

beyond belief and I see no glimmer of hope that she might change. America, France and Britain have tremendous investments in South Africa and it is to their advantage that the present order of things remain. South Africa

can rely on their support because of their vested interests, so 15 million blacks can very readily be sacrificed. I see more hope for the American black than there will be in South Africa for a long time to come.

---

# THE STRATEGIES OF BANTU RESETTLEMENT

LAWRENCE MORGAN

*Mr. Morgan is Agricultural Editor of the Natal Mercury. He specialises in problems of Bantu development. This article is a talk he gave to the Natal Coastal region of the Black Sash.*

**T**HE GRAVEST MATERIAL and physical problem facing South Africa is that of resettling millions of Bantu. The factors determining ultimate success or failure now hang desperately in the balance. The scale of this problem and its decisive role in determining whether or not White South Africans can maintain the viability of their society in the years ahead should logically make its solution a basic issue in any parliamentary general election.

That it is quite unlikely to displace the issues of Maori rugby players, television, and what Dr. Hertzog said to some nonentity 40 years ago is indicative of the widespread ignorance and lack of perspective regarding the realities of the crisis towards which most White South Africans, of all shades of political opinion are so apathetically and perilously drifting.

**W**hile we have not yet reached the point of no return, and while we still retain considerable opportunities for bringing the situation under control, indications of failure are already apparent in some specific facets of the problem.

No longer, for instance, can we justifiably hope that we will be able to overtake the rapidly accumulating backlog in housing, and at the same time retain those structural and amenity standards which we thought in the past to be not only possible but essential. This failure, the roots of which are at least 30 years old, in itself poses a considerable threat to our projected industrial and urban growth points.

If we have considered resettlement in the past, we have usually focused our attention on its tactical implications, rather than on its wider strategical nature. It is the strategies of Bantu resettlement which I wish to discuss this morning. The tactical considerations which concern us from time to time involve the mechanisms and nature of specific "removals": the justice or injustice of government action; the efficiency or blundering,

the heroism or villainy of local officials; the hardships or advantages experienced by those removed. But we tend to give minimal consideration to the broader issues of resettlement — the strategies — in which the removals of the past constitute merely an infinitely small part of the total problem. For Natal, the strategic demands of the resettlement issue are ominously clear.

In the older urban areas, housing facilities for the existing Bantu population are ludicrously inadequate. Many of the major centres have as many illegal residents as they have lawful tenants and householders. The numbers of squatters living under Cato Manor-style conditions are increasing at a disturbing rate. New industrial growth points are being generated. They will provide jobs for many thousands of Africans, who will have to be resettled in new townships.

In overpopulated rural areas, safety valves in the form of new employment opportunities and new townships will have to be created. As a result of land betterment schemes, scattered kraals will have to be relocated at a more rapid rate and their occupants resettled in village-type groups.

## 2,000,000 Africans in Natal alone

Altogether, during the coming decade we can expect to be confronted with the seemingly impossible task of securing the resettlement of a seemingly 2,000,000 Africans in Natal alone. On the face of it, "impossible" because census figures would have us believe that there were little more than 2,000,000 Africans in Natal in any case. We have just to consider some of our main Bantu townships, however, where the actual population is at least 100 per cent. above the officially accepted figure, to understand the reason for the apparent discrepancy. We have to recognise from the outset that few of the statistics we possess relating to the Bantu can be considered reliable, population statistics least of all. Although the next census may result in a more accurate population assessment than the last one, it will certainly produce figures far below the actual totals. Every Bantu urban centre now contains a continually increasing proportion of illegal tenants. These, together with the illegal squatters on the perimeter of the townships, will naturally evade to the best of their ability the formality of being recorded in the census. We can therefore accept as inevitable a considerable degree of error once again. However, there are often discernible area population patterns, and recorded figures from a variety of local organisation and State department offices are frequently available. It is upon such sources that I have based the approximate calculations in this survey.

