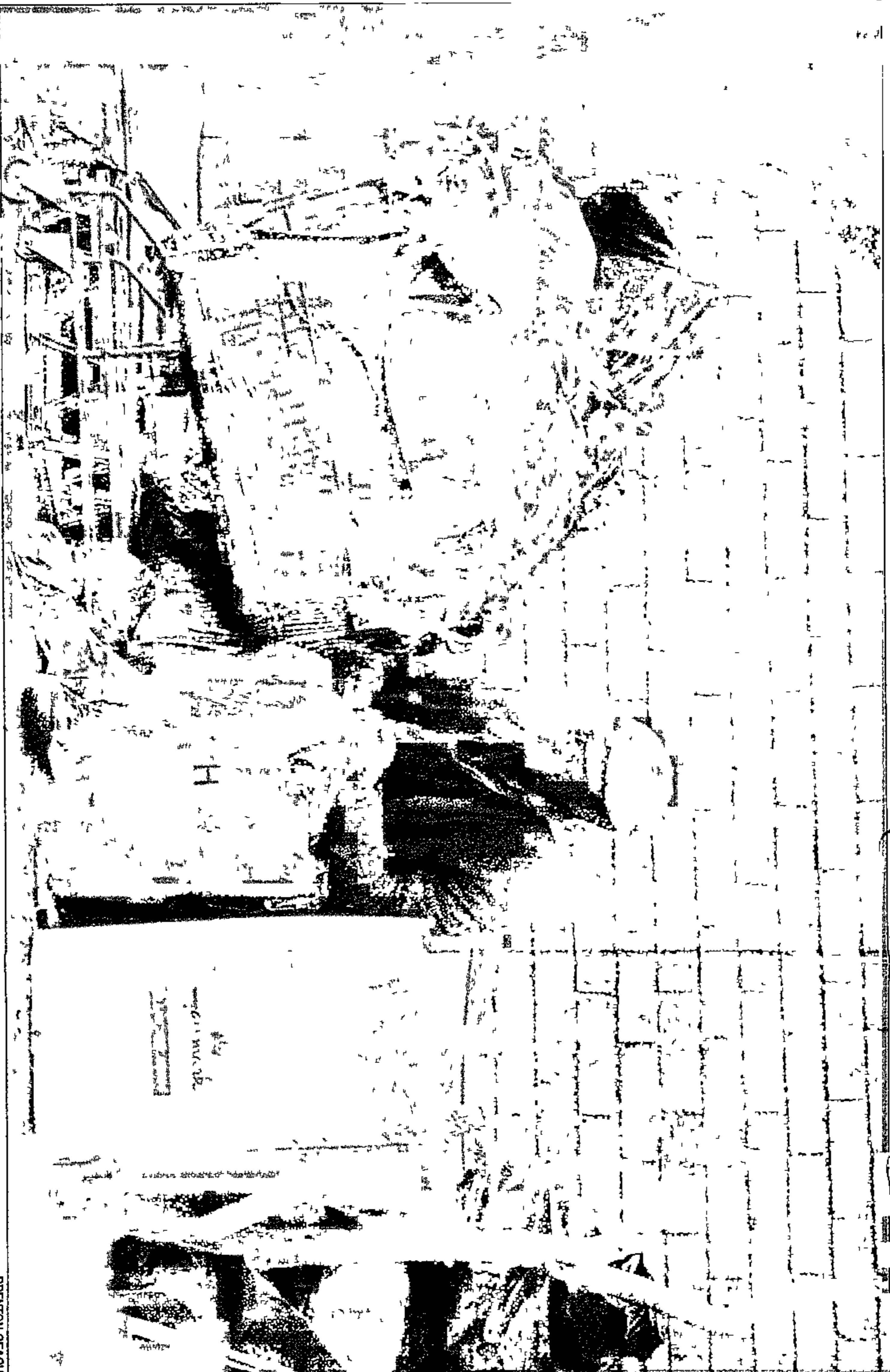
"There are about six or seven different types of problems, each with their own complexity, that relate to this issue," said Mr Vawda. "There are a number of people who are putting together policy frameworks, which we are supporting. We are working at practical solutions"

Two women vagrants in Pepper Square, Observatory, Cynthia Adams and Patricia Jacobs, told Saturday Argus that night shelters or havens were not acceptable to them

"We don't like the hours of the shelters," said Mrs Adams, who has lived in Observatory for many years - at times in cemeteries

Mr Kinahan said the southern suburbs were deteriorating rapidly because of vagrancy, a situation he felt homeowners should not have to tolerate

Many vagrants refused to move to night shelters or havens. He said he was concerned about the rights of law-abiding residents. "They should not have to be compromised by the steady deterioration of neighbourhoods," he said. Action with Street People (Casp), which helps street people, said vagrancy was increasing, but that talks about how to solve problems must continue



Solitude: this old man in Grove Road, Mowbray, is one of the many homeless people crowding the area. He has lived in the same place for at least two years

BRENTON GEACH

"Some of the demands made by the homeless are unrealistic, because we have to run shelters in a sustainable way," she said

"We only guide communities to find solutions"

She added "We are now talking about drawing up a code of conduct for vagrants to see if we can find a solution"

Mr Kinahan demanded "Why should a nursing home have to brick up its windows against the torrent of foul language around the clock?"

"Why should a medical doctor working long hours in the service of the community be prevented from getting a few hours sleep?"

"Why should a shopkeeper have to hose the facces from his steps before opening his business?"

"Why should women and children be afraid to walk in open parkland?"

"Why should property prices be devalued through filth that quickly accumulates around hedges, canals and underpasses occupied by squatters?"

Mr Kinahan said the increasing

pockets of vagrants in a variety of unsightly and unhygienic shelters were not acceptable

"I share the frustration of those who call on me for help," he said

He said the municipality did not have a ready solution

"The buck has to stop somewhere. At present it grazes undisturbed"

store, and they drank cheap wine sold to them in styrofoam cups

"They don't use the nearby toilet and they fight, shout and argue throughout the night," he said

There were also vagrants living along the Liesbeek Parkway on the banks of the river, in which they were doing their washing

They were also breaking down the hedge for firewood

Mr Kinahan said "There must be a political and administrative will to recognise and deal with the challenge of the homeless"

He said the new constitution gave little protection and recourse to property owners



Home: a temporary resident of George Street, Mowbray, surrounded by his possessions



Sleeping it off: a vagrant in Observatory takes a rest in the heat of the day

(194)

(194)

ART 17/1/98

Bid failure leads to quiet house market

Samantha Sharpe

(124) (124)
BD 19/11/98

CAPE TOWN — Cape Town's unsuccessful bid to secure the 2004 Olympic Games had a significant effect on the local residential property market and contributed to quiet December sales, according to Seeff Property Services MD Samuel Seeff.

The comments come amid increasing speculation that Cape Town's property boom has reached its peak and that prices are due to fall.

Nonetheless, the latest Cape Property Services figures showed a total of 1 366 residential properties had been sold at an average price of R333 883 in November, compared with 1 166 properties at an average sale price of R343 112 in June.

Seeff said sellers had sat tight over the bid period in the hope that, if Cape Town won, they would be able to demand higher prices from foreign buyers.

"In the past few months, a larger quantity of stock has been released, with supply exceeding demand for the first time in years," Seeff said. "Unrealistic prices have further contributed to a sluggish market."

While it was traditional for buyers and sellers to take a break over the Cape holiday season, with sales picking up considerably in January and February, recent stock market volatility had contributed to a drop in excess capital for investors, he said.

Pam Golding Properties MD Andrew Golding said the group had been expecting the Cape residential market to flatten out for some time, but this still had to materialise.

"Sales in October, November and December have been good," he said. "We keep expecting the market to flatten out and turn down, and while there is certainly not the same escalation in prices, (it) is still very buoyant."

Rode & Associates property economist Erwin Rode said it was too early to comment on whether the Cape residential property market remained on a fast growth track. Revised economic growth forecasts for SA — most economists have revised their estimates of economic growth for this year downwards following the recent fallout in Asia — were hardly bullish for the residential property market.

"There is usually a correlation between economic growth and the property market — when the economy is bad, the residential property market suffers."

R110m water bill for CMC

CT 20/1/98
CLAUDIA CAVANAGH

(124)

THE Cape Metropolitan Council owes the Department of Water Affairs nearly R110 million for water supplied to the metropole

And for every month that passes the mega-bill grows by nearly R1m in interest. Yet no one seems absolutely sure where the buck really stops, because the CMC only became responsible for the service on July 1 last year — by which time Cape Town and the old Ikapa administration had already run up R100m of the current total.

CMC executive director for finance Mr Philip Schenck said Cape Town had been paid most of the money and that it was simply "lying in their bank account" accumulating interest — an allegation denied by Cape Town executive director for finance Mr Philip van Ryneveld.

"Without the facts at my fingertips, I don't want to comment now," said Van Ryneveld late yesterday.

He said he would telephone Schenck "immediately" and set up a meeting to discuss the matter "which can clearly be resolved, but not through the press".

Thinking along the same lines, chairman of the CMC's

water and waste committee Mr David Erleigh suggested to the CMC's executive committee yesterday that a "high-level delegation" visit the City Council, arrange for the money to be transferred and then pay it over to the department.

But, said Schenck, because the CMC was now responsible for supplying bulk water to the metropole, it could actually be legally liable for the bill.

"If the Department of Water Affairs want to sue anyone they'll sue us," Schenck told the meeting.

'If the Dept of Water Affairs want to sue anyone, they'll sue us.' — Philip Schenck, CMC

"I disagree," countered chairperson Mr Pierre Uys. He pointed out that financial assets and liabilities had not yet been unbundled in the restructuring process.

"We can't pay with our money under these circumstances," he said.

A call for legal advice on the matter was debated for some time. Finally ANC councillor Mr Mzukisi Gaba asked why an outside opinion should be sought when the CMC's legal adviser, Mr Ben Kieser, was sitting silent in the meeting.

"It's not as simple as that," piped up Kieser. "We're talking about R100m — no small amount. You'd probably need a senior advocate here. Ben Kieser may just not hold the same weight."

ST(CM) 1/2/98

US called in to help with waste disposal

BOBBY JORDAN

(124)

THE Cape Metropolitan Council has turned to a team of American waste disposal experts to help get rid of the 3 500 tons of waste piling up daily across the Peninsula

With most of the CMC's six landfill sites nearly full, authorities are concerned that the problem might get out of control. They are even considering exporting waste to a regional dump far away from the city.

"Handling the waste of a metropole of 3-million people is quite a problem," said Arthur Clayton, CMC executive director of water and waste

"New regulations make it very difficult to establish new landfills — for instance they may not be within a certain distance of built-up areas — and the Peninsula is quite densely populated"

The American team, which arrives

next week, will be funded mainly by the United States Trade Development Agency, and aims to find cost-effective waste disposal methods.

The cash-strapped CMC could not afford sophisticated disposal techniques used elsewhere in the world, like incineration, which cost between R300 and R400 per ton compared to R22 per ton at a landfill, according to the CMC head of waste services, Peter Novella.

He said medical waste — which has to be incinerated — was hardest hit by lack of disposal facilities.

"Currently we only have one incinerator, which is falling apart."

Authorities have also faced a barrage of criticism over "offensive odours" coming from the Athlone Refuse Transfer Station where waste was transferred from road to rail, he said

The American team is expected to submit a report at the end of the year which could have a significant effect on council waste policy

"The Peninsula is filling up. The problem is we all want to produce waste but nobody wants it in their backyard," Novella said

"Although other cities produce more waste than we do, they have more sophisticated disposal methods as well as better recycling policies"

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State will be taken to court over water cutoffs

(124)

Non-paying Hermanus community wants taps to flow, but others say councils are within their rights to target defaulters

Star 2/2/98

BY BUNTY WEST

The Government's right to cut off water to defaulters is shrouded in such confusion that residents are preparing to take the state to court over the issue.

A community in Hermanus in the Western Cape will go to court next month to force its municipality to turn their water back on.

The case, which could settle the issue once and for all, will be fought by the Legal Resources Centre

It follows a case in Durban last year in which the LRC successfully challenged a local authority's decision to cut off water to a household

LRC lawyer Ranjit Purshotam, who believes local councils cannot cut off water to residents, said: "Not only did

we get an interdict for the water of the non-payer to be turned on again, as a trickle, until the case came to court, but the council eventually capitulated on the steps of the court and agreed that a special water tariff for the poor would be implemented."

Lawyers for Human Rights national director Dr Vinodh Jaichand, however, took the opposite view "Different towns have different bylaws, but paying for services is a contractual obligation with the local authority and would take precedence over any right to water," he said

Greater Johannesburg Metro Council spokesman Kenny Fihla says councils do have a right to cut off water to people who do not pay for services, but that councils cut off water only if residents

persistently refuse to pay

"We give defaulters notice first and then put in a plug to reduce water flow. It is only when people remove the plug that we take steps to remove the meter

"Under no circumstances do we remove a meter if there is no alternative source of water within reasonable walking distance," Fihla said

Rand Water is behind the council.

"We don't think it is illegal to cut off water to houses and businesses, because the constitution says that although you have a right to water, this could be obtained from your neighbour or other sources," according to Rand Water spokesman Archer Davis

"The minimum level of service which has to be provided is water within 200m of your home, but you must pay for it."

Official in land deals probe paid for 16 months at home

KARIN SCHIMKE
POLITICAL WRITER

A GUN-TOTING official of the Western Cape administration has spent the past 16 months at home, drawing a salary of more than R5 500 a month, while allegations have been investigated against him.

Mr Barend Birk, a senior administrative officer in the Department of Public Works, has been investigated by the De Meyer Commission, which is probing alleged irregularities involving state land.

In its report, handed to President Nelson Mandela in September, the commission said it had found that Birk manipulated the sale of R2,4-million worth of state properties in favour of a partner who had later sold them for huge profits.

Because of these deals, pensioners were denied potential housing, a Mowbray Hospital block of flats for staff was sold without the residents or hospital authorities' knowledge and performers at the Nico Malan Theatre were denied safe late-night parking.

At a meeting of the Western Cape standing committee on finance yesterday, it emerged that Birk had been suspended before fraud allegations against him had come to light and because he had been carrying a gun on duty.

"He was originally suspended from duty for threatening actions while in possession of a firearm on administration property," Mr Janne Morkel, director of personnel management in the province, told

the Cape Times later.

"After investigation, no disciplinary charges could be justified.

"The suspension was extended on 9 October 1996 for alleged fraudulent actions regarding the sale of immovable state property."

Birk's salary, for his position at lower middle management level, was around R69 381 a year.

Although the details of his package may not be made public, Birk has been receiving a monthly salary of about R5 781,75 — excluding perks or benefits — while he has been at home during his suspension.

The administration was studying the De Meyer Commission's report to formulate disciplinary charges, Morkel said.

Western Cape auditor-general Mr Willie Brits gave a summary of the De Meyer report to the standing committee meeting, which was attended by a high-powered provincial administration delegation.

According to the summary, there were four sales of property under the former Cape Provincial Administration that were allegedly irregular.

Birk apparently co-operated with two other people: a director of closed corporations and a Camps Bay lawyer.

Through his involvement with one of the deals under investigation, Birk allegedly received R1,375m although "he did not

obtain the necessary permission to engage in or perform remunerative work outside his employment in the public service"

In another deal, a "property that could have yielded R1,2m" had been sold to the director of closed corporations, through Birk's involvement, for only R750 000.

The MEC for Public Works, Asset Management and Media, Mr Michael Louis, said his department had noted the De Meyer Commission's report and saw its findings in a serious light.

"The matter will be taken to the highest level."

Relevant information on all the investigations would be sent to the law society and the Receiver of Revenue, Louis said.

"May this be an example to the public that any form of fraudulent transactions within public affairs will not be tolerated," he said.

"Public Works will be strategically and managerially consolidated to avert any problem of this kind in the future."

Criminal charges could be brought against Birk.

If disciplinary action is taken against Birk and he is found guilty, he may be fired.

The Western Cape's director-general, Dr Niel Barnard, undertook to report to the standing committee in two weeks on the status of the province's investigations into the allegations against Birk.

*'Public Works
will be consolidated to
avert this kind
of problem
in the future.'*

CT 3/21 98

(124) ~~124~~

Nissen to lead Masakhane drive

ET 4/2/98

(124)

FORMER Western Cape Economic Affairs and RDP MEC Mr Chris Nissen would take up the post of national co-ordinator of the Masakhane campaign this month, Provincial Affairs and Constitutional Development Minister Mr Valli Moosa announced yesterday.

Nissen's background as a church minister in rural and urban

areas and as a Western Cape MEC in charge of the RDP made him eminently suitable for the job, he said yesterday

Moosa said that at the Minmec (national minister and local government MEC) meeting yesterday, it had been decided that he propose to the cabinet that a "Masakhane Week" be held later

this year to promote the campaign. Masakhane is aimed mainly at motivating people to pay for their municipal services

Moosa told the Minmec meeting that central government would be strengthening its contribution to the campaign. A white paper on local government was being finalised for the cabinet — Sapa



New role: Chris Nissen

Nissen (124) named to head payment drive

ARG 4/2/98

CHARLES PHAHLANE
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

Former Western Cape ANC chairman and economic affairs MEC Chris Nissen has been appointed national Masakhane campaign co-ordinator, Provincial Affairs and Constitutional Development Minister Valli Moosa announced.

Mr Moosa said yesterday that Mr Nissen's experience in local economic development and his involvement in promoting the Reconstruction and Development Programme in the Western Cape qualified him for the job.

He was also proficient in three languages, including Xhosa.

"We are extremely excited that we now have probably the best person one could have wanted for the job of this nature," Mr Moosa said.

Mr Nissen replaces Chris Ngcobo, who left for a local government post.

Mr Moosa said a proposal would be put to Cabinet to declare another Masakhane focus week this year based on the success of last year's campaign, which encourages citizens to pay for housing and services while local authorities attempt to raise standards.

President Nelson Mandela will present the Masakhane Presidential Awards tomorrow.

Mr Moosa also said the White Paper on local government was in its final stages and would be presented to Cabinet in the next few weeks.

He also said that local government elections would not take place at the same time as national government elections next year.

Council funds crunch could spark steep Peninsula rates rise

JERMAINE CRAIG
STAFF REPORTER

Peninsula ratepayers face a substantial rates increase if the Cape Metropolitan Council continues making "irrational" decisions about allocating funds to municipalities.

This is the view of Cape Town municipal officials and councillors who believe the CMC is treating the Cape Town council unfairly, giving it less money because it is ANC-controlled.

The CMC is already at loggerheads with Finance Minister Trevor Manuel who refused to approve its budget for this financial year on the grounds that it is spending too much on bureaucracy and too little on infrastructure in poor areas.

It is now involved in a new row with the Cape Town council because it has decreased its grant from former Regional Services Council levies and increased those to the other councils, which are all National Party-controlled.

The CMC has R419-million available

from the levies and has allocated R209-million of this to the six councils.

Cape Town's allowance has been cut from R39-million last year to R26-million this year. Grants to the other councils have gone up.

None of the six local councils has had its budget approved because they are reliant on CMC funds to balance their books.

The CMC intends giving Tygerberg R79,4-million (R70,5-million last year), Helderberg R13,4-million (R2,9-million),

Oostenberg R31,4-million (R14,2-million), South Peninsula R38,6-million (R29,8-million) and Blaauwberg R20,3-million (R8,1-million).

Yesterday, the Cape Town council's executive committee deputy chairman Saleem Mowzer said it was possible the CMC was targeting Cape Town because it was the only ANC-controlled council in the metropolitan area. He said the cut meant Cape Town would have a shortfall of about R13-million, 5% of the rates base. CMC executive committee chairman

AKIT 6/12/198

(124)

Pierre D'ys denied that the allocation of levies to councils was made on political grounds.

He said Cape Town had agreed to the R26-million allocated to it more than six months ago and had been invited to come up with new figures to prove the allocation should be different, which they had not done.

The amount had been reduced initially after the CMC was told by Cape Town treasurer Peter Lever that the CMC had overpaid Cape Town the previous year.

Nissen issues call to patriotism

New Masakhane head plans 'civil obedience' drive

MICHAEL MORRIS
Special Writer

Expanding the Masakhane campaign to build a "new

patriotism" - getting people not only to pay their bills, but to save, buy local, increase productivity and stay within the law - is Chris Nissen's vision for his new job as head of the national project.

"I want to move in the direction of a civil obedience campaign and get people to ask themselves not what the

country can do for them, but what they can do for the country. That will be good for all of us," said the former Western Cape ANC chairman and economic affairs MEC.

Mr Nissen left politics at the end of last year when it became clear that the ANC would be excluded from Premier Hermus Kriel's Western Cape cabinet. He replaces Chris Ngcobo, who took up a post in local government.

Mr Nissen was meeting the Masakhane team today for discussions on strategy and, for this reason, was

reluctant to discuss his ideas in detail.

But he made it clear his overall vision would be to expand the campaign into something more than a programme to get people to pay their rates and service fees, the key objectives of Masakhane when it was launched two years ago.

He envisaged broadening the campaign to include programmes to:

- Increase productivity;
- Encourage people to buy locally-made products;
- Pay their television licenses;

■ Get their car licenses;
■ Pay their bills - not just their local government debts;

■ Buy only what they can afford;
■ Start saving; and

■ Exploit opportunities in the private sector.

"I want to get the message across that we need these things for our own survival and our own well-being," he said

Mr Nissen's appointment, which was announced on Tuesday, takes effect on February 16

8/2/98

(124)
ARLS 5/2/98

Council to boot out rent defaulters

TOM HOOD

ST(CM) 8/2/98 (124)

THE Cape Town City Council is to give some 10 000 rent defaulters in council houses an ultimatum: pay your rent or get out

The decision to get tough with people illegally occupying council houses — which are supposed to go to the poor — was made at this week's housing committee meeting

In terms of the decision, the first to be kicked out will be hundreds of "hijackers" who have taken over council houses by force. They will be told to get out later this month. Others to be targeted include tenants profiteering through illegal sub-letting, tenants owning property elsewhere and sub-tenants who took over vacant houses.

However, before the first evictions take place, the council is to make one last effort to talk offenders into paying. Councillors armed with rent printouts will knock on doors of defaulters as part of the "persuasion" campaign.

The tough action has been taken by the council in a bid to recover tens of millions of rands of arrears and build more houses

Until now, the council's policy has been not to evict families for non-payment. But, according to housing committee chairman Sydney Ncate, court orders were now being sought to evict defaulters

However, some councillors fear thousands of evictions could lead to a rash of new squatter shacks springing up.

Over 10 000 — 66 percent — of the council's 15 400 tenants owe at least three months' rent and have piled up R28-million of arrears. Meanwhile the council has a waiting list of 31 000 families wanting to rent houses and flats

Another 9 800 — 56 percent — of 17 300 families buying council houses are at least three months behind in their repayments and owe the city R33-million

Ncate said no unemployed or poor person who could not pay would be evicted. But defaulters who could afford to pay would be kicked out.

far new
HOREY

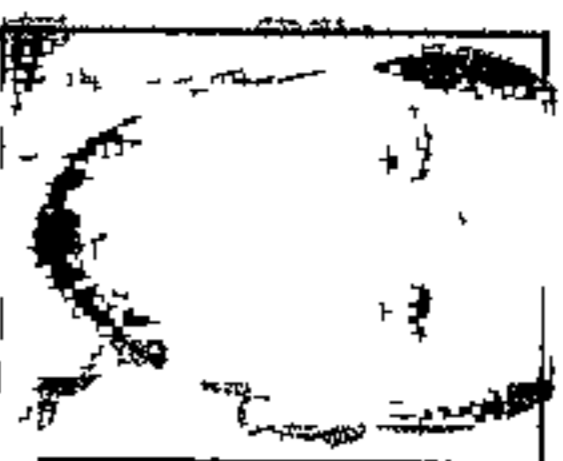
UP TO
40%

TENANTS PACKED INTO SLUM

Muizenberg facade conceals life of filth

CT 11/2/98

(12/1)



Special Assignments Team **ROGER FRIEDMAN** and **BENNY GOOL** scratch away some of the veneer of picture-postcard Muizenberg.



COASTAL Lodge, just off the beachfront in Muizenberg, used to be an old-age home. It is a three-storey building with communal bathrooms and toilets on each floor. The elderly once occupied tiny single rooms.

These days, some of the rooms are still occupied by elderly, single tenants. Others house families, extended families and groups of friends. Some of the toilets are broken, taps don't work, pipes have burst, window frames rattle, electric cables are exposed — the place is filthy. There are about 40 rooms. They go for between R400 and R600 each.

Tenants would only speak to the *Cape Times* on condition of anonymity, scared they would be evicted if they were seen to be speaking out.

"My water pipes leak, so I cannot use my sink and am forced to fetch water from the bathroom. There are 15 bedrooms and two bathrooms on this floor, but the one bathroom has broken taps," a tenant lamented.

"I stay alone here because I could not subject my children to these conditions. I sit and reflect every day how terrible it is, but there is nowhere else to go. I pay R450 rent. In other buildings, smaller rooms go for R750," the tenant said.

The caretaker, a middle-aged woman, shooed the *Cape Times* from the place, refusing to give her own name or the landlords' "I can tell you nothing about this build-

ing. Since I moved in I've seen nothing wrong," she said.

This is the Muizenberg tourists seldom see, the Muizenberg that lurks beneath the veneer of respectability.

Just down the road the upstairs balcony of the Star Inn groans under the weight of about 50 tenants and/or visitors.

The ageing caretaker doesn't want to say much in case it gets her into trouble.

Single rooms cost R500 a month, she says, and are restricted to four adults each.

"They give you four names but the next time you look there are six or eight and you cannot get rid of them." Double rooms go for R650.

A single toilet and bathroom is provided for the eight downstairs rooms. There are more rooms upstairs, and another toilet and bathroom.

Residents said the place was "infested with cockroaches" and they were scared to use the toilets because they ended up with boils and medical bills.

Across the road, on the corner of Church and Frankfort roads, is the old Don Pepe Hotel.

"Full inspection on each room and flat will take place shortly at any time of the day or night. Any tenant that has more than two adults in a room will be charged R400 a head — per month. If not, you will be notified to VACATE IMMEDIATELY," a notice greets you at the entrance.

There are two South African families living there now, the rest of the residents are immigrants. They told the *Cape Times* they were quite happy at Don Pepe, only they were forced to sleep five, six or seven to a room to come up with the R650 monthly rent.

The hotel's once-popular Portuguese restaurant has been converted to living accommodation and residents are encouraged to use the old restaurant kitchen.

In fact, they are warned by a second notice that if they cook in their bedrooms they will be evicted "instantly." Many cook in their bedrooms anyway.

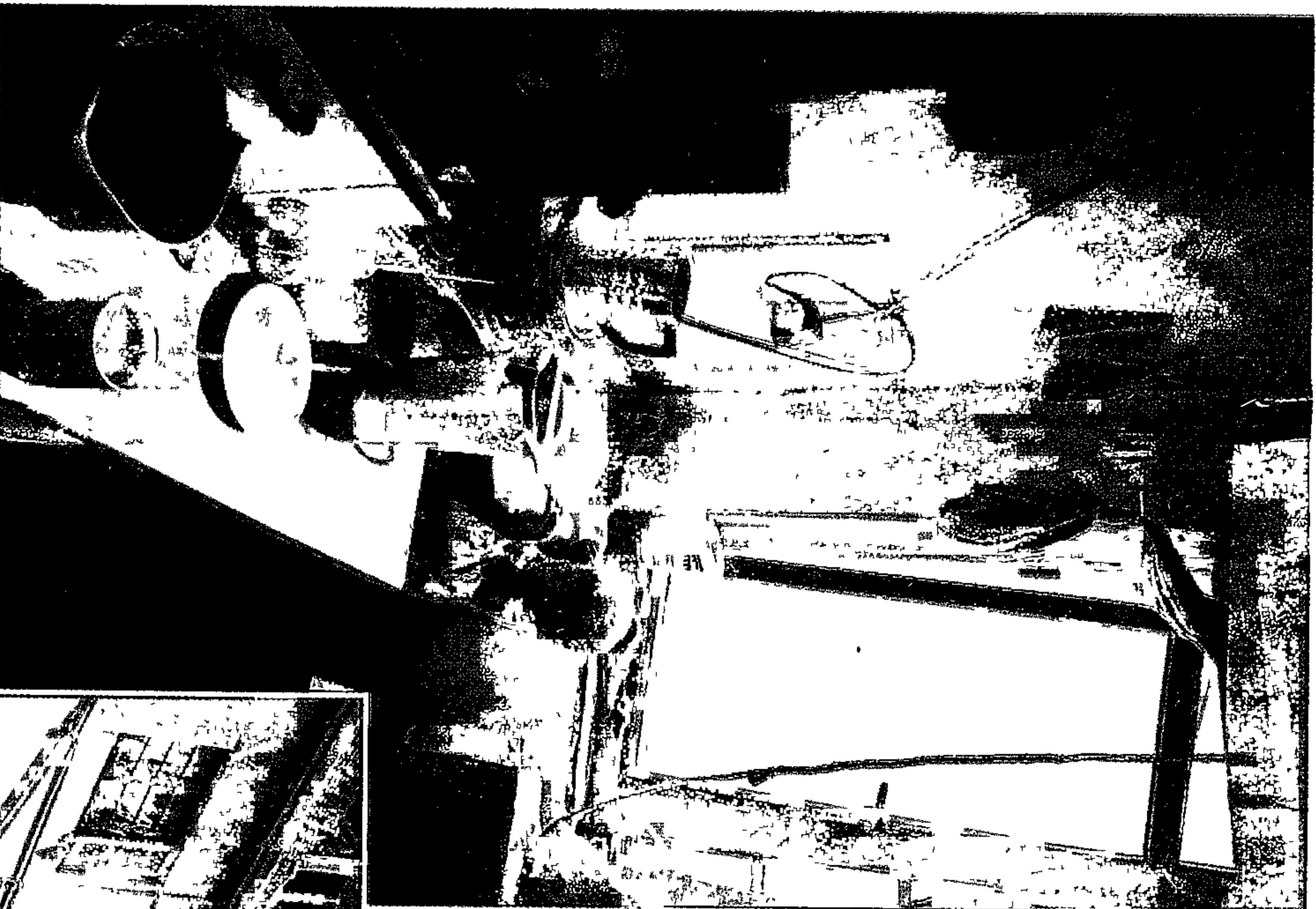
This building — and several others in the vicinity — is owned by well-known Cape Town businessman Mr Zhauns Amd, who drives a Rolls-Royce and owns property in Bishopscourt and other areas.

"We are not slumlords because we have control over our property. I deny emphatically that people are living five or six to a room. Our properties are not overcrowded because when we sign leases we make sure no more than two people, or two people with a child, occupy the rooms. Where there has been overcrowding and we discover it we sort it out."

"We have actually improved the condition of the buildings when they were owned by whites they were never looked after."

Amd said only racists would accuse him of being a slumlord. "When we took over the buildings we found the lowest scum whites living with rats and filth. But it is only when black people move in that problems are raised."

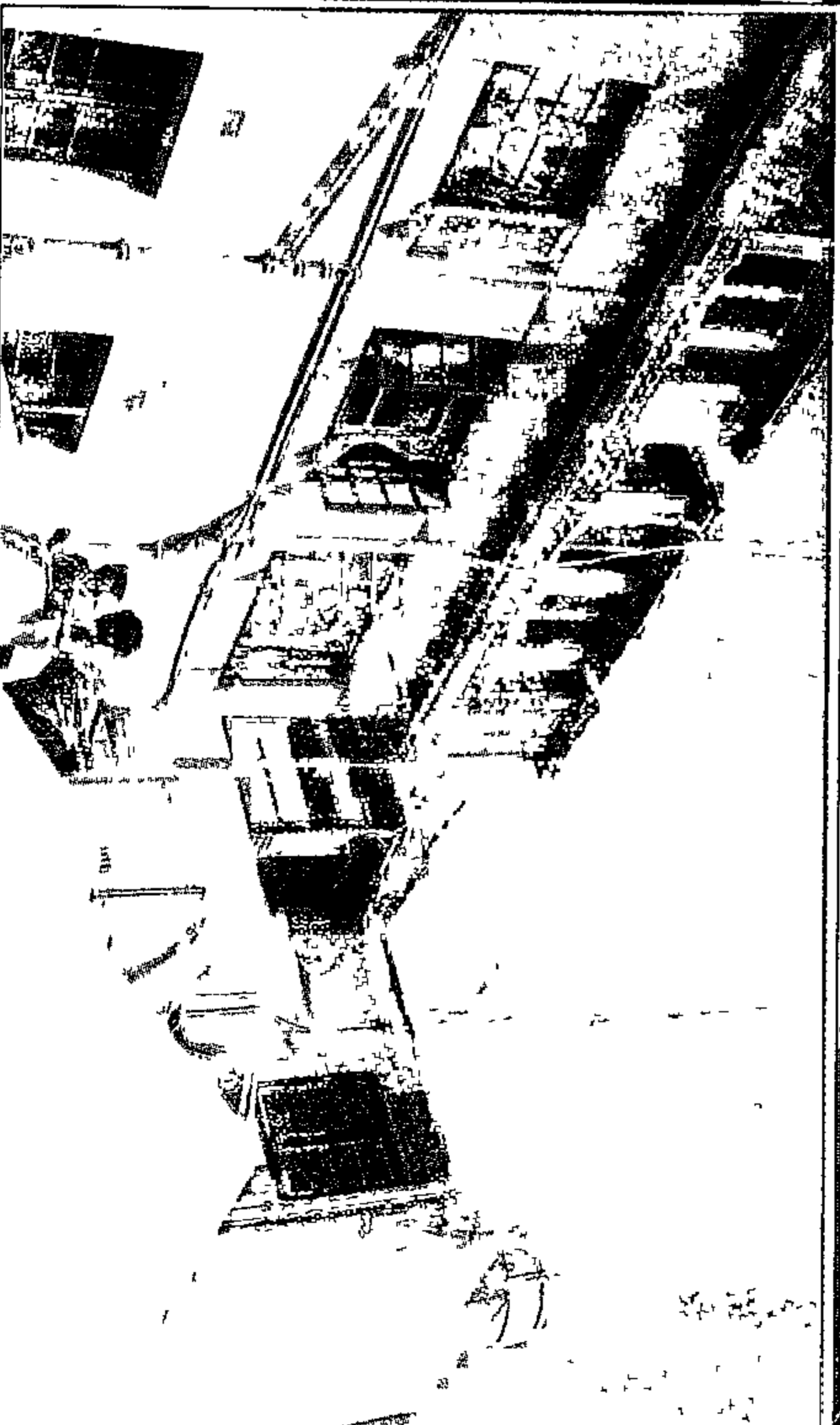
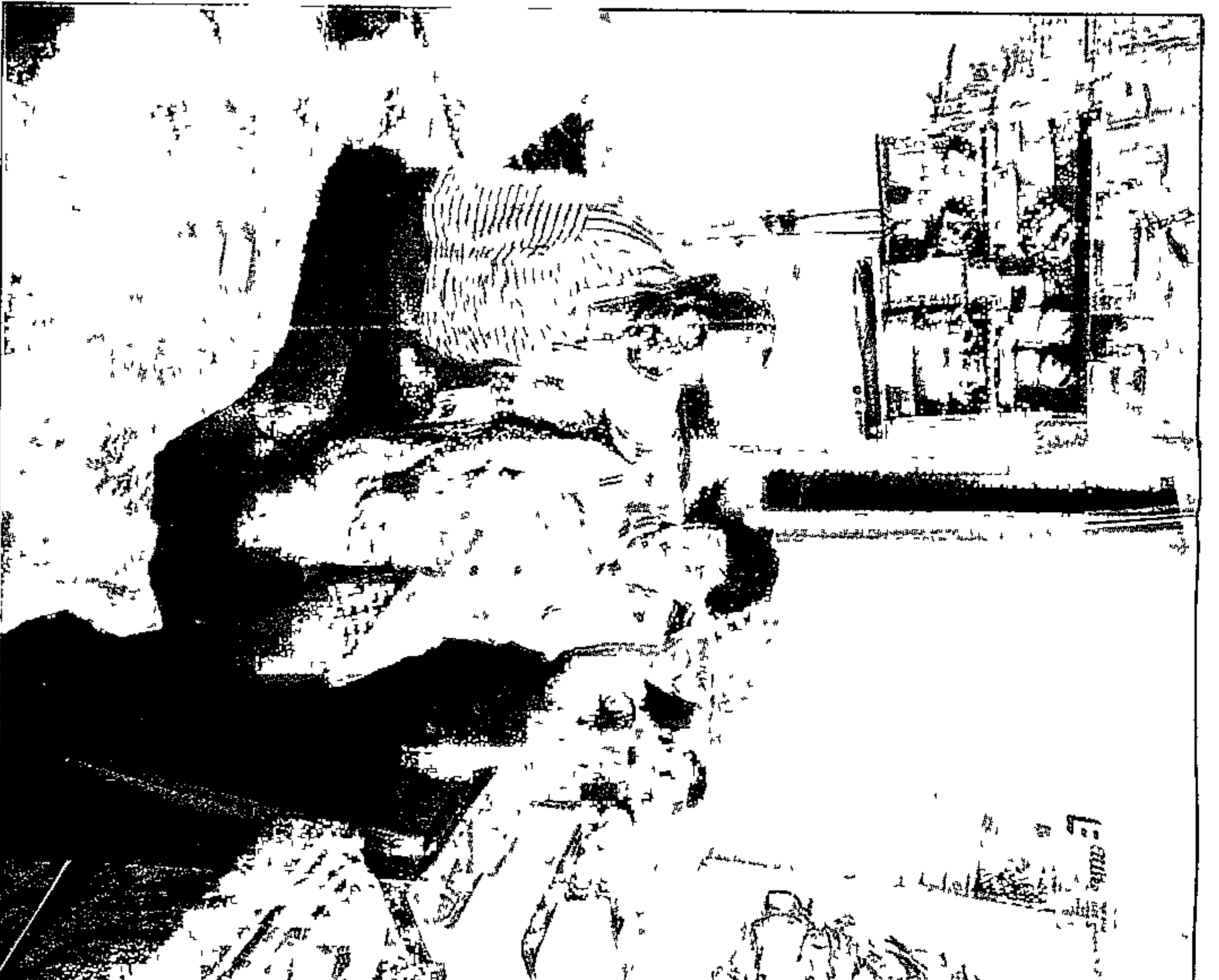
He suggested the *Cape Times* carry out an inspection of the buildings at night, to see how many people lived in each room. During the day the places appeared



ROOMS WITH VIEWS: A girl tests the water in a room at Coastal Lodge. Abdurakep and Margaret Satarren (above right) pay R650 a month rent plus electricity for this narrow room in the former Don Pepe Hotel.

crowded because "as far as black tenants go it is in their nature to congregate that does not mean they are all sleeping in the building", he said.

Muizenberg conditions that ANC branch chairperson for the area Mr Ben Turok wants improved. Not to restore the place to its former white-only colonial glory, but to restore the dignity of its ordinary residents.

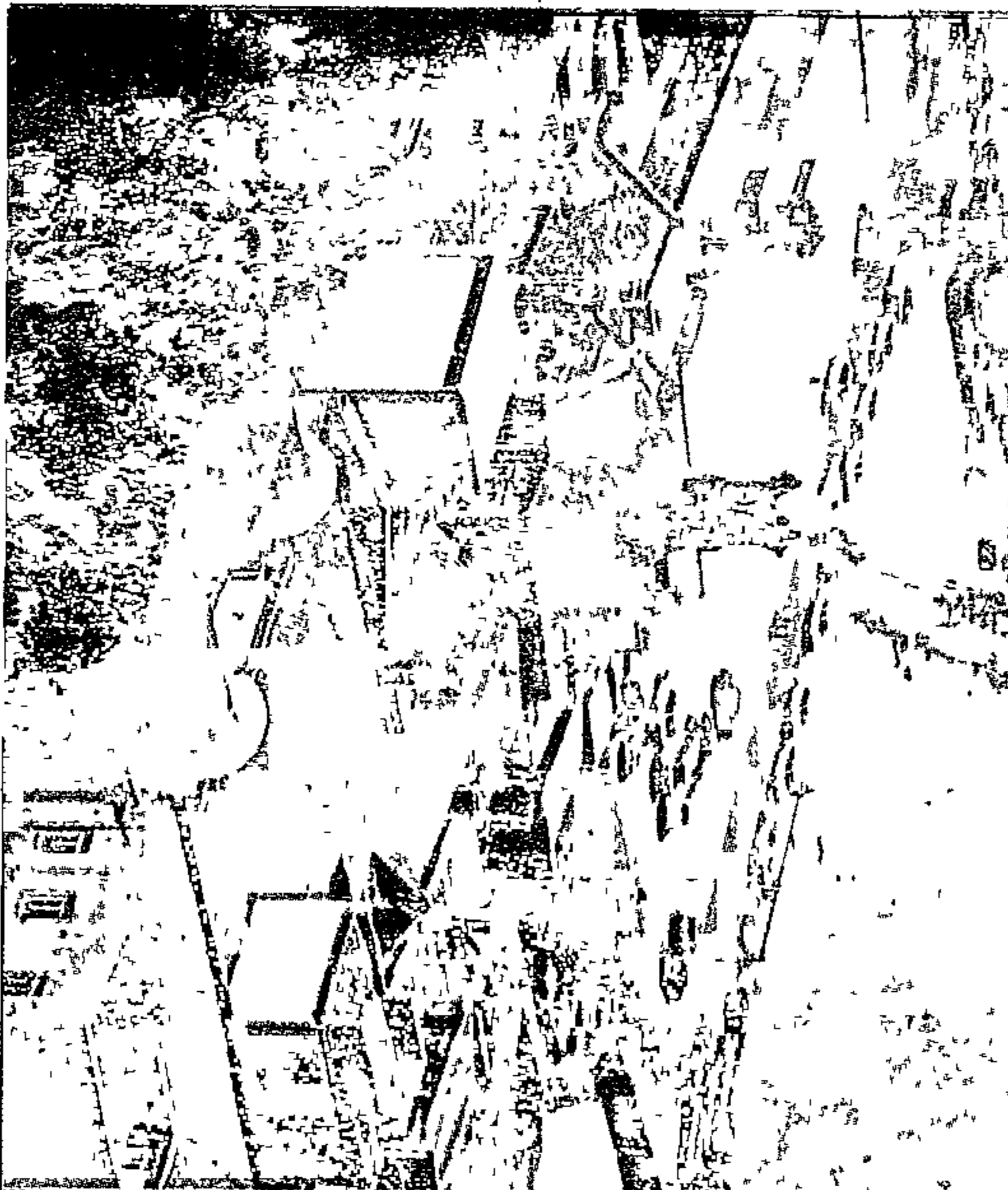
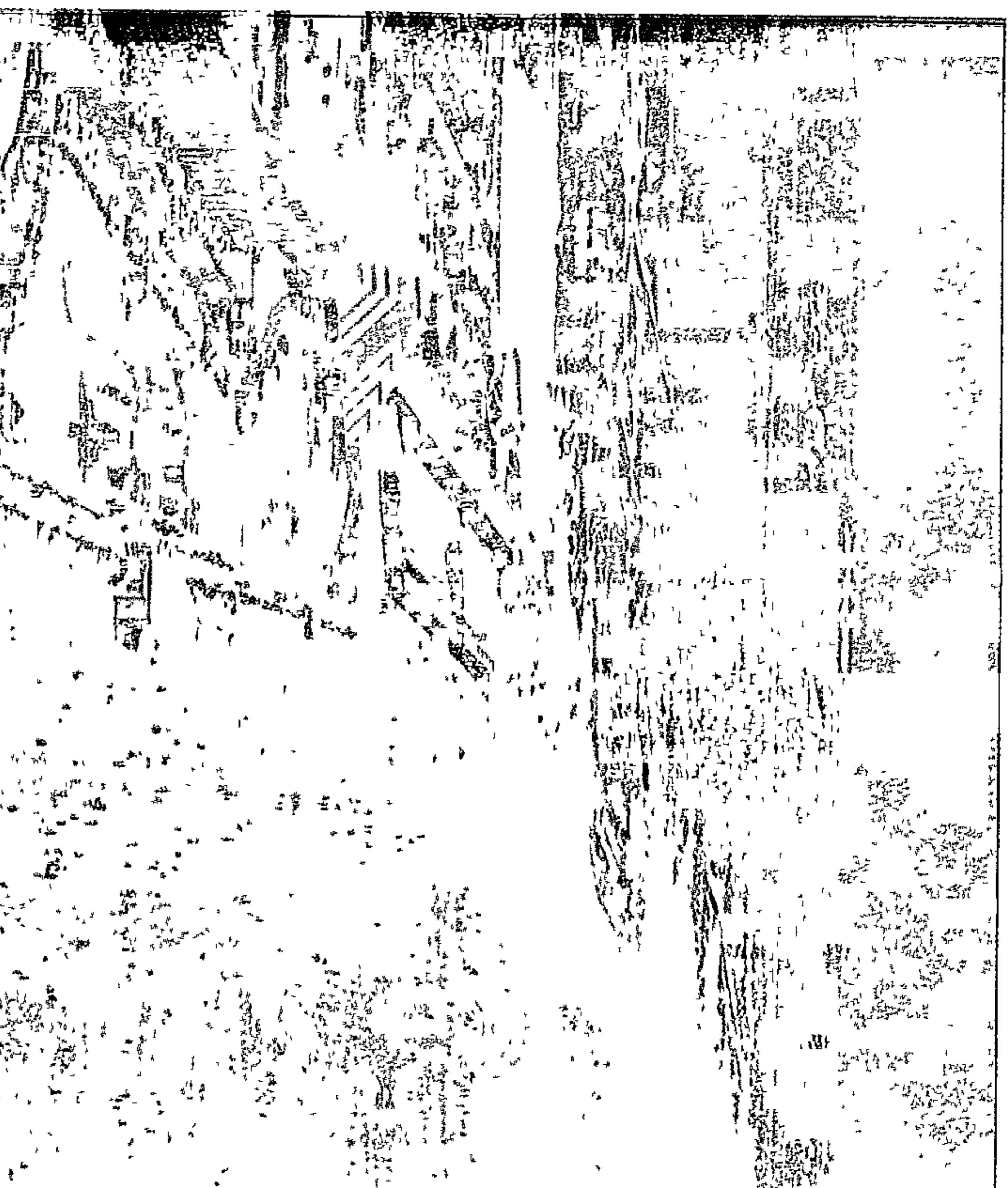


TENUOUS LIFE: The facade of the Coastal Lodge in Muizenberg. "The people are scared to talk because when they have complained to the council in the past the lamey (boss) has given them notice," a tenant said.

THOUSANDS LIVING IN SQUALOR

Hidden shame Of beach paradise

SQUALOR, OVERCROWDING and desperation are the main ingredients in this False Bay ghetto, reports Special Assignments Team **ROGER FRIEDMAN** and **BENNY GOOL**.



WORLD CLASS The view of Muizenberg and the False Bay coastline from Boyes Drive belies the squalor that lurks within. **Right:** Children at play in the corridors of Coastal Lodge, the former old-age home only a stone's throw from the pristine beach. Four or five prominent Muizenberg buildings have been condemned, others could follow.

ONCE a colonial tourist boom town, where "Europeans" spent their summer holidays picnicking on the beaches, strolling the promenade and waltzing the nights away at lavish balls — while servants tended the children — the

place has been decaying for about 40 years. Now the life-blood is being throttled out of it by absentee landlords — some say slumlords — who profit handsomely from Cape Town's desperate housing shortage by packing people into deteriorating former hotel rooms, boarding houses and

old-age homes, and charging them exorbitant rents. Parts of the town have managed to cling onto a modicum of middle-class respectability, but others have gone to the dogs.

The creeping malaise has struck particularly at beach-front properties — some of which have been condemned and are boarded up — and those in the "village" between 2 000 and 3 000 people live in the most terrible conditions.

Welcome to Muizenberg, where a family or a bunch of friends can pick up a stinking room — usually without running water — for anything between R400 and R1 000 a month. Where vulnerable people living in squalor are too scared to speak out about the mess because they fear being turfed onto the street, where citizens of Africa fleeing economic and social hardship in their countries to the north can afford to congregate (and avoid pervasive township/squatter camp xenophobia), where rent is paid in cash and few questions are asked. Muizenberg home-owners had the following to say in a report handed to the South Peninsula Municipality this week: "The situation is out of control. The inhabitants of the slim dwellings defy law and order. The landlords of these dwellings are smiling all the way to the bank — they do not declare their cash income to the Receiver of Revenue. The landlords are contravening the zoning law (and) show no interest whatsoever in maintaining their properties."

A week ago the Muizenberg branch of the African National Congress held a public meeting at Muizenberg Pavilion to address the situation. The event was

(124) CT 11/2/98

chaired by Mr Ben Turok MP, who told the *Cape Times*. "The key point is that people are forced to live in these conditions because there is no proper housing. We would ask the South Peninsula Municipality to build rented accommodation. There are subsidies available for housing, why are they not being brought to Muizenberg?"

A spokesperson for the municipality did not return the *Cape Times* call yesterday.

Turok said the conditions described by tenants were "horrific" and "appalling". "People do not have access to toilets, there's no water, some of the rooms have leaking roofs and broken windows. These are people who are being oppressed. The ANC cannot tolerate this."

"The tenants are scared of being evicted so we are going to have to tackle this issue very responsibly. What we plan to do is set up a task group of MPs, MPLs and councillors to monitor the situation, conduct research into the ownership of the buildings, and then get into contact with the owners one by one."

The task group would also be responsible for proposing changes, if necessary, to the legislation governing landlords and tenants.

Chairperson of the Muizenberg/Lakeside Ratepayers and Residents' Association, pharmacist Mr Gerald Musikamh, said: "The Cape Town City Council has neglected Muizenberg for 40 years. Town planning killed it. There have been a multiplicity of schemes, but each has really just driven another nail into the coffin."

"Because of the neglect and the absentee landlords, Muizenberg has deteriorated into a dumping ground," he said.



Right: Children at play in the corridors of Coastal Lodge, the former old-age home only a stone's throw from the pristine beach.

INSIDE

THE GHETTO

— Page 9

'Strongest action' urged against councillors

JERMAINE CRAIG
STAFF REPORTER

Two Cape Town city councillors are being investigated for allegedly using their political influence to stop the eviction of illegal tenants from municipal houses.

City manager Andrew

Boraine said in a report to the executive committee today that, after carefully consideration, he felt the councillors were guilty of contravening the code of conduct, and he recommended the council should take the "strongest possible action" against them

The councillors, Osborne Adams of the National Party and

ARU 17/2/98 (124)
Mogamat Yusuf Sampson of the African National Congress, are members of the council housing committee

Mr Adams is being investigated for allegedly trying to prevent officials from evicting them from a Manenberg house

Mr Sampson is being investigated for allegedly trying to stop the municipality evicting people

from another Manenberg council house

Mr Boraine further recommended that if the councillors did not resign, the council should apply to the High Court to terminate their membership of the council, and the councillors should be suspended without pay pending the outcome of the application

Racial tension makes Happy Valley sad

NORMAN JOSEPH
CITY REPORTER

(124)

ARG 19/2/98

Happy Valley, an informal settlement in Blackheath, has been dubbed "Sad Valley" because of racial tension over the allocation of houses.

Residents said 10 years ago Happy Valley was given its name because black and coloured people lived together peacefully

This week Oostenberg Municipality will try to defuse simmering tension between separate black and coloured residential committees in the area

About four months ago, when low-cost housing was available on a site next to Happy Valley, the two committees submitted to the municipality separate lists of homeless people who qualified for subsidies

Those earning less than R800 qualified for a subsidy of R17 250 which covered the total cost of the house

Black committee leader Herbert Gaba claimed that the coloured committee's list comprised "coloureds from outside the area of Blackheath"

Mr Gaba's colleague, Mxonyiwe Congo, said "the coloureds" were turning the settlement from "happy" to "sad valley"

But Jane Solomons accused the black committee of refusing accommodation to coloureds "who have lived in the area for many years"

A group of coloured residents said there was none of the old unity of the past

Municipal officials and Power Development project manager Henrie Jonck, developer of the site, tried unsuccessfully to bro-

ker peace last week

Mr Jonck said he had been commissioned by the provincial housing board to build 719 units

Since moving into the new houses three weeks ago, hundreds of black and coloured residents had clashed verbally and were being kept apart by religious leaders

Oostenberg's chief executive officer, Dave Cedras, said a plan was in place to address the problems

Continuous negotiations were taking place with all the parties concerned to try to resolve their differences

Mr Cedras said that at negotiations on February 11, it was agreed that a new joint committee would be elected

Further meetings were scheduled for this week to resolve problems identified.

Cape Town to try new land valuation roll

ADELE SHEVEL

Johannesburg — The value of vacant land in Cape Town would decline after the introduction of a new valuation roll next year, Peter Meakin, a property valuer at Holland Real Estate, said this week.

The new roll, which will change the way land is valued and respective rates imposed, is expected to be finalised within the next six months and Cape Town municipalities will use it to calculate rate payments from July next year.

The January 1997 valuation roll is the first revision to the valuation roll since 1979. Values of

properties will be based on site values only, excluding improvements. Values were previously based on land and improvements.

Meakin said the change to site value rating would benefit owners who had improved their properties. Such owners would pay the same rates as identical but vacant or underdeveloped neighbouring sites.

Meakin expected this to encourage developers who at present had to pay higher rates for improvements and additions to properties, thus reducing the incentive to develop land.

The 1990 valuation roll was thrown out by the supreme court after the Cape Town municipality took its own valuers to court because the valuation method was seen to be unfair.

At present Cape Town residential property owners are given a 26 percent rate rebate over their commercial property-owning counterparts.

Meakin said the matter could again end up in court if commercial property owners were discriminated against. He said that, according to the constitution, they should pay proportionally the same amount in rates as residential land of the same value.

But Meakin said this could only happen if the residential rates were scrapped and this would cause an outcry among

residential land owners

Meakin said residential property owners could bank on a considerable increase in rates and taxes.

He said he was urging several of his clients to forge group actions to share legal costs, but it was likely the authorities would use every legal device available to get commercial ratepayers to pay as much of the council budget as possible.

Commercial property owners and managers will soon be invited to object to the new municipal valuations of their properties. The invitation to object is expected to appear in the media in the next three to six months.

(124) CT(MR) 20/2/98



Making a fast buck off the poor

(124)

Marion Edmunds

Two former Western Cape housing officials are skimming hefty profits off the provincial low-cost housing programme in exchange for processing subsidy information for the state.

The Centre for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) has appointed RR, a Cape-Town based consultancy run by two former senior departmental officials, to help manage electronic subsidy applications.

RR has been charging developers and consultants R62 to fast-track each subsidy, more than six times the amount it pays the CSIR for each application.

This leaves the consultancy with a R52 profit on each subsidy, a portion of which it has to spend on overheads, marketing and running costs.

The CSIR recently adjusted its fees after receiving complaints.

A departmental consultant, Latief Camroodien, has accused RR of rip-

ping off the poor by demanding such a high fee for work he believes can be done very cheaply.

He says the administrative fee of R62 is not borne by the developer, but by the subsidy applicant, because the developer will always pass on the cost.

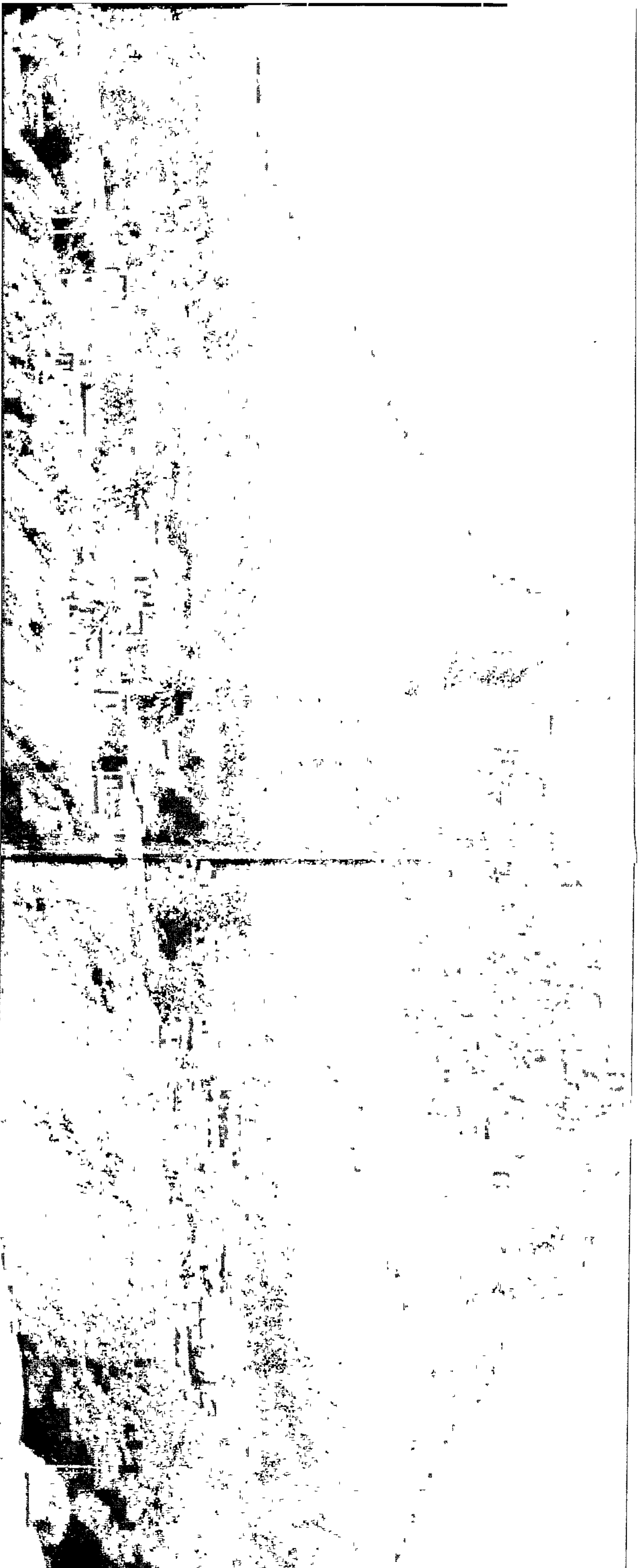
Camroodien says he has tried since 1996 to "expose" RR, but nobody was prepared to respond to his objections. He wants to cut out RR and deliver the subsidy information electronically to the housing board. The department can enter information manually for him, but it delays the subsidy approval by months.

Camroodien also claims that at least eight subsidies in a project in Weltevreden Valley on the Cape Flats have been awarded to people who do not qualify.

The department acknowledged this week that it was "rectifying incorrect approvals of beneficiaries" but said RR was not to blame.

Handwritten notes at the bottom of the page, including "M+G 20-26/2/98".

When the Cape enjoys its balmy summer weather, the northern hemisphere is still wrapped in the chilly legacy of winter. Paul Olivier finds it's a powerful incentive for investment in a holiday home



Prime real estate: Llandudno, one of the Cape's favourite areas for foreign investment, basks in the sun. Latest figures show that since October last year, foreigners have made a whopping R146-million in residential properties in the Western Cape, mainly as holiday homes and seasonal retreats

Hold on to your homes, the Yanks are coming!

The hardy British are snapping up Western Cape property, but the Germans are said to be too nervous to invest here

Estate agents report that the expected German invasion has not materialised because the Germans are apparently afraid of crime in South Africa – and are even fearful of flying over Africa's notoriously uncontrolled airspace

And while the Americans have been slow to buy our houses, estate agents are confident that the Yanks are coming in large numbers to buy their slice of the Cape

Latest figures show that since October last year, foreigners have invested a whopping R146-million in residential properties in the Western

Cape, mainly as holiday homes and seasonal retreats

Investors from the United Kingdom continued to show the most confidence, spending more than R73,7-million for 38,4% of all the homes sold to foreigners

But Germany, once tipped as the top source for foreign investment into the local residential property market, represented 27,3% of foreign sales valued at R37,1-million

Third is the United States, with Americans having 5,6% of the market share, buying 11 units valued at R6,3-million

But market property experts predict the American share will grow significantly in the near future

"The local property market in gen-

eral has shown significant growth since October last year but the German connection has proved disappointing against all expectations," said Roger Gallagher, Cape regional director of Pam Golding properties

"Unsafe flying conditions over Africa, highlighted by the aviation disaster off the Namibian coast when 33 US and German servicemen were killed in a mid-air collision, has deterred many German buyers who traditionally favour Cape Town as a holiday destination

"The high rate of violence in South Africa and the Western Cape, as well as the rand's ability to hold its own against foreign currencies, are also factors responsible for the German investors holding back," Mr Gal-

agher said

Foreign investors buying property in the Western Cape fall in the upper-income or definitely, although bracket who generally spend anything from R1,5-million upwards for a home in the Mother City

Some wealthier investors have been known to spend R5 million or more on a single property and properties falling into the R2-million to R2,5-million bracket have become increasingly popular

Foreign investors regard Cape Town largely as a holiday venue for a seasonal retreat. The mix of attractive destination, English as the lingua franca, and warm weather, as well as the northern hemisphere, is unbeatable. Some spend large

the summer here with the first three months of the year the most popular

German investors are known to buy up guest houses for business purposes while the British set up holiday homes and seasonal retreats which could also be used as venues for business conferences

Many of the properties are rented out to tourists during the off-season. Mr Gallagher said although expectations were still high that the German market would recover, all eyes were now set on the United States "where pointers indicate capital is waiting to be invested"

Other Western Cape property experts echo Mr Gallagher, saying that the United States still wields the economic sceptre in the world, a fact

highlighted by the recent meltdown of the Asian economies

US visitors to Cape Town predict that investments from their country could soon start flowing in as people there become disillusioned with overcrowding and escalating crime in California, the US holiday mecca

Leading international property broker ERA Steer said its representatives would be visiting Las Vegas for the international ERA convention later this year with a specific interest in investors from the United States. ERA is the largest international property franchise in the world with offices in 19 countries

"Although we have traditional ties with the United Kingdom and Germany and they remain our core mar-

kets, the United States is emerging as a potential giant for investment in the Western Cape's property market," said chairman Hadden Steer

He added, however, that his organisation still viewed Germany as one of the most important investor markets in the world and that the Cape Town operation would soon join the more than 120 offices throughout Germany

"The German connection will be one to watch in the future as it holds huge potential for further growth," Mr Steer said

But South Africans from Gauteng still lead the field of local property investors who have spent R163-million for 347 properties in the Western Cape over the past five months

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ARC 21/2/98

ARC 21/2/98

Cape drinking water is of 'shocking' quality

CHARL DE VILLIERS

THOUSANDS of people in the Western Cape are drinking below-par water which, in some cases, is of "shocking" quality, according to the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research.

The CSIR's findings are based on the sampling of 12 rural communities — which, except for Stellenbosch, Zuurbrak and Middleton near Caledon, the CSIR refused to identify.

CSIR spokesman Dr Johan de Beer said the information was confidential and could only be released by local authorities which took part in the study.

But according to the January edition of *Technobrief*, a CSIR publication sent to the Cape Metro, the issue of unsafe water was not limited to the 12 test communities. It said the CSIR's Cape water

programme had "clearly demonstrated that the problem of poor drinking water quality exists on a large scale" in the rural parts of the Western Cape.

The CSIR has warned that about 20 percent of deaths in the one-to-five-year age group are attributed to diarrhoea — and, internationally, up to 50 000 people die daily from water-related diseases.

The CSIR's Western Cape survey found that a third of the tested communities did not disinfect their drinking water, and in most cases chlorination was not done effectively.

"The microbiological sampling results were even more shocking," said the CSIR.

"At the time of sampling it was found that in 10 of the 12 communities, more than two-thirds of the samples collected failed the South African Bureau of Standards' drinking-water maximum allowable limit.

"In 58 percent of all communities, all samples collected failed the SABS recommended limits, while in 42 percent of them, all samples collected failed the SABS maximum allowable limits."

Stellenbosch assistant town engineer Dirk Hattingh confirmed that even one of the Western Cape's wealthiest rural towns had failed water quality testing by the CSIR's Division for Water, Environment and Forestry Technology.

"Sampling found that the bacteriological quality of Stellenbosch's drinking water was not up to standard. The natural chemical composition of the town's water had also caused cement to leach out of water pipes," Hattingh said.

Additional chlorination stations and limestone treatment had resolved both problems, but kilometres of piping had to be replaced at huge cost.

The CSIR said in only one community did all samples satisfy the SABS recommended and maximum allowable limits. Only two communities passed the quality guidelines laid down by the SABS maximum allowable limits.

Department of Water Affairs water quality chief Sakke van der Westhuizen said South Africa did not have legally enforceable water quality regulations.

"There are only guidelines, and the quality of drinking water is the responsibility of the Department of Health."

"Bulk water supplies are usually OK, especially with regard to bacteriological quality, but problems are far more widespread in isolated rural areas where local authorities do not always function effectively."

The new Water Services Act expected local authorities to be responsible for both the supply and quality of water, Van der Westhuizen added.

(144)
ST (cm) 22/2/98

THE GREAT RATES RIP.

Millionaire home-owners are subsidised through outdated Cape Town

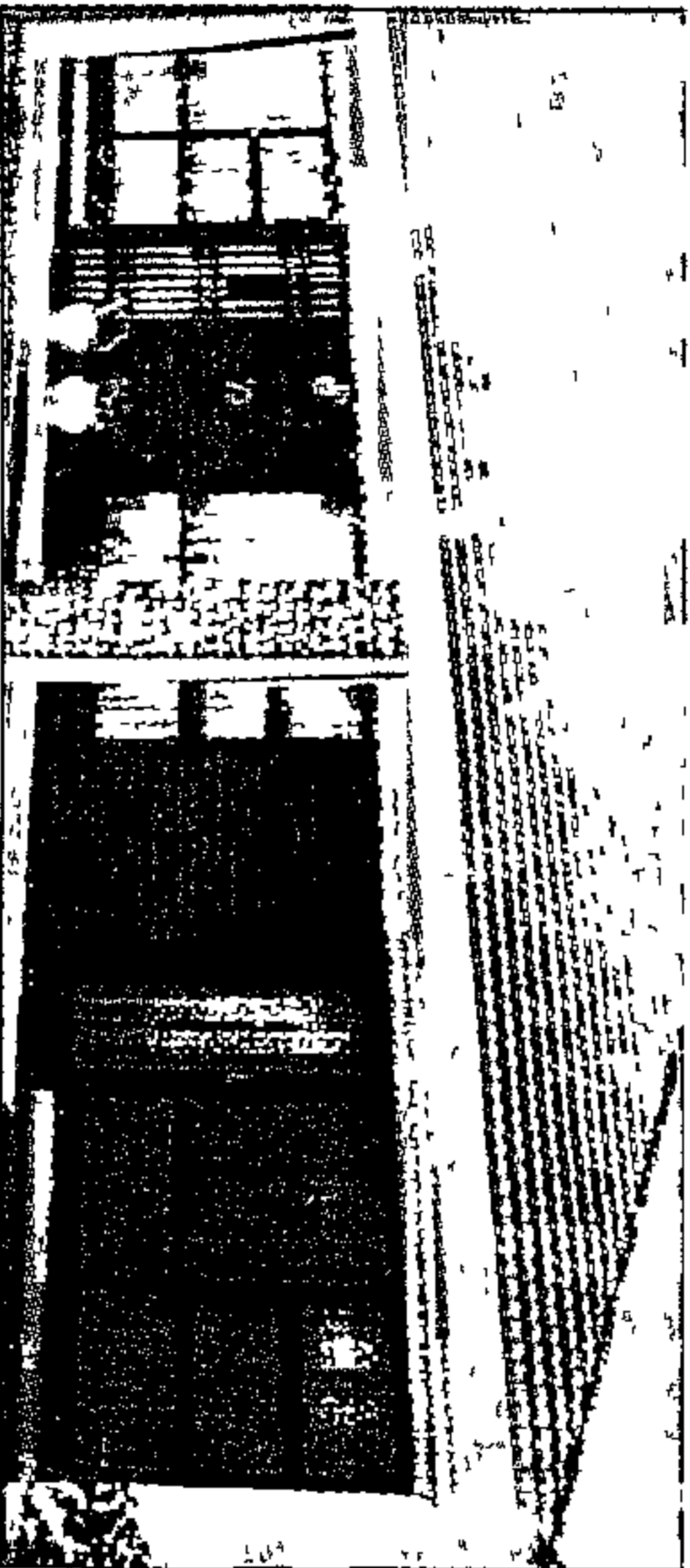
TOM HOOD

CAPE Town's suburban house-owners are subsidising millionaire home-owners on the Atlantic seaboard because municipal valuations do not reflect the true value of properties.

