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DEAD MAN
TELLS NO TALES
HATE-BORN
TO
SUFFER

SQUATTERS

reality

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EDITORIALS

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THE QUESTION

Twenty years ago France was rocked by the publication of a book called "The Question". It was Henri Alleg's account of his torture by French security forces in Algeria, and it provoked an outcry, not only in France, where the authorities did everything they could to suppress the book.

No doubt the almost universal reaction of every South African who read the book was "Well, thank God, that could never happen here!" But could it not? Britain, often regarded as the epitome of civilised and tolerant behaviour towards those it holds in custody, has been successfully arraigned before the European Human Rights Commission for torture of Irish detainees by its security forces. And if it could happen there, could it not happen here?

South Africa has created a web of security laws which provides safe and cosy conditions for potential torturers to go about their business if they should wish to do so. They provide for detention in solitary confinement without access to family, friends or lawyers, until the person detained has answered questions to the satisfaction of his interrogators. In many quarters the mere detention of a person in solitary confinement is regarded as a sufficiently effective form of

torture to persuade many of its victims to say to their interrogators what those interrogators want them to say. But in South Africa, over the years, a growing number of witnesses and accused have described in court, experiences they claim to have gone through, which go much further than passive detention in solitary confinement. Almost since the first detention act was passed, people charged with security offences have told of being forced to stand until their legs swelled up and they collapsed exhausted; of being kept awake for days; of continuous interrogation under these conditions, while exhaustion ate away at their resistance and awareness until they no longer knew whether what they were relating in response to their interrogation was what had actually happened or what their interrogators wanted them to think had happened. Recently evidence of this nature has become more common in such cases. Here are only a few examples, taken from press reports.

In a trial in Pietermaritzburg a Security Police officer told the court that "it had been necessary to interrogate one of the accused continuously for 43 hours". Another accused in the trial claimed "that he was assaulted by security police

on the day of his arrest. He said he was punched in the stomach, hit with fists and open hands, had pieces of gravel put in his shoes, and was made to bend and straighten his knees until he was 'unspeakably sore' ". Other accused were reported to have made similar, or worse, allegations. Cleopas Ndhlovu told the Supreme Court ³ "how he had been assaulted continuously for two days, given electric shocks and blindfolded for 13 days by Security Branch policemen". A defence witness, Russel Maphanga said that his interrogators made him take off his jacket, trousers, shoes and watch, he was told to squat with his back against the wall and his arms raised. ⁴ "Then I was interrogated further, and hit. Fists were piled into me. I was hit with open hands and fingers prodded me in the stomach". Two state witnesses were recalled at a later stage of the trial by the defence to refute the evidence they had previously given. Frans Kunene, after relating a story of prolonged police assault, said he eventually agreed to support police allegations against the accused because ⁵ "they were killing me". Harold Nxasana, a key state witness in this trial, was recalled to the witness box after his wife had filed an affidavit alleging he had told her he had been tortured in detention. Mrs Nxasana claimed that on a visit to her husband last year he had whispered to her ⁶ "You don't know what they did to me. They killed me!" At another meeting she asked her husband if he was prepared to tell the truth if she took the matter up. Her husband had replied "Oh yes, I am prepared. But as to the thing they will do to me thereafter, they will kill me". Mr Nxasana then proceeded to give his account to the court of the treatment to which he claimed the Security Police had subjected him . . . which, if true, was quite terrifying.

In the trial of 20 Ngoye students relating to the disturbances at that university last year, a state witness, E. Mqaba, was gaoled for refusing to give further evidence against his fellow students after days of pathetically confused evidence in which he alleged that shortly after his arrest a policeman told him that he was going to meet a police captain ⁷ "who had already killed ten people in detention". Mr Mqaba, who was arrested in July, claimed not to have been given a change of clothes until late in 1976. Mr Mqaba who, from press reports of the trial, appeared to be completely demoralised and disorientated by his experience in detention, finally refused to give further evidence, and was sent to gaol.

In the same case it was established from the diary of a security police officer ⁸ that one student, detained in solitary confinement for six weeks before his interrogation even began, had then been questioned for 31 hours 15 minutes non-stop by various interrogators.

In the inquest into the death of detainee Mapetla Mohapi, 27 year-old Miss Thenjiwe Mtintso stated that, while detained last year, ⁹ "I was made to stand in their office for three days and nights without food or drink while Captain Hansen sometimes hit my head against the wall or slapped or punched me". She said she was later warned by another security policeman that if she continued to lie she would go "the same way as Mohapi". Miss Mtintso alleged further that she was later taken to Kei Road police station, where Mohapi was alleged to have committed suicide. She said that she was put in a cell and Captain Hansen appeared with a wet towel. He told her to sit on the floor. "He put the towel over my head and in doing so he stood directly behind me and placed the towel over the

whole of my head until it reached my neck. He then pulled the two ends of the towel tight over and across my neck, which had the effect of making me feel I could not breathe. He held the towel in this position for what seemed to be a long time. All this time I was struggling and throwing my head back, trying to get breath and also was using my hands to try and get the towel off my face". Miss Mtintso alleged that this treatment was repeated three times and after the third time the towel was removed and she was left lying on the cell floor until she was eventually taken back to East London. Asked why she had not reported the assaults during her detention she said she had been warned by the Security Police that if she did she would be further assaulted.

In the trial in East London in which Mr Steve Biko, honorary president of the Black People's Convention, is charged with defeating the ends of justice, a state witness, 19 year old Mr Steki Linda, told how, on his way to the police station, he was taken to a hall, where he ¹⁰ "was smacked with an open hand and hit with a clenched fist". Under cross-examination Linda said that, before making a statement at the police station, he had heard screams coming from the other offices and he thought at the time the other detainees were being beaten. Another state witness, a 16 year old schoolboy, admitted under cross-examination ¹¹ that he had complained to his mother of pains in the ribs and shoulders and that he could not lift his arms after being released from detention. He had also complained to his mother that he had been beaten with a sjambok and a baton which the security police called "Black Power"

These are only some of the allegations of torture by the security police made in political trials during recent months. Add them to the number of deaths in detention, often allegedly through suicide, and the inference grows that grim things could be going on in some interrogation rooms.

Each allegation of police brutality is, of course, vehemently denied by the security police. They insist that all these stories of assault are part of a sinister plot to discredit them and to blacken South Africa's name. They say that the deaths in detention occur because detainees are under orders to commit suicide rather than give away information. It is not, to our minds, a very convincing story. Great play is also made of the fact that detainees so seldom complain of their treatment to the magistrates who are bound by law to visit them once a fortnight. It is not surprising that they don't for, it transpires, if the evidence of detainees is true, that the magistrate is invariably accompanied by one of the policemen involved in the interrogation into whose hands the detainee will be delivered for the next fortnight as soon as the magistrate has left. And even when he does complain there is no guarantee that anything will come of it. In the Pietermaritzburg ANC case, for instance, ¹²

Mr Potgieter, Assistant Chief Magistrate of Durban, in answer to defence questions, said that it was his duty to send detainee's reports of complaints and requests to the Secretary for Justice and the Commissioner of Police. He said he was never informed if the complaints were followed up and it was not within his power to investigate the complaints himself. And in the Ngoye case one of the investigating security police officers told the court he had not investigated a complaint by one of the accused because he did not think it necessary. He knew there was nothing going on.

What about the Courts before whom all these terrible stories are related, and then denied by a succession of police witnesses? Is there nothing they can do to uncover exactly what does go on in the interrogation chambers? It seems not. Remember the case of Joseph Mdluli, arrested one day in a state of good health, and dead the next, having been in the hands of nobody but the security police? Months later four security policemen were charged with culpable homicide. They were found not guilty because it could not be proved that they were present at the time of Mr Mdluli's death. But the judge was not happy and he remarked "I need hardly say that the problem of how Mdluli met his death is one that should be solved" Well, it will not be, for the Attorney-General of Natal announced recently that his department had carried out a further full investigation into the case and he had come to the conclusion he could not institute criminal proceedings against anyone. If it proved impossible in terms of our law to pin the Mdluli death on anyone, how on

earth will it ever be possible in any other detainee's case?

The Government indignantly denies that there could be any systematic psychological or physical torture of political detainees in South Africa and rejects all requests for an inquiry. Yet evidence over nearly twenty years, in a succession of political trials, suggests that torture may be used systematically by some members of the security police. If Britain was prepared to accept the findings on torture in Northern Ireland of the Human Rights Commission, why shouldn't we submit our interrogation system to the investigations of a totally independent body, perhaps the International Red Cross? Or if national pride balks at that, what about a retired Judge of Appeal? Or any other acceptably independent inquiry?

All we want to know is this. Is torture being used by some policemen in the interrogation of political detainees or is it not? □

¹ Natal Mercury, 15.3.1977;

² Natal Witness, 29.1.1977;

³ Natal Mercury, 8.2.1977;

⁴ Daily News, 4.2.1977;

⁵ Natal Mercury, 23.2.1977;

⁶ Natal Witness, 4.5.1977;

⁷ Daily News, 19.4.1977;

⁸ Weekend World, 26.5.1977;

⁹ Daily News, 16.3.1977;

¹⁰ Daily News, 13.4.1977;

¹¹ Daily News, 7.4.1977;

¹² Daily News, 8.3.1977;

¹³ Weekend World, 26.5.1977.