In Natal we are confronted with two main aspects of Bantu resettlement: those of the rural areas and those of urban areas. It is probable that few members of the Black Sash will agree with me when I assert that the basic factors contributing to the necessity for resettlement programmes in Natal are essentially social and developmental, and only in insignificant part are they political. The fact that nearly 40 per cent. of the region is Bantu-occupied, in fragmented areas, reduces the necessity for mass resettlement on purely political grounds. Other than for minor consolidation projects and the acquisition of more land from the White sector, this fragmentation is likely to persist indefinitely. There is no prospect of a consolidated Zulustan on the pattern of the Transkei.

Rural resettlement needs stem from three principle problems: those of overpopulation, agricultural planning requirements, and the labour tenant system.

No other development has been so dramatically significant and has possessed such far-reaching implications in South Africa's recent history than the Bantu population explosion. Natal's Bantu population densities, and their accompanying livestock numbers, are now exerting such pressures on most rural areas that the situation must be regarded as critical. There is now, as never before, the likelihood that vast areas of land will become sterilised and permanently incapable of food production as the result of having to accommodate too many people and too many animals. The consequence must be increased poverty, malnutrition, and disease, and an escalating threat to Natal's major watersheds — all but one of which lie in Bantu areas.

### Population density

In South Africa other than in Natal the population density of non-Whites varies from 15 per square mile in the Cape to 43 in the Transvaal. In Lesotho it is 63, Kenya 41. On Natal's South African Bantu Trust Land it is nearly 110 per square mile. On Bantu-owned land it is over 235 a square mile. Some individual districts are even more overcrowded. There are 400 people per square mile in the Swartkop location and 252 in the Inananda location. And these are suspect figures, derived from the last census. In one Natal Bantu area alone a recent survey has revealed an actual population more than double that officially accepted from census figures.

Until such population densities are reduced it is impossible to effectively plan an area on an agricultural basis. Up to the present 44 per cent. of Natal's African areas have been planned, ranging from five per cent. at Msinga to 50 per cent. at Bergville. Without such planning, agricultural rehabilitation is impossible, and so is the effective participation of scattered communities in educational and health services and other essential amenities. This rehabilitation involves both the urbanisation of those who can no longer be supported on the land, or who are no longer farmers, and the resettlement of the remaining farming community in village-type settlements. Of the latter, over 105,000 people have been resettled so far in planned residential areas. It is probable that at least a further 200,000 in this category will have to be resettled.

### Labour Tenant System

However, perhaps an even more immediately menacing rural resettlement problem is that produced by Natal's labour-tenant system.

There is little that can be said in favour of this method of employment in which Bantu labourers engage in farm work for half the year in exchange for certain residential rights, grazing facilities for their animals, and — though not always — a small wage while they are employed. This system is not conducive to either an efficient White agriculture or to the provision of adequate living standards for the Bantu. In full-time employment a labourer's status and conditions can be immeasurably improved and it becomes possible to initiate training programmes adequate to the demands of modern agriculture. Both organised agriculture and the Government have agreed that the labour-tenant system should be ended, but have accepted that no abrupt change can be made without serious repercussions both for the employer and his worker. The official approach in Natal, therefore, has been to soft-pedal the move towards full-time employment, which will ultimately result in the resettlement of at least 316,000 Africans. The Natal Agricultural Union has put the total at a possible 1,000,000.

### Weenen

Unfortunately, this awareness of the scale of the problem and its resettlement implications are apparently not shared by the White farming community in its entirety. At the moment we are seeing in the Weenen district what precipitate action can accomplish. As a result of an understandable but ill-advised decision of the local farmer's association to seek the immediate application of regulations legally ending the labour-tenant system, a substantial crisis has been provoked there. The Africans, forming a solid front, have rejected full-time employment until they have been provided with homes off the farms where, they say, they can negotiate employment conditions from a basis of security. The immediate result of the crisis has been a severe shortage of labour on the farms, and a crash programme for the resettlement of between 20,000 and 25,000 Africans who may eventually need new homes. The long-term consequences may well be a permanent switch by the Weenen Bantu from agriculture into urban — migrant — employment. The Weenen affair has also provoked a further influx of homeless Africans into the already overcrowded Msinga reserve. It is obvious that further additions to such overpopulated areas, whether voluntary or involuntary, cannot continue without severe and accelerated injury to both the land and the human com-

munity involved. Weenen is only the curtain raiser to what may be an even greater labour-tenant crisis.