The Cape Metro has discovered that owners of average houses in the suburbs pays almost the same rates as owners of exclusive multi-million rand mansions with beach views on the Atlantic seaboard.

In one case, a R2,8-million Clifton house bought recently by a Singaporean doctor is charged only R366 a month in rates — almost the same as that paid by the owner of a R180 000 house in Grassy Park.

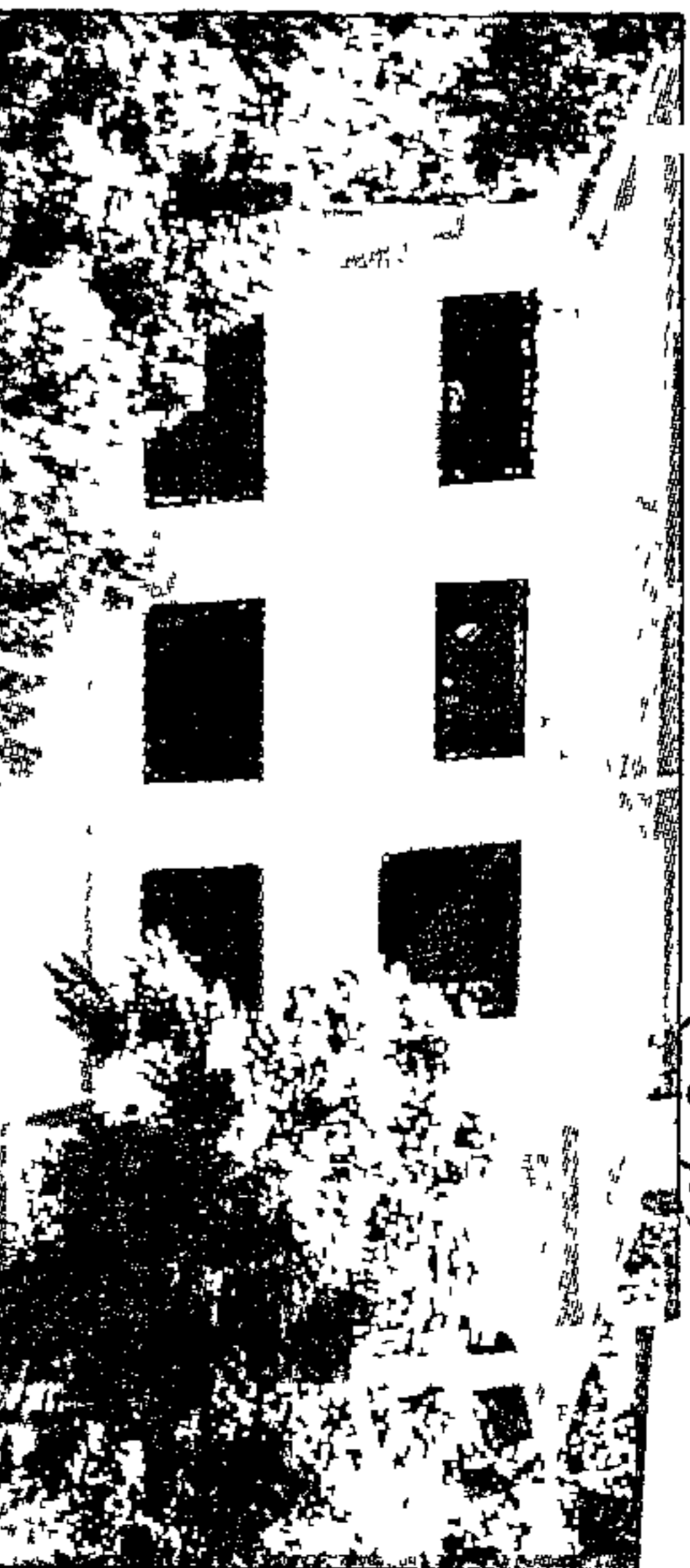
By comparison, a R2,8-million property in up-market Umhlanga near Durban would cost the owner R2 600 a month in rates, while others in plum Johannesburg suburbs Houghton and



PAYING A HIGH PRICE: A neat house in Grassy Park which was sold for R180 000, but the owner pays R300 a month in rates

Bryanston would pay about R1 000 a month in rates.

And it has emerged that home-owners in Mitchells Plain pay more for each square metre than home-owners in the up-market areas of Clifton and Bishopscourt, whose valuations have



MILLIONAIRE'S PARADISE: A R2,8-million house in the Clifton, but the owner only pays R366 a month in rates

not risen in line with huge price increases over the last few years.

This is according to Saleem Mowzer, vice-chairman of the city's executive committee.

The Cape Town city council is now considering a new approach to rates

payments which would put all property owners on an equal footing.

Mike Parker, Cape Town valuations co-ordinator, said the city planned to impose new rates for the first time since 1979 from July next year.

The plan could see rates rising by

up to 1 000 percent in up-market areas, leading to resistance from people who own property in Clifton, Bantary Bay, Camps Bay, Sea Point, Coştan-tia and Bishopscourt, where properties were last valued in 1979.

Already seven ratepayers' associations are to demand undertakings from the city that pensioners or elderly home-owners in these areas be spared the brunt of huge increases. Last time the city tried to bring out equitable property valuations — involving steep rises in posh suburbs — a massive campaign from the Atlantic seaboard and a court action forced the city to abort the change.

Under the new and more equitable system of land-only valuations, owners of small plots in Mitchells Plain, parts of the Cape Flats and other less affluent suburbs could end up paying less than they now are.

Atlantic seaboard councillor Chris Joubert said there was great unhappiness in the area at the prospect of higher rates.

But a city valuer took a different view.

"People will have to review their property holdings if they feel they cannot afford higher rates.

"They may be sitting on an asset that has appreciated 1 000 percent."

OFF

property valuations (strcm) 22/12/98

R100m water arrears bill still in dispute

CLAUDIA CAVANAGH

CT 24/2/98

CHANNELS of communication between the Cape Metropolitan Council and the City of Cape Town could dry up over a whopping R100-million water bill that neither seems prepared to pay

The CMC will pay the amount that has accrued since it began supplying bulk water to the six municipalities in July, but no agreement can be reached about who

should foot the R76m arrears bill up to June

Interest has swollen this figure to R100m. (124)

The CMC says, according to legal opinion, it is not responsible for the payment

The Department of Water Affairs says it needs the money urgently

The department's budget was about to be cut by 14%, said Mr David Erleigh, chair of the CMC's water and waste committee

Councillors await fate

CLAUDIA CAVANAGH
METRO EDITOR

CT 25/2/98

THE FUTURE of two Manenberg councillors, who face expulsion from the city council after intervening in a legal eviction, will hang in the balance for yet another week.

By contacting the council's head of housing and urging him to stop the evictions, ANC councillor Mr Mogamat Sampson and NP member Mr Osborne Adams directly contravened the councillors' code of conduct

After investigating the incident, city manager Mr Andrew Boraine recommended that the council "apply to the High Court for the termination of their membership".

Should the council agree with Boraine, it is believed the councillors will be the first ever to be expelled

The pairs' actions highlighted how some councillors — who in the course of their duties approve council policies — fail to support officials in executing the policies

Some actually side with unlawful elements against officials who are simply carrying out duties in terms of the policies, and even identify particular people in the civic centre as being responsible for the action

And it's exactly this type of behaviour that led to a top council official being driven from his office by death threats last week

Allegations of similar acts of intimidation of officials abound

But, after hours of meetings by both the ANC and National Party caucuses, no consensus was reached about Adams and Sampson

Both parties agreed the matter should be postponed for yet another week.

"Because of the serious nature of the item, it's important to make sure that you bring everyone on board," said exco chairperson and ANC member Ms Nomandia Mfeketo

"I know it has been discussed twice but many councillors are still grappling with the issues and need time

"It's important that we view this matter in the serious light it deserves. If we don't involve everyone, we'll take a decision as a head but the body will go against us."

DP member Mr Chris Joubert said his party had already studied the matter and "strongly supported the city manager and his officials"

"Whatever they (the other parties) decide, we will not waver on that," he told exco

Acting leader of the DP caucus, Ms Belinda Walker, added: "We believe the director of housing should be given the strongest possible backing by all councillors and officials in his policy to achieve equity in rental housing and we fully endorse the recommendations by the city manager in assisting him to do so"

Hard line on rates arrears

ARL 25/2/98

It's pay up or else, says ANNC councillor

MOSES MACKAY

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Job creation and investment in disadvantaged areas such as Khayelitsha will not get off the ground unless residents pay their rates and service bills.

This is the blunt view of Vuyani Ngcuka, African National Congress councillor and deputy chairman of the Tygerberg Council, who has proposed tough measures against defaulters.

Khayelitsha residents owe more than R86-million in rates and service charges.

Mr Ngcuka, who complained that his persistent pleas to people to pay up had fallen on deaf ears, said he favoured legal proceedings to recover arrears and the disconnection of water and electricity if people still did not pay.

He said payment for services was vital to his vision of turning Khayelitsha into a clean, modern suburb.

"There is one principle that

underlines marketability and that is honest labour that goes hand in hand with honest income," he said.

"What I mean is that when people receive goods or services they should pay for them."

Without this, economic development would remain elusive.

But hundreds of Khayelitsha residents were not getting their accounts in the post and, as a result, were accumulating huge debts for municipal services, said African National Congress councillor for the area, Raymond Jada.

However, the Post Office disagreed. It said the accounts were put in people's post boxes or delivered to homes, but residents did not take them.

Mr Jada said many residents were willing to pay their bills, but were being hindered by the non-delivery of their accounts.

He said the postal services are gradually improving, "but we're still picking up problems - we continue to get complaints from residents."

He said the recent discovery of

bags of mail dumped by a postman in Khayelitsha and other problems did not inspire confidence.

Some postal staff were incompetent and others had "negative attitudes about Khayelitsha."

The Tygerberg council had made land available for new post offices in the area and the municipality was discussing a new kind of postal service.

Themba Siyolo, a manager at Cape Mail in Goodwood, said the post office delivered municipal accounts to the greater part of Khayelitsha.

"Our postmen deliver the municipal accounts, but the residents don't take them."

"People collect letters, but not their municipal services accounts," he said.

He believed non-delivery of accounts was just an excuse. People knew they were using services and were responsible for paying for them, even if accounts did not arrive. People should put money aside for services.

He said Cape Mail was looking at ways of extending the service in Khayelitsha. Street names and numbers would help.

Another problem was that some areas, especially in the informal settlements, were known simply by letters of the alphabet, such as Block C, but the blocks were not always in alphabetical order. There were also complaints of lengthy queues, but Mr Siyolo said there was a system which managed long queues efficiently.

"The only real queue problem in Khayelitsha is on pension days."

There were enough staff in the area and if there was a shortage due through illness or absence, additional staff would be provided.

Shaun Povey, senior manager sales and customer services at the Post Office, said the problem of street deliveries was being tackled in a Government green paper.

Anyone with queries or encountering problems at the Khayelitsha post offices should contact Mr Siyolo on 590 5729 or Mr Povey on 590 5552.

Evictions row: council action put on hold

JERMAINE CRAIG

STAFF REPORTER

The executive committee of the Cape Town City Council has again delayed making a decision about two councillors under investigation for allegedly trying to prevent the eviction of illegal tenants from municipal property.

This is in spite of tensions among

officials who feel the council is endangering the lives of staff by not backing its decisions with strong action.

City manager Andrew Boraine said he felt Osborne Adams of the National Party and Yusuf Sampson of the African National Congress were guilty of contravening the council's housing code of conduct, the Local Government Transition Act.

Mr Adams is being investigated

for allegedly moving a couple into a Manenberg house illegally and then trying to prevent their eviction.

Mr Sampson is being investigated for allegedly attempting to stop the council from evicting people from a council house in Manenberg.

Mr Boraine said if they did not resign the council should apply to the High Court to have them removed. The executive committee was to have

made a decision yesterday, but decided to wait until next week to give the NP and ANC more time to discuss the matter.

Mr Boraine said last week that council officials were "appalled" at the delay in making a decision.

He said staff whose duty was to implement council policy decisions were being intimidated and getting death threats.

ARC 25/2/98 (124)

GANGS THREATEN HOUSING DIRECTOR

Cobbett may quit city post

CT(M) 27/2/98 (124)

THE CITY'S highly-regarded director of housing is considering resigning his position because of intimidation and death threats from gangsters. **ERIC NTABAZALILA** reports

CAPE TOWN'S director of housing had not yet handed in his resignation, city official Mr Saleem Mowzer told the *Cape Times*, and the city is to do everything in its power to persuade him to stay

Mr Billy Cobbett, former minister of housing Mr Joe Slovo's hand-picked national director-general, was enticed to the city last year as a Mr Fix-it to help sort out the local housing crisis

The city's housing waiting-list was pegged in November at 31 000 families, and was growing by between 100 and 500 new applications a month

Cobbett is to hold crisis talks with city manager Mr Andrew Boraine, and other officials and

councillors, on his imminent return from a private trip to London with his family

Mowzer, deputy chairperson of the Cape Town city council's exco, said yesterday "He hasn't resigned, but like many officials in different services, he has received threats. He is on a two weeks compassionate leave with his family. Before going on leave he raised the possibilities of discussing options for his future"

Boraine warned, in an interview with the *Cape Times* earlier this week, that hard-hitting policies aimed at reversing inequities in the Cape Town were in danger of being shelved because of widespread intimidation of council officials charged with their implementa-

tion

Cobbett was the key figure behind the city's revised policy on housing which, among other things, sought to halt a trend that saw gang bosses effectively allocating houses on the Cape Flats. This, the gangsters were clearly not willing to accept

So serious were the threats against Cobbett that he was forced to vacate his office and was assigned armed guards to protect his home

Mowzer said the situation in which Cobbett found himself was linked to the question of governance and social disintegration of communities. But he was confident Cobbett could be persuaded to stay

"The communities have lost the right to govern themselves. Over the past few weeks the situation has posed a very real threat to the council's ability to deliver ser-

vices to communities in parts of Manenberg, Hanover Park, Athlone, Guguletu and Langa," Mowzer said

"Should services be stopped — which has become a very real possibility in certain of these areas — it will show that we have failed to govern our communities

"It is vital that municipalities and government continue to provide services, and as a council we will do everything in our powers to ensure the continuation of service delivery"

Mowzer said the Cape Flats was crying out for positive role-models and appealed to young Cape Town sports stars such as Benedict McCarthy, Quinton Fortune and Paul Adams to help the city overturn a culture that sees so many of its youth lured into gangsterism and crime

"Their rise gives hope to millions of South Africans"

Cobbett's fate in balance after gang death threats

JERMAINE CRAIG
STAFF REPORTER

ARG 27/2/98 (124)

Cape Town director of housing Billy Cobbett returns from visiting his terminally ill mother-in-law in England next week to an uncertain future with the municipality.

Mr Cobbett has received death threats from gangsters because of his tough approach to the illegal occupation of council houses. Two weeks ago he lifted the lid on two councillors who were accused of trying to halt the eviction of illegal occupants of council houses in Manenberg. If found guilty, the councillors could be expelled from the council.

To maintain control of their areas, gang bosses play a major role in allocating council houses on the Cape Flats - something Mr Cobbett is determined to end. The threats on

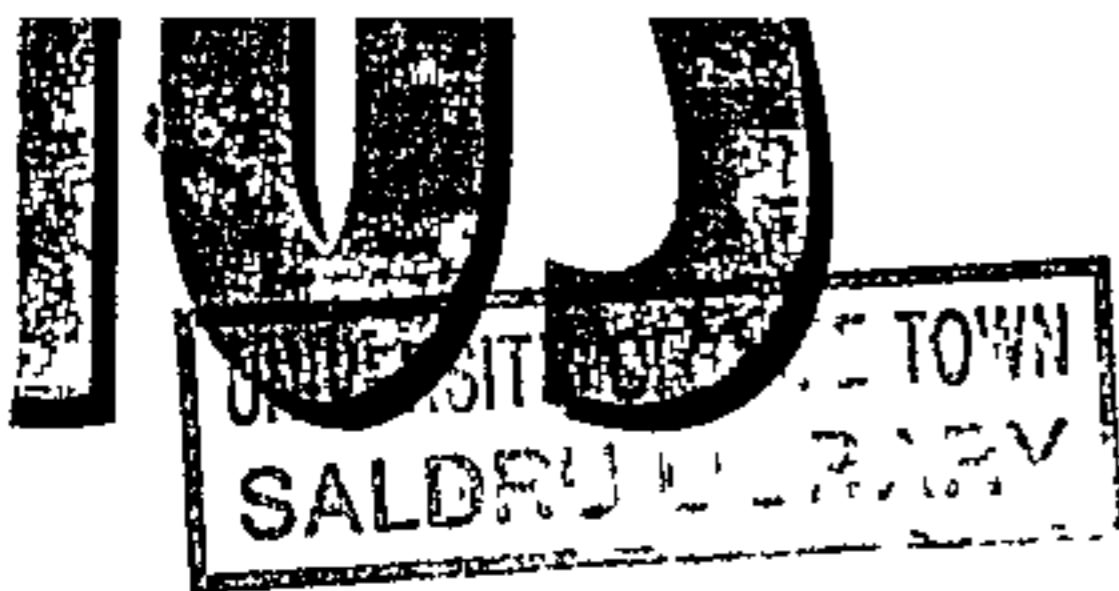
his life last week became so serious that an armed guard was assigned to his home.

Contacted in England last night, Mr Cobbett said he was visiting his mother-in-law but admitted there were other reasons for his departure. "It is not the only reason I am here, but it is a significant reason," he said.

He said he would meet city manager Andrew Boraine and other officials on his return to discuss his future.

Saleem Mowzer, council executive committee deputy chairman, said Mr Cobbett had been getting death threats and was being intimidated, as were other officials.

"In the light of what has been happening over the past two weeks, he raised with me and the city manager options in terms of his employment with the council. We agreed we would discuss it on his return to work. It does not exclude his continuing as director of housing or in the housing sphere."



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FEBRUARY 28/ MARCH 1 1998

GANG'S PLAN TO KIDNAP COBBETT



Housing boss 'on leave' in UK
 (124)
 ART 28/2/98

ANDREA WEISS

The discovery of a plot by the Hard Livings Gang to kidnap Cape Town housing director Billy Cobbett convinced city officials to send him away for his own safety.

Mr Cobbett and his wife are presently in England, while a guard has been placed at his house in Cape Town.

City manager Andrew Boraine revealed that a plot to kidnap Mr Cobbett emerged during the council's campaign to regain control of facilities in Manenberg.

Mr Cobbett told Saturday Argus that the key issue behind his sudden departure was "whether I wanted to be dead or alive".

Although he declined to elaborate on the threats, he said he did not wait to find out how serious the threats were.

Mr Boraine said that in the course of dealing with the situation in Manenberg, information had been brought forward that the Hard Livings Gang was plotting to kidnap Mr Cobbett and had apparently even obtained plans of his office.

Mr Boraine said this information

had come from "very responsible people" and had been taken seriously. Mr Cobbett, a father of four young children, was very concerned.

He had consequently been told to take some leave and a guard was posted at his house. Mr Cobbett had subsequently decided to accompany his wife to England, where she was to visit her seriously ill mother.

Earlier, it was reported that Mr Cobbett, former national housing director-general, was considering resigning his job after threats to his life.

Mr Boraine confirmed that Mr Cobbett had broached the subject of resigning, but said this would be discussed on his return.

He said he believed that the council had acted correctly in taking the threats seriously and giving Mr Cobbett leave.

Mr Cobbett said he knew in his own mind what he was going to do, but "in fairness" it needed to be dealt with at a corporate level by city manager Andrew Boraine and his team.

Mr Cobbett's sudden departure, just a few weeks after the council began implementing a hard-hitting campaign to clean up corruption in

its housing rent stock, has dealt a serious blow to efforts to regain control of gang-ridden housing estates.

Mr Boraine has long been on record as saying that Cape Town's most urgent need is "housing, housing, housing, housing and housing".

Of the message that Mr Cobbett's sudden departure sent out, Mr Boraine said: "As far as I'm concerned, it is going to be a long, tough battle and we won't win every round. After each round, we have to regroup and recover. It's like a boxing match. The housing policy will continue."

The threats against Mr Cobbett follow the council's efforts to implement a policy to regain control of its rent housing stock, including evictions of illegal tenants, which started in Manenberg.

During the evictions, gang leaders reportedly appeared on the scene and two councillors blamed Mr Cobbett, even though the evictions were being carried out in terms of the council's campaign to clean up the administration of housing stock.

The council has 31 500 names on its waiting list, with more than 100

To page 2

P.T.O

Kidnap plot forces housing boss

From page 1

new entrants a month, but only a handful of units become free every month – and these are being allocated, not by the council, but by departing tenants, neighbours and even gangs, according to a document signed by Mr Cobbett.

The document noted that in areas like Manenberg more than 70% of tenants were not paying rent, yet many registered tenants sub-letting the housing were collecting rent well in excess of what the council charged.

On February 4, Mr Cobbett laid a formal complaint against two councillors, Osborne Adams (National Party) and Yusuf Mogamat Sampson (African National Congress), who attempted to stop an eviction at 13D Dwyka Street, Manenberg.

A report from Mr Boraine recommended that the councillors either resign or the council should approach the High Court to have their membership terminated.

But the ANC caucus was split on the issue and no decision was reached.

The matter is likely to be decided only on Tuesday.

Daphne King, deputy chair of the council's housing

committee, expressed shock at the latest development.

"As a member of the housing committee, I am disgusted at the fact that this man has been threatened and we are dithering on this issue."

She said Mr Cobbett had been one of the best things to have hit the council in a "very long time". He was committed to restructuring the housing situation, which is abhorrent in the Western Cape, and then he gets threatened. "I can't stand by that."

"It is very upsetting that he might leave," she added.

"Even in just a few months, he has done so much for us and the city.."

■ Mr Cobbett resigned as national director-general of housing in June last year after a highly publicised row with Housing Minister Sankie Mtembi-Mahanyele.

He had asked the auditor-general to investigate alleged irregularities in the awarding of contracts for a Mpumalanga rural housing project.

He was subsequently appointed Cape Town's director of housing in a new "nuts and bolts" portfolio aimed at starting new housing projects, and dealing with difficulties in the rental stock and homelessness in the central business district.

'Even in just a few months he has done so much for us and the city'

ARG 28/2/98

(124)

Many Cape Town councillors 'receive death threats'

BD 2/2/98

Linda Ensor

CAPE TOWN — Many Cape Town city councillors and officials had received death threats similar to those made against housing director Billy Cobbett, who was reported to have decided to emigrate from SA, a council spokesman said at the weekend.

Cobbett was targeted because he spearheaded the adoption by the council of a tough campaign — the fairness in housing campaign policy — aimed at eliminating corruption in the administration of the council's housing stock. The death threats forced him to vacate his office and armed guards were assigned to protect his home.

The death threats on councillors and officials followed the council's attempts to remove the control Cape Flats gangs had over housing allocation. The council's housing waiting list of more than 30 000 applicants was a complete "farce" showing no movement at all, deputy chairman of the council's executive committee Saleem Mowzer said. The gangs had their own waiting lists which overrode that of the council.

Officials trying to implement the council's policy on informal trading and staff members working in the council's library, housing and clinic facilities in areas such as Manenberg and Hanover Park had also been threatened.

The council was meeting the police and national intelligence service to find safety routes for them to travel to and from work and to ensure the delivery of services. Mowzer said for the past 25 years gangs had a mafia-type grip on the allocation of houses, often subletting them and collecting rentals higher than those charged by the council and which were not paid to it. There were allegations that some councillors were part of the scam but this had not been proved. He was hopeful that Cobbett could be persuaded to remain when he returned from two weeks compassionate leave on Friday. Mowzer said Cobbett had been invaluable as a strategist and visionary, and his departure would be a setback to the implementation of the council's housing policy and a victory for the gangsters.

Cobbett's policy recommended that people not paying their rent, unauthorised occupants of council housing and any tenants involved in illegal activities should be evicted "however violent or well-connected". The council's executive committee meets tomorrow to consider a recommendation by city manager Andrew Boraine that an urgent application be brought before the Cape High Court for the expulsion of two councillors, Osborn Adams of the National Party (NP) and Mogamat Sampson of the African

(124)

National Congress (ANC)

They were found guilty by Boraine's inquiry for intervening in an eviction against Cobbett in violation of the council's code of conduct, as well as that of the local government, act and suspended from the council's housing committee.

A decision on the matter was deferred from a meeting two weeks ago, leading to claims by Democratic Party councillor Belinda Walker that "the NP's and the ANC's adhering, backtracking, evasion of responsibility and political cowardice have very likely undone the good work of months".

Comment: Page 9

SA has lost Billy Cobbett 'for good'

(124) CF 2/3/98

CAPE TOWN'S director of housing, Billy Cobbett, is in England with his wife and four children who start school and a new life there today, writes **CLAUDIA CAVANAGH**.

SOUTH AFRICA has lost Billy Cobbett for good. Cape Town's housing chief has gathered his family and fled to Britain after gang-related death threats.

A year ago, Cobbett's relentless quest to iron out irregularities in a rural housing scheme in Mpumalanga got him fired as South Africa's director-general of housing.

Now the same determination to stamp out corruption and ensure equity in the allocation of council housing in the Cape Town has forced him out the country.

In June last year, the highly-rated Cobbett, who worked closely with former housing minister Mr Joe Slovo to formulate a national housing policy, was appointed head of Cape Town's new housing department.

At the time he said "It will be a real challenge getting out of the ivory tower and into the reality of local government."

But last week that reality became too much.

Within 24 hours of receiving gang-related death threats over a legal council eviction in Manenberg, he gathered up his family and flew to England, leaving the vital department without a head.

Armed guards took up position outside his Pinelands home.

Although he is officially on compassionate leave and due to meet city manager Mr Andrew Boraine on Friday to discuss his future with the council, reliable sources say he is determined not to return.

Contacted in England yesterday, Cobbett refused to comment on the situation until after Friday's meeting.

"I am absolutely depressed. We were going to make great progress with the housing situation in Cape Town and now it's blown up in the

council's face," he reluctantly said. The situation erupted early last month amid reports of widespread intimidation of municipal officials attempting to enforce unpopular policies decided on and endorsed by all councillors.

When officials and the sheriff tried to evict illegal tenants in Dwyka Street on February 3, ward councillors Mr Moganat Sampson (ANC) and Mr Osborne Adams (NP) attempted to derail the process, sided with the people who had broken the law and identified Cobbett as the person directly responsible for the action.

'We were going to make great progress with housing and now it's blown up in the council's face'

By doing this, they directly contravened the councillors' code of conduct and face expulsion from the council by the executive committee tomorrow.

Although it was dealt a severe blow by the recent events, the council has vowed to

rigorously pursue the policy.

"If we're serious about addressing the immense housing problems in our city, we have to support and implement the policy. There is no way we can abandon it now," said executive committee deputy chairperson Mr Saleem Mowzer.

Speaking to the *Cape Times* last year, Cobbett revealed a housing system in such disarray that 31 000 families who had been on the waiting list for 15 years or more had no chance of ever having a home of their own.

In parts of the Cape Flats, it is the gangsters decide who should be given a council flat or house, he revealed.

Reacting to an executive committee motion last week to postpone a decision on Adams and Sampson's future until tomorrow, the Democratic Party accused the NP and ANC of aligning themselves with gangsters.

"The NP and the ANC's dithering, backtracking, evasion of responsibility and political cowardice have very



OUR HOME Mrs Safia Jacobs (centre) and her husband Rashad (far right) surrounded by friends and relatives in the humble council house they're occupying illegally. They claim a ward councillor gave them the go-ahead to move in, and hope to resolve the matter soon.

PICTURE LEON KNIFE

likely undone the good work of months," said DP councillor Ms Belinda Walker yesterday.

She pointed out that Adams and Sampson were part of the housing committee that enthusiastically endorsed the new housing policy.

"Yet when subjected to pressure from illegal residents who are being evicted in terms of this policy, the two revealed themselves to be

unscrupulous in acting against their own code of conduct, and utterly spineless. Not only have the NP and ANC failed to censure the two, they have tried to excuse them by making mealy-mouthed comments about concern for their constituents' safety and the concerns of the community.

"In fact, all they have done is to send a clear signal that, when it comes down to it, those who are vio-

lent or well connected can thumb their noses at the law with impunity," she said.

Mowzer said he "totally rejected" the comments. "The ANC immediately proposed the suspension of the two councillors from the housing committee and all matters relating to housing. Exco only received the city manager's report about the incident the night before the exco meeting

and felt it was in the interests of the council to allow all councillors to study it properly and to be part of this important decision.

"The ANC feels strongly about clean government, fully support our housing policy, is totally against gangsterism and drugs and supports the fight against crime.

"Gansterism must be removed from society on all levels," he said.

Family's struggle for a home amid high-stake

CLAUDIA CAVANAGH

IN the middle of a frightening row which drove Cape Town's director of housing Mr Billy Cobbett from his office and ultimately the county, is a pathetic story of one family's desperate bid to put a roof over their heads

In October last year Mr Rashad Jacobs, his wife Safia and their four children moved illegally into 13D Dwyka Street, Mainenberg, after being on the council waiting list for 15 years. The list currently stands at 31 000.

They were evicted last month in a high-profile incident which allegedly involved a gun-toting Mr Solly Stagge, younger brother of Hard Livings gang leader Rashied. But when the *Cape Times* visited yesterday, the family was back in the modest home and denied involving gangsters in the affair.

"We were living down the road with my sister-in-law and 19 other people when we heard that this house was going to be vacant," explained Safia, who has a back injury and cannot work.

"We went to councillor (Mr Osborne) Adams (one of two councillors who face expulsion from the council for interfering in the eviction) and asked him to help us to get the house. We visited him every night after that and sat waiting at the Civic Centre for days on end, but nothing happened. We were desperate and began to lose hope of ever getting a home of our own," Jacobs said.

When the previous tenants began moving out, a crowd of hopefuls gathered outside to claim the two-roomed house for themselves.

"We went to councillor Adams and he told us to move in — and we did," said Jacobs.

After 15 years and 16 moves, the family finally had a place of their own. They paid a deposit to the council and have faithfully produced the monthly rental of R155.

Then on February 3, the sheriff arrived and their possessions were unceremoniously dumped in the street.

"I wasn't here," said Jacobs, who was retrenched from his job last year. "But I believe Solly Stagge arrived and kicked the sheriff and that subsequently Billy Cobbett has received threats."

"We're mystified by the whole thing and really don't know how the gangs got involved. These are people we've heard of and fear but have never had anything to do with," he said.

And they have no idea who is behind the threats received by Cobbett.

After the eviction, the council directed them to a one-bedroomed flat in Hanover Park.

(p4)

CT 2/2/98

struggle

"It was terrible and in the middle of the Afrikaners' territory I wouldn't want my worst enemy to live there, let alone bring up my own children in that neighbourhood," said Mrs Jacobs.

So the couple returned and moved their furniture back in.

"I believe there's some sort of court case happening about all this," said Jacobs.

"But in the meantime, our children's schoolwork is being affected and we're sleeping with one eye open."

Cape Town recommends councillors be expelled for violating

David Greybe

CAPE TOWN — The council's executive committee recommended yesterday the expulsion of two councillors for violating its code of conduct, and warned Cape Flats gangs that the council, not the gangsters, controlled service delivery in the city.

The African National Congress, which runs Cape Town, said it was committed to stamping out corruption and would not tolerate corrupt councillors or officials.

The ANC would also not abandon its commitment to housing as "priority number one" despite death threats and intimidation of councillors and officials since the adoption of a tough campaign to eliminate corruption.

"We are fully committed to clean government and winning back the right to govern our cities," deputy chairman and ANC councillor Saleem Mowzer said.

"The gangsters are definitely not controlling Cape Town," chairman and fellow ANC councillor Nomandla

Mfeketo said after the ANC, supported by the Democratic Party, adopted the expulsion resolution.

The National Party opposed the recommendation on the grounds that the two councillors — the NP's Osborn Adams and the ANC's Mogamat Sampson — had not been given a fair hearing and the council could be defeated in the high court.

Mfeketo said she would ask Cape Town mayor Theresa Solomon to call a special meeting of the full council to adopt the recommendation.

BD 4/3

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The committee recommended that if the two councillors failed to resign, the council should apply to the high court for their expulsion. It also reiterated its support for the code of conduct.

Mowzer said the Cape Town council needed to send a clear message to its communities "Work with us to ensure clean government, to stamp out corruption, to create a better life for all and to ensure we remain accountable to the people of Cape Town."

The death threats against councillors and officials followed the council's

attempts to remove the control Cape Flats gangs had over housing allocation. The councillors were found guilty in an inquiry by city manager Andrew Boraine of intervening in an eviction. Housing director Billy Cobbett, one of the officials who received a death threat and who reportedly decided to emigrate, declined to comment on the resolution. A source said he was expected back from the UK soon to discuss his future with Boraine.

Picture: Page 5

code

Councillors to be axed over housing row

ET 4/3/98

(124)

CLAUDIA CAVANAGH

TWO Cape Town city councillors who interfered in a council eviction in Manenberg last month contravened the code of conduct and should be expelled from the City of Cape Town

This was decided yesterday by the city's executive committee after more than two weeks' deliberation. The volatile incident involving the NP's Mr Osborne Adams and the ANC's Mr Mogamat Sampson led to gang-related death threats against housing director Mr Billy Cobbett, who has subsequently left the country and may resign.

But yesterday's decision — the first of its kind in Cape Town and possibly the country — was not taken without a fight.

NP councillors opposed the motion by the ANC to support city manager Mr Andrew Boraine's recommendation that the city apply to the High Court to have the two councillors "membership of council terminated".

All councillors were being reduced to "eunuchs" by the council's "overreaction",



OSBORNE ADAMS



MOGAMAT SAMPSON

said NP leader Mr Clive Justus. "Since this has happened, all councillors felt intimidated."

He also felt Sampson and Adams hadn't had a fair hearing.

"They've been tried for acting in the best interests of the community of Manenberg and the city at large. Their good intent has been grossly misrepresented. They were attempting to stay evictions for a short period so that alternative accommodation could be found, not to interfere." But the DP's Mr Chns Joubert, who sec-

onded the ANC's proposal, said he believed many councillors were skating on thin ice as far as the code of conduct was concerned.

"It's important that the message carried in today's decision goes out loud and clear throughout the chambers," he said.

NP member Howard Parker had sought the advice of an advocate who said the city would have little chance of succeeding in its quest.

"We're about to have the city embark on tens of thousands of rands worth of court action when we're doomed to failure," he said, suggesting that the parties rather take "strong internal action" against the respective councillors.

But the ANC stood firm. In proposing the motion, deputy chairperson Mr Saleem Mowzer said the council was committed to "rooting out corruption, clean government and winning back the right to govern the city

"We want to send a clear message to our communities. Work with us to ensure a clean government, to stamp out corruption, to make a better life for all and to ensure that we remain a council for the people of this city," he said.

"We want to send a message to everyone — gangsters, communities and residents — the council will deal with all events in the same manner. There will be no special treatment for anybody."

Chairperson Ms Nomandla Mfeketso said the decision "should be a lesson that the council will not condone this sort of bad practice. We won't hesitate to apply similar action to anyone."

● If the councillors do not resign first, the full council will be asked to consider exco's recommendation at its next meeting. If it agrees, an application will be made to the High Court to have the councillors expelled. If this succeeds, a bi-election will be held to replace Adams, a Manenberg ward councillor, and Sampson will be replaced by the next person on the proportional list.

SCHEME AMOUNTED TO UNILATERAL CHANGE

Privatisation unfair to municipal workers

CT 4/3/98
(124)

MEMBERS of Samwu who felt threatened by the privatisation of refuse removal in Khayelitsha took their fight to conciliation and won. **ERIC NTABAZALILA** reports.

THE Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA) announced on Monday that privatisation of refuse removal in Khayelitsha was an unfair labour practice and that the introduction of the Billy Hattugh Refuse Removal Scheme amounted to unilateral change in the terms and conditions of employment of municipal refuse removal workers.

CCMA upheld the agreement in the National Labour Relations Forum for Local Government that the public sector was the preferred deliverer of services.

However, attorneys acting on behalf of the city of Tygerberg said they would be appealing against the CCMA's judgment to the Labour Court.

The South African Municipal Workers' Union (Samwu), which had fought the privatisation, said last night "It is highly questionable that the council should now find it necessary to take this decision by a neutral body on a costly and time-wasting appeal, considering that the motivation for the pri-

vatation was that it would be the most cost-effective."

Samwu spokesperson Ms Anna Weekes alleged that since the introduction of the Billy Hattugh Scheme and the union demanding arbitration on the matter, the Tygerberg City Council had been paying for both the refuse removal scheme and the municipal workers who had been employed by the council's cleansing department.

"This is hardly cost-effective, although it was lucky that the municipal workers were retained as they had to assist in cleaning the area.

"The scheme was not competent enough to do this as contractually agreed," Weekes said.

Samwu is demanding that the refuse removal company be removed from the Tygerberg sub-structure immediately, that the cleaning of Khayelitsha be returned to the municipality and that a sustainable system to keep the area clean be implemented.

Weekes said the union questioned whether some councillors had vested interests in keeping the

scheme in Khayelitsha

Mr Vuyani Ngucka, who has been at the forefront of having the services privatised in the area, said last night: "The only reason we want the scheme to stay in Khayelitsha is that the services had totally collapsed in the area. We only want services to be rendered to our people. We had no other vested interests except that."

Weekes alleged that after making calls to senior counsels Samwu found that it would cost about R700 an hour for the Tygerberg City Council to be represented.

Ngucka said he was not sure about the figures but he was convinced that it was going to be expensive. He said whatever the council was doing it was doing for the good of the residents of Khayelitsha.

Samwu is demanding that disciplinary charges against the union's members, who allegedly assaulted Ngucka, the former mayor of Khayelitsha, be dropped. It believed that the CCMA's judgment had shown there were mitigating circumstances which led to the alleged assault of Ngucka. It said workers were not consulted about the restructuring of the cleaning services in Khayelitsha and felt their jobs were not safe.

JUST IN CASES DAY

MARCH 5 1998

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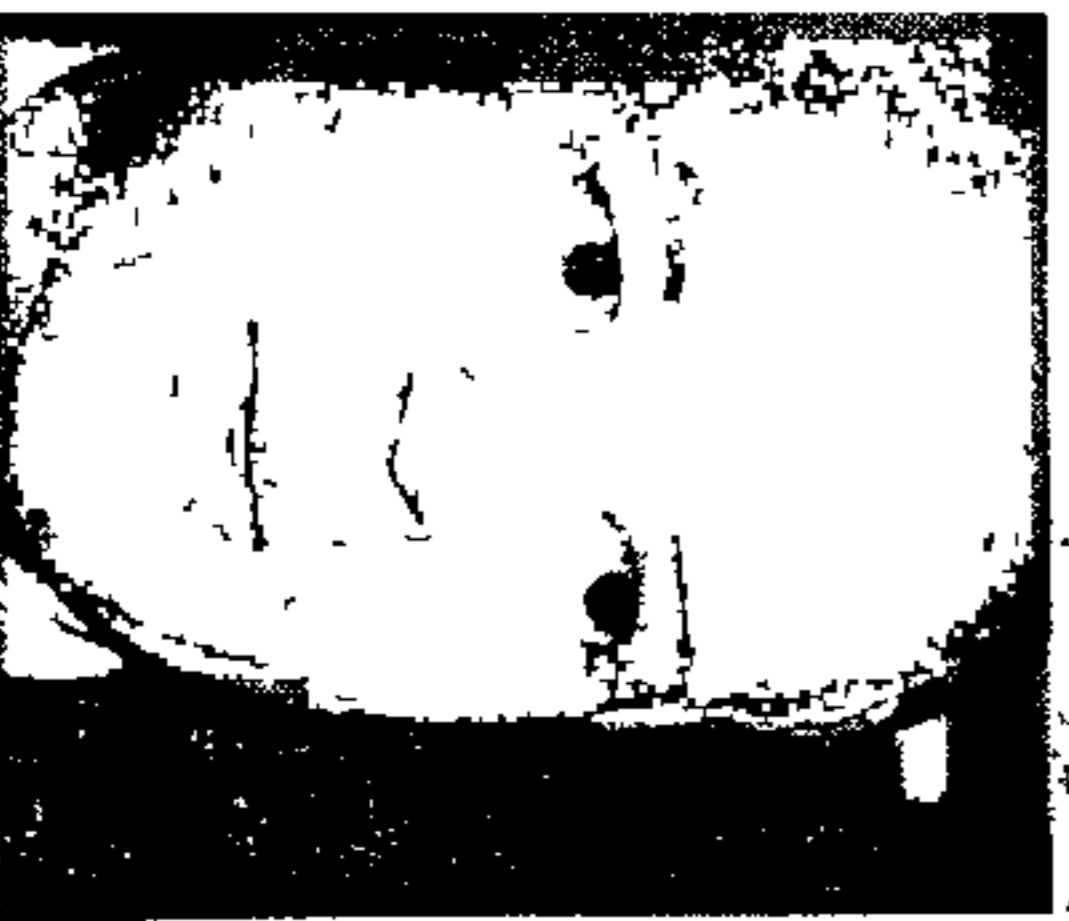
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COBBETT

Cape Town plans to grant top-up subsidies for housing

Alan Fine *BA 5/3/98*

CAPE TOWN — City housing director Billy Cobbett has been working on a groundbreaking R150m council "top-up" housing subsidy scheme, council executive committee deputy chairman Saleem Mowzer has disclosed.

Mowzer was talking yesterday about his hopes that the council would succeed in convincing Cobbett to reverse his reported decision to relocate to the UK after threats to his and his family's safety by gangsters opposed to

his efforts to eliminate gang influence over council housing activities.

If implemented, the subsidy scheme would be the first such initiative by a local authority.

Mowzer said the scheme, already accepted "in principle" by the executive committee, envisaged the distribution over five years of R3 000-R8 000 subsidies to recipients of central government's R15 000 subsidy.

The purpose was to improve the quality of housing available to subsidy recipients. He estimated that it would

enable people to build homes of 40m² to 48m² instead of the 20-25m² dwelling the central government subsidy generally financed.

The magnitude of the scheme was determined in part by the size of the city's housing waiting list of 32 000 families, although the list is considered to be flawed due to various factors, including a history of corruption, and is likely to be reconstituted.

Recipients, Mowzer said, would have to make specified personal savings commitments through a scheme

being negotiated with Pick 'n Pay's financial services arm. "Any family wanting the top-up would have to make their own contribution." It is understood Boland Bank, which operates Pick 'n Pay's financial services system, has also been involved in discussions. Further details were not available.

Mowzer said though the scheme would go ahead whatever happened, Cobbett had a "very important role" to play in Cape Town's housing plans and councillors would do their best to convince him to continue serving the city.

Khayelitsha defaulters face threat of court

R15 not enough, says councillor

MOSES MACKAY
STAFF REPORTER

ARG 5/3/98
Hundreds of Khayelitsha residents have started paying for their municipal services, but not enough to satisfy former mayor Vuyani Ngcuka.

Now an ANC councillor with Tygerberg council, he says the residents have to pay R50, not R15, for their monthly services, and to start clearing the R86-million arrears bill if they want their town improved.

This week about 2000 residents queued at the Lingeletu West council offices to settle their accounts. Some of them were sent to the council offices in Site B, Khayelitsha. Their move follows Mr Ngcuka's call for tough measures against defaulters.

Mr Ngcuka has proposed that legal proceedings be begun to recover

arrears, and that water and electricity be disconnected if people still do not pay.

There is conflict over how much residents should pay for their services. The council wants R50 a month and the residents say they are prepared to pay R15. Mr Ngcuka said the principle of cost-recovery had been adopted throughout Tygerberg.

"Because we are aware there are unemployed people who can't pay, we have created a facility where people can come and state their position."

Mr Ngcuka said Tygerberg municipality had to differentiate between those who could pay but didn't from those who could not afford to pay at all.

One of the problems facing the council was that there appeared to be elements within the community who did not want the Masakhane cam-

paign to succeed, he said. Abe Bokwe, media secretary of Khayelitsha Civic Association, said his organisation had taken the initiative of mobilising the people for payment.

Mr Bokwe, who works at a sports shop at the Waterfront, said residents were willing to pay but the monthly R50 for service charges was too high for many.

"So we decided to reduce the monthly payment of R50 to R15."

He said his organisation had met the Tygerberg council several times, but these meetings had not been fruitful.

Mr Bokwe, who owes the council R2 000 in arrears, claimed Mr Ngcuka and his colleagues had not consulted residents on the question of payment for services.

Mr Ngcuka denied the council had made decisions without consultation.

Privatisation plan overruled

JOSEPH ARANES
STAFF REPORTER

The City of Tygerberg's decision to privatise its cleansing services in Khayelitsha is an unfair labour practice, the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration has ruled

But the municipality will ask the Labour Court and, if necessary, the Labour Appeal Court, to review the ruling

In what could be interpreted as a landmark ruling in worker

PRG 5/13/98

(24)

union opposition to privatisation, the commission said contracting a private company to run the council's cleansing services was a breach of the national Labour Relations Forum for local government, and of the basic conditions of employment for workers removing refuse in Khayelitsha

The matter went before the commission in November, when the South African Municipal Workers' Union opposed the council's plans for privatisation

Union general secretary Roger Rommie said the ruling sent a clear

message that unilateral decisions on privatising services were no longer an option

"We are completely vindicated in our struggle for the jobs of workers. It goes without saying that any form of privatisation can be contemplated only with due regard for workers' rights," he said

Tygerberg municipality chief executive officer Dave Wilken said it was always obvious that the council would not accept the commission's findings

"This arbitration hearing was just the first step," he said



Victory! union officials Roger Rommie, Xolile Nxu, Andre Adams and Thobile Ndwalaza

BRENTON GEACH

I'm staying, vows defiant Cobbett

Evictions will go on, says housing chief after return

(1244) RRG 6/3/98

STAFF REPORTER

Cape Town municipality's director of housing, Billy Cobbett, has decided to stay on in his post in spite of death threats.

Mr Cobbett jetted into the city today after spending two weeks in London with his wife and four children, visiting his ill mother-in-law. At a press briefing after meeting

city manager Andrew Boraine and the deputy chairman of the council's executive committee, Saleem Mowzer, Mr Cobbett explained the circumstances that led him to take the two-week break.

"In part it was as a result of my personal safety being compromised and my family's need to take care of my sick mother-in-law. But I have time back to continue

with my work as housing director for the city, and, together with team of councillors and officials, complete the process we started."

Mr Cobbett said his wife and children would remain in Britain and he was not too sure how long it would take to get the council's housing process back on track.

"I will remain here as long as it takes, and, depending on the length

of time, will make trips to visit my family."

Mr Boraine said "Most of the council's employees and councillors have their lives threatened in their execution of their duties. Evicting families or cutting their electricity is a horrible job and at times there are ugly repercussions."

Mr Cobbett said the problems being experienced by the present

council were as a result of decades of mismanagement and the new housing policy was a serious attempt at establishing fairness.

"We will continue to evict all illegal tenants."

The housing chief had the death threats from Hard Livings gangsters after two Manenberg councillors tried to stop officials evicting illegal tenants from a council house.

Two face axe in city eviction row

Bid for special meeting to settle councillors' fate

ART 4/3/98

(124)

LINDSAY BARNES AND JOSEPH ARANES
STAFF REPORTERS

The fate of two Cape Town city councillors facing expulsion could be decided by the end of the week.

The council executive committee recommended yesterday that the councillors be expelled for trying to stop the eviction of illegal tenants from a council house in Manenberg.

The committee accepted in principle that Osborne Adams of the National Party and Mogamat Yusuf Sampson of the African National Congress were guilty of misconduct and recommended that subject to legal opinion, they be suspended without pay.

If they did not resign, it was recommended that a High Court application be made for their removal.

Executive committee chairwoman Nomandla Mfeketo said she would see the mayor today about calling a special

meeting on the recommendation.

The alternative is that the recommendations will be put to the council at the end of the month.

The executive committee found that the councillors contravened the code of conduct when they attempted to use their political influence to prevent the eviction. Both men are on the council housing committee.

The tenants were being evicted in line with director of housing Billy Cobbett's policy, which was adopted by the council late last year.

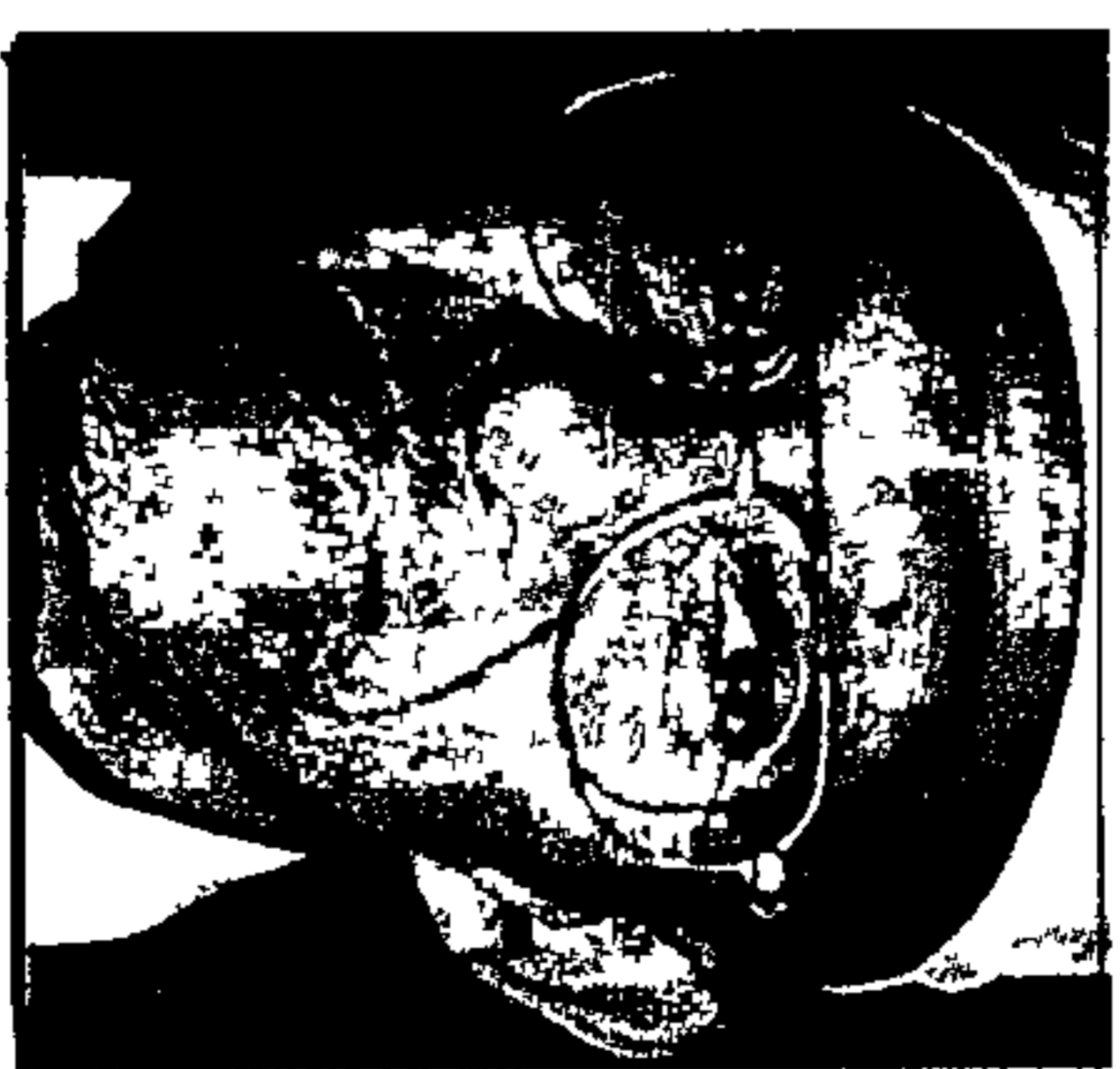
The councillors telephoned Mr Cobbett to try to halt the eviction. Mr Cobbett reported this as a contravention of the code of conduct in the Local Government Transition Act.

City manager Andrew Boraine investigated the allegations and recommended that if the councillors failed to resign, the council should apply to the Cape High Court for an



NP: Osborne Adams

order terminating their membership. At yesterday's committee meeting, National Party councillor Clive Justus said the councillors had attempted to act in the best interests



ANC: Mogamat Sampson

of the community and their action had been "misinterpreted grossly". He said the committee's recommendations were an overreaction and it needed to interview the coun-

cillors to hear their side. "I think this overreaction reduces all councillors to eunuchs," he said.

Ms Mfeketo said that following threats to councillors and municipal staff, the council was working with the police and national intelligence to ensure their safety.

The Western Cape region of the African National Congress backed the decision to expel the councillors. Spokesman Cameron Dugmore said it showed that the council was committed to clean government. "The Democratic Party-led council in the past deliberately turned a blind eye to organisations and gangsters using housing for their own corrupt purposes," he said.

Mr Dugmore said this inaction directly resulted in the problem the municipality faced today - that of gangsters wanting to decide who got houses in their strongholds.



From a trickle flows a victory

JUSTICE WRITER

(124) CT 6/3/98

HAWSTON residents whose water supply was cut off by the municipality because of payment arrears won a respite when a settlement was reached with the municipality before the matter went to trial

Legal observers say the settlement is historic and could serve as a model to resolve disputes of such a nature

In papers residents told of high unemployment as well as the alarming increase in water costs over the past few years because Hermanus had become very popular for holiday home owners, tourists and small industry.

Residents believed they were being "priced out of Hermanus".

"Those who are born and bred in Hermanus can no longer afford to live here," said Mrs Dorothy Josephs one of the applicants in an earlier interdict application

Josephs was supported by Mrs Ansie Isaacs, Mrs Clara Kennedy, Mrs Louisa Damon and the Hawston Civic Association against the Greater Hermanus Municipality.

They wanted the municipality's decision to cut off the water supply of individual applicants and those of HCA members be declared unlawful, or alternatively unconstitutional

The terms of the settlement agreement include that the water supply would remain at a trickle, affected residents would be allowed to make arrangements for payment and that the amount of the arrears would be recalculated.

The municipality would also enter into negotiations with the civic association regarding the possible writing off of the arrears which residents genuinely cannot pay

Legal proceedings arising out of summonses in respect of arrears water and electricity accounts would be held over for 60 days pending negotiations for settlement

Mr Wim Trengove SC and Mr Norman Arendse, instructed by Mr Vincent Saldanha of the Legal Resources Centre, acted for the residents Mr Boet Smit SC, Mr Mario Willemse, instructed by Guthrie and Theron, acted for the municipality

INSIDE LABOUR

Khayelitsha rubbish scheme escalates into political storm

CT (Mar) 6/3/98 (244) (222)

The ripples caused by this week's anti-privatisation arbitration ruling in Cape Town may grow into waves and create dangerous political turbulence, particularly in the Western Cape.

The ruling, handed down by the Commission for Conciliation Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA) should have put paid to a private sector rubbish collection scheme in Khayelitsha. And there the matter might have rested, although the ruling has more general implications.

But the Tygerberg council, having initially agreed to abide by any CCMA decision, has now announced that it would take the matter to the labour court on review.

This decision — made by the 12-strong executive committee, which comprises National Party (NP) and ANC members and one member of the African Christian Democratic Party — will spin out an already protracted and often bitter row between an ANC trade union affiliate and some ANC local politicians headed by Vuyani Ngcuka, the Tygerberg councillor and unofficial "mayor of Khayelitsha".

"The only winner in this one will be the NP," noted an official of the South African Municipal Workers' Union (Samwu).
The row has been characterised

by accusations of thuggery on both sides and at least one shooting incident.

Most published allegations came from councillors and were directed at unnamed members of Samwu. But no trade unionists have

been arrested, and Roger Ronnie, the union's general secretary, has stated that any member involved in violence would be expelled from the union.

In the shooting incident, still under the investigation of the Khayelitsha police, the Samwu driver of a front-end loader was allegedly shot at from a minibus — apparently one of two such vehicles provided by the NP-controlled Tygerberg council for "ANC Youth League" members to "monitor" the introduction of private rubbish collection for Khayelitsha's 350 000 population.

The scheme involved private contractor Billy Hattingh providing the infrastructure for a "community entrepreneurship" programme involving neighbourhood rubbish collection units.
The primary reason for the



TERRY BELL

council's decision to accept Hattingh's tender was economic. But, as the CCMA ruling states, "a private contractor would only be able to undertake such a contract if the workers employed were to earn substantially less than the city's workers currently do".

Francois Fourie, a council technical manager, admitted to the arbitration hearing that the council workforce would have to be cut as a consequence of the new scheme.

The arbitration ruling also stated that the process of consultation in what constituted a major change in working conditions for the 160-strong unionised workforce was flawed.

During the four months between the introduction of the privatised service and the CCMA ruling, the situation in Khayelitsha became increasingly tense.

Earlier this year Samwu's head office warned members not to carry out union insignia in the Khayelitsha area.

"We didn't want them to be targets," said Ronnie. A small community campaign against privatisation also went into abeyance while local ANC councillors complained of threats and violence.

On the one hand, Samwu was accused of frustrating an initiative aimed at benefiting the local commu-

nity. On the other, the union was hailed as a defender of the public interest.

The matter was complicated by various individual and political agendas and racism. Some budding local entrepreneurs and desperate job-seekers saw a fulfilment of their hopes in the "Billy Hattingh scheme". Some supporters of a public sector operation saw the Samwu campaign as a last-ditch stand against "sell-outs".

Now, with a further legal battle looming, the tension is likely to continue.

"It's a terrible waste of money," said Ronnie. "Council is employing lawyers at great expense to fight this thing." The union has relied so far only on organiser Andre Adams to present its case. "He just costs us his R3 500 a month wage," said Ronnie.

"We just let the facts speak for themselves," said Adams. This is the same approach Samwu will adopt at the Nelspruit water summit, tentatively scheduled for March 14, which is supposed to decide on the privatisation of water and sanitation services in the Mpumalanga capital.

The CCMA decision regarding Khayelitsha, which has provided a considerable boost to Samwu's confidence, will also feature in union arguments against Nelspruit's plans for privatisation.

Defiant Cobbett back to build more city homes

But family will stay in England

ANDREA WEISS

Cape Town housing chief Billy Cobbett, who has returned from England in the face of death threats from gangsters, is to put all his energy into the delivery of new housing over the next few months

Mr Cobbett emerged from a meeting with city manager Andrew Boraine yesterday to tell journalists he would be resuming his job as housing director, but that his British wife Mary and four children would remain in England with his seriously ill mother-in-law

He also said that it was time the city not only brought fairness to the allocation of existing housing stock, but also provided a "healthy dose of new housing"

Mr Cobbett was given two weeks' leave by Mr Boraine after it was alleged that the Hard Livings gang was plotting to kidnap him from his civic centre office. When he accompanied his family to England there were fears he would not return, setting back the city's efforts to address a dire housing crisis

Of his family's decision to live in England, he said "It has got nothing to do with the politics of South Africa. It has nothing to do with crime or Cape Town or sunny beaches or horrible weather. It has got everything to do with our marriage and it is a decision we have taken"

Mr Cobbett said that when he returned to South Africa in 1988, within the "democracy" of their marriage the couple had agreed they would stay for only three years. He



Billy Cobbett: back in the hot seat

had previously lived in England for eight years

But the family had stayed in South Africa for 10 years and it was now his wife Mary's turn "to live in her own country"

He added that he would stay with the municipality "for as long as it takes" to put in place a framework for institutional and financial arrangements to provide new housing

But indications are that Mr Cobbett is unlikely to complete his full five-year contract and that he will leave once the framework is in place

In the meantime the city will continue trying to restore order to its rental housing stock and to ensure

fairness in the allocation of available units to convince the private sector that the city is capable of managing its housing projects

Mr Cobbett also urged that the housing crisis should be viewed not as the problem of one man, but as the responsibility of the council and its team of officials

Mr Boraine said he respected Mr Cobbett's personal circumstances, but was very pleased that he would be completing the work he had started

He said specific targets and goals would still have to be set out before any changes to the terms of Mr Cobbett's contract were worked out

Threats against Mr Cobbett were not unique, in that council staff were often threatened, whether traffic officers attempting to stop drunken drivers or electricity staff replacing light bulbs shot out by gangsters

"I don't think Mr Cobbett's person is different from any one of the 12 000 staff or any one of the 74 councillors," he said

Mr Boraine said he was dismayed at the perception that the city was run by gangsters

"Gangsters do not run the council and they do not run the city," he said

Deputy exco chairman Saleem Mowzer also stressed that the city would not negotiate with gangsters

He said councillors would meet with the community over the next few weeks to explain housing policy and why there was a need to restore fairness in housing allocation

He said communities needed to "win back the right to govern themselves"

(124)

ARC 7/3/98

JAPANESE HOMES RUSH

or property sales go to newcomers

ARG 6/3/98

the effect of higher property prices and lower salaries. Many executives with careers in Gauteng are settling their families in the Cape and commuting weekly.

There is a fear that many of the houses bought by foreigners could end up being little more than summer holiday pads and that the character of some of Cape Town's most sought-after suburbs could be changing for good. But the influx amounts mostly to an infusion of capital and skills that is boosting the Western Cape economy.

Urbanisation, chiefly from the Eastern Cape, is continuing too, but at a much slower pace than a decade ago. People come for jobs and the prospect of better education and services.

Cape Town is also earning increasing attention from a growing number of immigrants attracted by the sun and sea, cultural



THE GRAPE ESCAPE

An exodus to the Cape from Gauteng and elsewhere in South Africa, and steady immigration from abroad, are invigorating the Peninsula's economy. Find out how in our special report on pages 8 and 9

vibrancy, a simpler alternative to big-city life in Europe and a favourable exchange rate. For African migrants, the Cape offers opportunities only dreamed of.

André Slootweg, Cape Town branch manager of removal group Frasers International, says that "there has been a steady flow" of

business. People are "taking their time finding houses in our over-priced market, and are putting their possessions in storage, and renting accommodation. All our stores are filled to capacity."

He reports a three-to-one ratio in truckloads between Gauteng and Cape Town,

with sustained demand in Johannesburg. Tony Hall of Pickfords and Johan Marras of Shuttard Van Lanes agree.

All three said newcomers were looking increasingly at such areas as Somerset West, Stellenbosch and Durbanville to set up new homes.

Samuel Seeff, managing director of Seeff Property Services, believes that "people are looking for property across the broader metropolitan area, partly to get greater value for their money, but also to have a similar neighbourhood style - bigger gardens, wider roads - to what they have been used to."

Pam Golding's Cape regional director, Roger Gallagher, says while the flow has been sustained, the pace has slowed slightly over the past year. "It's marginal - where between 11 and 15% of sales used to be from Gauteng clients, it's nearer 8-10% now."



Cobbett back to finish his council business (124)

Lukanyo Mnyanda
and Robyn Chalmers

BILLY Cobbett, Cape Town city council's housing department director, is back in the country and will rejoin his family in the UK after fulfilling his commitments with the council.

Cobbett said yesterday he was not sure how long it would take to finish his work at the council, but confirmed that he would move to the UK for the "foreseeable future", once his work had been completed.

Cobbett was drafting a new housing protocol and a framework for the administration of the Cape Town municipality's public housing in an attempt to bring fairness and justice back into the system.

He left for the UK recently after receiving death threats from Cape Flats gangsters.

He said he would continue his work to reform the allocation of Cape Town housing and implement council policies.

Cobbett said he had always planned to move to England after his stint at the council as his wife was English and they had agreed to move there for "a while".

DD 9/3/98
Council executive committee
deputy chairman Saleem Mowzer said last week that Cobbett was working on a groundbreaking R150m council "top-up" housing subsidy scheme.

If implemented, the subsidy plan would be the first such scheme by a local authority.

It involved subsidy recipients making specified personal savings commitments through a project being negotiated with Pick 'n Pay's financial services arm.

Cobbett has investigated the council's housing policy and found it to be sadly lacking.

One report to the housing committee said that the state of affairs in the management of Cape Town's housing stock "is so serious it would be difficult to overstate the nature of the crises".

Cobbett has been dogged by controversy recently, having been fired last year from his position as national housing department director-general. He uncovered irregularities in the awarding of a R190m rural housing project in Mpumalanga, and this was reported at the time to be the last straw in his unhappy relationship with Housing Minister Sankie Mthembu-Mahanyele.

Pay points in stores boost Masakhane

Deborah Fine

(124)
BD 9/3/98
EASILY accessible accounts pay points in large retail stores were proving an effective means of improving the culture of payment for municipal services, Chris Nissen, the newly-appointed national Masakhane project manager, said recently.

The Masakhane campaign aims to boost civic responsibility, including reversing the culture of not paying for services which has resulted in arrears totalling R9,2bn countrywide

Nissen said the location of established municipal-payment offices and business hours between 8am and 4pm had often proved a stumbling block in the drive to increase payment levels, especially in disadvantaged communities.

Retail stores, however, offered extended business hours and were visited on a regular basis by most households

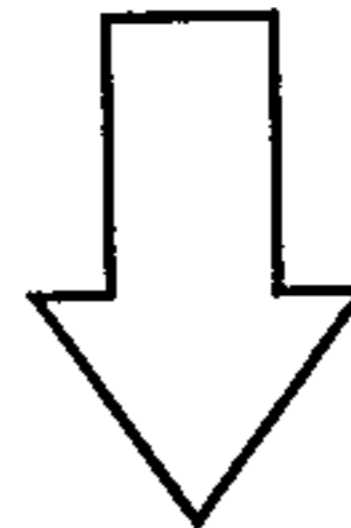
More than 90 000 municipal accounts in the Cape Town region, for example, were being paid monthly in this way. The system was already raising more than R500 000 a month from the area's township communities where billing for services had only recently been introduced.

Paypoint facilities in local stores would soon be set up in areas where there were no large supermarkets, Nissen said.

"Local government faces a huge challenge in balancing its books and I am leaving no stone unturned in implementing measures to get payment levels up," he said.

Nissen was formerly economic-affairs MEC in the Western Cape and was leader of the African National Congress in that province.

Business Report finds its BARINGS



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WATER AFFAIRS

**R632-million
(134) for dam to
ARG 11/3/98 supply Cape**

Water supply to the Cape Town metropolitan area is to be augmented by the building of the R632-million Skuntram dam

The dam is a new project funded with water affairs budget. It will provide fresh water from R2.3 billion this year to R2.6 billion in 2000.