2

THE MANDELA VENDETTA

In 1964 Nelson Mandela was sentenced to life imprisonment. Since then he, and the other six black men sentenced with him at the famous Rivonia trial, have been on Robben Island.

In April 1977, twelve-and-a-half years later, the Press was taken on its first conducted tour of the prison since Nelson Mandela was sent there. The tour, as with all such tours of the institutions of any state, was we suppose, intended to show the newspapermen that Robben Island was not such a bad place after all. We note that, although the newspapermen were not allowed to speak to Mr Mandela, it is quite obvious, from their reports of his attitude to their party, that he did not want to speak to them, or be seen by them. No doubt he regarded the whole visit as the piece of official window-dressing it undoubtedly was. This being the case, and his attitude being obvious, we regard the attempts by some of the newspapermen to catch a glimpse of Mr Mandela, and the photographs taken of his cell, as an insensitive and unmannerly intrusion into that small area of privateness which, over the years, we hope he may have been able to create for himself on that grim island.

This intrusion on Mr Mandela has now been followed by an announcement that he is to be charged by the prison

authorities with "insolence". We await with interest details of his offence. Is it really possible that a man of Nelson Mandela's stature, at the age of 59, can be charged with insolence? We suppose that within the terms of prison regulations, it is. Within the terms of the outside world even the suggestion that such a thing could happen is ludicrous, and shaming.

Is this, perhaps, just another episode in the campaign of persecution which the Nationalist Government has waged without let-up and with increasing vigour against the Mandela family since the 1950's? While her husband has been on Robben Island, Winnie Mandela has been subjected to every conceivable form of harassment. She has been banned. She has been imprisoned for breaking her ban. She has been detained, and charged, and had the case against her thrown out, and has then been detained again. Her ban has been allowed to expire and, after a brief spell of relatively normal living, another has been imposed upon her. And according to evidence before the Cillie Commission an attempt was made by the Security Police to implicate her in last year's Soweto upheavals by persuading at least one young man, under duress, to give false evidence against her.

And now the most vicious act of all. In the early hours of a morning in May, Mrs Mandela's Soweto house was surrounded by a small army of Security Policemen, her furniture and other belongings were loaded on to trucks, and she was transported into banishment in the village of Brandfort, O.F.S., where she has neither family, friends, nor work. She will live in a house without electricity, water or telephone, all of which she had in Soweto.

What do these heroes of the hours of darkness, who did this terrible thing to Mrs Mandela, hope to achieve by it?

Do they think that, by cutting her off from Soweto, they will somehow solve their problems there? Do they think that if they have half the Mandela family shut up on Robben Island and the other half in Brandfort, South Africa and the world will forget about them? Or have they reached the stage where only new outrages will satisfy their appetite for persecution of what is, and will continue to be, one of the most important families in South Africa? □

3

AFTER VIENNA

While Mr Vorster announced at the end of his May visit to Vienna and Geneva that he regarded it as a definite success, and while he was welcomed back home by cheering crowds of Nationalist enthusiasts, rather as Dr Verwoerd was when he took South Africa out of the Commonwealth, to most South Africans his trip looked more like a disaster. For had he not perhaps cut our country's last life-line to survival? His and Mr Pik Botha's post-Vienna reports to Parliament make it look dangerously like that.

If "majority rule", to which Liberals look forward, frightens the life out of Nationalists, will they never see that "separate development", as an alternative, is a complete non-starter? Nor will it ever be anything else. Black South Africa and Black Africa and most of the rest of the world will not suddenly forget that separate development grew out of apartheid which grew out of baaskap. They will not forget that it confines Black South African aspirations to 13 % of the country, gives the richest 87% to the Whites, and is a policy in whose formulation, since the 1940's, blacks have had no say at all.

Black Africa, in the Lusaka Manifesto, recognised the tears of being swamped which White South Africans, particularly Afrikaners, experience. All that manifesto asked for from South Africa was a clear indication that apartheid would be abandoned and a deliberate move be started away from discrimination, towards a society in which black aspirations could be fully realised and black political thinking and power fully recognised on the basis of a policy acceptable to black people.

There is only one way in which such a situation can be reached and that, as we have said so often before, is by Mr Vorster sitting down and talking to black leaders and working out with them a solution to which they can subscribe. There is certainly no other way in which South Africa can make itself what Mr Pik Botha calls "internally invulnerable", and unless Mr Botha is prepared to face this fact it really isn't going to make much difference that he, and not the HNP man, won the Westdene by-election.

A recent speech by Dr Piet Koornhof has raised speculation that the Government may at last be preparing to give some serious thought to the position of urban Africans. There is no longer time for this kind of kite-flying. The moment has arrived for the Government to state quite openly that South Africa is now entirely on its own, its situation is desperate, a way back to international acceptability must be found, by all its people together, and that it intends starting talks, to work out our joint future, not only with the people it regards as black leaders, but also with all those others who are imprisoned or banned.

What a release of hope and energy and goodwill would follow such an announcement, and, whatever political formula came out of it, the road back to international recognition, and reconciliation at home, would have been laid. We would have escaped from the dangerous and suicidal dead-end in which we are now stuck.

A dream? Maybe. But the alternative is that nightmare too ghastly to contemplate which each day spent on our present course brings nearer. □

BLACK UNITED FRONT

An Interview with Dr Nyembesi and Mr Mavuso

by Jill Wentzel

"Inkatha and the Black United Front should not be one and the same thing, but they are," said Dr Nyembesi, Chairman of the Black United Front since its inception in October last year. He and Mr John Mavuso, a member of the Black United Front executive, were explaining the movement to a Black Sash general meeting in Johannesburg in May this year.

Inkatha had started in Dr Nyembesi's house in 1974 while a public meeting was being organised to receive Chief Gatsha Buthelezi and introduce members of his government to the Soweto public. The organizers of the meeting felt they would like to establish something more permanent and asked Chief Buthelezi for a name. He suggested the name Inkatha be revived. This was a movement started by King Solomon in 1928 in order to unite the people as an alternative to direct confrontation with the whites. The idea had been to bring people together to develop themselves. In Natal at that time there was a large population of Sotho and Inkatha did not exclude them or anybody else.

In 1974 the revived Inkatha was officially launched. The membership was quickly 70 000 and R69 000 was raised. Now in 1977 it is 100 400 with funds of R136 000. The joining fee is R3 00 with an annual subscription of R1 00.

Feeling that a national movement was necessary, Inkatha launched the Black United Front at a meeting in the Jan Smuts Holiday Inn on 8th October 1976. All homeland leaders were invited. Chiefs Buthelezi, Phatudi and Ntsawanisi attended. Others failed to turn up. A cross section of urban representatives throughout the Reef and Pretoria were personally invited and attended, including Godfrey Pitje, David Thebehale and Sally Motlana. Although personal approaches were made to Saso and BPC they refused to sit down with homeland leaders.

At this meeting the Black United Front was successfully launched and a steering committee elected with Dr Nyembesi as chairman, the three homeland leaders who had been present, Sally Motlana, David Thebehale and Mr Mashao from Pretoria. Mr John Mavuso and others were subsequently co-opted.

Another Black United Front conference was held in Pietersburg on 5th March 1977 when Dr Nyembesi and the executive went to talk to the Pedi, sell the idea of the Black United Front and encourage them not to take independence. It was a big meeting. Six or seven hundred people packed the assembly hall in Teshigo.

The large meeting at Natalspruit early this year was not as had been reported by some of the press a Black United

Front meeting. It had been an Inkatha recruiting meeting called to present urban representative Mr Gibson Thula to the public of Natalspruit. This had been a festive occasion with drum majorettes, singing and many speeches. There was a huge crowd and a number of old congressites had attended. Dr Nyembesi said that good wishes and subscriptions from a large number of exiles were received.

Dr Nyembesi said Inkatha really started because blacks had no bargaining power and their only weapon was numbers. "If we can come together maybe weight of numbers might tell in the end".

He said Inkatha was not an anti-white movement and, "we don't want communism that is certain".

He said he believed that had it not been for confusion and multiplicity of organisations in Rhodesia a solution might have been found by now.

"We must have a disciplined body of people. We have to tidy ourselves. We lack leadership".

"We have lost confidence in the white leadership. We are not sure they are the right people to govern a multi-racial society".

"Majority rule means the best people must govern the country. Separate development will cause disaster".

"Inkatha talks with the PRP because this is the only white political party who want to talk with us".

He said Inkatha believed neither whites nor blacks should bully the other. 'If they want to dominate us we will go for black majority rule. But this is not what we want. We want non-racial majority rule'.

Inkatha was not prepared to have any discussions on the basis of separate development. Dr Nyembesi said he believed Nationalists had not properly thought out separate development and did not really know how it protected the interests of whites or how Transkeian independence could ease the problems of the country.

Inkatha was a grass roots movement which was something that had not been organised before among blacks and certainly not by Saso or BPC. 'Our approach is to the simple people'. Neither Saso nor BPC had been invited to join Inkatha.

