

IZWI lase TOWNSHIP



**THERE SHALL BE
HOUSES, SECURITY
& COMFORT**

One day we trust the above declaration will be realised. The position today, however, is that there is a shortage of houses, little comfort and no security.

All over South Africa people are squatting, sharing rooms, sleeping in the open, bribing to get accommodation, taking other peoples houses. All over South Africa people are moved out of one slum into another slum: they are evicted with nowhere to go: they are housed in tents, sheds, garages, dolls-houses, boxes, drain-pipes, doorways and gutters.

You would suppose that this was the result of a catastrophe, like the Mfecane or Rinderpest. But it is not accidental: it is national policy. It is deliberate.

To the people who are homeless it may be a problem but it is not a problem to the state. Since to them it is not a problem, they will not look for a solution.

There are people (even officials) who offer, or promise, solutions: but they can only help in selected places, the selected few. One family may get a house, but another family won't.

There is a shortage of 160 000 houses (possibly in Soweto alone). At the same time 'A massive process of urbanisation is taking place in South Africa in spite of government efforts to decentralise jobs and to use influx control.'

This means that there is a continuing influx of people, continuing need for more housing, continuing indifference from the state.

THE PEOPLE DEMAND HOUSING

What is the situation in Alexandra?



1. Imikhukhu (illegal structures) are being torn down. These were not ideal, but for people with no other place to stay, they were essential shelters. The Liaison Committee threatened people not to retain them (Chronicle Jan/Feb 1982), and since then many have been demolished by Wrab.
2. Some people evicted from their lodging have been housed in the warehouse behind Wrab offices.
3. In Wynberg, houses have been flattened to make way for factory building. Families continue to live there in the open air, on the ruins of their former houses. They have nowhere to go.
4. In a certain yard people have been evicted to make way for others who have permits. Those evicted are squatting in the very same yard, living in motor-car wrecks.
5. "Evictions take place almost every day here, and the trouble is that some people force others out of their rooms and occupy them." Gert Steyn of WRAB (from a report in The Sowetan).
6. "When one goes up to Peri-Urban offices to appeal for additional room one is told to 'guard Alexandra Township to get a decent house', ie one must search for people who are illegally staying in Alexandra houses, or have not paid rent for a certain period..." (Letter in The Sowetan, March 2 1982).

7. "My dear fellow black brothers, stop robbing people of their houses. Last month I visited my sister in Alexandra. She has been staying in her 4 roomed house since 1980 together with a lodger. What had happened is bad. The lodger went to WRAB offices. After two days the Wrab committee came to my sister telling her that she had to get out of the house..."
(Letter in The Sowetan, May 25 1982).

These are a few items typical of many, many problems being experienced by

Alexandra people. A full list of problems would take many pages. The cases mentioned, however, show how much discomfort, insecurity and houselessness there is in this particular location/ghetto.

It does not improve things that such chaos exists side by side with promises of renewal and luxury. Rive and Knoetze boast about making Soweto the most beautiful black city in Africa: in Alexandra there are promises of a lovely village, green and pleasant. What people want is houses. Houses is the priority. And houses is what the people do not see.

In August 1981 the first of these pictures was taken. The settlement of houses was on old farmland. In June 1982 the second photo shows the same place, flattened for factory building. The people squat in the ruins of their homes. They have nowhere to go.

Ditshwantsho tsa Rona

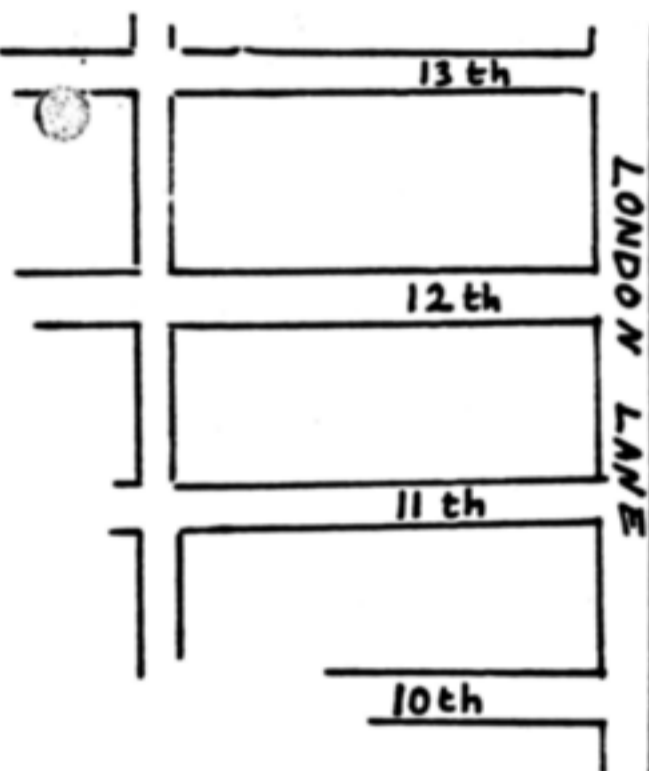


Ditshwantsho tsa Rona



"Give them games"

In the South of Alexandra (see drawing), between 10th and 12th avenues, several schools are to be built, and sports fields, a youth club, maybe even a swimming pool. Millions of Rands are involved, gifts from generous sponsors. But the people in that area, who will have to be resettled, are left in ignorance about what rents they will be asked to pay; they do not know what size or shape or kind of houses they will be moved to. They have not been consulted properly about these matters, nor have they been kept informed.



Some people in the area have been told by the police to expect to be removed at a certain time: others have been assured that they will not be moved for several

months. In March it was said that building had started, and that the sub-economic houses would be completed within two months. It is now June, and there is no sign of such building.

It is very well to have schools and sports stadiums, BUT HOUSING IS THE PRIORITY.

Residents' Committees

All over South Africa, communities have found that they must protect themselves against officials, police, authorities, even sometimes against their own leaders.

They protect themselves by forming community action groups. A united group with common interests, is far stronger than any single person, single family. A committee consisting of people who are in regular contact with one another, and who know the bread-and-butter issues and the problems facing the community, will be able to present the authorities with their demands, or approach them with questions. This sort of association is the true basis of local government: and it is the true basis of democracy. Real issues at the level of housing, cost of living, facilities for children – such things do not come *after* sports stadiums and pompous campaigns. These are the basis of peoples lives. Only the people themselves will be able to organise such committees. The authorities won't help, and often the so-called leaders won't help either.

Can one depend on Mr Steyn of WRAB? No, because, whatever his goodwill, he is implementing national policy. Blacks do not have the vote, so national policy does not include advantages to black citizens.

Can one depend on the Liason Committee? No, because, whatever their goodwill, this problem is a national one, and cannot be solved on the local level.

It would be better to face these facts, and refuse to be bluffed by the Liason Committee or by Mr Steyn.

A few houses will go up, but that will only shift the *discomfort, insecurity* and *houselessness* to someone else, somewhere else.