### Vryheid

In the Vryheid area, where there are 175,000 Africans, including families, involved in the labour-tenant system, there are now ominous indications of a situation developing which would make the Weenen crisis seem a mere picnic. A minority of impatient White farmers are already, on their own initiative, enforcing full-employment conditions on their farms. The disquiet and anxiety which this is producing among the entire African farm population threatens to escalate to a point where another vaster and far more serious Weenen situation will arise. Just in the two areas of Weenen and Vryheid, there is need to plan for the resettlement of at least 200,000 people. There is no hope of providing the Bantu with land in the Vryheid area which could support the numbers which would be displaced there. The only hope of accommodating them on land of an adequate agricultural standard lies in the possibility of more White-owned farms in Zululand being acquired for their resettlement. This is not an impossibility, as the agreed quota of land yet to be released there for eventual Bantu resettlement has not yet been taken up.

### Black Spots

In addition to displaced labour-tenants Natal is faced with the task of resettling the population of Black Spots. Some 200 of these areas remain to be cleared. Although the Black Spot problem has acquired in some instances a political aura, there is little doubt that the majority of these areas are long overdue for attention on non-political grounds alone. The conditions under which the inhabitants of most of them live are an indictment of any nation which claims to number itself among the advanced states of the world. Many are, indeed, Black Spots in more ways than one, sited on ruined, donga-scarred soil, with disease-ridden slum housing. Where there is water, it is usually polluted. But there can be no immediate resettlement of all these unfortunate people. There is insufficient land to offer them, and any improvement of their conditions must await either the acquisition of more White land under the quota agreement, or new accommodation and employment opportunities in urban centres.

## Urban resettlement

The problem of the urban resettlement of the Bantu in Natal is complex and of vast proportions. Without exception, the existing urban townships are grossly overpopulated. In many, illegal tenants outnumber those that are there legally. There are also increasing numbers of squatters. Authoritative estimates of the population of such centres as Durban's Umlazi put the current population at more than twice its official figure. A by-product of this situation is that thousands of Bantu children in Natal are barred from educational and other facilities because their parents have no legal status as residents. In addition to the contribution by illegal tenants to overcrowding, there is no indication that current housing programmes are even keeping pace with the natural increase of the legal population of urban centres.

## Squatter population

But urban areas have yet another problem of increasing gravity — that of the squatter population around their perimeter. The squatter population of Port Natal alone is now bigger than that of Natal's biggest African township, Kwa Mashu. A conservative estimate of the shortage of houses in the Durban-Pinetown complex is 30,000. This backlog is increasing by the day.

The biggest resettlement programme in Natal's history is, however, that incorporated in the Government's second five-year plan, which is now being implemented. It will involve the resettlement of at least 850,000 Africans, the development of eight Bantu towns in the Port Natal area and 34 others in the rest of Natal. A large volume of new employment opportunities will become available in the new border industry centres of Newcastle and Richards Bay. This development will meet the urgent need of providing employment and accommodation opportunities necessary to support surplus rural populations, which will relieve the current critical pressures on the rural areas. It will also contribute to the decentralisation of urban and industrial populations, and it will reduce the proportion of migrant labour.

Border industries, however, still involve considerable transport problems for their workers. A large expansion of Natal's road and rail transport facilities is now envisaged, but it is obvious that unless industrial wages rise, there will be need to subsidise Bantu

transport considerably in much of the new development areas.

There is an important alternative to Border industries. Official surveys are now in progress in Natal, conducted with complete lack of publicity. These will not only provide the foundations for future planning of minor resettlement areas and patterns of land use, but will indicate where and how many major industrial growth points will be created in Bantu areas.