Question: Is there a diversity of aim between Black United Front and Saso?

Answer: We are aiming at the same thing, but they are taking a path which makes us a bit uncomfortable and vice-versa. Some of our tactics don't suit the other.

Replying to Peter Brown's comment that the generation gap in the Transvaal was being emphasised by Inkatha, which surely made it vital for them to approach Saso and BPC very soon, Dr Nyembesi denied that Saso and BPC had all that support. "Not even all the students agree with them". He admitted that membership of Inkatha was largely middle-aged, but said that the problem was not so much the generation gap as the fact that the government had successfully convinced people that there is such a thing as urban and rural blacks.

"We believe in Gatsha but the youth say that he is a homeland leader who works in the system".

"But," he said confidently, "we will relate to them when the time comes". In the meantime, "we are going to join everybody in. We are working fast". He added, however, "Unity does not mean that we involve everybody".

Question: How is Gatsha accepted by the other groups?

Answer: That's the problem. We must sell ourselves.

Mr Mavuso: Half the people have not come forward to join the united front. A barrier is the feeling that one cannot have anything to do with people who operate within the system.

Nevertheless Inkatha was growing steadily as a grass roots movement. Dr Nyembesi claimed that no other black political movement had ever been able to be as financially self-supporting as Inkatha was able to be. "Saso would not be able to collect a joining fee of R3 00 plus an annual R1 00 nor had the A.N.C. or P.A.C. been able to collect sufficient funds.

Question: When you have got it all organised what are you going to do?

Answer: I'd rather not say.

Question: How do you plan to spend the money you have raised?

Answer: We have banked the money. That is all.

Question: How can you attract new members unless you have a clearly stated policy?

Answer: The success of the movement in attracting people shows that we are succeeding in getting the message across.

Question: What support do you have from the homeland leadership, the black radicals and on the campuses,

Answer: Dr Phatudi and Professor Ntsanwisi have thrown their weight behind us. We haven't invited the campuses as a group. Everybody is invited as individuals. Before we invite them we'd like to have a round-table conference where we can sort out certain things.

Question: When you feel you have sufficient numbers for their weight to tell, would you take up short term objectives like rents?

Answer: Inkatha would like to be involved in all problems affecting the country, not the problems affecting just one group.

Question: What sort of policy-making machinery do you have?

Answer: Central Executive and Regional Executive elected by local branches.

Question: Will you have white members?

Answer: Would you like to join? Yes — I will bring you forms to sign.

Question: What plans does Inkatha have for coping with people in the Transkei?

Answer: We have made it clear that they can be independent from Pretoria but Independence replaces white elitism with black elitism. They can't be independent from us. Matanzima himself said there was no purpose in multi-racial society and whites and blacks might as well go their own way: but he is prepared to join S.A. if conditions change. We will talk to Matanzima. We are school mates and I have an open invitation to go to him.

Question: Why does he deal so ghastly with his opposition?

Answer: I will ask him when I go to him.

Question: If you feel it is impossible for you to treat with the Nats and if its going to be impossible to get the Nats out of power by any peaceful means, how do you see Inkatha achieving its aims?

Answer: People go into the separate development laager because the government says the Nats are the only people who can protect them. The issues are not even looked at.

Question: Can you see any possibility of bridging the black-white gap through dialogue?

Answer: Yes, we still have time to talk. We think and we have every confidence that we shall overcome those people who will not sit down with other people. We state we can't close our eyes to the white group but we can only talk before we get too strong. We want to avoid a Rhodesian situation. We want Buthelezi to talk now.

Question: If as you say you believe in slow consensus among people at grass roots level, without having any clear policy, what do you say when you recruit people?

Answer: You have a fine leader in Buthelezi. You must support him. You must work for the Zulu first and then attract all for the good of the black community. □

GOOD HOPE

by Edgar Brookes

At this moment many people in South Africa are frankly pessimistic. Whites see no hope for the future, thoughtful blacks see no hope of achieving liberation without civil war and the wholesale destruction of the country's assets. As against this I wish to set up the standard of Hope.

There are some things that South Africa cannot hope for. One is the continuation, but for a few modifications, of the present system. With almost all the articulate black population and with almost every State in the world against her she cannot hope to do this. White South Africans could of course die fighting if they thought it worthwhile to die for the maintenance of a system of white domination. Another thing that South Africa cannot hope for is that if liberation is achieved by head-on confrontation between white and black, the victorious blacks – for they will be victorious, the world will see to that – will win a South Africa many of whose mineral and industrial resources have remained intact for the victors. Between these two extremes there is a vast field where Hope can find a place.

To illustrate my point let me take as a parable, however unexpected, the first discovery of Southern Africa by European Imperialists.

In the year 1488 Bartholomew Diaz, under the auspices of the King of Portugal, travelled along the coast of Africa, going further and further south. He outstripped all previous explorers. Suddenly he came to the end of land. Africa took a turn to the east. He rounded the Cape (no doubt a strong south-easter was blowing), which he named "Cabo Tormentoso" or "Cape of Storms". As he left this cape behind him he found that the sun was no longer rising on his left hand but on his right. Either by himself or by the King of Portugal the Cape was renamed "The Cape of Good Hope". In spite of the fact that all his previous experiences were being reversed, he found Hope in the situation.

If Bartholomew Diaz had not been willing to turn to the left at the Cape and had proceeded to go on south, following the general tendency of Portuguese explorers, he would have had to go through the Roaring Forties and would then have found himself enmeshed in the pack ice.

I suggest that this parable has a realistic meaning for us. If we go on and find our expected way of life radically altered we may name the point of alteration "The Cape of Good Hope". If we decide to follow the same course as in the

past, we shall find ourselves frozen in. It is quite true that we are facing storms and that we are afraid of them. It is equally true that we can pass these storms, reverse our accepted arrangements and live in the land of Good Hope. Pessimism and despair are the enemies of progress and advancement. In general there is much in the situation of the world in the year 1977 to give us Hope.

We may say that the future of the world and the future of South Africa are full of Hope, provided we do not want to lay out in advance the exact programme which must be followed.

If we are to be successful in South Africa we must expect a great change of feeling in the three Afrikaans churches, particularly the NGK. Is this impossible? Is it impossible that there should be some change in the Nationalist Party? There are many indications of dissentient movements in these two important bodies. We need not despair, we must not give in.

We Liberals are committed to radical reforms in the South African situation. We shall go on even if we ourselves, our interests and our policies are overwhelmed by civil war. But no South African who truly loves his country will lightly encourage the idea of civil war. Black South Africans are no fools. They do not want to take over a devastated country. It is true that if White South Africans make no worthwhile move civil war, and with it devastation, will come. Let us consider that many responsible black leaders do not want this to happen and that co-operation between them and white leaders is something that they would welcome. The new state of affairs as the black man receives liberation will release immense treasures of goodwill, will introduce a new order in which men are respected as men irrespective of colour.

All this means that apartheid has to go. It has no part to play in the real future of the real South Africa. Unless Mr Vorster shows qualities of statesmanship which have been lacking in the past few months he also will have to go. If the Security Police are allowed to go on unchecked there will, alas, not be much to hope for. But let us hope that we pass the Cape of Storms and go on to a fruitful new era of life so that we shall be able to rename the area of our deepest fears "The Cape of Good Hope". □

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RETURN VISIT

by Ernest Polack

"You'll see lots of changes after nine years", South Africans in England had kept on telling me and I did but not the sort of changes they meant. I was continually urged to note the decline in petty Apartheid. The park benches, I was told, had lost their notices, sport was becoming multi-racial, concert halls and theatres were open to all. But to tell the truth, I saw little change in this respect. As far as I could judge on a short visit of six weeks which only covered the Transvaal, Natal and the Free State, Apartheid was the same vicious system that it had always been if now slightly more furtive and ashamed. Any changes barely qualified for the title of cosmetic.

No, what had altered and altered radically were the attitudes. The crude and unfeeling complacency, the swagger in the walk of young Europeans, the acceptance of privilege as a fact of life that would last for ever, these had gone. The impression that I got of European attitudes was of uneasiness, uncertainty and in some cases fear. Why join a Commando in the Midlands of Natal, well away from hostile Black frontiers, if you do not expect to have to shoot?

On the other side, and I fear that side is increasingly the word to be used, Africans displayed a new confidence verging on arrogance. They may not know when Black rule will come or how it will come but there seems to be an increasing certainty that it will come and that the time may not be far away. Sadly, this has perhaps meant among many of the black community the feeling that the white liberal has no longer a relevance for future development and a rejection of what used to be the hopes for a non-racial community. And if this is true, it is hard to blame the blacks. When I left South Africa in 1963 after living there for seven years, the Liberal Party was still in existence and the bands of Apartheid philosophy were more loosely drawn than they seem to be today. In so far as a section of the White community is now opposing Apartheid, this movement seems to come from fear of the alternatives rather than from more positive motives. The old Liberal party may have been small but its multi-racialism arose from constructive conviction not from fear. But its achievements, regrettably, were limited. Did it convert the hearts and minds

of the whites? Did it avoid the danger of confrontation? Did it enhance the sense of human dignity of the blacks? It tried, my God how it tried, but with little success.

