

I am only concerned that we hold onto this strength. That is why I am worried about the effects of disinvestment, for example. We all cringe, do we not, from the faces of unemployed people in our advice offices? That is why I am concerned about our silence when people get their ears sliced as punishment for going to work during a stay-away. I know these are not easy matters. I just want us to worry about them.

Your argument about sitting comfy and passing judgment can be turned on its head. It's just as bad to sit comfy and forget how awful it must be to be caught between police violence on one hand and intimidation by a highly politicised elite on the other. I speak about this not from some lofty theoretical ivory tower but from contact with people who have explained to me in graphic detail what it is like to live like this. I have two black students who intermittently live with me who don't know whom to fear most and who want to emigrate to America!

Sash warning on new 'dictators'

By BARRY STREEK

THE Black Sash has warned against the "ominous" potential for dictatorship among black communities where leaders are not elected.

It has also urged the United Democratic Front (UDF) to adopt strategies in which the government was presented with demands it could meet.

The creation of strong constituencies for organization and negotiation would never happen if leaders allowed themselves to be guided by self-interest and ideology "rather than by the needs and aspirations of ordinary people", the Black Sash said.

In an editorial in the latest issue of the organization's journal, Sash, it said: "One result of denying the vote to the majority of citizens is that there are no properly accepted structures for the expression of discontent or bargaining or management of day-to-day living.

"But now we are glimpsing signs of a more ominous, less recognized consequence, which is the potential for dictatorship that exists among the disenfranchised masses; for when leaders are not elected, they are free from responsibility to their constituencies and even from the necessity of having constituencies."

When the government could prohibit meetings, either by banning or the refusal of permits, "you are asking for a situation where any determined group can order masses of people around by means of posters, leaflets and strong-arm tactics".

The article declared also that there were some disconcerting straws in the wind which needed to be discussed by the UDF and all opposition organizations.

Boycotts

Substantial numbers of people now wanted to get on with their lives and schooling, and they did not see what was being achieved by endless boycotts. The kind of rhetoric which invoked "the wrath of the people", together with statements that collaborators only had themselves to blame for violent attacks on them, "do not exactly create a suitable climate for frank and free discussion", the editorial continued.

The editorial suggested that "strategies must surely be worked out whereby the government is presented with demands it can meet. The consequences of the all-or-nothing ethic need to be looked at".

From Cape Times, November 28, 1984

Rural blacks in the western Cape

Sue Joynt

In Ceres — a small Boland town — the prescribed areas defined by the government for the purpose of 'ordering' the lives of blacks, is divided into a municipal and a divisional council area. The former covers the town and the latter the surrounding farming areas. Mr D J was born (he claims) in the town of Ceres where for many years he has worked for a dairy. The Development Board officials claim that he was born in the divisional council area of Ceres and therefore needed their special permission to work in the municipal area. This he was given, together with a place in the single quarters in the black township.

Problems arose when he married a coloured woman — her family are happy for him to live with them in the coloured township but this is not allowed. Because his wife was with him in the single quarters after repeated warnings that she was to leave, his permit and accommodation in the municipal area have now been cancelled and he has been told that he must find a job in the divisional council area of Ceres. The employer, meanwhile, would like to continue employing him but would have to provide him with housing which is not possible.

In Robertson there are families with qualifications for permanent residence in the area but no residences for them to occupy and no obligation on the part of the authorities to provide any.

Mr and Mrs O have lived on a farm in the Robertson district since 1962. They therefore have qualified under Section 10 (b) of the Urban Areas Act to live and work there permanently. All their children were born there. Because no provision is made for schools for black children in the area, they had to be sent to boarding school in Transkei. When Mrs O returned from taking the children to school, she found that they had been moved out of their house on the farm and her husband was in the single quarters. As she has no other home, she moved in with him. They have twice been arrested — she for being where she is not permitted to be and he for harbouring her. The magistrate feels that this is not a matter for his Court but the authorities are not compelled to house them. (Robertson is theoretically served by a small township — Ashton) nor is the employer (in this case the Dept of Nature Conservation). Where are they meant to live? No other farmer can provide them with accommodation unless they are registered as working for him and the township has no room.

In Swellendam the position is even worse. Many blacks have lived and worked there for 20 or more years but there is no township at all. Thus a place to live in the area where a black is qualified to be is totally dependent on

his employment. If he works on a farm he will probably have a house. If he works on the national road for the Provincial Administration he is supposed to live in a hostel in a camp with no provision for his wife and family to be with him — even though many of these men have wives who if black are qualified to live in the Swellendam area too.