Fight as hard as possible for the right to housing, comfort and security, but do not be blind to the truth: do not suppose that the problem is over once you have a doorway to enter and a place to sleep.

A Good Example

Here is a report copied from the newspaper UKUSA, May 1982:

More than 1 500 people in St Wendolins, near Pinetown, have been threatened with removals since 1979. They have opposed any move to remove them from an area they believe belongs to them. In their struggle to remain in the area they have formed the ST WENDOLINS WELFARE COMMITTEE.



What's in the News

In a society like South Africa in which you have employers who benefit from capitalism and workers who suffer under the capitalist system, ideas either favour and support the ruling capitalists or the workers. Where do ideas communicated by commercial newspapers like 'The Sowetan' and the 'Rand Daily Mail' fit in?

Policy of the Owners

Newspapers are owned by the same people who own the mines and factories — the capitalists. Anglo-American Corporation owns more than half of the shares in the Argus Company which is the biggest newspaper monopoly in South Africa.

These owners appoint editors who share their conservative views. In the same way, the editors appoint sub-editors and reporters. This means that it is newspaper owners who really decide what does and what does not go into the paper.

As a result, newspapers often ignore the struggles and issues which concern most South Africans, while giving space to puppets like Mangope.

newspapers, just like the State-controlled radio and TV, present capitalism as a non-exploitative system which takes care of everyone's needs. This hides the exploitation which lies at the root of the capitalist system. Employers pay workers low wages so that they can make high profits from selling products which the employers did not make themselves. For this reason, the wage is not fair payment for a day's work. It is also the reason many workers can't afford to buy the things that they themselves produce.

All newspapers work in the same way. When they do consider township problems (such as high rents) they focus on sensational, short-term events. This means that they don't give attention to the underlying economic causes of township problems.

In reality, township problems such as poverty are everyday matters. There are a few journalists who try to do research into the background to their subject



matter, however. The Rand Daily Mail's labour reporter, Steve Friedman, is one of these. But it often happens that reporters who have a point of view different to that of the owners of the paper do not last long in their jobs.

“30 Lost in Mine Blaze”

From these headlines readers would probably not see any reason for protesting against what had happened. It actually did happen that in 1978 a mine in the Western Transvaal was sealed in order to kill a fire. More than thirty black workers were left to die inside the mine. Newspapers used the opinions of mine management as facts, saying that the miners would have died even if the mine had not been sealed. Nobody questioned management's decision.

“Miners doomed by management”

What if the article said that the managers of the mine decided to condemn over thirty miners to death by sealing them in

a mine, because to allow the fire to continue would have stopped production? We think that many newspaper readers would have been disgusted and angry.

Biased Quotes

In looking for the bias of any news report, it is necessary to note who is quoted. Newspapers try to convince readers that people they quote are important. By giving a lot of space to what homeland leaders say, newspapers imply that they are rulers of truly independent states.

The owners of newspapers like readers to believe that their newspapers provide them with a wide range of opinions. But commercial newspapers do not, for instance, quote people who travel on buses every day, on the issue of unjust increases in fares. Instead, they quote people who have fancy cars and therefore are not affected by bus fare increases.

Who tells the paper what to say?

Many events take place every day which are not reported in newspapers. Therefore, we can say that people are not buying newspapers to read about events. But, they are buying them for 'news'. News and events are not the same thing, so what is the difference between them? Journalists hunt around for events which they

can turn into news. Once the journalist thinks that he has found a suitable event, he writes about it in a way that makes it clear why he thinks that this event is important. For example, a journalist can turn the event of ANC guerrillas blowing up a railway line into news by treating it as part of what they call a 'terrorist threat'. We can see that although commercial newspapers pretend that they describe events, what they really do is *interpret* events, which they can sell as news. Through interpreting an event, a journalist can influence how people think about that event.

Photo Messages

The journalist's interpretation of an event is often supported by a photograph. Photos can be forced onto the reader as being obvious in meaning and also

'neutral'. Because readers are not suspicious of photos, they can be used as proof to make people's minds up for them.

News photographs always have a hidden message. For example:

We are accustomed to photos of 'great' individuals, so-called leaders; and we are persuaded to believe, therefore, that it is individuals rather than masses of people that bring about political change. Newspapers usually only show crowds massed together at gatherings that are non-political, like sports events, soccer matches etc.

Government Fears

About 100 laws limit what journalists in South Africa are allowed to write. But, in spite of such laws, some journalists, and even editors, have at times tried to

take up an uncompromising anti-apartheid position. If such struggles aim at changing the present system, they should be supported.

But there are limits to these struggles. Especially when a cheeky newspaper is widely read, the government is likely to squash and silence it. This is what happened with *The World*, in October 1977. By that time *The World* had become less sensational and more politicized than it had been before. The government brought its boot down because it could not tolerate it preaching complete rejection of apartheid, Urban Bantu Councils, Bantustans etc.

The government does not ban newspapers that do not challenge the system. If a newspaper fits into the system of exploitation, we should be very critical of it. This may apply to *The Sowetan* and *The Golden City Press*. Time will tell.

The hidden history of Alexandra: (locked in your memory?)

The task of writing the history of Alexandra, as it has been experienced by the people of Alexandra, is important and urgent. If the wrong people are left to say what Alexandra has been like, they will repeat the usual journalists nonsense about the 'dark city' and its 'violent past': they will not know how to describe or analyse the day to day life and the events that have given a particular shape to the township. We must show things from the point of view of the people who have lived in Alexandra and whose struggles are at present recorded in the peoples memory.

The article below deals with a particular struggle in the history of the township. It is an important event, because it involved the principle of democracy. We do not yet know enough about this period. The 'official' story is that before 1958 Alexandra was a sordid and dangerous slum, and the Peri-Urban Board cleaned it and made it safe. What was really happening is a lot different, as the following account will show. But we still need help in writing about this period. We appeal to people who were in Alexandra at this time: Please contact us, so that we may learn from your own words what was taking place in the township in the past.

The Peri-Urban Areas Health Board took control of Alexandra in January 1958. Before this, there was a Health Committee which included members elected by township residents. Under Peri-Urban the elective principle was withdrawn. This led to resistance.

Many people believe that Peri-Urban came to Alexandra in order to get rid of organised crime. But their real purpose soon became clear, when people began to queue for permits, when they were removed to Meadowlands and other locations, when families were split up, when stand-holders were harassed and induced to sell, and when the state introduced the hostel plan and wanted to turn Alexandra into a location of bachelor labourers. In fact, the function of Peri-Urban was to destroy Alexandra township, which had given the state so much trouble in the past, and turn it into a controlled location for the labour needs of northern Johannesburg.

People vs Peri-Urban

At first Peri-Urban did a few nice things in order to cover the pill with sugar. They built storm-water drains, they pro-

mised a swimming pool and they erected concrete umbrellas at the beer-hall.

Their first mistake was appointing a Liaison Committee, hoping to control Alexandra through stooges.