I remember speaking at a Liberal Party meeting in the Drakensberg in 1962 or 1963. The meeting took place in a dark school room lit only by two candles. Perhaps thirty people were present and I had to talk about Democracy. At the end of the meeting an African came up to me and asked me whether I did not think that force was the only way to achieve liberation. With a Security Branch man in the vicinity, I weakly gave an equivocal answer. What would I say after Soweto?

The lines have become increasingly tightly drawn and the flashpoint, inevitably perhaps, is Johannesburg, the symbol of the wealth and the exploitation that are the hallmarks of South Africa. Frightened whites barricaded in their luxurious suburbs face bitter blacks in the Townships with the police in between, sometimes last year seeming to be encouraging the violence of the confrontation. Is this an overstatement? I doubt it and, though control has been temporarily regained, it is hard to see how violence can be indefinitely postponed.

Travelling as I did mostly among whites, and generally among white liberals, my impressions were probably not impartial. But I am left with three memories of friends. One, a young farmer on a large scale lamenting that his assets were impossible to move. Two, a journalist who rejoiced that he and his family would have no difficulty in moving to another part of the world if necessary. Three, at a delightful party in a garden in the outer northern suburbs of Johannesburg, asking my host seriously whether it was a "fin de siècle" occasion and receiving a sombre reply.

The liberal, the religious man, those with goodwill can never, thank heaven, give up the struggle for justice and freedom but a tourist's view of the state of South Africa today and any study of the growing implications for the future of the country of international developments, must make all of us who love South Africa, and live in safety outside it, tremble with foreboding. □

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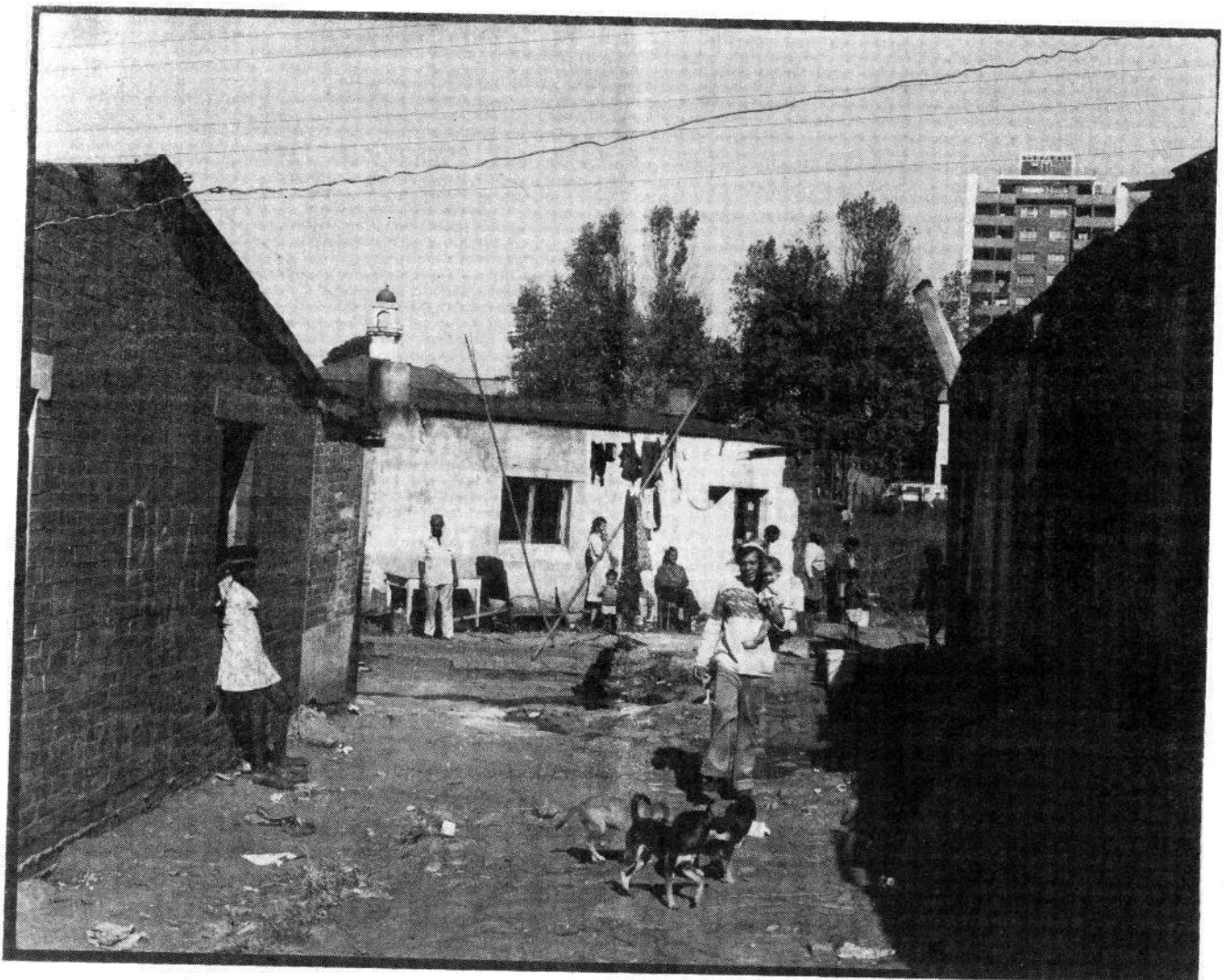
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BACKGROUND TO SQUATTING

1 Pietermaritzburg

“THE BARRACKS” — AN URBAN SLUM

PHOTOGRAPHS AND COMMENTARY BY JOE ALFERS





Unemployment due to depressed economic conditions has its most dramatic effect at the lower end of the economic scale, and creates areas of urban squalor considered by the authorities as unfortunate but inevitable. REALITY investigated an area in Pietermaritzburg, where people, merely redundancy statistics in the eyes of the authorities and of industry, struggle to exist "with no visible means of support" in bureaucratic language. This area is no doubt typical of many urban slums in South Africa.

It is found at the lower end of the main street of Pietermaritzburg where a number of families have been existing in what can best be called "rooms at the bottom". Some of the families were paying rent others were squatters. About twenty families were involved – 120 people, half of them children. This scene of squalor is called "The Barracks" and is mainly hidden from the main road by a row of flats and shops, (among them a butcher's shop and a restaurant),

The people at "The Barracks" were in dire need of houses but sub-economic accommodation is at a premium in Pietermaritzburg and there are special problems here – the community is racially mixed, which is against the law in South Africa: many are unemployed and even those re-

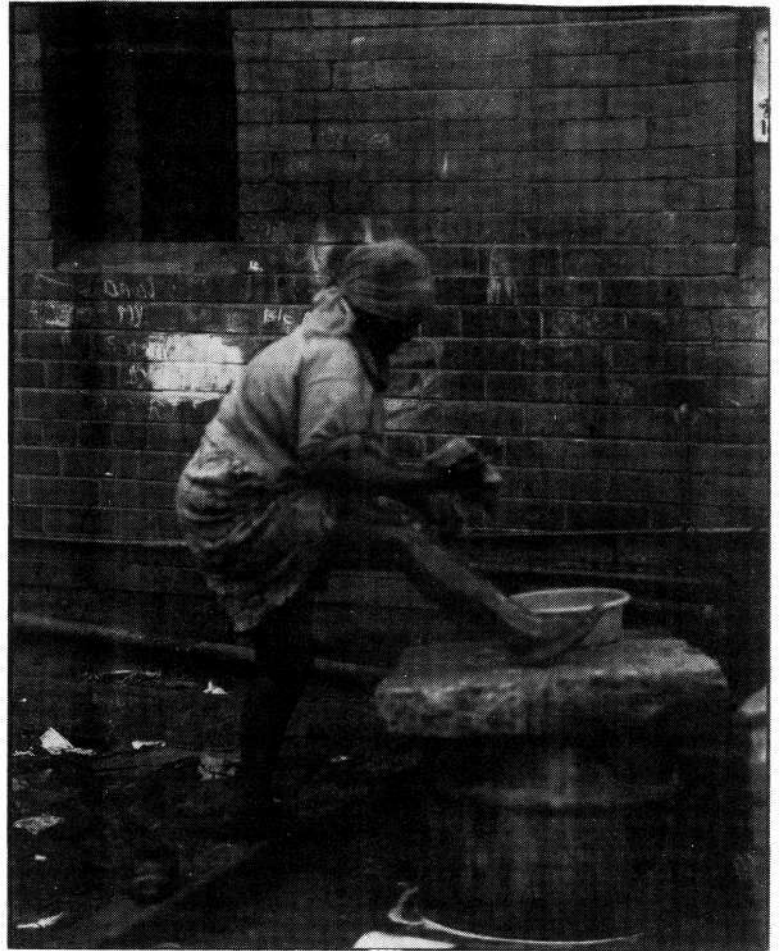
ceiving welfare grants or in employment are unable to pay more than depressingly low rentals. These slum buildings are privately owned but the health authorities have known about them for ten years and seem to have made little attempt to force the landlord to clean them up, though they contravene the local health laws. Recently the landlord died and his heirs tried to get rid of both tenants and squatters who, having no where to go, clung to these sordid rooms, with no electricity, no internal toilet facilities, no running water no heating. Two flush lavatories serve the whole complex and neither of them flushes. There are two taps, one broken.