The dam will grow from 1.7 billion to 1.7 billion litres per day.

In September last year 1020 million litres of water were used by 1.7 million people. Water supplies are expected to be cut by 10 per cent in 2000.

The dam has been built to provide water to more than 1 million people. It will supply water to the Cape Town area and the surrounding areas.

New dam to augment Cape metropole's water supply

ANDRÉ KOOPMAN
PARLIAMENTARY BUREAU

THE Skuifraam dam, worth R632 million, is to be built on the Berg River near Franschhoek to augment the water supply to the Cape Town metropolitan area, Finance Minister Mr Trevor Manuel said in his Budget review yesterday

The dam is expected to have a gross storage capacity of 126,4 million cubic metres and should take about four years to build. The dam will be linked to the existing water supply by a pump station and a pipeline.

(124) (S)
ET 12/31/98
The Water Affairs and Forestry Department budget is projected to increase from R2 330 million in 1998/99 to R2 639,9m in 2000/01, the budget review showed yesterday

Capital expenditure will increase from R1 537,2m to R1 785,3m over the period

Between January and July last year more than a million people who had not previously been connected to a water supply received water at a cost of R725m

By September last year 1 020 water supply projects were under way or completed which will



ensure that 8,9 million people gain access to water and 100 000 to adequate sanitation

Between January and July last year 569 000 were supplied with water services

Cape Town ponders its rates rise problem

ON JULY 1 next year, a new rates regime is scheduled to come into operation in Cape Town. As happened to the folk of Sandton, Johannesburg, in 1996, it is likely to mean, ultimately if not sooner, sizeable rates increases for many, especially inhabitants of well-to-do areas — the downside for them of soaring property values.

The Cape Town city council, unlike its Johannesburg counterpart, plans to take active steps to avert the middle-class uprising that triggered the Sandton rates boycott. It is far from certain, however, whether those efforts will succeed.

The case for a revaluation exercise seems unchallengeable. Rates are still based on valuations conducted in 1979, and everyone knows what has happened to up-market property prices in the city, especially since 1994. Properties in the former black local authority areas have never been valued for rates purposes, and occupants are being levied a so-called community charge based on a notional value of the property.

While property values on the Cape Flats may not have increased by much more than the rise in the consumer price index — roughly 750% over the 18-year period — those in areas like the Atlantic seaboard, Bishopscourt and Constantia, and even the less up-market of the southern suburbs, have exploded. In many cases, rates bear little relation to present-day values.

A typical example may be the associate who bought at Llandudno in 1970 at R42 000 and sold last year for R3,5m (an 8200% rise compared with inflation for that period of just over 2 000% — though less if one assumes im-

Its officials are already looking for innovative ways to address the problem. Can the city avoid a Sandton-type rates controversy, asks Cape editor Alan Fine

BD 17/3/98

(124)

provements to the building). By last year his rates were around R800 a month (0,27c in the rand a year, taking the market value of the dwelling as the basis for the calculation).

Or take the city official who raises an eyebrow at the meagreness of his R140 a month rate bill for his R500 000 Pnielands home (0,32c).

In contrast, the typical lower middle-class owner of a R200 000

home in a former coloured suburb might be paying the equivalent of almost 2c in the rand a year measured on the same basis.

For Saleem Mowzer, council executive committee deputy chairman and African National Congress councillor, this is inequitable. He says the council wants "an evaluation and rating system that brings fairness and equal treatment to all".

The recently constituted Rates

Achon Group — now consisting of no more than a handful of people but which could, if the Sandton Ratepayers' Federation is any precedent, become a popular mobilising force — is not opposed to fairness and equity. But its interpretation of what that means is very different from Mowzer's. Indeed, it challenges the conventional view that rates levels should bear a direct relationship to property values.

Group spokesman and local businessman Robin Bosomworth argues that Cape Town's unique circumstances mean that concept should not apply. The uniqueness he refers to is the distribution of property values — a small proportion of properties carry extremely high value (like the Llandudno example). Though, in general, it costs a little more to service high-valued properties, their owners would find themselves paying a huge premium on the actual value of municipal services they receive, subsidising the large majority of homeowners.

He accepts there are "imbalances" that must be addressed but believes rates levels must be based on the cost of services.

"Rates are being insidiously transformed from a municipal charge into a redistribution tax," he says.

Exacerbating this problem, in Bosomworth's eyes, is that the system is to change from a site-plus-improvements basis to a site-only one. The reason for this

change, Mowzer says, is that the site-only valuation can be completed in good time for the July 1999 introduction of rates based on a new valuation.

Bosomworth points out, correctly, that if rates are based directly on the valuation, a site-only valuation would mean an even bigger rates differential between high- and low-value property owners. This is because prime-area site values have risen far faster than the value of buildings. Some estimates suggest it would double the differential in rates obligations between high- and middle-value properties.

One oft-quoted hypothetical situation is the case of the retired couple, long-time occupants of a small, old Mowille Point block of flats with six apartments. Next door, occupying the same acreage of similar value, is a modern, new 30-apartment block occupied by yuppies. For the six occupants collectively to pay the same combined rates as the 30 would clearly be unquitting.

Bosomworth warns that the planned rates system will distort the property market, turning Bishopscourt and Constantia properties into high-density town-house complexes, while seaboard property values will plummet. It may lead to an exodus of the wealthy — and their businesses — to less aesthetically pleasing but more economically attractive in the Cape Peninsula and surrounding areas.

And thousands of retired or less well-off people will find their homes unaffordable under a new rates regime.

These are not unlike the arguments heard around Sandton a year or two ago. The Cape Town council is more prepared to deal with them, though.

Both Mowzer and Democratic Party councillor Melanie Walker, both of whom serve on a multiparty committee managing the rates project on a nonpartisan basis, believe Cape Town has learned from the Sandton debacle about how to manage the looming change.

Mowzer says "We need to look at rates increases. Will it be affordable? Is a big jump fair?"

The council, he says, wants to ease the burden of those in line for a massive increase.

"But we need also to say that many of those people have benefited for years from artificially low rates. And the poor have also suffered."

He and Walker both talk about a gradual phasing in of increases, perhaps over a couple of years. For the rest, says Mowzer "We will come up with innovative ideas." Another idea to mitigate the effects on one class of particularly vulnerable ratepayers could be an additional rebate for the elderly.

Walker says "People are willing to pay a premium to live in Cape Town. And a good service delivery system is an additional attraction. But the city has to be competitive compared with the other municipal structures of greater Cape Town. Otherwise residents and businesses may migrate."

"The magic word is 'sustainability' (of development objectives without alienating those paying for them). It is a major balancing act," she says.



Saleem Mowzer, Cape Town city council executive committee deputy chairman, and chairman Nomandla Mfeketo at a recent meeting of the council

Picture: KIMLUDBROOK/AFRIKA

Minister suspends city housing project

MOSES MACKAY
STAFF REPORTER

(124)
ARG 18/3/98
Western Cape Minister of Local Government Patrick McKenzie is to instruct the Ikapa council to suspend building houses, which residents claim are too small, in Old Crossroads.

This follows a meeting with representatives of Crossroads Women's Power at his office yesterday.

Mr McKenzie told members of the African National Congress, Pan Africanist Congress, the United Democratic Movement, the National Party and the Inkatha Freedom Party, that he also would communicate with the police and stop harassing and evicting them from the council premises.

He also had ordered an investigation into their allegations of nepotism and mismanagement by two councillors.

The women began protesting in January, claiming councillors refused to meet them and discuss their demands and grievances.

Complaints included rent increases, building of houses that are too small and the absence of development.

The women led a march of about 3 000 residents to Mr McKenzie's office last week.

Yesterday they repeated their call for ANC councillors Depoutch Elese and Melford Gwayi to resign.

This was because the councillors had "failed to deliver on their election promises".

The women told Mr McKenzie they wanted "Budget money" added to council money for building houses and appealed to him to give instructions for building to be suspended.

Mr McKenzie promised the women he would visit the area soon and assess conditions there.

Bill allows province ⁽²⁶⁹⁾ (124) to broker land deals

ARG 19/3/98

CHENÉ BLIGNAUT
STAFF REPORTER

The Western Cape government will be able to sell provincial land with the passing of the Western Cape Land Administration Bill.

The bill was approved unanimously in the provincial legislature yesterday

It was debated on budget day, indication of the urgency with which the measure was viewed by the provincial cabinet

It is the first bill to emanate from the new portfolio of asset management, which falls under African Christian Democratic Party minister Michael Louis.

"This bill for the first time gives us the real rights to be accountable and responsible for our assets," said Mr Louis.

But he emphasised it was not the intention of his department to "sell the family silver"

The bill spells out criteria for the disposal and acquisition of state land

It contains a clause referring to "co-operative government" with a view to co-ordinating the provincial government's activities with the national objectives of land reform.

Truly equitable rating system cannot be

ALAN Fine's article, Cape Town ponders its rates problem (Business Day, March 17), has to be challenged on two counts

The prospective rates hike is nothing less than political, and the need to challenge "a site-based revaluation" in court is a necessity — not out of protecting "white privilege", but in terms of the integrity of our institutions. It has national implications and should be of concern to most readers.

To what are we entitled? The mutation of the rating system from a "municipal charge" into a de facto or "unofficial redistribution tax" is the cause of our problems. Rates are neither an efficient municipal charge nor efficient as a redistribution tax. It is a wolf in sheep's clothing!

Redistribution is loaded with "perceptions of equity" depending on one's point of reference. Zambabwean President Robert Mugabe, Constitutional Affairs Minister Valli Moosa (read Saleem Mowzer and Belinda Walker) and mine are, for instance, perhaps all very different. The proposed rating system

SA cannot afford a patronising rating system which allows cross-subsidisation to become an arbitrary and irrational exercise, writes Robin Bosomworth

(site rating) dispenses the maximum amount of patronage at the maximum amount of hurt. Most economists now realise taxation should be raised in the most efficient manner and that taxation in our case, should go to "the poorest of the poorest of the poor".

Cape Town's council adopted the need for a revaluation without first re-evaluating the principles. Secondly, they adopted "site-rating" as a foregone conclusion without first evaluating the consequences of this decision — which they admit.

One must conclude the issues are driven by a certain amount of political ideology and expediency rather than an objective look at the issues and realities. Hopefully, they will be forced by legal action to review the issues in terms of the broader aspect of change, and the need to maintain "integrity" of law. We hope to do this before we are irrevocably shackled to issues and positions.

The rates system has to be released from its baggage and become a proper property tax in accordance with normal, reasonable taxation principles and western civilised standards. Rates can go back to being a "municipal charge" for which people pay, if they can afford it, in line with the level of service. Accountability and good governance will follow.

The deliberate obfuscation of principles for political purposes is to destroy the integrity of our institutions and to promote the "big lie". The mutation process, a "life threatening virus", of uniform rating, boundary changes, "market values", and now "site rating" is an exercise in mind-bending, and cross-subsidisation of massive and complex proportions.

Attend any ratepayer or council meeting and find out who understands anything, let alone perceive it as equity! The realities of the "mutation" are finally revealed on Clifton beach.

(124) BS 24/24/3/98

ANC councillor Saleem Mowzer, who chairs the rates and valuation working group, raises through the media the "who should be subsidising whom" argument in terms of "what the system should be".

Not in terms of "municipal consumption" or "cost of services" but in terms of entitlement, under Mowzer's prescription of equity.

Clifton and Grassy Park is his turf for comparison. Clifton's habit for rates go from, say, twice the cost of municipal services to 15 times under a normal revaluation (land and buildings) and to more than 40 times under land only. Unsurprisingly, Mowzer's system gives the most subsidy!

Now the best way to redistribute wealth is to dump into the rating system whatever we can. The megacity or city state. The final mutation has arrived.

The Clifton "millionaire" lives where he does because he pays his taxes and can afford to live there.

He understands his property should be taxed in terms of what the market can bear and he would not mind types like the minister of finance and his experts doing it. His perceptions of Mowzer's constituency getting a free lunch and patronage in the run up to the next elections, does not go down well with his martini.

Can SA afford a patronising rating system that is an exercise in arbitrary and irrational cross-subsidy? That is tax inefficient, indiscriminate and a political "football"? If we apply minister Valli Moosa's well-intended principle of equity, a national uniform rate based, for example, on Sandton's 6,45 cents in the rand, the answer in Clifton runs to a few hundred thousand rand a year.

If the Clifton resident closes his factory and moves it to California, where municipal rates are limited, by law to only 1% on the whole property, do not be too surprised. The whole world uses land and

□ Bosomworth is a Cape Town businessman and a leader of the Rates Action Group

That is not to say they are not already proved that it cannot have the executioner in the design and application of the system? Council has already proved that it cannot have meaning in what they do. Yet governments always seek to prescribe everything — equity, taxation, redistribution and job creation too. Pity your systems are not working too well? They are yours, not ours. We are not part of your processes!

Can a politically-controlled council be the judge, the jury and the executioner in the design and application of the system? Council has already proved that it cannot have meaning in what they do. Yet governments always seek to prescribe everything — equity, taxation, redistribution and job creation too. Pity your systems are not working too well? They are yours, not ours. We are not part of your processes!

prescriptive

Cobbett to go for good

M+G 27/2-5/3/98

(124)

Andy Duffy

The head of Cape Town City Council's housing department, Billy Cobbett, is poised to quit his job and move overseas after receiving death threats from Cape Flats gangsters

Cobbett, former director general of the national Department of Housing, is already in London, settling his British wife and four children. He is expected to formally resign when he returns briefly to Cape Town in the next 10 days.

Cobbett was unavailable to comment. However, it is understood he received death threats last week after housing officials attempted to evict a householder in Mannenberg — strong hold of the Hard Livings gang. The eviction is in line with the council's drive to clean up Cape Town's notoriously corrupt council housing operation.

But two city councillors, African National Congress councillor Mogamat Sampson and National Party councillor Osborne Adams, both called Cobbett to demand he halt the eviction. When he refused, the two apparently told the Mannenberg community that Cobbett was personally to blame for the policy.

City manager Andrew Boraine has recommended that the two be expelled from the council for breaching its code of conduct. The council's executive committee, however, decided this week to delay a decision on their expulsion, pending further discussions. Such dithering is thought to have outraged Cobbett and other senior officials.

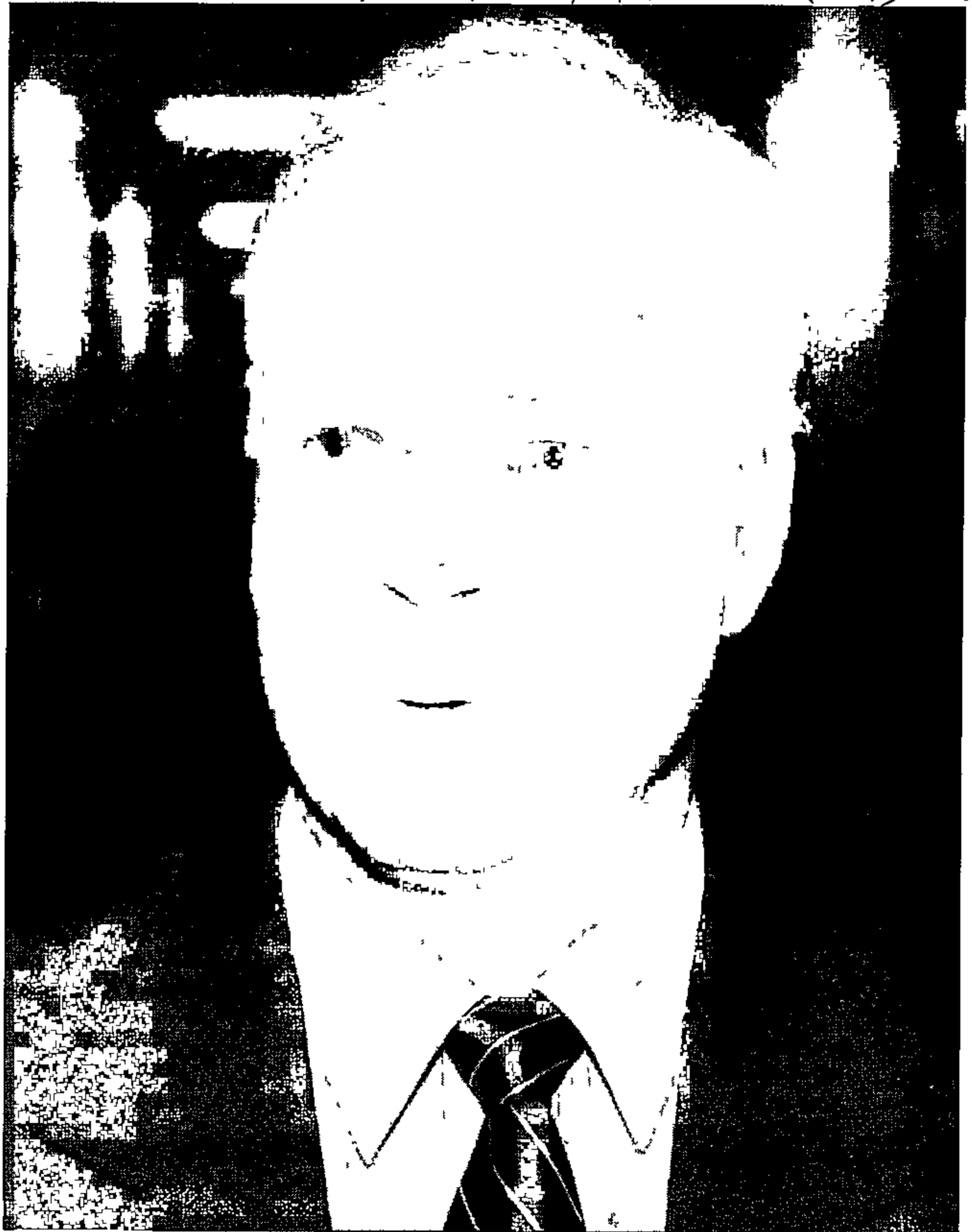
It has also fuelled fears that many councillors lack the will to enforce politically hazardous policies in their own backyards. Sampson and Adams sat on the housing committee and council meetings which last year unanimously voted through the new housing policy. Cobbett and his officials are trying to implement

The council assigned security guards to Cobbett's Civic Centre office following the death threats. But he decided to take leave and join his wife in London, where she is visiting her terminally ill mother.

Boraine declined to discuss Cobbett's future with the council, before a meeting between the two when Cobbett returns. Cobbett's departure would be his second dramatic exit in less than a year.

He took the Cape Town job last July, after Minister of Housing Sankie Mthembu-Mahanyele fired him because he uncovered irregularities in a R190-million Mpumalanga low-cost housing project.

He is likely to have first attracted the attention of the Cape Flats gangster communi-



Heading for 'safer' pastures: Billy Cobbett has apparently decided to move to London after having received a number of death threats. PHOTOGRAPH: TML

ty last November when he gave a stinging report to the council's housing committee.

Cobbett told the committee that gangsters dominate council housing on the Cape Flats, using council property for activities such as drug-dealing, gun-running and prostitution. Hundreds of illegal tenants threaten anyone who tries to evict them, he added.

"We have a whole category of consumers in Cape Town who make a tax-free profit from housing that is being subsidised for the poor," he said. "This is corruption on a great scale, and is common in parts of Cape Town."

Boraine says several other council officials have also received death threats, and councillors face similar intimidation. But, he adds, his investigation found clear evidence that Sampson and Adams had broken the rules.

Nomaandia Mfeketo, executive committee chair and acting leader of the ANC in the Western Cape, says the two did breach the council's code of conduct. "But they're saying, 'What of the concerns of the community?'"

The council wants to reach a full consensus before deciding their colleagues' fate, she added.

Valuations challenged

TOM HOOD

(124)
FIVE hundred property-owners are to challenge huge hikes in valuations by the Blaauwberg municipality, which stretches from Atlantis to Milnerton

They are to demand that their valuations be reduced. A valuation court is to sit in Milnerton from April 28 to June 10.

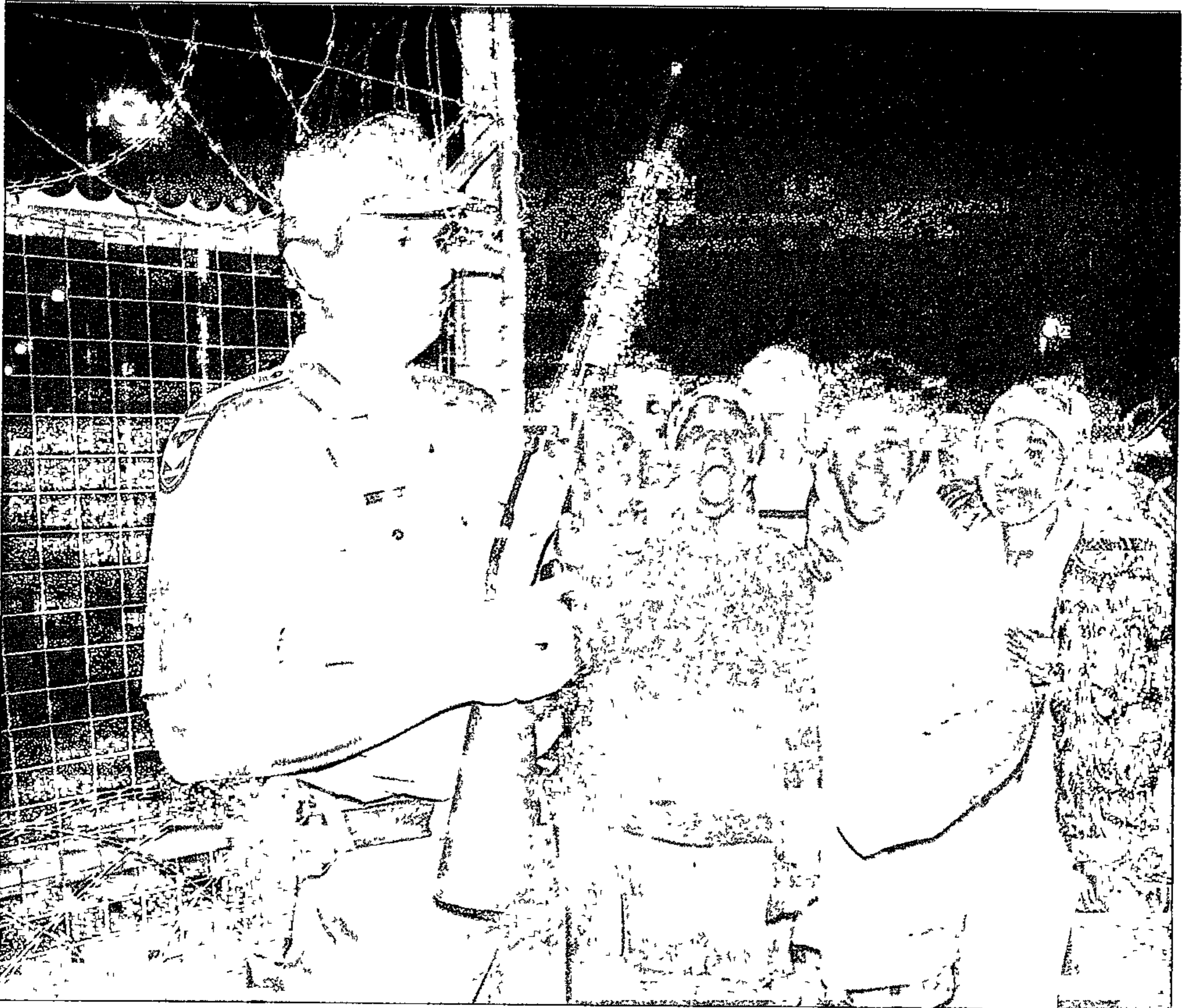
Increases of more than 800 percent over the 1990 valuations of some houses and 2 000 percent for commercial properties, were reflected in the new valuation roll, released this month.

The chairman of the council's executive committee, George Mellett, said a system of rebates allowed cuts of up to 40 percent for pensioners and people with low incomes.

Blaauwberg is the first of five metropole councils to complete valuations based on sites alone.

In Cape Town, the Rates Monitor Group, representing a number of ratepayer associations, intends to oppose the site-only system and may go to court.

ST(cm) 29/3/98



ON GUARD: A policeman stands guard last night while Delft South residents demonstrate against the alleged unfair distribution of houses between coloured and black residents

CT 31/3/98 (124)

PICTURE KIM LUDBROOK

Delft under siege after 'illegals' kicked out

FATIMA SCHROEDER

BULLETS and bricks flew in Delft South last night and at least one policeman was injured and a protester arrested in a confrontation over the alleged racial allocation of state-built houses

Several shots were fired at police, who responded with rubber bullets in an angry confrontation

involving about 500 people

A 38 revolver was confiscated. A man is expected to appear in the Bellville Magistrate's Court today on charges of attempted murder.

Community leaders allowed a *Cape Times* team through the gates of the besieged housing complex — but the crowd seized the opportunity and surged through.

Several bricks and stones were

hurled at policemen. A shot was fired and police fired rubber bullets at the crowd — but several more shots came from the direction of the crowd as they dispersed.

Police spokesperson Superintendent Wicus Holtzhausen said police were summoned to the scene after Tygerberg councillors had evicted people who had illegally occupied about 15 houses

A council source, who declined to be identified, said the houses were built by the provincial administration for residents who qualified for state subsidies of R17 500.

It had been agreed that the available homes would be split 50/50 between coloured and black residents.

Last night residents said that council had broken its agreement

Muizenberg mayor gets an ultimatum

(124)
ERIC NTABAZALILA

~~CF~~ 31/3/98
MUIZENBERG residents will deliver a petition to their mayor signed by 4 000 residents who claim that the South Peninsula Municipality was "not doing enough" to develop the area

The mayor, Mr John Jacobs, has been given "week" to react to the proposals in the petition

This follows a *Cape Times* report which highlighted the conditions many tenants were living under. Slum lords who profit handsomely from the city's desperate housing shortages, pack people in the dilapidated old hotels, boarding houses and old age homes, and charging them exorbitant rents

The petition calls on the South Peninsula municipality to create an urbanisation plan that would eradicate the unhealthy conditions and squalor in the area

It says the South Peninsula Municipality needs to develop a plan to create multiple housing of

differing quality for purchase and for rental to cater for the needs of the different economic groupings of the Muizenberg, Lakeside and Marina da Gama communities

Mrs Kerne Sinclair, a co-ordinator of a project called Renaissance of Muizenberg, said: "Many people here want to see change. Visible change. We strongly feel that the municipality is not doing enough to develop our area."

Mr Ben Turok, ANC MP in Muizenberg who helped draw up the petition, said it was clear that people were fed-up with the neglect of Muizenberg

"It is interesting to note that ordinary people are confronting the municipality about the lack of development. We are reasonable, we are not expecting miracles from them. We know they are a new municipality. But it does not take five years of planning to clean the beach. It does not take marathon meetings of officials to clean the beach."

Self-help housing scheme flops

Villiersdorp building project in chaos after thieves steal materials

NO RODERMANS
AND JENNEKE DE ROJ

A self-help scheme to help people build their own homes in Villiersdorp has flopped after thieves helped themselves to the building materials.

The project was the brainchild of a Dutch official in the town of Culemborg, who wanted to help disadvantaged South Africans. It was launched in 1986 to encourage people to build their own homes, using cheap loans and building materials supplied by a Villiersdorp co-op.

The project was due to have finished this year but, in the two years of its operation, only 44 of the 475 planned houses have been completed. Only eight houses are presently under construction.

Each four roomed house was supposed to cost only R17 240 as people were meant to do their own building work and use cheap materials. But it has ended up far more expensive as contractors had to be called in.

The well meaning plan, devised in the Culemborg town hall in Holland, created a rolling fund starting with R1.8 million to be lent at 14% interest - which would cause the fund to grow, thus making more money available for more houses.

Would-be homeowners were to be trained by the Building Industries Training Scheme of South Africa to build their own homes.

But the training scheme broke down as fewer and fewer people arrived for their lessons.

According to the building instructor, who asked not to be named, most people who initially showed an interest ended up not attending the courses to get the necessary skills.

Building materials disappeared and the people who were supposed to learn how to build had instead asked him to do the work for them.

As local people lost interest in building the houses themselves, they hired expensive commercial contractors - causing prices to increase.

As the first phase of 52 houses became bogged down in chaos, the second phase could not begin. There is still no idea when it will start.

Numfundo Noyi of the Villiersdorp Civic Organisation said people had not carried out their responsibilities.

She said people preferred to do other work at weekends, when they were supposed to be learning new skills and building their homes.

Eric Schuurman of the Culemborg Foundation for Development Co-operation in Holland said that, in spite of the problems, the organisation was still positive about the project.

"The realisation seems to take a long time but, in fact, compared to other projects in South Africa, it is quick. Building a school in The Netherlands, for example, will take about five to 10 years, including preparation."

He said only three people in the completed houses were in arrears. But the building instructor does not agree. "It's a strange project. You have to force people, make them work by changing their attitudes."

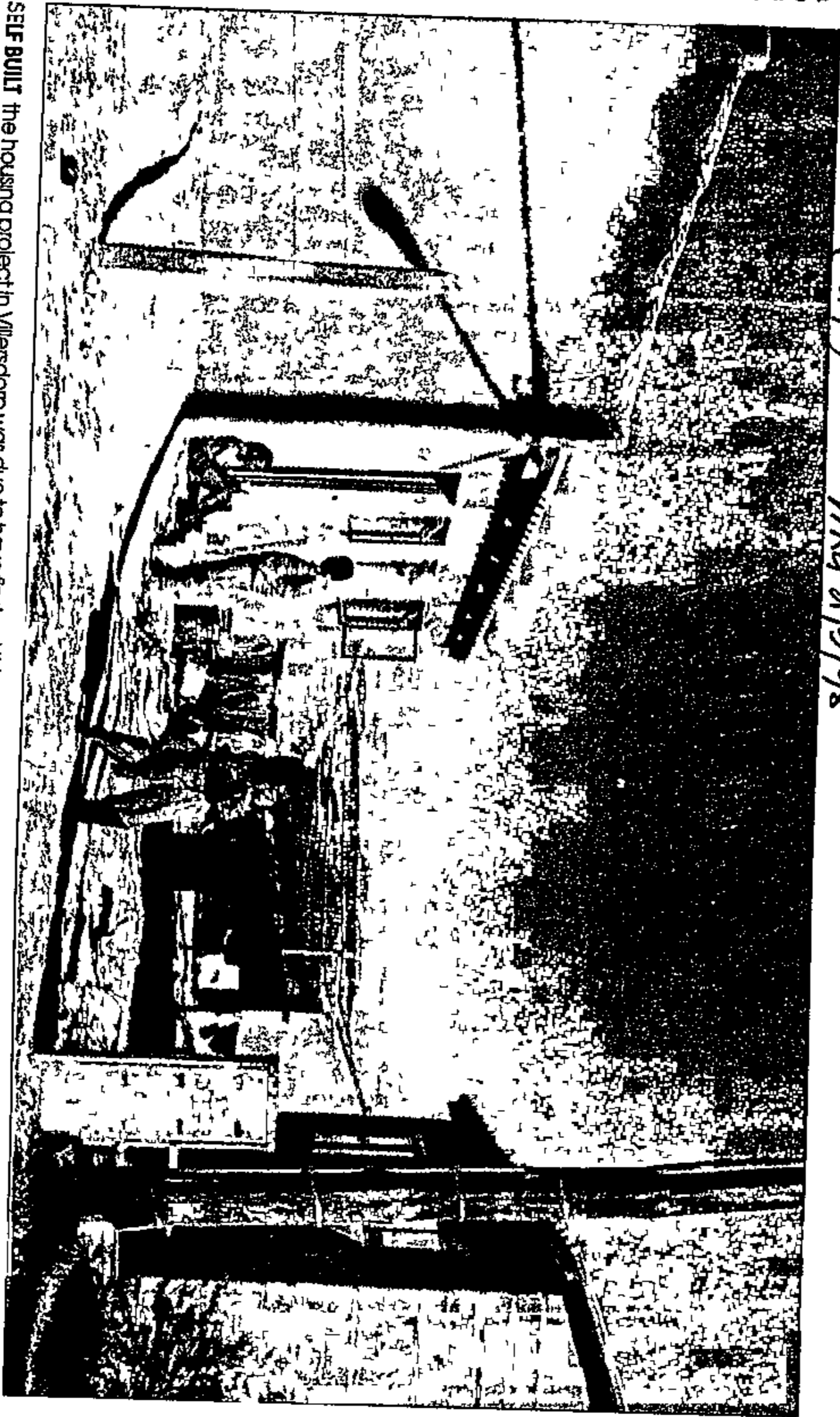
"But there is no control and it's unclear who is in charge, who says 'man, we need you'."

"A project in South Africa is never like a dream, but Villiersdorp is really the opposite."

He believes that, in order to stop theft and to encourage co-operation, only building materials needed at the time should be brought in. This means large amounts of materials would not be left around to be stolen. And in order to qualify for more materials, people should have to finish the work at hand.

"If you carry a full range of materials, people abuse them," he said. "I have no idea why the organisations in Villiersdorp are not using this step-by-step approach."

"It is a community project, but organisers didn't come with an answer to solve the problems caused by the lack of solidarity."



SELF-BUILT the housing project in Villiersdorp was due to have finished this year but only 44 houses out of a planned 475 have been built

(144) ARt 2/5/98

How to build a dwelling over a squatter shack for as little as R1 500

BY GRAHAM NORRIS

Anyone who sees a dwelling built by Nolusapho Accessible Housing could be forgiven for thinking it is the latest in trendy, affordable holiday houses

Its designs are the culmination of three years of research into upgrading informal settlements, and shows what can be done by building a house over an existing shack, with shack-dwellers themselves doing the building at minimal cost and with minimal training.

Based on successful programmes in Brazil to upgrade informal settlements into formal houses, Nolusapho is a team effort by Dr John Abbott and his colleagues at the University of Cape Town's urban management research team and the Triple Trust Organisation, a non-governmental organisation that trains and empowers unemployed South Africans to be self-reliant

The houses are built with Eco-beams, a Cape Town-invented and patented beam construction which is light, one-third of the price of the alternatives and easy to erect

Sandbags are used for walls, and oriented strand board (a laminated board of wood slices) provides stability and structural integrity

Siviwe Matika of UCT's urban management research team emphasises that the entire concept is based on the idea of minimal social disruption and that community parti-

icipation is the key to its success.

He says that once roads and services have been built around informal settlements, shack-dwellers can upgrade their houses without moving out. This is done by first building a top storey above the shack using the Ecobeam construction and afterwards completing the ground floor.

"It's creating a huge amount of excitement," Matika says

The partnership has been given the go-ahead to implement a pilot project at the Kanana and New Rest informal settlements between Guguletu and the N2

James Thomas, managing director of the Triple Trust Organisation, says part of the challenge has been to overcome the huge difference in costs between a shack and the simplest of formal houses

A "starter" shack can be set up for around R1 500, compared with the small 21sq m houses built for the Marconi Beam Development Trust, which cost R9 300.

Thomas says a 46sq m double-storey house costs R12 000, including plumbing and electricity, whereas it would cost R25 000 if a contractor built it. The difference lies in labour costs because 80% of the cost of a Nolusapho house is spent on building materials.

He stresses that the houses are not "bargain basement" creations, as all the materials have passed tests for thermal insulation, water resistance and strength.

Start 2/5/98 (124)

Fury is unleashed in SA's Wild East towns!

Frustrated Eastern Cape residents have had enough of non-delivery

2/3/5/98

(12/4/8)

FROM lup shooting to bloody head banging, the Eastern Cape was once again the Wild East this week when several towns in the province were tossed into turmoil.

As Bisho battled for bigger welfare, education and safety and security budgets for the impoverished ANC heartland, events in Butterworth, Indwe, Maclear, Tsolo, Qumbu and Port St Johns underscored the desperate need for delivery.

Residents have taken to the pot-holed streets - with their rubbish - to demand that town councils in the first three towns resign over corruption and failure to deliver basic services. In the last three the long unchecked forces of anarchy continued.

In Butterworth, controversial suspended mayor Anthony Bam shot straight back when Special Investigating Unit (SIU) chief Justice Willem Heath announced that an "Untouchables" probe into the embattled local council's activities was almost over and ready for referral to the Special Tribunal in a month's time.

That's when the tribunal, after issuing summonses to those involved, will be claiming back missing millions lost through a host of alleged malpractices.

Bam who is being investigated for property fraud, railed with customary panache "We challenge Heath to prove his lies in court and stop making foolish propaganda in the press like a naughty schoolboy."

Charging the SIU, appointed by President Nelson Mandela in November to investigate the council's affairs, Bam said "We are only too pleased to meet him at the tribunal -

we'll take him to the cleaners."

Butterworth's councillors are accused of improperly spending a R14.5 million provincial government grant, overpaying themselves by R1.3 million, defaulting on rates and taxes by R54 000, and ruing up a R125 000 cellphone bill.

Outside town, old women and children still carry water home in buckets. Miles of telephone poles have been converted into firewood. Said Heath: "Nothing stops the councillors from paying the amounts before the matter is referred to the tribunal. If they wish to negotiate with us they are welcome to do so."

But Bam says an October report by chartered accountants - which Heath calls "superficial" - and a letter from then local government and housing MEC Max Mamashe, since transferred to agriculture, exonerates the Butterworth council of fraud claims.

Council employees also have to tell the tribunal of alleged malpractices in a motor finance scheme, while ex-town clerk Ernest Vermaak is to be grilled on money spent on accommodation and council vehicles allegedly sent to a local panel beater without getting quotations.

But the community's frustration-fueled protest that brought the Butterworth crisis to an investigative head, has spread. Eastern Cape local government and housing MEC, Smuts Ngweni,

soon to be transferred to head the presidency, is waiting for a report from a special three-man investigative team on allegations against the Maclear council and the council's response.

Over two days last week, before negotiations with police restored the peace, dustbins were overturned and litter strewn in the streets, tyres set alight and the homes of councillors stoned as youths demanded the council resign because of non-delivery and incompetence. And in Indwe, where the Residental Front is demanding the council resign because of corruption and failure to deliver, an angry group of pupils took local high school teachers and pupils hostage for three hours this week after accusing them of siding with the council.

Mayor Mosebisi Linba, whose car was stoned and stopped from entering the schoolyard after being called by teachers to intervene, says peace has not returned - and neither have the teachers.

Linba said, "It's high time the department of local government and housing came and addressed the community because some people are ignorant about how to raise their grievances."

But in war-torn Tsolo and Qumbu to the north of Umhata, and in the Majola area of Port St Johns, grievance were still being sorted out by medieval methods this week. An 80 year-old man was burned to death, a 55-year-old man was shot

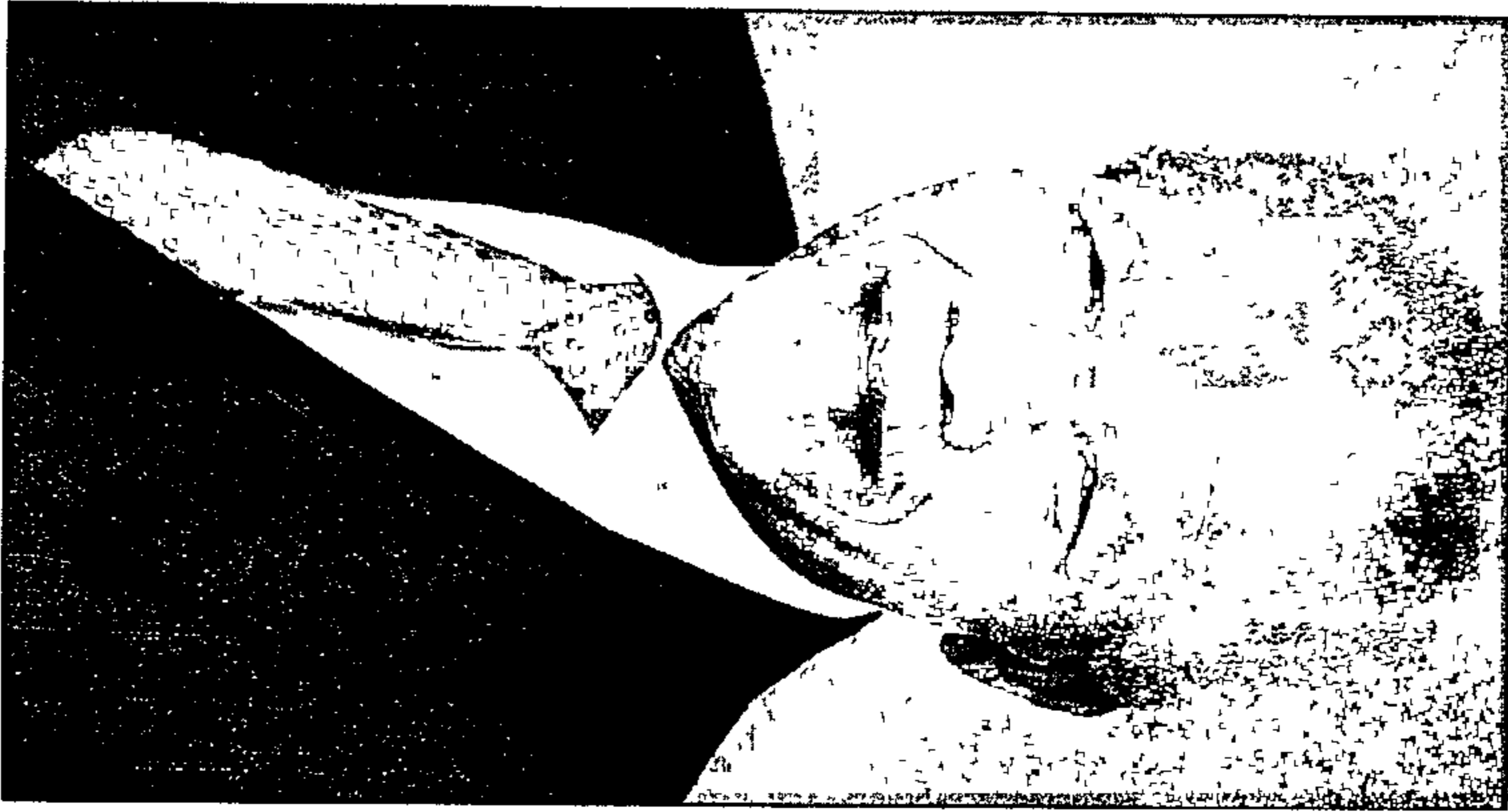
dead and scores were wounded when a mob opened fire and burned down 40 homes in a pre-dawn revenge attack on the Sipisipu locality. Police say that had most villagers not anticipated the attack and hidden in the bushes, many more would have died.

The attack came a week after public order police withdrew from the area. They were deployed with soldiers, spraying teargas from helicopters to flush out forest-hidden warriors armed with guns and pangas to end savage faction fighting a month ago that killed 15 and saw 130 homes razed. The area is still described as tense.

In the Tsolo and Qumbu areas, where more than 700 people have been murdered over the last four years in land and livestock feuds which go back to the 1920s, the killers returned this week. In this cruel Transkei region of little visible hope, a sign of wealth such as a horse is enough to get you killed.

This time, three women - aged 36, 48 and 65 - and a nine year-old girl, shot dead in their beds, were the victims of the midnight gunmen. Police said 20 homes were torched. The bullet-riddled road signs outside Qumbu told more than a tale of social breakdown this week.

As the imposing undertaker's mansion, complete with satellite dish, next to dilapidated and empty homes testifies, death is still the only big business here - @LiveWire



GET TO THE BOTTOM OF IT. President Nelson Mandela appointed a Special Investigating Unit team to investigate the Butterworth town council.

I'm sorry I had him killed but he gave me hell...

By ANDILE NOGANTLA

NTOMBEKHAYA Letlaka - who is to be sentenced tomorrow for the murder of her husband, Bisho civil servant Neo Thuso Letlaka - faces the prospect of only seeing her two young children during periodic visits in prison.

One child is under two years old. Letlaka (38) has already admitted to being party to the murder of her husband - a close relative of Eastern Cape PAC MP, Tshapo Letlaka - on August 20, 1996. He was repeatedly bashed with a hammer on a dark stretch of road in Mdantsane by two men whom the court found she had hired to kill him.

Letlaka, who had shown no emotion during the trial, this week stood in the dock, looked at her dead husband's friends and family at the back of the court and offered her apologies.

She asked that her children be taken back to her family. Her lawyer, Joe Krusman, had kept her out of the main trial - but on Wednesday she took the stand to plead in mitigation of her sentence. The previous day Judge Dikoko had found her guilty of getting Mymnelo Lhaha and Melizwe Mfoll to kill her husband.

She had pleaded not guilty on the grounds of temporary non-pathological criminal incapacity - claiming her husband's behaviour had caused her long periods of unhappiness.

She said he had had a string of affairs and had refused to take responsibility for his family. The court had earlier heard that the hammer killing of her husband had been preceded by an attempt to poison him with battery acid.

The state is expected to ask for between 10 and 15 years when sentence is passed tomorrow.

French bid for water services irks Samwu

(125)
FRANK NXUMALO

CT(MR) 6/10/98 EDITOR

Johannesburg — The French multinational Société d'Aménagement Urbaine et Rural (SAUR) International was yesterday declared the "preferred bidder" for the R2 billion privatisation of water and sewerage for the Dolphin Coast municipality in KwaZulu Natal, the town council said.

But the South African Municipal Workers' Union (Samwu) immediately threatened to stop the deal, alleging that "privatisation initiatives at municipal level are often initiated by councillors for personal gain". It said it was determined to keep service delivery within the domain of the public sector.

Francois Buck, the acting town clerk for the municipality, said the contract was for a period of 30 years and that the next phase was the negotiation of the final contract with the help of the Development Bank of Southern Africa. He said rival bidders Lyonnaise des Eaux and Générales des Eaux, both French multinationals, had been invited to stay in the race for another 120 days pending finalisation of the negotiations.

Patrick Vincensini, the general manager of SAUR International for southern Africa, said "We are glad of the opportunity to provide our services here, and consider this a significant step forward in the development of our South African activities."

Anna Weekes, a Samwu spokesman, said the union would take up the issue with the KwaZulu Natal provincial bargaining council to demand an immediate stop to the privatisation of Dolphin Coast's water and sewerage. "The initiative goes completely against the binding ruling of the South African Local Government Bargaining Council last year that the public sector is the preferred deliverer of services."

Bold development plan for squatter settlement

Councillor comes closer to dream

PETER GOOSEN
STAFF REPORTER

The dream of Adelaide Buso, a mother of three sons and a domestic worker turned town councillor, is to be able to leave her shack in Die Bos, the Westlake squatter camp, and move into a proper house of her own

And that dream could be not too far round the corner for Ms Buso and the other more-than 700 families living in the camp

The plan - masterminded by the South Peninsula Council, the Province and development company Rabie-Cavcor consortium - to turn the prime, 93-hectare area that is Westlake into a R1,1-billion spanking new place to live and work for a broad cross-section of people, has come another step forward with the acceptance of the project in principle by the South Peninsula Council

The plan includes building the 700 economic homes, other upmarket housing, a commercial and a light industrial component

The theory is that the cost of the services and the R30-million economic housing complex will be paid for

out of the revenue from the other sections of the development, as well as government subsidies, and the light industrial area will supply jobs for the families in the economic houses

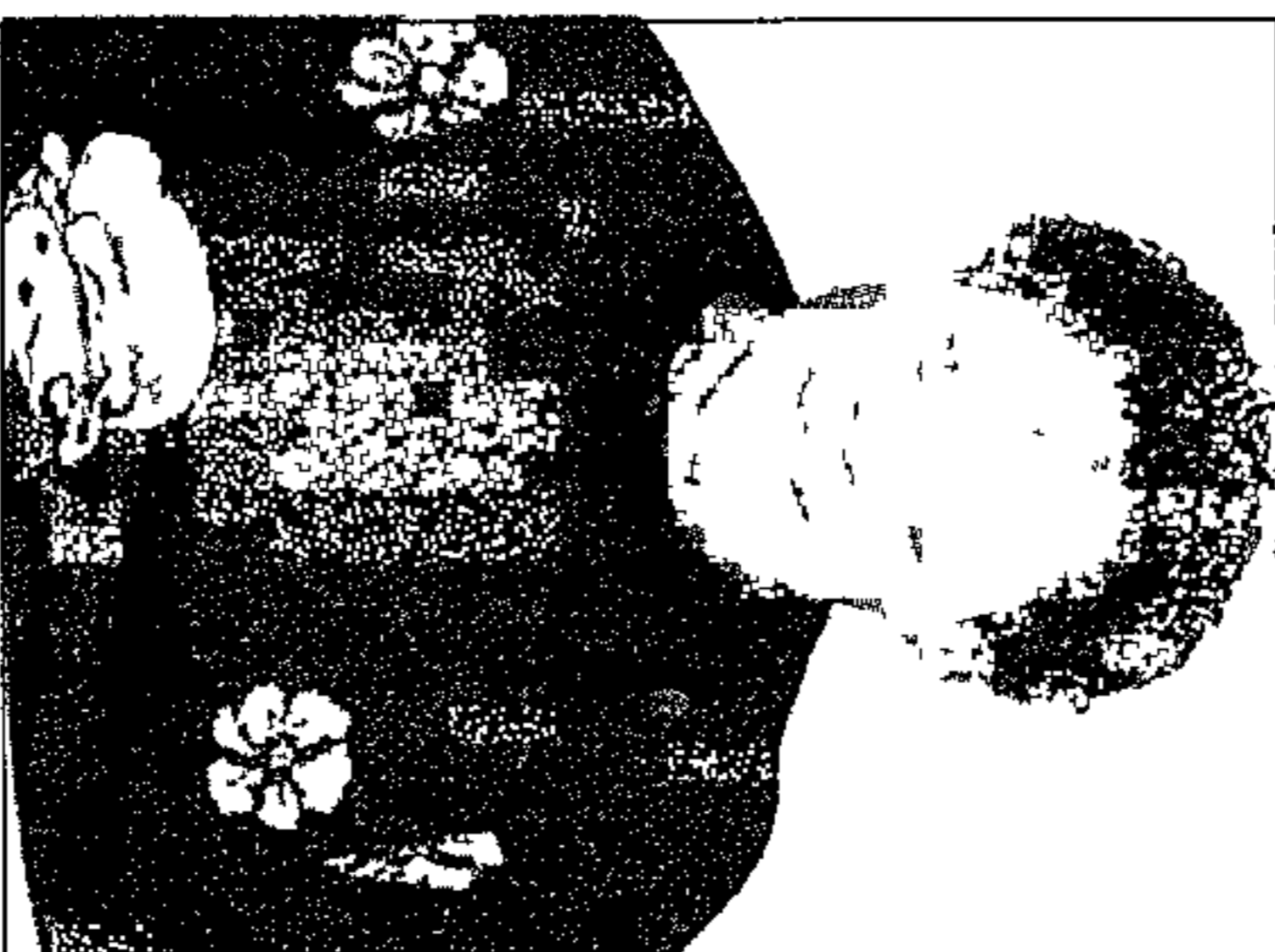
And what is frustrating for Ms Buso, who has lived at Westlake for the past eight years, is that now that the plan is reaching fruition, she is unable to take part in debates on this important issue because, as a resident of the informal settlement at Westlake, she is likely to benefit from the new scheme in the form of a formal house. This, in terms of council rules, bars her from the debates

Ms Buso, together with fellow councillor Neville Riley, who is chairman of the council's urban planning committee, have been involved in Westlake since the inception of the plan. Ms Buso was a member of the community committee responsible for preparing the development plan for Westlake. But it's more than just houses at stake

"I believe that when all the people that live here have their own houses with sewage, running water and electricity, it will mean an end to the crime and the abuse of children and women who live here

"Houses will make people proud of

ARL 7/15/98



Living in hope: Adelaide Buso

themselves and the area in which they live"

Ms Buso is dreading another winter in the camp. It floods. Her roof is likely to blow off in the first strong north-westerly storm that heralds the winter rain in the Cape. She has no address and her only contact with the outside world is by cellphone, as long as she can arrange to have it charged

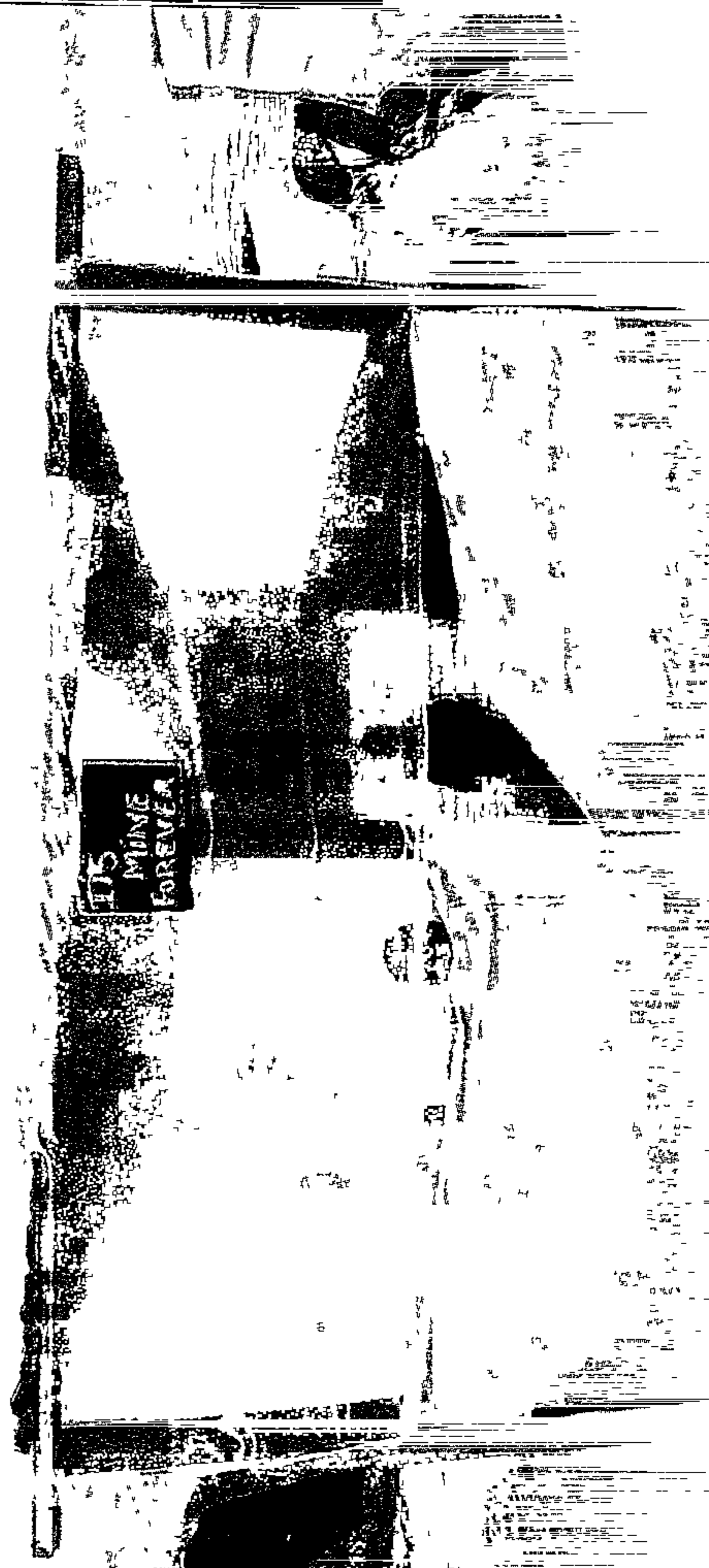
(124) 4

somewhere where there is electricity. Her council papers are hand-delivered by a council messenger because there is no postal service

But there is still a long road ahead for development facilitators Rabie/Cavcor. There has been spirited opposition from some Westlake neighbours, mainly because of the scale of the development and the controversial plan to move the sprawling church complex, the Ark City of Refuge to Ottery

Supervising over 1 000 people from all walks of life is no easy job for the young church staff, and many former Ark residents who can't handle the strict Christian regimen, which includes no liquor, become squatters outside the Ark and add to the area's host of problems. The development facilitators have put forward a plan to move the Ark to an abandoned reformatory building, a plan that hasn't gone down well with Ottery residents or their councillor, the National Party's Deon Kruse

At a meeting with Ottery residents, development facilitator Leslie Viljoen of Cavcor gave the assurance that alternatives for accommodating the Ark would be investigated



better houses sooner, to Cape Town's 31 000 homeless families.

Metro Editor CLAUDIA CAVANAGH reports:

CITIES across the country are eyeing Cape Town's unique new housing model which will see bigger and better houses for the poor, teach people how to save and aim for 100% rates payment across the Cape Flats. It began with R125-million from the council to top up the state housing subsidy which date has delivered tiny and shoddily built homes dubbed "kennels" by appalled city councillors last year.

Cape Town is the first council in the country to take this initiative.

"The phrase, 'unrealistic expectations'," says Cape Town's housing chief Mr Billy Cobbett, "is normally meant to rather patronisingly put the poor in their place. But one can argue that it is the historically privileged of Cape Town who are unrealistic if they expect a mother of five to refer to 18m² as a house, let alone a home."

So this is how Cape

SVP's only job is to build them as quickly as possible. "At the moment in Cape Town, developers have to put together social compacts. Why? It's not their job and they're not good at it."

Then the company starts building.

But if the project blows up three weeks later because of a protest (as happened in Crossroads recently), a sit-in or a land invasion (the Tafelsig debacle), the SVP hands the project straight back to the city with a bill for all expenses incurred to be settled in 24 hours.

"In other words we will price political interference."

"The ward councillors will have to report to the full council on why the project blew up and cost the ratepayer, for example, R75 000 in penalties. This is part of their job."

At the moment, if a protest slows down a project, the delay is paid for out of the subsidy and the people land up with worse

"Until then the money is theirs and they can clear the account whenever they want. But as soon as they qualify for the top-up, they cede the account to the council."

Then, the house is built and the people move in — but the title deed is only handed over once the owner has paid 100% rates for four years.

"If they don't pay rates, we have the six months' savings to draw on."

"Once that is used up the SVP — and not the council — will evict them. So once again it's not a political decision."

"No element of doubt or confusion must be allowed to creep into this model — if the qualifying beneficiary does not meet the savings or payment criteria, then there will be no contribution from the city."

"The real attraction here is that by the time the SVP is formed, we will have an agreement with certain financial institutions that

It's simple: No land invasions

The wisdom of 'things happen in threes' can be a bugbear

UNTIL this week I held the vague suspicion that the millennium bug was the creation of computer giants and was designed to send us into such a panic that we'd be forced into spending millions, if not billions, in buying a wonder solution that's going to be boasted to the world by some geek with the unassuming name of Bill, just as the clock turns 2000.

The "antidote" would do for them what the "miracle" potency pill Viagra has done for pharmaceutical manufacturer Pfizer's shares after the drug hit the



American market. It could be the wild card in the pack to take the prize for the find of the 20th century for which Viagra seems the runaway winner.

Must have been the old conspiracy theorist in me that made me think bad of Gates and company. In addition, as a journalist, one always expects the unexpected.

But events in the past few weeks served as reminders of just how fragile we are and how reliant we've become on hi-tech. And of course we're human after all for not having the foresight to predict the coming of the millennium bug.

Well OK, I've got an axe or two or more to grind. And the next person who

tells me that sometimes it doesn't rain but pours, even in reference to the Cape winter rains, may just end up

Yes, that's how I feel and don't even think about imparting such wisdom as things (and they're usually bad or unpleasant) usually happen in threes.

LIKE three weeks ago the Babble had to be rewritten from scratch when the laptop went on the blink and the master copy was lost to cybersville. The stiffy drive will cost nine hundred bucks to replace so it can stop adding to noise pollution with those loud grating

sounds and doing nasty things to the copy.

LIKE the cellphone that cut short an important conversation last week and insisted it's a "card error" and allowed emergency calls only. The service provider didn't say whether the programmed phone numbers on the old card could be transferred onto the new that came at over a hundred bucks.

There's no going back to them now to ask, what with all the other things a man in my disposition finds he has to do

LIKE on Monday night when the

rains poured and the car battery died soon after take off AA to the rescue. The next day, a new one at two hundred bucks later. But that's not all.

LIKE, I mean, the starter's only switching because the battery's got all the power to fire it into action.

LIKE the headlight that was replaced the other day has just fused.

Yes, and still the rains fall. Only that that's holding together at no extra cost the humble umbrella that underwent emergency repairs with a needle and instead of thread, dental floss.

TELELETTERS

Mr R James, Atlanta's Re donation made by W Bantam from the Metropolitan Mayor's Fund Last year the mayor promised a youth he would assist him financially to represent South Africa at the World Youth Conference in Paris Later he denied he was ever approached and said there wasn't a Mayor's Fund I see from yesterday's paper that he has donated money from the Mayor's Fund

Mr J Terblanche, Cape Town Louis Luyt was democratically elected The way the ANC and NSC want to oust Luyt isn't acceptable The way they are doing it is unconstitutional To arrange boycotts against rugby because they're against Luyt isn't acceptable



H Bernaud, Newlands Does this impoverished, debt-ridden sub-Saharan country really need a Ministry of Sport? Does it really need a National Sports Council? What do these bodies do except soak up public money? But South Africa should welcome a Sarthi board that is democratically elected and that does not milk the taxpayers

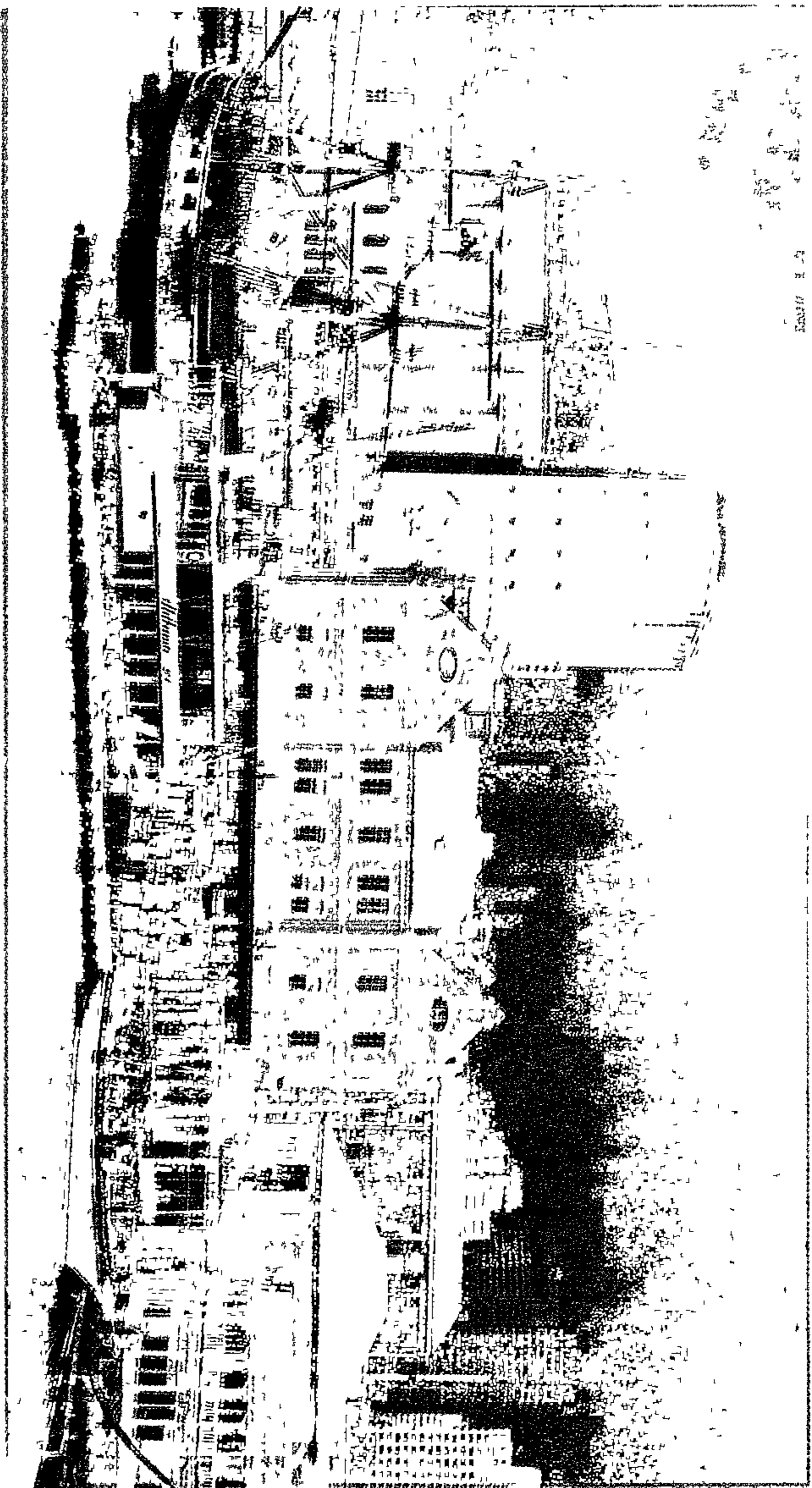
Mr W Francis, Fish Hoek I don't think Louis Luyt should go at all, but they should get rid of Muleki George, the whole of the NSC, Steve Tshwete and Cosatu — only then will rugby get on its feet again But to get rid of the ones I've mentioned is easier said than done

Mr R Barnard, Somerset West Re the marching orders given to the South African Airways chief (Cape Times, May 6) Ever since affirmative action was implemented all departments from health to education have taken a turn-able This is what happens when you kick out properly educated people and employ ones who don't have a clue what is going on, simply in the name of politics Zukile Nomvele walked into SAA when it was at a R14-million loss Now, R322 m later, he blames the fact that he "did not have time to settle down" He should leave the lame excuses behind and get out of an industry he does not know and probably does not care about South Africa is tired of excuses Make a difference or leave it to people in SAA who know what's going on

Mrs E Libuli, Rondebosch A month ago Telkom installed a phone in my house and said it would be working within two days It is still not working and, despite several calls, they have still not connected it I have enough ornaments — I don't need another one



A Parker, Woodstock Re a newspaper report headlined "Only 10 nations home to Jews" I am surprised that India was not mentioned among the countries There are many Jews in India In fact a Jewish man called David was a famous Indian film actor and was honoured by the Indian



Legal profession must change

THE recent action by black advocates of the Cape Bar to ensure that transformation takes place within the Cape Bar is significant Not without justification, the legal profession worldwide is seen as essentially conservative

The problem is particularly acute in South Africa since, as with other institutions, it is dominated by white males on the Bench, at the bar and at the side bar It is also a profession that has, in overt and subtle ways, resisted transformation

The astonishing and ill-considered act of racial bravado by 14 Natal judges who opposed the appointment of a black judge to the Natal Bench is but one example of this It is interesting that a majority of members of the Natal Bar also supported the 14 judges' preferred candidate, Judge Booysse, a high-ranking member of the sinister Broederbond This is perhaps not surprising as the General Council of the Bar, of which all the bar councils are members, has over the last few years distinguished itself by resisting any measures that would effectively transform the legal profession as a whole, including the academic training of lawyers This attitude was especially apparent during discussions at legal forums convened by the Ministry of Justice over the last three years

Given this background, the Black Lawyers' Association fully supports the initiative taken by the 19

the dominance of males in the current bar council

Advocates render an important service to the public, the government and corporations They cannot, therefore, be immune to change Far more problematic is his assertion that, by virtue of their overwhelming numbers, white advocates should continue to form the majority on the council

If we were to follow this argument, there would effectively be no change except for the incorporation of a small minority of black people who could be outvoted on the council at every turn What Gauntlett seemed to forget is that the very reason why the Cape Bar has 280 white members is that successive white regimes in this country allowed people like himself and his colleagues access to education, wealth and the unfettered right to practice which were denied to blacks

The dominance and experience they have gained, they gained on account of racist policies, surely not something of which to be proud Not only have they benefited from these racist policies but they continue to benefit in that corporations and even government institutions continue to brief them at the expense of black advocates at the Bar

Gauntlett's reference to Verwoerd is either naive or pure sophistry It is precisely because Verwoerdian policies succeeded that we face the current problems, that of a dominant

Bill a recipe for environmental rape

I WOULD like to focus on the Western Cape Planning and Development Bill that has caused much controversy in recent times and that has almost universally been rejected by those involved in this province, including by members of the National Party's membership at local government level

The Democratic Party rejects the bill in its current form and I would like to focus on three issues that I believe deserve particular attention

Firstly, if one examines the general principles of the planning bill, one finds that the independence of local government in all matters relating to land planning and development in this province is undermined

While one could accept the fact that there is of necessity an overlap between municipal planning on one hand and provincial planning on the other, we in the DP are opposed to the proposed wholesale subordination to parliament and to the minister of virtually all of the key current municipal planning matters

In short, this bill infringes the power of local government to make decisions on municipal planning

The second objection is contained in Sec-

TOO FEW: Although the lack of black waiters on the Waterfront has been highlighted, a reader feels that the main issue, that of the lack of black-owned businesses, has been ignored

comprising representatives of the department of planning, the provincial law advisors, municipalities of the province, the private sector and others involved

This task team should conduct proper research and then draft a new, better provincial planning bill which would contribute to good governance in this province, not destroy it

JOE MARIS, DP MPP
CAPE TOWN

Look beyond waiters for V&A's problem

I WOULD like to comment on your article "The white face of Waterfront eateries"

Although the Waterfront's spokesperson neatly wriggled herself out of the problem by passing the buck to a spokesperson for the traders, the fact remains that shop-owners on the Waterfront have so many rules, regulations, laws and stipulations forced on them contractually by the Victoria & Alfred that one more rule about "affirmative action" (or whatever you want to call it) won't make the slightest difference

Unfortunately, though, the problem lies much deeper and is far more serious than just

POSTSCRIPT

SINCE it is evidently desirable that our country needs its citizens to save, I can never understand why there are such whoops of joy when interest rates drop

If there is one thing certain, it is that those who are able to save find little reward in doing so This is particularly so for people in their 80s Inflation was hardly known before the 1970s, so the elderly not only have to cope with pensions or savings which are minimal because deductions were made from very small salaries in their working lives, but now they also receive less interest on their savings

Many have pensions or insurance policies which at inception were not inflation-based or "with profits" For such persons, it seems to me most unfair when their hard-earned savings earn even less when interest rates drop

For low income earners to save at all is difficult, yet some banks are now charging R10 for every withdrawal from savings accounts of less than R2 000, which in any case earn only about 2% interest In these circumstances, it is no wonder that some people find it better to keep their money under their mattresses

Pick 'n Pay is to be thanked for coming to the rescue of such people by offering savings accounts which pay 5% interest on savings of up to R2 000 and incur only R1,40 per withdrawal

EVALIE STOTT
NEWLANDS

THE media seems unable to find anything other than crime and violence on which to report Your reporters seem so concentrated on reporting the bad in our lives that they miss the good On Tuesday evening, May 28, courage, quick thinking and previous training allowed three young men to save the life of a comrade

Massive seas caught my son, Andrew Preen, and tumbled him over and over in deep, churning water until he was unconscious Chris Bethish realised Andrew was in deep trouble He fought heavy seas to pull Andrew, still unconscious, on to his surfboard in almost impossible conditions and applied his training to resuscitate him Chris's brother, Corn, swam out to help and together they were able to bring Andrew ashore Here Alistar Schoon helped Chris to revive him about 10-15 minutes later

They continued with the correct first aid treatment, covering Andrew with towels and blankets An ambulance collected him and took him to Constantenberg Clinic, where the emergency staff and doctor on duty were superb in their treatment

Without the prompt, correct actions taken by these people, Andrew would not be with us today

Not only would my family and I like to express our deepest gratitude to these people via your newspaper, but also ask your reporters to focus on some of the good that is happening around us — such as the likes of these young people, who gave of their time, without reward, to learn how to help others We are living in troubled times, and it is with a deep sense of gratitude that I salute these unsung heroes

RAY PREEN
HOUT BAY

Minister of Housing slams local councils

Time for action – Herandien
(124) ARG 8/5/98

JERMAINE CRAIG
CITY REPORTER

Western Cape Minister of Housing Cecil Herandien has accused local councils in the Cape metropolitan area of "lack of interest" in tackling the country's biggest problem – housing.