But the people of Alexandra had not been idle. They rejected the Peri-Urban Board because it was not an elected body and thus had no right to govern. They formed the ANTI PERI-URBAN AREAS ACTION COMMITTEE, with A.A. Tantsi as Chairman, and Dan Mokonyane as Secretary.

One of the committee members, Gilbert Nhlapo, later told DRUM:

We used to hold meetings, and thousands of residents turned up. We resolved to form a management committee to run the affairs of the township, and got 60,000 signatures backing us. (Drum July 1969)

Liaison Committee

This action Committee took a strong stand against the Liaison Committee, demanding their resignation on the grounds that they were appointed by a non-representative state body. When this demand was not met, circulars were issued saying:

We have no recourse now except to institute a boycott of every member of this arbitrarily appointed committee in every respect. Most of them are businessmen. We must make it a point of political consciousness not to buy from them.

Other traders have refused to sell to them – no food, no credit – in order to starve them out. We must get rid of them.

(RDM 30 October 1959)

All the members of the liason committee resigned. One of them claimed to have received an anonymous letter threatening assassination. However it would seem that the true reason for their resignation was that they realised that they had got into a false position.

'We did not regard our position on the liason committee as desirable as we were not elected. But as it was all we had, we decided to do the best we could. We think that if the people do not want us there is no point in continuing.'

(RDM ibid.)

This was a blow to the authorities in Peri-Urban. It showed up their totally undemocratic position, and removed their stooge-disguise. True to form, the members of the Board immediately lost their benevolent smile and became vicious. They decided to take revenge, and stamp out opposition once and for all. That was, after all, their function in Alexandra, and now they let it be seen.

The two most prominent leaders of the Action Committee, Tantsi and Mokonyane were threatened with banishment. According to the Board,

Their presence in Alexandra was detrimental to peace and order: they deliberately wanted to discredit the board with the residents: they tried by 'unlawful' means to remove recognised institutions of the State, by force or otherwise: they were prominent at a meeting on November 18 where a boycott of the (African) liason committee was suggested: and that this proposal proved beyond doubt that the liason committee did not resign on their own free will.

Banishment

Mokonyane left Alexandra and went abroad. To this day he lives in London, in exile from his country and from his birthplace, Alexandra. It is not known to us what became of Rev Tantsi. Information on this and other details of this story would be appreciated.

A Previous Struggle

It might interest the reader to know that this was not the first battle for the principle of democracy in Alexandra. In 1941 the Transvaal Administrator decided to abolish the Health Committee and replace it with a 'Board of Control' consisting of 3 European experts, who would be assisted by an advisory committee of Alexandra residents. On this occasion, a deputation was sent by the residents to the Admini-

strator, led by Dr Xuma, whose warnings were reported in The Star 24 June 1941:

'Dr Xuma mentioned a threat by some of the women that they would rather be shot than legislated for by a committee in which they had no confidence, and he appealed for the re-establishment of a democratically constituted health committee.'

In fact on this occasion the battle was partly won. The new Health Committee did include an elective principle.

LETTERS

IZWI:

In the letter about Alexandra High (*Izwi April*) the writer made some useful points and some that are not so useful.

It is well-known that the present building is only temporary. Although broken doors and windows make a place uncomfortable, this does not seem to me a very serious complaint. It can be easily put right. But what the writer says about teaching and teachers, is important: and such things take a lot of hard work to put right.

At first the letter makes one think that it is an attack against teachers. I am an ex-teacher, and I felt this way when I started to read the letter. But then I began to think that, if there is something wrong, there is no reason why it should not be said openly, by anyone, teacher or pupil. It is a mistake to force scholars to keep quiet about faults in a school. They can see very well what the true situation is. It is their own future that is being prepared in school.

The truth is that there *are* serious problems in our schools. There is a shortage of teachers (not the teachers' fault), and many teachers are not sufficiently trained. They feel this themselves, and are a bit embarrassed; but again, it is not their fault.

It is useless to pretend about the situation. Both pupils and teachers should admit it, and they should be open with one another about it.

Two things can be done. I should say that there are two questions to be asked. Why are things so bad, and What is the solution?

The reason Alexandra High has problems, is not because the teachers cause them, or want them. It is connected with the whole education system and with the Department of Education and Training. Bantu Education is an inferior and poisoned system. This is the cause of the problem, and it is something that should be thoroughly discussed by teachers and pupils, so that they may all try to agree on what is the good and what is the harm they get from their education. This is already part of the second question, about what should be done. I mean, this kind of discussion is something that should be done. But there are also practical things to do. A school cannot solve the teacher shortage: but perhaps there are ways of making this shortage less disastrous.

How?

That is not for me to say, in such a letter. Solutions could be found only in one way, that is, when everyone involved meets to discuss things thoroughly – parents, teachers and pupils. At such a meeting problems and solutions could be examined in a useful way.

I notice in the other letters, about the African History Group, a very different attitude. There you see a pupil who is not fighting his teacher, but values the work they do together. I would guess that the teachers of this course are also more interested in the process of learning, than in protecting their dignity.

Ex-teacher

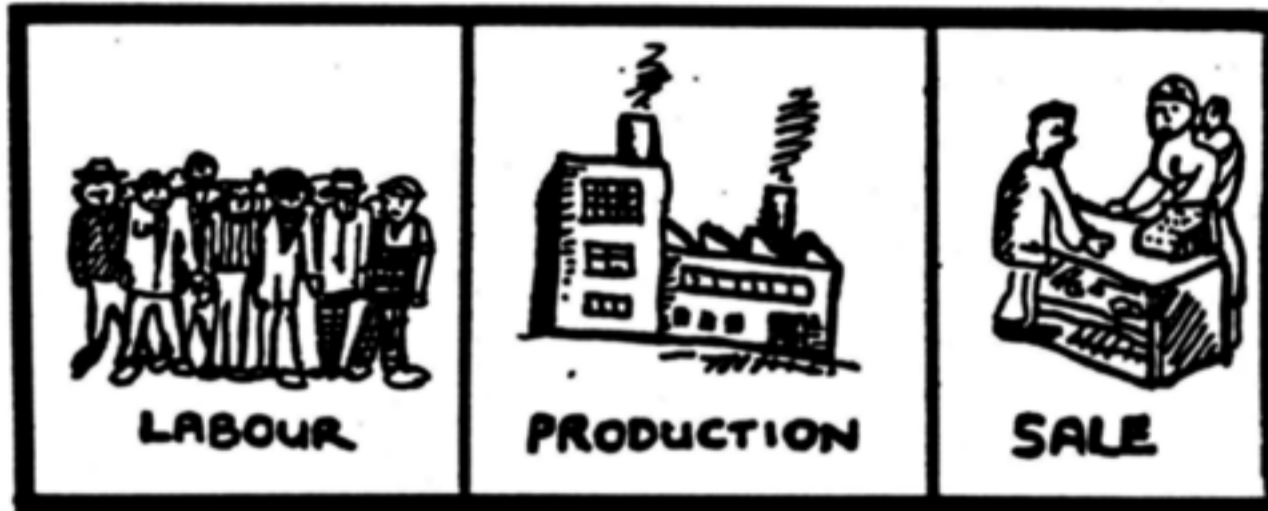
IZWI LASE TOWNSHIP is published by Ditshwantsho tsa Rona. It offers notes and views about events of today or of the past. Though mainly concerned with Alexandra, because that is the home location of Ditshwantsho, we hold that Alexandra is but a part of South Africa, and shares in the general struggle in this country. We reject the ghetto status of the township, and we reject strategies that attempt to divide it from other parts of the nation.