Five families were evicted by court messenger on the 2nd May and appealed for help to the Rev. Sol Jacob, director of Community Care who housed the families in St. Anthony's Church Hall and then investigated the situation at the Barracks. The remaining families were to be evicted on 31st May 1977.

As soon as a family was evicted the landlord removed the floor, roof, windows and door of their rooms and at once squatters moved into these shells.

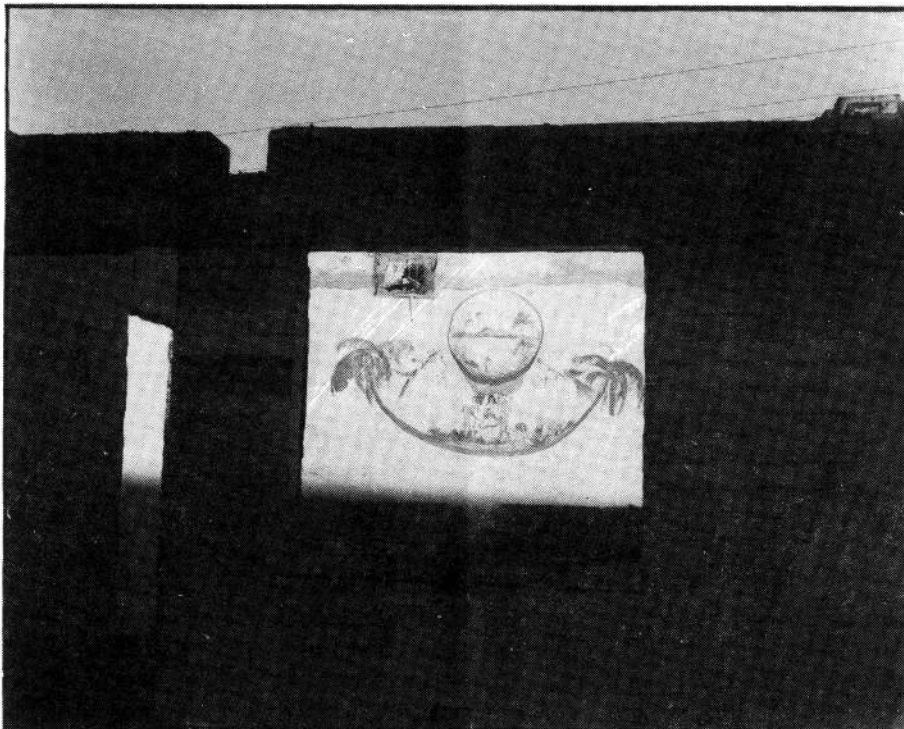
Right:

Washing facilities are minimal. Two lavatories which do not flush. Two taps — one broken. The drain is usually blocked and filthy water overflows and seeps into the ground.



Below:

A squatters home — no roof, no floor, no door, no window. It offers little protection from the elements but the picture on the wall makes it home for someone.



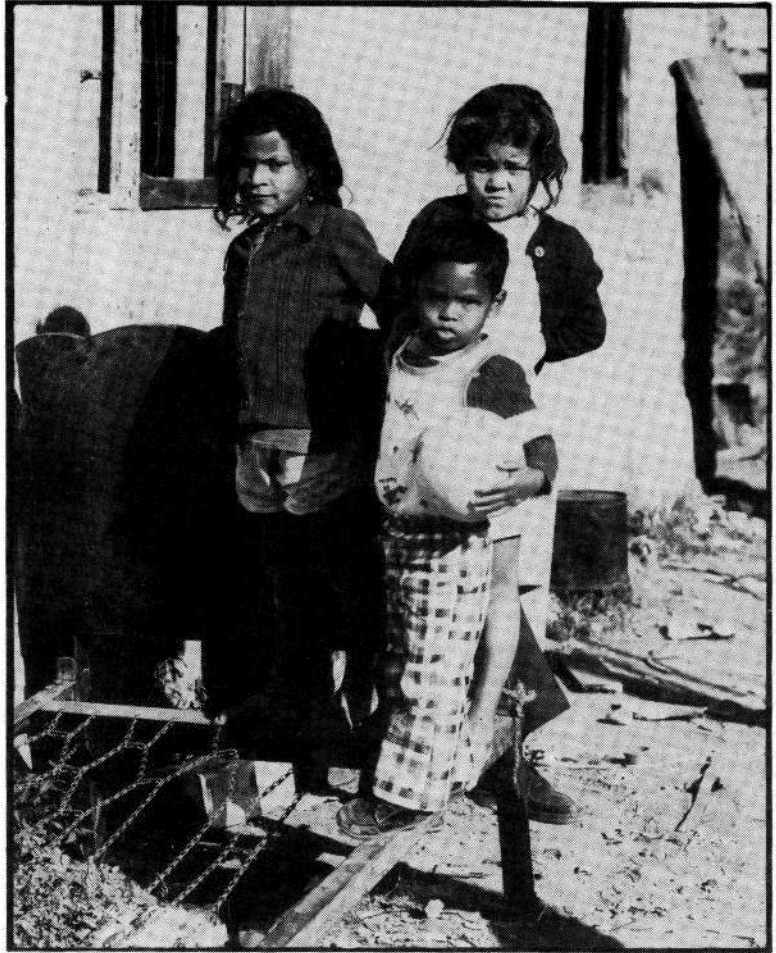
Right:

The Barracks is the only home these children have ever known.

Below:

The Rev. Sol Jacob and representatives of the South African Institute of Race Relations and the Black Sash asked for an interview with the Mayor of Pietermaritzburg, and discussed the Barracks and other squatter haunts. The Mayor was sympathetic but explained that the City Council was doing all it possibly could to provide houses. Later the matter was discussed with Councillor Pamela Reid who at once realised that the matter could only be dealt with as an emergency and that emergency measures must be taken. She brought the matter up at a City Council Meeting and was fully backed by the Mayor and Councillors. The people from the Barracks were to be moved into tents. An attempt would be made to set up prefab housing until permanent housing could be provided. All municipal departments would seek to find work for some of the growing numbers of unemployed. And a fund would be opened to collect money to help the homeless and the unemployed. The City Council itself opened the fund with a donation of R60 000.

The time lapse from the deputation to the Mayor until these measures were passed and execution commenced was three days. Why is Pietermaritzburg called Sleepy Hollow? This picture is taken from inside one of the tents in which the families from the Barracks are now living. □



2 Johannesburg

ELDORADO PARK — KLIPTOWN

In October 1976 when a rainstorm damaged their dwellings, 231 families from the Kliptown slum moved into new sub-economic houses that had been standing vacant in nearby Eldorado Park. They claimed that a social worker, Mrs Aisa van Wyk had in the heat of the emergency told them they should move into these houses. This Mrs van Wyk subsequently denied.

For some months these Eldorado Park Squatters fought off a series of attempts by the Community Development Board to have them evicted. When finally the eviction order was granted, some families lodged an appeal, while others gave up. Of those who did not appeal, some have gone to live with relatives, others have been given City Council flats. The plight of these Eldorado Park squatters

has highlighted Coloured housing problems in Johannesburg, particularly the iniquities of "freezing" areas that are re-zoned under Group Areas and the fact that so little land has been made available for Coloured housing.

The basic facts of life in the Eldorado Park-Kliptown complex are here set out by Sister Pauline of the Good Shepherd Congregation which started work in nearby "frozen" Protea in 1950 and in Eldorado Park and Kliptown in 1973. Sister Pauline was born in Durban and educated there. She has a social work degree from Unisa and also psychology honours. Prior to working in Protea, Eldorado Park and Kliptown she worked in various Good Shepherd Institutions including Girls Town (Training School for wayward girls) and Fatima House for unmarried mothers.

By Sister Pauline

Since 1973 when I first started working in Eldorado Park and Kliptown there has been tremendous expansion of the area. Overnight it seemed, houses appeared where there had formerly been only barren, rocky veld, and the houses filled with people — and still there were, and there are, thousands waiting for houses: thousands who have been waiting for houses for more years than they care to remember. Some of them have lived through forty years without knowing a decent home of their own.

Situated some ten kilometres south of Uncle Charlies Garage, Eldorado Park and Kliptown are perhaps just far enough removed from white Johannesburg to keep most whites ignorant of their existence. As one travels to Vanderbijlpark one passes the fringe of Eldorado Park — the houses which have been bought by their occupants and in many cases made very attractive by additions and gardens. Seeing this could make the traveller feel quite good about "our Coloured townships". But seeing this is hardly seeing at all.

There are, of course, some positive features about the place. The fact that there has been an accelerated building programme at all has been cause for gratitude. The pity was that it took so long to get under way. Then, too, there is some satisfaction to be gained from the improvement in the quality of the houses being erected now over those put up some ten years ago. Provision has been made in the City Council's plans for facilities such as a town centre, parks, shopping centres, crèches and other amenities. Some 120 plots will become available for sale to persons wanting to erect their own houses when the plans have been

approved by the Township Board. All these factors indicate some improvement in the quality of life of the people of the area.