"They can talk very easily of housing delivery but it seems to me they are not very serious," Mr Herandien told the Cape Argus in an interview yesterday.

But his comments have been described as "unfair" by City of Cape Town executive committee chairman Nomandla Mfeketo.

Mr Herandien dismissed a call by the Cape Town council for a housing summit, saying councilors spent too much time in meetings and not enough solving the housing crisis.

"Everybody is talking about a housing summit. I am not interested in a housing summit. It will be just another talk shop where everybody will blow a gasket and nothing will happen."

"The problem is that the councils are not very pro-active. They must develop the will to house people. It is no use having summits, that time is over. Nothing happens on the ground and I am sick and tired of that."

He said he would instead hold an "urgent meeting" with the housing directors of the various municipalities to thrash out solutions to the problem. Councils needed to come up with business plans, prepare proposals and submit applications for projects.



BRENTON GEACH

Hitting out: Western Cape Minister of Housing Cecil Herandien

His department had had 95 000 housing subsidy applications and was ready, if it got the money from central government, to implement projects worth more than R300-million. But this meant councils needed to integrate waiting lists and identify projects.

Mr Herandien said his department was working on a land release programme and that councils, with the Cape Metropolitan Council, should identify where there was land available for housing. In Khayelitsha alone 30 000 serviced plots were vacant.

Earlier this week Mr Herandien met a delegation from the Cape Town council to discuss the land invasion in Tafelsig, Mitchell's Plain. Today the land invaders are contesting a High Court order to evict them.

Mr Herandien said that although he did not condone land invasion, he felt sympathy for the Tafelsig families. As a short-term solution the council should identify families who had been on waiting lists for many years and he would accommodate them in houses on the integrated Serviced Land Project site in Delft.

Responding to Mr Herandien's remarks, Cape Town housing director Billy Cobbett said his council was "more than committed" to playing its part in ensuring housing delivery.

Mrs Mfeketo said the provincial government needed to be serious about housing delivery.

"In the final analysis the Minister of Housing is the one who needs to push the province to deliver housing," she said.



Out on a limb: About 100 000 people in the Cape Town area still live in shacks, but the provincial legislature has decided not to implement 20 of the 24 proposed housing projects. PHOTO: RODGER BOSCH

Red tape cripples Cape housing

(124) MAG 8-14/5/98

R30-million of Cape Town's R46,2-million housing budget will not be spent because of bureaucratic bungling, writes Andy Duffy

The squatter invasion that swept Cape Town housing officials into the high court this week comes against a backdrop of delayed, scrapped or crippled low-cost housing projects around the city

Latest council figures show that nearly R30-million of the R46,2-million the city council had earmarked for priority housing projects for the year to June 1998 will not be spent — with many schemes snagged in a bureaucratic web or simply scrapped

The provincial legislature, meanwhile, has decided to halt one of the province's highest-profile low-cost housing projects — Crossroads Phase 4. Just 31 of the planned 604 houses have been built.

Such setbacks are symptomatic of the growing housing problem Cape Town faces. The council alone has about 41 000 people on a long-standing waiting list for housing.

Another 100 000 people are living in shacks. Many of them were among the hundreds who invaded the Lost City area of Tafelsig in Mitchells Plain two weeks ago.

The council had originally hoped to evict the squatters and bulldoze the site earlier this week. But the Legal Resources Centre (LRC), which is representing the squatters, won a four-day reprieve.

The council was due back in the high court on Friday to re-argue its case, should negotiations opened on Wednesday fail to find a settlement.

"Bulldozing is not the right way of dealing with this problem — it's not going to go away," says LRC attorney Vincent Saldanha. "You have to deal with people. You have

to negotiate. The continuous refrain is that people have been frustrated. They've been living in backyards, under cramped conditions."

Deputy executive committee chair Saleem Mowzer says the council understands the squatters' frustrations. But he says the council cannot give favourable treatment to illegal occupants.

Officials also suspect the Lost City invasion is being exploited for political gain. The Inkatha Freedom Party, the United Democratic Movement, the South African National Civics Organisation, the Congress of South African Trade Unions, the Muslim Judicial Council and Qibla have all been jostling to stake a claim among the squatters.

'Bulldozing is not the right way of dealing with this problem — it's not going to go away. You have to deal with people. You have to negotiate'

Mowzer adds that the council is close to finalising a plan under which the city will contribute R125-million over five years to "top up" the individual R15 000 state subsidies available for low-cost housing.

"I think we have a housing policy in place that will fundamentally address the housing need," he adds.

Such a policy is desperately needed. The latest reports compiled for the city's housing committee include an update on expenditure for "ad hoc" projects — those drawn up to eliminate housing backlogs.

They include schemes in Vyge-

kraal, Manenberg, Hanover Park, Mitchells Plain, Ikapa, KTC, Langa and Nyanga.

The report shows the council expects to spend nothing on 20 of the 24 projects it identified for the year to June 1998. Three of them, together worth R9-million, have been scrapped as "unsustainable", the others delayed.

Project engineer Paul le Roux says among the main difficulties is getting the state subsidies through.

"In some cases it's because consultation with the community has not been done, or the community is just not ready."

One of the delayed projects is a 320-house scheme for another area of Tafelsig, Silver City — illegally occupied more than four years ago. The city's housing committee must also discuss a plan of action for Crossroads Phase 4.

The provincial housing department has been battling with the scheme since last May, arguing that the subsidy is insufficient. Most of the cash goes to providing services such as water to the site.

The department's patience finally snapped last month. "We do not believe any contractor can build 36m² houses to the required specifications and programmes on a sustainable basis," provincial housing head of department Herman Steyn wrote to outgoing city housing chief Billy Cobbett.

"The existing housing contract has been terminated. Your council is invited to consider an appropriate means of continuing the project."

Crossroads Phase 4 is part of the R1,2-billion Integrated Service Land Project founded six years ago to provide 41 000 houses.

Other project schemes have been afflicted with similar difficulties, and allegations of poor workmanship and corruption.

Upgrades bring new life to Lwandle hostels

Project on track to transform dingy hostels into flats for families

FRUIT HILL 1/2/98

(124)

Housing delivery is something the residents of Lwandle, between Somerset West and Strand, know a lot about.

For young mother-of-two Nokhanyo Madolwana it has meant the difference between sharing a cramped hostel dormitory with eight other families and her own brightly-painted home with her own electricity supply.

A year ago she was living like Mhoneleli Mukwelwa, just a few blocks away, who is still waiting for his new home to be completed.

Currently, "home" for Mr Mukwelwa, his wife and two children is two beds, surrounded by curtains hung from strings for some privacy. The dark, badly-ventilated hostel dormitory is partitioned into space for eight families.

They cook in the passage at either end and share just one toilet and basin. Even the toilet is something new in their lives, put in as the first phase of the project to transform Lwandle's hostels into proper homes for the residents.

It's part of a R15-million upgrade of Lwandle's 43 hostel blocks which will affect 325 single people and 511 families. It is a joint undertaking involving the Helderberg municipality, the Provincial Housing Board, the Cape Metropolitan Council and the Department of Sport and Recreation.

Although it is set to be completed in December, the project is already halfway done with about 25 hostel blocks still to be converted, says Eddie Larkman, of the company WBHO which is co-ordinating the changes.

The work in Lwandle is continuing quietly as a storm over housing in greater Cape Town is threatening last week provincial housing minister Cecil Herandien accused local councils in the Cape metropolitan area of a "lack of interest" in tackling the country's biggest problem.

He dismissed a call by the Cape

CAPIERS

SPECIAL WRITER

Town City Council for a housing summit, saying councillors spend too much time in meetings and not enough time solving the housing crisis.

Visits to the old and new hostel homes in Lwandle show the vast improvement in living standards. Converted hostel blocks mean families have their own "flat", a single room of varying size according to the number of people in families. They pay for their own electricity, have three plugs for electrical appliances and share a bathroom - with toilet, shower and hand basin - between two families.

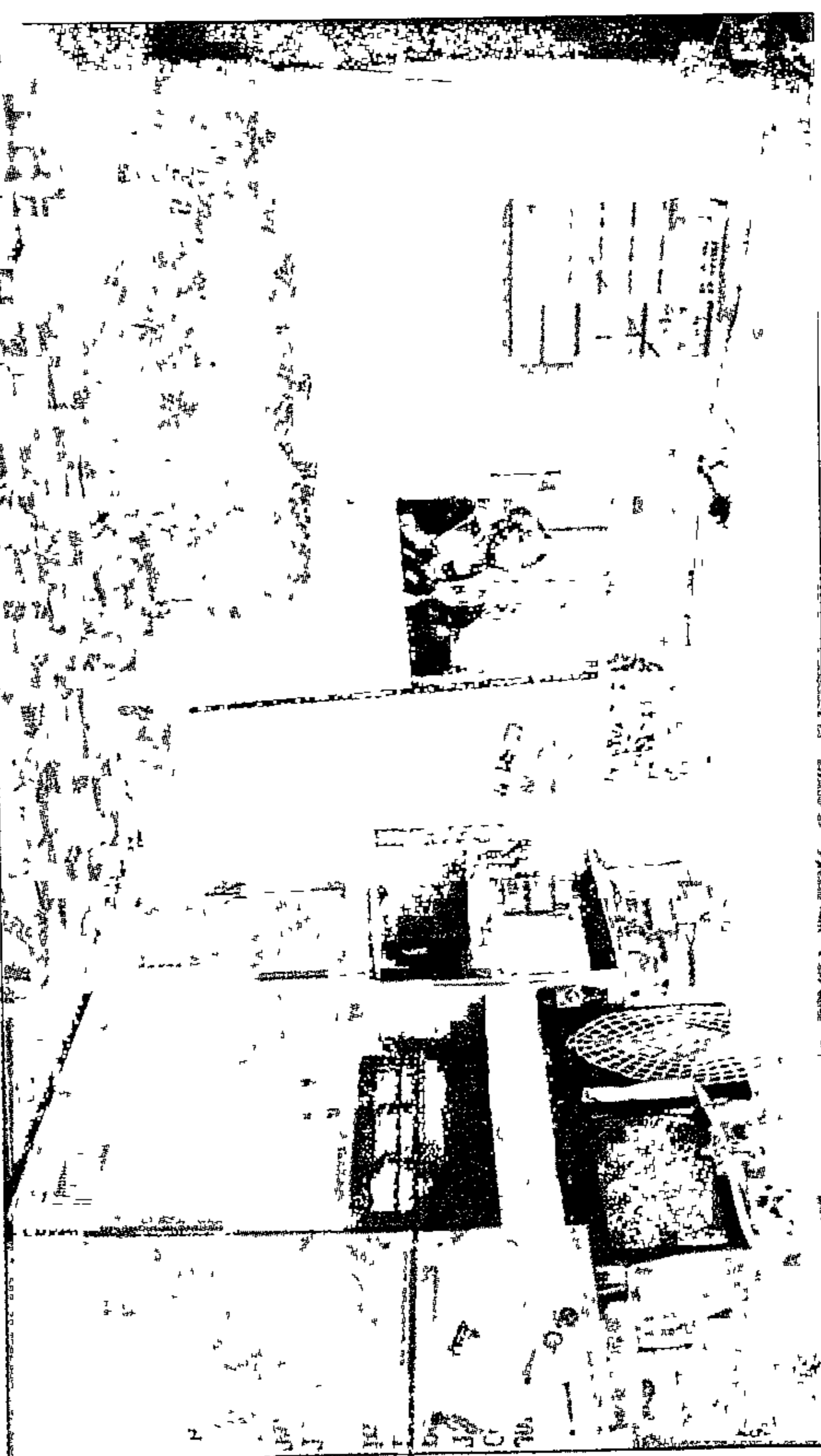
Most families have put in partitions to create a separate sleeping area. Walls are painted bright colours and television sets play loudly.

In sharp contrast, the old hostel buildings are dark, damp and offer families no privacy.

Mr Larkman points out that although the old roofs remained in place after being cleaned with a high-pressure gun, the ceilings are new and insulated to keep the homes cool in summer and warm in winter.

Communal ablution blocks are also slowly being upgraded to provide additional facilities. Showers are fitted with paraffin heaters for hot showers.

The work is being done by eight local contractors and includes erecting several double-storey buildings, divided into flats designed for families of six, which are being used as "roll-over" accommodation.



Home is where the heart is: Nokhanyo Madolwana in her new home. She has put in a partition to create a separate sleeping area.

Families move into these buildings while their "module" is being upgraded, and later move back.

Project co-ordinator Bonelewa Tubeni says the project started in 1995 when they surveyed families living in Lwandle.

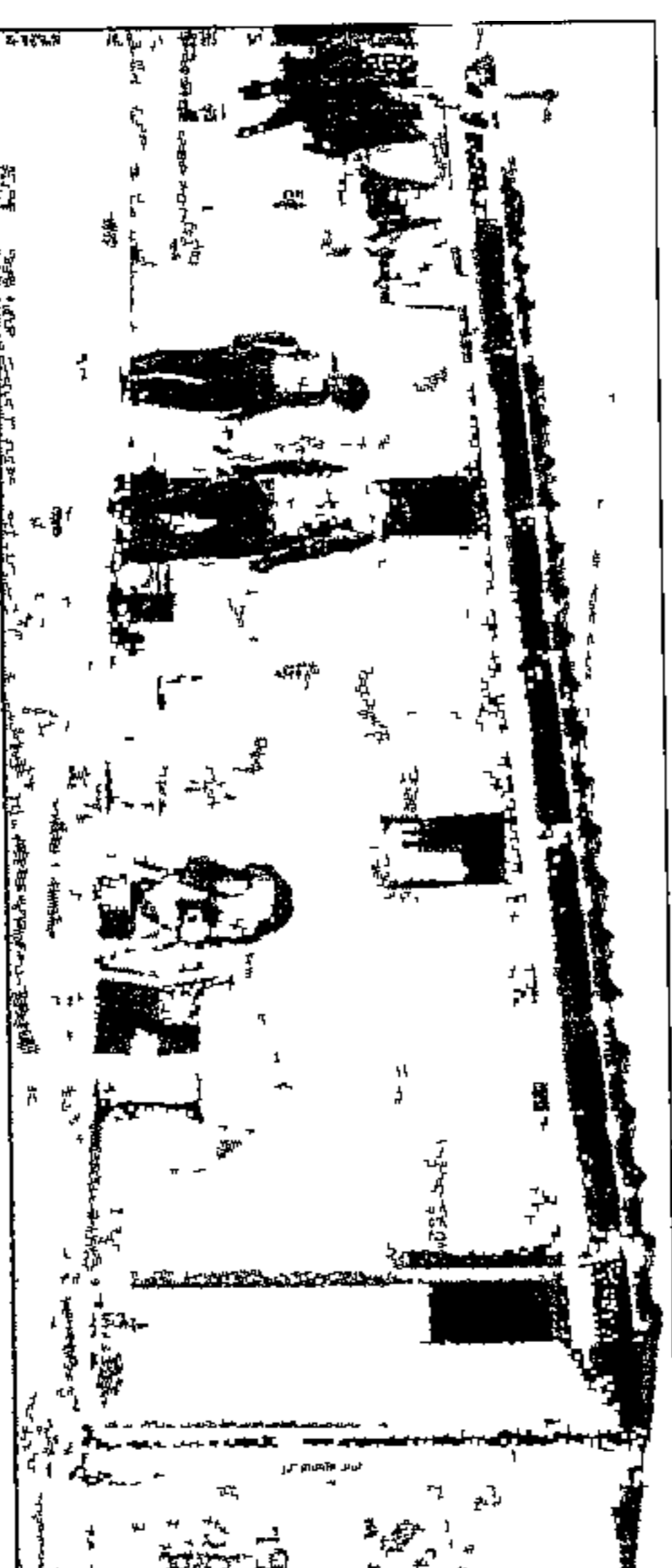
Families may only move into the new accommodation if they conform to the following criteria:

- Their rental payments must be up to date

- They must pay Eskom a R45 flat rate designed to bring down the community's electricity arrears bill, and pay for the electricity connection in their new home

- Residents can have a hostel place or a plot in the township, not both.

Hostel residents will pay rentals of about R11 a bed, easily calculated because the units are designed as F2s.



Cold comfort: one of the old communal ablution blocks which are being upgraded.

F3s, F4s or F6s, reflecting the size of families.

One of the old hostels will be retained in its original state as a museum.

Other changes at Lwandle include building separate houses in Lwandle for families who requested them

last year, an R850 000 library which opened in February, a new taxi rank and a fully-equipped gymnasium which is currently being built.

Ms Tubeni says they are now building separate houses in Lwandle for families who requested them



Old world: Mhoneleli Mukwelwa in the dark, stuffy hostel which is his home

FRUIT HILL

Thrilled



TEARS OF JOY: An ecstatic Jenny Syms embraces Chris Vietri, general manager of the Cape of Good Hope Bank, after hearing that she would finally own her home. **PICTURE: KIM LUDBROOK**

District 6 residents get ownership

CT 11/5/98 (124)

ERIC NTABAZALILA

A LANDMARK agreement, the first of its kind in South Africa between a bank and a civic association, was signed on Friday night between the Cape of Good Hope Bank and the District Six Civic Association

The agreement, termed the "Record of Understanding", will enable 45-odd families to own the houses they have been renting

The announcement this weekend was followed by a party at which hundreds of former and current District Six residents danced and cried tears of joy

For the first time they will own their own homes in the area

Their dreams have been realised by a loan of R1,3 million, which the Cape of Good Hope Bank advanced

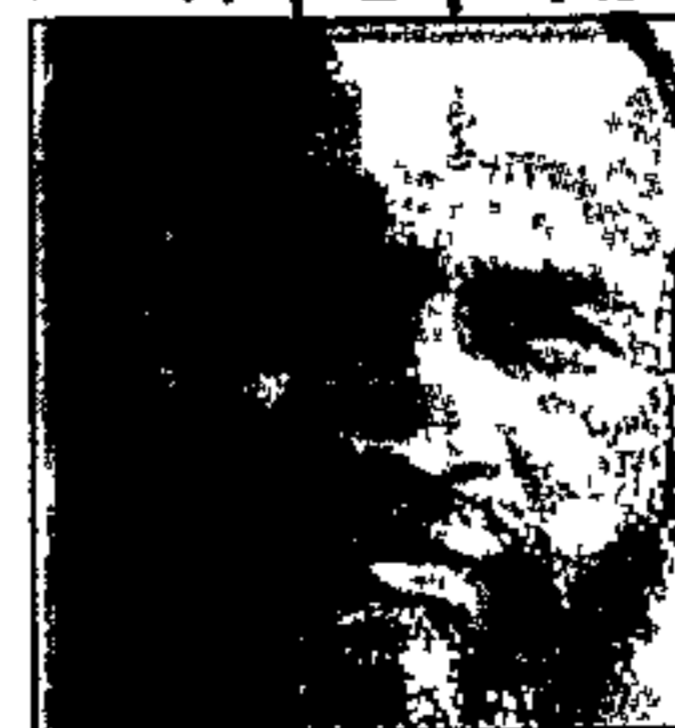
to purchase the properties

The terraced Victoria cottages in Osborne Street on the outskirts of District Six were not demolished during forced removals because the area was zoned for industrial use

The owner of the houses, Mr Sydney Schach, allowed the tenants to stay on at the time, but later changed his mind and decided to sell the houses.

A settlement of R1,3 million was reached as the price for the cottages

Mr Anwah Nagia, chairperson of the District Six Civic Association,



DELIGHTED: Anwah Nagia praised bank

for its belief in the community and for making it possible for them to buy "All the other financial institutions slammed doors in our faces without doing a thorough investigation into the communities and assuming a culture of non-payment existed "We are going

to warn our people against these institutions for red-lining certain communities as high risks Cape of Good Hope Bank must get all the praise and support for taking such a bold step "

The bank's managing director, Mr Mike Thompson, said his bank

had an affinity with District Six.

"Many of our first clients were residents of District Six, some of whose successive generations we still serve today "As a Cape bank, we see this initiative as totally appropriate in our community involvement programme and will extend it much further," he said.

He said the bank had worked out a package that meant the residents would be able to pay off a mortgage at about the same amount as their rent All residents have now acquired individual title to their homes

A valuation showed the condition and building quality of the houses to be good Significant roles were also played by attorneys and other friends of District Six at no cost to the residents

STCUM) 17/5/98 (124)

Herandien in bid to expedite housing

CHARLE DE VILLIERS

HOUSING MEC Cecil Herandien has met his local authority counterparts in a bid to unlock housing delivery in the Cape Metropole as "a matter of utmost urgency"

Herandien, having recently snubbed calls for a metropolitan housing summit because he was "tired of gripe sessions", has now agreed to convene a workshop aimed at drafting a detailed strategy on housing delivery, ministerial spokeswoman Surita Botes said on Friday

This follows a meeting with the directors of housing of the Cape Metropolitan Council and six metropolitan local councils on Monday and another on Friday between local authority and provincial officials.

"The minister has made it clear that the time for airing problems is over. Everybody is aware of the problems and now attention must be focused on obtaining solutions," Botes said

A date still has to be set for the workshop

CMC housing director Basil Davidson welcomed the initiative as a "critical opportunity" for the local and metropolitan authorities to work out a common strategy

The round of talks follows a recent land-grab by about 8 000 people in Tafel-sig, persistent complaints by local authorities that the province was not paying subsidies for approved housing projects and Herandien's own admission that the Cape metropole was seriously lagging behind in delivery

Most of the R345,6-million awarded to the Western Cape by the national Department of Housing this year was tied down in existing projects and not further housing development, Botes said

"The bulk of the province's housing needs, however, is in the metropole and therefore the issue of housing delivery needs to be addressed with the utmost urgency," she said

South Peninsula municipal housing director Hans Smit said there was only R60-million available for top structures in the Cape metropole this year

UCT's Urban Problems Research Unit (UPRU) estimates that about 450 000 households will be inadequately housed in the metropole by 2010

Referring to steps taken to speed up housing delivery, Davidson said. "We'll also be trying to clarify exactly what is the most appropriate system of delivery and get on with the production of housing in the metropole"

Innovative development schemes devised by Cape Town housing chief Billy Cobbet would also be looked at

Botes said it was important to identify new projects as soon as possible to get the process going, as it could take up to 30 months to move people into their new homes

It would also "strengthen the province's hand in negotiating more funds from the national department if it can prove the subsidy applications exceed the funds available", she added

UPRU spokesman Peter Wilkenson said the planned workshop would support efforts to "have housing directors thinking in a strategic and co-ordinated way"

Bid to end Old Crossroads bond crisis

Moses Mthethethu Makhay
Staff Reporter

AKT 19/15/198

(124)

In a bid to defuse the bond repayment crisis in Old Crossroads, a finance company has offered clients a deal under which their homes will be repaired and their loans rescheduled.

Residents have been refusing to repay their bonds because they say their homes are in poor condition.

Victor Mrhawu, a negotiator for Khayalethu Homeloans, said the company was inviting residents to come forward with their problems so they could be investigated by an independent assessor from the Council for Scientific and Industrial

Research (CSIR).

Clients would be visited in their homes so information could be collected.

Khayalethu Homeloans hoped to do repairs based on the results of the CSIR assessments.

Mr Mrhawu said the issue was not that Khayalethu Homeloans wanted to end the boycott but that it wished to address the problems of clients in Old Crossroads.

He said clients would have their loans rescheduled so they could repay the costs of the repairs, which would be done at discount.

He said Khayalethu Homeloans had 172 clients in Old Crossroads and some were not paying their bonds.

"I encourage them to come forward as others have done," Mr Mrhawu said.

There had been a history of problems with bond repayments since 1993, he said.

In 1996 agreement had been reached with the defaulting clients that the boycott of repayments would end.

But problems had not been completely resolved.

Mr Mrhawu said the company expected people to continue paying their installments while the properties were being assessed.

When the CSIR had done the assessments, repairs would be done and installments adjusted.

A joint task force made up of

Khayalethu Homeloans officials and community leaders would monitor the process.

Asked whether they had applied for a court order to evict defaulters, Mr Mrhawu said the company had set up the rules with the clients.

"It's up to them to follow the rules and people who don't will be penalised," he said.

Xoliswa Mbambo, a resident and convenor of Housing in Phase One, Old Crossroads, said: "People want to pay but cannot due to the appalling conditions. We also encourage residents to pay."

"But the banks should also improve the houses."

She said a number of families had been evicted in the past six months.

Cobbett quitting, but tackles new plan for city's poor

JERMAINE CRAIG

City Reporter

It's official: Cape Town housing director Billy Cobbett is going

After speculation over the future of the man entrusted with solving the city's housing crisis, city manager Andrew Boraine confirmed yesterday that Mr Cobbett was standing down at the end of the month and said his post would be advertised soon.

But Mr Cobbett might not be lost to the city entirely. "He could do some consulting

work for us even if he is based in England. I think in a few years' time he could be back, depending on his personal and family situation," said Mr Boraine.

Mr Cobbett's departure, coupled with the resignation of the municipality's executive director of institutional transformation, Nene Molefe, is a big blow to the city. Ms Molefe, who had been in the post for a year, resigned because she was unhappy with the progress of transformation.

Mr Cobbett received death threats from gangsters recently after reporting two coun-

cellors for allegedly trying to halt the eviction of people staying illegally in municipal houses in Mamelong.

In the wake of these threats, Mr Cobbett and his family left for Britain and it was feared he would not return. But he came back after three weeks, leaving his family behind, and vowed to complete his job of formulating a policy for the city's 40 000 homeless families.

Mr Cobbett's housing policy has been adopted by the council and he has also unveiled a model designed to provide bigger

and better houses for the poor, to teach people how to save and aim for 100% rates payment across the city.

Central to the project is a R5 000 top-up subsidy for each qualifying family in addition to the R17 250 Government housing subsidy. The municipality is to form a private company to drive the process.

Mr Boraine said Mr Cobbett was phasing out his work as housing director and was now looking solely at the establishment of the company and the legal and financial framework attached to it.

REG 21/5/98

(1A4)

Cobbett: 'I'm not quitting'

CT 22/5/98 (124)

PRISCILLA SINGH

"I'm not quitting," housing director Billy Cobbett told the *Cape Times* yesterday

Cobbett said there was only going to be a change in the status of his job "and nothing more" and emphatically denied reports that he was leaving

"I am not going anywhere, except to visit my wife and four children, who are living in England, later this year. And that will only be for a month and I will come back and continue with my work," Cobbett said

He said he will be relinquishing some of the delegated administrative authority as director of the housing department and will be released to work exclusively on making sure that housing delivery happens in Cape Town

Earlier yesterday, city manager



BACK ON THE JOB Billy Cobbett is ready to fast track delivery of houses

FILE PICTURE

Andrew Boraine said Cobbett has promised to fast track the delivery of houses in Cape Town

"He is stepping down as the head of the department — by mutual consent — and relinquishing some of his duties as

director of housing, such as administrative and staff matters, in order to focus on policy and implementation," Boraine said

Cobbett's priority, said Boraine, is to set key objectives in the establishment of a "special

purpose vehicle to build houses", a legal framework for it, a board and a chief executive officer

He added that the council would advertise for a new housing director very soon, and part of Cobbett's tasks included mentoring, training and a handover role

"He (Cobbett) is committed to getting the housing delivery vehicle under way as soon as possible," Boraine said

Cobbett said that one of the most pressing issues facing Cape Town is the structure of local government. He added that the delivery of new housing must be done on a metropolitan basis

"Cape Town cannot have six discreet housing management units working on delivery. That is why we need to have a single vehicle which will see housing vastly improved in the Cape in five years' time."

Bid to beat Cape housing crisis in danger - Cobbett

Alternative 'certain disaster'
ARLT 22/5/98
(124)

JERMAINE CRAIG
CITY REPORTER

Billy Cobbett, outgoing Cape Town Director of Housing, predicts doom and "certain disaster" unless the structure of local government changes and there is an integrated approach to housing.

Mr Cobbett is finalising a revolutionary new housing policy that many believe will become the model for the city and, possibly, the whole country.

According to a discussion document from the Cape Town Municipality's housing directorate, the present system could lead to continued "apartheid-style" inefficiencies, fragmentation of the city, racial polarisation and the continued provision of sub-standard housing or "new ghettos".

Mr Cobbett's policy, which has been adopted in principle by the municipality, has as its focal point a top-up subsidy of about R5 000 for each family qualifying for the R17 250 Government housing subsidy.

The municipality is to form a private company, known as a special purpose vehicle, to drive the process.

Its board will be nominated

by the municipality and the National Housing Finance Corporation, and will not include any politicians.

The municipality is negotiating with businesses, banks and other financial institutions to get prospective house-owners into savings schemes and to organise loans for them.

"The progress has been extremely good. Some of the financial institutions to which we have been talking are going back to their boards for decisions on their involvement," said Mr Cobbett yesterday.

The Cape Town Municipality is holding a preparatory workshop next Friday to discuss the rapid release of land for housing, which is a major stumbling block to housing delivery.

Mr Cobbett said the municipality was looking for a sustainable solution to the problem of dealing with the thousands of homeless families in the city, not for a "quick fix" solution.

He said that, if his model was successful, large-scale housing delivery would take about a year.

The housing directorate document criticises the geographical boundaries of the six metropolitan municipalities, saying

they don't make provision for housing and urban development.

The document says certain municipalities have an abundance of land for housing, but few homeless communities, while others, like Cape Town and Tygerberg, have little land and a huge demand for housing.

Major transport routes, such as the N2, which should be used to link development and social organisation, are used instead as political and administrative dividing lines.

The boundaries also make no provision for existing development projects, like the Integrated Serviced Land Project or the Wetton-Lansdowne corridor.

The document says housing professionals are being asked to operate in a manner "that is, at best, hopelessly inefficient and myopic and, at worst, unethical".

It says the existing system could still work, but that it would need an extremely high level of mutual trust, openness and co-operation among the six municipalities.

"Not only does that relationship not exist, it would be accurate to describe the current relationship in the opposite terms - mean-spirited, competitive, closed and hostile."

Billy Cobbett 'to stand down'

JERMAINE CRAIG
CITY REPORTER

The Cape Town Municipality today confirmed that its housing director, Billy Cobbett, is standing down.

But he will continue to work on a model designed by his department to alleviate the housing crisis.

City manager Andrew Boraine told the Cape Argus earlier this week that Mr Cob-

bett was phasing out his work as director of housing, but would continue to work on the institutional and financial aspects of the housing model.

Mr Cobbett declined to comment today.

Mr Cobbett is leaving for England tomorrow to visit his wife, Mary, and their four children, but will return to complete his work, a municipal official said.

ARG 22/5/98

(124)
See page 5

Rates hike on the

Cash-strapped Cape Town set to hit property owners with a

ST(CM) 24/6/98

(144)

TOM HOOD

cards

10 percent rise

RATEPAYERS in Cape Town will be hit by a 10 percent hike in municipal rates if the city council on Tuesday approves the budget for the city from July 1.

A draft operating budget, passed by the finance committee on Thursday, estimated a shortfall of R63,6-million, which needs a rates increase of 10 percent. A bigger hike was staved off by profits of R101-million from electricity and R14,5-million from water services.

In addition to rates, interim community charges for basic services may rise by 10 percent and cost between R16,50 and R33 a month.

Council house rents for over 15 000 tenants are likely to go up by 10 percent, while 16 800 buyers of council houses face a 10 percent hike in repayments.

Rent arrears stand at R30,7-million, with 68 percent

of tenants owing more than three months' rent. Nearly 60 percent of home buyers owe at least three months' instalments and arrears have risen to R37-million.

The city's total spending grew by 6,7 percent to R2,5-billion, of which salaries, wages and allowances took R931-million. Pay rises of only four percent were provided for, and any variation to this would have implications for staff levels and other spending, warned the director of corporate finance, Philip van Rynveld.

But the city could save millions of rands in interest over the next three years. Treasury officials pulled off a coup by negotiating three soft loans totalling R650-million, which will cost between 12 percent and 14,5 percent a year and can be used in the townships and other poor areas.

The council's capital budget exceeds R700-million a year and it needs to borrow R250-million a year to meet a shortfall on development costs.

Treasury officials obtained a R300-million three-year line of credit with the Development Bank of Southern Africa, a R200-million loan with Absa group and a R150-million loan with First National Bank. The Absa loan will cost under 12 percent and the FNB loan below nine percent.

Finance committee chairman Saleem Mowzer said that as a result of the loans the council would be able to go forward with a number of projects in the poorer areas.

"It has not been easy, but we are pleased we have been able to keep the rates increase at a level which will be acceptable to the broader Cape Town community."

There had been a fundamental shift in addressing the needs of the poor by upgrading libraries, community halls and clinics and other facilities, as well as upgrading sewage and drainage systems in informal areas. This would ease the flooding so prevalent in winter.

Forum plan to give simmering Crossroads back to the people

ABEL MPUTING
SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

(124)

ARG 26/5/98

Justice and prison officials, social workers, police and community peace workers have launched the Nyanga Safety Forum in a bid to defuse tension in Old Crossroads.

The forum aims to renew co-operation and trust between police, the criminal justice system and Crossroads residents.

The forum was set up at a meeting at Hlengisa High School in Nyanga last week.

Anger over small council houses has been part of an increasing cycle of violence in Old Crossroads which has led to several deaths, houses being torched and children staying away from school.

Many people are angry with councillors Melford Gwayi and Depoutch Elese about the size of the new houses which are between 16m² and 25m². They are also angry

with the police who, they say, are not putting a stop to the violence.

An elderly man, who asked not to be named, said. "I am a pensioner roaming the streets because my shack has been burnt.

"When I went to the police to open a case, a man named Robert, a former captain of Nyanga police station, said they would not go to Crossroads. We must fight for ourselves."

A homeless elderly woman, a member of the militant women's organisation Crossroads Women's Power, alleged that the councillors were behind the housing dispute and the violence.

Simon Mpembe, newly-appointed Nyanga police station commissioner, has said no one in the area is above the law.

"Anyone who is proved guilty of instigating violence has to be arrested with immediate effect, irrespective of his position in the community."

Director Mpembe appealed to residents to give police information about the instigators of violence.

"People should be prepared to be placed in a witness protection programme and ... if people came up with information, the forum could intervene and restore law and order in Old Crossroads and also make sure that suspects are denied bail."

Director Mpembe unveiled a two-month strategy to patrol the area 24 hours a day.

Police would be accompanied by an investigation team who would help speed up the prosecution of culprits.

He said he was not fond of making promises, but was optimistic that with people's co-operation, violence could be stamped out.

Mr Gwayi and Mr Elese, who failed to attend the launch of the forum, could not be reached for comment.

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THE BIGGEST RANGE IN TILES.

Spotlight is on our homeless people as city takes action

Seven mayors to lead initiative

ARG 26/5/98

Greater Cape Town's seven mayors are to serve on a high-profile committee as part of a new plan to tackle homelessness.

The Local Government Street People Committee, expected to be up and running by the end of June, is one of the strategies detailed in the Cape metropolitan area's first joint policy and action plan on homelessness.

The initiative is the result of 10 months of work by people involved with the homeless, driven by the Cape Metropolitan Council, and including the six metro local authorities, the University of Cape Town's Community Law Centre, non-government organisations, Child Welfare, the police, the Justice Department and the Department of Social Services.

Local authorities will consider the report next month, while a final report including further recommendations will be ready by August.

A spokesman for the Cape Town municipality said the report would be considered by the housing committee next month, and later go before the executive committee and full council.

Cape Town mayor Theresa Solomon pledged her support for the development of the policy document, and said society had to take responsibility for generating and implementing solutions for homelessness.

A committee spokesman said that, while local government did not have a social welfare role "It is acknowledged that local government can and must play a key role in addressing the challenge of street people in the Cape

SPECIAL REPORT



DI CAELERS

Metropolitan area. If this challenge is not met, the area's physical and social environment will deteriorate, and its potential to serve as an economic engine of growth and empowerment will be greatly compromised."

Isobel Edelstein, deputy metropolitan mayor and chairwoman of the task team behind the report, will present the findings to the Cape Chamber of Commerce and Industry today.

Among recommendations for local government are:

- Facilitating job creation;
- Providing basic needs,
- Ensuring that all by-laws – and their implementation – are consistent with the constitution and the realisation of socio-economic and human rights; and,
- Auditing the needs of street people and what action can be taken to support service providers.

The report also suggests the establishment of the Cape Metropolitan area Local Government Street People Committee to include mayors, a councillor and an official from each local authority, representatives of the province, the Community Law Centre or Human Rights Committee and non-government organisations.

Local authorities are encouraged to establish similar committees.

By the end of July, the main committee should have concluded an initial round of meetings with organised business and be in a position to advise organisations that work with street people on funding application procedures.

Statistics from last year, the latest available, show that non-governmental organisations provided 22 facilities for street children in greater Cape Town, three for street youths (between 18 and 25 years), 22 for street adults (older than 25) and one project for chronically mentally ill adults on the streets.

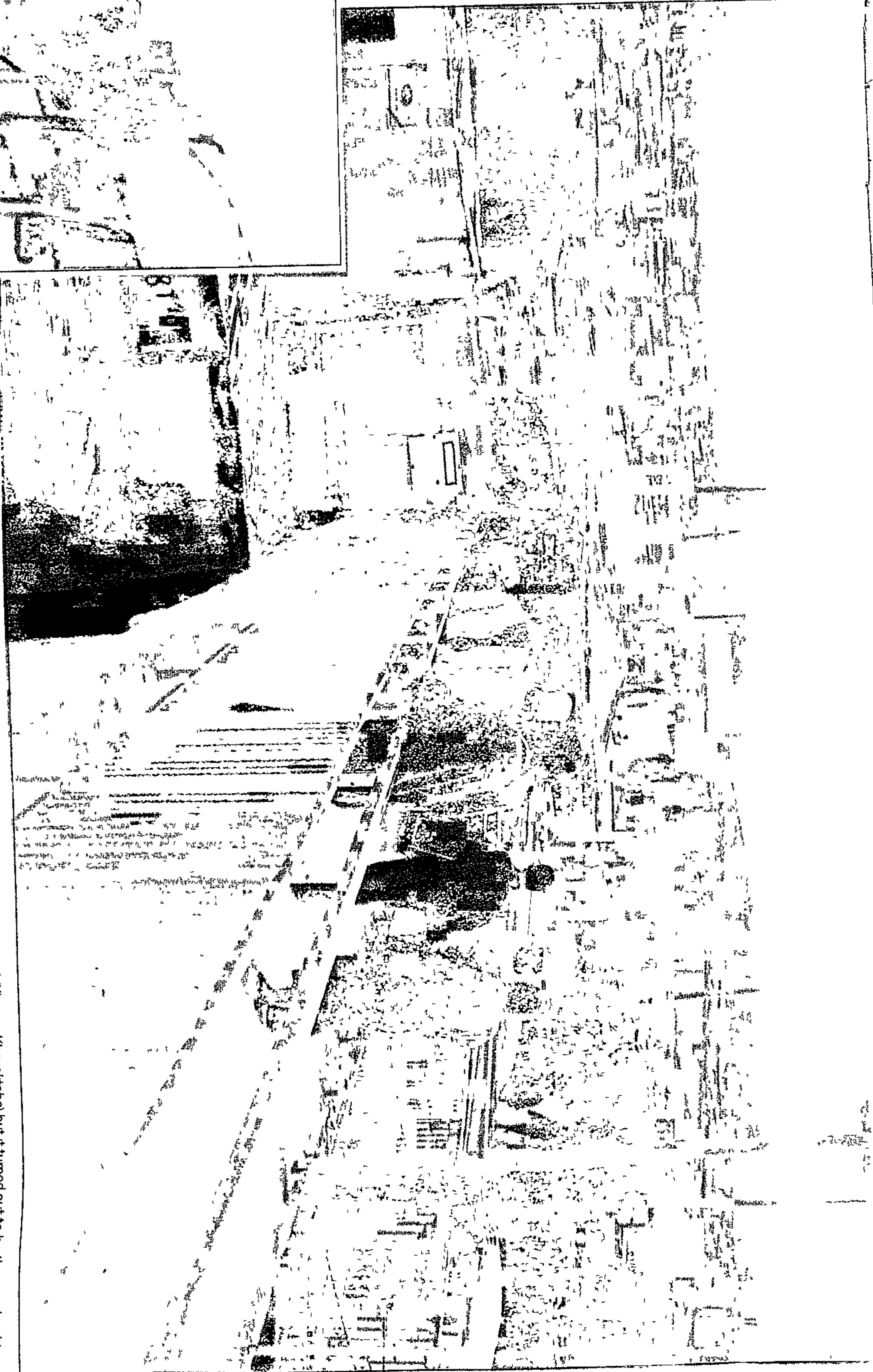
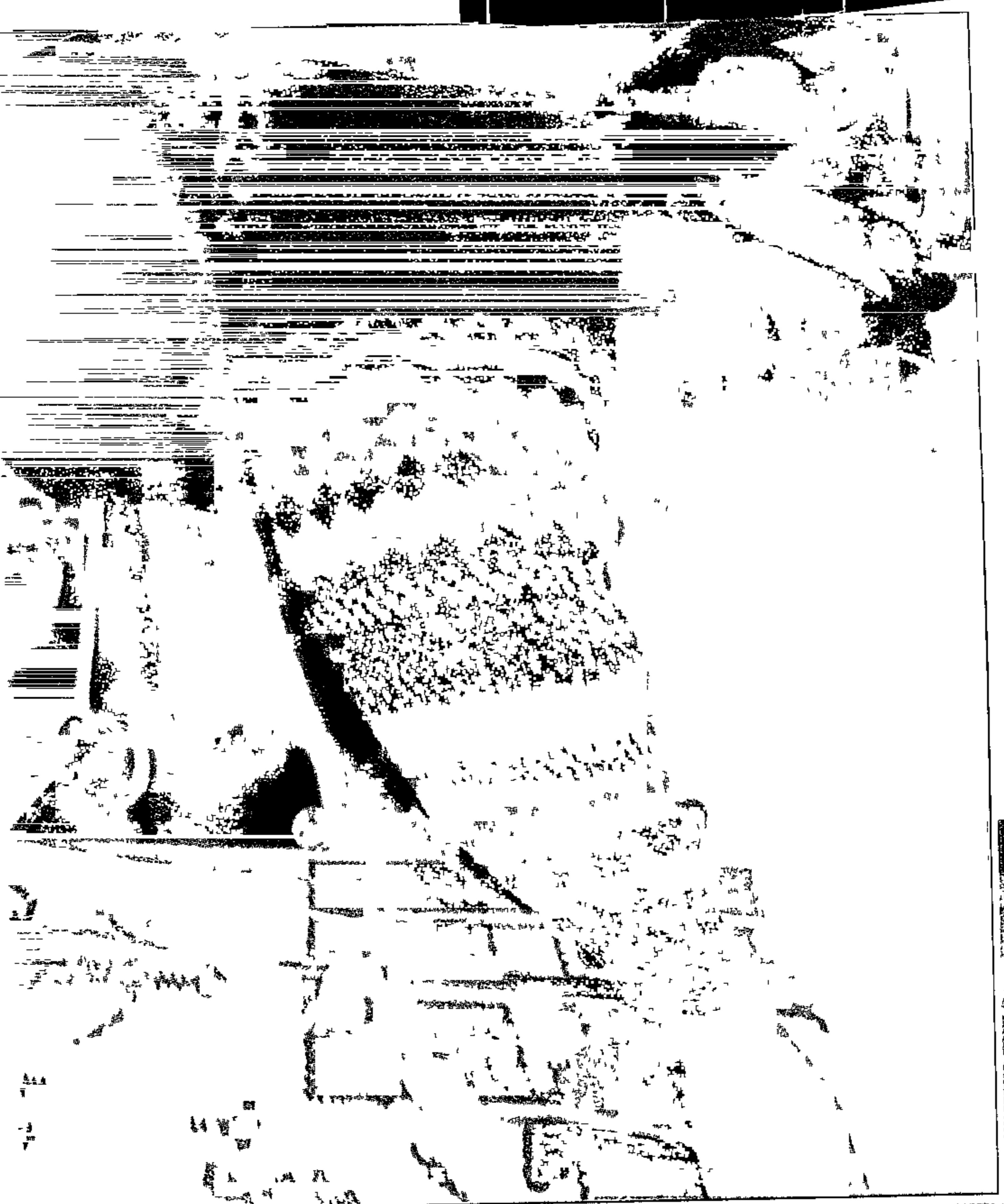
Only five full-time social service workers looked after the needs of about 900 street youths and adults in the Cape Town central business district, and another five worked specifically with street children.

There were not enough night shelters, only one day centre for adults, and no day centres for youths.

The report said the mission statement and recommendations gave local authorities and the CMC the chance to mobilise and co-ordinate activities and resources around street people.

Bathembu Lugulwana, task team co-ordinator and the CMC's head of social development, said "This is going to allow a more effective, co-ordinated approach to addressing homelessness. It will allow us to go out and seek partnerships with business and NGOs."

Khayelitsha may at last truly spell new home

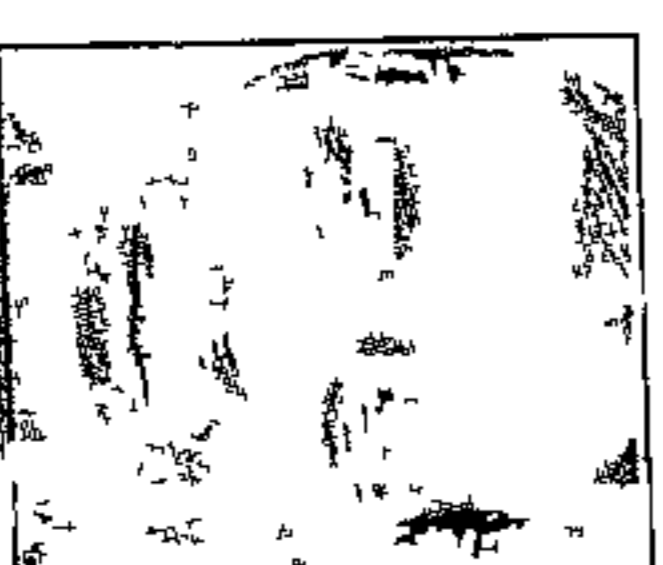


NOW IS THE TIME: Apartheid named the sprawling dormitory township on the False Bay coast 'New Home' (Xhosa: Khayelitsha) but it turned out to be the usual nightmare (top). Now, a development bridgehead may be at hand to capitalise on newly won freedoms. Left: Nobuntu Saki and son Popo, 16 months, get to grips with creating a durable carpet woven out of factory off-cuts at the Philani Centre

PICTURES: THEMINKOSI DWAYISA

KHAYELITSHA'S people are crammed together on the flattened sand dunes without a single bank, just one supermarket and an unwieldy, impractical transport system.

Trains run at 140% capacity, with passengers being forced to change lines at Bortchnewel or Mutual stations to get to work in Tygerberg. More expensive buses run equally circuitous routes, as do taxis, with an average journey to work



National Congress mayor of Khayelitsha and now deputy chair of the Tygerberg executive committee which runs the

IT CAN be a nightmare or a developer's dream, depending on whether the Metropolis can be convinced its very future is linked with the sprawling township. CHRIS BATEMAN reports.

(124) ET 27/5/98

the same period. Top 10 category crimes are those targeted by police as the most serious

energy — we have to redirect that energy and anger, channel it"
Town planning consultant Jacques



cannot suit their coastal doors at peak hours — they're crammed full of people. It's now been 14 years since the first "problem" Crossroads squatters were moved to the "New Home" (translation of Khayelitsha) in what the apartheid government saw as the answer to their racially-defined influx control problems.

When influx control was abolished in April 1986, a tide of humanity from the Transkei/Ciskei "homelands", estimated at up to 30 000 people per month, swept into the Peninsula, most of them settling in Khayelitsha.

Director of planning and economic development for the Tygerberg substructure, Shabhed Solomon, now warns bluntly "If Cape Town doesn't deal constructively with Khayelitsha, Khayelitsha will deal destructively with Cape Town."

The youth of the largest suburb in the metropole will "simply seek alternatives which may be difficult for many of us to accept".

Ask Vuyani Ngcuka, former African

In November last year, when it's predicted that up to the emotions of job-threatened Lindelethu West union members and refuse removers. A mob burst into Ngcuka's office and beat him senseless, landing him in hospital for two days.

He now says "People can be easily misled and if the efforts of the committed and proud people of Khayelitsha are not recognised and guided, we'll lose the battle."

"Once we lose Khayelitsha, it won't go down alone, the rest of the Metropole will follow," Ngcuka warns.

The violent crime statistics in Khayelitsha speak eloquently of the socio-economic conditions there and largely contribute to the Peninsula's nasty reputation internationally. An average of 22 people are murdered in Khayelitsha every month.

In the first three months of this year, 1 168 "top 10 category" crimes were committed, compared to 920 last year, 1 013 in 1996 and 939 in 1995 (all over

lives) increased as police gain trust and acceptance, the same cannot be said of armed robberies (virtually always reported). The first quarter of this year saw 124 armed robberies, 1997 saw 88 and 1996 saw 116.

With one policeman/woman per 1 379 residents, it's an uphill battle, which Tygerberg will have to address smartly to ensure outside investment.

As for Masakhane, service and rental arrears went from R68,91 million in April 1995 to R65,2m in April 1996 — after a write-off of R51,9m. Last April they stood at R81,12m and this April stand at R101,62m.

Payments went from R521 000 this January to R352 150 this April, while the 42 000 accounts sent out to serviced even (excluding squatter camps) gleaned R1,4m per month, according to Chris de Vries, senior income manager for Tygerberg.

Solomon says Khayelitsha is "like a time bomb, like a reservoir of enormous

"What we're seeing now, with the shackles per site in Site C, Khayelitsha, would spread willy nilly — people can only handle being underprivileged for so long before they take matters into their own hands." He says Khayelitsha would sprawl out towards Cape Town International Airport, making land occupations like the recent controversial Tafelsig invasion look tame as shacks sprout closer to where the jobs are.

"Bellville property prices would plummet and there'd be major sanitary problems," Theron adds.

Peter Tomalin, executive director of urbanisation and planning for the Cape Metropole, adds "If there's a disaster there, we'll all go down like a pack of cards." He says an estimated 80% of residents in urban black areas earn less than R850 per month.

"People need to wake up to that I mean just how much does a (leaky suburban) housewife spend at Pick'n Pay in a week?"

It sprawls with high-mast lighting, one sand dune, a shopping centre's billboards and the football stadium lights — the only landmarks to navigate by.

Yet there are other beacons in Khayelitsha — ones that point the way to what's possible in the unprecedented climate of political peace.

A guided tour by former mayor Vuyani Ngcuka revealed to me a township dramatically different from the one I grew to know through weekly reporting visits in the late 1980s.

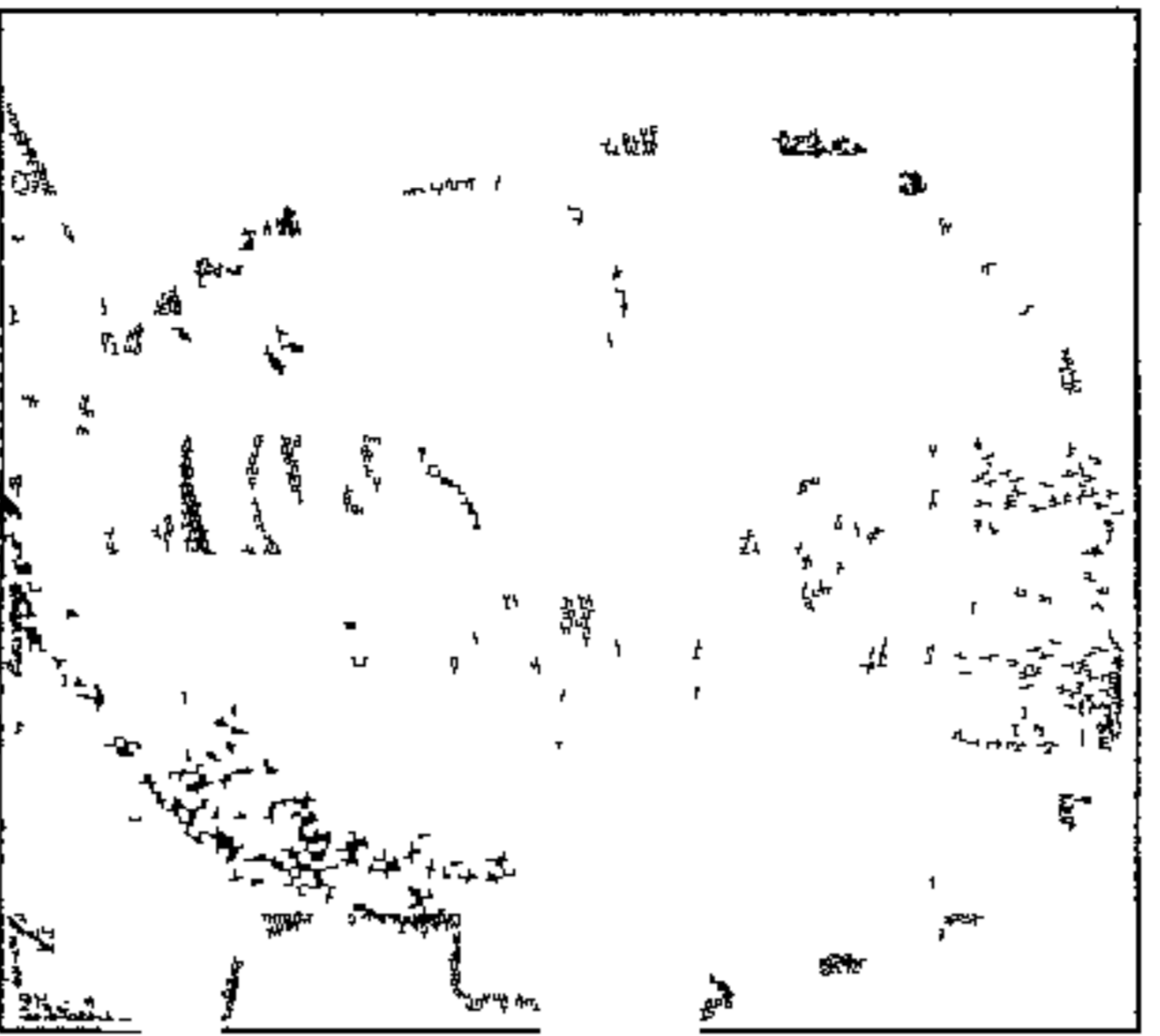
I and other reporters helped define Khayelitsha in readers' minds by reflecting the bloody taxi violence, intercommunal political assassinations, police "kagadagheid" and the stoning and burning of commercial vehicles.

Today creativity and innovation are what's endemic. The goodwill is palpable — an *mhungu* like myself hardly attracts a second glance.

Khayelitsha hums haphazardly, the "Jam Alley Inn", "nesting beside the One-Love Rasta fresh market", spaza shops everywhere, open-air meat sellers, makeshift repairs for anything from cars to electronics — it's vibrant, friendly and communal.

The "fight or flee" adrenalin which vaped neighbourhoods during the "struggle" years is gone — attention has turned to building.

Craig Baynham, a planning consultant and urban designer at the hub of creatively growing Khayelitsha, knows of R260 million in foreign and local fund-



BUZZING: Former mayor Vuyani Ngcuka shows off a now-vibrant township. The area needs investment, he says.

ing "just waiting to come in."

Yet the way in which Tygerberg releases land for tender, with community involvement and a "redistributive component", is creating a logjam. "There's a degree of vagueness as to how council will do this," Baynham says.

Ngcuka says "The solution lies in finding what's acceptable to the money-people and what's acceptable to the community. We have to develop new ground rules."

Planner Shabhed Solomon disagrees and says Tygerberg is developing one of the most pro-active land release strategies in the Metropole.

Investors' conferences are due within months with Monwabisi, the Khayelitsha CBD and the Swartklop Industrial area targeted for development.

Construction of a R26m magistrate's court begins in September, municipal offices are earmarked for construction early next year and today the council adjudicates on tender proposals to build 2 000 homes.

In nearby Lutha Park, the first 150 of 500 three-bedroomed homes have been sold at a modest price of between R60 000 and R100 000 each.

Quickest on the uptake have been teachers and other black professionals renting small flats in Rondebosch.

"They've made the pilgrimage back to the 'new home'."

Earthworks for a R7m sports centre in Site C are well-advanced. This will include shops, a garage, two tennis courts, a rugby/soccer field enclosed by a six-lane athletic track, two cricket pitches and two netball courts.

The Site C/Nolungle railway station development node is setting the pace with agreement reached on creating 8 000m² of commercial space, a library, a community health centre, a pre-school and local industrial park.

Here the council is building covered cement stalls for hire by a Section 21 company consisting of taxi owners and other entrepreneurs.

If Rondebosch flat-dwellers can invest their futures in Khayelitsha, private investment locally cannot be far behind.

"People can only handle being underprivileged for so long, before they take matters into their own hands."

— Consultant Jacques Theron

CREATING a workable, thriving suburb that generates business development and opportunities is the goal of Shabhed Solomon, director of Planning and Economic Development for the Tygerberg substructure.

His job is to pull together all the disparate non-governmental organisations, small businesses and public/private initiatives into a cohesive unit to breathe life into a community cut off from the mainstream of economic activity.

A veteran of 18 years' planning for the Cape Town City Council, Solomon's vision is of a thriving and dynamic city rising out of the dunes, a tourist haven with dance venues, restaurants and buzzing open air markets.

Solomon and a dedicated group plan to integrate Tygerberg's conservative northern population with Khayelitsha's dynamic young population in the south by creating a development corridor linking existing roads (Bongga Drive with Durban Road).

This north-south "economic lifeline" to Khayelitsha envisages the authorities selling up state land to finance road building and getting private developers to help finance development "nodes" along the route.

The jewel in the crown will be the R150-million first phase development at Cape Town International Airport which will turn 2 000ha of airport land into one of the province's major industrial and commercial centres.

This will create tens of thousands of



ENTREPRENEUR: Michael Miti buys pigs for "about R800" from Stellenbosch farmers, slaughters them and sells the meat at Nolungle station.

jobs over the next decade, by which time commercial air traffic will be disgorging 20 million passengers a year.

Other "mixed use" business hubs along the route, similar to Cape Town's Mann Road linking the southern suburbs, will include the Bellville CBD, the Bell Rail Transnet property, and the Eiseksraal River Valley all the way to Fisantekraal.

One of the most exciting projects

begins at the Monwabisi Coastal Resort — where development potential is huge around the existing tidal swimming pool, pavilion and leisure/cafe area.

"When you add all this up you have enough meat on the bone to get high density development and give Khayelitsha people direct access to the activity of the metropole," Solomon says.

He believes the major elements of the corridor can be in place within five years.

CT 27/5/98 (285) (124)

NOT a hint of fat or gravy and no room for employee salary increases. That's the city's new R3,2-billion budget that puts the poor first. And, although there is more to be done with this budget — which is less than last year's in real terms — ratepayers will not be asked to dig much deeper into their pockets

The 10% across the board rates increase that was approved by the Cape Town City Council yesterday is less than last year's 12,5% increase.

Rates and tax bills that average households receive after July 1 will be up by between 8% and 9%, while water and electricity charges will rise by 7% and 12% respectively

"We will have enough money for the essential priorities, which are to maintain services in the established areas while concentrating on essentials like housing, sanitation, water and infrastructure for the poor," said the city's financial director, Phillip van Ryneveld, in a pre-budget interview with the *Cape Times*

"There are tens of thousands of poor people who still do not have these basic facilities"

Council income will effectively be less than it was last year because of the lower rates increase and because all indicators point to a 25% cut in the national government subsidy that the city receives

Because this budget has not increased from last year, there is less money to do more with this year.

While existing services have to be maintained, over one-sixth (R56 million) of the new budget will go to low-cost housing and new water services

Shortfalls will be made up and development stimulated by keeping the tightest reign on spending and by making the most of revenue-generating opportunities, said Van Ryneveld

For example, significant changes to the traffic services will be made by making sure that transgressors are caught and fined so that the money can be channelled to upgrade and maintain traffic services

"We plan to make R20 solve 80% of the problems," said Van Ryneveld, playing on the popular 80/20 concept that describes how 80% of the population has always benefited from only 20% of the wealth

Another budget ploy to "do more with less" is to create jobs by attracting businesses into the council's domain with a far smaller increase in charges for electricity (3,5% to 6%) than domestic users

Costs have also been cut in this budget by a precedent-setting move that bases expenditure on the number of employees the council currently has

This is a break from the common practice by local authorities to include vacant posts in budgets in order to leave "room to move" or space to accommodate unforeseen costs and salary increases

"Any extras will have to come from cuts and possible restructuring," said Van Ryneveld

Executive Committee chairperson Nomandla Mfeketo



DOING MORE WITH LESS:
Nomandla Mfeketo

said outcries about the council being understaffed were outweighed by the need to run the most efficient council that did not pose unnecessary burdens/costs on ratepayers

"We must start a culture of a workforce being used to its maximum benefit

"The key thing for me is that this council is going to spend less than last year in real terms but, do more

"Doing more with less is what it is all about," said Mfeketo, whose operation was given the same A- credit ratings as organisations like the Natal Building Society, Boland Bank and Pick 'n Pay Stores

Being rated as such a good creditor and competitor with the private sector is an attribute all local authorities had to strive towards if local government was going to be successful, said Mfeketo

But she stressed that prudent, ingenious spending was not enough.

Instead of being concerned with council matters only as far as rates increases were concerned, Mfeketo sent a plea to ratepayers to become more active and interested in municipal affairs

She warned that local government would not reach people effectively unless they participated and put pressure on elected representatives to perform in key areas

NO RATES SHOCKS

City council's new budget rations gravy

THE CAPE TOWN CITY COUNCIL HAS opted to keep spending lean and mean by increasing rates a mere 10% across the board — a 2,5% drop from last year's rates hike — to spare ratepayers additional costs. **TROYE LUND** reports.

Rates up by 19% in the South

Stiff tariff rises

JERMAINE CRAIG
CITY REPORTER

ARG 28/5/98
(124)

Ratepayers in the South Peninsula Municipality have been hit by a shock 19% rates increase after the council's R471-million operating budget was passed today.

The council accepted a capital budget of R70-million.

The area's estimated 350 000 residents also face tariff increases, with electricity going up by 6% and rental stock going up by 12,5%

The rates increases were sharply criticised by various members, who pointed out that the increase was way above the Consumer Price Index of between 5% and 6,5%

In his budget speech, executive committee chairman Graham Lawrence said the council had been hit by major reductions in income - R72-million over four years - through the phasing out of subsidies.

Mr Lawrence said the situation was exacerbated by the fact that during the 1997/98 financial year the community received services to the value of R66-million more than would be charged for.

He said to compensate for the loss of income, the 19% rate increase was "absolutely imperative" Because of financial constraints many projects would have to be postponed or cancelled.

The increase came in for vehement criticism from opposition parties in the National Party-controlled council, with independent Grassy Park councillor Philip Bam slamming the increase as "discriminatory"

"Different rates are charged for in different areas. Even areas with the same valuations are charged different rates and it is no coincidence that it is the disadvantaged area that pays more. The grand plan of apartheid to keep us poor is still being perpetuated.