## Industrial complexes

Up to now, industrial complexes have been confined to White areas. Although the border industry concept can probably be implemented more effectively in Natal than in most other regions of South Africa, and there is little doubt that it is destined to play an invaluable role in both Bantu and White development, it has certain obvious disadvantages for both employer and employee. It is now probable that Natal will be the site for the first industrial growth point in a wholly Bantu area. That the Africans have had to wait this long for prospects of industrial development in their areas is surely utterly inexplicable. In most developed nations when faced with the problem of economically depressed regions it is regarded as axiomatic that new industries should be deliberately sited in them, even if it means their transference from other, more affluent areas. Nothing of the kind, voluntarily or involuntarily, has occurred in our economically depressed regions — the Bantu areas. Indeed, little support for such a policy has come from the public generally, or from the English-speaking section in particular. It is impossible to understand, from a basis of economic and social justice, why the African should be denied the provision of employment opportunities on his own doorstep, and instead be expected to leave his home under pressure of poverty to seek work in distant corners of the country.

As a group, we English-speaking people have consistently and, I think, rightly attacked the iniquities of the migrant labour system. But what have we and English-speaking industrialists done to promote or encourage employment near the traditional homes of the Bantu so that the worst evils of the system could be alleviated? This is yet another basic socio-economic issue which has become bedevilled and befogged by our pathological urge to translate everything into political attitudes.

## Ethnic grouping

There remains one further facet of resettlement — that which is being implemented for reasons of ethnic grouping. This, possibly, is potentially the most controversial of all. The largest project in this category may well be the resettlement in Natal of Zulu populations now living outside the Province. With the industrial development of the Tugela Basin I think that we can expect pressures to accommodate the Zulu population now living in the Southern Transvaal.

## Creating residential centres

To recapitulate: We must now prepare for a rapid acceleration in the urbanisation of the Bantu; we also are confronted with the task of creating large numbers of residential centres within the rural areas themselves to accommodate the farming population after their land has been agriculturally planned. To accommodate all categories, including squatters, illegal tenants, inhabitants of Black Spots, labour tenants and the rest, will involve housing programmes on a scale never before tackled in South Africa. Earlier I asserted that we had already lost the unequal struggle to provide housing of the standards which, up to now, we have considered essential. Indeed, the physical challenge of creating sufficient housing is one of the most difficult that confronts us. This is not a problem unique to Natal, or even to South Africa generally. A committee of the United States Senate has estimated that more than 900 million people in Africa, Asia and Latin America live in sub-standard housing, and that altogether some three-quarters of the world's population live in such conditions.

## Site and Service Schemes

Except in the further expansion of some major existing centres such as Kwa Mashu and Umlazi, I do not see any physical possibility of providing the vast number of required homes at current standards in new industrial areas, such as those of the Tugela Basin. To provide for all categories, both urban and rural, would require a housing programme of at least 300,000 new houses for the Bantu alone during the next decade. It is evident that there will have to be considerable rethinking on the part of the Department of Bantu Administration as regards housing, particularly in the new urban centres. Personally, I can see no alternative to an extension of the Site-and-Service Scheme, whereby

the State provides the site and essential services, while the house is built by its prospective occupant. This would mean that more houses of the traditional Bantu type of approved standards would be erected, possibly incorporating improved design and equipment facilities.

## Truly organic growth

But this immense programme of resettling large masses of African families in new or expanded urban environments involves far more than a relocation of human pawns on a Natal chessboard. If we are to avoid creating soul-less, termite-like urban communities, such as those of Calcutta and some of the huge, crowded cauldrons of humanity in South America, we need to ensure that our new and existing Bantu townships experience a truly organic growth. The mega-cities which are to be created will be accompanied by a variety of insuperable problems if conceived merely as broiler chicken plants, no matter how many cinemas and sports stadiums they may contain. When housing projects in its environs are completed, Kwa Mashu is likely to comprise a residential complex containing a population of 500,000 people. What sort of place will it be? A community of homes or a sub-economic science-fiction nightmare?

On the answer to this will, to a large extent, depend not only a significant part of the material prosperity of Durban's Whites, but also their physical security.