Right now, however, Eldorado Park still presents a bleak picture, both in its external appearance and, still more, in the lives of its residents generally. And beyond Eldorado Park is Kliptown, a place of despair. During winter especially, entering Eldorado Park is a depressing experience. Generally, in the mornings, the place is shrouded in a thick haze of smog which has drifted over from Soweto. The roads are generally untarred and pot-holed. When it rains they become rivers of mud, hazardous to travel. In Eldorado Park itself the houses put up by the Department of Community Development present a monotonous picture of sameness: little boxes, with an outside toilet, small and drab. A large number of these dwellings consist of two rooms only, and often fairly large families are housed in these. Sometimes as many as twenty people seem to reside more or less permanently in these two rooms. Houses are so very hard to come by: to have one's name on the waiting list for five or six years is to be a fairly recent applicant with possibly a long wait ahead. The rental for these sub-economic units is low — R4 — and that for the three-roomed and four-roomed units is R5 and R6 respectively. There are many residents who could afford to pay higher rentals for better units. They are housed — sometimes to their own satisfaction as well — in the sub-economic dwellings, whilst others from Kliptown, in desperate need of accommodation but unable to afford higher rentals, find themselves, when they do

get moved from their hovels, forced to live in the flats where rentals are R38 to R40 per month. The whole picture of the allocation of housing, especially where the Department of Community Development is concerned, is vague and completely unsatisfactory. Stories of corruption amongst department officials circulate freely amongst the residents of Eldorado Park, but they are seldom substantiated by affidavits because the main objective here is to get a house by fair means or foul and with as little come-back as possible afterwards.

The flats, numbered from A to Z, are likewise a bleak picture. They appear poorly constructed. Certainly the stairways with their inadequate guards must be a constant headache to mothers of small children. Whilst individual flats are kept spotless in many cases, the overall picture is one of grubbiness and general neglect. Money and effort expended on upkeep appears to be minimal.

In the extensions of Eldorado Park, especially those developed by the City Council, there is decided improvement in the appearance and the quality of the houses. Even here, however, for those people who have been forced by the Group Areas Act and other similar factors to move from more spacious homes, these houses by comparison are minute, a fact which causes them many problems when it comes to furnishing. The whole story of Eldorado Park is intimately linked with the process of implementing apartheid, and so it is pre-eminently a place of bitterness, sometimes only thinly veiled, towards the white man who controls everything, who always gets his own way and the best of everything. Save for representation on the Coloured Management Committee of the City Council, the people of the area have had no say in the development of their place nor do they exercise control over the very limited facilities and services available to them.

Housing apart, what is life like for the residents of Eldorado Park? This is an aggregate of people, thrown together by the implementation of the Group Areas Act, uprooted in many cases from communities where they had become established and forced now to try and re-establish some sense of belonging. To make the task of forming a community even more difficult for them, the Department of Community Development decided to establish houses designed for sale next door to sub-economic units with the vague hope that somehow those from the higher income brackets would "uplift" those in the sub-economic units. Perhaps in theory this is the way things should operate, but human beings being what they are it has not worked in practice. A little consultation with community representatives might have prevented this sort of arrangement being made. Very little help has been available to the community members to assist them to find themselves. Two recreation centres, one opened last year, exist in the area, but compared to the recreation centres operating in the white areas these appear to be poorly provided for. At least until recently they closed altogether during the children's school holidays! Entertainment for adults is even more limited. There is a sports stadium, a swimming bath, and, in Eldorado Park, nothing else. In Kliptown there are two cinemas, both very dilapidated in appearance, and except for those with cars, dangerous to attend at night because of the ever-present gangster threat. Now and again a fund-raising dance is organized in the recreation centre by a welfare organiza-

tion. Police protection has to be provided against the gangsters. A library now exists in the Extension 2 Recreation Centre.

Transport by PUTCO buses is generally regarded by the residents as unsatisfactory. For those in the extensions there is often quite a distance to walk to bus stops. There have often been complaints about the non-availability of time tables for the buses, and, of course, inevitably, there is dissatisfaction at the amounts charged. Another serious cause of dissatisfaction is the fact that there is no bus service between the various townships. As a result, persons wishing to visit relations in, say, Coronationville or Riverlea, have to catch a bus into town and then out to these townships. This is expensive and time-consuming. It is therefore also difficult to visit relations and friends who may happen to be in Coronation Hospital.

In the past year or two a couple of small shopping centres have developed in the area. The housewife of Eldorado Park, however, cannot so easily shop at any of the big chain stores like OK Bazaars, Checkers, Pick-'n-Pay or Woolworths, for these have not been allowed to establish branches in the area. Pep Store's is an exception to this rule. Consequently, in many cases she has to pay more for items than does her white counterpart who is physically more proximate to alternative shopping points. Especially hard hit are housewives in the extensions who find themselves without transport and a tiring walk away from any shops. They are forced to resort to buying at the illegal house shops where everything is 50% to 100% more expensive. The Congregational Church does run a van which sells food items more cheaply, but this service is obviously inadequate.

The clinic service is a major cause of dissatisfaction for many residents. This does not refer to the City Health Department clinics, of which there are two in the area. These offer mother-baby care, family planning services, inoculations and a T.B. preventive and curative programme. The cause of complaint is the Coronation Clinic in Nancefield, where patients often deplore the careless treatment they receive, the rude way in which they are dealt with by both clerical and nursing and medical staff and many other things, such as the poor ambulance service and the total absence of any emergency treatment centre at night or over weekends. This in an area which has no public telephone except at the Post Office, which is situated on the outskirts of the area, and where private telephones hardly exist at all in family dwellings.

There are nine government primary schools in the area and two high schools. In addition there is one private primary school. All the primary schools are very full and teachers have large classes to cope with. The schools are for the most part prefab structures and are poorly equipped. Some of them have no electricity, which makes many of the teaching aids used freely in white schools unavailable to them. Even a very superficial comparison with any white government school will convince anyone that here again, as in practically every area of social life, the idea of "separate but equal" has absolutely no practical implementation. No well laid out sports grounds here, and in some cases cleaning and caretaking staff is so inadequate that the children have to do this work themselves, supervised by the teachers. Again, perhaps in theory this is not a bad thing, but it is hardly fair in view of the fact that this is

not expected of white children in government schools, and that precious learning time is used for this purpose.

There are two creches in the area which between them cater for about 150 children. A welfare organization runs an "early learning programme" at the Eldorado Park Recreation Centre, which cares for a further 200 children during the mornings. Thousands of children in need of day care because their parents work are left unattended all day. A club is run at the home of one of the residents of Eldorado Park for the aged and another club exists at the recreation centre. One other welfare organization is based in the area itself. Otherwise help can only be obtained by travelling into town. The Coloured community of Johannesburg as a whole suffers from a dearth of good welfare services. If, for example, there are problems for the white mother who needs day care for her retarded child in Johannesburg, the problem becomes impossible for the Coloured mother. The same is true of a family needing to place an elderly parent in a home.

With no official figures available for the area, it is suggested by leaders of the community that the unemployment figure at present must stand at 15% – 20% of the male population capable of work. This includes a large number of tradesmen. In addition there are many adults with very limited education who have been the first casualties of the recession in which we now find ourselves. As yet no facilities exist to help them improve their education or skills, partly because of lack of funds for such ventures and partly because of the lack of electricity in many schools and the dangers of walking around the area at night make it difficult to get these projects off the ground. Undoubtedly this community is going to need much help in establishing a greater economic viability for itself within a sick economy.

So much for Eldorado Park. What of Kliptown, adjoining it? Kliptown is the oldest section of the area – once perhaps, like Doornfontein, a fairly respectable area but now a festering slum. The recent floods brought some publicity to the area as did the move of the "squatters" to Eldorado

Park Ext. 3 last year. If these so-called squatters refuse to move back to the place they left – in so far as these survived the rains – they can hardly be blamed. What they left behind them was years of living in damp – sometimes completely flooded – "homes", with leaking tin roofs, uneven floors, collapsing walls, boarded-up windows. They left behind them those days when they had to cook the family dinner holding an umbrella to protect themselves and the food against the leaks over the stove. They left the rats and vermin. They left the bucket toilets, emptied three times weekly, which they and their families shared with often 30 other people in the area. They left the one tap in the yard which they shared with 100 others. And they left behind them thousands of neighbours who still live in these inhuman conditions, despite the pleas of representatives of the community that Kliptown be declared a disaster area and that urgent steps should be taken to rehouse its inhabitants before yet another generation be forced to grow up in it. In Kliptown the overcrowding is severe – and so other problems such as a high school drop-out rate, absenteeism from work, alcoholism, desertion and gangsterism find a natural breeding ground there, as does illegitimacy. Until the people are offered housing fit for humans, efforts made to eradicate these problems seem doomed to failure. The wonder is that so many of the people there are so human – generous with the little they have, humorous, patient.