"This is blatant discrimination. This cannot be reasoned away by the lame excuse of inheriting different systems. If that is so, then why are you not arguing the same when it comes to salaries and car allowances of those officials who come from these various councils?"

"You see, I need to know what makes it right not to discriminate against a council official, but at the same time you propose that we discriminate against the ratepayer and residents," said Mr Bam

Court battle looms on 19% rates rise

Poor will suffer, council warned ARG 29/5/98
(124)

JERMAINE CRAIG
CITY REPORTER

Ratepayers in the South Peninsula are considering legal action to fight a shock 19% rates increase.

And the opposition and community representatives attacked councillors representing poor residents who had supported the rise

The chairman of the Lotus River, Ottery, Grassy Park Residents Association, Richard Arendse, said he believed residents had constitutional grounds to oppose the increase

"We believe we have no alternative but to resort to legal action," Mr Arendse said

In addition to the increase, which is more than three times the inflation rate of between 5% and 6,5%, ratepayers will have to fork out 6% more for electricity, 12% for water, 20% for refuse removal and sewerage and 12,5% for council house rents after the passing of the South Peninsula Municipality's budget yesterday

Cape Town passed a budget earlier this week with a 10% increase in rates

Mr Arendse criticised South Peninsula councillors who supported the increases even though they represented poor residents who would suffer because of it

The National Party, supported by the Democratic Party, used its majority in the council to pass the budget by 25 votes to seven

"I was absolutely shocked by the ease with which the 19% rates increase and the increase in rent went through," Mr Arendse said

"It is quite obvious that those councillors who voted for it have dissociated themselves from the poor people in their constituencies. I am disgusted with them in that they have now totally forgotten their roots and the people they are representing for the purpose of political expediency"

The association's Grassy Park councillor, Philip Bam, an executive committee member of the council, said there was already a problem of people not being able to afford their rates

The increase would make things worse, and the council would have to evict families from their homes because they could not keep up payments

He said councillors with poor constituents who supported the increases "had no conscience"

The United Democratic Movement's Alan Phillips acknowledged funding to the council had been cut, but questioned how it could condone R9 000-a-month car allowances for some of its senior officials while increasing rates

Hennie van Wyk of the African National Congress said the budget "further impoverishes poor communities"

"We reject this budget out of hand with the contempt it deserves, as it fails miserably to bring long-sought justice to our communities. We want to see a budget that offers relief to those impoverished by apartheid"

In his budget speech, executive committee chairman Graham Lawrence said the 19% rates increase was "absolutely imperative" to compensate for the loss of income through the phasing out of subsidies to the council, which amounted to R72-million over the past four years.

In spite of the rates increase, a R16-million cut in the operating budget would be needed, he said

COMPANY NEWS

KFC commits R162m to province's housing sector

(125) CT (MK) 29/5/98

SHIRLEY JONES

KWAZULU NATAL

Durban — The KwaZulu Finance Corporation (KFC) would inject about R162,8 million into the province's low-cost housing sector despite a crippling seven-year bond boycott that had cost the organisation dearly, Marius Spies, the executive director, said yesterday.

Spies said the decision to increase the KFC's loans volume by at least 30 percent followed the almost total resolution of the bond boycott. The boycott had affected about 10 percent of the KFC's loans book and had a negative effect on its financial performance for six years. About R80 million worth of outstanding loans would now be recovered.



DRIVEN Marius Spies sees the needs of low-cost housing sector

Homeowners in Sundumbili, Osizweni, Ezakheni, Edendale, Folweni and KwaNdengezi had already begun to repay their bonds. But in KwaDabeka, the KFC realised the chances of a settlement were remote. This left it with no alternative but to institute legal action.

Spies said the actual resolution of the bond boycott during the past financial year had cost the KFC R8,3 million in property valuations, professional fees, personnel costs and the rectification of structural defects.

The KFC also had to write-off of the prior years accrued interest.

A further R7,2 million had been budgeted for the 1998-99 financial year to wrap up this problem.

Residents stick with boycott as debt soars

Delft now owes municipality R35-m
(124)
ARG 2/6/98

NORMAN JOSEPH
CITY REPORTER

Rates, service charges and home loan repayments owed by Delft residents to the Tygerberg Municipality have risen by R7-million to more than R35-million in less than a year.

The municipality inherited the area's payment arrears of more than R27-million from the Cape Metropolitan Council last July, according to a council statement

This happened when some towns, such as Delft, which fell under the CMC, were incorporated into Tygerberg when local authorities were restructured.

At several mass meetings in the past week, hundreds of angry Delft residents living in Eindhoven, Rosendal, The Hague and Voorbrug said they were determined to carry on their with a six-year-long rates,

service charge and home loans payment boycott

Coloured residents claimed they were being discriminated against, saying black people's arrears accumulated before 1994 in towns such as Khayelitsha had been written off

Dave Wilken, Tygerberg chief executive officer, said there was nothing his council could do at this stage

Payments stopped in 1992 when the African National Congress went into intense protest action against the National Party government

Eindhoven Civic Association spokeswoman Patricia Michaels said about 80% of residents stopped paying their municipal accounts, and some were still not paying

She said people were demanding that all debts that accumulated before 1994 be scrapped

These sentiments were echoed by Rosendal residents Ruth Pasquali and Gadija Francis, who said the

community was very angry that the municipality had done nothing about the issue.

"Disabled and unemployed people who can't pay the huge amounts off in regular instalments are suffering the most," said Mrs Francis

Last week Delft NP councillor Gerhardus Ventura was held hostage briefly by angry residents at a meeting held to discuss the issue

People called on him to ask the municipality to stop issuing summonses against defaulters.

At a tense meeting between a delegation of Delft residents and municipal officials chaired by Mr Wilken on Thursday, it was resolved that payment arrangements for arrears accounts and the problems faced by unemployed people would be investigated, and that attorneys would stop issuing summonses until the end of the month while investigations were in progress

Boraine urges joint action on housing

(124) ARG 7/6/98

JERMAINE CRAIG
STAFF REPORTER

The delivery of housing is "doomed to failure" unless there is an integrated approach across municipal boundaries, warn Cape Town city manager Andrew Boraine.

"Poor people are in one part of the metro and available land is in another part, and we have got to connect the two," he told a housing workshop convened by the Cape Town municipality

"We need a common commitment to building a joint team to tackle this, otherwise we are not going to get anywhere"

He recommended that at the housing summit convened by the provincial housing department next week, an immediate

audit of available land in the province should be called for

A metropolis-wide waiting list for housing should be drawn up, and a uniform policy to deal with evictions and land invasion decided

He said there should be increased communication with communities about the housing process, and more communication with civic structures and non-governmental organisations

The chairwoman of the city council's executive committee, Nomandla Mfeketo, said that instead of using the housing crisis as a "political football" kicked around from one place to the next, those responsible for dealing with it must focus on the objective of delivering houses for the poor

"We need a mindshift and a will to

change. It is our responsibility as a province to see to it that we accommodate the poor. There needs to be a political will to provide shelter and land and not to use the provision of housing as a vehicle for political ideologies," Ms Mfeketo said

The Cape Town municipality could not deal with the housing problem on its own, and a metro-wide approach involving all six local authorities and the provincial housing department was needed

New legislation would make it very difficult to evict people who occupied municipal land illegally, and this would also have an impact on the delivery of housing

"The act is trying to create a balance between a humane approach to evicting people and not having people take advantage of the situation," Ms Mfeketo said



Person: Nomisa Heynhay, far right, wife of a taxi operator, and the remains of her house and speza shop in Nonzamo township



Metal fatiguer: the wreckage of a burnt bakke in a Lwandle street. Residents are angry about the lack of progress by police

Crossroads on edge as housing battle hots up

Council mounts probe of conflict as two die in row over development

ERMAINE CRANG
TV REPORTER

ensions are running high in Old Crossroads where violent political rivalry which has been simmering for six months is threatening to boil over.

The Cape Town Municipality today announced it was launching an urgent investigation into the conflict, parked by controversy over a housing development in the area.

Two people have been killed and many injured in the violence.

In the latest incident on Sunday, three people, including a seven-year-old boy, were shot and wounded and five shacks were burnt down.

The problems stem from allegations that houses in a 600-unit development are much smaller than promised and have been allocated unfairly. There are also allegations of nepotism and corruption against the African National Congress council-

lors for the area, Depoutch Eliese and Melford Gwayi.

Mr Eliese survived an assassination attempt on April 23 when his car came under fire. The same night two people were killed and two seriously injured when opposing factions in the feud opened fire on each other.

Mr Eliese said yesterday the attempt on his life was linked to the weekend shootings and conflict was being fanned by members of the Pan Africanist Congress and National

Party, who were trying to make the housing development a political issue.

Sources have alleged that former Crossroads warlords Johnson Nxobongwana and Jeffrey Nongwe are among those leading the protests.

Mr Eliese said a sit-in at the former Ikapa council offices by a group called Crossroads Women Power, which Mr Eliese says is backed by Mr Nxobongwana, had instigated the violence.

ANC provincial secretary Mcebisi Skwathsh said earlier that after being evicted from the council offices, Women's Power members had tried to stop the development and had tried to burn houses of key ANC figures.

Mr Eliese denied the charges of nepotism and corruption and said he welcomed the investigation.

Cape Town municipality spokeswoman Leonora de Souza said the council had approached the Independent Mediation Services of South

Africa to investigate the matter.

Public hearings would be held in an attempt to get to the bottom of the conflict.

"Over the past few months numerous allegations have been made against our ward councillors and by our ward councillors against various organisations. An independent inquiry has been instituted so that all parties making these allegations will be asked to substantiate them," Ms De Souza said.

Key housing summit starts in city

ARG 9/6/98 (124)

JERMAINE CRAIG
CITY REPORTER

Provincial Housing Minister Cecil Herandien took a tough line on housing officials today when he opened a key summit on the housing crisis in Cape Town.

More than 200 000 Western Cape families are in dire need of housing, he said, and if officials entrusted with providing shelter for them did not

have their interests at heart, they must "disappear"

He was addressing senior housing officials from local councils

Mr Herandien said it was time to look the problem "squarely in the eyes" and deal with it

"I want clear cut-and-dried recommendations which I will put to the province's standing committee on housing and they are free to put them to the people"

Mr Herandien said two main issues should emerge from the summit an integrated metropole-wide waiting list and a land identification process in which local councils without land for housing sold off prime land to raise money to subsidise low-cost housing

Mr Herandien said there needed to be "neighbourliness" among councils to help one another other with innovative ways to get rid of the backlog

Probe to unravel Crossroads conflict

(124)
ET 9/6/98

STAFF WRITERS

WHEN differences between Crossroads factions erupted in battles and bloodshed early this year, fingers were pointed in all directions

But the City of Cape Town hopes to bring all this to an end with an independent investigation, beginning today, into the allegations.

Six people have been killed, more than 30 injured and more than 100 shanties razed in the past six weeks

At the weekend, three people were wounded in a gun battle and five shacks razed by fire

Crossroads sources, including Depoutche Else, one of the two Cape Town councillors representing the area, believe that individuals who collaborated with the state to foment violence in the area in 1986 are behind the incidents

On the surface, the ructions stem from a council housing project of about 600 units

One camp, led by Crossroads Women's Power, says residents were not consulted adequately and the houses are too small. The other supports the ANC councillors. It says there was sufficient consultation and that any formal housing is better than informal homes.

Crossroads Women's Power is a coalition of disaffected ANC members and Pan Africanist Congress, United Democratic Movement, National Party and Inkatha Freedom Party supporters. It is said to have close connections with the warlords.

Else said the city council had asked the police and army to stabilise conditions. It had also appealed to the Mitchells Plain chief prosecutor to ensure that the instigators, if brought to court, would not be given bail.

Else feared that the motivation for the violence had nothing to do with housing and everything to do with the 1999 election. "They want to intimidate people into not voting and want to (portray) the ANC-led government as unable to govern effectively."

Other sources speculated that the violence introduced the element of *swartgevaar*, which was effective in luring coloured and white voters to the NP.

"It seems to me there are politics involved, but you can just call it a faction fight," said Nyanga police Inspector Edward Nogwaza.

He is investigating more than 40 cases of murder, attempted murder and arson in Crossroads. Police have made 14 arrests.

Else survived being shot at in April. He was then accused by Crossroads Women's Power of nepotism and mismanaging funds.

Crossroads Women's Power staged a longed sit-in at the Ikapa council offices early this year. It has been accused of trying to burn down political rivals' homes.

Cape Town's investigation will be led by an independent group and will concentrate on the allegations exchanged by the groups and councillors — not the violence.

"That is the duty of the police," said the city's public affairs manager, Leonora de Souza.

The investigation's terms of reference are to be made available today and a date set for public hearings.

"The council takes these allegations seriously," De Souza said.

"We would be derelict in our duties if we did not investigate them."

"All parties will be asked to substantiate their allegations and we will call on members of the public to give evidence. We are determined to get to the bottom of this."



Three's company: provincial Housing Minister Cecil Herandien, left, with Rose Sonto and Cameron Dugmore of the ANC at yesterday's housing summit

OBED ZILWA

Joint strategy bid at housing summit

JERMAINE CRAIG
City Reporter

Provincial Housing Minister Cecil Herandien's call on councils to "face the cold facts" of the housing crisis and deliver seems to have been heeded with officials apparently realising the need for a joint strategy.

Senior housing officials from all six local councils, the Cape Metropolitan Council and the provincial government attended a sum-

ARG 16/6/98

(124)

mit convened by Mr Herandien yesterday CMC and Cape Town councillor Brian Watkyns, who was delegated by the meeting to report back on the closed meeting, said five key issues were discussed

There was consensus for a rapid land release programme, but concerns were raised about the pooling and prioritisation of land and allocation procedures

Everyone at the summit agreed that a housing "delivery vehicle" had to be put in place. Participants also called for a metro-

politan subsidy and increased subsidies from national and provincial governments

There was agreement that there should be a unified approach to providing houses for the poorest of the poor. First Agreement could not be reached on Mr Herandien's call for a single metropolitan-wide housing waiting list or on the future of the individual councils' existing waiting lists

Mr Herandien said he would take the recommendations to the standing committee on housing in the province

Campaign to boycott rates hike

ST(CM) 14/6/98

(124)

CHARL DE VILLIERS

THE cash-strapped South Peninsula Municipality has been threatened with a rates boycott if it presses ahead with plans to tax ratepayers by an extra 19 percent

The South Peninsula Municipality Development Forum says the community backlash will be held off till Wednesday, when the council is to decide on an implementation date

"The decision of that meeting will determine our reaction," fo-

rum chairman Vernon Seymour said yesterday "We have a clear mandate to withhold increased payments and court action may also follow"

According to the municipality's chief executive officer, Jan Koekemoer, drastic metropolitan subsidy cuts have left his council no option

"We have met the development forum twice and have explained the full budget to its members They simply don't want to accept that subsidies are being cut"

The municipality had increased its operating budget by

just over one percent because R37-million was to be shaved off its budget in two years

"Our rates base is R165-million What can you expect? All Cape Metropolitan Council subsidies, a total of about R72-million, have to disappear within four years," Koekemoer said

The council had been told in April that the provincial administration, under instructions from the national Department of Finance, would no longer be paying it a R12-million allocation"

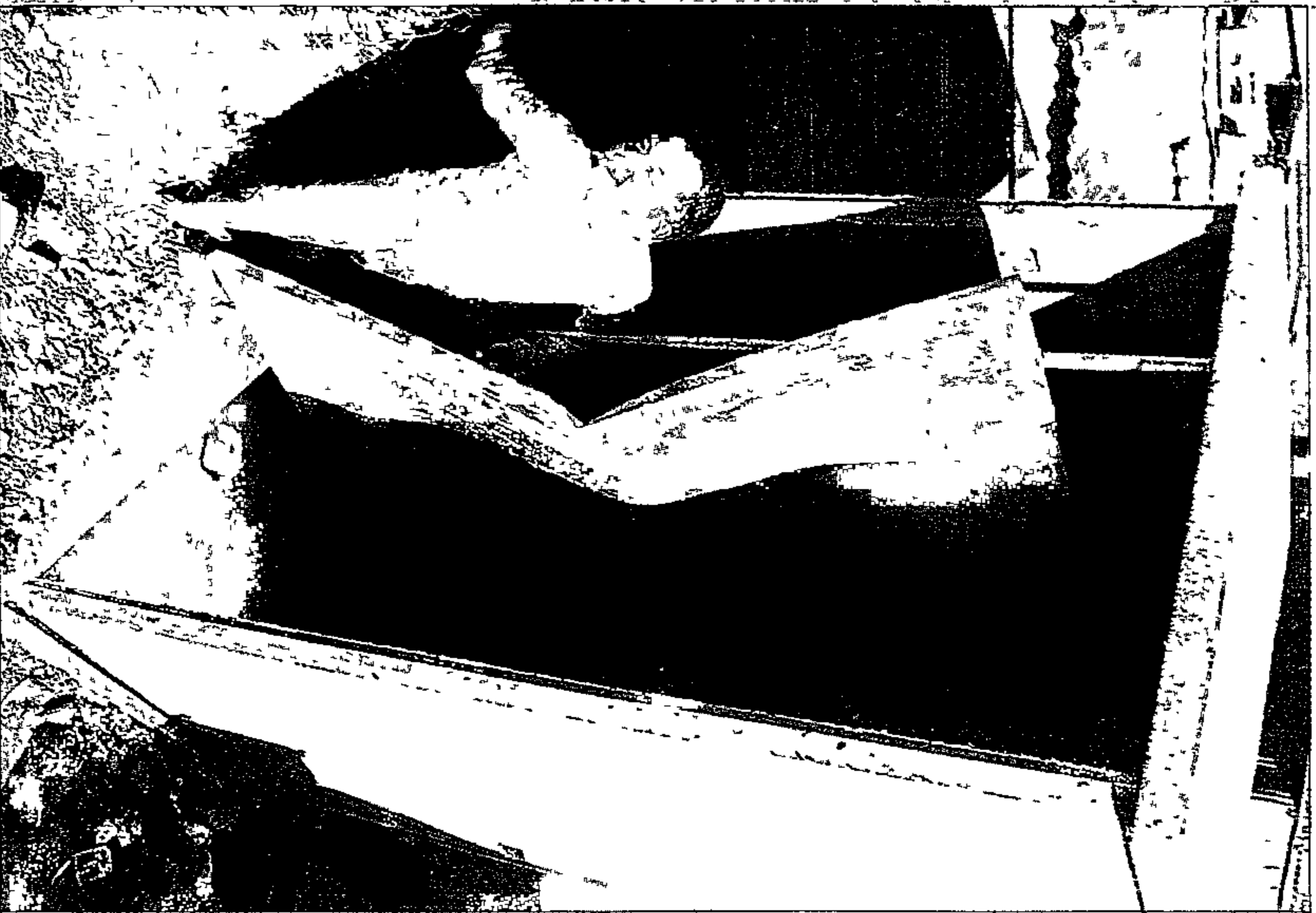
Seymour said at least 14 civics, community organisations and RDP forums in the area support-

ed a campaign to stop the council's going ahead with the proposed increases announced last month

Rates are set to go up by 19 percent, rents 12,5 percent, water 12 percent, electricity six percent and refuse removal and sewage 20 percent

Seymour said the groups would demonstrate at the council's Tokai offices on Wednesday and hoped to come to an agreement

Failing this, the campaign would seek an interdict preventing implementation of the new rates and taxes



Rejected: a girl plays in one of the damaged bucket toilets at Brown's Farm

MANDLA MINYAKAMA

New bucket system 'will cause a stink'

Angry squatters trash toilets

MANDLA MINYAKAMA
SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

(124) (307) AREG 16/6/98

Angry shack residents at Brown's Farm have demolished 36 bucket toilets installed by the Cape Town Municipality.

The toilets were provided in Section One last month as part of a basic sanitation programme for the city's informal settlements.

Residents claimed acceptance of a bucket system would delay development of their area and condemn it to squatter camp status for ever.

Some criticised the system as unhygienic and said it could make children sick.

Others said the action against the toilets was taken because there had been no consultation and if there had been, the community would have rejected the bucket system from the start.

Mabala Ngqayi said that while he still had his own long-drop toilet, he did not need a bucket one which, he claimed, was not as hygienic as the long-drop.

"It will be easy for me to dig another hole to build a new one when the present one is full up. I dislike this bucket system. It will stink and bring us diseases because no one will look after the buckets when they are full."

"Passers-by could also force their way in and use the lavatories at night and children will mess in them."

"The Government must come right and give us proper flush toilets."

"We have been expecting something better than this. We've lived in these squalid conditions for a long time without any development while there have been many promises," said Mr Ngqayi.

Nozipho Myengeni said she expected a flush toilet after local leaders promised to move people to land with all basic services.

"How can they bring us toilets while we don't even have water here? We walk long distances to bother Philippi West residents for water," said Mrs Myengeni.

Thabo Memani of the greater Philippi reconstruction and development programme committee said

they criticised residents for damaging the toilets and were trying to resolve the situation.

"We will try to get things back to normal through a new project committee which will deal with matters such as development in that community," said Mr Memani.

Cape Town Municipality spokeswoman Leonora de Souza described the trashing of the toilets as "irresponsible and criminal" and said the council was investigating.

"The programme is continuing in other areas and we will repair the damaged toilets."

She said the Brown's Farm community should realise the incident had financial implications.

"If one of the shack dwellers was unhappy about the service, there were various channels they could have used."

"This damaging of council property is criminal and we reserve our right to lay charges against those causing damage. This programme was meant to uplift squatter communities around the city."

RATES HIKE OUTRAGE

in open revolt

(124) CT 17/6/98

HUNDREDS OF ANGRY RATEPAYERS will mass outside South Peninsula council chambers today where the 19% across the board rates hike will be challenged. Metro Editor **CLAUDIA CAVANAGH** reports.



FACING threats of a rates boycott and possible High Court action, the full South Peninsula council will meet community representatives today to hear objections and thrash out a solution to a mounting rates crisis

"We have a mandate from our members to withhold all the rates increases in a holding trust account until the matter is resolved," said Vernon Seymour chairperson of the South Peninsula Development forum yesterday

The forum represents RDP forums, civic and ratepayer associations from throughout the municipal area

"Then, if need be, we'll apply to the High Court for an interdict to prevent the implementation of the rates increase. There has been no move to bring equity to the rates system in the South, where the old apartheid system has been carried over"

By Friday, 514 individual ratepayers, 14 ratepayer organisations, four churches, two RDP forums and 42 body corporates had lodged objections. A 2 536 signature petition was also handed in

"This is unprecedented," said Lotus River, Ottery and Grassy Park Residents' Association councillor Philip Bam

"I don't think any municipality in the country has been confronted by such an overwhelming flood of objections"

By late yesterday, all indications were that the objections would not be upheld

"In his recommendation to the council the chief executive officer admits that the increase will result in hardship, but says it's unavoidable. I think this is an incredibly callous standpoint," said Bam

Ratepayers say

● They simply cannot afford the

increase. People who are already struggling will become even poorer while retrenched and old people fear they'll lose their properties as a result. And since the central government has asked all local authorities to submit affordable budgets, the Department of Finance and the province may well reject South Peninsula's efforts

● The increase is discriminatory — those in Bergvliet say they pay far higher rates than people living in Simon's Town, Grassy Park, Zeekoivlei, Lotus River and Constantia have the same value base, but all pay different rates. Grassy Park ratepayers get no rebate on residential property while in Simon's Town and Fish Hoek they do

● Services offered by the municipality are poor in some areas and declining in others

● The municipality did not consult those affected

● Possible legal action by the municipality against rates and rent defaulters will impact harshly on the poor and lead to increased social problems

South Peninsula municipality's exco chairperson Graham Lawrence spent yesterday ploughing through "a pile of objections the size of a telephone book".

"With talk of a boycott on the cards, we have to take this seriously but would simply be robbing Peter to pay Paul if we dropped the proposed 19% increase. We cannot budget for a deficit so our only other choice is to look at bulk retrenchments

"It's a *Catch 22* situation. The only way to bring the rates down is to increase the revenue base or reduce what we spend on services and staff. If we reduce staff the ser-

vices we offer will be affected adversely. And mass retrenchments are expensive"

It costs around R1,2 million to retrench a senior or middle management staff member. One retrenchment would translate to a rates hike of one percent, he said

Lawrence said today's council meeting was being held to hear the public's objections. "Whatever they say will influence our decision, but there's no way we'll be able to find a solution in one day"

South Peninsula chief executive officer Jan Koekemoer says ratepayers simply don't realise how seriously the municipality has been affected by a R72m reduction in subsidies to be phased in over four years

In the past two years alone this created a R27m shortfall. This year's R15m shortfall simply pushed the municipality "over the edge"

"Although we're taking the objections seriously, I wouldn't call it a crisis when

compared with the 200% hike in Sandton and Durban's 40% increase two years in a row

"In the South we have an active community — which is good — and we therefore expected a reaction to the increase

"In the long term we have to manage ourselves out of this situation. But at

least we're honest with our ratepayers. Those municipalities that are not will really be in trouble"

Real equity will come when the municipality has a new general valuation in place, says Koekemoer

The municipality hopes to have it up and running by July 1 next year

● A separate rates debate has residents in Cape Town up in arms. While the City of Cape Town claims the new site-based valuation will bring fairness to an inequitable system, some residents fear they could be facing rates hikes of up to 3 000%.

● For a full report see *Insight* on Page 15

There has been no move to bring equity to the rates system

Ratepayers

THE title of the SABC3 programme *You don't know Dick* turned out to be more suggestive than its seriousness initially. It tackled with flair and good taste the plight of men trapped in women's bodies (that doesn't sound quite proper, either) and how they are now coping after undergoing sex changes. Usually it is the other way round, with men becoming women. The physical operation involves excision rather than reconstruction. But why am I being euphemistic? Very soon in the programme one of the jollier recently-become lads (closer to middle-age, actually) confesses: "I had all

those feelings, just like a guy. Well, once Michael... (we were spared the more gruesome details) it were fulfilled. "My sex drive has become urgent now," he confessed. Loren, another man, even sported a wife, Isabella, who quickly announced: "I'm a relationship with Loren before she had been facted to Loren's butchness as a woman to be even more mas-

The same applied to Max and Kyle, when Max was still Anita. "I was attracted to Anita many years ago," said Kyle, "but I realised I wasn't gay." Conveniently Anita/Max solved her problem. But back to the extrovert Michael, whose mom was still the only permanent woman in his life. Talking about the reconstructive preferences he voiced to his surgeon, he recalled "I said I wanted a big dick and he said 'Michael, every guy wants a big dick. Just join the club'". One of the benefits of spending the first half of your life as one sex, and then switching to the other, is that you gain

an understanding of being two pigeons, one in your chest and doing a

Rating the

THE last time the City of Cape Town tried to introduce fairness to its old and unfair rating system, rich residents facing steep increases derailed the procedure in court. That was in 1994. Then in July last year the city embarked on a massive project revaluing all 214 000 properties in the municipality. Some were last valued in 1974, other areas have not been valued at all. Previously owners were taxed according to the value of the land and its buildings. The new system focuses only on the site value, and once again, has residents in wealthy areas threatening to "throw a spoke in the wheel". Metro Editor CLAUDIA CAVANAGH looks at both sides of the problem that will affect every home-owner in the Metropole.

RESIDENTS in Cape Town's wealthier suburbs like Camps Bay and Bishopscourt will not be discriminated against by the city's new site valuation system — and are definitely not facing a rates hike of 3 000% as has been claimed. So says the city's valuation co-ordinator Mike Parker.

The subject of much hot debate at residents' association meetings and in the press, the new system is designed to correct the currently unfair system based on the value of the house and not the property it's built on.

"While building costs only increase in relation to the inflation rate, land value escalates with the market," explained Parker. As the last general valuation for areas that fall into the old City of Cape Town was carried out 20 years ago, properties along the Atlantic seaboard, for instance, have rocketed in value while the owners continue to pay rates on building values that are simply inflation linked.

Home-owners in Mitchells Plain pay rates linked to the buildings as well, but the value of their land has increased far less.

"So in the past, the poorer areas have paid more than they should while the rich have been on a type of rates holiday, not paying taxes according to the real value of their property," said Parker.

"These are the home-owners who now want the best of both worlds."

"In Rylands, an area that was racially segregated during the apartheid years, people, by necessity, have over-capitalised on their

properties. Under the current system, which values improvements on the site, these people are paying rates that are equivalent if not more than those in Camps Bay with incredibly valuable property.

"They're victims of apartheid who under normal circumstances would have used their money to buy houses in better areas."

For example, a R2,8-million Clifton householder pays R366 a month in rates — almost the same as paid by the owner of a R180 000 house in Grassy Park.

"This is really the only fair way of going about it. Everyone transacts according to market value these days."

In addition, says Parker, larger properties which abound in wealthier areas are less efficient and more expensive to service.

If the wealthy residents of Cape Town succeed in derailing the new rating system, only the rich will benefit.

"The reality is that they must pay more rates," said Parker.

That wealthier land-owners can expect rates increases of 3 000% is "pure myth".

"They're assuming that if the value of their property has increased by 3 000% from 1979 to now — which is not impossible — that their rates will increase accordingly."

"Once the valuation is done we'll probably drop the cent in the rand rate so they'll be paying, say 1c in the rand instead of 8c."

"This is not a means for the city to make more money — our income is tied by the government — but just a fair way of rating the city."

TELELETTERS

Innocent Ntanjana, Khayelitsha. Regarding the match between Bafana Bafana and France, I pointed to hear SA player Jerry Sikhosana not allowed to air their complaints about the way they used to perform. If the players perform the way they used to and go back to their own brand of African play they can show the world what they can do. South Africa has good soccer players but the problem is selection. Players are not performing the way they should and are scared to talk out against their coaches to play their normal game which is the African Cup of Nations.



Superintendent Holtzhausen said 90% of information to the police. The bottom of the old baggage is still in the police community will not trust them.

Case, Bellville South: The noose is being tightened on lenders with banks increasing their lending rates, but what about the people on the gravy train? When will the government officials tighten their own belts and pay more attention to the man in the street?

W Boltman, Blue Downs: Referring to the axing of South African Airways' senior managers, it is high time SAA started a positive affirmative action programme. Their services have been decreasing and disadvantaged people only used in lower-bracket jobs.



Ershwartz, Claremont: Crimes such as robbery, rape and murder will only be dealt with properly when the authorities in the Justice Department pull them together and formulate new laws for judges, magistrates and the courts. When people are caught stealing and getting lengthy jail sentences while dangerous gangsters and criminals get away with light sentences and sometimes only a fine. There are too many holes in our justice system and this needs to be plugged immediately.

Closing Valkenberg

I AM disturbed by the intended closure of Valkenberg Hospital (June 15). The concept of community-based, outpatient assistance for mentally ill patients is a good one, as is the intention to treat people before their illness progresses to such a degree that they need to be taken to hospital. But closing an existing hospital that provides a much-needed service makes absolutely no sense.

Before the 1994 elections, the present government maintained that they would focus on improving health care and education, among other things. While some improvements have been attempted, and some achieved, it seems to me that the general situation in these areas is far worse. I cannot respect the reasoning that the health budget cannot support the hospital when so much mismanagement of funds and many investments in dubious projects has taken place.

It seems that the ANC does not welcome criticism, especially from whites, and here I must agree with the point made by P N Malherbe (Letters, June 15). A true democracy encourages people to think for themselves and to develop personal integrity.

ANN FIELDING
PLUMSTEAD

Human life seems to have no value at all

I MUST express my absolute horror at the fact that the brutal St James murderers have been granted amnesty. These people committed an act which was barbaric and premeditated on innocent victims who had posed no threat to them whatsoever. The worst part is that the perpetrators have no remorse whatsoever. How can we believe in a justice system which seems so unjust?

With regard to the killings taking place in Athlone, Manenberg, Woodstock and Salt River, which happen to be predominantly coloured areas, I can only say this is definitely the work of a third force. I do not understand how our government can sit back and allow this to happen when a full-scale inquiry could be instituted, especially with the sophisticated methods we have of interrogation and investigation.

How many more innocent people have to die before someone is going to take note? Is it because these killings are happening in coloured areas? I do not for one instant believe that all these murders are drug or gang-related — it just cannot be.

How can we believe in human dignity and talk about values when we seem to be living a lie? What type of society are we busy building? Do we see a future in this country where human life has no value whatsoever?

I firmly believe we have to bring back the death penalty.



KEEP THIS FACILITY OPEN: Although community-based services are a good idea, closing Valkenberg Hospital makes no sense. Too much needed service makes no sense. Too much needed service makes no sense. Too much needed service makes no sense.

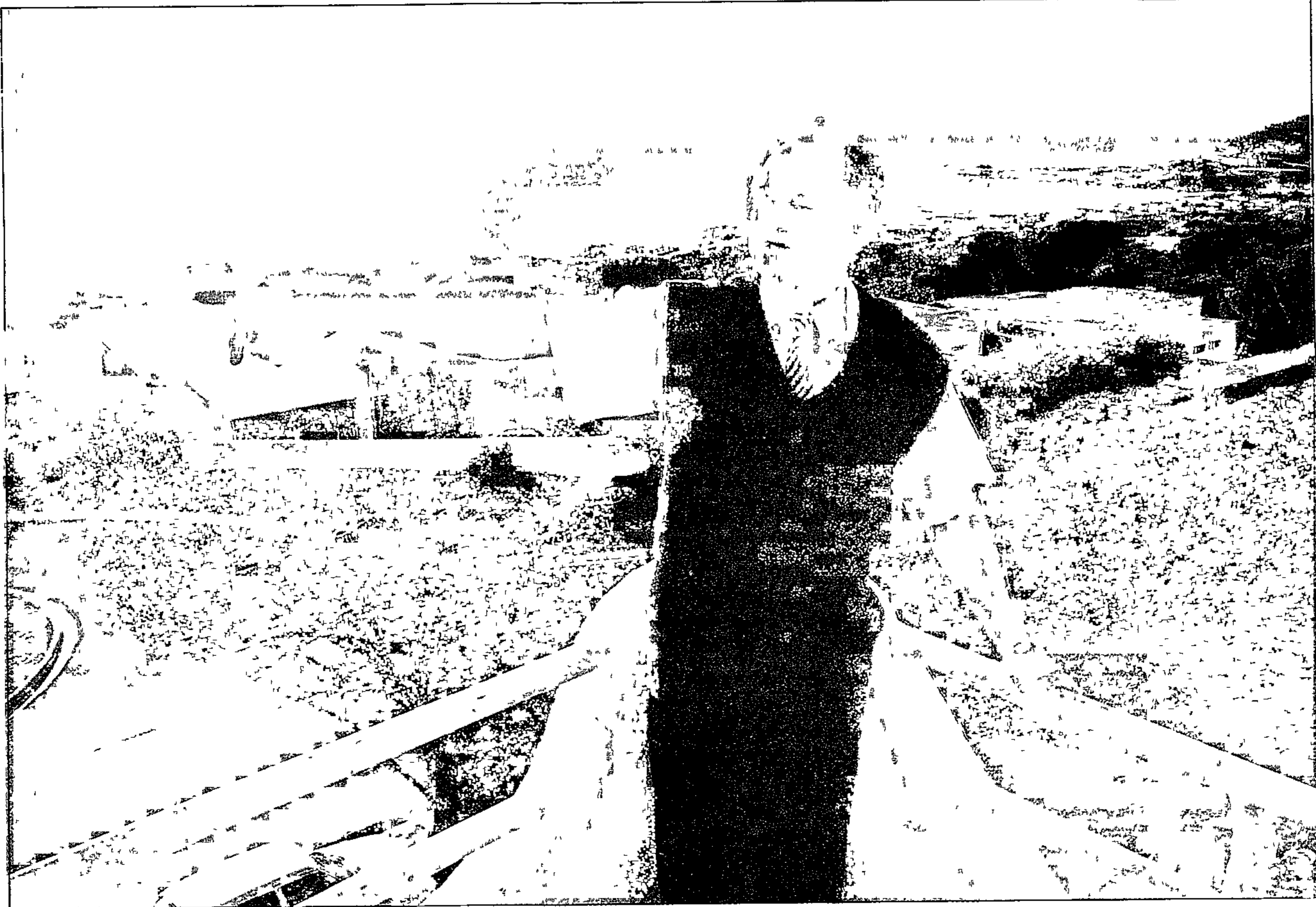
no pen was ever put to paper to draft tobacco control policy.

Anyway, quite frankly, I think Shalala should be grateful for the advantages he has in this game. The tobacco industry has all the power money can buy. They can pay expert PR consultants to impress politicians, they can influence editorial opinion by threatening to withdraw advertising revenue from any magazine or newspaper which refuses to toe the line, they can buy loyalty from sports bodies with the threat that all hope of sponsorship will be lost if there is an ad ban, they can pay R50 000 a time for full page ads in the press to manipulate public opinion and they can pay academics to produce spurious research to defend their case. Hardly an equal playing field for cash-strapped NGOs.

However, what we have on our side is the

future cost of home ownership

(124) CT 17/6/98



HERE TO STAY: Trevor Robertson says he will fight Cape Town city councillors to prevent them from increasing the rates exorbitantly for residents of Camps Bay. He has been on the executive of the Camps Bay Ratepayers' Association since the 1970s. **PICTURE BY: KIM LUDBROOKE**

Residents to tackle council

PRISCILLA SINGH

RESIDENTS living along Cape Town's "millionaire's mile" on the Atlantic seaboard are bracing themselves for steep rate increases while continuing to fight the city council tooth and nail. The perception is that only the wealthy can afford to live in Camps Bay, Clifton and Bakoven, but there are also "ordinary" people living there.

Trevor Robertson, a teacher at Jan van Riebeeck High School in Gardens, has lived in Camps Bay for nearly 30 years and has vowed that he will not be "squeezed out of his own home" because of exorbitant hikes in the rates.

Robertson bought his plot Rontree Avenue for R10 000 in 1969 and says he built his house "with my own two hands". It is a modest, old house with breathtaking sea and mountain views.

He pays between R5 000 and R6 000 a year in rates and taxes on his property. As a teacher with 22 years' service, he takes home about R5 000 a month after deductions.

"If I have to end up paying about R5 000 or more a month in rates to the council, what will have left to feed and clothe my family? It's madness."

Robertson has written numerous letters to newspapers and politicians venting his anger and bitterness about the way the issue has been handled.

He is part of the Rates Action Group that derailed the council's rates plans with a court interdict in 1994 and has been on the executive of the Camps Bay Ratepayers' Association since the 1970s.

Robertson showed the *Cape Times* some of the letters concerned residents have sent him.

One is from pensioner Rhonda Barnish, a retired secretary. She lived in Camps Bay for about 20 years. Her annual rates are R3 993,84.

"Pensioners will be particularly hard hit by site valuations and have been told that sites will be valued for their 'potential'. Pensioners do not have the finances or inclination to make large property improvements."

"We have lived happily in our modest homes for so long, we've always paid rates, water, electricity and obeyed the laws. I know that my rates are very high. Why are you talking about this?"

Robertson says he has seen residents who have sub-let their houses.

Revaluations under way for all

ALL municipalities in the Cape metropole are revaluing property for rates purposes.

CAPE TOWN: Site only, as discussed.

SOUTH PENINSULA: Site only valuation conducted with Cape Town.

BLAUWBERG: Close to completing and implementing new site only-based valuation roll.

OOSTENBERG: Currently involved in a site and improvement valuation.

TYGERBERG: Resolved to prepare new valuation roll but not yet decided on method.

FELDERBERG: It's intended to include all areas in the municipality into a single rating system based on site and improvement valuations.

Ratepayers ready for battle

CAPE TOWN'S property market will collapse if the council goes ahead with plans to implement its new rating system, claims the Rates Action Group.

Voicing protest from some of the city's most affluent, leafy suburbs, including Constantia, Llandudno, Camps Bay, Bishopscourt and Rondebosch, the group threatens to "throw a spanner in the works" if their voice is not heard.

A Constitutional Court case is almost inevitable, they say.

"The council must put this on the backburner and get debate going. To proceed is folly," said spokesperson Robin Bosomworth of Bishopscourt.

"We don't want a system of legal robbery to be introduced or to be determined behind closed doors," he says.

"It appears that rates, a municipal service charge, are being insidiously transformed into a kind of property wealth or redistribution tax unrelated to income and means."

He says "Take, for instance, a cottage in Clifton on 500 square metres of ground. Someone from overseas buys it, knocks the cottage down and builds a big house establishing a value that will apply to the bungalow next door as well."

"Say we land up paying rates at 3c in the rand — which is a safe guess — then those people

could land up with an annual rates bill of R124 000."

"Then, say the value of ground in Clifton is 100% more than in Plumstead, the homeowner in Clifton will land up

paying the same rates as 100 houses, each on 500 square metres, in Plumstead."

"This illustrates the absolute absurdity of the system."

"We have no doubt at all that it's unconstitutional because it is

so unfair. "Why should people be forced to sell their homes in order to subsidise others?" he asks.

Mel Richter of the Camps

We don't want a system of legal robbery to be introduced or to be determined behind closed doors

Bay Ratepayers' and Residents' Association said he had approached the council for an indication of how much the rates would be going up, but that no one would "even give a guesstimate."

"The real fright will come when everyone gets their rates bill," he said.

The crux is that property prices here are inflated because of the influx of overseas visitors.

"An expensive house here is a cheap house overseas."

Ward councillor Chris Joubert says he is watching the rates situation warily.

"I've been persuaded to wait until the valuation has been completed."

"But I'm worried about the people who could be forced out of their homes by massive increases."

O Grant

Kadalie tackles NP man

'Don't play cheap political games'

AKG 17/6/98 (124)

MOSES MTHETHELELI MACKAY
STAFF REPORTER

Head of the District Six Land Claims Unit Rhoda Kadalie has hit out again at Local Government Minister Patrick McKenzie for attacking her when she said he should not use the Crossroads Women's Power grievances as a political football.

Mr McKenzie recently said "I don't want to fight with Ms Kadalie. She should not use me because I would not use her."

He then appealed to the two councillors and the Crossroads Women's Power to resolve their differences and work for peace.

Ms Kadalie said electoral politics between the National Party and the African National Congress determined the way these grievances were addressed.

She also called on the Government to deal with the crisis in Old Crossroads

before it escalated any further.

Her call comes amid bitter conflict between Crossroads Women's Power and councillors Depoutch Elese and Melford Gwayi.

Since January, the women's group - a coalition of members of the African National Congress, the Pan African Congress, the United Democratic Movement, the National Party and the Inkatha Freedom Party - have protested about the absence of development and alleged nepotism and mismanagement of funds.

Other complaints have included claims that Cape Town councillors are allegedly demanding fees from residents occupying unserviced sites and of failing to provide nightsoil removal services.

In an interview with the Cape Argus, Ms Kadalie said she was a human rights activist before she became a human rights commissioner.

"Mr McKenzie should not play cheap political games with me. The women's

grievances have got nothing to do with my position. Nobody will shut me up regarding my position for human rights."

Ms Kadalie, a former human rights commissioner, said the Western Cape was ruled by the National Party and the politicians should address the people's legitimate grievances rather than score points in the run-up to the elections.

"What improvements are there in Old Crossroads? The area is the responsibility and problem of both the national and Western Cape governments, especially the provincial government."

She said there was a perception among Africans that their grievances were not addressed while grievances by other racial groups were addressed by the provincial government.

Commenting on the announcement by Cape Town Municipality that it was launching an urgent investigation into the Old Crossroads conflict, Ms Kadalie said "I highly recommend it. It's long overdue."

SOUTH PENINSULA REJECTS OBJECTIONS

Residents prepare to battle over rates hike

CT 18/6/98

(124)

SOUTH PENINSULA Municipality is in a bind. It cannot budget for a deficit, but a 19% rates hike may precipitate a costly court battle. Metro Editor **CLAUDIA CAVANAGH** reports:

THE people of the South must tighten their belts and fork out. That's the message that emerged during a special council meeting yesterday where over 1 000 letters objecting to the council's recently announced 19% rates hike were considered.

Four hours of tough debate, which on several occasions degenerated into racial mudslinging, failed to convince the majority of councillors in the National Party-dominated council to reconsider.

"One thing is for sure, people will simply not be able to afford the increase and the cash flow to the council will drop off drastically. Nobody has thought of the problems that will cause," said Lotus River, Grassy Park and Ottery Ratepayers' Association councillor Philip Bam, who with four ANC councillors and a United Democratic Movement member voted against the increase.

"What is our chief executive officer's response to all this? Let me say immediately that when I read his response and recommendation

(not to uphold the objections) I was reminded of the infamous words of the queen who said 'Let them eat cake'."

Bam said the council faced an enormous crisis: "We might even go down in history as the ones who caused the collapse of local government in the Western Cape. It's now in the hands of the people."

And the people, it seems, are ready to fight.

"At a meeting tomorrow, we'll propose applying to the High Court for an interdict preventing the municipality from implementing the increase. After that we'll approach the Constitutional Court to rule on the council's conduct," said chairperson of the South Peninsula Development Forum, Vernon Seymour.

The council's budget simply perpetuated the inequalities of the apartheid era, he said.

In his response to the objections, chief executive officer Jan Koekemoer said the council had lost R42m in subsidies over the past two years.

"Even with the 19% increase in the rates levy, a shortfall in the operating budget of R18m exists."

He responded to residents' objections with the following:

- He acknowledged that some pensioners simply could not afford the increase. "This is unfortunate, but any further rebate (than the one which exists) would have to be collected from the remaining pool of ratepayers."

- People complained that they pay higher rates than their neighbours. "This will be addressed in the general valuation."

- The council has effected a greater rates increase than other municipalities. "The South Peninsula Municipality is under a legal obligation not to budget for a deficit and therefore cannot set a rates increase merely on the basis of the increases of other municipalities," he said.

- Objectors said the council spent too much on staff and allowances. To heckling from the public gallery, Koekemoer replied "An independent investigation by an international law firm has shown that the administration needs *more* managers to tighten up control over the work process."

● See Leader article, Page 15

Rates War looms as South defiant

Court action plan

ART 18/6/98

(1A4)

PETER GONSEN
STAFF REPORTER

The South Peninsula Council is sticking to its guns over raising property rates by 19%, in spite of a barrage of objections from residents.

But after nearly four hours of debate, it agreed to have another go at dealing with the objections

It will compile a new report on the reasons for the increase and deal with objections in a less dismissive tone

The new approach came about through an amendment, proposed by the Democratic Party's Herbert Syre, to a motion to dismiss the objections.

After a short caucus meeting, the National Party majority backed the DP amendment and it was passed by 24 votes to six.

Mr Syre said a new report needed to be drawn up to address the shortcomings of the original, such as its dismissive tone: "Object, but nothing changes"

The earlier report had also lacked specific responses and explanations to issues raised and hardship cases had not been handled compassionately

But the council is not out of the

woods yet. The influential South Peninsula Development Forum, representing 400 organisations, has given notice it will go to the High Court to seek to have the increase overturned

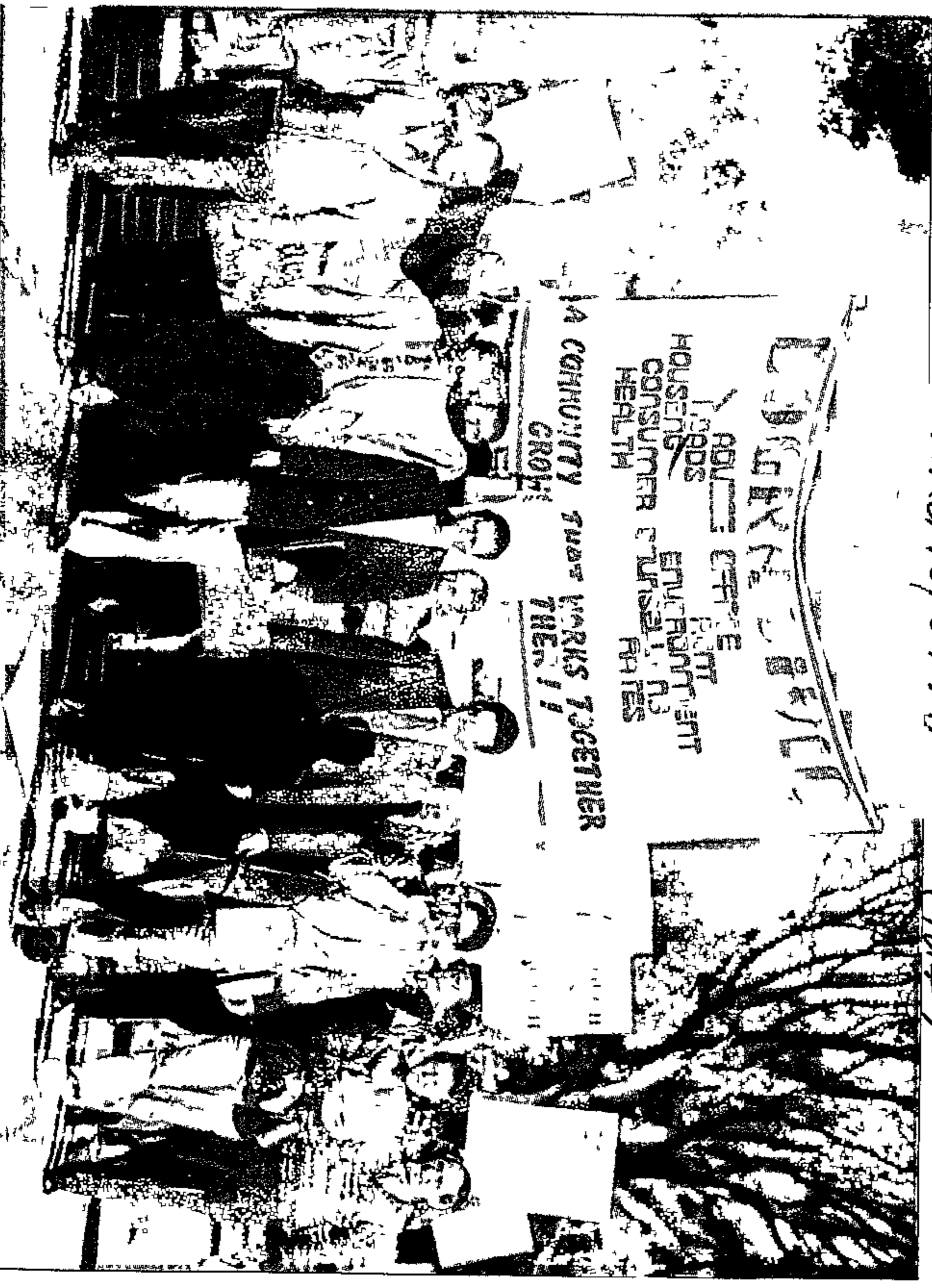
The African National Congress minority, Dick Meter, Peter Gabriel, Hennie van Wyk and Adelaide Buso, joined by Phillip Bam of the Lotus River, Ottery and Grassy Park Ratepayers' Associations and independent Sulaiman Ebrahim, put up a spirited resistance with a barrage of amendments aimed at preventing acceptance of the 19% increase. But all were dismissed, again 24-6

Representatives of about 120 residents who marched to the council building in Constantia to protest against the increase were allowed to address the council

The chairman of the South Peninsula Development Forum, Vernon Seymour, said it was objecting to the budget as well as the rates increase

Objections were also about lack of consultation and the fact that no councillor had a mandate from his or her ward to support the budget

"The imbalances of the past are perpetuated in this budget. The people are expecting more," he said



Marching to Constantia. South Peninsula residents head for the council offices in Constantia to protest over the 19% rates increase

BRENTON GEACH

Khayelitsha schools face water crisis

Rates war looms as South defiant

Court action plan

MORIAM JOSEPH
City Reporter

Most Khayelitsha schools will be without water unless the Western Cape Education Department can find R6-million to pay the City of Tygerberg municipality.

The Tygerberg council announced at a budget meeting yesterday that the department had until June 26 to pay something towards the water bill arrears.

The provincial administration has offered to pay the R6-million, but in instalments Tygerberg finds unacceptable. Finance committee chairman Gerald Smith told the meeting the province wanted to pay the amount off in three instalments over three years.

Hein Herbst, the council's finance director, said the interest on the arrears accounts amounted to R75 000 a month.

The council agreed that the interest on the R6-million had to be paid off in a lump sum first and that the department had to respond within 30 days on how the R6-million would be paid. But the council expected some payment by June 26.

PETER SOOSEN
Staff Reporter

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Objections were also about lack of consultation and the fact that no councillor had a mandate from his or her ward to support the budget.

"The imbalances of the past are perpetuated in this budget. The people are expecting more," he said.

New site-only rating system for city properties on the cards for '99

JEREMIE COHEN
Staff Reporter

A new site-only property rating system could be in place throughout the Cape Town municipal area by July 1 next year.

This was confirmed by City of

Cape Town executive director of finance Philip van Rhyneveld, who said the "very major" process of valuing hundreds of thousands of properties in the municipal area was underway to get a common rates system up and running as soon as possible.

But the new system is coming in for a storm of criticism, especially from people in more affluent areas who face steep increases in rates.

Mr Van Rhyneveld said that when the new administration came into being, it was faced with two major problems.

With the re-organisation of local government in the Cape metropole, the new Cape Town council had to

accommodate old local authorities such as Pinelands, Ikapa and Crossroads which had different valuation systems, or none at all, and a uniform system needed to be found.

Another problem was that the old council rates were based on 1979 valuations.

The city had decided on a new sys-

tem of valuing only the land and properties worth quite a lot less. That is because of the 1979 valuation. We are trying to achieve greater fairness and equity," Mr van Rhyneveld said.

The council would launch a public consultation process from September to discuss the new system with ratepayers, he said.

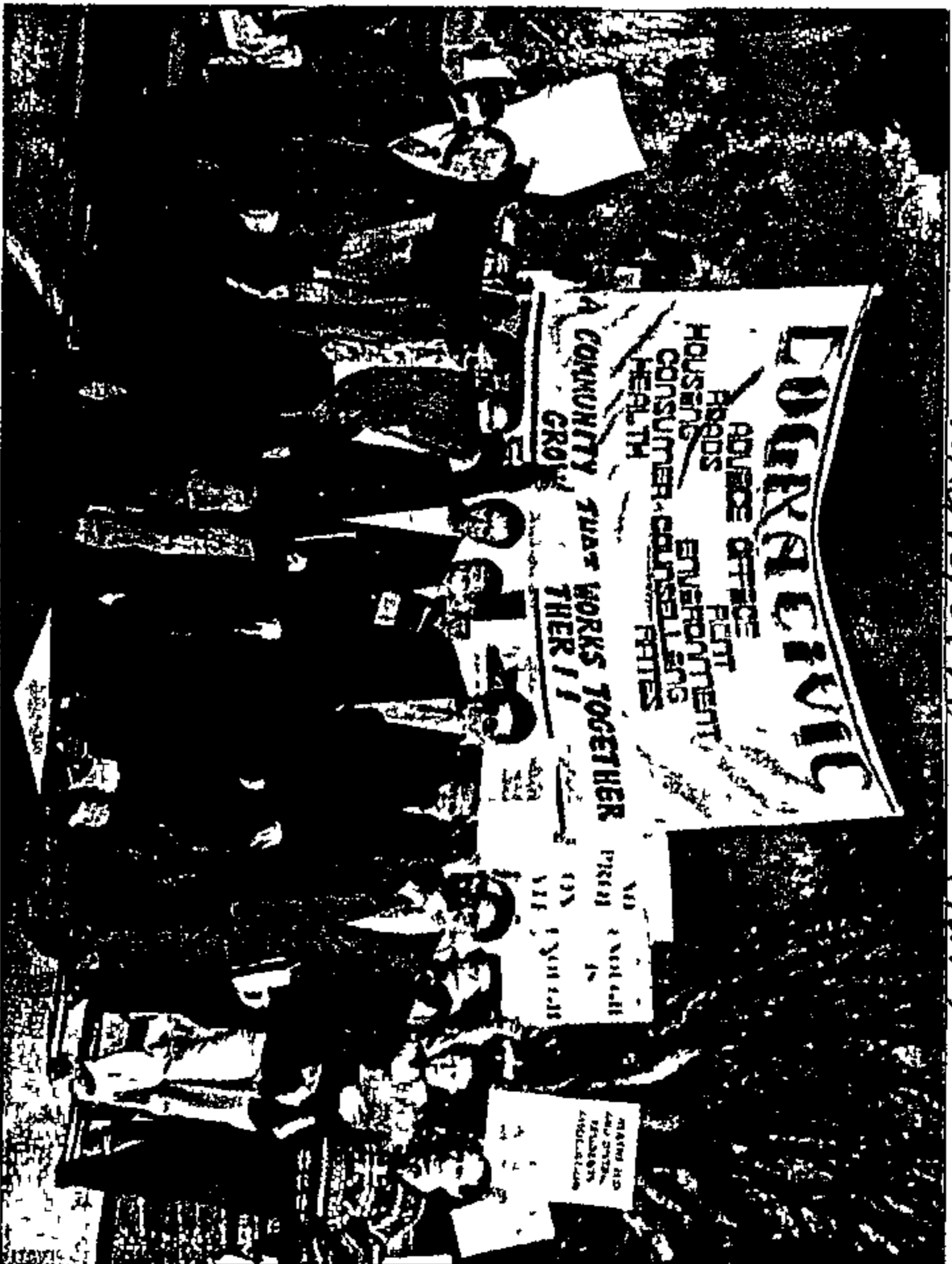
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Marching to Constantia, South Peninsula residents head for the council offices in Constantia to protest over the 19% rates increase.

RAIT 18/16/198

(124)

Guguletu plan won't make its 2000 deadline

(124)

THABO MABASO
BUSINESS REPORTER

ARG 22/6/98

Nearly three years after plans were unveiled to turn Guguletu, one of the city's poorest townships, into a model place to live and work by 2000, the dream is no closer to reality.

One of the chief movers behind the plans has admitted to the Cape Argus that the project will not be implemented by the turn of the century.

"The process will have started by the year 2000 but it will not have been completed," said Bulelwa Belu-Toni, a leading member of the Community Development Corporation set up by the Guguletu Reconstruction and Development Programme Forum.

The forum launched the plan with much fanfare in 1996, with Public Works Minister

To page 4

Guguletu misses deadline

From page 1 (124) ARG

Jeff Radebe and Trade and Industry Deputy Minister Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka in attendance. The multi-million-rand plan, designed as a partnership between the private and the public sectors, was to include:

- An industrial park for small and medium-sized businesses
- A technopark to train workers with no formal skills
- Housing and infrastructure upgrading
- The "greening" of Guguletu

But with 18 months to go before the turn of the century, most of these plans

have not left the drawing board and no money has been forthcoming

The corporation has organised management training for 15 Guguletu businesswomen and the training of 28 unemployed township residents by the Building Industries Federation of South Africa. Plans are also under way to refurbish roads and paths

Nothing has been done to establish the industrial park, to build the planned houses or to "green" the township. The industrial park, designed to kickstart the township economy, is at the core of plans to turn Guguletu into a suburb.

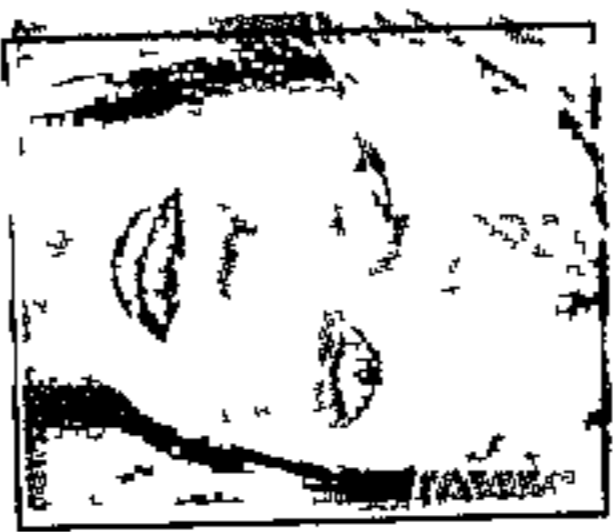
But Ms Belu-Toni is still confident the plans for Guguletu are achievable



LEON LESTRADE

Little progress on the prairie: a prototype low-cost house is all that has been built so far

Lack of decent homes a highly explosive issue



ILLEGAL LAND invasions and the type of violence that has racked Crossroads will only stop when the six municipalities in the Cape Metropole jointly tackle the growing housing crisis. Reports by Metro Editor CLAUDIA CAVANAGH.

CT 25/6/98

(124)

ONE out of every three people you pass in Cape metropolitan streets hasn't a proper roof — and has little chance of getting one soon. In the city of Cape Town alone, as many as 120 000 families are improperly housed.

Facing huge backlogs, insurmountable waiting lists and a bleak future, these are the people who are taking matters into their own hands, often violently.

'Cape Town has no suitable land left. Only Tygerberg and Blaauwberg (has).'

Provincial Housing MEC Cecil Herandien freely admits that with the exception of the Integrated Serviced Land Project "little to no progress in the provision of housing has been made in the metropolitan area in the past few years".

"Eighty percent of our housing projects are running in the rural areas, while 80% of the need is in the Metropolitan Area

"I predicted that this situation could potentially lead to conflict and dissatisfaction among the communities in the Western Cape"

And lead to conflict it has. Over the past six months at least six people have died in escalating violence

directly related to the delivery of housing in the Crossroads and Philippi areas. In April 3 000 people, some on waiting lists for 15 years and tired of being exploited in backyard shacks, illegally invaded a school site in Tafelsig. They built shacks, and are determined to stay put.

This is despite efforts by the city of Cape Town to have them evicted.

Central to the problem, say roleplayers across the spectrum, is that when it comes to the rapid release of land for housing, the Western Cape is lagging far behind other provinces. There has also been no proper audit of available land suitable for low-cost housing.

So no one really knows what land is available or where that land is.

Why? ANC sources say it's because the National Party's provincial government has refused to implement national legislation, known as the Development Facilitation Act (DFA), for the rapid release of land.

metro and I know of no provincial plan to do this," said ANC spokesperson for housing Rosberry Sonto.

"That is the main reason why things like Tafelsig and Delft (where 150 houses were illegally occupied) happen.

"The people are left with no option. But Herandien claims the DFA is flawed and takes power away from local authorities.

"If local authorities identify available land, it's possible to release it within 21 days without the act," he told the Cape Times.

But first, all six municipalities in the metropole must work together, produce one waiting list and identify available land to be sold or used for housing.

"Cape Town has nearly no suitable land left. In fact only Tygerberg and Blaauwberg will have available land in the near future," said Herandien.

"So co-operation is essential if the problem is to be solved." Cape Town's city manager Andrew Boraine said the provision of housing had become the top priority. He agreed that a metro-wide

approach was paramount.

"It's no good if there's land available in one municipality but it's not accessible because of municipal boundaries.

"Land invasions and the provision of housing are closely linked.

"The rapid release of land and not evictions is the best way to deal with the problem."

'The rapid release of land, and not evictions, is the best way to deal with the problem.'

Boraine said that until a metropolitan solution had been thrashed out, the city was determined to do the best it could on its own.

"We are doing a land audit and pulling out all the stops. The city has adopted a comprehensive housing policy and is implementing a scheme to top-up government housing subsidies," said Boraine.

At a housing summit attended by all municipalities earlier this month, there was general agreement on the need for an appropriate housing delivery vehicle for the metropole, and an agreement in principle of the need for a rapid land release policy, said Herandien. A technical team on issues where consensus was not reached will meet tomorrow.

visited squatters illegally occupying council land in Tafelsig earlier this month, he told them he could not promise houses, but would visit again to help solve the crisis.

Behind closed doors he gave the city of Cape Town three weeks to report back directly to him on what it was doing to address the matter.

In the meantime, the 3 000 strong squatter community illegally living on a school site, and encroaching on the Wolgat Nature Reserve, have demanded services, water and refuse removal.

But, awaiting the outcome of an August 23 court case to determine whether the council can evict them or not, the council is standing firm.

"We cannot recognise an illegal land settlement, or solve Tafelsig in isolation. We need the co-operation of all municipalities and that is why we've put so

g (amm), ... Boraine. When squatters illegally invaded the Rondebosch common and land in Nyanga, the council had them evicted.

"We will only provide them with the minimum health and safety emergency services as we do for anyone else in their position," said Boraine. "There are thousands of people on our housing waiting list, thousands of people who have been waiting patiently for years, waiting for services and waiting for land."

Deputy chairperson of the council's executive committee, Saleem Mowzer, agrees. "The council is now in the process of providing basic services to these communities, but there is a programme and process that must be followed when doing that.

"Tafelsig will become part of the process, and will not be treated differently

of land where people jump the queue on others who have been living in shacks for decades and are waiting patiently to be housed in terms of the council's new housing policy."

In the meantime, the city has prepared a report to meet Madiba's deadline, which expires this week.

"We will tell him that since his visit we had a housing summit, attended a follow-up metropolitan summit, did a land audit and pulled out all the stops," said Boraine. "Ironically, we may one day look back and say the whole Tafelsig business was quite good because it helped us to focus on land."

"In the past, we've tended to focus on top structure and finance rather than looking at a metro wide approach. "The whole thing has been quite positive on the whole."



ACTION NOW: The land issue is so serious that President Nelson Mandela went to meet land invaders in Tafelsig

Durable homes ... from polystyrene?

Feather-light brick construction goes up in Milnerton

JOHAN SCHIRMEN
STAFF REPORTER

No amount of huffing and puffing will blow down the new double-storey house, built of feather-light polystyrene, being constructed in Milnerton Ridge.

The apparently revolutionary building method has been tried and tested overseas where houses are built of material most South Africans associate with take-away coffee cups.

To passersby in Milnerton Drive, the stacked hollow white polystyrene bricks look like giant interlocking play blocks for children.

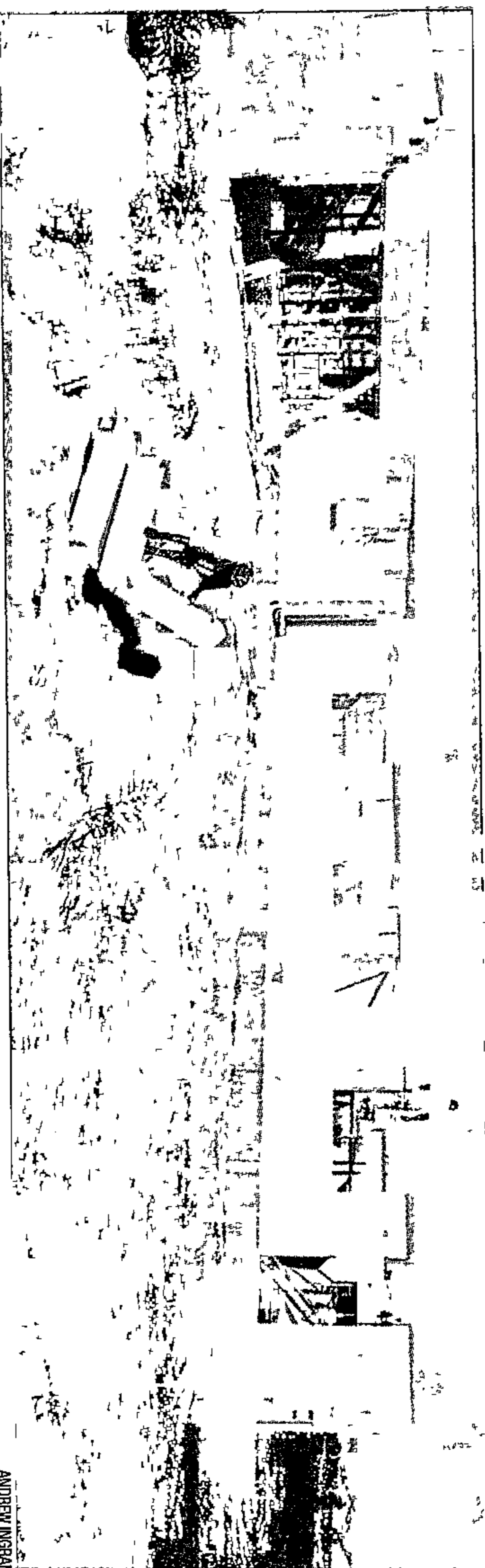
In reality, they will probably be built into the strongest house in the Peninsula.