The WCDB and/or SAP regularly raid these camps and arrest the women they find there.

Lucky is the black family who have a house on a farm but what is supposed to happen to them when the parents reach retirement age? They are entitled to a pension in the area in which they are qualified to live. They know no other home and the farmer will probably evict them from his land because he needs the housing for his new workers.

Who is responsible for sorting out problems such as these? Who decides that there will be no township in Swellendam even though there are scores of black families qualified to live and work there but who are not provided with houses, schools or any access to basic social infrastructures which they are not allowed to provide for themselves either?

In Swellendam most of the women are living on farms with at least their children and sometimes their husbands with them. This puts them in a tenuous position as farmers are only allowed to accommodate their own workers on their farm. Thus if the woman loses her job she loses the family's accommodation too. This has just happened to Mrs M who has lived and worked on a plum farm for the past 20 years. The farmer has now decided to farm cattle instead of plums and she and her family have been evicted. Her husband has worked for the Provincial Roads Dept all his life and is supposed to live in the 'camp'. Where is his family to live now?

The whole of the Western Cape is administered by the Western Cape Development Board which has its head office at Goodwood in Cape Town. There are regional offices at Stellenbosch, Paarl, Worcester, Hermanus, Ceres, Ashton/Montagu, Malmesbury and Springbok. According to the Western Cape Development Board there are presently 136 000 people qualified to live in the Western Cape — of these 2 585 families live in the rural areas. 353 families in Ashton (where there is a small township) 132 in Robertson, 123 in Ceres, 1 022 in Paarl (where there is a township) 129 in Hermanus (where there is a township) 231 in Stellenbosch (another township) 251 in Kuilsriver (a township) and 1 160 in Worcester (again a township) — *Die Burger* October 2, '84. No mention is made of the remaining 435 families who presumably do not live in townships and are scattered through the rest of the WCDB area.

Figures for the de jure (ie legal) population of the Western Cape for 1983 are as follows:

Prescribed Areas:	males	females	total	number
				of houses
				rented
Ashton	3 173	1 639	4 812	202
Ceres	4 853	347	5 200	59
Hermanus	7 250	800	8 050	93
Malmesburg	8 770	100	8 870	—
Paarl	10 180	4 700	14 880	622
Springbok	4 432	—	4 432	—
Stellenbosch	11 547	1 113	12 660	279
Worcester	9 466	4 287	13 753	1 038

Hansard 17 of '84 para: 1387

Worcester covers a large area extending up to Sutherland and Laingsburg while Hermanus administers all the coastal magisterial districts up to the Gouritz River. There is only one township in this region and this is at Hermanus which is obviously of no use to most of the blacks working in this large area. Each town in the area is visited one day a week by a circuit labour officer and the camps are regularly raided by the board inspectors and/or the SA Police. Tear gas has been used in these raids. If the women apprehended in the camps have permission to be in the area then they are charged with trespassing in the camp.

During July 1984 the Black Sash advice office went to Swellendam (controlled by the WCDB office at Hermanus, but it has no township) and interviewed 87 people from whom we ascertained the following information:

MEN : 68 interviews

Permits — ie permanent residence rights:

5 had contracts, 29 had open permits, 23 had a permit marked 'nie kontrak', 1 had 10 1(b) rights, 3 had pensions, 2 were work-seekers, 3 had no permits, 2 had new travel documents into which their permits had not yet been stamped.

Thus 58 of the 68 interviewed, or 85%, have permanent residence rights.

Accommodation:

Men living on farms: 32 — with wives 28 (6 coloured); without wives 4

Men living in camps (ie single quarters): 32 — with wives 7 (3 coloured); without wives 25; with wives on farms 7 (1 coloured).

Of these wives, 7 had no permits, 14 had permits, 13 permit position unknown, 12 coloured.

WOMEN : 19 interviews

Permits : 4 working with permits, 6 without permits, 5 have permits but are not working, 4 have no permits and are not working.

Accommodation:

On farms: 16 — with husbands 5; without husbands 9 (4 not married); away all week working in Paarl 2

In camps: 2 — with husband

In town: 1 — without husband

Length of time in Swellendam:

Of 68 men : 22 were born in area, 2 had lived there longer than 40 years, 8 longer than 30 years, 22 longer than 25 years, 13 longer than 15 years, 1 longer than 10 years.

Of 23 women either interviewed or wives of men interviewed: 10 were born in area, 3 had lived there longer than 25 years, 5 longer than 15 years, and 5 longer than 5 years.

In discussions with senior officials of the WCDB they agree that the situation is deplorable but representations to the government regarding the building of family housing have not met with any success.