The approximately 30 000 people of Eldorado Park and Kliptown remained quiet during the recent upheavals throughout the country. Their quiet, however, is no sign of content. Bitterness is rife in the hearts of the people here. If they are quiet now it is only because they have not yet summoned enough courage to rebel openly. But the time will come when they will throw caution to the winds and join with the people of Soweto. Many opportunities to avoid this confrontation have been squandered by a thoughtless and often totally heartless officialdom. Some of the leaders of the community maintain that even now it is not too late for a change. Only time will prove them right or wrong. □

3 Cape Town

by Rommel Roberts

Co-ordinator for Cape Flats Committee for Interim Accommodation

Cape Town has been infested with many squatters ever since the war, and in some cases even before then. Perhaps the word "infest" is the wrong one when seen from a sociological point of view; however, it has been the view of authorities that has counted to date and for them squatters do "infest" and breed all kinds of unruly elements. In fact, most people still have this view since there happens to be an incredible lack of knowledge about these people who litter our beautiful countryside, causing all kinds of eye-sores and therefore grave embarrassment.

Squatting has always been a problem. Its seriousness a matter of degree. Certainly the Sophiatowns (JHB) and Elsie's Rivers (CT) have been in existence for more than a few decades. People have always found the cities to offer more lucrative positions, salaries, though never houses, hence the equivalent development in S.A. of the USA grey areas (squatters situated close to city industrial areas) plus the birth of a new culture (a sub culture) as opposed to that of the city. In S.A. this is probably more evident than in the American situation by virtue of the

fact that the people have so many diverse interests and backgrounds resulting in a diversification in the whole transferral process including actual habitation. Obviously a metamorphosis takes place in the modification or sometimes even total change of groups or community structures, aspirations (due to new environment) culture etc. In S.A. there has been the tendency to coast along on the squatter problem until it reaches such immense proportions that something has to be done. Sophiatown experienced something of this nature years ago when it was simply eliminated. However, the Cape Town situation has highlighted the whole squatter problem because suddenly as a result of the Group Areas Act the whole squatter problem was exposed in the transferral process resulting in a sharp increase in squatters (backyard and dune squatting). It suddenly took on huge general proportions which authorities prefer to ignore rather than tackle. To date they had been dealing with localised problems e.g. Facreton, Sophiatown etc. The problem was never seen in its totality with its string of side-effects, nor the aspect of causality entered into for serious consideration with the idea of affecting future change on the long term basis. To date only festering sores have been dealt with but never the real deep underlying problem, threatening now to burst the seams of the larger community. There has been a very negative approach in trying to control the situation — special legislation has been passed for this purpose by central authorities aimed at curbing rather than developing. The desire to eliminate the problem is present, the method and means happen to be negative and limited.

The squatter problem in the Cape Peninsula, (the "O1 Region", as it is called by the planners, incorporating greater Cape Town), is not a new phenomenon and has in fact existed from the time of Jan van Riebeeck, who happened to be among the first. Since then the position has deteriorated considerably, particularly in the period after World War II when settlements in Windermere and Elsie's River came into prominence causing great concern within council circles as well as constituting health hazards. Overcrowding has of course also been a very significant factor particularly in areas like District Six. A whole development has since taken place in the growth to its present proportions.

Cape Town has both African and Coloured squatters. Many come from outlying areas through a process of immigration. They serve the community in numerous ways and are seen as being an asset to the community (from the point of view of being a positive labour force). The majority of these people do come from the city itself but are forced to squat due to a serious lack of accommodation. This should be attributed more to the Coloureds than the Africans. Cape Town is the Coloured persons traditional homeland. The percentage of immigration in the African community is much higher (60%) than Coloureds (22%) due to an almost total lack of opportunities in the rural areas.

There are now more than 50 different squatter settlements within the O1 region comprising both African and Coloured people numbering over 300 000, living in existing shanties. A further 150—200 000 are living in grossly overcrowded conditions within African and Coloured Townships. These people exist and cannot be wished away no matter how much anyone tries. The

problem in terms of numbers is of such magnitude that it has evoked a series of responses from the public, local and central authorities. The problem is further complexified through the varied responses by local authorities and central government as well as the public when dealing with each particular race group affected, as each group either enjoys or suffers a certain status attributed to it by law.

Africans have no rights within the Peninsula as it is classed as a Coloured preferential area. Consequently job opportunities are very limited. Provision of Black Housing was officially frozen in 1967 and theoretically the Black population should have reduced at a rate of 5% p.a. in a movement back to the homelands. This has, however, not worked and instead has given rise to a rapid increase in influx (as much as 60%) to the city. In a recent survey (Feb. 1977) undertaken by the Cape Flats Committee for Interim Accommodation in the Modderdam Squatter Camp (10 000 people), the findings were that of the number of Africans (over 80%) over 70% of the men were legal residents and in regular employment while over 90% of the women were illegal. This raises the point of the dreaded Bachelor quarters where men are forced to live without their wives hence the squatter problem, since the only means whereby men are able to live with their women and children are in hastily put up shacks.

The coloured people experience a projected backlog (1975 to 1985) of 60 000 dwelling units required by 1985 for Coloureds and 40 000 for Africans, requiring a building rate of about 12 000 dwelling units per annum which to date has never been remotely reached in any building programme in the region. 1976 produced 4 000 units approximately. This group is not restricted in its movements, however, the ¹"Platteland" situation is similar to that of the urban areas except that the problem is not one of unemployment. The very low wages and the continued existence of the "dop system" has driven many families to Cape Town where facilities and better employment opportunities exist. ²About 22% of the total Coloured squatter problem can be accounted for in the process of immigration.

Although Coloureds have a legal right to be resident in Cape Town, they suffer the same fate as their African counterparts. All squatting is illegal and carries heavy penalties for the squatter and the owner of the land on which squatting takes place. Squatters are entirely at the mercy of the State and landowners. Their only hope is public sympathy (Thornhill — Ciskei, Limehill — Natal, Modderdam — Cape Town, Crossroads — C.T., etc.). The present Squatting Act (passed May 1977) raised a public outcry because it effectively removed whatever rights squatters had and contains certain elements which make squatting extremely difficult while at the same time providing no positive alternatives.

The Act brings to an end the long standing Roman Dutch Law principle that notice must be given to a person residing on land to move. The owner may now do as he likes, for instance:

- (i) He may demolish any illegal structure without prior notice,
- (ii) his action will be condoned in that the victim of the demolition will have absolutely no claim for damage to his property against the demolisher;

- (iii) the squatter's right of recourse to the courts is removed. The onus is placed on the squatter to prove the legality of his occupation of the place where he is squatting. In terms of the Act, however, it is illegal to be a squatter, which effectively means that no squatter has grounds for approaching any court for relief.

The Act is seen as a direct reaction to recent successful litigation by squatters in the Cape Town settlements of Modderdam and Kraaifontein. These actions prevented the eviction of the people who brought them. The present legislation is made retrospective and thus sets aside the successful applications brought by the Modderdam and Kraaifontein people.

The Act places a heavy onus on the landowner to rid his land of squatters. In the event of his failing to do so he can be ordered to demolish any squatter houses on his land himself. If he fails to do this he can be charged and fined and/or imprisoned. In the meantime the demolition can be carried out by the responsible authority in the area and the cost of it charged to the landowner. The squatter who lives in the demolished home may also, be fined and/or imprisoned.

The Act increases the penalties for squatting or harbouring squatters. It makes no provision for alternative accommodation to be given to people whose homes are demolished.

It is evident that the law is not designed to protect the squatter but rather a stern preventative measure in the light of inadequate provision of housing.

One of the most retarding factors in community developments has been the insecurity experienced by squatters giving rise to two extremes namely, apathy and aggression in the face of the inability to cope with the problem.

The approach has been to build standard housing on a mass scale as quickly as possible. Funds have been made available for this reason. However to be realistic, leading sociologists (S. P. Cillier and others) do not see the problem being alleviated within a period of 10 years.

Interim measures are necessary growing to an eventual permanent solution in the following ways.

- 1 Provision of land and basic services where people can be encouraged to erect houses under supervision (or on the lines of Zambian experiments).
2. The establishment of low cost housing on the lines of starter or core housing which is financed by the State, employer or general public (as in the case of the Shelter Appeal Fund). The idea would be the encouragement of self-help housing.
3. A lowering of building standards and the cutting of red-tape in order to stimulate growth are necessary measures.

We are faced with a growing problem of homeless and inadequately housed people. The problem has taken on emergency proportions and must therefore be dealt with in this light. The niceties of red-tape and group areas are luxuries which we cannot afford. Bold steps are required to meet the problem if one is to save various South African Communities and families from suffering the fate of disintegration. A positive step could avert chaos. □

¹ The surrounding farming areas of the Cape where most people are employed on wine, fruit and other farms.

² Prof. S. P. Cilliers report on the Coloured Housing Crises 1972.

³ Prof. W. H. Thomas – Housing Projections.

A Project for Mr Dunne

Suggested by A. R. Morphet

I was struck by Tim Dunne's description of the early morning workers as "the people of God" Mr Dunne has clearly himself heard the things that are said by them and has seen the world they leave so early in the morning. I would like therefore to propose that Mr Dunne arrange to lead a group of people into this world and for members of the group to listen, to look and to record what they see and hear. The columns of Reality would I hope be available to the group for publishing their cumulative record and their conclusions. □

ALBERT JOHN LUTHULI COLLEGE

A speech given by Bishop A. Zulu at the opening of the College at the Theological Seminary at Edendale.