Letters, articles, comments and enquiries should be sent to our address: PO Box 720, BERGVLEI, 2080.

It is necessary to understand society in order to change it. We invite the public to participate in this paper, by carrying our research and by contributing to discussion.

SELLING LIES

The Advertising Industry



This chart shows the capitalist production process. Labour is employed, production takes place and then the goods must be sold to realise a profit and to get money back into the business.

We know a lot about the first part of this process; that is, how workers are treated by their employers, who get as much labour as possible and pay low wages. Workers constantly experience struggles with management over the basic wage, deductions, unfair dismissal, injury compensation and other things. We tend to think that it is in this labour process that there is exploitation.

But, as we see from the chart, this is not the end of the story. The other side of the process, where goods are put onto the market for sale, is also anti-social. This is not easily recognised, so let's look closely at how it works.

In order to continue making profits, a producer must get more and more people to buy his products, and he finds that the best way to do this is by advertising. Advertising is a way of tempting people to buy. It is a method of temptation. He who tempts is not at all concerned about the welfare of people. To him, people are victims, and he has no respect for them. If he tries to understand them, it is only so that he may get more from them.

The main technique of the advertiser is to tell lies: 'An Old Buck Man Always Wins' 'With Mobil You Are Number One'. Actually, these slogans contain a mixture of nonsense and lies, and it is not always easy to see where the nonsense ends and the lie begins. Take as an example the slogan HAVE A COKE AND A SMILE. It is implied that the producers are offering you not only a bottle of coke, but happiness as well. They are suggesting that if you drink coke, you will smile — that happiness comes from drinking coke. But we know that happiness is a very complex emotion; it is certainly not bottled together with coke; it is not owned by the manufacturers of coke; they do not possess it, and they cannot offer it for sale. If one can say what they are saying, then one can say *anything*. One could say, for instance, HAVE A COKE AND DIE or HAVE A COKE AND ROTTEN TEETH. It is just as possible that you might die after drinking coke, as that you might smile.

Blindfold

By offering happiness, success, beauty and wealth advertisers conceal the real connection between their products and the process by which they were produced.

Lets go back to that other side, the labour process. In The Star (11 May 1982) we read of a dispute between a certain trade union and a manufacturing company. The trade union accused the company of dismissing 259 workers, of refusing to negotiate with the union; and it was demanding that the workers be reinstated.

A Battle Ground

This sort of thing is very common, as we know. Every day in the newspaper we read a similar story. What is interesting about this particular report, however, is that the union concerned was the GWU (General Workers Union) and the employer was S.A. Bottling, the firm that handles Coke in South Africa. From the report we can see that Coke is produced in an atmosphere of conflict between the bosses who want to make higher profits, and workers who want higher wages. Their interests are opposed, and they constantly battle with one another. This is the heart of the class conflict, between owners and workers, between those who have capital, and those who have nothing but their labour to sell. And all of this is concealed behind the slogan we see on huge billboards — HAVE A COKE AND A SMILE. We have to think twice before we realise what a *product* really is. Coke is something that is made and bottled by workers in a factory, somewhere. They work hard, they struggle, they get low wages, they might be migrants separated from their families, they may not get enough money to send their children to school — and so on. Coke is also a product that makes profits for shareholders, for the bosses and managers, and for the holders of the patent, in the United States. The way Coke is sold (advertising etc) must not make us forget the whole production process — the workers, the exploitation, the profits.

The Cost

Now we come to the cost of advertising. It is difficult to realise how much advertising there is, and how wasteful it is. If you open a magazine such as Pace or Fair Lady, you will find that about 50% is advertising. Each ad involves a lengthy and expensive process of photography, art-work, copy-writing, layout, administration, printing etc etc. And the end product of all this work is the combination we have already described, nonsense and lies. The cost is very high. Every year, for example, Checkers alone spends about 1 million Rands on advertising. One single advertising agency has clients who spend about 73 million Rands per year.



Where does the money come from? It would probably be correct to say, that everytime you buy a bottle of coke, roughly half of the price you pay, is for advertising. The money for advertising comes from the consumer. Not only are you deceived by advertisements, but you pay to be deceived!

So essential is advertising to producers, and there is so much of it, that many products and activities actually could not exist without it. Newspapers, for example, could not be produced without the income they get from ads. The same can be said of TV, radio, magazines, sports functions and so on. This is very dangerous, because it means that the interests of advertisers (that is capitalists) are going to be favoured by anyone who depends on their money. If a newspaper gets advertising revenue from PUTCO, obviously it is not going to say anything bad about that company. In this way, the mass media favour capitalists rather than the workers. Although it is the workers who ultimately pay for advertising (when they buy products), it appears as if it is the advertiser who pays, since it is he who places the ads, and so his point of view is favoured. The working class actually pays to have his opponents view expressed in the media!

Consumer Boycotts

Because selling is such an essential part of the capitalist process, consumer boycotts can be quite effective. A consumer boycott is similar to a strike; but whereas a strike interrupts production, a consumer boycott interrupts sales.

In 1959 the ANC organised a *potato boycott* as protest against the treatment of farm labourers in Bethal. Many of these labourers were prisoners, — a kind of slave labour force. The boycott lasted two months, during which time masses of Africans refused to buy potatoes in any form. Stocks of potatoes began to pile up unsold, and had to be used as cattle feed. To some extent this boycott changed things for the labourers; and it focussed attention on a certain area of exploitation and oppression.

In 1979 there was a consumer boycott against Fattis & Monis (manufacturers of spaghetti and related products). The company would not negotiate with the African Food and Canning Workers Union. There were dismissals of workers, followed by a strike. Part of the workers' tactic was to organise a consumer boycott. Fattis & Monis' profit declined; they increased their advertising; and they tried

to market products under a different name. Eventually the company agreed to negotiate. One of the directors said, 'There is no doubt that these boycotts can be effective. We made the mistake of ignoring organised labour.'

A single producer advertises to sell only his own product: but if you take all advertisers together (that is the capitalist class), what they are doing is creating and enlarging consumption *in general*. The more consumption the more production; and that is what capitalists want, because as production increases, so do their profits.

The state, which represents the capitalist class, helps to encourage consumption. That is how they get people involved in wage labour, and how they increase the wealth of their class. A state commission in the 1950's said in its report:

'... (black) needs should be increased, or at least so developed that they are never quite satisfied.'