Ace builder Pieter Tromp is the man who stuck out his neck and brought this cost-effective and superior building method to Cape Town where people, traditionally resistant to change, rely on good old bricks and mortar.

The feather-light blocks are easy to handle. They are stacked into



Lighter than air: the feather-light blocks are stacked into walls which serve as a mould



ANDREW INGRAM

Box of tricks: to passersby the polystyrene bricks for this under-construction house in Milnerton Ridge look like giant interlocking play blocks for children

"walls" which serve as a mould, which is in turn filled with concrete and steel reinforcing.

The polystyrene blocks remain as insulation around the almost indestructible solid core.

A special cretestone-like layer of

cement is then plastered over the polystyrene to seal it and provide a hard and durable finish ready for painting.

Building foreman Anwar Dawood said the polystyrene was easy to shape and to cut for openings for win-

dows or doors.

"Cutting channels for electrical wiring and plumbing is like cutting butter with a hot knife," he said.

"Building time is also reduced significantly and there is no need for brick-layers. The polystyrene blocks have

openings on the ends to allow wet concrete to flow and interlock with adjoining blocks when it sets.

"And in the event of a fire, polystyrene melts rather than burns."

Mr Dawood said the building method was common in Holland.

ARG 2/7/98

(24)

Affordable housing for 300 Makhaza families

MOSES MTHETHELELI MACKAY
STAFF REPORTER

(124)

ARG 3/7/98

The initiative started in December when 40 units were built.

Financial guarantees by the National Urban Reconstruction and Housing Agency have resulted in a major upliftment for Makhaza, in Khayelitsha, where 300 new houses are expected to be completed by the end of the month.

"The Makhaza model is proving highly successful and could be extended to other parts of Khayelitsha as neighbouring communities have expressed an interest in this type of upliftment exercise. Employment prospects also improve as the developer uses local workers wherever possible," he said.

The multi-million rand project will offer affordable housing to hundreds of families.

New owners usually take occupation of their homes within 14 days of the start of building work. Homes are handed over to residents each week.

The agency's chief executive, Cedric de Beer, said the project involved site-by-site upgrading of shacks into owner-occupied homes on their own plots.

"We anticipate that 500 units will be built this year," Mr De Beer said.

New row breaks out in Delft over housing

ARG 3/7/98
Official denies colour involved
(124)

NORMAN JOSEPH
CITY REPORTER

A new row has broken out over housing with the illegal move by 400 people into new, but empty, houses in Delft South.

African and coloured people have been at loggerheads for months over the allocation of houses - now occupied by coloured people illegally

Several clashes have ended in violence, and stones have been thrown

Surita Botes, spokeswoman for provincial Housing Minister Cecil Herandienu, said half the houses were intended for the homeless from the Tygerberg municipal area, and the rest for people from Cape Town

She said there were no separate waiting lists for black and coloured people. The Tygerberg and Cape Town municipalities each had one

housing list from which the provincial housing department allocated houses

Homeless people from Khayelitsha and Crossroads fell within the Cape Town area, and those from areas like Delft and Ravensmead in the Tygerberg area, Ms Botes said

The allocation of houses in Delft had nothing to do with colour and "it must not be seen as a race issue"

Ms Botes said that a month ago the department decided to allocate the Delft South houses on a 50-50 basis to both municipalities to help accommodate homeless people

Delft housing director Herman Steyn, who is working on a plan to remove the illegal occupants, is addressing meetings in Delft to explain the allocation process

Delft National Party councillor Gerhardus Ventura said the problem

was not a Tygerberg municipal one, and had to be sorted out by the provincial department.

Eindhoven Civic Association spokeswoman Patricia Michaels said all Delft's councillors had to help find an amicable solution

People had had their names on a waiting list for up to seven years, then houses were allocated to people not on the list at all, she said

Delft Small Builders' Association chairman Gerald Brown agreed, saying local politicians and councillors had to resolve the continuing clashes

■ Earlier this year about 800 families illegally built shacks on council land in Tafelsig in Mitchell's Plain that had been earmarked for a school. They opposed a High Court application for their removal and got a reprieve until August 28, when they return to court fight their case

Philippi residents

Want their land back

Deserted houses are vandalised

(124) ~~971~~
ART 9/17/98

MANDLA MNYAKAMA
SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Residents who were driven out of Philippi because they allegedly supported an ousted squatter leader say they have a right to live there and want to return.

They said people were occupying their sites illegally and accused police of failing to take their problem seriously. Several families were chased from the Brown's Farm area during violent clashes said to involve rival squatter leaders.

About 10 women from the families went to the Nyanga police station this week to seek help. Police then returned with them to visit the area - for the first time since June 16 when the squatters fled after a house was burnt down, a man was shot dead and two were wounded.

Last week the deserted houses were destroyed or vandalised.

The women's mood was sombre as they looked at what remained of their homes and salvaged what they could.

In one instance what had been a four-roomed corrugated iron and wooden house was in ruins.

Its owner, Nomfundo Hlobo, who had lived there since 1992 recalled her nightmare experience when she and others fled. She said all her belongings had been destroyed or stolen, including three television sets and an electric hot plate.

The women said they did not know why they had been chased away - and were still paying for their sites.

They said they knew who their attackers were and could not understand why police did not arrest them.

Neluswa Tsotso demanded that the guilty people be arrested and be

refused bail. "Police must do their work properly. We've got our rights as residents who have voted for this new dispensation. The Government must make a plan to solve this problem."

"We have children who cannot even go to school and some of us who worked close to our homes are unable to go to work," said Ms Tsotso.

The women disputed allegations that the unrest was caused by fighting between the Western Cape Squatter Association and the SA Civics Organisation. They said they still believed that the clash between rival squatter leaders was to blame.

Police director Simon Mphembe said no one had laid charges.

"When the properties were destroyed they needed to lay charges so police could act immediately. They must do so now," he said.



Devastated: a sad Nomfundo Hlobo with some of the clothes she rescued from her ruined shack at Brown's Farm in Philippi

MANDLA MNYAKAMA

Judge orders Delft community

ANDREA WEISS

A High Court judge has urged politicians and community leaders to find a solution to the crisis in the Delft housing development, which has seen people illegally occupy hundreds of new houses, sometimes forcing the legal occupants on to the street at gunpoint.

Mr Justice Ben Griesel yesterday postponed an application by the Western Cape Provincial Housing Development Board to evict 150 illegal occupants from the housing

development.

His remarks follow allegations that people who had been awarded houses in the Delft development were being escorted out of their new homes at gunpoint. Some of the new home-owners had apparently arrived to find that the houses were already occupied.

At least one man has been stabbed to death and another seriously injured in the conflict, which works close to "anarchy".

The public order police have been called in to prevent further illegal

occupation of the houses.

About 10 to 15 houses in the development are finished each day. The project, which forms part of the integrated Serviced Land Project, is Cape Town's largest housing development and aims to deliver about 6 000 units.

Judge Griesel said the postponement of the case should not be seen as a "form of condonation".

However, when their legal adviser informed them that the case had been postponed, some of the alleged illegal occupants outside the court hugged each other, and said "We

have our foot in the door".

Judge Griesel said it was not possible for the court to determine whether the allegations in the affidavit to the court were correct, but if they were true they were a "very serious and very disquieting development in this region".

"This court urges all parties - those who are politically responsible and the community - to try to solve this situation," he said.

He said that while he had a great deal of sympathy with all the homeless people, of whom there were many in the Western Cape, people

could under no circumstances be allowed to take the law into their own hands.

An affidavit from Abdulatief Camroedien, a project manager in the area, described the situation in Delft as "incredibly volatile and dangerous".

Mr Camroedien said he believed a state of anarchy had been reached "as a result of people taking the law into their own hands" and suggested that the army should be called in to restore order.

Mr Camroedien asked the court to deal with the issue speedily because

he said that if it were allowed to continue "open warfare, bloodshed and loss of life" would be the consequence.

The court papers told of people forcibly taken out of their homes, whistles being used to summon illegal occupants to drive away people coming to take occupation of their new homes and the death and injury of people who had attempted to move into the homes awarded to them.

The papers also said that illegal occupants were marking kerbsides and building materials to stake their

claim to the new houses.

People working in the area described earlier occupations in Delft as a "Sunday picnic" compared with the situation currently developing. Urgent meetings with the police this week prompted a decision to deploy public order police in the area in an effort to prevent intimidation or the forced removal of legal occupants from their new homes.

There are concerns that the Delft crisis could strike a serious blow to efforts to deliver low-cost housing in the Western Cape.

Land invasion, see page 23

to talk

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Race-hate row over housing list

(part)

Violent clashes erupt as corruption claims grow

ARG 21/7/98

NORMAN JOSEPH AND CHARLES NGULUME
STAFF REPORTERS

A waiting list used to allocate housing to homeless people in Delft South is at the centre of controversy and must be scrapped, claim residents living in fear of violence.

The list, from which half the houses are allocated to homeless people in the Cape Town municipal-

ty and half to those in the Tygerberg municipality, is allegedly being exploited by ward councillors and the Delft housing branch.

There have been violent clashes between blacks and coloureds over house ownership in the sprawling town, and the Cape Argus was told that councillors were allocating houses to party supporters.

Reporters were shown confidential documents by a party official

outlining a ward councillor's alleged housing allocations.

Saphiwe Stephen Olifant, who was legally allocated a house, was stabbed to death the day after moving in last week.

Another man, Mlungisi Siquhaza, was badly beaten by people telling him to move out, and needed 38 stitches.

One family caught up in the violence, Brian and Leonie October,

were forced out of their house last week, allegedly by black people.

Mr October said one of the men claimed the council had given him the house a week earlier.

Mr October said he paid R80 to a Delft family to store his furniture and belongings.

He said he and his wife had been on the waiting list for five years, and had been allocated a house by the Delft housing branch office.

They said the present list had to be replaced. Houses should be allocated so that people from similar areas were housed together.

Resident Nathaniel Keet said the problem would affect next year's elections.

The 50/50 waiting list had to be scrapped, Khayelitsha people should be allocated homes in one area of Delft South and Ravensmead people in another.

Promises of homes, but Delft illegals still face action

(124) (3007)
NORMAN JOSEPH
AND CHARLES NGULUWE
STAFF REPORTERS

ARG 22/7/98
The Western Cape Housing Development Board is pressing ahead with court action against Delft South's illegal occupants in spite of a decision to allocate houses to them.

Provincial housing Minister Cecil Herandien announced on Monday that houses would be given to "illegals" whose names appeared on either the Tygerberg or Cape Town Municipality's housing lists.

The move would hopefully end the ongoing housing conflict in Delft, said Tygerberg municipal officials.

The board is seeking an eviction order to remove about 150 illegal occupants from houses in the integrated Serviced Land Project development, the largest in Cape Town.

Last Friday High Court judge Mr Justice Ben Griesel postponed the board's application to evict the illegal occupants to Friday.

The 150 illegals would first be evicted and then the housing department would consult with them.

Housing conflict in Delft South appear to be ending but police and the justice department will continue with a clamp-down on illegal occupants.

Bellville South police commander Jan Solomons and state prosecutors held talks at the Bellville Magistrate's Court on Monday regarding charges laid by legal homeowners against illegal occupants.

Superintendent Solomons said five cases of intimidation were under investigation - 25 extra police from different units were drafted into Delft South on Monday to help prevent further clashes.

Superintendent Solomons said he hoped the fighting would stop now that the housing department made a positive move.

In the past two weeks the conflict resulted in the death of one resident and the wounding of another. Doors were kicked down and people assaulted.

Provincial housing spokesperson Surita Botes said illegal occupants whose names appeared on the waiting lists would be allocated houses, but those people whose names were not on the lists would be evicted.

Illegal occupants living in houses earmarked for legal buyers would be asked to leave and other houses elsewhere in the town given to them.

Claude Ipser, chairman of Tygerberg Municipality's standing committee on housing, said the provincial housing department's decision was consistent with its move in April to accommodate illegal Crossroads people. He said it would hopefully end the conflict, but must not be repeated.

Gangster rule halts homes for poor

ANDREA WEISS
POLITICAL REPORTER

Provincial Housing Minister Cecil Herandien is to delay the Western Cape's largest housing project on the grounds that it has fallen into the hands of warlords and gangsters.

But his decision, termed a "suspension" rather than "termination", could be the death knell for the only large housing project for the poor in the metropolitan area

Officials have been taken hostage and people with legal rights to houses have been driven out of them at gunpoint in the rapidly developing crisis around the Integrated Serviced Land Project, which has seen hundreds of houses taken over illegally

The situation was now so bad, Mr Herandien said, that building would have to stop before order could be restored

"There has been one death already and that is one death too many," he said

His decision will affect Southern Delft

ARG 23/7/98 (124)
and Weltevreden Valley, where gun-wielding warlords and gangsters are reported to be collecting money from desperate people and allocating newly completed houses

Mr Herandien said he would wait until tomorrow, when the Cape High Court would decide on the fate of 150 people occupying houses in Southern Delft illegally, before putting a stop to any further building, or

To page 2

Housing project threatened

From page 1

(124)
cancelling the project altogether if order could not be restored

This would effectively mean that the responsible municipalities would have to find the funds themselves if they wanted to see the project continued

He was prepared to suspend the project because houses were occupied illegally as soon as they were built, and it was becoming increasingly difficult to go to court each time an eviction notice was needed.

Mr Herandien also ruled that those people in houses illegally, but whose names appeared on the waiting list drawn up for the project, could remain on it

Mr Herandien said small builders working on the project would be hard hit by the decision, but it was impos-

ARG 23/7/98
sible to pay them because certificates of completion could not be issued

He said public order police were already guarding newly built houses, and were also standing by to prevent loss of life

More than R156-million was spent in the integrated Serviced Land Project in the 1997/98 financial year, and 3 803 families have moved into the contractor-built starter homes since the beginning of the project

The Cape High Court would be asked tomorrow to grant eviction orders applying to those occupying 150 houses illegally

The Western Cape provincial cabinet was also expected to deliberate on the issue next week

Mr Herandien said, however, that he believed it might still be possible to find a solution to the problem in Southern Delft

(35)

With a sense of pride

A QUESTION about the Masakhane campaign and its future, sends the crusade's newly appointed national manager Rowland Chris Nissen, down victory lane

He starts reminiscing about the tiny four-roomed asbestos-roofed houses many township residents knew as home. He also thinks of how mothers used to apply red polish painstakingly to the little stoeps in front of their houses.

They would then rub them until they shone like mirrors. Some of those stoeps, he recalls, were just red strips that ran from the broken-down gate to the steel front door.

Besides the stoeps, mothers also used to polish the outside taps at the back of the house with brass cleaner leaving them gleaming.

"That was a labour of love done with pride," Nissen says. "For me that is the essence of the Masakhane campaign. It is about people taking pride in their environment and communities," he told *Sowetan* during a recent interview.

Masakhane was launched in 1996 under the Ministry of Provincial Affairs as part of the Reconstruction and Development Programme. One of its objectives was to encourage people to start paying for their services, a practice many stopped during the apartheid era.

However, some observers have consigned the campaign to the dustbin because of its apparent failure to inculcate a culture of payment.

Recent reports showing practically bankrupt local councils throughout the country have done nothing to dispel such conclusions.

Nissen, however, disputes the gloomy picture painted by these reports, and argues that there are municipalities throughout the country that are successfully recovering debt.

About 150 municipalities recently participated in a government-run competition - of which one of the criteria to qualify was debt recovery, he says. This proves that the practice of payment is taking root, he says.

Nissen believes local authorities must provide facilities that make it easy for people to pay for their services.

"There must, for example, be more facilities such as the 'Transwitches' available in some stores, where people can pay for their services," he suggests.

"And the front staff of local authorities must be trained in public relations and make it a pleasure for residents to pay for their services."

According to Nissen, the Ministry of Provincial Affairs is also encouraging residents to participate by setting aside R1 billion to assist people who cannot afford to pay for their services.

Under this plan, families with a monthly income that ranges between zero and R800 can

The Masakhane campaign goes beyond encouraging residents to pay for their services. **Ido Lekota** spoke to its new manager about its importance.

(124) *Sanetom 24/7 / 98*



The Masakhane campaign, which was launched in 1996 under the Ministry of Provincial Affairs, is gradually winning support throughout the country.

apply for a government subsidy of R86 a household.

"There is still a responsibility on their part to pay for the services," he concedes. "The subsidy is there to augment whatever they bring to the table."

Residents in black townships stopped paying their rents and services in 1984. But Nissen says he recently heard of a local council in Pretoria, where the residents who are mainly white owed R17,8 million for services.

For Nissen, the Masakhane campaign is bigger than getting people to pay for their services. It is also about newly found patriotism which inspires people to take responsibility for the welfare of their own communities.

"Masakhane is not only about building a culture of payment but is also about people accepting their civic responsibility," he says. "It is about not waiting for things to happen in your community but making them happen."

As part of Masakhane, the people of Thokoza have implemented cleaning campaigns and house-rebuilding projects. As a result, they have turned what used to be a war zone into one of the cleanest and most peaceful townships, he points out.

"Operation Pimpa" is also part of Masakhane, Nissen says. In this project, run with the Ministry of Safety and Security, people identify criminals and report them to the police.

"In Alexandra, for example it is happening with the community (They are) either reporting crimes or apprehending criminals and handing them to the police. Of course, there is a need to draw the line between community involvement in anti-crime campaigns and vigilantes."

Nissen envisages Masakhane as a movement that includes the government, the private sector and all members of the civil society.

Masakhane also means people who benefited before must show their commitment through voluntary service," he says.

Companies such as Eskom are already participating. Through the "Lungisa" project, the company provides people with skills in domestic and industrial electrification.

"We would like the private sector to contribute much more," Nissen adds.

The South African Broadcasting Corporation contributes to the Masakhane campaign through its civic education programmes.

The Government is participating in the campaign through its various agencies. For instance, the Ministry of Water Affairs has provided communities with pre-paid water meters, which help people to consume only what they can afford.

The Ministry of Public Works, for its part, has begun a campaign to maintain public buildings.

The "Arrive Alive" campaign, initiated by the Ministry of Transport, is also part of Masakhane. Communities take responsibility for reducing road accidents by not drinking and driving and other activities.

Masakhane week will be from October 11-17 to showcase the campaign's triumphs and to raise people's awareness about the contributions they can make to their community.

"During that week, every municipality in this country will fly its Masakhane flag high," enthuses Nissen.

'Threat of violence looms in Delft housing row'

RONALD MORRIS
JUSTICE WRITER

PEOPLE legally entitled to houses in Delft may use violence against illegal occupants, with the inevitable bloodshed and even loss of life, the High Court was told yesterday.

This warning was given by Benjamin Rheeder, Deputy Director of Housing, in an application to have illegally occupied houses vacated.

The court was told that Towns 3 to 6 of the Delft South project would comprise 3 700 serviced erven, of which half

would go to people on the Cape Town City Council waiting list, and the other half to people in the Tygerberg municipal area.

Rheeder said 139 houses had been occupied since late June, depriving those legally entitled to a house. The mood of the illegal occupants is hostile, while those entitled to houses are threatening to take the law into their own hands.

He said police have declined to act against occupiers because they regard it as a civil matter.

However Noelle Beyers, a painting

contractor who occupies a house, denies that people broke locks and said the builders left the doors unlocked so that people could move in.

She claimed that at one stage a marketing official, Abdulatif Camroodien, had said he would be able to get a house for her mother within seven days if she paid R600.

Camroodien denied he received or demanded money from anyone, and said there is an atmosphere of mistrust.

"People are easily led and misinformed by community and other leaders with, in some instances, sinister

motives," he said.

Judge Willem Louw said it appeared from the papers that the Prevention of Illegal Eviction from and Unlawful Occupation of Land Act, which came into operation on June 1, had not been covered.

A part settlement was, however, reached with 55 of the illegal occupants who, in terms of an order, will vacate houses. The remaining people must next Wednesday satisfy the Housing Development Board that their names appear on an official waiting list by providing documentary proof, and must

also prove that they qualify for a housing subsidy granted by the board.

Should they meet these conditions, they will be allocated the houses currently occupied by them or they will be allocated a house in the same area.

The hearing against the remaining illegal occupants was postponed to August 11.

Charles Louw SC and Alistair Shoika-Douglas, instructed by the state attorney, appeared for the Housing Board. Ian Marais, instructed by Milton de la Harpe, appeared for some of the occupants while Con Joubert, instructed by Eben Kline, appeared for those who settled.

ET 31/7/98

(124)

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TOM HOOD (124)
ST (CM) 5/7/98

Council may sell defaulters' homes

THOUSANDS of Cape Town's council houses, whose buyers can afford the monthly payments but have defaulted, could be sold on the open market

Housing director Billy Cobbett's get-tough policy is not working out

No fewer than 9 200 buyers of council homes are in arrears and more than 10 200 tenants — 66 percent — owe at least three months' rent

The housing committee's plan was to offer repossessed houses to fam-

ilies on the waiting list. However, few can afford to raise a bank bond to take over a repossessed house, according to a report to the committee

"This leaves repossessed houses vacant and vulnerable to vandalism unless, at great cost to the city, security is pro-

vided until a buyer can be found," said deputy housing director Mervyn Bregman

The housing committee is to be asked next week to approve the sale of repossessed homes as well as residential plots on the open-market

The sales would be organised by the council's municipal properties section and the cash raised go into a dedicated fund to pay for new low-cost housing

According to the latest figures, housing arrears were a record R71-million, with tenants owing R32-million on May 10 and buyers R39-million.

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Cape Town approves new housing plan

Robyn Chalmers

DD 6/7/98

CAPE Town's city council has approved an innovative low-cost housing model which marries the housing subsidy with a combination of a municipal contribution, domestic savings and microcredit facilities.

The new policy, forged by former Cape Town housing director Billy Cobbett, has created a stir among financial institutions, many of which have shunned the low-cost housing market. Other cities and towns are understood to be considering adopting the plan.

Cape Town has approved R115m over five years as a municipal financial contribution. A portion of the R23m for the first year will go towards capitalising a separate legal entity or special purpose vehicle which will facilitate the provision of low-cost housing.

The policy document said delivery of new low-cost housing stock was at a record low in Cape Town and the quality and size was often rejected.

There was limited private sector involvement in the lower end of the market and the subsidy was used as the only source of housing finance. The new model was specifically designed to use the government subsidy as a lever to attract other resources. "In short, our aim must be to banish subsidy-only delivery in Cape Town," it said.

This would be achieved by introducing a municipal financial contribution, domestic savings and microcredit to government's institutional subsidy — the recommended form of subsidy for the new policy.

The municipal contribution would be made available to prospective beneficiaries only on a conditional basis.

They would qualify by establishing a specified savings record and maintaining the value of the contribution through a 100% rates payment record for four years.

Potential beneficiaries would have to save for between six months and a year with an accredited financial institution. The savings account would be ceded for up to four years as a risk buffer against default on rates.

For those able to satisfy a basic affordability profile, microcredit would also be made available against a further specified savings pattern.

The special purpose vehicle would be set up as an independent private company. Its functions would be to promote the construction of low-cost housing stock and to hold such stock for 48 months in line with the rules that governed the institutional subsidy.

'Racist' comments prompt walkout

Reneé Grawitzky

DD 6/7/98

A MISUNDERSTANDING over a presentation on the Employment Equity Bill sparked a row at last week's 11th annual labour law conference in Durban and prompted a walkout by a group of delegates who claimed the presenters were racist.

The walkout followed a presentation by leading labour lawyer Martin Brassey and Institute of Race Relations researcher Anthea Jeffery on "employment equity law within a conceptual matrix".

The group approached the conference organisers and demanded an apology. One delegate said the speakers had been insensitive to the expe-

riences of blacks during apartheid. Another said the speakers justified the maltreatment of blacks during apartheid and implied blacks could not perform at the same level as whites.

Jeffery said the bill provided for an unnecessarily high degree of state intervention, focused on race and failed to address poverty and unemployment.

Brassey was deliberately provocative in his exploration of affirmative action. He attempted to highlight the need to look at individuals rather than groups of people who "are defined externally by others".

At the outset, he said, people tended to talk past each other when discussing employment equity. "There is an immense amount of silencing that goes on

in this area, for fear of being accused of being racist or sexist."

He raised a number of controversial issues, and compared groups on the basis of race, equality, the abilities of individuals, and differences between groups based on past maltreatment. "If I could demonstrate that whites did better for blacks on balance over the three or four centuries since whites have been here, would that change your attitude in relation to the question of maltreatment?" he asked.

The bill forced the examination of the abilities of one group as opposed to another. "If I am condemned and pilloried for this so be it: I have absolutely no doubt that groups are not the same. That groups are not all equal."



Earning about a natural-born thriller

CT 12/8/98

(124)

FARIEDA KHAN believes apartheid deprived blacks of a natural environment — and she's doing something about that. Environment Writer MELANIE GOSLING reports.

WHILE most of the members of the green movement are drawn from the more affluent groups who live in the country's leafy suburbs, professional environmentalist Farieda Khan was born and bred — and still lives — in the semi-industrial, polluted Salt River

And she loves it

"Many people find it strange that an environmentalist comes from an inner city environment which is full of factories and pollution, where most people don't have gardens and where there is very little green space

"But I think it is precisely because I come from that background that I feel the need very strongly to develop environments which are attractive to live in. It is also why I am more of an urban environmentalist than a straight science-wildlife type"

Khan lives in a terraced house in Salt River ("You'll find it easily — the only one with a garden") which has been in her family since late last century

While she acknowledges the suburb is bleak, she loves its social richness

"I love Salt River with a passion. There is a community here, which many other places have lost, or never had. Everyone knows each other, and there is a warm, friendly atmosphere. I know the man who put up my burglar bars, and the mechanic at the local garage, and the woman I buy Koeksusters from

"You'll see housewives going to the shops in their dressing gowns, walking past factory workers who don't bat an eyelid"

She grew up in the shadow of Table Mountain, and feels an almost physical attachment to it

"Sometimes I think I'm hooked up to the mountain by an invisible umbilical cord. When we were children, we really could get into the natural environment quite easily. There was a gate behind Groote Schuur which we went through, and walked up Devil's Peak. I also remember playing on Woodstock beach across the railway line. Now it has all gone. The gate is closed off and the beach has been turned into a concrete harbour

"This is an example of the short-sightedness of city planners. Salt River could have been an environmentally desirable suburb, but because it was cut off by man-made obstacles, it has become a bleak, inner city place where, if you don't have a car, you might as well be living miles from the sea and mountain"

Planners, says Khan, don't plan for people. They plan for commercial interests, or for cars, or for industry

"I always make a point to argue for holism. People are too biased towards science and technology, and neglect social and political factors. I always try to put those two factors back into the equation, because it is a very neglected side of the environmental sphere"

It was when she went to high school in the 1960s that Khan became politicised. It was the 1960s. Her teachers featured anti-apartheid activists like Neville Alexander

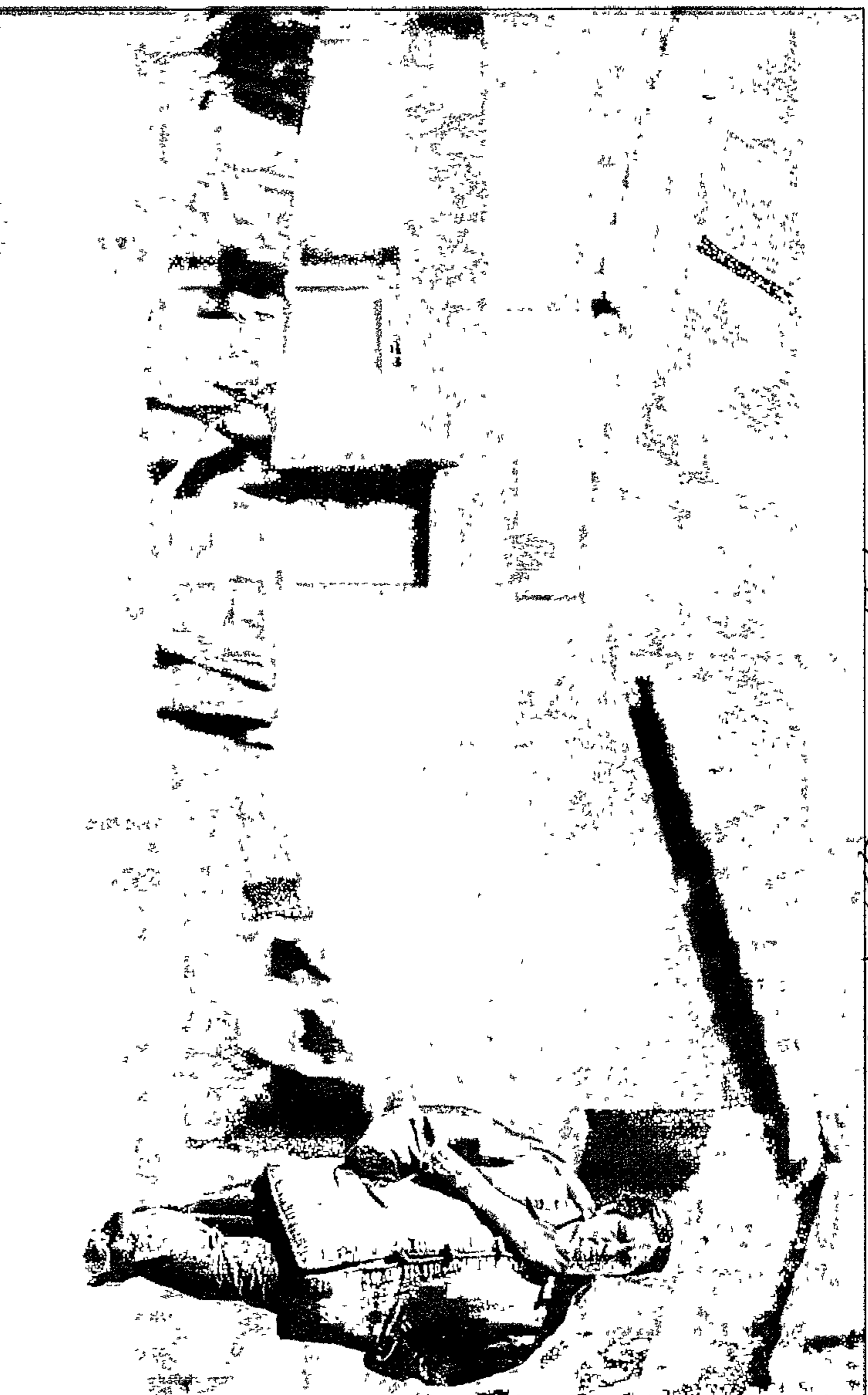
"I arrived a naive 13-year-old and overnight was thrown into a maelstrom of political activism. Our teachers gave us a political awareness and also a sense of worth. We were told by our teachers to stand on our hind legs and stand proud

"But we weren't indoctrinated. They taught us to think, gave us the tools to be critical. And education was always a priority. It was 'liberation with education' and if we lost out on school work because of political activities, we made up that time

"Later when I was teaching on the Flats in the 70s, things had changed. The political activism was pupil-driven, no longer teacher-driven, and it had changed to 'liberation before education'. I don't believe in that. I passionately believe you need education with liberation"

Apartheid legislation kept blacks and whites at separate universities, unless they wanted to do a course that was not offered at their allotted university. Because she did Social Anthropology and Xhosa, Khan was allowed by the authorities to attend UCT, where she did a BA degree and then Honours in History

"I never intended to teach, but like so many other blacks, I'm afraid to say, we



URBAN DECAY: Environmentalist Farieda Khan at one of the few green spots in Salt River. She says bad planning has turned it into a decaying inner city area. She believes that mainstream conservation organisations have a lot to answer for by excluding blacks during the apartheid era, and says the environment has suffered as a result.

PICTURE GARTH STEAD

drifted into teaching because of the lack of opportunities for us"

At Crestway Senior Secondary in Retreat and at Bridgetown Senior Secondary she came across an environment a lot worse than anything she had experienced in her childhood. She also came across gangsterism, and people she couldn't reason with. In this emotionally and physically bleak spot, she decided to start a hiking club to introduce children to the natural environment, which was so near yet so far from them

It wasn't easy. Most were just not interested, and those that were said "But miss, what will we do when we get to the top of the mountain?"

But for most of those who joined

Khan, a wonderful world opened up to them, and to this day some of her former pupils are hooked on hiking and are keen environmentalists

"You're not born an environmentalist, you are made one through experience. Apartheid closed most resorts and nature areas to blacks, setting aside some hideous commercialised picnic places with shops and blaring music

"I remember going to Bain's Kloof to a picnic facility for coloureds. Hideous. Nowhere near the river, no trails, postage stamp swimming pool, while just down the road was the white facility in beautiful natural surroundings, next to the river, hiking trails laid out, natural swimming pools. To me that encapsulated the

apartheid era in terms of conservation

"The mainstream conservation fraternity, the NGOs, the provincial and state authorities have a helluva lot to answer for. They estranged black South Africans from the natural environment, prevented them from enjoying it

"That has had two consequences. It damaged the psyche of black South Africans, and has meant that the environmental movement has never had mass support

"The environment has lost out too. People moan that the former homelands have been raped, which is true. But it was apartheid policy that squashed millions into fragments of our country, forcing them to live unsustainably, and leaving

sections of our country environmentally bankrupt"

What changes would she like to see in the environmental sphere?

"A lot of mainstream environmental organisations are starting to change, but they need to step it up. They need to harness people's energy in trying to improve their environments, to make initiatives more community based, and to find ways of empowering people so they can sustain these initiatives

"Townships lack the money and the expertise to do it themselves

"The environmental movement in South Africa is still not mass-based, and to get there we need a type of environmental affirmative action"

Teaching about the local green scene

FARIEDA KHAN is the projects director of UCT's Environmental Advisory Unit, which was founded in 1992 to provide disadvantaged groups with environmental research and advice

Important functions of the unit are to increase environmental literacy by providing information in a simple form, and to facilitate public participation in environmental decision-making

A trained school teacher, Khan became a professional environmentalist after she completed a master's degree at UCT's Environmental and Geographical Department

Her contact with the unit ends this year, and she has been offered a doctoral research fellowship at the Environmental and Geographical Department from next year

Her research will focus on conservation history in South Africa from 1910 to the end of the apartheid era, "looking behind the mainstream environmental movements", and putting them into political context

Khan serves on the board of the South African National Parks and on the Cape Peninsula National Park Committee

She has written several articles on the environment for various publications, and also several short stories

NOW IT'S CAPE TOWN

Private company to wipe out crime and

WHAT PUBLIC-PRIVATE ADMINISTRATION WILL MEAN

- A top-up levy in addition to rates to be paid by businesses - but in return there will be:
- More privately paid policemen on the streets
- More city street cleaners
- A flat-out drive to make the city tourist-friendly
- An increase in demand for office space in the city centre

CAROL CAMPBELL
SPECIAL WRITER

The Cape Town municipality and business leaders are in talks to set up a private company to run the city's business areas - which would mean big improvements in such services as cleaning and crime prevention.

Their dream is for Cape Town to remain a bustling centre, but with clean, safe streets full of foreign tourists buying local goods with pounds and dollars.

City centre firms will be asked to pay a "top-up" levy to improve municipal services, an amount which has yet to be

negotiated. A by-law is being considered to enable the new company to collect the money.

At the helm of the company will be a chief executive officer - a Ms or Mr Cape Town - who will co-manage business districts with the council.

Cape Town city manager Andrew Boraine confirmed that within two months, an "interim" structure would be set up to make this partnership between the city council and city businesses a reality.

"It may take a year to get the whole thing up and running. We (the council) will define a minimum standard for the running of the city's business areas based on what we can afford."

Although Cape Town is still South Africa's premier tourist destination, the inner city is plagued by crime and grime. Municipal funds are so stretched that the council cannot afford to throw money at the problem.

The move by business to get involved in the running of the city is regarded as an investment which could reap huge returns, especially with an increase in tourism.

Mr Boraine said consultation with all parties involved would come next.

Inner-city business leaders have promised they will provide expertise to expand the idea to other areas such as Mitchell's Plain, Athlone and Claremont.

What happened in the centre of Johannesburg - where areas were actually abandoned by businesses - cannot be allowed to happen in Cape Town. This city survives on tourism and we have to make it a pleasant place to work and shop.

■ This report on future plans to manage the business district of Cape Town is the first in a series on the inner city.

least R1-million to launch the project. "Gauteng has passed provincial legislation enabling Johannesburg to run a similar project."

David Jack, managing director of the V&A Waterfront, said a city could lose out quickly to competing suburban centres if streets were dirty and crime-ridden.

"People want to work and shop in a pleasant environment, otherwise they go elsewhere."

And, when the demand for office space dropped, buildings stood empty and became run down, as property owners no longer had the resources to keep them maintained.

Charl Adams, human resources manager for the Cape Chamber of Commerce and Industry, said there was good business support for the initiative.

"You can't expect business to take over the responsibilities of the local council, but we understand partnership and are prepared to work with the council on this initiative."

Mrs Hartshorne aims to raise at

From page 1

The city manager is running a tight ship. He is also responsible for the development of infrastructure in many poverty-stricken townships.

Although the lion's share of Cape Town's rates is raised from businesses in the CBD, a substantial part of the money is being used to subsidise development in the townships and to maintain suburbs.

"The advantage of a partnership is the ability to combine resources and keep costs down all round," Mr Boraine said.

Wendy Hartshorne, co-ordinator of the Western Cape council of the SA Property

ARG 3/18/98 To page 3

STIME
(1994)

Housing war in the promised land

Political conflict turns violent in Old Crossroads

JOSEPH ANANES
AND ANNESS ANTHELLEU MACKAY
SWP REPORTERS

People moving into new homes within the sprawling informal settlement of Old Crossroads plan to call it Entokozeneni - the promised land.

More than 90 houses have been completed and work is continuing on the construction of another 550 houses which form part of the contract.

But not everyone is happy.

A women's group, called Crossroads Women Power, says the houses are too small and have dubbed the emerging neighbourhood Vezanyawo - roughly, "your feet stick out".

The 36m² houses, fitted with a toilet and running water, are not mansions but for most residents they are better than the shacks they previously called home.

Outside, the dusty streets are bustling with activity - builders are constructing new houses while plumbers and carpenters add finishing touches to others.

A few women are doing their washing in front of their freshly painted homes while chickens scratch in the dirt in the backyards.

But everything is not as idyllic as it seems. A closer look reveals that several mothers don't take their eyes off their children, while the streets are full of watchful men.

There is tension in the air. Just a few days ago a group of alleged Women Power supporters opened fire on the residents and petrol-bombed two of the houses, one belonging to African National Congress councillor Melford Gwayi.

At the weekend other residents marched on Nyanga police station demanding the right to demolish the houses belonging to members of the Women Power group, who they claimed had been responsible for the spate of attacks and violence.

The tension and attacks date back to October last year. Accusations and counter accusations fly.

Mr Gwayi said that when the women's group was formed, they demanded to know from him what had happened to R35-million set aside by the former Ikapa Town Council for the upgrade of the area. The allegations of corruption levelled against the Ikapa council were the subject of a commission of inquiry, appointed by President Mandela.



Eye level, bricklayer Zwelliswa Bahani continues his work, unaware of the political storm surrounding the building of the houses in Old Crossroads.

Mr Gwayi, who is back in his house after the attack, said the women also demanded that the construction of the houses be stopped because they were too small.

"As a community we have been involved in a long and tedious process in getting these houses for the people. This is part of the Government's promise of providing a better life for all of us.

"We can't allow a small group of people to use the suffering of people as a political football. With the elections looming, there are people who oppose the Government and want to use the sensitive housing issue to whip up people's emotions. We can't allow this to happen," Mr Gwayi said.

But the Women Power group, a coalition of women's organisations from the ANC, National Party, Pan Africanist Congress and the United Democratic Movement, has denied being behind the violence.

They say the problem stems from the fact that the houses are much smaller than promised and have been

unfairly allocated.

Group spokeswoman Nozibele Mbeka said, "It's malicious lies to say that we are behind the violence. We don't have guns. We are too old to do such things."

Mrs Mbeka laid the blame squarely on the shoulders of Mr Gwayi. "He has his own private army and with a group of minibus taxi drivers are shooting, killing and burning down our houses. We are living in fear in Old Crossroads. You don't know whether you will survive."

She alleged that on June 1 Mr Gwayi and Michael Sengayi, a member of the local ANC committee, burned down five shacks in Section 2.

Mr Gwayi was arrested and is presently on trial in the Mitchell's Plain magistrate's court in connection with the allegations.

Mrs Mbeka said they had reported many cases to Nyanga police but nothing had been done to bring the culprits to book.

"Instead the police side with the

councillors. We have lost faith, trust and confidence in the Nyanga police. Now we rather seek help from the Ballville South police."

She said the Old Crossroads Women's Power wanted their demands and grievances addressed as a matter of urgency.

Last week, police arrested 10 alleged members of the Azanian People's Liberation Army, the former armed wing of the Pan Africanist Congress, following the latest attacks.

Mr Gwayi accused PAC members, who had lost at the local government election, of using the party's military wing to gain a foothold in the area. It has been linked to the women's group amid claims they were using the housing and women's issues to achieve their political ends.

Mrs Mbeka denied any collusion between the PAC and the women's group, although she admitted she knew some of the people recently arrested were PAC members.

But for Joyce Mfengwana a new life has begun in her new house, in



On trial: councillor Melford Gwayi

spite of the political war of words and bullets fired by faceless attackers.

"I'm happy living in my new house and don't really know what the trouble is about. What I do know is that when the bullets start flying, I grab my children and run."

Mrs Mfengwana said with the police patrolling on a more regular basis, residents were feeling safer.



Washday blues: Joyce Mfengwana makes full use of the relative peace to do washing



At play: Entokozeneni children play in the street under the watchful eye of their granny

Solve housing conflict, cop tells parties

(124) *ARG 6/8/98* Crossroads crime up

MOSES MTHETHELELI MACKAY
STAFF REPORTER

A top policeman has called for the direct involvement of all political parties in negotiations to resolve conflict over housing in Old Crossroads.

Simon Mpembe, police director in Nyanga, said the crime and violence in Old Crossroads was unlikely to decrease soon because he believed it was politically motivated.

In an interview with Cape Argus, Director Mpembe said violent crime in Old Crossroads was on the increase. Even if police were thrown at the problem they would not be able to solve it.

"We have to understand that political parties are campaigning for next year's general elections. Maybe talks between Crossroads Women Power, the councillors, the police and other stakeholders would decrease the violence."

Director Mpembe said 12 people had died since the dispute began at the beginning of the year and 14 had been arrested, of whom five had been

held on murder, attempted murder and arson charges.

More than 18 houses had been burnt down and nearly 100 people were homeless. African National Congress councillor Melford Gwayi had been arrested and was on trial in the Mitchell's Plain Magistrates' Court for alleged assault and arson.

Crossroads Women Power alleged that on June 1 Mr Gwayi and Michael Sgagayi, a member of the local ANC committee, burned down five shacks in Section Two.

The women's group, a coalition of members of ANC, the Pan Africanist Congress, the United Democratic Movement, the Inkatha Freedom Party and the National Party, claimed council houses being built in Old Crossroads were too small.

At the weekend people opposed to Women's Power marched to Nyanga police station to demand the right to demolish their rivals' houses.

They claimed Women's Power was responsible for the attacks and violence.

The women have denied they are behind the violence.

'Keep the Masakhane campaign alive'

Nissen says it is SA's 'contribution to African renaissance'

ART 12/8/98

(124)

"Don't quote this, but do you know there is a municipal cash office in Khayelitsha where officials wrote out only three receipts last month?"

"People are just not paying any more. It's ridiculous."
"Masakhane? Ag no, that fizzled out long ago."

These remarks, by an official in a greater Cape Town municipality, just about sum up the attitude of local authorities to the Masakhane campaign still being promoted by the national Government.

Masakhane is the Xhosa word for "Let us build together". It was, and according to Constitutional and Provincial Affairs Minister Valli Moosa still is, a key project of the Government.

Its aim is to encourage payment for services and good citizenship. But in South Africa's second biggest urban centre, the Cape Metropolitan area, where ratepayers owe R1,2-billion in service debt - that's 12,3% of the national figure - the campaign appears to be a non-event in four of



SPECIAL WRITER

the six municipalities.

In Tygerberg, a municipal spokesman said the Masakhane campaign had "died a natural death", in the South Peninsula, "There are no Masakhane projects under way", in Blaauwberg and Helderberg, information on Masakhane was "unavailable". Only in Oostenberg and Cape Town, which incorporate vast townships of the very poor, are any real efforts being made to keep the Masakhane idea alive.

In spite of the lack of enthusiasm, Chris Nissen, for the past six months the head of the Masakhane project and former head of the African

National Congress in the Western Cape, remains doggedly optimistic the campaign is working.

"The Government cannot do everything. At some point, individuals and communities must take the initiative and make things happen for themselves," he says.

What the Government is doing includes:
■ Involving the private sector in running and administering pay points for service accounts.
■ Running a Mayors for Masakhane campaign.

■ Setting aside R1-billion to subsidise municipalities in poverty-stricken communities (R86 a household with an income lower than R800 a month).

■ Having an annual Masakhane award to reward well-run municipalities financially.
■ Rewarding individuals with a presidential award.

■ Co-ordinating a Masakhane week in October.
■ Setting up private-sector partnerships to promote good citizenship.

And there are pockets of excellence in greater Cape Town and the Western Cape where good citizenship and civic responsibility are bearing fruit.

In Vredendal, Mr Nissen says, there is no municipal debt and Wellington is not far behind.

But the figures quoted by Zam Thus, director-general for provincial development and constitutional affairs, in a recent Government report on municipal liquidity show that the big debtors do not live in rural towns. "The larger urban municipalities constitute 82% of the total debt," he writes.

Without money, the delivery of services - and election promises - cannot materialise.

Without reasonable services, many people refuse to pay.

In greater Cape Town, the lack of support for the Masakhane idea cannot be blamed on political loyalty.

Mr Nissen is, after all, the former leader of the ANC in the National Party-controlled province and Masakhane was an ANC idea.

But payment in ANC-controlled Gauteng is four times worse than in greater Cape Town.

Mr Nissen is adamant that Masakhane is one initiative which should extend beyond politics.

Individuals can contribute to the campaign simply by getting involved in their community and doing their bit to run efficient, debt-free households, he says.

In the rural areas, people rise at dawn to sweep their kraals and clean their homes. Why, he asks, do the same people sit back and do nothing when they come to the city?

Why do whites, smug in the knowledge that they live in clean streets where refuse is collected once and sometimes twice a week, also fail to pay accounts or get involved in community initiatives?

"Masakhane is South Africa's contribution to the African renaissance."

If this is so, local government in South Africa has the responsibility of inspiring citizens to live up to their responsibilities and set an example for Africa.



Short cut to a dream for tenants

ARG 17/8/98

LYNNE RIPPENAAR
STAFF REPORTER

(124)

Galima Moosa and her husband Rashaad have lived in a rented house at 39 Gympie Street, Woodstock for seven years.

It is one of 10 state-owned residences in the Western Cape that will be sold to "previously disadvantaged" people at discounted prices by the Government

This was announced last week by Public Works Minister Jeff Radebe

Mrs Moosa, a mother of five children, was thrilled to hear that the house they have lived in for so long could belong to them

"We will buy the home if it is for sale," she said

"I've approached the Public Works Department before to buy this house, but they said that the shopkeeper next door was also interested"

The building is split between the Moosa's home and the premises of the shopkeeper next door

But Mrs Moosa believes her family deserves the first option to buy the house because the shopkeeper lives in Bothasig with his family

"We have three quarters of the property We are a family and this is our home"

Mrs Moosa's husband is the breadwinner and she sells chicken from the home to add to the family income

Mr Radebe announced that the government would sell 800 state-owned residences

This action is expected to raise millions



Dream come true: Galima Moosa of Gympie Street, Woodstock, in front of the state-owned house that she and her husband might soon own

of rands for the state and will provide previously disadvantaged people with the opportunity to own their own homes

People who were either socially or economically disadvantaged by the previous government and have not owned immovable property will get a 20% discount on the selling price

Other disadvantaged people who previously owned or currently own immovable

property will be given a 10% discount

First option will be given to the legal tenants

Tenants who do not want to buy their houses will be given three months to vacate. Illegal tenants will be given 30 days to vacate after which they will be evicted. The vacant properties will be sold by tender

The shopkeeper next door to the Moosa's home declined to comment

'Killer' asbestos in low-cost homes

Hundreds of Cape Flats houses have been built with panels that may cause cancer

(124) ARG 5/19/98

LINDA DANIELS

Asbestos-cement panels, made of the same asbestos fibre that causes lung cancer, is being used to build cheap houses on the Cape Flats.

Doctors fear the material could lead to health problems, but building authorities insist the asbestos-cement is safe.

Hundreds of state-funded low-cost prefabricated houses using the asbestos cement have been built on the Flats. They include a number in a new housing scheme in Delft South. The walls and roofs are made of corrugated asbestos-cement sheeting.

According to the Western Cape housing department, the asbestos fibres in asbestos-cement, which have been linked to lung cancer, pose no threat to the health of the inhabitants of the homes.

The sheets of asbestos-cement used in the Cape Flats homes consist of asbestos wedged in between layers of ordinary cement. The light-weight asbestos acts as an insulator.

Eric Strijdom, the Cape Town quality auditor for the SA Bureau of Standards (SABS), said: "Once the fibres are set, they are completely inert (inactive)."
"(Asbestos-cement) is virtually everlasting and it doesn't corrode and it's very quick to build."
He said that the SABS had tested

the material's strength, profile and thickness.

But, according to Mario Rocha, the acting manager of the SABS materials testing department in Pretoria, the SABS did not test the asbestos-cement's health specifications.

He said the health specifications for asbestos products were set by the Department of Labour, as laid out in the Occupational Safety Hazard Act.

Neil White, a respiratory specialist at the University of Cape Town's medical faculty, said: "It seems that we have been using asbestos for low-cost housing for years."

"But the problem is, someone only knows they're ill in 20 years' time when they die of cancer."

He said lung cancer and mesothelioma, a more specific lung disease, were directly related to asbestos inhalation.

"We are not quite sure how much or the dose you require to cause cancer."

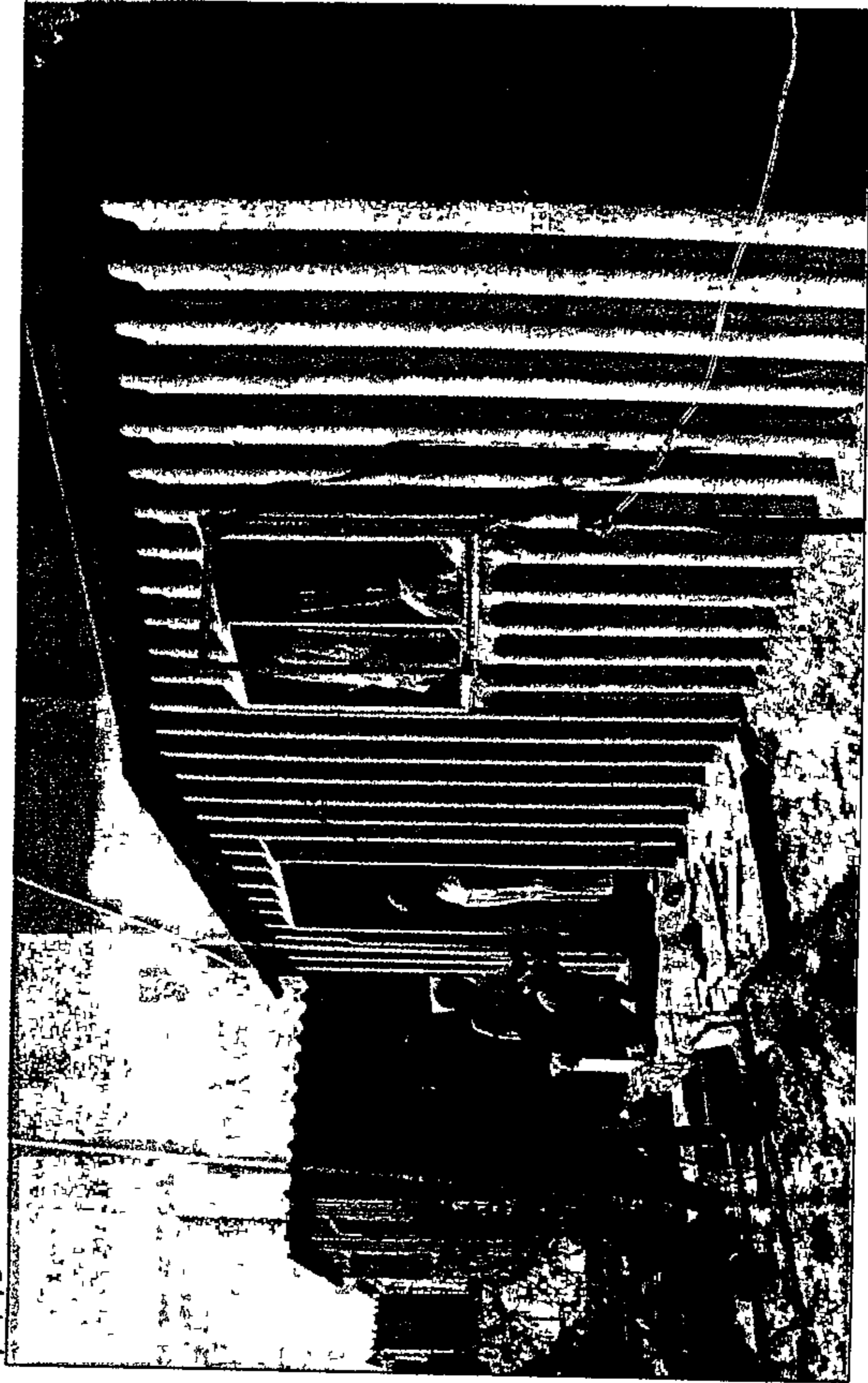
"But if there is any health risk, why do it?" he asked.

Not taking the possible health risks associated with asbestos into account, communities still regard the prefabricated housing structures as inferior to brick structures.

Mrs Poeler said she coughed constantly and that her daughter's youngest child suffered from a tight chest.

Mrs Poeler said: "But it's probably from the cold."
Sarita Botis, speaking for the provincial housing department, said: "Although the houses are completely safe to live in, communities where these houses are built are against the use of any type of prefabricated housing."

"There is a perception that any building method other than the conventional brick or cement block method is inferior."



HEALTH CONCERN: Caroline Poeler, Felicity Tromp and her baby, in their house of asbestos-cement

Picture BRENTON GEACH

COMMENT & ANALYSIS

Rates must survive critical civic mood

THE end of this month sees the start of the most sensitive phase of the changing of the rates system in Cape Town and the adjoining South Peninsula municipality. September 30 is the day that the new valuations — based on the site-only concept — are scheduled to be completed. And that is when political parties and ratepayers' groups will be able to begin lobbying in earnest, with concrete information at hand, for the interests of their supporters. A new rates system is scheduled for implementation next July.

It has already raised the spectre of a Sandton-style ratepayers' boycott backlash. This is the first valuation in Cape Town since 1979. Inhabitants of Atlantic seaboard areas particularly, as well as some other upmarket suburbs whose property values have spiralled in the period, face steep rates hikes. The switch to the site-only valuation system exacerbates the potential rates differentials between upmarket and downmarket suburbs.

Those in favour of the new system argue that it is more equitable in their view. Cape Town's wealthy have effectively been subsidised by the city's poor as rates are based on outdated valuations. City financial director Philip van Ryneveld points out that the fluid state of SA's local government system complicates the situation. The move towards stronger metropolitan government means that whatever new system is implemented in the relatively decentralised Cape Town Metro, it will have to be fairly easily made compatible with the new metropolitan government system expected to come into effect by 2002.

The life of the Local Government Transition Act is to be extended beyond its envisaged termination date next April, meaning that the new rates system will have to be compatible with it. That broadens the scope for legal challenges — which in any event are

likely given the vested interests affected by the change. The leaders of the African National Congress (ANC) majority and the Democratic Party (DP) opposition in Cape Town have acknowledged the need for measures to try to avert a rates boycott, although details still bare.

The DP councillors, who have a tough task balancing the interests of well-to-do members with the hoped-for surge in support among previous National Party supporters in coloured communities of the Cape Flats, and who are conscious of the difficulties faced by their Sandton counterparts, have been first off the mark.

This week the DP unveiled proposals designed to create a mutually agreeable system — proposals which themselves raise a host of new questions. As outlined by South Peninsula councillor Bill Stibbe, they include:

- Phasing in increases over five years,
- Increasing the range of fee-for-service payments,
- Special arrangements to protect the elderly from the effects of big rates hikes, and
- A R20 000 rebate on all residential properties — though this one is highly debated.

Both DP and ANC councillors have already contemplated phasing in the rates increases — a step which, many believe, could have taken the sting out of the Sandton rates revolt. Stibbe talks about a five-year period. There are, however, two potential problems.

Council officials say, first, that the current local government act makes the phasing in of increases a mite ambiguous. They believe it can be done, but thus opens yet an-

other area for a legal challenge. Second, no one talks about whether those for whom the new system will bring lower rates — primarily residents of poorer areas — will have their rates reductions phased in too. That could trigger political problems. But if the situation is to be eased through a phase-in for those who will have to pay more, ratepayers somewhere will have to pay the costs of that. Once the numbers become available, this question will have to be addressed.

The DP's second proposal, increasing the range of services that are charged on a fee-for-service basis, also raises issues.

Fee-for-service, whereby the individual resident's bill relates directly to consumption, currently applies only to electricity and water. Stibbe proposes extending this to include sewerage, refuse removal and street cleaning. General rates (based on property value) would then be used to finance what are clearly community services — libraries, ambulance service, fire brigade, clinics, and traffic, road and related services.

The plan is not that simple. First, how do you measure individual households' consumption of refuse removal and street cleaning? Theoretically and imprecisely, it could be based on, for example, the length of the street frontage of properties. Sewerage could be based on water consumed, though those with swimming pools and large gardens require a smaller proportion of water used through the sewerage system.

But are these individual rather than community issues? People can choose how much electricity or

The debate on changing the rates system in Cape Town is about to reach a vital stage, says Cape editor Alan Fine



The use of rates based on property valuation to fund community services has been suggested

water to use, and have it cut-off if they do not pay. But if street cleaning, refuse removal or sewerage services were cut off (if indeed they can be) the effects would be felt by neighbours. There would

be real community health risks. There would also be political effects. More fee-for-service arrangements would reduce the redistribution effect of the rates system. And because charges will be directly related to costs, it would open up space for outsourcing of services, or at least force the municipality to tender for services at rates more competitive than the private sector could provide.

The plan to assist the elderly who live on properties where values have skyrocketed in recent years — a common phenomenon in suburbs like Seapoint — entails the council taking a second bond of up to half the value of the property out of which rates would be paid. The bond would be paid off out of the property owner's estate — rates payments would be deferred and effectively paid by the owner's heirs.

Finally, to assist the poorest homeowner, Stibbe proposes a R20 000 rebate on the value on which rates are based. This would add a progressive element to a proposal which is largely regressive in tax terms. It would mean that people living on properties valued at less than R20 000 would pay no rates at all — though they would pay for direct services, however defined.

Some of his colleagues disagree, however, saying that valuations should not be tampered with for welfare reasons. Instead, welfare assistance should be clearly defined as such.

A second objection, likely to arise even from ANC councillors, is that municipal services should not be delivered free of charge when attempts are being made to eliminate the culture of nonpayment which began in the 1980s.

The plan to change Cape Town's rates system by next year means that the city's elected leaders and officials will have to implement major financial changes in an uncertain and changing legal environment, and a fragile and tense civic one.

MANDELA PARK CASE

'Lawyers stole millions from housing fund'

A CITY law firm and one of its partners are alleged to have stolen R13,3 million intended as subsidy payments for 823 applicants in a Khayelitsha housing development, the High Court has been told. Justice Writer **RONALD MORRIS** reports.

THE firm and the lawyer are alleged to have acted alone or in concert with Sadrick Khan, who trades as BDS Developers and project manager of the Mandela Park development in Khayelitsha. On his letterhead Khan is described as Dr S E Khan ABL.

Two days after the Provincial Housing Board paid more than R13,3m to the Parker and Mohammed law firm, Khan, who described himself as project manager, authorised payment to himself for an "administration fee" and subsequently for "Geo-tech fees" and "helped themselves to an administration fee of R750 per erf", the court heard.

This was at a stage when the development could not have been completed. A subsequent investigation showed that very few houses were being built and those houses identified as qualifying for a subsidy were more than five years old.

Some of the money was also paid into the bank account of Khan's wife.

In papers, John Austin, deputy director of the provincial department of Housing and Planning, said Parker and Mohammed was one of the law firms chosen to administer subsidy applications for 823 erven in Mandela Park.

Austin said this in an application by the Western Cape Premier, the Provincial Housing Development

(124) CT 11/9/98
Board and Carel du Preez, deputy director-general of the department of housing and planning, Western Province for the sequestration of the estates of the law firm Parker and Mohammed and its partners Asraf Abdulrahiman Parker and Mohammed Esack Mohammed.

The firm and the lawyers oppose the application. Parker denied that he had stolen any money, saying all the amounts identified were paid over to Khan. He does not know what happened to the funds after that and neither he nor his firm benefited from the transactions.

Khan has acknowledged that any liability to repay the money was his alone and that he would in fact repay the money, Parker said.

Meanwhile, the Law Society of the Cape has brought an application to have Parker struck off for misconduct.

At a meeting of the disciplinary committee of the Law Society Parker admitted he had contravened certain rules governing accounting in respect of trust accounts.

Austin told the court that in terms of an agreement with the firm the seller of the land can only be paid on transfer of the property to an individual applicant. Payment for building work can only be made if the attorney/conveyancer is satisfied that the work in question has been completed.

In September last year the law firm delivered a reconciliation statement to the Provincial Housing Development Board in which receipt of the R13,3m was recorded.

The document records further transactions and "illustrate theft and/or fraud committed by the law firm acting alone or in concert with inter alia Khan".

According to the statement R617 250 was paid to S Khan as an administration fee.

The law firm was neither instructed nor authorised to pay this fee to Khan and/or BDS Developers, Austin said.

When challenged about this the firm tried to justify the payment by referring to correspondence between the Western Cape Department of Housing and another law firm — Balsillies Watermeyer and Cawood; a purported minute of a meeting, and a purported authorisation by Khan as "project manager" of BDS Developers.

The money was paid to Khan two days after Parker and Mohammed received the lump sum of R13,3m. It is evident that the entire project having been approved by the board could not have been close to completion by then, Austin said.

"In terms of the recorded transaction, BDS Developers appear to have helped helped themselves to an administration fee of R750 per erf," Austin said.

It is "disingenuous" for Parker and Mohammed to rely on an authority for payment given by Khan on behalf of BDS Developers for payment of R617 250.

"A recipient of money cannot by himself authorise a payment of which he is the beneficiary," Austin said.

Khan's claim that he represents some or all of the applicants for housing subsidies in Mandela Park is being investigated by the Office for Serious Economic Offences. Tommy Prins, assistant director for the OSEO, said yesterday that the body is still conducting the preparatory investigation.

DOUBLE THE INFLATION RATE

Rates increase lands municipality in court

SOUTH PENINSULA has increased rates by 19% across the board, without adjusting the imbalance between richer and poorer areas. Justice Writer **RONALD MORRIS** reports.

THE 19% rates increase imposed by the South Peninsula Municipality (SPM) from the beginning of this month is being challenged by a civic association in the Cape High Court

The increase was implemented despite the fact that 550 objections were received from ratepayers, civic and ratepayers' associations, churches, RDP forums, bodies corporate and two political party branches

The government has urged local authorities to consider the affordability of an increase and recommended six percent. Both Cape Town and Tygerberg municipalities have increased rates by 10%, but the SPM has imposed an increase that is almost double the inflation rate, the court was told

The Lotus River, Ottery, Grassy Park Residents' Association (Logra) is calling on the SPM to show why an order should not be made setting aside its decision on June 17 to implement a 19% rates increase and declaring its actions unlawful and unconstitutional.

Logra is supported by other civic associations, including Heathfield and District Residents' Association, Concerned Residents of Steenberg and Retreat, Zeekoevlei Residents' Association, Fairways Civic Association, Wynberg Resi-

dents' Association, New Retreat Residents' Association and the Greater Retreat and Steenberg Civic Association

In papers Richard Arends, of Logra, told the court the rates increase will inflict hardship on many poorer people and have a more deleterious effect, economic and financial, on the ratepayers

Communities represented range from the very rich to the very poor, from Constantia, Hout Bay and Llandudno at one end of the spectrum to Grassy Park and Lotus River at the other

The general rates for the various areas set out in SPM's 1998/1999 operating budget show that Grassy Park is paying 13,104 cents in the rand and Zeekoevlei 11,375, while Llandudno is paying 1,007 cents, Hout Bay 1,315 cents and Constantia 10,472 cents

Arends said the issue of the valuation of properties done in 1974 — a standard formula in respect of all properties within the SPM area — caused much concern and dis-sension

This has had the effect of creating a disparity in the base rate applicable to different areas, he said

Ratepayers have been unable to understand how the standard formula works and the SPM has

frequently been asked by civic organisations for a rational explanation, but it has failed or refused to give one

Graham Lawrence, chairperson of SPM's executive committee, had acknowledged that there are inequalities and imbalances that the proposed increases have failed to address

It was both irrational and inexplicable that, notwithstanding that the General Valuation is to be finalised in mid-1999, SPM had found it necessary to impose its 19% increase across the board

"Logic shows that the same rate-in-the rand increase will further exacerbate the historical imbalances which exist between Grassy Park and Zeekoevlei on the one hand and Constantia, Hout bay and Llandudno on the other," said Arends

The base-rate for the 19% was itself a discriminatory levy, and the additional 19% at this stage could not be condoned under the present constitutional dispensation

By adopting and applying the rigid policy that the SPM had, the council had failed to exercise a proper discretion, Arends said

The matter will be heard on Monday.