The decision to honour the memory of the late Chief Albert John Luthuli by naming this college after him is, I believe, inspired. He was a man of many parts. He became famous for his political exploits with the result that many of his other qualities were almost submerged. Those of us who were intimately associated with him know full well that he would have desired to be remembered first as a christian. This point needs to be emphasised especially in our day when many people doubt the relevance of the christian faith in the struggle for building a happy and free South African society. All his labours were the expression of his christian faith. That for him all men were meant for fellowship with one another was evident in his relationships not only with black persons of every ethnic group but also with white people. His faith saved him from hating his political opponents while he did not hesitate to criticise and to condemn the inhumanity and injustice to which black people were subjected.

The naming of this college after Chief Luthuli is timely also for his memory as a politician, and that for important reasons. Firstly, the volume and harshness of oppressive legislation makes swift and frequent changes in black strategies inevitable. The result is that acts of wisdom and courage in one period can appear trite, foolish and even cowardly in another. Secondly, historical facts have been presented to the black community, through schools and by other methods of propaganda with the twist that renders blacks amenable to control by dominating authority. Thirdly, powerful unfriendly spirits desire that black heroes of the past should not be remembered because the memory of them is hurtful to consciences that choose darkness rather than light. Until the black man writes up South African history it is essential that monuments of presently scattered achievements by the black man should be erected as signposts along the way. Tonight's event marks out this college as destined to serve this function and for this reason it is most highly welcome. One is reminded of a prophetic utterance by the distinguished English statesman, Edmund Burke when he said, "People will not look forward to posterity who never look backwards to their ancestors".

It is thrilling to know that future generations of South Africans will find inspiration and strength when they see this college and reflect upon the truths and ideals for which Luthuli lived.

While certain elements in our society would belittle the contribution of black christians towards building the church and the general service of the country, it is right that the name of Albert Luthuli should be raised and shouted from the housetops.

In former ages, the mercy of God would not allow his

justice to bring about the fall of Jerusalem until he had sent a succession of prophets to show them the way. In our time, it pleased the Lord not to bring judgment upon South Africa until he had raised, among others, Albert Luthuli whom he endued with the faith and integrity that gave him the moral force of the passive resistance and the economic boycott campaigns of the early fifties. That those noble efforts failed to bring about more humane attitudes in this country's human relationships must be seen as the basic reason for much of the violence that threatens the peace and happiness of our land.

When Chief Luthuli became a political leader, his credentials as a great christian had been widely recognised. His genial spirit, his respect for men and women of all ages, of all cultures and economic standing, together with his deep commitment to humble service of individuals and groups had made him an acknowledged leader in many areas of life. Christian missionaries appointed him to serve on the staff of a Training College as one of the first two black men to hold responsibility of such a kind in Natal. Later, successively and often simultaneously, he became President of the Natal African Teachers' Union, President of the Durban and District Football Association, President of the Natal African Cane Growers Association, President of the Natal Mission Reserves Association, President of the Natal African National Congress, and, finally, President of the South African African National Congress.

At a time when the ecumenical movement was at its infancy, Chief Luthuli was recognised as an honoured leader of the wider church. In that capacity he travelled to India in 1938 as one of a representative South African delegation to attend the third International Missionary Conference in Tambaram. A few years later, he was elected for two terms, as Vice-President of the Christian Council of South Africa, the predecessor of the present South African Council of Churches. At about the same time, his own church sent him to the United States of America on a fraternal visit.

As a man, Chief Luthuli possessed an amazing capacity for suffering. He seemed to understand more fully than many, the need for cheerfulness when people suffer for their convictions. He displayed this trait most eloquently, first, when he sacrificed the joys of life as a successful teacher at a renowned institution, the old Adams College. He chose to respond to the request of his home community to become their chief. Later, that same gift of self-sacrifice enabled him to abandon the chieftainship when the government forbade him participation in national politics as chief. The incident gave proof of the ancient truth that a man finds his life by losing it. He ceased to be chief of Groutville, a tribe of little significance in the country and became instead the much loved and revered chief of the majority of South Africans. Multitudes from Cape Town to

the Limpopo and from Durban to Mafeking, hailed him and sang his praises as "OUR CHIEF"

It is not without significance that many chiefs have enjoyed greater political freedom since the government's failure to muzzle Chief Luthuli. Chief Luthuli's endurance in suffering served him well during his imprisonment with one hundred and fifty-five others during the notorious Treason Trial of the late fifties. On discharge, it was a delight to watch him lead groups of people, many of them much younger than himself, singing and dancing as if they were returning from a wedding party. Nor do I forget his perfect mastery of emotion on one occasion in Pretoria.

Tea-time found him in the middle of giving evidence on behalf of the Natal African Cane Growers' Association. Dr Tomlinson, sent the chief with his party to a little room that served as the Tomlinson Commission kitchen. He was a respected leader of black South Africa, but could not partake of tea with white people. He was not embittered by his humiliation. Rather, it strengthened his determination to struggle to the bitter end for the liberation of South Africa. He saw the arrogance of the white man as the greater enslavement and the one more certain than that of the black man to bring disaster to our country.

Also during his two term ban, instead of self-pitying misery, the Chief reflected the joy of those who regard it as a privilege to suffer for a good cause. It was in that spirit that he travelled with Mrs Luthuli to Sweden in 1961, there to receive the Nobel Peace Prize. All who knew him agreed that no one in South Africa deserved it more than he.

It is right that the South African Church has chosen at last to do something to commemorate a distinguished black christian statesman. Christians cannot afford to support even by their silence, allegations that martyrs for justice in South Africa should be called communists. Such an accusation has been made against the late Albert John Luthuli. Christians should of all people remember that privileged people in former ages accused none other than the Son of God himself of casting out devils through Beelzebub. The naming of this college after our chief will stand out for all time as a contradiction to popular thinking. It will be a proclamation that Albert Luthuli succeeded in his generation to express in real life, the truth spoken by Aristotle in his Politics when he said, "the amount of felicity (happiness) which falls to the lot of each individual man is equal to the amount of his goodness and wisdom and the good and wise acts that he does". May the same be said also of all those who will pass through the walls of the Albert Luthuli College. □

WHITEY by David Muller, published by Ravan Press

A review by Trish Riekert

The title of David Muller's first novel **Whitey** has heavily political overtones which are not borne out by the novel itself. Its concern is social and psychological rather than directly political, although in the South African context it may be false to make this distinction because many of the social ills which the author describes are the direct consequences of a political situation. It also seems, given this peculiar context, that any comment about the Coloured community made by a white man becomes, in a sense, a political statement.

The statement, however, is severely limited by the fact that David Muller chooses to make his observations largely through the private, subjective and often hallucinatory consciousness of an alcoholic white seaman who, in the course of a "bender", finds himself in Cape Town's District Six. He is taken under the protection of "Mommy Stilhuis", the owner of a thriving "smokkelhuis", or shebeen, and a large part of the novel is given up to detailed examination of the psychological states and physical sensations of the compulsive alcoholic. In his attempt to give the oppressive and claustrophobic sense of a mind imprisoned by need, the author goes too far, and the result is repetitive and tedious; while his style, which is often turgid and self-consciously literary, does not allow the experience to rise above the particular.

It is in the fine evocation of the atmosphere of District Six that the author is at his best. Filth, squalor, inertia and appalling poverty combine almost ludicrously with colour, vitality and irrational gaiety to produce a composite and convincing picture. At the heart of this confused variety is the paradoxical co-existence of vice and virtue, of the brutal and harsh with the compassionate and gentle.

Mommy Stilhuis sells liquor illegally, and harbours the most vicious and murderous thugs in return for their protection against the other gangs that roam the district. Yet she is a God-fearing woman, aspires to the respectability of a "house in Athlone" and has only turned to "smokkeling" in order to support her three children and acquire the wealth that would enable her to move out of the corrupt underworld which now supports her. But escape is not so easy, and she watches with dismay as the world to which she has opened her doors claims as one of its own the son that she hoped thereby to save.

John Boonzaier, the hopeful, dignified young man of seven years before has become "Boon", the leader of the "Gympie Street Crew", and stabs a man to death for a bottle of wine. It is unnecessary to trace the process of transformation; thwarted hopes and ambitions, the losing battle against impossible odds form part of a pervasive consciousness of hopelessness and futility against which the strivings of someone like Gertie Smit become almost heroic. It is a fine irony that Whitey "crie(s) out in anguish to God for the return of Boon".

The self-destructive compulsion of the alcoholic seaman is reflected and paralleled in a community that is so restricted by external factors that its ends become self-defeating, and exacerbate its already wretched lot. At the end of the novel it is appropriate that Whitey, after a period of "drying out" in Groote Schuur Hospital, should return to the bottle and also decide to return to the people and district which so vividly externalize his psychological imprisonment. This is a novel rich in potential, but marred by the pompous and inflated style of its author, and, like its chief protagonist, it remains self-enclosed. □