And as long ago as 1903, during an enquiry by the state's Native Affairs Commission, this sort of thing was being said:

'A Native's wants increase as he becomes more civilized... and those have to be supplied.'

'The principal effect of education on the Native is to increase his wants. A Native, when he is educated, wants more things, and he becomes a greater purchaser; and, I take it, he becomes a more useful subject of the state.'

A Danger

One danger of advertising is that it leads to widespread consumerism — that is, the desire for things, and buying things to satisfy this craving, whether these things are useful or not. People who are interested in increasing their possessions gradually forget that they are dominated. They exchange freedom for a home and a TV set. An even greater danger is that people might become hypnotised by advertisements, and ignore what lies behind the consumer goods; the theft of labour, the struggle, the exploitation and the profit. These dangers must be neutralised and counteracted. Every ad must be examined closely, its method of attraction must be discovered. You must look for its *untruth*.

Ads are the capitalists graffiti. Don't be taken in.



When prices go up, so do ads!

Anyway, don't believe it ntombazanyana.

New milk price hike

Own Correspondent

The Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, Mr Piet du Plessis, has decided on a new milk price, but it is not likely to be announced until next week.

Star 12-6-82

Who qualifies for Alex?

In the *Alexandra Chronicle* of January/February 1982, the Liaison Committee states:

Those persons who were resident in Alexandra, and who have been resettled elsewhere, will not be permitted to return to this Township. Indeed, those persons who at present reside illegally in Alexandra will likewise not be permitted to continue to reside there.

This means that thousands of people will be forced to leave Alexandra. Only those who have Section 10.1(a) or (b) rights will be allowed to stay. People who have never managed to get a permit, or who have only (c) or (d) rights will have to get out (except possibly those who have single permits and live in hostels. But we must remember that the Liaison Committee has said that it will turn hostels into universities and hospitals!). The Liaison Committee has often declared that the new Alexandra caters for everybody. But what about those without (a) or (b) rights? Many such people have been deceived if they do not yet know that they will be forced out of the township – to nowhere.

Why

In the past Alexandra has been a crowded township because standowners have accommodated many people in their yards. Now that WRAB is the landlord, the new housing they build will be strictly controlled – they won't allow so many people in one house or one yard as before. This, together with the fact that there are plans for more schools, parks and sports-grounds, means there will be less space for people to live.

Cost

It is also probable that the new houses will be expensive. The money which WRAB has for redevelopment is borrowed money and will have to be paid back out of the rates and rents they charge the people of Alex, for the houses. It is, in any case, a government principle that locations must be self-supporting. The cheapest house will probably cost about R9 000,00 to buy. As for the rented houses, even if rents are low for the first year or so, they will soon be increased, as we have said, to pay back the loan. Newly built houses in

other locations near Johannesburg are being rented for more than R100,00 a month.

Either because of lack of rights or because of poverty, it seems likely that thousands of Alexandra residents will have to leave the township during the next few years. You ought to be prepared for this. You ought to know that it could happen to you, and you must consider where you would go.

Illegals?

People with no permit or reference book, and thus no proved rights, and all people who do not have an (a) or (b) right in their reference book, will be thrown out of Alexandra. (We are not here considering 'singles' with (c) rights and single permits, who are living in the hostels.) The *Alexandra Chronicle* of January/February 1982 gave advice on 'How to acquire a new house in Alexandra'. It says that in order to buy or rent a house in Alex a person must have '1. A family permit, and 2. Section 10.1(a) or (b) qualification in Alex.'

On Becoming Legal

People who have not obtained the rights and permits for which they actually qualify should try to prove these rights soon, so that WRAB will not be able to evict them. The following is a list of Section 10 rights, and advice about how to secure these rights if you qualify for them.

Section	Who should have this right?	What you are entitled to	Proof you will need
10.1(a)	If you were born in Alex and lived here all your life then you qualify for Section 10.1(a). Even if you attended school somewhere else, so long as you came back to Alex for holidays you have an (a) right.	A 10.1(a) right entitles you to live in Alex and to work in ANY white area (even Cape Town, if you like). You can buy or rent a house.	A birth certificate. If you do not have one, you can get a new one issued if you can produce witnesses to your birth.
10.1(b)	If you do not qualify for an (a) right, but 1. If you have lived in Alex legally (i.e. with a permit) for fifteen years OR 2. If you have worked for one employer legally (registered employment) for ten years, or with different employers for fifteen years, then you have a (b) right. Even if you have been working on one-year contracts, going home to a rural area once a year, you still qualify for (b).	A 10.1(b) right entitles you to live in Alex, or rent or buy a house and to work in the white area for which the (b) right is issued.	Proof that the residence or employment was legal such as a housing permit, a record in your reference book or letters from your employers.
10.1(c)	If you do not qualify for an (a) or (b) right, as above, but 1. If your husband has an (a) or (b) right, OR 2. If you are a man under 18 years old living with a parent who has (a) or (b) rights, OR 3. If you are an unmarried woman of any age, living with a parent who has an (a) or (b) right, then you qualify for your (c) right.	A 10.1(c) right entitles you to work in a white area. It does not entitle you to buy or rent a house, although you can get accommodation as a single in a hostel.	Proof of your husband's or parent's Section 10.1(a) or (b) rights.

Notes

1. Section 10.1 (a) and (b) rights are the only rights entitling a person to buy or rent a house. Those without (a) or (b) rights will have to leave Alex, and they will probably not be given alternative accommodation. If you have a (c) right, you could get a single permit

and thus be housed in a hostel. Whatever rights you have got, even if they are none, if you have managed to get registered employment you could get accommodation on the Reef, - in another township.

2. Section 10.1(d) does not exist anymore. If you have (d) stamped in your book, you should go and demand your (a), (b) or (c) right.

3. No man over 18 years should have (c). If you have that, you should go and

demand your (a) or (b) right. This is important because people with (c) rights will be sent out of Alex.

4. If you have been forced to carry the 'Travel Document' of an 'Independent Homeland' you do still qualify for your urban rights. The travel document does not affect your rights at all, it is only children born after the date of independence of their 'homeland' who will never be given any urban rights at all.

continued

The kind of right which is stamped in your pass governs your whole life - and at the moment, whether or not you will be evicted from Alexandra. You must make sure, therefore, that you get nothing less than the right for which you qualify. It often happens at Albert Street that the officials will give a person a wrong stamp, so that he does not get his full rights.

sation with a lot of experience in pass laws, and they would be able to help you write up the necessary statements and collect the necessary evidence. Also, they would make sure that the officials give you the rights that are legally yours.

You can visit the BLACK SASH offices any week day between 8 and 3, at their offices in Khotso House, 142 De Villiers Street, near Park Station.

Who can help ?