Gerald Josman, SC, and Norman Arendse, instructed by Johannes Spamer of T Smith and Associates, appear for Logra. Ashely Binns-Ward, instructed by Fairbridge Ardene and Lawton, appear for the SPM

(124)

CT 18/9/98

'Recognise opportunity'

PRISCILLA SINGH

NEWS that 100 000 low-cost houses could be in the pipeline for the Western Cape was expected to spread like wildfire through squatter camps on the Cape Flats and surrounding peninsula, where the majority of the province's homeless have been on housing lists for years

So far at least 52 000 houses have been built and 16 000 are under construction, but the current housing situation reflects a far greater problem than the council's projections indicate

When contacted for comment on Kassie Wiehahn's offer of R2 billion to build houses, civic representatives were at first confused but later excited as they realised the possibilities

Gladstone Ntamo, a councillor on the Cape housing committee, said he was happy that at last there was a glimmer of hope for solving the housing crisis in the province. He represents the Kakaza Trading Camp, Brown's Farm and Crossroads, where abject poverty and unemployment have led to a high crime rate

He said thousands of people

have been on waiting lists for years and have almost lost hope of getting a "real house"

"It is unacceptable that people are living in shacks and it is sad that some of them have come to accept that this is the only house they will ever have

"If people have houses then the crime rate will come down. This talk of building 100 000 new houses will give jobs to our people, it will improve the economy, but most importantly it will provide a proper roof for those who have always known leaky roofs," Ntamo said

He said other wealthy business people should follow Wiehahn's example

John Neels, an economic developer for the South African National Civic Organisation and the chairperson of the Provincial Development Council, said he had no problems with anyone who wanted to donate half their profits towards building houses

"We have to recognise there is a housing backlog, and other needs

in the province. We must go the Philadelphia route, where any developer must donate a percentage of the profits to the local community as Wiehahn is proposing to do. The reality is that government does not have money to fulfil all the housing demands

"I'm excited about Wiehahn's contribution. It should not be a point-scoring issue. There has been too much emphasis on the environmental needs in white areas, and an example is that so much money is pumped into Table

Mountain and the reserves around it. How come no one worries about sand storms, flooding and other physical problems on the Cape Flats?

"How come places like Oudekraal get huge coverage just because there are environmental concerns?"

"Why can't we use our natural resources to alleviate the problems? I'm praying all the roleplayers recognise this opportunity. As the saying goes, 'Do not look a gift horse in the mouth,'" Neels added



'Don't bargain with our needs'

(124) (126)
WILLEM STEENKAMP
STAFF WRITER

ET 11.10/98
USING "the needs of the people" as a bargaining chip by Oudekraal developer Kassie Wiehahn was unacceptable, Pan Africanist Congress parliamentarian Patricia de Lille said yesterday

De Lille, who has consistently been vocal on land issues and housing for the poor, said this yesterday in reaction to Wiehahn's proposal that if he be allowed to extend his proposed development plans for his Oudekraal property, R2 billion could be made available for low-cost housing in the Western Cape

Wiehahn believes that sum could be used to halve the provincial housing shortfall of 215 000 units

"I don't like the idea of using the needs of the people to bargain," De Lille said

She said an obviously already-wealthy person like Wiehahn had a "responsibility" to his fellow, poorer South Africans and should be prepared to part with some of his fortune in the interests of the common good

"He should give that money with no strings attached," she said

De Lille also felt there was not a shortage of funds for housing — but that the money was not being used effectively.

"We should be planning better and spending more efficiently," she said

De Lille asked what quality of low-income home would be built with the money proposed by Wiehahn, and would it be better than "the rubbish being built now"

De Lille was also opposed to Table Mountain bearing the brunt of development.

"I don't think we should damage or scar Table Mountain. It should be preserved for future South Africans," she said

'A deal with a sting in the tail'

GASANT ABARDER

(124)
CT 1/10/98

WHILE some Camps Bay residents were impressed with Oudekraal owner Kassie Wiehahn's proposal to the city council, others were totally opposed to the idea, the *Cape Times* concluded in a spot survey yesterday

"It's fantastic if R2 billion is going to the underprivileged for housing development.

"As a Camps Bay resident I'm not in favour of those kinds of development, but it's a shrewd deal with a sting in the tail," said David Gad.

"I'm totally against any development on Oudekraal

"There is plenty of open space elsewhere in Cape Town

"Eventually that whole area between Camps Bay and Llandudno will disappear and with it the ambience

"I know the Muslim community, who have ground there, won't be too pleased either," was Ryan Scheibe's response

"They've already ruined Camps Bay with houses on the mountain and now they are going to do it to Oudekraal.

"God knows what it will do to property values. It's beautiful to drive around there

"If his gesture is genuine then it's okay, but the Muslims may have something to say," said a resident who did not want to be named

"We'll have to wait and see what he (Wiehahn) wants to do with the property," S Noble said.

Imam Hassen Walele, an executive member of the Environment and Mazaar Action Committee, said "The whole idea smacks of securing votes for next year's elections

"Never in the history of South African politics have promises ever been delivered to the disadvantaged people

"What guarantees are there of this sudden change of heart?

"This land was purchased during an illegitimate era of our history and Wiehahn does not have development rights at this stage

"The National Monuments Council has provisionally declared the main portions a national monument, therefore freezing any development," Walele added

Net

Mayor in move to upgrade city's neglected areas

R300-m loan to boost equality project

(976) (124) ARG 2/10/98 (124)

NORMAN JOSEPH
STAFF REPORTER

Cape Town's new mayor, Nomaindia Mfeketo, has begun to make good her promise to bring equality to the city's people by signing a R300-million loan agreement with a bank.

The money will be used to upgrade neglected areas of the city, including Philippi, Weltevreden Valley, Brown's Farm and Crossroads. When Ms Mfeketo was inaugurated

ed on Tuesday, she said she believed in equity and redistribution of resources.

Ms Mfeketo, city manager Andrew Boraine and Development Bank of Southern Africa officials signed the 15-year-loan agreement in the mayor's parlour yesterday.

Mr Boraine said the first R150-million would be drawn soon and the balance later.

The council had targeted priority projects in certain areas and would introduce basic infrastructure to

improve the lives of 300 000 people

Suburbs benefiting from upgrading projects would be Philippi, Weltevreden Valley, Brown's Farm and Crossroads.

Div Botha, Development Bank's executive general manager of operations, said upgrading projects would empower emerging local contractors.

New city council executive committee chairman Saleem Mowzer said 70% of the loan would be used to finance sewerage and stormwater systems, roads, water mains, electric

ity and repairs to council buildings and housing.

After the elections four years ago it was a council-led initiative to make contact with the Development Bank to fund projects in underprivileged areas. "We have managed the financial resources of the city from capital projects to upgrade poor communities," Mr Mowzer said.

The loan would mean the council would be in a better position to deliver and improve services in areas such as Athlone and Manenberg.

Oudekraal: Pay me to go away

JOSEPH ARANES
STAFF REPORTER

Oudekraal owner Kasper Wiehahn says his controversial proposal to develop the land between Camps Bay and Llandudno on the slopes of the Twelve Apostles is not cast in stone and he is prepared to move off the mountain - if he is paid R2-billion

Cape Town city planner David Daniels says speculation about any development on the property is premature as no formal application has been submitted to the council or any other body for approval

And the Western Cape government has categorically rejected any "ribbon development" along Victoria Drive, as envisaged in Mr Wiehahn's latest proposals

Provincial Environment Minister Kobus Meiring said he would definitely not allow the coastal strip in the foothills of the Twelve Apostles to be "sacrificed"

But Mr Meiring emphasised that he wanted to see a deal negotiated with Mr Wiehahn, and that this could be permission to develop the part of his property closest to Camps Bay - portion seven - in exchange for



Give me R2-bn: Wiehahn

'I won't sacrifice nature', page 3

Oudekraal egg-dance, page 8

Wiehahn Q&A, page 8

"Unfortunately, none of these bodies came forward with a concrete alternative. But I'm prepared to leave the development alone and sell the land for R2-billion," said Mr Wiehahn

National Parks spokesman David Daitz confirmed a land swap had been raised in the past, but he felt it was an "empty offer"

"The problem with a deal like that is that we all have different perceptions about the value of the land and how that figure is reached. Last year, Mr Wiehahn was prepared to accept R1-billion"

Mr Daitz said that even if such a deal was accepted, which was not impossible, it would be difficult to negotiate a settlement as he was sure Mr Wiehahn would not accept land in the Karoo, for example

Mr Daniels said the concept of the new proposal, development rights in exchange for funding low-cost housing, was the subject of a meeting between Mr Wiehahn, himself and Cape Town city manager Andrew Boraine in August

"After the discussion, Mr Wiehahn promised to put this idea in writing, which

right to vote on issues

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he did, and we will respond to him formally in the next few days"

Mr Daniels said there was nothing wrong with the principle of using development profits to cross-sub-

sidise housing and other upgrading projects, but the development proposal could be looked at only when formal applications had been lodged

"Oudekraal is an extremely sensitive environmental site and we are applying to have the whole mountain

chain declared a world heritage site

"There is also huge public interest and before any approval can be given there will have to be extensive and intensive public participation"

Mr Wiehahn said the new constitution gave all citizens a voice and the

right to vote on issues

"If the majority of the people are against the development, I will hold it back, do a land swap or sell the property. But it can't be expected of me to walk away from a business proposition empty-handed," he said

Controversial Wiehahn deal is 'not set in stone'

Meiring rejects Oudekraal ribbon development plan

'I won't sacrifice God's own nature'

JOHN YELD
ENVIRONMENT REPORTER

The Western Cape government will not allow "ribbon development" along Victoria Drive as envisaged in controversial proposals by Oudekraal landowner Kasper Wiehahn

This assurance was given yesterday by cabinet minister Kobus Meiring, who resumed responsibility for the provincial environment portfolio this week after a cabinet re-shuffle by Premier Gerald Morkel

Mr Meiring described the coastal strip along the slopes of the Twelve Apostles at Oudekraal as "God's own nature" and said "I'm not going to be part of sacrificing that"

But Mr Meiring, who said he "nearly had a heart attack" when he saw press reports on the proposals, also emphasised that he wanted to see a deal negotiated with Mr Wiehahn. This could possibly involve permission to develop portion seven of the property, the area closest to

(14)

(14)

Camps Bay, in exchange for donating the rest of the land for incorporation into the new Cape Peninsula National Park

"I want to make my position very clear. I am all in favour of a negotiated deal and I feel very seriously that I would much rather sacrifice, say 5% - just to give a figure, now to achieve the conservation of the remaining 95% in perpetuity.

"But I am not for a ribbon development. I cannot stress enough we are extremely fortunate in the Western Cape to have one of the most important landmarks in the world within the boundaries of the city.

"And we can never allow this natural splendour of Cape Town, which really is the crux of the city's attractiveness from a tourism point of view, to be lost."

Referring to Mr Wiehahn's offer to subsidise low-cost housing in disad-



Kobus Meiring: 'no ribbon development'

vantaged areas in exchange for being allowed to develop a substantial section of the property - including high-density housing along 4km of Victoria Drive - Mr Meiring said he was "all in favour" of building houses for the poor.

"This is very important, but not at the cost of the Western Cape's most important characteristic. To change the rest of the Atlantic seaboard into another Monte Carlo is just too hastily to contemplate."

He said that R2-billion - Mr Wiehahn's offer to subsidise housing - was significant, but it was also "easy to play with figures."

"If we can really get our gambling board going, there will be R2-billion straight away, although that would not be used only for housing."

If permission was granted to develop portion seven of the Oudekraal

property, it would have to done in a sensitive and environmentally friendly way and would have to take cognisance of the existence of the kraam and graves, he said.

Mr Meiring said he would invite Mr Wiehahn to resume talks.

■ In a joint statement yesterday, three Western Cape provincial ministers - Kobus Meiring, Cecil Herandien and Michael Louis - said they had noted Mr Wiehahn's offer of R2-billion for low-cost housing in return for development rights at Oudekraal.

They fully supported the principle of tapping part of the proceeds of up-market development to help in addressing the province's many social problems.

"But, given the desperate situation of masses of low-income or jobless people in the Western Cape and the country as a whole, unrealistic expectations which may be created by an 'announcement' of this kind can have disastrous effects in terms of potential takers moving to the metropolitan area and the Western Cape as a whole," they warned.

ARG 2/10/98

Praise for controversial developer

Radio callers hail R2-billion housing offer in exchange for Oudekraal project

TWEET GAINSBOROUGH-WARING

Kasper Wiehahn, the man behind the proposed controversial Oudekraal development on the slopes of the Twelve Apostles, appears to have successfully wooed Cape Townians in need of houses.

Many callers to a Cape Talk radio phone-in show yesterday were quick to praise his "generosity" in offering R2-billion toward constructing low-

cost housing in exchange for permission to develop a strip of land between Camps Bay and Llandudno.

Mr Wiehahn has said that his proposal is not cast in stone and that he would be prepared to give up his plan if he could get R2 billion for the pristine coastal land.

Andre, a caller from Blaauwberg, said it was great for a developer to think beyond just making money and to help improve the lot of the underprivileged.

Another caller hailed Mr Wiehahn as a "great man" to make money available to build 100 000 houses.

Mr Wiehahn told callers that the Oudekraal development would consist of a mix of single residential, low-rise, commercial and recreational components.

The land, bought in 1965, stretches along the Atlantic coastline from Camps Bay to Llandudno. It is divided into portions, with that closest to Camps Bay (portion 7)

originally zoned for single residential development.

Asked by a caller if he would consider a higher density development, Mr Wiehahn said in view of planning done 30 years ago he would probably look at three to four-storey buildings.

To develop the other portions, Mr Wiehahn will have to apply to the city council for approval and zoning. He anticipates about 1 000 plots becoming available along the coast.

and suggested allocating a certain number for local buyers and for foreign buyers.

One of the critics of the scheme was Noseweek magazine editor Martin Welz, who questioned where the R2 billion would come from.

"R2-billion is an incredibly large amount of money," said Mr Welz. The land had originally been bought cheaply as it had been zoned as poor quality agricultural land. Mr Welz also criticised the fact

that no concrete proposal had been put forward for the development.

A Camps Bay resident said a large development would worsen existing traffic conditions for commuters in and out of the city at peak hours.

Nell van der Spuy, of Llandudno, a former legal adviser to the Cape Metropolitan Council, said the residential zoning on the portion adjacent to Camps Bay had lapsed and Mr Wiehahn would have to re-apply for development rights.



ON THE AIR: Kasper Wiehahn

(124)

Water for 75 000 poor Capetonians

LESS than five percent of Khayelitsha residents were paying for services, Water Affairs Minister Kader Asmal said yesterday

Speaking at the opening of the Khayelitsha RDP Water Project, he appealed to residents to be "law-abiding, moral and upstanding" and to pay for services

The project, one of the largest of its kind in the Western Cape, will supply piped water to more than

15 000 informal homes and provide more than 75 000 people with clean water

The project cost R2,1-million and more than R380 000 was paid to local labour and small contractors for plumbing and transport

Asmal said community involvement was vital for the project's success

"One critical area that must still be resolved for the project to be

completed successfully is cost recovery This, in plain language, means paying for what you get — something we all have to do, whether at supermarkets, at petrol stations, on buses or trains

"At the moment cost recovery levels are very poor and are of great concern to me It is distressing to know that in the whole of Khayelitsha, less than five percent of people are paying for services" — *Sapa*

ST(CM) 4/10/98

Boraine pours cold water on R2-bn offer by Oudekraal man

Council raises concerns

(124)
ARLT 6/10/98

JOSEPH ARANES
STAFF REPORTER

Oudekraal owner Kasper Wiehahn's financial calculations for the development of the land and his R2-billion offer to fund low-cost housing are over-optimistic and do not hold water, says Cape Town city manager Andrew Boraine.

Mr Boraine says the lack of housing for the city's homeless will not be remedied by money alone.

After a barrage of media reports on Mr Wiehahn's proposal to develop the pristine 4km stretch of mountain land between Camps Bay and Llandudno, Mr Boraine said that while the council approved in principle the concept of developers helping to pay for housing in disadvantaged areas, this could not be linked to planning approval.

He said the council executive committee would discuss Mr Wiehahn's idea today after having informed him of some of the council's reservations.

"In 1996 the council decided that the subdivision of portion 7 of the Oudekraal property, closest to Camps Bay, had lapsed," said Mr Boraine.

"The engineering plans then submitted by Mr Wiehahn were not considered and it is our opinion that a new application for the subdivision of the land should be submitted if he wishes to

develop this portion of land

"The remaining land is zoned as rural property, and for any development to take place there rezoning applications must be submitted. To date, we have not received any applications."

In its letter to Mr Wiehahn the council said that, while it took any proposal to solve the housing backlog seriously, there were several concerns.

These included outstanding legal issues over development rights on the land, the financial calculations made available through the media and planning and environmental concerns.

Mr Boraine said "Housing may be the city's number one priority, but this need should not be played up against the need to protect our natural environment and it can't be solved at the expense of the environment either."

"Pumping more money into the housing problem will not speed up the delivery of houses, as issues like the size of houses conflicts within communities and administrative hitches within the system are compounding the problems."

He added: "While we welcome the intense public debate about Oudekraal, which will inevitably be resolved politically, there is a real need for environmental protection on one hand and the need to address the serious problems of poverty and housing."

LITICAL ISSUE'

Wiehahn offer Tech 'let down' in Granger Bay deal

CHRIS BATEMAN

THE R300-million Granger Bay development, completed more than two years ago, was at one time subject to a R1m verbal agreement to subsidise disadvantaged students at the Cape Technikon's Hotel School on the site.

This commitment — the extent of which is disputed by former Granger Bay developer Ian Hirschon — and several others made to former landowner Cape Technikon have not been met.

The agreements were not honoured because Hirschon's company, Equikor, which entered into a multi-layered agreement with the Cape Technikon, sold its development rights to Meyer Budow

Theo Shippey, then-rector of the Cape Technikon but now retired, said last night he had been "disappointed and deeply saddened" as many verbal and written promises made by the developers had been broken.

"I was disturbed that we were not getting a fair deal, in spite of contractual undertakings," he said.

"There was clear understanding that there would be a partnership between the hotel school and the new hotel. We were to have some say in design and the way the hotel was operated so that a partnership could help train our students.

"To the best of my knowledge, this has not taken place"

These undertakings had been given in addition to the promises to subsidise students.

"It became a fight between us and the developers with long legal

consultations. I became greatly disillusioned with developers' not understanding what education was about. I got the feeling they did not mean what they said and that money was the cardinal motivator and not just education. I believe we lost out badly."

Shippey said Budow had undertaken a "complicated deal".

"There were a dozen major clauses which he challenged us to litigate," he said.

According to John Neels, head of economic development, culture and sport for the SA National Civics Organisation (Sanco), which had been a facilitator in the deal with Hirschon, the subsidy agreement involved R1m and was verbal.

"It was partly our fault," Neels said. "We did not follow up after Budow's take-over, so the technikon subsidy scheme did not come about"

Hirschon said that the agreement had been "in principle". He said he could not recall — and would have to refer to documentation — the amount involved.

"There were a lot of integrated deals to suit various parties," Hirschon said

All these obligations had been passed on to Budow's company

Budow said that if he had been party to a written R1m subsidy agreement, "I'd like to see it".

"I'm a property developer and whatever agreements I enter, I do so in writing."

Of his part in the deal, Budow said: "Nothing was offered to the community"

(124)

CT 6/10/98

Oudekraal owner's claim overstated — council

CT 6/10/98

THE CITY COUNCIL responded yesterday to the controversial Oudekraal trade-off development proposals. Environment Writer **MELANIE GOSLING** reports.

(96) (124)

THE City Council has told Oudekraal owner Kassie Wiehahn that his claim of being able to donate R2 billion to low-cost housing is "overstated" and that his assumption that he has existing development rights on his property is wrong.

City Manager Andrew Boraine said yesterday he had written to Wiehahn to say that if he wanted to develop Oudekraal, he would have to start from scratch by lodging new development proposals with the city.

His previous development plans, passed in 1957, were invalid. Wiehahn disputes this.

"Our response to Mr Wiehahn, dated October 5, points out that in our opinion his assumption that he had existing development rights is not correct. His financial projections appear to be overstated," Boraine said.

He told Wiehahn that if he submitted new development proposals, they would be subjected to an environmental impact assessment (EIA).

"All interested and affected parties will be identified and involved. Apart from extensive public participation, the EIA process will involve the Provincial Administration, the Cape Metropolitan Council and the City Council," he said.

If the EIA found that some of the Oudekraal land could be developed, Wiehahn would have to apply for rezoning and subdivision rights.

Wiehahn has offered the City



PROJECTIONS QUESTIONED:
Andrew Boraine

Council a trade-off deal whereby he will donate R2bn to the city to build 100 000 low-cost houses for the poor if he is allowed to develop a thousand luxury houses on his Oudekraal property, stretching along the Atlantic coast from Camps Bay almost to Llandudno.

Although the Oudekraal development issue fell within the council's jurisdiction, Boraine said they intended to work jointly with all spheres of government on the issue.

The council would approach Environment MEC Kobus Mering and ANC Western Cape leader Ebrahim Rasool as they favoured a "multi-party approach" to issues of environmental protection and the provision of low-cost houses.



'HARMONIOUS DEVELOPMENT':
Kassie Wiehahn

In Wiehahn's letter to the council, where he outlined his trade-off deal, he wrote "Oudekraal is currently the most valuable estate land in South Africa. During the past 24 months overseas buyers have paid unheard of prices for properties on the Atlantic seaboard."

"We are only interested in developing Oudekraal on the basis that all portions should be planned in conjunction with each other to create a harmonious development and to achieve maximum conservation."

Wiehahn told the council he planned to develop 1 000 plots on the land stretching the entire length of the Oudekraal property, which he would sell for R1,5 mil-

□ Turn to Page 3

Oudekraal

□ from Page 1

lion each. Rezoning of the land to allow the development of flats and commercial building would increase the value of the plots by about R1m each. Profits on the building projects would bring in further R250m, and 1 000 "donations" of R500 000 each would bring in R500m. Spending on the project would amount to R500m, leaving a net income of R2bn.

Wiehahn wrote: "Should the Cape Metropolitan Council/Government hand land in, for example, Guguletu, Khayelitsha over to the developer to develop economic housing at R20 000 per house, we should be able to build approximately 100 000 houses."

"The unemployed, homeless and underprivileged part of our population will support this project. This is the largest donation ever, which will create work and solve our housing problem at no

cost to the CMC or government."

Wiehahn suggested various options on the deal to the council:

- If the government contributed R10 000 to each low-cost house, they could push the number of houses built up to 200 000.

- The 100 000 low-cost houses could be sold for R20 000 each with a bond over 20 years at a low interest rate (10%) granted by the developing firm, which would build another 100 000 houses over 20 years.

- The council could sell 40%

of the low-cost houses and charge rental for 40%, which would generate more income for further low-cost houses to be built.

"This project is never ending and should solve the housing problem in Cape Town," he wrote.

Wiehahn also discussed with the council the possibility of extending the Oudekraal development onto state land adjacent to his property. This means the luxury housing development would extend to Llandudno.

City lays down law to Oudekraal developer

ANC says 'No' to Wiehahn's plan

ARG 9/10/98

JOHN YELD
ENVIRONMENT REPORTER

The City of Cape Town has confirmed that Oudekraal owner Kasper Wiehahn does not have township development rights on any of his property, and that he will have to submit development proposals from scratch.

In another development, the African National Congress has given Mr Wiehahn's controversial Oudekraal proposals a categorical "No", saying that his R2-billion offer for low-cost housing "does

not exist" This follows a meeting on Tuesday between Mr Wiehahn and an ANC delegation led by Western Cape leader Ebrahim Rasool

Cape Town executive committee chairman Saleem Mowzer said the council had formally replied to Mr Wiehahn on his development proposals, which included the R2-billion "offer", telling him

- His assumption of existing development rights was incorrect
- His financial projections appeared to be "over-stated"
- Any development proposal regarding the Oudekraal property

had be lodged anew

■ Any proposal lodged would be subjected to a full environmental impact assessment

Mr Mowzer said "Council welcomes the intense public debate about Oudekraal and sees it as an indication of a real concern for environmental protection, on one hand, and the need to address the serious problems of poverty and housing, on the other"

The ANC said Mr Wiehahn's proposal to support low-cost housing projects in other areas would accrue only as a result of the sale of 1 000 erven on the Oudekraal site



MANDLA MNYAKAMA

Home from home: Olga Melaphi in front of her shack in Site B, Khayelitsha. 'I can't blame those who cannot afford to pay because we are all struggling here'

Khayelitsha's monthly struggle to pay own way

Residents divided over service demands

(124)
ARG 9/10/98

MANDLA MNYAKAMA
STAFF REPORTER

The only money Nomvuyiso Mekuti makes comes from the sale of snacks and sweets

But the mother of two from Victoria Mxenge informal settlement in Khayelitsha tries to pay the council a few rands every month for rates and services

"I'm satisfied with everything I get from the municipality here," says Ms Mekuti, 34. She believes other residents should follow her example, "because the Government can not do anything without money, and these services are very important in our lives"

Olga Melaphi is a single parent and mother of two who lives in Site B, Khayelitsha. She has worked as a char for the past 10 years and whenever she can, she pays her rent. It is difficult for unemployed people, she says

"I can't blame those who cannot afford to pay because we are all struggling here and the rate of unemployment is rising every day. Most people just live without any hope"

Ms Mekuti and Ms Melaphi face the same dilemma as many people in Khayelitsha: how to pay for municipal services when you earn barely enough to survive. Poverty and unemployment appear to be the main reasons why Khayelitsha residents delay paying their bills

The problem was highlighted again last weekend when Minister of Forestry and Water Affairs Kader Asmal, during the launch of a water project in the area, said only 5% of Khayelitsha residents paid their municipal service bills

Mr Asmal appealed to residents to start paying

Some people in Khayelitsha say that the policy of non-payment for services - an important instrument of resistance in the struggle years - has ended and they now realise that it is unlawful not to pay

Officials at Tygerberg municipal offices in Khayelitsha say the situation is much better than before because many residents are co-operating

But the municipality acknowledges the fact that, due to the high rate of unemployment in the area, others cannot afford to pay



House proud: Nomvuyiso Mekuti of Victoria Mxenge site B, Khayelitsha. 'I am satisfied'

for the services. The council also tries to ensure that all residents who have full-time jobs pay for services

The chief executive officer of the City of Tygerberg, Dave Wilken, said the Tygerberg Municipality, of which Khayelitsha is part,

is taking action against people who do not pay. "I agree with Mr Asmal. People must contribute towards the governing of the city which they are part of. That will enable us to extend services and do more," said Mr Wilken

'HOUSING OFFER DOES NOT EXIST'

ANC blows Wiehahn's 'offer' out of the water

ET 9/10/98

(124)

KASSIE WIEHAHN'S Oudekraal proposal has been forcefully rejected by the ANC. He says that now it's time for "trade-offs". Environment Writer **MELANIE GOSLING** reports.

THE ANC has blown Kassie Wiehahn's Oudekraal proposal out of the water by issuing a statement yesterday saying his R2 billion offer for low-cost housing "does not exist".

The party also said Oudekraal should not be turned into a high-density, luxury development site, nor does it believe trade-off deals like this are the way to fund low-cost housing.

"The ANC will meet Mr Wiehahn to persuade him to recognise the potential of this unique piece of South Africa's heritage and its benefit to all South Africans," the statement said.

After meeting Wiehahn on Wednesday to consider his proposal, the ANC said the deal could only happen if Wiehahn could sell some 1 000 erven at Oudekraal.

"Wiehahn's proposal is that these erven would be sold to selected super-rich international and local buyers. We do not believe this is the most appropriate use of the land, nor do we believe this is an appropriate way to raise funds for low-cost housing.

"We have satisfied ourselves that the R2bn offer for low cost housing does not exist."

Many people saw Wiehahn's proposal to "donate" R2bn to build 100 000 houses in the province's disadvantaged areas in exchange

for Oudekraal development rights as a political ploy. The city council had already turned down his development application for Oudekraal two years ago.

Wiehahn's offer amounts to a quarter of the country's low-cost housing budget, and would provide half the Western Cape's housing needs for the poor.

Because of this size of the offer, many felt Wiehahn had painted politicians into a corner, particularly the ANC, whose main constituency is the poor.

Now that the ANC has shot holes in his proposal, it is effectively a dead duck.

The city council had said earlier that the authorities could not legally do deals with the public when they considered an application to develop. Legal opinion is that if they were to do so, any decisions they came to were likely to be set aside by a court on review.

The ANC has backed this, and said yesterday any proposal for development at Oudekraal must "follow the due process as required by law".

They said this should be accompanied by broad public consultation and studies to examine environmental, religious and other factors on which development of the site may have an impact.

The ANC would consult all

"stakeholders", including Environment Minister Pallo Jordan, before arranging a follow-up meeting with Wiehahn to persuade him to "recognise the potential of Oudekraal and its benefits to all South Africans".

Wiehahn did not seem deterred by the ANC's statement, and told the *Cape Times* yesterday that he thought it was a "very interesting document".

"This might be where trade-offs begin," he said.

Asked what he thought of their claim that his R2bn offer did not exist, Wiehahn replied: "The way I read it is that they're saying I have no development rights on portions 6,5,4 and 3, and therefore if I can't build houses there, I can't raise the money."

Wiehahn still maintains he has development rights, but says he cannot say yet if he will go to court to prove it.

Wiehahn insists that he will press ahead with his proposal. "I'm seeing Kobus Mering (MEC for the Environment) on Monday and there are some other meetings which people have asked me to keep confidential."

Would he take legal action if the authorities expropriated Oudekraal to include it in the Cape Peninsula National Park?

"Look, expropriation is a method of purchase under pressure, and whether I accept it depends on what they offer. If the trade-off is good, it won't be a problem."

Call for all to join Masakhane projects

'We're on the road to success'

ARG 12/10/98

CHARLES PHAHLANE
PARLIAMENTARY BUREAU

(24)

Masakhane is turning the corner from a payment-for-services campaign to consolidating its experiences and expanding on themes that address nation-building through community participation, partnerships, patriotism and civic duty, says national co-ordinator Chris Nissen.

More than 1 500 activities are planned for this week to celebrate Masakhane Focus Week, including the handing over of land title deeds and houses, the opening of clinics and water projects

The activities for the week are divided into four categories showcasing Government delivery, creating awareness of violence and crime prevention, and protesting against the abuse of women and children, emphasising the importance of culture and sport in encouraging nation building; and expressing civic duty through cleaning campaigns and the launch of a waste management campaign in Tembisa, Gauteng

These activities indicated the extent to which the Government has managed to transform the country, said Mr Nissen

Masakhane sought to create an awareness of these projects, including affirmative action and the opening up of job opportunities for black

professionals, he said

"There are tangible and non-tangible deliveries that have taken place and Masakhane is marketing that. But Masakhane markets that on the basis of a partnership between the Government and citizens."

Mr Nissen said Masakhane formed the background against which the Reconstruction and Development Programme and the concept of African renaissance should be seen

People used to band together through self-help schemes to build schools, classrooms and churches for themselves. They did not expect Government funding.

So, the Masakhane focus week is a celebration of what people in partnership with Government can do for themselves, he said

"It is a way of people saying that this week we are going to celebrate our successes. But we are also going to demonstrate to the world that we can do things for ourselves. That is the essence of African renaissance

"What (Deputy President Thabo) Mbeki is asking for in the African renaissance, we have been doing all along. But let us do it better," he said

When Masakhane was launched in 1995, the issue of payment for services was central to it and successes have been recorded with debt collection. Mr Nissen said no new debts had been incurred and the old debt had not increased

He felt, however, that the Govern-

ment should start thinking along the lines of writing off the debt which was not only from township residents, but included white communities who owed "huge sums" as well as other institutions. The debt problem had nearly derailed the focus of Masakhane and risked turning it into a debt-collection agency.

A challenge for Masakhane was the theme of civic education where citizens learnt to be responsible for themselves and other citizens.

Mr Nissen spoke with passion about civic education. "It deepens responsibility as far as democracy is concerned. People will take responsibility for the democracy"

Future challenges for Masakhane were to use its concept and practice in approaching issues such as job creation, moral renewal, poverty alleviation and anti-crime initiatives

He said Masakhane was not a project that could be completed after a few years, but was an on-going process of government

"Masakhane is a road of success. Every mile that you walk is a mile of success

"It will probably take us many years before we develop a culture of civic duty, for example

"The most important thing for Masakhane is to bring out what the individual and the collective can do to say 'This is my country. I belong here. I have to make a contribution'," said Mr Nissen



LEON LESTRADE

Here to stay: about 300 families moved on to developed land at the Weltevreden Valley site at the weekend

City land grab 'scam' sparks row

LYNNE RIPPENAAR
STAFF REPORTER

The illegal occupation of developed land in Weltevreden Valley has been labelled a scam by the Cape Town Municipality's housing committee chairman and by Gladstone Ntamo, a member of the committee.

Mr Ntamo said that the Integrated Services Land Project already had allocated 1 015 sites in Weltevreden Valley to the Samora Machel community

However, during a meeting with the SA National Civics Organisation (Sanco) and leaders of the Samora Machel community held on Thursday, extra land for about 428 families was demanded

He said the Cape Town housing

committee had urged the community to write to the housing committee so that an alternative plan could be made to accommodate the extra families.

Mr Ntamo said the committee had only counted 312 illegal structures at the site

Mr Ntamo said this could mean "there are leaders who are corrupt in that area" who had taken money from individuals in exchange for land

"It seems like they are using Sanco's name.

"I believe there is corruption in this area"

He said the sudden disappearance of Shooter Nobom, chairperson of the Samora Machel branch of Sanco who allegedly told residents to occupy the land, made this more likely.

Mr Ntamo said that the housing

committee would consult its legal department today about action to be taken against occupants "This is, in fact, illegal occupation," he said.

He believed this was "a planned campaign from whatever quarter", using Sanco as a "launching pad for this action".

The majority of Sanco's members are members of the United Democratic Movement

■ Gauteng housing and land affairs MEC Dan Mofokeng has allocated residential sites to about 1 000 families, formerly from informal settlements, in Boipatong near Vanderbijlpark, reports Sapa

The allocation of sites on Friday was made through the department's Mayibuye programme, aimed at providing land ownership to the landless

(124) (207) ARG 12/10/98

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Bold plan to solve

Oudekraal poser

ALU 12/10/98 (124)

LENDRE OLNER
STAFF REPORTER

A former top Cape Metropolitan Council official has come up with bold suggestion to resolve the impasse over the development of Oudekraal.

Neil van der Spuy, who retired as the council's director of legal services in January and is now chairman of the Landudno Ratepayers' Association, suggests that Victoria Drive be extended across portion 7 of Kasper Wiehahn's land, that closest to Camps Bay, which will allow him to develop almost a kilometre of seafront.

Mr Wiehahn has offered to give the city R2-billion towards low cost housing in exchange for permission to develop a 4km strip of coastal land between Camps Bay and Landudno.

He has said that if the Cape Town City Council allowed him to put up high-density luxury housing on the full length of his Oudekraal property, he would pay for 100 000 houses wherever authorities said they were needed most.

There has been a public outcry about building on the pristine coastal land and about the concept of trading development rights.

Mr Van der Spuy has suggested that Victoria Drive be deviated from

the coast across portion 7, rising gradually and connecting with Fulham Road in Camps Bay. Portion 7 was zoned for single residential development in the 1950s although the Cape Town city council says these rights have lapsed.

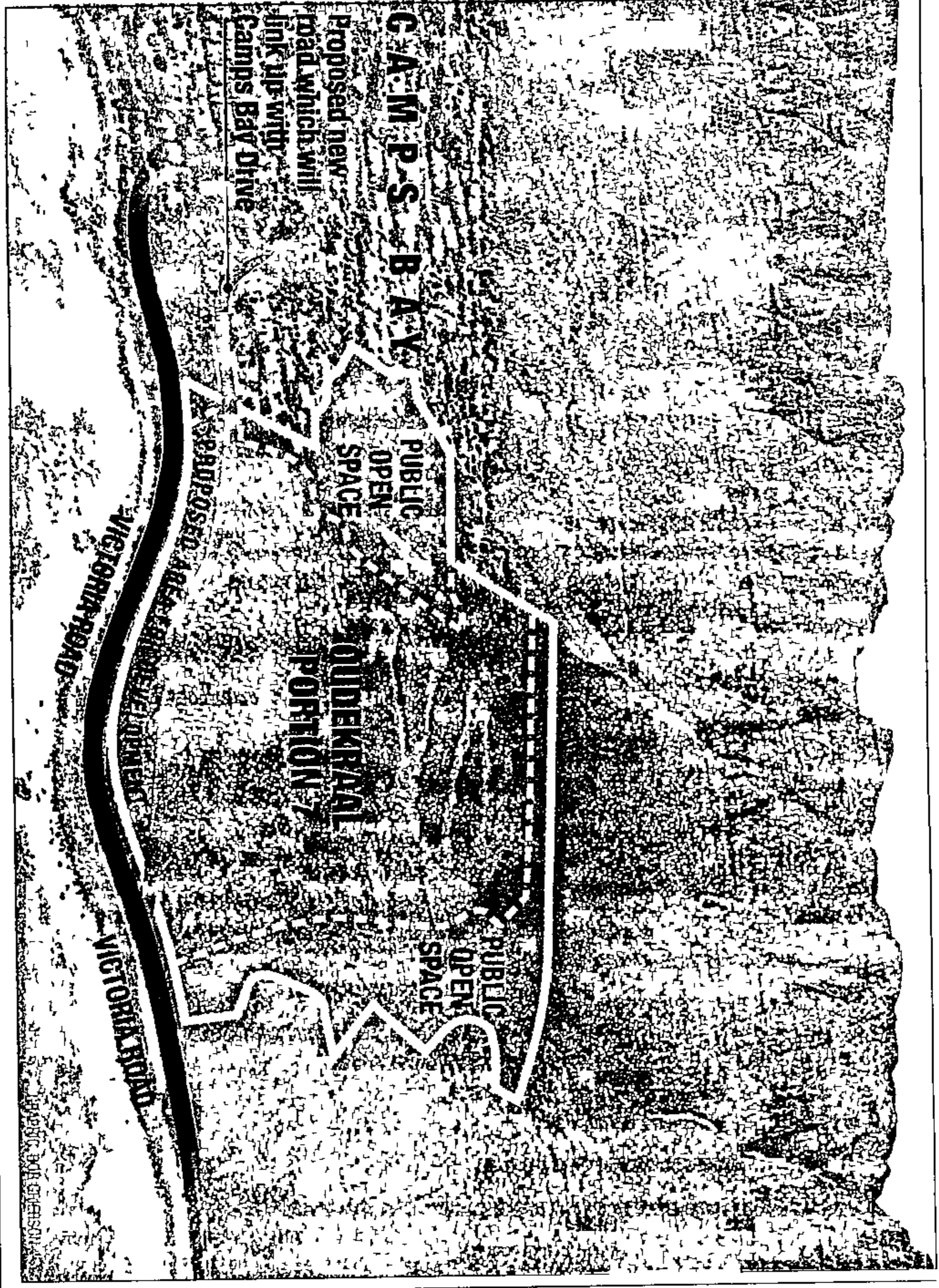
Mr Van der Spuy said this would create a triangle of land between the new road across portion 7 and Victoria Road along the coast that could be developed.

"This triangle will have a sea frontage of about three-quarters of a kilometre," Mr Van der Spuy said.

He suggested that the council allow Mr Wiehahn maximum development within this triangle but with a height restriction not to exceed the level of the new road.

"One envisages a full range of zonings to provide for apartments, restaurants, shops, hotels and even perhaps a marine development on the sea side of the old road. "As is customary, Mr Wiehahn should be required to contribute to the cost of the new road."

In return for these enhanced development rights, which probably more than equated with the value of his property, Mr Wiehahn should cede the balance of the land free to the National Parks Board, said Mr Van der Spuy.



Showdown looms on land grab

MANDLA MNYAKAMA
STAFF REPORTER

Confrontation is looming between Cape Town Municipality and squatters who occupied land in the Weltevreden Valley near Philippi at the weekend.

The squatters, from the Samora Machel settlement, have vowed not to return to the unhygienic conditions they left.

They say they will go only if the municipality provides alternative land.

The Weltevreden Valley land has been earmarked for a housing project.

Yesterday, squatters were still erecting shacks there.

Phathiswa Mpulwana, a mother of two, said if police moved in

with bulldozers she and her neighbours would ask them to stop

Ms Mpulwana said they had waited long enough on unserviced land at Samora Machel where they had stinking bucket toilets that were collected only once a week.

Her sentiments were echoed by Nomsa Valeshiya, a mother of five, who said she, too, had had enough.

Most of the squatters said the decision to move was their own, taken at a meeting on Sunday.

They all denied reports that Samora Machel SA National Civics Association chairman Shooter Nombombo advised them to occupy the land.

Instead, they alleged that local councillors were corrupt.

Whitey Jacobs, chairman of the city council housing committee said the Weltevreden land had

been allocated to 15 communities.

"As the city council, we allocated plots according to an agreement taken by squatters themselves.

"We find it very strange for the Samora Machel community to sabotage that decision," said Mr Jacobs.

"Some people from Samora Machel have plots where they already own houses.

"But they occupied the new plots for their own benefit," said Mr Jacobs.

He claimed most of the squatters were on the council's waiting list for housing, but wanted to jump the queue.

Mr Jacobs said councillors had not been involved in the land allocation. The land allocation was done by squatters and the Integrated Services Land Project.

ARC 13/10/98

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LAND TO BE CLEARED BY FORCE

Invaders to be driven off

A MEMBER of the housing committee believes community leaders have sold Weltevreden Valley land to people and are unable to repay the money. **ERIC NTABAZALILA** reports

FORCE is to be used today to remove people illegally occupying land in Weltevreden Valley

Attempts to negotiate an agreement have failed

About 300 people moved illegally onto the land, earmarked for houses, and began building shacks on Sunday

Whitey Jacobs, chairperson of Cape Town's housing committee, said last night that police had advised the Cape Town City Council not to act yesterday as this would have led to unnecessary confrontation.

"We thought, after giving these people enough time to think about the invasion, they would pull out, but instead they are coming in large numbers," Jacobs said. "There are now more than 300 people in the area. We will be acting to bring the situation back to normality."

Jacobs said there had not been any confrontations between police and the illegal occupants, but the situation was tense

The City of Cape Town viewed the invasion in the most serious light as it worked against the implementation of properly administered housing policies and the rapid release of land for housing, Jacobs said. Land invasions tended to undermine and undo these processes.

The participants in the land invasion were outsiders, Jacobs said. They had not been involved in the extensive consultations on which the orderly allocation of erven was based.

The squatters claim that they were given the go-ahead to move onto the land by a branch chairperson of the South African National Civics Organisation, Shooter Nobom.

CT 13/10/98

(124) (107)



BID TO AVERT CONFLICT:
Saleem Mowzer

Dismissing this, Sanco's regional chairperson in Khayelitsha, Chris Stali has said that Nobom told the people that the land was not earmarked for them. Stali said the invaders acted of their own accord

Gladstone Ntamo, a member of the housing committee, said the City Council had done its utmost to avert a confrontation.

"We have had meetings with these people to try to convince them that the illegal occupation of the land is not a good thing," he said.

"To me it's quite clear that some leaders within the community have sold some of the land to people in the area and surrounding areas and are faced with the problem of not being able to pay these people back. That is why they are causing this confusion

"I think we have been fair enough to these people. It is time that we show them that our patience is running out."

Ntamo said the City Council had tried in vain to contact Nobom and his "clique" to clarify the allegations.

The chairperson of the Cape Town executive committee, Saleem Mowzer, said extensive negotiations had been held with the illegal occupants on Sunday to minimise the potential for conflict and to restore due process in favour of the people who had rights to the land.

'Priceless' Oudekraal on books at R202 700

New valuation due

ARG 14/10/98

LENORE OLIVER
STAFF REPORTER

Kasper Wiehahn's "priceless" Oudekraal property is worth only R202 700 - on paper.

This is the value of the extensive sea-front and mountainside property in terms of the latest municipal valuation, carried out in 1974

In real terms, if Mr Wiehahn is unable to get development rights, he may not be able to realise much more than that for the land because it is protected by a veritable thicket of zoning and legislation restrictions.

Meanwhile, Mr Wiehahn does not pay rates because the land is zoned rural, which is not rateable

Phillip van Ryneveld, Cape Town Municipality executive director of corporate finance, said municipal valuations in some areas of Cape Town had not been done since 1974

But the municipality was compiling an up-to-date valuation roll

"This will be a long process, but we hope to get it going as soon as possible," he said

Mr Wiehahn has offered R2-billion to the city for low-cost housing in return for the right to build high-density housing on a 4km ribbon of coastal

land between Camps Bay and the new hotel at Oudekraal

While the market value of the 400ha Oudekraal property could conceivably run into billions of rands if developed the way he wants it to be, it is doubtful Mr Wiehahn could ever realise its full financial potential because of the many restrictions imposed by zoning, title deeds and national monument laws

Japie Hugo, municipal director of land and management, said the existing rural zoning permitted Mr Wiehahn to build a main dwelling and two labourers' cottages on each of the five portions of his land.

But even this limited development depended on many restrictive criteria.

Portions four, five, six and seven were national monuments and he would need the approval of the National Monuments Council before building

There might also be species of flora and fauna on the land protected under environmental legislation.

Mr Hugo said that if Mr Wiehahn did not get development rights, whatever he decided to do with the land would have to be environmentally friendly

If Mr Wiehahn's bid for development rights failed, an environmental impact assessment study would be carried out to determine the alternatives

Four Sanco officials held over land invasion

Police stand guard as council bulldozers demolish Weltevreden shacks

NORMAN JOSEPH AND MANDLA MNYAKAMA
Staff Reporters

Police arrested four SA National Civics Organisation officials as the Cape Town Municipality evicted more than 300 land invaders at Weltevreden Valley near Philippi yesterday.

Over the past few days, swarms of people from Samora Machel informal settlement had moved on to the land. As municipal officials moved in with police in Casspirs and trucks, angry squatters gathered in Oliver Tambo Drive waved hammers and planks, chanted freedom songs and taunted the large contingent.

When they failed to comply with the order to remove their shacks within five minutes, police and the demolition team moved in. Shacks of wood and corrugated iron were razed and the material was loaded on trucks and taken away.

It has been alleged that Sanco officials told people living in Samora Machel on Sunday to move on to the land earmarked for low-cost housing. The Sanco officials were arrested in the area in connection with this allegation.

But Sanco has distanced itself from the land invasion. Sanco Western Cape leader Roseberry Sonto stated "media and individual rumours" that his organisation had spearheaded moves by homeless people to occupy the land. Mr Sonto, African National



No way! a squatter at Weltevreden Valley tries to stop a front-end loader

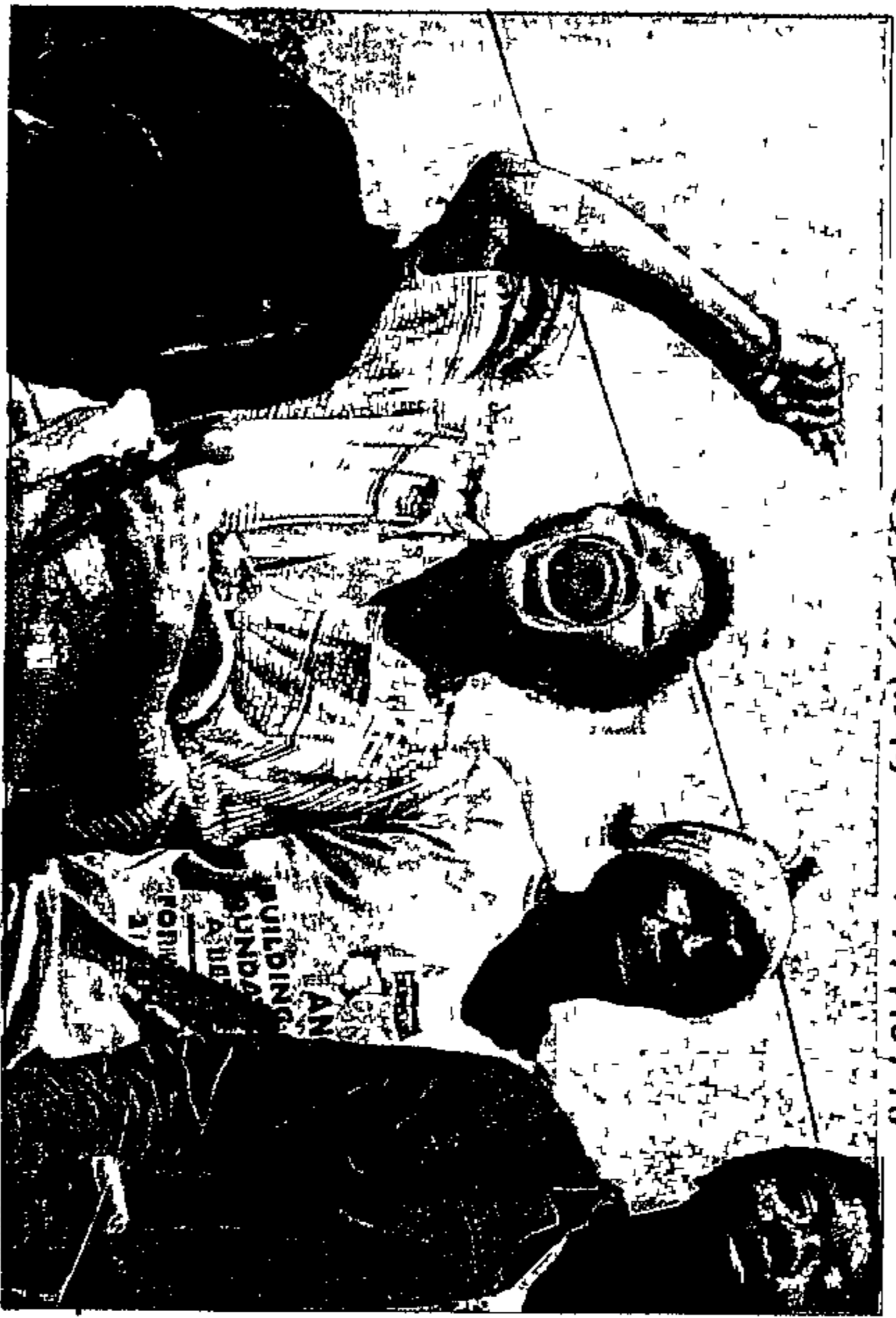
Congress MP and spokesman on housing, said it was against Sanco's policy to promote illegal occupation of any kind.

The occupation was grossly unfair to prospective home owners in low cost housing projects. "We did not stand back as spectators but were part of a contingent asking people to leave the land peacefully," he said. City council executive committee chairman Saleem Mowzer said the

council would investigate allegations against Sanco. "We will comment after the investigation when a full report has been drawn up."

Mr Mowzer said illegal land occupation was viewed in a serious light by the council because it was counter-productive to the implementation of properly administered housing policies and the rapid release of land for housing.

"Illegal occupations tend to undermine and undo these processes."



Anger: a woman taunts police as they move in to demolish shacks in the illegally occupied Weltevreden Valley

Municipal housing director Mervyn Bregman said the development of Weltevreden Valley as a housing estate for 3 500 families was a provincial government project with-

in the Cape Town municipal area. Phases one, two and four were already legally settled and 446 of 780 erven in phase three had been allocated and occupied.

"The vacant land which was targeted by illegal occupants is made up of 334 erven not yet occupied by legitimate beneficiaries and public spaces reserved for recreational

purposes and amenities," he said. Councillor Whitey Jacobs, the chairman of the council housing committee, said that in view of the project's importance, the council had agreed to help the Western Cape government on the housing project with logistical and technical support.

One of the squatters who moved on to the land, Sylvia Madun, a mother of five, said she did not know where she was going to sleep at night now her home had been destroyed. Julius Kwaaman, who used to be a stroller, alleged that he found his TV and hi-fi missing when he arrived to see his locked shack demolished.

The Weltevreden Valley is in Samora Machel, an area which initially started as a tiny squatter settlement in a bushy area as early as 1987 and developed over the years, with people from Langsa, KTC, Gugulethu, Nyanga and Khayelitsha moving to the area to occupy sites in the vacant land along Vanguard Drive.

In the early 1990s the land was upgraded for housing development and people from areas that included Nyanga, as well as the earlier squatters, were allocated one-room houses built on the serviced sites with money allocated for government subsidies.

Early this year, another piece of land adjacent to the developed area was upgraded to serviced sites. These were earmarked for low-cost houses for people who squatted in such townships as KTC, Langsa and Gugulethu.

(SAPA) (AP) ART 14/10/98



Wiehahn spells out vision of Oudekraal 'paradise'

Between bribe and threat – opponents

ANDREA WEISS
POLITICAL REPORTER

Oudekraal land-owner Kasper Wiehahn believes developing the land he owns along the Atlantic seaboard will make a great contribution to tourism.

He has a dream that his children will in the future go to sea, look back at a developed Oudekraal with pride and say: "You know, dad, or granddad, did something right!"

His vision is for a high density development, using the small cliffs to off-set low-rise flats with open spaces in between.

He also dreams of building a grant "arc de triomphe" along this coast to immortalise those who buy into any housing project there because their

contribution will be a "donation" to the country's future.

Mr Wiehahn, who has thrown the cat among the pigeons by offering R2-billion for low-cost housing in exchange for development rights at Oudekraal, was addressing the Cape Town Press Club.

He said Oudekraal was a "very small piece of land" within the Cape Peninsula, with only half of its 400ha open for development, because the rest fell above the 150m contour line.

"The beauty of Oudekraal will have a bigger attraction to tourism by being developed than by not being developed," he said.

If the decision was that portions six, five, four and even three remained undeveloped, those who wanted the land should buy it as a

ART 15/10/98

"matter of respect for the owner".

He said he would also consider a land swap.

He claimed he had already spent R3.5-million on an engineering plan for portion seven, the part that, in his view, had township development rights. He said he had not tested these rights in court because he did not believe the 1957 township plan was still appropriate.

His lawyers had, however, advised him that his rights for developing portion seven were "pretty sound", he said.

Mr Wiehahn compared his vision for Oudekraal with the development of Sun City, the Waterfront and, more recently, Century City.

He said his family bought the land from Sir Philip Henry Price in

1965 with the view to developing it one day, not pre-emptive, but according to a single plan.

He suggested that his figure of R2-billion offered for low-income housing might be "understated".

Asked whether he would not be better remembered if he gave the land to Cape Town, Mr Wiehahn said he thought it was "unfair" for a individual to donate that much.

"I think everybody should make a donation. Let's have the silver platter out and I'll take that money in exchange for the land."

■ In a letter handed to reporters after the meeting, the Wildlife and Environment Society of South Africa said it believed Mr Wiehahn's offer amounted to "something between a threat and a bribe".

Oudekraal 'deal' on the cards

ANDREA WEISS
POLITICAL REPORTER

(124)

ART 28/10/98

Provincial Environment Minister Kobus Meiring says environmental impact studies will be done on the controversial Oudekraal land, and that cultural sensitivities will be taken into account if any deal is made with owner Kasper Wiehahn.

Mr Meiring said in a provincial debate yesterday that he believed the best course of action would be to reach an agreement so that 90% of the land could be preserved for conservation purposes.

Mr Meiring said there were several principles that had to be taken into account.

These were that as much land as possible should be preserved for

future generations, but that property rights had to be respected.

And that if the Government wanted to procure land for conservation it would have to rely on donations or expropriation – an option that was unaffordable, which meant agreements would have to be reached.

Mr Meiring said striking a deal on Oudekraal would not be setting a precedent, as this had happened with land at Sandy Bay.

Rob McGregor of the African National Congress said his party had concluded that the R2-billion offer for housing did not exist because it depended on the sale of 1 000 erven to the "super rich" and commercial development rights.

He said the ANC was concerned about the poor, the need for housing, cultural beliefs and the protec-

tion of the natural environment, which was why it had taken the initiative to call a meeting with Mr Wiehahn.

The development of Oudekraal was not a way of raising funds for housing.

■ The legislature also heard yesterday that 106 ambulance staff had left the service this year, 78 from Cape Town Municipality, 18 from the Cape Metropolitan Council and 10 from rural councils.

Health Minister Peter Marais said the resignations would not result in a crisis, but Daniel Silke of the Democratic Party cited two examples of poor ambulance service last weekend: a man, who had had a heart attack died waiting for an ambulance, while a woman with a ruptured ectopic pregnancy was stranded for six hours.

FIRST TO MOVE IN DECEMBER

City squatters set to become home-owners

CT 28/10/98

(124)

CARDBOARD City squatters are happy to move from under the Western Boulevard flyover to Montrose Park in Mitchells Plain as home-owners, reports **ERIC NTABAZALILA**.

MANY residents of Cardboard City are about to become home-owners for the first time

Acting city housing director Mervyn Bergman said negotiations have taken more than two years, but have resulted in all concerned being happy with the results

"We convinced them that the city council can't provide services to them in that area. No promises were made to them," he said

He agreed that the process had taken too long, but said all of them, including the residents of Montrose Park, had to be accommodated

"As the city council, we are happy that everybody is comfortable with the results. Now we have to check whether they are eligible for the government housing subsidy," Bergman said

The houses have not yet been built

"We are not going to relocate all the residents at once. The first group of the community will be relocated on December 15"

The city council has tried on several occasions to move the Cardboard City community to Mitchells Plain, but their new neighbours vehemently objected to the move, claiming they had not been consulted. The relocation of the residents is expected to cost

about R500 000

Zelda Ndlumbini, secretary of the Cardboard City Residents' Committee, agreed that everybody was happy with the outcome

"We are families here, and I believe all these people will be happy to have a decent house with a bathroom, a toilet, a bedroom and a yard — something they have never had."

"I will be among the first people to move into my new home. Every night since the agreement was reached, I have dreamt about being in my own house," she said.

City council officials will visit the area today so that residents can fill out housing subsidy forms.

Although everybody in the squatter area is over the moon about the decision, there are some who are concerned because they are unemployed and it would be difficult for them to look after their new homes. Some residents do piece-work in the city centre and would have to come to town every day to earn their living.

Ndlumbini assured residents that they should not worry, as city manager Andrew Boraine had promised that members of the pri-

vate sector had agreed to sponsor train tickets for them for a year after they move to Montrose Park.

Altogether 340 sites have been identified near Lentegeur Psychiatric Hospital for relocating the residents. Eighty of the houses will be given to the Cardboard City residents and the rest will be given to Mitchells Plain families who need accommodation.

The first eight squatters who were spotted under the bridge in December 1992 were evicted by the city council.

The community later approached the Legal Resource Centre, which helped them to continue staying in the area.

The pattern of rebuilding and demolishing the dilapidated buildings has continued over

the years and the community has grown to 80 families.

In July, the city council decided to put a security fence around the area and place a guard at the entrance in a bid to keep out criminals who were using the place to hide after committing crimes.

This was welcomed by the residents, who defended themselves as a community of hard-working people. But the council was forced to find a solution after pressure from businesses in the vicinity that were affected by further delays in the relocation of the squatters

"Every night since agreement was reached, I have dreamt of being in my own home."

R2-m housing boost for squatters

NORMAN JOSEPH
METRO REPORTER

The provincial housing board has approved more than R2-million in subsidies for Cardboard City shack dwellers and destitute Mitchell's Plain people.

The money will be used to build houses in Montrose Park, Mitchell's Plain. (307) (124)

Provincial housing director Gerrit Erasmus said the approval was subject to the condition that the City of Cape Town prioritised housing needs in its area of jurisdiction.

A plan by the municipality to move about 80 Cardboard City families to a transit camp near Montrose Park at a cost of R500 000 while their

houses were being built was vehemently opposed by the Mitchell's Plain Councillors' Forum this week.

Members of the all-party forum said Mitchell's Plain residents did not want to see homeless people going from "shack to shack"

They wanted people moved from shacks to proper housing.

Another of the forum's grievances was that while Cardboard City enjoyed preferential treatment from the council, other squatter communities had been waiting for houses for many years

Acting housing director Mervyn Bregman said it was decided at a forum meeting this week that 20 Cardboard City families and 20 Mitchell's Plain families on the coun-

cil's housing waiting list would be moved into completed houses in Montrose Park by December 15

Only 40 houses would be ready by the end of the year because of the building industry holidays

He said the Mitchell's Plain beneficiaries would be people living in inadequate conditions and in backyards

Mr Bregman said the moving of Cardboard City residents was taking "longer than we anticipated".

City of Cape Town executive committee chairman Saleem Mowzer said the council hoped the second phase of 150 houses would be completed in January.

A third phase of 150 houses was in the pipeline and "these were a victory for the homeless".

ARG 29/10/98

Delft building stalls again

NORMAN JOSEPH
METRO REPORTER

ARG 30/10/98

(124)

Building in Delft South has ground to a halt yet again.

Work on houses stopped earlier this year when the area was beset by illegal occupation of completed homes.

Now four projects have stopped because local builders and the provincial housing department disagree over business partnerships.

The development is part of the Integrated Land Service Project, the largest housing scheme in the city. Members of the Delft Small Builders' Association claim they cannot pay their workers because the housing department refuses to pay a company called Group 6, because it does not have a contract with the province.

Group 6 has been supplying small builders with materials, bridging finance and expertise. The province, meanwhile, is recognising the services of another company, Marnol Manage-

ment Services.

There has been no work on the four sites for the past week and hundreds of labourers gather there daily to demand arrears wages.

Association spokesman Albert Martin said he and fellow builders Robert Leite, Kevin Thomas, Edmn Botha and William Jansen were at their wits' end. Workers wanted their wages and they could not pay them.

Faan Naude, provincial housing acting chief director, said Marnol Management Services, a supplier, had entered into an agreement with the builders. Part of this agreement was that Marnol provided materials and bridging finance to the small builders.

He said the arrangement was that the department would pay Marnol on completion of each house's top structure. The company would then pay the small builder.

But members of the association said they discarded Marnol a long time ago and acquired the services of Group 6.

Cape Town councillors face expulsion after housing probe

David Greybe (124) BD 1/4/98

CAPE TOWN — The Cape Town council voted yesterday to expel two members who violated its code of conduct by trying to prevent an eviction in the gang-controlled Cape Flats.

The African National Congress (ANC), which runs Cape Town, and the Democratic Party adopted a recommendation by city manager Andrew Boraine that if the two councillors fail to resign, the council should apply to the high court for their expulsion.

The council's executive committee recommended four weeks ago that the councillors the ANC's Mogamat Sampson and the National Party's (NP's) Osborn Adams — be expelled.

NP leader in the council Clive Justus said afterwards the party did not believe Adams and Sampson had vio-

lated the code of conduct. The NP would not advise Adams to quit and would consider offering him financial assistance in any subsequent high court action brought by the council. However, ANC sources said the ANC expected Sampson to do the honourable thing and resign.

The two were found guilty of intervening to prevent an eviction in the council's bid to reassert control over housing allocation on the Cape Flats. Some councillors and officials, including outgoing housing director Billy Cobbett who initiated the campaign, have received death threats.

Council executive committee chairman and ANC councillor Nomaindia Mfeketo said the decision to expel Adams and Sampson was a clear signal that the ANC was serious about clean government in Cape Town.

Protesters occupy Delft housing offices

(124)
STAFF WRITER

ET 1/4/98

THE housing crisis in Delft entered its second day yesterday with hundreds of protesters staging a sit-in in the local housing offices

The protesters, from the black townships of Crossroads, Langa and Barcelona squatter camp in Philippi, also marched on the Delft police station to demand the release of two people who were arrested on Monday night during violent scuffles with police

Police and protesters clashed on Monday after Tygerberg councillors evicted the protesters who had illegally occupied several newly-built state-funded houses in Delft South

Police spokesman Superintendent Wicus Holtzhausen said two people were arrested on charges of attempted murder and public violence, and a 9mm pistol was seized

The protesters occupied the houses on Monday afternoon in protest at the slow delivery of houses. They returned to the housing offices yesterday where they continued their protest action, watched over by members of the police public order policing unit and the SANDF

A housing official said the trouble started when township residents were "bused" in to Delft in what appeared a "well-orchestrated" move

The people gained access to several empty houses and "hung up curtains and name tags on door handles" in an attempt to claim the houses as their own

The official said that although the houses were empty they had already been allocated to people who had been on the government waiting list, some as long as 20 years.

Early this morning the protesters were still occupying the Delft South housing offices, and police were monitoring the situation.

Council in landmark housing deal

ARG 2/4/98

(124)

JERMAINE CRAIG
CITY REPORTER

Plans have been unveiled for solving the huge housing shortage in Cape Town, with the municipality committing itself to spending R125-million on new houses over the next five years.

The city's housing model, brainchild of director of housing Billy Cobbett, aims to put roofs over the heads of thousands of homeless families who have been waiting for homes for many years

Central to the project is a R5 000 top-up subsidy for each qualifying family in addition to the R17 250 Government housing subsidy

The municipality also aims to improve the quality of houses being built, many of

which have been rejected because they are too small and shoddily built

In a presentation to the council, Mr Cobbett said the key to delivering sustainable low-cost housing was to use the government housing subsidy of R17 250 per family as a means of attracting additional funds

In addition to the subsidy, the council would provide a R5 000 top-up and make it compulsory for potential beneficiaries to save first

This would be the first time in South Africa that a local authority would provide funding additional to the subsidy to assist in the delivery of housing. The municipality is negotiating with businesses, banks and other financial institutions to get prospective homeowners into proper savings schemes and organise loans for them to

improve their houses

The municipality is to create a private company to control the construction of houses which will also hold title deeds until houses are paid for. The council set the wheels in motion this week when it adopted Mr Cobbett's proposals in principle and agreed to spend R125 million – R25 million a year for the next five years – on top-up funding. This amounts to the council providing additional funding for 25 000 homes over five years

Mr Cobbett said the success of the project was entirely dependent on people paying 100% of their rates every month. It will now be the responsibility of the city's politicians to identify housing projects and sites to get the project off the ground

Cardboard City folk on home stretch, page 5

'Cardboard City' folk on home stretch

Housing plan gets nod

ARG 2/4/98

(124)

JERMAINE CRAIG
CITY REPORTER

The residents of Cardboard City on the Foreshore moved a step closer to proper houses when the Cape Town city council housing committee voted to move them to Mitchell's Plain.

The squatters have been staying in shacks under the Western Boulevard flyover for years while debate has been raging about their fate

A provincial ministerial task team has recommended that the settlement be demolished to help reduce crime in the city centre

The squatters were set to move to Mitchell's Plain late last year, but there were objections from people

living near the site proposed for them in Montrose Park

After lengthy negotiations between the municipality and all those involved, it seems the project is back on track

The housing committee yesterday supported a recommendation that they be accommodated on 80 sites in a housing project in Montrose Park

This proposal will go to the full council for a final decision

The squatters have indicated their willingness to move, but Mitchell's Plain residents say they will accept them only if proper housing is provided, as they do not want another squatter settlement on their doorstep

Old Crossroads homes objectors 'in minority'

Group warned about allegations

MOSES MACKAY
STAFF REPORTER

(124)

ARG 2/14/98

Old Crossroads women objecting to the small size of houses being built in the area, just one of a long list of grievances, are in the minority, says Cape Town municipality spokesman Leonora de Souza.

She warned that unless allegations against two city councillors made by the Crossroads Women's Power group were substantiated, the council would "reserve its right" to apply for an interdict for defamation against the protesters.

The women have been occupying council offices in Old Crossroads since January in an effort to bring attention to their grievances about houses they say are about half the size they were promised.

The women also allege that houses are being allocated unfairly, that

councillors Melford Gwayi and Depoutch Elese have given jobs to friends and that service charges are being levied for unserviced sites.

Ms De Souza said the protesting group did not represent most residents in Old Crossroads. About 1 000 residents had arrived at the council offices on Saturday to pay their service charges in a show of support for one of the councillors.

Earlier this month, a delegation of women met provincial Local Government Minister Patrick McKenzie to discuss their problems and he promised to take up their grievances with the municipality and the Ministry of Housing.

This week, provincial Housing Minister Cecil Herandien told the Cape Argus that grievances about rents for existing houses had been forwarded to the council.

He said his department was responsible for the development of

Crossroads phase four only - not for Crossroads proper. In phase four, only 15 houses of 24m² had been built. This had been at the request of the beneficiaries. No more houses of this size would be built.

He said the department was committed to making a success of the project. However, only R17 250 was available for a housing subsidy for each family earning less than R800 a month. The plot and installation of services had to be paid for out of this, which meant that only R8 000 was available for the building.