## Fundamentally non-political

This problem, like the majority I have discussed in the resettlement issue, is one which is fundamentally non-political. Perhaps South Africa's most tragic — and dangerous — characteristic today is the refusal or inability of so many of its people to view the realities of their situation without recourse to the distorting lenses of their ingrained political prejudices. It is because of this, perhaps, that there are too few sociologists, too few town planners, too few agricultural advisers — too little support even for voluntary organisations like SANTA who are struggling to provide desperately needed help for the African. Is there not futility in any approach which merely regards resettlement problems of exploding Bantu populations as being somehow isolated phenomena, directly attributable to specific political factors? If we accept this restricted type of assessment we not only fail to recog-

nise the intrinsic nature of the problem, but render ourselves impotent to contribute towards a solution.

### Social trauma

Africans are destined to suffer from the same social trauma as Whites: the devaluation of family and kinship beneath the tide of anonymous mega-city humanity; the ever-constricting urban limitations on what we now consider democratic freedom, and the increasing regimentation of human masses in an overpopulated environment; the pattern of violence, alcoholism and drugs, which will *increasingly become vehicles for a symbolic rebellion, or hopeless retreat, from a mechanistic environment which degrades individual identity and destroys the family clan.* More and more, the resettled Bantu in urban centres will, like White city-dwellers, suffer the suffocation of personality. Like Whites they will live, as *someone has aptly described modern housing trends, in disposable cubicles for dispensable people.* But such experience is inherently far more menacing for communities whose evolutionary time processes are compressed and who are abruptly pitchforked into a cultural and environmental transition, such as today's Bantu. These, indeed, are some of the most crucial problems facing mankind universally, as our population explosions and our technological development — like a demented, driverless steam-roller — threaten every aspect of our environment. Somehow we will have to attain that degree of vision and perspective which will enable us to view Bantu resettlement, the creation of new cities and the expansion of the old, not merely as an exercise in Black or White logistics, but essentially as a problem of human ecology.

Someone is certain to comment that as *population growth is the principle cause of our resettlement problems, the answer is basically one of contraception.* I have just one observation to make on this: the only avenue that holds any promise of reducing the birth rate lies in raising the living standards of the Bantu. In no country in the world has it been found that *birth-control facilities and propaganda, on their own, have more than scratched the surface of the problem.* The poorer and less-educated people are, and the lower their standard of nutrition, the more babies they have.

I am conscious of the pitfalls in African resettlement planning waiting those who approach this massive complex problem from a

predominantly abstract, non-organic basis. I am aware of the dangers of undermining individual responsibility and mutual human respect through impersonal manipulation of human society, whether attempted by sociologists, ethnologists, town planners, politicians, or merely by those who think — possibly even with justification — that they know best how other people should live their lives. Indeed, I see also the perils inherent even in the power of knowledge, of understanding, of moral courage — a power, without doubt, shared by many White South Africans of differing outlook, including members of the Black Sash. For today even these qualities, on their own, are not enough. They possess their own built-in limitations for ultimate practical achievement.

Today, the battlefield undeniably belongs to the nameless ones; to those who are spurring and canalising African development in directions which offer most hope for them and for their neighbour races; to those who are working with special skills; who are compassionate but without the diffusive impotence of sentimentality. This, as never before, is the day of the field worker with the sociological hoe; the cultivator of cultural change. All else is now of subordinate urgency. It is only necessary to look at trends in many of the Black States to the north of us to appreciate this. In spite of severe human organisational limitations and the fragility of both political and a-political influences on a community's evolutionary destiny, there does not appear to be any alternative to attempting to accelerate change in the culture and environmental circumstances of Bantu society. And this involves the task of stimulating such far-reaching processes as resettlement, one of the basic structural facets of change.

To achieve this — and to achieve it in the rapidly dwindling time left to us in South Africa — is there any alternative to rolling-up our sleeves and to labouring for it within whatever White political and sociological framework exists at any specific point of our history, now or in the future?

For if we reject this role, we retard even essential developmental processes, to the danger of all races — but, most of all, to the peril of the Bantu themselves.