And it is difficult to argue with those officials. If you have any trouble in getting your rights you should ask for help from the BLACK SASH. It is an organi-

(Note: Black Sash also assists people in connection with complaints about employers, unfair dismissals, domestic labour problems, employers not paying proper sick-leave or notice pay, workman's compensation etc.)

But don't forget

Now that we have given advice about legal rights and how to obtain them, we must also make it clear that we oppose laws that limit the rights of South Africans to live wherever they wish in their own country. We reject the distinction between legal and illegal. The struggle for democracy and freedom must continue, and nothing less will satisfy the people. Even those who fight for their limited rights within the system, must not forget the broader struggles or cease to insist on democracy.



(Ditshwantsho tsa Rona)

Bantustans in the City

Different people say different things about hostels. Mothers with young daughters fear them as places harbouring rapists. To some people they are fenced slums in their neighbourhood. The Liason Committee calls them a source of misery and crime. To the migrant worker, a hostel is simply home in the city.

Hostels house mostly migrant labourers. The migrant labour system in South Africa is a form of cheap labour. A migrant worker goes to the cities for the purpose of work. He remains for a period of time, while he is working or still capable of work. His home is in the 'homeland' so he possesses no rights in the urban areas. He cannot own or rent a house. He is regarded as a temporary sojourner who will go away when he is no longer needed. The migrant labourer can therefore not stay with his family in the urban area. (Where will he stay with them when he is prevented from owning or renting a house?) Migrants are therefore housed in

single hostels. This usually benefits industry, in that the employer, because his worker is a single in a singles hostel, does not pay a family wage but pays a low wage with the assumption that the migrant's family is subsisting on the land. The hostel system is one of the identifiable ways by which wages are kept low.

In Alexandra the idea of hostels was conceived in 1963 when the Peri-Urban was planning the future of Alexandra. According to these plans Alex was to become a city of hostels. Now we will try to look at what was in the minds of the planners when this decision was made:

Families are a Nuisance

Quote: "I would like to know from the honourable members whether they and their party (the U.P.) are going to exert themselves towards having all Bantu men working in white areas on a family basis. The implications of their objection to this Bill are that the Bantu employed in a white area should be there with their wives, children, grandmothers and grandfathers - the whole lot." (Deputy Minister of Bantu Administration and Development during the Better Administration of Designated Areas Bill debate in 1963.)

From the above quote it is clear that the Deputy Minister wanted nothing but single men in the urban areas. To him

wives, grandfathers and grandmothers, 'the whole lot' were not needed because they are not productive. They contribute nothing to industry. Making a whole township of single men would increase the potential of that township for providing labour.

Apart from producing a huge army of labour and housing migrants (the soldiers of the army), hostels perform another very important function.

Dr Mulder's Pretty Words

Quote: "Experience has taught us, however, that in many cases we find the most peace-loving Bantu in the single quarters. We know the tradition of the Black man. Whenever there is agitation or whenever problems arise, it is usually the female Bantu who, with her shouting and hysterical outbursts, ultimately encourages the Black man to do what he is doing." (Dr Mulder, Better Administration of Designated Areas Bill debate in 1963.)

From Dr Mulder's words we find this other reason for hostels. By putting 'Bantu' men in hostels and separating them from their wives, the state hopes for effective control. This control is carried out in different ways in different hostels. In almost all the private hostels in Alexandra there is a watchman and the hostel is fenced (normally with very high fences). This man at the gate is paid to monitor the lives of the workers. He sometimes

acts as a cleaner (this happens at Combrick 16th Avenue; Sandton Municipality: Fidelity Guards).

This man, usually a migrant worker himself, has to see to it that workers adhere to the rules set out by their bosses, eg. no women, no liquor, no outsiders etc etc.

In the Wrab hostels, Wrab policemen are used. In the women's hostels there are, in every passage, steel doors that roll up to the ceiling when they are not in use. Just before the building was completed in 1970, Mr CH Kotze, in explaining the purpose of these doors, said that they were electronically controlled and could be used to seal off sections of the building in times of unrest or trouble.

(Report, Sunday Times.)

These doors were obviously designed with the purpose of controlling workers staying in the hostel.

Tribalism

Since mining began in South Africa, tribalism has been used in compounds and hostels as a form of dividing the workers and thereby controlling them effectively.

In one of the private hostels we visited in 19th Avenue, a worker told us: "I stay in that room there. Some of us are Pedi and some of us are Venda. We do not want to see a Xhosa or Zulu in our room. If they come inside our room they get beaten up. They also beat us up if we go to their rooms."

In another hostel, in 17th Avenue, housing Fidelity Guards workers, we asked one worker: "There was a strike here recently over wages; do you think that you are united enough to carry out another strike, which could be more effective than the



Ditshwantsho tsa Roma

last one?" He replied: "You see here we are different tribes. We do not understand each other, and whenever there is trouble the bosses want to know which tribe started the trouble and instigated others. This divides us more."

A VISIT TO THE OLD MEN'S HOSTEL

The hostel is divided into blocks. Each block has its own kitchen, showers and toilets. The hostel is generally very dirty though there are WRAB workers employed to clean it. There is a beerhall inside the hostel grounds, that sells African beer. The blocks consist of about 20 rooms which house, some 8 and some 4 beds. There is electricity but no plugs on the walls of the rooms. Workers cook in the kitchens that are fitted with gas stoves. Rent is R9,50 for a room of 4 beds: R8,50 for a room of 8 beds.

Interview 1

"I have been in this hostel since 1975. I work for JM as a cabbage collector. My rent is lower than that of people staying in the other hostel, but this hostel is filthy. I don't like it here at all. I have a wife and two children. They are all in Odendalsrus, in the Freestate."

Interview 2

"I come from Gazankulu. I work in a bakery in town as a cleaner. I have two wives and three children at home. I want them to come and stay with me here but where will they stay? I am too old to be staying in this place. It is too noisy and dirty. Sometimes people get drunk and vomit on the passage or they don't use the buckets in the toilets. Sometimes others get drunk and sleep in the passage. Many funny things happen in this place. I pay R9,50 per month for rent here. It is not little. Some people pay less at other hostels. I get R37,35 per week. I try to work overtime if I can so that I avoid coming here."

Interview 3

"I have been in this hostel for two years. I am now used to it. What can I do? Before I came here I used to stay with relatives who have a house in the township. They threw me out because they said I drank too much and did not buy food. They were tired of me. I work for a factory in Wynberg. We make electrical appliances. I get 95c per hour (R42,75 per week: 5 day week: 9 hour day). This hostel is very dirty and I don't like it. There is nothing you can do here but drink. I have no wife and no children. I pay R9,50 rent. I do not have any complaints about the rent, but I do not like this hostel."



I have two children who are staying with their mother in Vendaleland. I think the rent is too much here. People in other hostels pay less rent. I don't know why we pay so much. I only get R40 per week."

In this article we have tried briefly to examine the reasons for hostels. We have seen that hostels are yet another of the governments schemes which fit in with the general system of workers

control and exploitation and the curtailing of freedom of the majority of South Africans. (Elsewhere in this issue we examine another method, namely passes).