If people were able to find contractors to build complete houses of 36m² for R8 000, the department would not stand in their way. But if no such builders could be found, beneficiaries of the subsidy scheme would have to opt for the People's Housing Process scheme. In this case, the money would have to be used for people to build their own homes.

'Shame of Muizenberg' spurs petition to mayor

Group of 4 500 demands quick action

PETER GOOSEN
STAFF REPORTER

Three groups representing thousands of residents and ratepayers handed petitions and memorandums to South Peninsula Mayor O J Jacobs this week.

Two were allowed to hand their documents personally to Mr Jacobs during a monthly council meeting, signalling a new council approach

All three sets of documents expressed dissatisfaction with developments – or lack of them – in areas as far apart as Muizenberg and Imizamu Yethu, the Hout Bay informal settlement

The Muizenberg Renaissance Project handed Mr Jacobs a petition signed by more than 4 500 people saying the mood of the people made it necessary to ensure some kind of immediate visible progress was made in Muizenberg, which had become a disadvantaged area and been allowed to fall into disrepair

A letter signed by Kerime Sinclair on behalf of the Renaissance Project said that after a press report depicting the squalor, overcrowding and the filth in Muizenberg central, a small group of devoted and energetic people had set about bringing change in an area of the South Peninsula that seemed to have been forgotten by the authorities

"The purpose of our petition is to create a window of opportunity for all the relevant organisations, action groups, committees, authorities, political parties and people of the area to work together with a view to achieving the miracle of renewal," read the letter.

During the debate that followed, chairman of the south's urban and environmental planning committee Neville Riley, a Muizenberg resident himself, said that with the Capricorn development and another major development to be revealed soon, the renaiss-

ANCE HAD ALREADY STARTED

One of the problems in the past had been to get consensus from the people of Muizenberg. It looked as if consensus had been obtained at last, he said

The project was assured that it would be represented on the south's integrated working group that was being set up for the development of Muizenberg

It would be headed by Chris Sullivan, executive director of urban and environmental services

A memorandum from the residents of Imizamu Yethu in Hout Bay – more than a 100 attended the meeting – said they were running out of patience because the council's budget did not reflect the greatest need

The settlement had only 10 toilets, one to every 20 families, and although another 10 were promised, they had not been budgeted for

And there were only two standpipes to supply the whole settlement with water

Roads were disintegrating and what was left would not last another winter

There was no proper drainage, no traffic signs and a traffic officer had never been seen there, claimed residents

Hout Bay councillor Dick Meter said that, by seeing the deputation, Mr Jacobs was setting the best possible trend. Urgent action was necessary in the settlement

Councillor Alan Phillips said he was shocked and appalled by conditions in the settlement

Peter Gabriel of the African National Congress said the people were asking for the most basic of services like toilets and taps

Democratic Party councillor Demetri Qually thanked the community for its involvement

The council would have to take its responsibilities seriously to address the shortcomings of the past

The third deputation, which handed in its memorandum at the council's Tokai

offices yesterday, were from the Vrygrond branch of the South African National Civic Organisation

The development of Vrygrond has been stalled because the council cannot get consensus from all the residents through the official representative body, the Vrygrond Trust, from which Sanco has walked out

Sanco's memorandum said the organisation was fully committed to the development of Vrygrond

"We feel quite comfortable with the South Peninsula Municipality in the role of a neutral party in this project

"We demand that the South Peninsula Municipality waive the cost of the infrastructure and not utilise housing subsidies for that purpose

"We need to set up a much broader based committee to deal with the details of the development"

In a reply, executive director of housing Hans Smit said the municipality was anxious to proceed with developing Vrygrond with housing subsidies

He outlined a list of delays caused by walk-outs and other disagreements by a small breakaway faction of Sanco, in spite of the council appointing and paying an independent facilitator to get consensus

"During the entire period (since September 1995) the group of Sanco opposing the scheme were visiting people at the housing board, ex-city councillors and others to portray the picture of an aggrieved community being excluded from the process. Nothing could be further from the truth

"An application on behalf of Sanco to the Master of the Supreme Court was made to declare the Vrygrond Trust invalid. It was rejected

"Other action has been taken by Sanco opponents to delay progress by interfering with the collection of information for project subsidies. South Peninsula officials have been intimidated," said Mr Smit

ARG 2/4/98

(124)



MANDILA MNYAKAMA

Power purloined: a passer-by shows wires used to get power to residents' homes

Shack dwellers in illegal power link-up

Council warns of serious risk

MANDILA MNYAKAMA
Special Correspondent

The serious risk of being electrocuted isn't stopping residents of Guguletu's informal settlements from making illegal connections between their shacks and nearby electricity poles.

They say they are desperate for power in their settlement, and that the lack of lighting or electricity to their shacks is contributing to the high crime rate in the area at night.

Residents on their way home from work or socialising outside their shacks are easy targets for criminals, they say.

The residents want electric lights for the area, and also say power points in their homes would reduce the risk of fires, which sweep through the Peninsula's informal settlements

periodically. AR 4 7/4/98

They have vowed to continue with the illegal connections until the city's electricity department recognises their plight.

The residents say they are prepared to pay for electricity and that a pre-paid system for the connections would be acceptable to them.

"Waterfront" shack settlement resident Nomhle Dyanayi, a mother of five who has been living in the area for 25 years, said she was convinced that having access to electricity would reduce crime. "What we like is for each and every corner to be well lit," she said.

"We would very glad because we really need it desperately. "With electricity our shacks would be safe.

"You could just press a button and light up your lamps and stove with-

out the need for paraffin or a candle

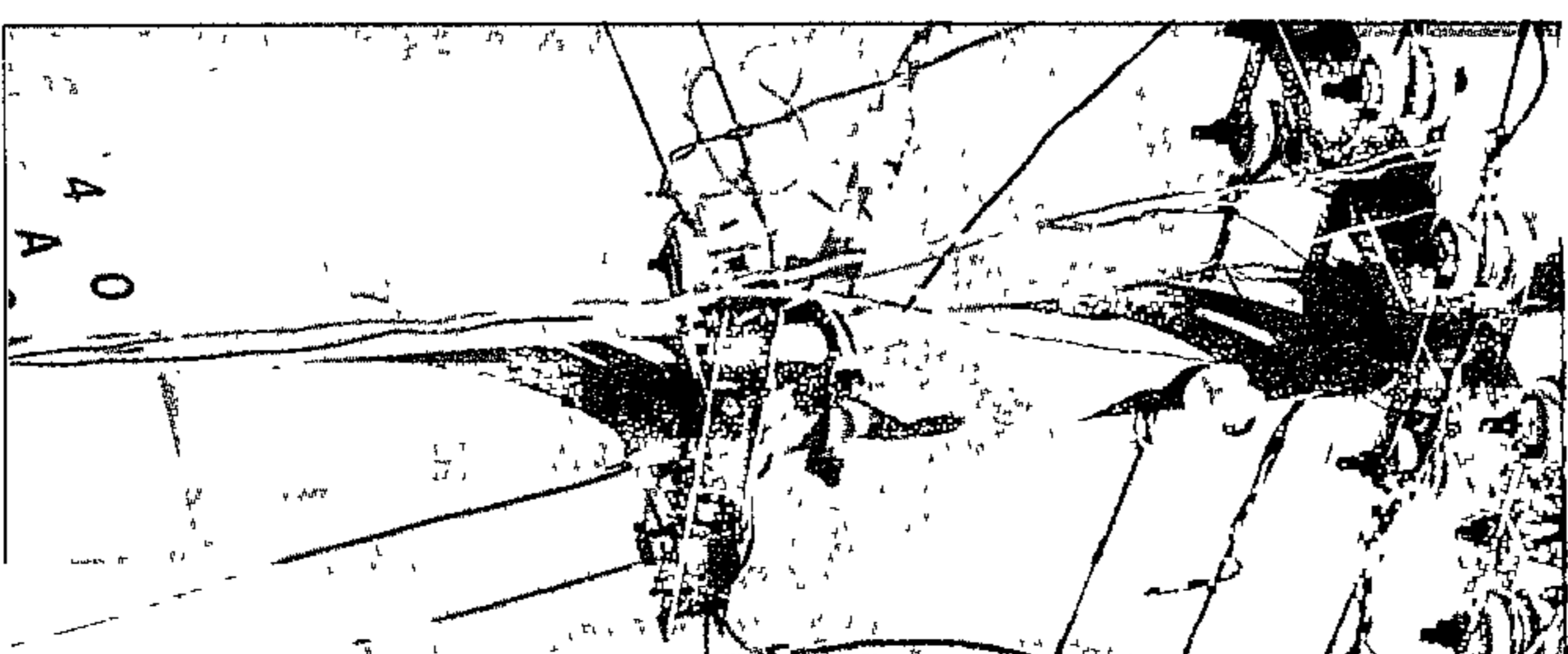
"As we have suffered a lot from shack fires, I think getting electricity would also make matters much safer."

The "Waterfront" shack dwellers promised to discourage others from making illegal connections to street poles if they were provided with electricity.

City of Cape Town spokeswoman Leonora Desouza said the city council was in the process of trying to supply electricity to informal and new settlements, and she criticised those shack residents who made use of illegal electricity connections.

"We really want to discourage people from stealing electricity. It's piracy and it's illegal," she said.

"In the past, many people have been arrested and fined heavily for doing that."



Illegal connection: wires leading from a pole in Guguletu

R33-m plan unveiled for 2 700 ⁽¹²⁴⁾ new homes

PETER GOOSEN
STAFF REPORTER

ARG 7/4/98

The South Peninsula has unveiled plans to provide 2 700 houses costing more than R33-million in Lavender Hill East, Phumlani at Pelican Park and Vrygrond in Muizenberg.

However, the council's housing services committee was told yesterday that both the province and the state had made it clear that no would-be home owner would be paid the Provincial Housing Board subsidy until he had made a formal arrangement with the local authority to pay off any arrears and to keep up steady monthly payments

The south will be competing for a share of the severely limited R60-million Western Cape housing budget. When it applies to the Provincial Housing Board it must state that arrangements are in place for the payment of arrears by beneficiaries of the subsidy.

Wayne Miller, the south's director of housing finance, told the council it was imperative that not a cent was spent on any project until the province indicated that the money was actually available.

"Project approval doesn't mean the money's there. There will be a second letter some time later to confirm that funds are available," he said.

In Lavender Hill East the council is to apply for project approval for 818 homes. Bulk service connections are already in place and the layout of services is being planned. Plots will be 160 square metres and the price is still being negotiated. It is proposed to provide 24 square metre starter houses.

The Peoples' Housing Process, a self-build option, will also be considered and support funds can be made available at the rate of an additional R570 a beneficiary. It is anticipated that work could start in October this year on the civil works depending on the availability of state funds.

The Vrygrond development will consist of 1 600 plots of 180 square metres and the present occupants of Vrygrond will be the beneficiaries

In Phumlani, Pelican Park, a plan for 200 homes is to go to the Provincial Housing Board for project approval and in Lavender Hill East (North) 81 serviced plots are planned.

CLAUDIA CAVANAGH
METRO EDITOR

Councillors to roam streets as bergies for a night

If you're in the city centre tonight, don't be surprised if the bergie who offers to watch your car looks strangely familiar — she could be Cape Metropolitan Council deputy mayor Mrs Isobel Edelstein scrounging for her supper.

It is not that Edelstein has suffered a reversal of fortune, she and four other councillors have undertaken to spend the whole night on the streets "come hell or high water".

The five — Edelstein, Mr Dan Plato, Ms Marelda Khan, Mr Mbulelo Ncedana and Mr Ernst Sonnenberg — are members of a task team dealing with homelessness in the

metropole. They will become "scroungers" for the night to gain a better understanding of life on the streets.

"The 'city plunge' will bring home the realities of the situation," says the organiser, the Rev Greg Andrews of Ons Plek shelter for female streetchildren.

"Our most energetic volunteers do this exercise and find it incredibly useful. Sometimes their eyes are opened so wide that they need counselling for weeks afterwards."

"It can be a quite shocking and depressing experience," Edelstein and her team will be left alone in the city centre with no money and no possessions.

bottom line

"They're not allowed to wear fancy clothes, deodorant or jewellery either," said Andrews.

They will, however be observed by a team of caretakers from a distance.

Next they'll be presented with a set of tasks.

"Most important is that they must find their own supper, and as they have no money, they must beg. Then they have to find some cardboard to sleep on," Andrews said.

But the team is also expected to find a list of objects — some that are used by homeless people and others that will bring the "scrounger" face to face with things that are encountered on the streets.

(24)
CT 8/14/98

"They must, for instance, find the hair of a dog. On the surface this seems to be pretty straightforward, until one considers that the only dogs street people bump into are of the security variety. So that alone could pose some problems," said Andrews.

And Edelstein said yesterday "I know it sounds crazy and I really have no idea what we are in for. It's interesting to realise how very little we understand about the way other people live."

"We hope to have a policy in place by May, and this experience will help us to see if our research is spot on."

"I'm not at all scared now — but that may all change when it all becomes real tomorrow night."

Councillors taste low side of life

Close look at hardship

BEAUREGARD TROMP AND CAROL CAMPBELL
STAFF REPORTERS

Cellular phones and tape decks were surrendered as five city councillors were deprived of their comforts to experience first-hand the hardships of life on the streets

Before setting out, they listened attentively as Greg Andrews from Onse Plek shelter ran them through a basic survival course for the streets

"Eye contact is very important and show that you are unarmed by keeping your hands open or in your pockets" warned the Rev Andrews

The five, Isobel Edelstein, Marelidia Khan, Dan Plato, Ernest Sonnenberg and Charlotte Tabisher, are part of a council task team dealing with the homeless

The councillors were asked to find seven objects during the course of what was going to be an arduous night

The items required included a "pamie", hairs of a dog and a "till slip from heaven"

In street lingo this meant they had to find a bottle used to sniff glue or thinners, a place which had been marked as the sleeping quarters of another street dweller and to get high during the course of the night

Hours before the project was to have begun there was a large police swoop on the city with armed patrols and vans randomly searching passersby

Rev Andrews said the police were having a major crackdown on drug peddlers in the city centre and it was not a show of force to make the streets safe for the night for the councillors

Armed with a 30-minute crash course on the streets and full of gusto, the five made their way out trying to find their seven items

Councillor Ernest Sonnenberg, wearing a jumble of clothes he admitted wearing 10 years ago when he performed as a vagrant in a play said this was a dream come true for him

"It's been a childhood ambition to put myself in the shoes of those who really experience hardship

"The next time I speak in council (about street people) I can say that I have been there," he said before heading out

The media was told not to communicate with the three teams of coun-

cillors watched closely by two caretakers versed in the way of the streets

By about 12 30am councillors Isobel Edelstein and Charlotte Tabisher had gathered some cardboard to sleep on and had made R11 from begging

At sunrise today the team were councillors again and enjoying breakfast at a coffee shop in Church Street

They were cold, very hungry and two of the ladies admitted using their position as councillors to gain access to the toilets at the City Hall

Mrs Tabisher and Mrs Khan, with the help of street people had found a clump of hair from a street dog called Rooies - one of the tasks they had been set

They had been instructed to find out "the best price for a BJ" which Mrs Khan admitted she thought was a hamburger

"It's the street name for blow job and it costs at least R350," she said

The two women said they tried to sleep behind the fountains outside Woolworths' head office but were evicted by police

"At first we refused to move but as soon as we put up a fight we were surrounded by police

"Somebody tipped them off that we were the councillors and then they backed off," said Mrs Tabisher

The councillors were refused till slips from Heaven strip club and had to pick them up outside the club - another of their set tasks

They all had to beg for money for supper and admitted they became irritated and frustrated when passersby wanted to give them cigarettes instead of cash

Renée Rossouw, a worker from Onse Plek said the councillors were watched by a 'caretaker team' from a distance to make sure they did not get hurt

"They were not exposed to some of the abuse from the street boys who can be very violent," she said

An elderly street woman Rebecca Coetzee, waking up after a night outside the Central Methodist Church told the councillors she was afraid of street children because they threw thinners on her and tried to set her alight

Mr Plato commented "This experience was very, very interesting"

Rev Greg can be contacted at 082 852 7740



LEON MULLER

Tough night: councillors from left Charlotte Tabisher, Ernest Sonnenberg, Marelidia Khan, Dan Plato with street people Mavis, Rebecca and Lionel



HANNES THART

Street encounter: councillors Isobel Edelstein and Dan Plato talk to street children on the outskirts of the Loop Street nightclub scene

CAPE ARGUS ISSUES

Renewed hope for good governance of the poor Residents of housing estates need to realise that council has been elected

INSIDE STORY

We should all be impressed by the determination of our city council to try to prevent unauthorised occupation of the few remaining rented dwellings (when vacated)

And I hope it will be possible for council to return to a situation where it can build 5 000 dwellings a year and when its eviction policy for anti-social behaviour in rented areas can be implemented - and when occupants can again be made to pay their dues.

Residents in the housing estates need to realise that now that the city council has been elected by all the citizens and an elected, democratic government has been achieved, it is time for a return to good governance and law and order

I would tend to believe that it was never improper for a councillor to seek to help a family - whom he represented - in dire straits (and there can be little worse than being poor with a homeless family) but, clearly, such an attempt to help should be done before an eviction order is actually being implemented.

Certainly the Democratic Party cannot be blamed for anything that happened in the Cape Town municipal area before 1982.

The party came into existence in 1989. Its decision (regrettable, in my view) to create a caucus in the city council did not occur until 1991 and

Eulalie Stott, former chairwoman of the city council's housing committee, hopes for a return to the days when the council's eviction policy for anti-social behaviour can be implemented

lasted for only about a year. During my 33 years in council, we were enabled to build over 90 000 new dwellings.

In the late 1970s and in the 1980s, we were even enabled sometimes to build over 4 000 dwellings a year - and once even over 8 000 houses.

In addition, the city council had something like 2 000 vacancies a year in its rented housing estates. The result was that those families longest on the waiting list, plus others who complied with the criteria laid down for priority allocation, when appropriate, could usually be offered some assistance expeditiously

When, however, the vacancies in the old estates dried up because of the previous government's offer to give



In action: Eulalie Stott when she was chairman of the city council's housing committee

tenants the right to own their rented houses (coupled with the end of large numbers of new houses being built and becoming available), it is not surprising that some of those in dire circumstances were sometimes willing to take illegal possession of vacancies

Thus it was inevitable that the misery of the homeless became an increasing problem. Equally, it was understandable to me that some management committee representatives

the office for 17 days. In 1990, to try to find a solution to the illegal occupation of vacant homes, a committee was appointed to liaise with the management committees and civic associations but solutions could seldom be agreed upon.

Later, meetings with various civics took place and there were also informal discussions with the SA National Civics Organisation and the African National Congress.

Councillor Ross, when chairman of the housing committee, went with his vice-chairman, Councillor Osburn, to see the senior police in certain areas who were dealing with drug offences, and submitted names of suspected drug dealers which had been provided to them by various civic associations.

Until the early 1980s, the city council had less than 2% bad debt (sometimes only 1%). From its housing estates

The policy was to follow up immediately, and firmly, those who did not pay on time and to try to assist with solutions concerning arrears. We wished to ensure that people could remain in their homes.

When the extra-parliamentary opposition, in an attempt to bring about change peacefully by making the country ungovernable, suggested a campaign to discourage payments, the situation changed and, while rela-

tively few residents in the council estates ceased paying them, those who did did so either out of political convictions or from fear of the threats from some activists if they continued to pay

I personally visited some of those concerned, from whom I learnt their reasons for not paying, and in certain cases some of those who were finding it difficult to make ends meet were joining the non-payers.

The housing committee could not, politically, evict thousands of non-payers. Had they tried to do so they would no doubt have learnt, as was the experience in Soweto, that when officials arrived to evict, political groups would sometimes intervene (often violently) to prevent administrative action being taken, possibly resulting in innocent bystanders being injured.

In Bontheuwel, staff doing electrical disconnections due to non-payment experienced similar difficulties and had to be provided with protection. In any event, how could one evict the people who were trying to bring about political change peacefully, or the people who had been threatened?

In 1993, about 50% were still paying. It was only after the Government had decided to write off the debts owing in the African townships that many more residents in the council's

housing estates felt that "if the Africans could get away with it, then why couldn't they?"

Anti-social behaviour was another problem. When tenants visited the housing estate offices to complain about the anti-social behaviour of neighbours, the staff made some independent inquiries to ensure it was not a vendetta between neighbours.

A note was made of the complaint, whereafter the persons complained about were called into the office and asked to discontinue such behaviour. They were also told that if they did not do so, they could expect to be evicted, and warning letters were sent to them to this effect.

The council, however, stood by the principle that there had to be a court conviction before they informed the wrongdoer(s) of the intention to evict due to anti-social behaviour such as shepherding, drug-dealing, panelbeating, etc.

Clearly, evictions for anti-social behaviour could be implemented in home-ownership areas. This fact should be borne in mind when housing families on a home-ownership-only basis. Experience has shown that among the poorest there is a large number of anti-social people. Although they are the minority, they can and often do make life for the majority - the nice families - very unpleasant.

Cape Town proposes new vehicle for homes

Robyn Chalmers

RUSTENBURG — Cape Town has proposed a new approach to the delivery of low-cost housing in the city which will introduce the combination of a municipal contribution, domestic savings and microcredit facilities

The proposal, tabled by Cape Town housing director Billy Cobbett, moves away from the current method of low-cost housing delivery in which most of SA's beneficiaries use state subsidies

It also recommends setting up a separate legal entity, or special purpose vehicle, to facilitate the provision of low-cost housing in Cape Town

"In order to access a municipal subvention of the land and service costs and thereby release resources for housing, potential beneficiaries would be required to satisfy certain housing requirements," it said in the proposal.

"For those able to satisfy a basic affordability profile, microcredit would also become available against a specified savings pattern."

The report indicated that one of the greatest risks of SA's housing programme was the way in which overall national housing policy was being partially or selectively implemented and, in many cases, misinterpreted

It said that the new owners were increasingly rejecting hous-

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es currently being delivered and as a result, this was creating conditions for enormous social ills in the future

The aim of the housing proposal was to address these and other problems

In terms of the "municipal subvention", it was proposed that the city of Cape Town make available an as yet unspecified capital sum to augment the national housing subsidy

This was aimed at costs for land and services, but should be openly visible on the budget.

The funds would be made available to prospective beneficiaries on a conditional basis

Track record

They would qualify by establishing a specified savings record as well as by paying their rates

A savings track record with an accredited financial institution would have to be built up, and accreditation would be limited to those institutions able to meet a set of criteria. These criteria would be jointly determined by Cape Town and the National Housing Finance Corporation

The report said that people with a savings track record of six months should have access to microloans on condition that their savings accounts were ceded to provide the first layer of risk against the loans

Unhappy homeowners refuse to repay bonds

Banks warn of possible evictions

MOSES MACKAY
STAFF REPORTER

Hundreds of Old Crossroads residents say they have stopped paying their bonds and municipal bills because their homes are not up to scratch.

But at least one bank has warned the residents they will be evicted if they continue their boycott without approaching the bank to discuss the matter

Angelina Kanzi of Phase One said the Natal Building Society (NBS) had helped her buy her house for R20 000 and her monthly bond payment was R278.

But Mrs Kanzi, a widow and she-been owner with three children, said she last paid in 1996 because the house was in a bad condition and not worth the price

"The floors are always covered with water and my carpets have been damaged many times. The walls have several cracks," she said

Mrs Kanzi added she could not

afford the monthly payment "My husband died many years ago and I'm not working"

She said the building society had promised to send a team to inspect the house, but it had not yet done so

She is also supposed to pay service charges of R40 a month, but has not done so for some time and is R325 in arrears

Priscilla Vambe, also from Phase One in Old Crossroads, said she bought her house - one of the Khayalethu homes - for R22 000 on a 20-year bond from Standard Bank. She had paid the bond for five years, but had then stopped payments

Mrs Vambe, a vendor, is a mother of two school-going children and lost her job recently when her employer went bankrupt. She said her house was decaying and the bank had done nothing to remedy the situation

Commenting on the possible evictions of defaulters, Mrs Vambe said: "We will fight with the court officials. We won't move from here"

She said banks should reduce

instalments because many people could not afford to pay

Mrs Vambe owes the municipality R600 because she has not paid service bills since 1996

In a response to a Cape Argus request, a NBS official, who did not wish to be named, said Servcon Housing Solutions, which acted as a facilitator between bondholder NBS and homeowners, had negotiated with defaulting owners in Old Crossroads

He said the owners had not responded and had not agreed to start repaying their loans. Proceedings to have them evicted would follow soon

Duncan Reekie, Standard Bank divisional general manager for home loans, said he could not make general comments on the defaulters in Old Crossroads. However, he said he would investigate the allegations of poor conditions and urged the residents to send their complaints to him

Mr Reekie said it was bank policy to send an inspection team to assess the conditions of houses after they were built

ARG 21/4/98 (124)

Low-cost houses for golf club

ET 23/4/98 (124)

FATIMA SCHROEDER
STAFF WRITER

THE Somerset West Golf Club — an old and well-established facility of the Somerset West community — is set for a major upgrade and 10 hectares of the course have been set aside for the building of up to 250 high density, low cost houses

At a heated meeting on Tuesday evening, irate residents fought the proposed plan, saying that the golf club, together with the consultants, first drew up their plan and then "tried to force it down the throats of the residents"

The golf course, one of the most valuable pieces of real estate in the Western Cape, belonged to AECI

(African Explosives and Chemical Industries) who recently donated it to the club

Mr Johan Prinsloo of the Planning Partnership consultants said the programme has been divided into two phases — developing the master plan and later, implementing it

A sub-committee of four residents, including a geologist and a town planner, was formed at Tuesday's meeting, to liaise with the consultants and look at using alternative pieces of land for housing

Residents complained that the proposed piece of land, near a retirement village, is the best section of the club. They said it has the best holes for golfers, is safe, quiet and the most valuable part of the course

Prinsloo said "We believe the club will have a good future and also that the (proposed) combination of land use will give us sustained revenue or income"

However, the sub-committee plans to point out alternative pieces of land to the consultants, said a spokesperson for the residents, Mr John Moot. He said there are other "odd pieces of vacant land" which could be used for affordable housing

Helderberg councillor Ms Frieda Adams commended the club for "coming up with such a wonderful business plan"

Adams said "Affordable housing is a good idea because it prevents foreigners from squatting — a problem which is difficult to get rid of"

Cape Town gives provisional nod to housing

Robyn Chalmers

THE City of Cape Town has provisionally approved an innovative low-cost housing development model to be implemented over the next five years.

It is understood that the city is considering making R25m a year available for the scheme, but the funds will only be committed once further practical details are submitted by Cape Town housing director Billy Cobbett.

However, the scheme struck a responsive chord when tabled by Cobbett recent-

ly, and a number of cities and towns elsewhere in the country are believed to be watching developments with interest. The new approach marries government's low-cost housing subsidy with a combination of a municipal contribution, domestic savings and micro-credit facilities.

An estimated R10m of the provisionally allocated R25m for the first year of operation would go towards capitalising a separate legal entity or special purpose vehicle. The vehicle, which would be at arms' length from the council, would facilitate the provision of low-cost housing

One of government's biggest problems with its low-cost housing policy has been the size and quality of units produced with the subsidy. There are examples of 18m² units which are increasingly being rejected by beneficiaries. The existing subsidy works on a sliding scale according to income, with people earning less than R1 500 a month eligible for R15 000.

It was estimated that about 3 000 units of a more acceptable size could be built with the R15m remaining from the proposed R25m allocation in the first year of operation. A proposal said these funds

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would be used as a "municipal subvention" to augment certain costs of land and services.

"The city's subvention will be used to smooth out anomalies and achieve an affordable and uniform residual amount for the actual construction of the house. This will involve deferring amounts for different projects, but in doing so a great deal of animosity and suspicion can be removed from an already fraught housing scene."

The subvention would only be made available to prospective beneficiaries on a conditional basis. They would qualify by

establishing a specified savings record and maintaining the value of the subvention through a 100% rates payment record for four years.

Beneficiaries would also have to build up a savings track record with an accredited financial institution.

Once the savings requirement was met and the beneficiary allocated a site in a project, the savings account would be credited for up to four years as a risk buffer against default on rates. In addition, a savings track record of six months should be able to attract a micro-loan.

model

Citrusdal drinks to 'liquid gold' gusher

Water strike could end shortages

JOHN YELD
ENVIRONMENT REPORTER

A strike of "liquid gold" – uncontaminated groundwater – on a farm outside Citrusdal could herald the end of water shortages in the town.

The full potential of the strike has yet to be evaluated, but the water in the subterranean reservoir could meet most needs in the economically important Olifants River valley

And, of even greater significance, research on this unique underground water system could point the way for the sustainable and effective management of the precious water resources of the entire Western Cape.

The strike, 5km outside Citrusdal, is the result of careful geological observation, perseverance, solid technology and the weather phenomenon, El Nino, whose effects are being felt world-wide

The success story has its roots in 1995, when Muizenberg-based hydro-geological consultant Rowena Hay was appointed by Citrusdal municipality to undertake a preliminary survey of groundwater use, and prospects in the district.

She found it would be easy to drill shallow, low-yielding boreholes close to the town, but that these would not be sustainable. Also, they would add to environmental problems associated with falling water levels in the already stressed Olifants River system.

"What was actually needed was an ecologically holistic analysis of groundwater recharge and movement on a much larger scale," explained Chris Hartnady, Ms Hay's husband and an associate professor in the Department of Geological Sciences at the University of Cape Town.

Using local hot springs such as The Baths as a clue, Ms Hay and her associates proposed a theory of major "hydrotects": geological structures such as faults and fractures within the region's unique



Liquid gold: driller Craig Wilcox in the coffer dam built around the borehole

Table Mountain Group rock formation, which were capable of holding immense amounts of underground water.

But an opportunity to test that theory arose only late last year, when the Department of Water Affairs made emergency funds available for dealing with the possible consequences of El Nino, one of them severe droughts.

"Locally, our last winter was a dry one," explained Professor Hartnady. "In the citrus-farming area of the Olifants River valley, a projection based on the historical rainfall record appeared to show that – for the first time in human memory – the river might cease to flow at the Citrusdal bridge."

Because the town derived its entire water supply from a pump station at this point, the local council moved smartly on an emergency system of extra boreholes,

Ms Hay's report was dusted off and her consultancy was re-engaged to supervise the drilling of new boreholes

Her choice of drilling location on the farm Boschklouf – relatively far from the town and the main river – and the contracted depth of the boreholes – an unusually deep 300m – raised eyebrows, and many observers were openly sceptical.

"It was a tricky decision, because I considered it important to go for a long-term, sustainable

target," Ms Hay admitted.

Drilling began shortly before Christmas, and there was an anxious wait over the holiday season.

But her site selection was fully justified when, on January 10, the drillers hit a large fracture zone at a depth of about 150m.

Water was blown out of the borehole in such volume and under such fierce artesian (natural) pressure that the rig crew battled for several days to control it.

Only then were they able to measure the flow, recording an astounding "blow yield" of 120 litres a second during a standard test. The borehole flowed naturally at between seven and 10 litres a second.

"The water was gushing out at such a rate the drillers were concerned their drilling platform would be washed away," Ms Hay recalled.

Any groundwater with a borehole yield greater than 10 litres a second under the blow test was classified as "high", said Professor Hartnady – "So the Boschklouf No 1 well is truly phenomenal."

Drilling then resumed, but the well soon had to be abandoned because the water pressure was too great, blowing rocks the size of bricks out into the air and preventing the drill bit from engaging properly with the rock face.

"Those drillers really deserve credit for their efforts," Ms Hay said. "And the strike turned into quite a community event – somehow it caught everybody's imagination, and people from the town flocked out to watch."

Another four boreholes were drilled, and the next step in the process – taken last week – was to pump three of the highest yielding at the same time for 72 hours

This was to see how the underground reservoir system would behave when stressed by a large quantity of water being removed.

The boreholes indicated a very extensive regional system of underground water, Ms Hay said.

Metropole 'faces steep rates hike'

CT 30/4/98
CLAUDIA CAVANAGH
METRO EDITOR

RESIDENTS — both rich and the "poorest of the poor" — can expect a steep rates hike following a Cape Metropolitan Council move yesterday to substantially increase the price of bulk water, refuse and sewerage services

So said the ANC during a long and vicious debate which became so unruly at one stage that mayor Rev William Bantom jumped up and threatened to throw members out of the chamber

The increases — ranging from between just over 8% for water and 20% for refuse — are substantially less than those originally mooted by the CMC but still exceed the 6% allowed by government

The six municipalities buy these bulk services from the CMC and bill their ratepayers for them directly or as part of the annual rates bill

"We've considered all avenues — and that's as low as it gets. We're down to the bone already. Where else can we cut?" said NP chairperson of the CMC's executive committee Mr Pierre Uys

Before local authorities objected, the CMC planned to increase water by 10% and refuse by a whopping 35%

Chairperson of the council's water and waste committee Mr David Erleigh agreed "These are good and low tariff increases and not at all subsidised by RSC (now CMC business) levies — we're trying to hold those over so we can help the Metropolitan Local Councils next year. What else would you like us to do — turn off the taps for a few days a week to comply with the Department of Finance's 6%?"

Erleigh pointed out that Rand Water in Johannesburg charged twice as much for water as the CMC and that the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry had in turn increased its tariffs by more than 6%.

NP member Mr Howard Parker added "We could have knocked off a percent here and there but then we'd be providing an inferior service"

The ANC's Mr Saleem Mowzer said the six municipalities would not be able to

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afford the new tariffs

"And in the end the ratepayers — both the better off and the poor — will be hit very hard," he said

"We cannot just stand by and watch as the CMC builds up its bureaucracy and justifies a 58% increase in wages"

ANC member Mr Mzukisi Gaba good naturedly dismissed constant references to an incident last year when he was arrested for drunk driving after allegedly driving the wrong way down the N1

"You're in the wrong lane again," shouted NP members as Gaba made his point

"I don't believe the legislator will accept this situation. We must think of the impact these tariffs we are setting will have on the communities," he said

"The people cannot afford the tariffs currently in operation and if we increase

them beyond inflation we'll be adding fuel to fire"

The ANC's Mr Les Recontre added "We mustn't push ratepayers to a point where they won't pay for services"

When the NP, Democratic Party and African Christian Democratic Party voted in favour of the increases, Mowzer accused them of not showing concern for the poor. This was met by angry calls from the NP for an apology.

"Ayikho! Never," shouted ANC members

"I will take you straight to Nuremberg," countered the controversial Gaba

● While addressing his executive committee on metropolitan financial issues earlier this week, Cape Town's head of finance Mr Philip van Ryneveld explained why the CMC hikes would translate to even bigger increases for residents.

"Unlike the local councils, the CMC has not experienced a reduction in subsidies — yet the increases above 6% are proposed," he explained

"Each litre of water will go up by that amount and at the same time the municipalities will be trying to incorporate the loss from subsidies as well"

Tariff services for the whole metropole should be managed by public companies, he said

Would you like us to turn off the taps to comply with the Department of Finance's 6%?

(124) (304)

Delft squatters agree to move

ABOUT 40 people occupying the housing marketing office at Delft undertook to move out last night. If they do not they will be ejected today.

Earlier the Provincial Housing Development Board and Indlu Marketing cc, brought an urgent application in the High Court against Mr David Sinazo, Ms Cynthia Mbeki, the occupants of the marketing office and the people occupying 375 houses.

Sinazo is chairperson of the SA National Civics Organisation's Delft branch and Mbeki is its secretary.

An interim order was postponed to June 2. — Justice Wnter

CT 30/4/98

Refuse collection project takes off in Khayelitsha

Where there's muck, there's money (124)
ARC 3/12/98

MANDLA MNYAKAMA
STAFF REPORTER

A refuse removal scheme in Khayelitsha, also aimed at developing local entrepreneurs, is proving to be a great success because of the support it receives from residents.

Since November last year, nine Khayelitsha entrepreneurs have been contracted by the City of Tygerberg to collect refuse in the area for five years.

The community-based refuse removal project emerged from negotiations between the Entrepreneurial Development Corporation and the City of Tygerberg.

People appointed from the local community were required to have drivers' licences and to have passed Grade 10.

The corporation lent them money to buy their own refuse trucks, and the council provided refuse bags.

Khayelitsha was divided into areas where these entrepreneurs lived.

So far the project has meant 108 previously unemployed Khayelitsha residents now earn steady incomes, and have benefits like a workers' fund, funeral fund and a holiday every year.

Vusumzi Dziba, the scheme's operational manager, said that ultimately the idea was for the contractors to own their own trucks.

He hoped "each and everybody from the group will remain strong business people".

The only complaints about the scheme have come from residents who say there is a shortage of refuse bins in the densely populated settlement.

Mr Dziba applauded residents for cooperating with the entrepreneurs.

"Now things have changed. Everything is being done by people from this community for its inhabitants."

"Most residents here are proud and quite



Cleaning up: Khayelitsha residents find there's a living to be made collecting rubbish

pleased to have a scheme like this working to clean this area. When the City of Tygerberg refuse trucks worked the area, people complained constantly."

Among their complaints were that the council staff were slow to remove rubbish, and that trucks did not service their areas.

"Now they all look determined to do their best to get rid of rubbish from their streets and backyards," said Mr Dziba.

Mr Dziba said the scheme was an attempt to beautify the area.

And if residents kept on paying up for the services they received from the council, many things could be done towards the redevelopment of the area and to provide employment.

During community meetings residents were advised on how to store rubbish

hygienically before removal day.

One of the nine entrepreneurs is Eunice Godze, who was a domestic worker for 20 years before enrolling at Boston College for a public relations course.

Last year, while in her second year, she applied to be a contractor, and now with her code 14 licence is driving a truck.

Ms Godze said she was excited by the scheme because it uplifted the community, and also broadened her experience.

"I see myself achieving all my ambitions in the near future," she said.

The community had responded enthusiastically and whenever there was a problem with refuse in their areas, residents approached her. Unemployed people should not sit at home without hope, but should go out and strive for success, Ms Godze said.

Urgent need for bins, say residents

MANDLA MNYAKAMA
STAFF REPORTER

Khayelitsha residents say that until they are supplied with proper rubbish bins, dumping and littering in the streets will continue.

Nokholekile Ngaphi of Sigwele Street at Site B's U section said rubbish was blown away because there were not enough bins.

It would help, she said, if the council supplied residents with four black bags a week, instead of two.

Nomatshayina Ntshelu, who lives in the same street, said the refuse problem was caused by residents themselves. She encouraged stall-owners not to throw their rubbish from their businesses on the ground.

Ms Ntshelu said some people did not care and just threw rubbish away without worrying whether they dirtied the area or caused hygiene problems. Dogs also tore refuse bags apart and scattered debris, residents said.

To address the problems, the City of Tygerberg's environmental health department has launched an anti-litter campaign

aimed at raising awareness among primary and pre-school pupils in the township.

Joseph Mokwele, based at the department's Khayelitsha branch, said the council had decided to teach young children about littering.

He said the intention was not to make the area spotlessly clean, but to impress on the children the importance of not littering.

"This is a very serious problem that affects all our lives."

"I encourage everybody to unite to fight littering," he said.

Invaders hijack city houses

Owners forced out

(124)
ARG 16/12/98

NORMAN JOSEPH
METRO REPORTER

In spite of forking out R100 000 a month for a security fence and armed guards in Delft South, housing authorities are unable to prevent hundreds of new home owners losing their houses to illegal occupants.

Latief Camroodien, the provincial housing department's marketing manager for the area, launched a scathing attack on the department, his superiors, and the top brass of Bellville South police, accusing them of failing to intervene

He said illegals were breaking in under the noses of security guards and even taking people's homes by force.

Yesterday, a family arrived at a new completed house in Town 3-6 in Delft, which they had to view before moving in, only to find the house occupied

Yusuf and Lamees Lawson, in possession of legal documentation, found another family in the house and an argument developed.

The "illegals", a mother and her adult daughters, who said they had been on the waiting-list, but failed to produce legal ownership papers when asked by the Cape

Argus, vehemently refused to leave the house. There were no security guards in the immediate vicinity.

Delft police advised Mr Lawson to seek a court order against the "illegals"

Mr Camroodien explains that new completed houses are being fenced in and guarded by armed security staff with dogs while legal home owners move in under their protection. Once a block of houses is fully occupied, the fence and guards are moved on to the next site of new units

Mr Camroodien said beneficiaries regularly complained that their houses were being occupied and forcibly taken from them by illegal people invading the town

In the past two weeks, complainants had included single mothers and elderly people who entered his office, sat down and cried

Hundreds of legal occupants returned from work in the evenings and found illegal people in the houses

Their own furniture and belongings would be strewn across fields or dumped on pavements

Doors were being broken down and windows smashed in broad daylight while

To page 3

P.T.O.



LEON MÜLLER

Stand-off: illegal occupants of a Delft house argue with legal owner Yusuf Lawson, centre, and his family, who were ready to move in

Invaders hijack new Delft homes

Turns from page 1

security guards patrolling near the troublespots apparently turning a blind eye

Fearful residents claimed guards spent most of their time in shebeens

Yesterday, Matthew Presence, a legal owner, told the Cape Argus how he and wife Belinda and four children recently ran for their lives when illegals forced them to quit their house

Mr Presence said he was part of a group of people who had a running fistfight with illegals over houses.

With the help of housing officials, the Presence family was reinstated in the house

After moving into their own house, Christine and Jerome Ruiters and their two children were told by a group of people that they must leave as the house was reserved for someone else

Provincial housing spokeswoman Surita Botes said the security measures were working, but "one can't stop everybody, because some of the people's movements could be family visits"

She said illegal people had occupied houses "once or twice", but "they were caught"

Once the new owner moved into the house and found it damaged, it became a police matter

Ms Botes said the department had no money to build a wall around the town's new developments

But Bellville South police commissioner Jan Solomons, head of Belhar and Delft police stations, claimed the housing department reneged on an agreement that the security fence would be moved promptly to new sites as soon as people were safely in their new houses

He said several cases ranging from malicious damage to property to burglary were under investigation

Some cases had been sent to the Bellville senior state prosecutor's office for a decision on whether to go to court

Cops called over home hijacking

Housing chief says he can't kick out Delft illegals

NORMAN JOSEPH
METRO REPORTER

Provincial Housing Minister Cecil Herandien is to hold urgent talks with the police top brass on the Delft South housing crisis.

The housing department has been unable to prevent hundreds of new home owners losing their houses to illegal occupants, sometimes by force

A fence, armed security guards and dogs, costing the department R100 000 in all, are not curbing the problem

Yesterday, Mr Herandien said the police would have to do something about illegal occupation

"We are not shifting responsibility, but we do not have a policy to evict people, especially after the new home owner has moved into the house"

Yesterday, housing department marketing and security officials, developers and Mr Herandien held a meeting to discuss the issue

As he did four months ago, Mr Herandien said he might have to cancel the Integrated Serviced Land Project housing scheme if people did not behave themselves

"We are aware that people are desperate for housing, but we can't



'No policy to evict people': Provincial housing minister Cecil Herandien

allow anybody to invade land and occupy houses

"It will be a sad day if I have to make a decision to stop the project - it's the only one running in the Peninsula at the moment"

Mr Herandien called on the Delft South community to form a neighbourhood watch patrol

"Residents must not live in isolation. They should help each other"

(Day) ARGUS/ajjg

false perception that "we allow illegal people to move into houses"

"If people think they can move in to houses illegally and we will then make them legal, it is just not on."

When told that a group of men, known as the Kickers, kicked open doors to allow people to occupy houses illegally, he said "This is hoodliganism and gangsterism and the police need to deal with this"

Delft housing director Nic van der Rheede said the security fence and security guards around incomplete sites were there to allow building to continue and not necessarily to protect people

Mr Herandien said that once a new buyer took possession of a house and it got damaged or occupied by someone else, it became a matter between a legal home owner and the police

"Home owners should not obtain court eviction orders, but lay criminal charges with the police"

David Frost, spokesman for provincial Police Minister Mark Wiley, said the issue was receiving attention. The illegal actions of people were delaying the process of providing houses and the community must allow the project to go on

He said the culture of lawlessness and appropriation had to be

addressed as a matter of urgency. Community leaders also needed to ensure that the law was adhered to

On Tuesday, Yusuf and Lamees Lawson, in possession of legal documentation, found another family in their house and an argument developed

Yesterday, it emerged that the house was built about six months ago.

Mr Herandien's spokeswoman, Surita Botes, said the Lawsons' problem was "an administrative matter"

There were people, previously illegals, who, in terms of the court order, had become legal occupants because their names appeared on the department's waiting list

Ms Botes said Mr Lawson's was not the only case. There were others who thought their homes had been occupied by illegals, "but we are working on this"

The Lawson family and others in a similar predicament would be housed soon, she promised

Mr Herandien said that when people were notified they could move into their houses, they often took several weeks to move, while the houses stayed empty

Only action by the police might help to stabilise the situation in Delft.

Recently, the Cape High Court ordered that more than 50 "illegal" occupants in Delft South, whose names appeared on the department's waiting list, be allowed to stay on in the houses

This was part of an out-of-court agreement between attorneys representing the housing development board and the occupants

Mr Herandien said there was a

Desperation makes Delft a housing hot potato

NORMAN JOSEPH
METRO REPORTER

(124)

The illegal occupation of Delft South houses is not politically motivated - it stems from sheer desperation.

But it should not be tolerated, say politicians, who believe the shortage of houses has led to people disregarding the law.

Provincial Housing Minister Cecil Herandien will meet top police this week in an attempt to halt illegal occupation of land and houses.

Delft ward councillor Gerhardus Ventura, of the New National Party, said he believed the illegal occupations were driven by the desperation of homeless people.

But he criticised the allocation of half the houses in Delft South to people on the City of Cape Town's waiting list, with the remaining half for those on the City of Tygerberg's list.

Democratic Party deputy provincial leader Cedric McNeil said that if the authorities and councillors worked together they could ensure the law was enforced.

Western Cape African National Congress leader Ebrahim Rasool said the housing ministry had to act swiftly and not tolerate illegal occupations and invasions.

Pan Africanist Congress MP Patricia de Lille said a plan of action had to be set up by the provincial government to provide more houses.

Mr Herandien insisted his department was not losing the battle to provide housing in Delft South. Since June 1996, more than 5 000 houses had been built.

ARG 22/12/98

Adderley Street squatters call on council for housing

NORMAN JOSEPH
METRO REPORTER

AR 31/12/98

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1998

Nine homeless families living under Cape Town's Table Bay Boulevard bridge have formed a committee to negotiate with the City of Cape Town for housing.

Committee leader Jennifer Meyer said more than 20 people were living in five shacks in Adderley Street, near Customs House, under the bridge.

The people, who yesterday classified themselves as homeless street people, last worked for a construction company in the city's Com-

pany Gardens. They said they hoped the council would help them, as it had the residents of nearby Cardboard City.

The council aims to move about 40 Cardboard City families from under the Western Boulevard fly-over on the Foreshore to new houses in Montrose Park, Lentegour, in Mitchell's Plain next month.

Two wire fences were built around Cardboard City to prevent more people moving in.

Sandra Botha, who shares a shack with another family near the entrance to Customs House, pointed towards Cardboard City and said: "If

the council can help us like it did those people, we will be grateful, because we now have no income."

None of them would say where they came from, but Ms Botha said: "We have lived on the city's streets most of the time."

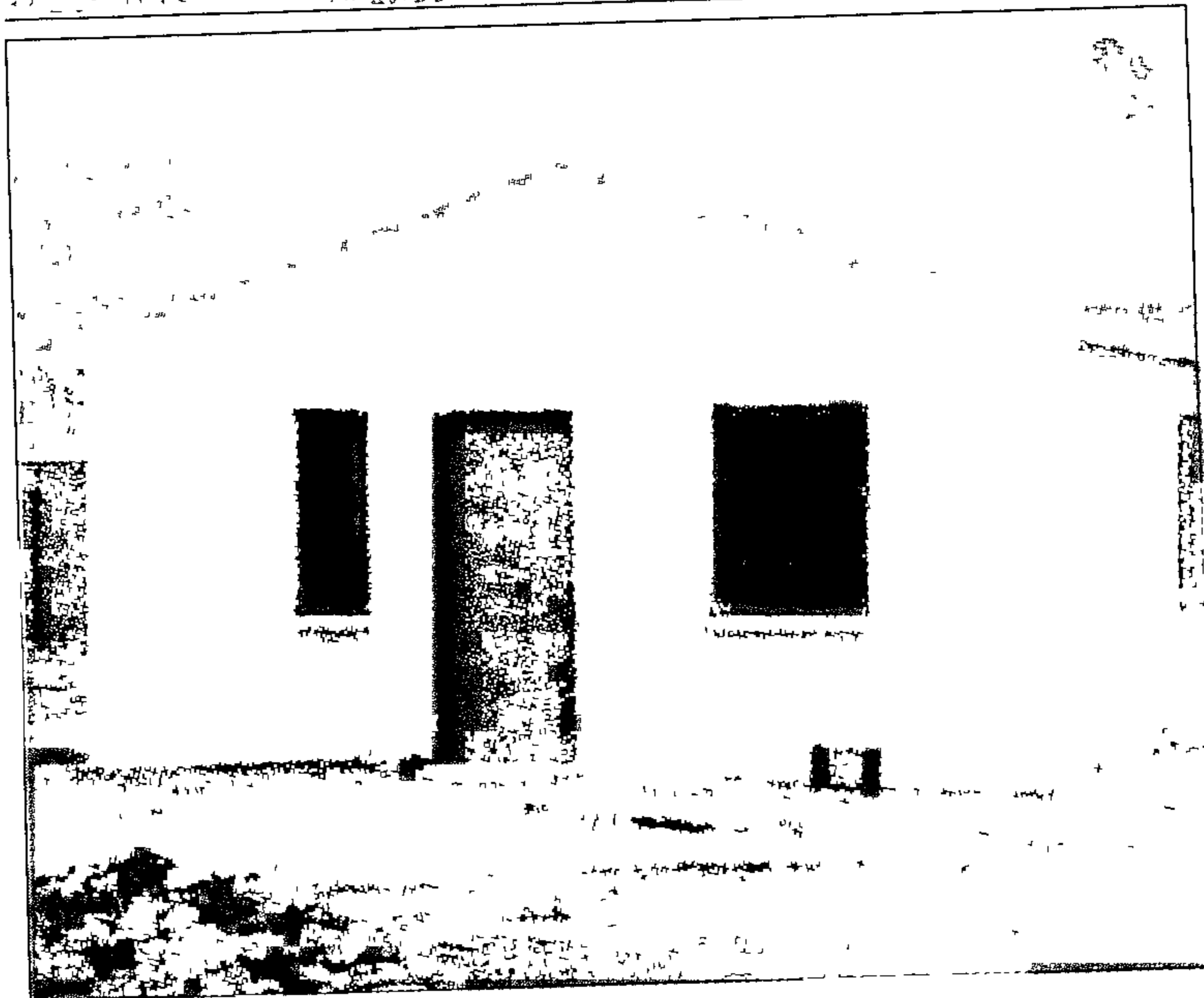
City of Cape Town spokeswoman Leonora de Souza said ownership of the vacant land they occupied would be investigated.

She said the council accepted that homeless people needed to be housed and that the council's housing policy was geared towards this, but that the correct procedures to obtain houses had to be followed.



Homeless: Sandra Botha in front of her shack near the entrance to Customs House

LEON LESTRADE



Homeloan Guarantee has lent over R1 billion this year for low-cost housing.

Company tops R1-b mark for home loans

By Isaac Moledi

THE Homeloan Guarantee company, one of the pioneers of guaranteed affordable housing finance, has this year topped the R1 billion mark for loans guaranteed, says chairman George Thomas

Another milestone, says Thomas in the company's first public annual report, is the achievement of 10 000 mortgage-based loans facilitated in the 12 months to June 30 1998

This is the first time this non-governmental organisation has moved into five figures in this loan category in a single year

The company began its work with R21,6 million in grants and interest-free loans in 1990. The Independent Development Trust (IDT), which in 1995 provided an interest-free loan of R100 million, is its biggest single supporter

The report shows that the value of loans guaranteed during the year from July 1 1997 to June 30 1998, totalled R220 million

This brought the total value of loans guaranteed since 1990 to R906,7 million, most of which was written in the last three years

However, Thomas says in his chairman's report that continued high levels of activity in the first quarter of the 1998-99 year had taken the total value of guaranteed loans to more than R1 billion

Activity is expected to continue at a high level in the year ahead. In the 12 months to mid-1999, Homeloan Guarantee conservatively projects that it will provide guarantees sufficient to unlock access to housing worth R500 million

From inception until June 30 1998, the company guaranteed 35 735 loans and facilitated, without guarantee, in excess of 140 000 loans

Secured lending

These form a mix of mortgage-based transactions (when it covers banks against loss of up to 20 percent of the purchase price) and partially secured lending (when the deal is driven by its guarantee plus cessation of part of an individual's retirement fund savings)

Thomas says his company also issues installment-based guarantees in support of rent-to-buy projects

Claims against guarantees fell in

1998 to R0,6 million - down from R1,7 million in 1997

Despite the increased tempo of its work, the report notes "The rate of delivery generally within the affordable housing market has not met expectations, and levels of housing finance have by no means realised their full potential"

The report expresses concern that though the housing subsidy to poor families has increased, "delivery of subsidy funds remains a problem", a reference to the fact that subsidies are not being granted in the hoped for volumes

Says Thomas "High interest rates and the possibility of an economic downturn may also have an inhibiting effect on delivery

"Nevertheless, the Homeloan Guarantee Company remains optimistic because of its strong balance sheet, a considerable level of capacity and a strong, experienced risk management team"

The company is active at 600 sites around the country, mainly engaged in housing finance education, risk management work, needs assessments and specialised administrative support

Sowetan 31/12/98

(123)

Minimum size of grant houses announced

Louise Cook

PRETORIA — Housing Minister Sankie Mthembu-Mahanyele has announced minimum sizes for houses built with government grants and said a framework for a housing capacity building programme was set up to address shortcomings at provincial and local government levels.

Mthembu-Mahanyele also said at a media briefing that government had by the end of October spent 58% of its R3,2bn allocation for the current financial year. It expected to have used the full amount at the end of March.

She said the minimum size of a house was set at 30m² from April next year, but sizes would be allowed to vary in cases where geotechnical or topographical conditions hampered production. The smallest house that could be built in areas of medium dolomite was 24m². Each provincial housing MEC could also set a greater minimum size than depending on construction costs in the area, she said.

"It is our firm belief that with these criteria clearly stipulated ... we will get the co-operation of all stakeholders involved in the construction of low-cost houses. Our aim is to promote good practices in the construction of housing units for low-income earners and discourage crooked tendencies," she said.

One of the challenges facing provincial and local government levels to produce low-cost housing.

"The new (capacity building programme) aims to act as an overarching guide as well as to direct the development and implementation of capacity building initiatives in two phases."

In the short term the programme would transfer skills through working sessions and related activities while in the long term the programme would cater for training needs of housing managers, administrators and practitioners through classroom tuition.

The University of the Witwatersrand had already trained 76 officials and the programme was likely to be extended to other universities.

"I must point out that with appropriate legal and policy frameworks already in place, the emphasis is now on the creation of adequate capacity at provincial and especially local spheres of government in order to execute and manage housing development," she said.

(123)

9D 4/12/98

Rental subsidy programme may be put into legislation

Sibonelo Radebe (122)

A RENTAL bill that would introduce a rental subsidy programme for low cost rental accommodation was being considered, Housing Minister Sankie Mthembu-Mahanyele said yesterday in the first annual report of the Social Housing Foundation yesterday.

The bill would set up minimum requirements in contracts between landlords and tenants. Mthembu-Mahanyele said increased provision for rental accommodation would play a critical role in eliminating the housing crisis of SA.

The Social Housing Foundation — established last year by the ministry of housing as a nongovernmental organisation — served a niche market of people earning between R1 500 and R3 000 a month, who wished to rent accommodation. The market included low cost flats and other forms of communal accommodation. Arvinda Gorhill, executive

DD 4/12/98

director of the foundation, said the foundation had grown to a fully operational and independent institution. It had the potential to make a significant contribution to SA's housing process.

She said institutions which provided low-cost rented housing were confronted with technical problems ranging from housing and land policy complications to tax legislation. The foundations was there to assist them.

The foundation currently was working with 30 housing institutions and aimed to raise this number to 50 by 2002.

The previous year of operation had been dedicated to establishing a base for major projects in the future.

The foundation provides training in strategic planning, financial and project management skills and tenant education. It received about R4,5m from government and is also funded by the British and Dutch Housing Associations.



Housing Minister Sankie Mthembu-Mahanyele speaks yesterday at the first annual report of The Social Housing Foundation. Picture: ROBERT BOTHA

Municipal services breakthrough

Deborah Fine

Framework agreement sets stringent conditions for private sector involvement

BD 14/12/98

(123)

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GOVERNMENT, unions and local authorities have agreed on a framework to regulate the involvement of private companies in the delivery of municipal services. Described as a "major breakthrough" in municipal services provision, the agreement was signed in Johannesburg on Friday by Constitutional Development Minister Valli Moosa, Congress of SA Trade Unions (Cosatu) deputy general secretary Zwelinzima Vavi and SA Local Government Association (Salga) chairman Colin Matjila.

The agreement follows months of wrangling over moves by cash-strapped municipalities to explore using the private sector to extend services coverage and address huge services backlogs. The SA Municipal Workers' Union staged protest marches countrywide, while Cosatu threatened action if government did not stop the privatisation of basic services. In particular, this affected Nelspruit in Mpumalanga and the Dolphin Coast in KwaZulu-Natal, where municipalities are at an advanced stage of involving private firms in water delivery. The unions said private sector pursuit

of profits would lead to unaffordable tariffs, retrenchments, poor standards and the neglect of disadvantaged areas. Moosa said an important principle in the agreement was that the private sector should not take over operations where municipalities had a "realistic chance" of delivering quality services themselves. The agreement rejected the "Thatcherite approach" of privatisation for the sake of it and the assumption that the public sector was inherently inefficient, he said.

Private sector partnerships could be established where municipalities were genuinely incapable of service delivery because of financial, technological or capacity constraints. The private sector would have to adhere to environmental and delivery standards, health and safety standards, and the protection of workers' service conditions. It would also have to monitor contracts at its own expense. Measures to prevent "exploitation" included the compulsory provision of life-

line tariffs, limits on tariff increases and restrictions on the rates of return companies were able to make. Municipalities would not be allowed to guarantee profits while companies would be obliged to put funds aside as performance guarantees.

The agreement is understood to give Nelspruit and the Dolphin Coast the go-ahead for their private sector partnerships, as long as labour is satisfied that the process is in line with the principles enshrined in the agreement.

The agreement also makes provision for the formation of a sectoral forum consisting of government, labour and Salga to flesh out the basic principles and build further consensus.

Storm over size of subsidised houses

BD 23/12/98

(123)

Housing minister says 30m² minimum is fair to developers seeking profit

Sibonelo Radebe

DISPUTES about the 30m² minimum size of low-cost houses built with government subsidies are looming, with some large developers indicating they can build only 10m² units for the maximum subsidy, which is R15 000

Analysts fear large developers will pull out of the housing market with the introduction of minimum standards

A number of developers have previously reduced exposure to the market, saying it was too risky and had low margins, exacerbated by recent budget cuts

Housing Minister Sankie Mthembu-Mahanyele yesterday defended the recent decision to introduce national norms and standards on low-cost housing, with the minimum size of houses built with the subsidy set at 30m²

Mahanyele said the minimum size resulted from a study conducted by her department and she was convinced it was fair both to developers seeking profit and beneficiaries looking for reasonable accommodation

She said talk of a 10m² house was "unfair and ruthless" to the destitute and unhoused people of SA

A recent study conducted by the council for scientific and industrial research suggested that rising costs in the construction industry would reduce the size of low-cost houses. The study said some builders believed they could provide only a single-roomed house for a R15 000 subsidy. The subsidy will be increased to R16 000 from next year

Murray & Roberts said it could build only 10m² units with the subsidy, while Grinaker said it could construct a 20m² room with an outside toilet. Stocks & Stocks offered a 20m²-25m², one-roomed house including a toilet and a sink

The minister said some conventional developers wanted to make abnormal profit out of low-cost housing schemes. More than 50% of low-cost houses were produced by unconventional and emerging builders, who in some cases could build houses of more than 40m²

Mahanyele said the national norms and standards provided for variations in

the size where geotechnical and topographical conditions caused problems

In such cases, provincial MECs could approve a reduction in house sizes to a minimum of 27m². "This will accommodate additional construction costs associated with steep slopes and sandy soil"

Mahanyele said that since 1994, housing developers had taken advantage of the loose definition of norms and standards and had built small units. "Our aim is to promote good practices in the construction of housing units for low-income earners and to discourage crooked and greedy tendencies"

Sapa reports that high interest rates have made life difficult for the housing industry. Chris Cudmore, the president of the SA Residential Developers' Association, said unless interest rates fell below 17% next year there would be no improvement in the rate of credit-linked housing development. Cudmore also warned that if next year's budget allocation on housing was cut once again, the momentum in the delivery of subsidised homes would be slowed down

Builders may have to pull out of low-cost housing

Siboñelo Radebe (123) (23)

ESTABLISHED builders will have to pull out of the low-cost housing market if the housing ministry continues to insist that the state subsidy of R15 000 is sufficient to build a 30m² house; the Building Industries Federation of SA says

Bifsa executive director Ian Robinson said the subsidy, which rises to a maximum of R16 000 from January 1, is sufficient for only a 15m² house

Housing Minister Sankie Mthembu-Mahanyele said last week that minimum standards for houses built with government's maximum subsidy would be introduced. While several builders have said the subsidy is sufficient to build only a 10m² home, Mthembu-Mahanyele insisted that it was possible to build a 30m² structure. She said some smaller and more creative builders had produced houses of up to 40m². She accused established construction companies of wanting to make "abnormal profit" out of the low-cost housing market.

Robinson said about R9 000 of the subsidy was consumed by service and infrastructure costs, including sewerage and the provision of water and electricity, leaving less than R6 000 for the structure.

This meant that even if second-hand materials were used it was impossible to build a quality 30m² home. He disputed Mthembu-Mahanyele's assertion that some contractors could build up to 40m² structures with R15 000.

Robinson said the minister had overlooked several factors in her insistence on the minimum house size, including rising labour costs and more expensive building materials. He said government's stance would drive many established builders out of the market.

He expressed regret that Bifsa had not been consulted before the minimum standards announcement was made, saying the organisation had access to the best expertise in the country to determine building costs. The minister's conclusion that 30m² was a fair minimum for the R16 000 subsidy was wrong and misleading, he said. **BD 08/12/98**

Gauteng housing MEC Dan Mofokeng said his department had introduced the 30m² minimum in 1996 and several builders, small and established, had managed to provide houses of up to 40m² at R15 000 each. "For the past two years our experiences (have proved) that the national minimum standards are sustainable and viable," he said.

New deal for landlords and tenants

Protection for both

ART 29/12/98 (123)

CLIVE SAWYER
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

A new deal for tenants and landlords countrywide is in the offing with Housing Minister Sankie Mthembu-Mahanyele's Housing Rental Bill, due to be put to Parliament early next year.

The bill will repeal outmoded rent-control laws dating back more than 20 years and will seek to implement a range of constitutional rights.

These include the right of access to adequate housing, the duty of the state to achieve this and a ban on evictions or demolition of people's homes without court orders

The bill also provides for resolution of conflicts between landlords and tenants speedily and at minimum cost

It balances the need to prevent excessive rents with the need for investors and developers to have incentives to take part in the rental market

The bill will allow the minister to set up a rental subsidy programme for low income wage-earners "in a manner that promotes urban integration and renewal" using money appropriated yearly by Parliament



Sankie Mthembu-Mahanyele

It will allow provincial housing ministers to step in to declare "regulated" areas where rental has gone off the rails.

Grounds for intervention by provincial ministers will include.

- Landlords or tenants not meeting obligations in terms of lease agreements or common law.

- Rents being excessive to the point of exploitation

- Tenants being harassed by unreasonable actions of landlords "aimed at depriving tenants of the peaceful enjoyment of the occupation of their homes".

- Landlords being harassed by tenants aimed at infringing the rights of landlords.

The bill also provides for "assured tenancies" where rents may not be increased except by an amount equal to the actual increase in rates and taxes, service charges and insurance costs, plus a percentage of maintenance and administration costs

Other grounds for eviction include six months' written notice that the dwelling is to be repaired or converted

Significantly, failure by an assured tenant to pay rent by the seventh of the month also will be grounds for eviction

New housing laws aim to be fair to tenants, landlords

Outmoded rent control legislation for repeal

By CLIVE SAWYER
Star Parliamentary Bureau

(123)

Star 31/12/98

A new deal for housing tenants and landlords countrywide is in the offing when Housing Minister Sankie Mthembu-Mahanyele's Housing Rental Bill is put to Parliament early next year.

The bill will repeal outmoded rent control legislation dating back more than 20 years and will seek to implement a range of constitutional rights.

These include the right of access to adequate housing, the duty of the state to achieve this, and a ban on evictions or demolition of people's homes without court orders.

In its preamble, the bill says there is a need to promote the provision of housing rental stock and to promote fair practices and certainty in the renting and leasing of housing.

The bill also provides for the speedy resolution of conflicts between landlords and tenants and at minimum cost. It also balances the need to prevent excessive rents with the need for investors and developers to have incentives to take part in the housing rental market.

The bill will allow the minister to set up a rental subsidy programme for low-income wage-earners "in a manner that promotes urban integration and renewal" using money appropriated yearly by Parliament.

It will allow provincial housing ministers to step in to declare "regulated" areas where housing rental has gone off the rails.

Grounds for intervention by provincial ministers will include

- Serious conflict that is harmful to sound relations between landlords and tenants,
- Landlords or tenants generally not meeting their respective obligations in terms of lease agreements or common law,
- Rentals being excessive to the point of exploitation,
- Tenants being harassed by unreasonable actions of landlords "aimed at depriving tenants of the peaceful enjoyment of the occupation of their homes", or
- Landlords being harassed by tenants aimed at infringing the rights of

landlords

A provincial minister who steps in to declare a regulated area may then put a ban on increases in rent, ban evictions, and must appoint a Housing Rental Tribunal to investigate the area.

Tribunals, which will consist of between five and seven members, will include at least two people representing owners or managers of rental property, two representing tenants' groups, and one knowledgeable about property valuations and investments.

Tribunals will be empowered to determine a "reasonable rent", appoint mediators, subpoena landlords and tenants, and decide on complaints.

Inspectors appointed by tribunals will have the power to enter and inspect any premises at reasonable times and request access to documents and records.

The bill also provides for "assured tenancies" where rents may not be increased except by an amount equal to the actual increase in rates and taxes, service charges and insurance costs, plus a percentage to be decided by the minister of maintenance and administration costs.

Assured tenants can be evicted only if they cause material damage to their accommodation, if they or anyone under their control cause a nuisance to neighbours, or if the landlord or the landlord's children need the dwelling for their own occupation and give three months' written notice.

Other grounds for eviction of assured tenants will include six months' written notice that the dwelling is to be renovated, repaired or converted.

Significantly, failure by an assured tenant to pay rent by the seventh of the month will be grounds for eviction.

In a major step, the bill makes it illegal for a landlord to discriminate against a prospective tenant or tenants on the grounds of race, gender, pregnancy, marital status, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture, language and birth.

Also to be set out precisely are the elements of rent including rates and taxes, service charges, maintenance costs, insurance and administration costs.