So, hostels are part of the state's technique of managing workers. They also divide people, by causing rivalry between hostel dwellers and township dwellers. This is a division which the people do not need. Let there be solidarity, as our struggle for a peoples' democracy continues.



VISIT TO THE NEW MENS' HOSTEL

The hostel is kept clean by WRAB cleaners. Each room has four beds. There is electricity and showers. Kitchens are fitted with gas stoves and each block has its kitchen, toilets and showers.

There is a WRAB policeman at the entrance who is always there.

Unlike the other hostel there is no beer-hall, and according to one inmate '... you are not allowed to bring two things into this hostel: women and liquor. You can at least come here drunk but you will never see a woman until you go home.'

Interview 1

"I really don't like this place. I do not know about the others - if I could I would have long left this place. Its like living soldiers. Routine. One thing every day. The rent here is also very high. I do not know how much people of Alex pay but they do not pay R30,00 a month. I am a migrant but I pay more rent than some people who work in the bank. I am a watchman in town. I must eat and pay rent and also send my wife money in P.P. Rust. R200,00 is nothing."

Interview 2

"I come from Queenstown in the Cape. I work at the GPO. My employer got me this accommodation. There is nothing I can do about it. The rent is too much. I have a wife and four children in Queens-town. I get R38 per week."

Interview 3

"I was also brought here by my employers. I work for WRAB as a garbage collector in Alex. I do not like this place at all. How can a man with a wife live like a boy? I cook for myself and do my own washing."

COMPETITION

Closing date has been extended until July.

DITSHWANTSO TSA RONA invites all people of Alexandra to enter a photographic competition. The prizes are sponsored by the Sandton Arts Workshop:

First Prize -	R100
Second Prize -	R70
Third Prize -	R30

Each person must send in a group of Six (6) black and white photos, and notes.

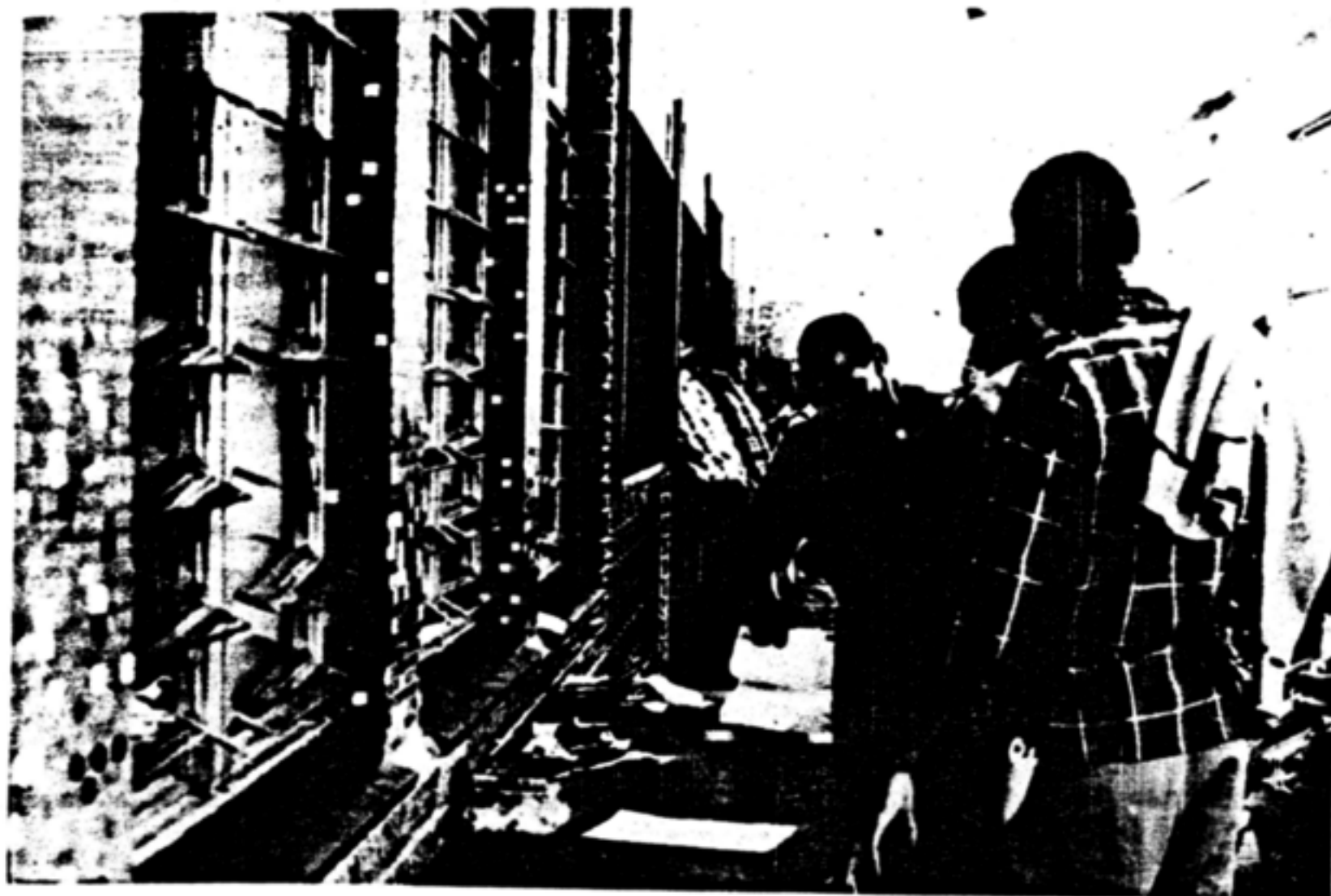
THE PHOTOS should be about one social theme of your choice. They should reveal something about Alexandra, to the people of Alexandra.

THE NOTES must accompany your set of photos showing how they are related to each other. They should explain your project - why you took your photos, or maybe what they mean. You may write whatever you think will be the most effective addition to your photos - for example: a story, an essay, a theory, captions on each picture, etc.

RULES

- Entries will be judged by a panel of four judges who will decide on the winners. Their decision is final.
- Photos must be in black and white. They must be 8 by 10 inches in size (important).
- Your photos must be taken by you but you can get them printed by anyone.
- Print your name and address on the back of each photo and your notes.
- Any person living in Alexandra may enter.
- All entrants will be notified by post of the judging date. Everyone who has entered will be invited to a meeting where some entries will be displayed, the judges will announce the winners and discuss their choice. (If you are a winner you will be notified beforehand by post).

Acknowledgements: For photos 1 to 4 Courtesy The Star; 5, 6 Courtesy Drum



(Ditshwantsho tsa Rona)

DOMPAS RULES

Passes were first introduced when the white settlers, who had just arrived at the Cape, drew boundaries and declared that certain parts of the land were theirs. They established a boundary which they extended east of the Keiskama river. Africans whose chief lived beyond the boundary were required to carry passes when they travelled in the white area. These 'pass laws' were aimed at controlling the influx of Africans and protecting the cattle and property of the colonists.

Colonists

After slavery was abolished, the colonists needed to find a new supply of cheap labour. They began to use Africans as workers, and this is when they began to consolidate the system of pass laws. Passes were a way of controlling the movement of blacks who had been forced to leave their land and come to work in cities. (For example, a hut tax was introduced, making money essential for every person to continue living on his land. People suddenly needed money, whereas they had never needed it before, and so they were forced to leave their homes and work in the cities to earn it.)

At this stage, passes were considered necessary as a means of 'enforcing contractual obligations between natives and Europeans and detecting deserters' (from the Report on the Interdepartmental Committee on the Native Pass Laws, 1920).

Passes showed which European a person worked for, his wages and the duration of the contract.

Passes showed a clear collaboration of the government with the bosses to force Africans into wage-slavery, and to keep their wages low. It was easy for the employers to trace and find African workers who had broken their contracts. The pass was a way of keeping the wage low because even if a worker found alternative work somewhere with better paid wages, he was forced by the pass or urban areas act to work in a prescribed area.

1 Permit Queues. Lining up to register, in May 1958. Men and women in separate lines.



However, passes were only one part of a system of laws which were being introduced in the early years of this century to control labour and keep it cheap. We do not intend discussing all these methods in this short article. They are dealt with in other articles in IZWI, such as the one on Hostels as a means of control.

Alexandra

Alexandra was a freehold township and it was impossible to enforce pass laws, as police were not allowed to raid in yards owned by landlords. This is partly what accounted for the popularity of places like Alexandra and Sophiatown, when the Johannesburg City Council began forcing people out of the yards, in the 30's. Close supervision and police action could be evaded.



2

Permits

When Peri-Urban came into power, its first objective was to reduce the population from about 98 000 to about half that number.

The permit system was introduced. Residential permits were given to whoever was resident in Alexandra on 3 February 1958. People who were temporarily away lost their rights; but many continued to live there illegally.

From Freehold to Controlled Location

The Better Administration of Designated Areas Act (1963) gave local governments increased power to control townships that had been, or still were partly, freehold. They could now raid, expropriate, arrest people who did not have permits or written permission to be in the township, and generally tighten their control on freehold areas, like Alexandra, Fingo Village (Grahamstown), and Lady Selborne in Pretoria.

One may argue that the state saw that it was a mistake to leave Alexandra as a freehold area, because it was not easy then to enforce pass laws and influx control. The solution to this problem was the expropriation of freehold title, and the conversion of Alexandra into a controlled location.

The Story of an Alexandra Pass-Offender

The following interview reveals some of the problems faced by people living and working on the Rand, but unable to regularise their position, unable to get the right stamps, unable to exist as human beings, in the land of their birth.

Question: When did you arrive in Alex?

Mr X: That was in 1946. I remember I started paying poll tax in 1947. The yards were owned by standholders. The Health Committee was local government then.

Q: Was there a permit system?

Mr X: There wasn't such a thing. Township was for everyone who came from anywhere. But during the 50's you were required to have a stamp on your middle pass.

Emasakeni

Q: When were you required to have permits?

Mr X: People started to have permits that were issued by the Peri-

Urban, when it came into power in 1958. I didn't get one.

Q: How did it come about that you were not issued with permits?

Mr X: I used to live with my parents here in Alex about 1943, but I am not sure. Then they left to Moroka-Jabavu, that is, Emasakeni. From there we went to Apex somewhere around Benoni. When Daveyton was built in 1955 my parents got a house there. But I couldn't get a house because they said I didn't work in Benoni but in Johannesburg, and that is where I qualify. During early 1957 Msomi was reigning in terror and we used to pay protection fee. Late 1957 we went to Dindela and from Dindela we went to Daveyton again. In 1958 women were issued with passes. We couldn't find houses because my wife didn't have a pass, permit and no qualification. We moved to Alex in 1963 we did not live there for a long time, we went to Soweto looking for a house but we couldn't find one. We came back to Alex there was trouble.

Peri-Urban demanded permits to be 'legally' in Alex, those who did not have a permit, like me and my family were arrested and paid a fine of R15.

From time to time the fine was changed – for instance at one stage it was reduced to R2,00 and at a later stage it went up to R10,00.

In 1963 I went with my wife to seek for a permit. I was fired from Alex and was said to belong to Johannesburg.

Mrs X: I went to Albert to have my papers fixed but instead I got a 72 hours stamp and my husband was given a 10(1)D qualification. We did not lose patience, we continued to go to Albert with all the proofs required. We made an appeal at Fordsburg in 1975 and we were told to get a lodgers permit, but we couldn't. Who could allow such a big family of 9 to live in his house? We continued to live in Alex illegally.

Another problem came, ie the problem of my son and daughters who could not get passes. In order to get passes we sought for a lodgers permit in Soweto which we got through my cousin who lived in Zola – but we still continued to live in Alex. We could not go to an already crammed house with such a big family. So we paid rent to the landlord, the Soweto lodger permit and also not to forget fines we paid to Peri-Urban.

Also in late 1975 I was told to get a single permit and go to live in a hostel. And my husband was told to get out of Alex.



4 Squatters at Orlando. The famous Masakeng, to which the family X went to live.

Mr X: Our passes were full of 72 hours stamps. In spite of these stamps we went to WRAB and appealed to the boer boy to give us a permit. We went there with proofs like the slip I have got for bicycle tax and paid to A.H.C. proving that I was in Alex before 1958 – ie before Peri-Urban took over. The boer boy said no they couldn't do anything to fix our papers. By then we couldn't take the 'no' any longer.

When the boer boy tried to stamp 72 hours stamp I snatched my book and he threatened me with beating me up and we said, oh well arrest us, we are illegals and we'll continue breaking the law, there is no need to leave us, now lock us up, please.

Q: What was the position of your children?

Mrs X: Well, they used to get arrested with us. I remember one time we were arrested, that is my husband, me and two daughters, but my son managed to escape through the window and Peri-Urban police laughed when they were looking for someone who was sleeping on the bed next to the window who was nowhere to be found.

My husband was happy that he managed to escape as that meant less fine. Well we lived this kind of life of running away from the police if we were warned by other people, or getting arrested if they did not warn us in time – for 20 years.

This permit system made women and men to look for a man or woman who was said to be legal in Alex. Many people divorced because they could not live with people who were illegal and got harassed by the police. We only managed to get a permit in 1979 when Alexandra Liason Committee fixed up papers of people who were entitled to get permits in terms of the legal system. I mean we had all the proof that we lived in Alex for more than 15 years: proofs like the receipt from the landlord and the bicycle tax slips from the Alexandra Health Committee.

Mr X: I got section 10.1(b) qualification and my wife got section 10.1(c) and my daughters and son got 10.1(d).



3 DINDELA: the Edenvale ghetto, long since demolished